



1.1 New to Hockey

Welcome to the Lethbridge Minor Hockey Association (LMHA)! We're excited to have you join our community and help your child start their hockey journey.

Step 1: [Shift Forward Parent Program](#)

Before registering, completion of the Shift Forward Parent Program is mandatory for all hockey families in Alberta. This ensures a safe and positive hockey environment.

The Shift Forward is focused on transformational change on how we approach training to achieve creating a safe and welcoming environment and empowering those who engage in the game to manage unhealthy behaviours. The program will cover a variety of topics focused on shifting hockey's culture forward. The modules within the program will cover the following themes: hockey culture, being an active bystander, how to have crucial conversations, autonomy, individual rights, grooming and consent.

- The course must be completed by one parent or guardian.
- Re-certification is required every 4 years.
- Completion assigns a Hockey Canada ID number, necessary for registration.

Step 1A: New to Lethbridge Minor Hockey from out of province.

- [Parent Declaration Form](#)

This form is required from families who have moved into the Province of Alberta from another Province or Member Branch. If a family is changing residences within the Province of Alberta, they are not required to complete the Parent Declaration Form.

The Parent Declaration Form is the designated Hockey Alberta form used by Players whose parent(s)/legal guardian(s) in situations where the Player continues to reside with the parent(s)/legal guardian(s). The form is a declaration by the Parent(s)/ Legal Guardian(s) of the Player that their permanent or primary residence is in the Province of Alberta.

The completed form is submitted to the Minor Hockey Association (c/o Registrar) for which the Player is registering.

Lethbridge Minor Hockey Association may request from the list below up to four (4) items of supporting documentation to verify residency. If there is a cause for suspicion, additional documentation/information may be requested. Note: renting accommodations, paying utilities, and registering for school in a community can be done without establishing permanent residency.

- Driver's License for Father
- Driver's License for Mother
- School registration at a school in or near the residence for the current year

- Proof of mail delivery by Canada Post at residence (Box numbers are not acceptable)
- Telephone bill for land line service at residence
- Cable or Internet bill for service at residence
- Utility bill for service at residence
- Lease agreement for residence in parent(s) name(s)
- Current property tax notice in parent(s) name(s)
- Homeowner/Renter's insurance policy for residence
- Void cheque with residence address
- Vehicle registration with residence address.
- Any other documentation which supports your claim to residency at the address

Step 2: Online Registration through Hockey Canada (HCR 3.0)

After completing the RIS Parent Course and receiving your child's Hockey Canada ID, you can register with LMHA through the Hockey Canada Registry (HCR 3.0).

- Use a long-term email address for your HCR 3.0 account.
- A new login is required, even if you used eHockey previously.

Step 3: Watch Ramp Team App & Emails for updated information on tryouts/mass practice.

Step 4: Participate in tryouts/mass practice

Step 5: Watch Ramp Team App for invite to your team

Need Help?

For assistance during the registration process, contact us:

- **Email:** lmhareg@telus.net
- **Phone:** (403) 320-0745
- **Office Hours:** Monday – Friday, 9:30 AM – 3:00 PM
- **Location:** Cavendish Farms Centre – 300 Britannia Blvd W, Lethbridge, AB



2.1 Equipment & Gear Basics


Helmet Fitting: Ensure a snug fit with no movement. Chin straps should be tight but comfortable. Helmets should meet CSA certification standards and not be altered.

Skate Fitting: Avoid oversized skates. Ensure heel lock and toes lightly feather the front of the skate.

 **Pro Tip:** Try on skates wearing the **same hockey socks** your player will wear during games for the most accurate fit.

Stick Sizing: The stick should reach your child's nose in bare feet and just under the chin with skates on. Flex should be half the player's body weight.

Base Layers & Under Armour: Choose moisture-wicking tops and bottoms. Avoid cotton as it traps sweat.

 **Pro Tip:** **Integrated jock/jill shorts or pants** with built-in protective cup and Velcro tabs for socks.

Other Required Gear Checklist:

- Shoulder Pads
- Elbow Pads
- Hockey Gloves
- Hockey Pants
- Shin Guards
- Neck Guard (BNQ certified)
- Mouth Guard (if required)
- Jersey & Socks (provided)
- Hockey Bag
- Water Bottle

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I buy used gear for my child?

Yes! Used gear is a great way to save money. Just ensure the equipment is in **good condition** and fits **properly** – especially helmets and skates.

Q: What brands should I look for?

Common and trusted brands include **CCM, Bauer, & Warrior**. Fit and comfort are more important than brand name.

Q: How often do I need to replace equipment?

It depends on growth and wear. Helmets every **5-6 years**, skates when toes are cramped or heel lift appears, and other gear as needed.

Q: Where can I buy or get fitted locally?

In Lethbridge, you can visit:

- **Players Bench Sports**
- **Sport Chek**
- **Canadian Tire** (for starter kits)
- **Facebook Buy & Sell groups** for used gear

For more information, email lmhareg@telus.net



3.1 Training & Development

Why Training Matters

Hockey is a fast-paced, demanding sport. Skill development, strength, coordination, and hockey sense all grow through consistent training. Whether your child dreams of competitive hockey or just wants to play for fun, development opportunities help build confidence, safety, and enjoyment on the ice.

Key Areas of Hockey Development

1. Skating

- Skating is the foundation of hockey. It includes balance, edge control, stride power, stopping, and agility.
- Development starts with programs like **CanSkate** or **Little Canes - Learn to Play**.
- Continued focus on skating is encouraged at all ages.

2. Puck Skills

- Stickhandling, passing, and shooting are essential.
- These skills are taught and reinforced through drills and small area games.

3. Game Awareness ("Hockey IQ")

- Reading plays, positioning, and decision-making are developed through gameplay and coaching.
- Encourage kids to watch hockey games and ask questions to build their understanding.

4. Strength & Conditioning

- Dryland training and off-ice conditioning (age-appropriate) help improve endurance, core strength, and coordination.
- For older players, strength and injury prevention training becomes more structured.

5. Mental Training

- Focus, confidence, and positive attitude are just as important as physical skill.
- Coaches and parents can help by encouraging a growth mindset, resilience, and sportsmanship.

Development Programs Offered

Little Canes - Learn to Play

Introductory program for ages 4–5 focusing on basic skating and puck skills.

Team Practices

Each division receives regular ice times that include both skill work and team concepts.

Individual teams may fundraise to offer their team additional ice time and off ice training.

Power Skating & Skills Clinics

Optional programs offered through LMHA to target specific skills like shooting, skating stride, and agility.

Spring/Summer Camps

Programs available through LMHA to keep players active and developing in the off-season.

Goaltender Development

Specialized coaching sessions and camps are available for goalies at all levels.

Additional Tips for Parents

- Encourage unstructured play: outdoor rinks or shooting pucks in the driveway are great learning tools.
- Support effort, not just results.
- Prioritize long-term development over early success.
- Communicate openly with coaches about your child's needs and interests.



4.1 Game Rules & Etiquette

Understanding the Basics

Hockey is governed by a set of rules designed to ensure fair play, safety, and sportsmanship. While rules may vary slightly by age group, here are key concepts that every new player and parent should know:

Basic Game Structure

- **Periods:** Most minor hockey games are made up of **three periods** (10–20 minutes each depending on age).
- **Players:** Teams play with **5 skaters and 1 goalie** on the ice.
- **Face-offs:** Games begin and resume with a face-off, which takes place at designated circles on the ice.

Common Rules & Penalties

Rule	What It Means
Offside	A player cannot enter the offensive zone ahead of the puck.
Icing	Dumping the puck from behind the center red line across the opposing goal line.
Penalties	Given for rule infractions like tripping, slashing, or body checking (at younger levels, body contact is not allowed). Time is served in the penalty box.
Minor Penalty	Typically 2 minutes.
Major Penalty	More serious infractions, usually 5 minutes.

Note: Rules are enforced by referees. Coaches and parents should always show respect toward officials.

Sportsmanship & Etiquette

- **Shake Hands After the Game:** A tradition in hockey that teaches respect, win or lose.
- **No Cheering Injuries:** Always stay silent or supportive if a player is hurt on the ice.
- **Respect Officials:** Referees are learning and doing their best—just like players.

- **Cheer Positively:** Encourage effort and teamwork, not just goals and wins.
- **Play for the Team:** Hockey is a team sport—sharing the puck, supporting teammates, and accepting coaching are all part of growing in the game.

Parent & Spectator Code of Conduct

- **Let Coaches Coach:** Avoid shouting instructions from the stands.
- **Let Players Play:** Don't pressure your child; support their love for the game.
- **Let Officials Officiate:** Refrain from negative comments toward referees or opposing teams.
- **Be a Role Model:** Your behavior in the rink influences your child and others.

When in Doubt, Ask

If you or your child don't understand a rule, ask your coach or a team manager—everyone was new once!



5.1 Lifestyle & Culture

More Than a Game

Hockey in Alberta is more than just a sport—it's a community, a lifestyle, and a platform for youth to develop life skills such as teamwork, respect, perseverance, and responsibility. Whether participating in their first season or advancing through the ranks, players gain experiences that shape their character both on and off the ice.

LMHA's Mission, Vision & Philosophy

- **Mission:** To provide an opportunity for youth within the Lethbridge Minor Hockey Association boundaries to participate in a structured hockey program, and to create opportunities and valuable life experiences in hockey by providing exceptional leadership and service.
- **Vision:** To create an environment that supports the learning of skills in a safe, fun, and supportive community atmosphere.
- **Philosophy:** LMHA endeavors to fulfill this aim by operating teams in all divisions that are developmental, equally competitive, and fun.

Core Values of Lethbridge Minor Hockey

Value	What It Looks Like
Teamwork	Prioritizing the team, sharing the puck, and celebrating collective success.
Respect	Treating teammates, coaches, officials, and opponents with dignity and sportsmanship.
Commitment	Being punctual, working hard, and giving one's best in games and practices.
Fun	Embracing the joy of the game and fostering a love for hockey.
Development	Focusing on learning and growth over winning.



6.1 Advancing Through the Levels

A Step-by-Step Pathway in Minor Hockey

Lethbridge Minor Hockey follows the structured development model established by **Hockey Alberta** and **Hockey Canada**, ensuring every player develops appropriately at each stage of their hockey journey.

Age Divisions (as of December 31st each season)

Division	Age Range	Typical Focus
LITTLE CANES	4–5 yrs	Fun, basic skating & introduction to hockey
U7 (Intro to Hockey)	5–6 yrs	Fundamental movement, teamwork, and basic play
U9	7–8 yrs	Core skills (passing, shooting, skating), small area games
U11	9–10 yrs	Team systems, positional play, skill refinement
U13	11–12 yrs	More structured team play, physical literacy
U15	13–14 yrs	Tactical skills, checking, leadership development
U18	15–17 yrs	Advanced play, competition, prep for post-minor hockey
U21 (Junior)	18–20 yrs	Optional, for advanced or continuing competitive play

Note: All divisions are open to both boys and girls; female-only teams are offered from U9-U21.

City League (Tier 4-5)

This league is developmental and recreational.

Divisions U5-U9 are not offered travel teams.

Divisions U11 - U15 the city league is for new or less-experienced players or players that are not wanting to travel.

Travel Teams (Tier 1-3)

LMHA divisions U11 and up offer **travel teams**. This allows players of similar skill levels to compete together in a fair and challenging environment. This program is offered through Central Alberta Hockey League (CAHL) for males and through Alberta Female Hockey League (AFHL) for females.

- **Tier 1** – Competitive, high-performance
- **Tier 2/3** – Balanced competition

Tryouts and Evaluations

Each season begins with **evaluations** to determine proper placement for development and safety. This ensures players are grouped with others of similar ability to support fair play and confidence.

- Skating, puck control, game sense, and attitude are typically assessed.
- Evaluations happen early in the season—more information is shared in late summer.

What Comes Next?

As players grow, their opportunities expand. In later years, options may include:

- **AAA/AA**
- **Provincial and tournament play**
- **Coaching or officiating**
- **Prep or Junior hockey**
- **University/college hockey**

Note: Review document Elite 101 for more information regarding AA/AAA levels

Hockey Alberta supports a “**Hockey for Life**” approach—players can continue in the sport as athletes, coaches, referees, or volunteers well beyond minor hockey.

6.2 What to Expect at Each Division

Lethbridge Minor Hockey Association (LMHA) follows Hockey Alberta and Hockey Canada's Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) model. Each division is designed to promote growth in skills, sportsmanship, and fun—while keeping age-appropriate goals front and center.

Division Overview

Little Canes (Ages 4–6)

Intro to Hockey / Learn to Play

Focus:

- Basic skating fundamentals
- Puck handling, balance, and movement
- Team interaction and having fun on the ice

Format:

- Half-ice sessions
- 1–2 sessions per week
- Emphasis on **FUNdamentals**, not competition

Parent Tip: No prior skating experience needed—just a great attitude and full gear!

🏒 U7 (Ages 5–6)**Introductory Hockey (Hockey Canada’s U7 model)****Focus:**

- Confidence on skates
- Stopping, turning, and gliding
- Simple puck skills and early game play

Format:

- Cross-ice or half-ice games
- Equal ice time for all players
- 2–3 ice times per week (practices and games)

Parent Tip: Keep cheering! This is where love of the game really begins.

🏒 U9 (Ages 7–8)**Transitional Development****Focus:**

- Refining basic skills (passing, shooting, skating)
- Introduction to positions and team structure
- Developing teamwork and game awareness

Format:

- Half-ice and full-ice game transition
- No stats or standings
- Tiered play for better skill matching

Parent Tip: Practices remain key. Expect skill-based drills with small-area games.

🏒 U11 (Ages 9–10)**Competitive Play Introduced****Focus:**

- Full-ice games and full rules
- Increased game strategy and awareness
- Continued skill development with game concepts

Format:

- City League, Tiered teams (Tier 1–3) & Elite AA
- Regular league play begins
- Equal development opportunities, though positions begin to matter more

Parent Tip: Sportsmanship and balance become important here—team commitment increases slightly.

🏒 U13 (Ages 11–12)**Strategic and Physical Development****Focus:**

- More structured team systems
- Off-ice training may begin
- Physical play introduced under close supervision

Format:

- Full body-checking NOT allowed (unless in checking divisions)
- Provincial play and tournament options expand
- Increased team and time commitment

Parent Tip: Start talking about nutrition, rest, and balance between school and sports.

🏒 U15 (Ages 13–14)**Advanced Tactical Play****Focus:**

- Physical checking (All levels) introduced with safe contact education
 - Option to have a T4 non contact team
- Systematic team play and positional understanding
- Leadership roles, peer respect, and discipline

Format:

- Tryouts and tiered teams (AAA, AA, T1,T2,T3)
- Provincial-level tournaments
- Full checking (in designated divisions)

Parent Tip: Watch for emotional and physical changes—support and dialogue are key.

🏒 U18/U17/U16 (Ages 15–17)**High Performance / Recreational****Focus:**

- Elite preparation or lifetime recreation
- Strategy, pace, physicality, and mental strength
- Possible coaching or mentoring pathways

Format:

- AAA/AA, travel team options
- Exposure to higher-level play (scouting, junior eligibility)
- Provincial competition opportunities

Parent Tip: Let them lead—these years help define whether hockey becomes a career, hobby, or community activity.

🏒 U21 (Ages 18–20)**Junior Pathway or Recreation****Focus:**

- For players not pursuing Junior A/B or collegiate routes
- Continue developing and playing for fun or competition
- Great way to stay active, involved, and connected

Format:

- Competitive rec-style play
- Includes mentorship or coaching opportunities

Parent Tip: Encourage leadership—these players often give back as refs or coaches.

💡 *Every Player Has a Path*

Not every child moves at the same pace—and that's okay! LMHA's goal is to ensure every player feels confident, develops well, and stays in the game for life.

Learn more about Hockey Alberta's model at www.hockeyalberta.ca



7.1 Common Challenges and How to Overcome Them

Starting in hockey is exciting—but it can also come with questions, uncertainties, and obstacles. Here's a breakdown of common challenges new families may face, along with practical solutions and reassurance.

1. “We Don’t Know Where to Start”

Challenge: Feeling overwhelmed by registration, gear, and scheduling.

Solution:

- Begin with the **Respect in Sport – Parent Program** (mandatory by Hockey Alberta).
- Visit our “**New to Hockey**” section or connect with LMHA staff for step-by-step guidance.
- Use our printable guides and FAQ section for clarity on next steps.

2. Equipment Confusion

Challenge: Buying and fitting hockey gear properly.

Solution:

- Refer to our “**Equipment & Gear Basics**” section.
- Many local retailers (e.g., Source for Sports, Pro Hockey Life) help with proper fitting.
- Ask LMHA staff or veteran parents for tips—many are happy to help!

3. Time Commitment Concerns

Challenge: Managing busy family schedules with practices and games.

Solution:

- U7 and U9 programs are designed with **manageable schedules**.
- You’ll receive a team calendar once your player is placed.
- Carpooling and shared responsibilities with other families help lighten the load, we can accommodate these requests at the city league level.

4. “My Child Isn’t the Best Skater”

Challenge: Worrying your child will fall behind other players.

Solution:

- Every child develops at their **own pace**.
- Programs like **Little Canes** and **First Shift** are built for learning in a fun, supportive environment.

- Encourage enjoyment over perfection—skills grow with time and confidence.

5. Fear of Injury

Challenge: Concerns about physicality and safety in hockey.

Solution:

- All coaches are trained in **Hockey Alberta's Safety Program**.
- Full protective gear is required and reviewed for fit.
- Non-contact and age-appropriate checking instruction ensures safe play.

6. Cost of Participation

Challenge: Financial barriers for some families.

Solution:

- LMHA supports applications to programs like **KidSport**, **Jumpstart**, and more.
- Ask about **payment plans** or **gently used gear exchanges** through the association or community groups.

7. Navigating the Rules and Structure

Challenge: Parents new to hockey may be unfamiliar with game rules, roles, and etiquette.

Solution:

- Check our **"Game Rules & Etiquette"** section.
- Attend LMHA parent meetings or info sessions to ask questions and connect with others.
- Coaches and team managers are great resources for learning on the go.

8. Burnout or Loss of Motivation

Challenge: Kids feeling pressure or losing interest mid-season.

Solution:

- Keep the focus on **fun and friendships**.
- Take breaks when needed—there's room to return when ready.
- Talk openly with your child and their coach about how they're feeling.

Remember:

You're not in this alone. **Lethbridge Minor Hockey** is here to support your family's experience—whether it's your first season or your fifth. Everyone was new once, and this community thrives by helping each other along the way.

Need help? Email: lmhareg@telus.net



8.1 Communication Protocol

Hockey Alberta & Lethbridge Minor Hockey Association (LMHA)

Respectful. Constructive. Transparent.

Effective communication is vital to creating a safe, supportive, and development-focused environment in minor hockey. Both **Hockey Alberta** and **Lethbridge Minor Hockey Association** have protocols in place to ensure concerns, questions, and feedback are handled respectfully and efficiently.

LMHA Communication Pathway

To ensure a fair and positive hockey environment, LMHA encourages families to follow this **4-step communication protocol**:

1. 24-Hour Rule

- If a concern arises, parents are asked to wait 24 hours before initiating discussion with a coach or team staff.
- This cooling-off period promotes respectful, solution-focused dialogue.

2. Speak to the Team Staff First

- Most issues can be resolved directly with the **Head Coach** or **Team Manager**.
- Approach them respectfully and privately—not during games or in public team settings.

3. Contact Your Division Governor or Director of Governors

- If the concern is unresolved or involves the coach directly, reach out to your **Division Governor**.
- Contact info is available at: www.lethbridgeminorhockey.com

4. Escalate to LMHA General Manager or Board

- For major or unresolved concerns, the issue can be elevated to the **LMHA General Manager, Administrative Assistant or Board**
- If necessary after please make a formal complaint to Hockey Alberta.

The first 3 steps must be followed prior to contacting the LMHA GM or Board

Hockey Alberta's Respectful Conduct Standards

Hockey Alberta supports a province-wide culture of respect. The following guidelines apply:

- **Respect in Sport – Parent and Activity Leader Courses** are mandatory.
- Zero tolerance for abusive, aggressive, or threatening communication.
- Concerns should never be addressed directly to officials, opposing players, or parents.

For policy details:

www.hockeyalberta.ca/members/respect

Tips for Effective Hockey Communication

- Be **solution-oriented**, not emotional.
- Focus on what's best for the child and the team.
- Practice patience—volunteers and coaches are often balancing multiple responsibilities.
- Respect the **chain of communication**—it protects everyone involved.

8.2 Hockey Alberta Maltreatment 11.4

🌐 Maltreatment, Bullying & Harassment | Hockey Alberta

THESE DON'T BELONG.

~~RACISM~~

~~DISCRIMINATION~~

~~SEXUAL MISTREATMENT~~

~~SEXUAL HARASSMENT~~

~~EMOTIONAL ABUSE~~

~~PHYSICAL ABUSE~~

~~VERBAL ABUSE~~





9.1 Athlete Nutrition

Fueling Young Hockey Players for Performance & Recovery

A balanced approach to energy, endurance, and development.

Pre-Game / Practice Fuel

When: 1–2 hours before

Why: Provides energy for movement, focus, and endurance

What to Eat:

- Whole grain sandwich with lean protein
- Pasta with tomato sauce
- Oatmeal with fruit
- Apple or banana with peanut butter

What to Drink:

- Water
- Milk or diluted sports drink (only if extended effort is expected)

During Games / Practices

Goal: Maintain energy and hydration

Recommended:

- Water every 15–20 minutes
- Small snacks between games in tournaments (e.g. granola bar, fruit)

Post-Game Recovery

When: Within 30–60 minutes

Why: Rebuild muscles and restore energy

What to Eat:

- Chocolate milk or protein smoothie
- Sandwich or wrap
- Greek yogurt and fruit

What to Drink:

- Water or electrolyte drink

Avoid Before Games:

- Energy drinks (not safe for kids)
- Candy or sugary snacks
- Fried or greasy food

- Heavy meals within 1 hour of activity

Smart Snacks for Hockey Bags

- Nut-free trail mix
- Applesauce pouches
- Crackers and cheese
- Fruit slices
- Granola or protein bars
- Refillable water bottle

Helpful Tips for Families

- Plan ahead for long rink days—pack a cooler or snack bag
- Keep portion sizes kid-appropriate
- Encourage hydration all day, not just at the rink
- Teach kids to listen to hunger cues and eat slowly

More Resources:

- [Hockey Alberta Nutrition Info](#)
- [Canadian Sport Institute Nutrition Resources](#)



Frequently Asked Questions

How young can kids start hockey?

Lethbridge Minor Hockey accepts children starting at **age 4** through the **Little Canes – Learn to Play** program. Children who turn 4 by **March 31** can also register.

How do I register my child?

1. Complete the **Respect in Sport Parent Program** (mandatory for all new families).
2. Create an account on the [Hockey Canada Registry](#).
3. Register your child online.

Help is available at LMHAREG@telus.net

We're moving to Lethbridge. Can my child play here?

Lethbridge Minor Hockey is part of **Zone 5**. While we serve most city residents, some rural areas also qualify. Check with our office at LMHAREG@telus.net to confirm.

When does the season start and end?

Most programs begin around **Thanksgiving** and run until **March**, depending on the division and schedule.

Where can I find my child's Hockey ID number?

After registration, your child's Hockey ID appears on the confirmation email/receipt. You can also find it under your HCR Account when you login.

Is it too late to register?

Registrations are accepted until **January 10**, based on space availability. Some programs fill quickly, so early registration is encouraged.

My child is older and has never played. Is it too late to start?

Not at all! Programs like **First Shift** are designed to introduce hockey to players ages 6–10 who are new to the game. Visit www.firstshift.ca for details.

How do I request a refund?

Complete the **Refund Request Form** on the LMHA website under the **Forms** section.

How can I update my email address on my account?

If you haven't registered yet:

- Log in to the Hockey Canada Registry and update your **Account Settings**.
If you've already registered:
- Email LMHAREG@telus.net with your child's full name and birthdate.

What if we miss evaluations or can't attend a session?

Contact the LMHA office **as early as possible** to discuss your situation. Alternate arrangements may be possible in certain cases.



LETHBRIDGE MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

PROVIDING LETHBRIDGE A STRUCTURED HOCKEY PROGRAM FOR YOUTH SINCE 1954.

KINDNESS-RESPECT-TEAMWORK-SUPPORT