



RED DEER MINOR HOCKEY

Red Deer Minor Hockey U18 / U17 / U16 Fall Tryout Information

Our Elite and Tiered tryout structure has been designed to provide players with a clear progression pathway while ensuring every athlete is evaluated at the highest level, they are capable of playing. This model allows for movement between AAA, AA, and tiered team selection processes as players are evaluated and advanced or redirected throughout tryouts.

Where Does My Player Register?

Red Deer Minor Hockey offers multiple tryout entry streams at the U18 age category based on:

- player birth year,
- previous season level of play,
- and highest eligible level of competition.

1. U18 Elite Tryout (AAA / AA)

The U18 Elite Tryout serves as the primary evaluation entry point for players pursuing U18 AAA, U17 AAA or U18 AA hockey.

Players registered in this process will participate in:

- two evaluation scrimmages,
- on-ice assessments,
- and direct advancement opportunities into higher-level camps.

Eligible players for the U18 Elite Tryout include those who played the previous season at:

- U15 AAA
- U15 AA
- U15 A
- U16 AA
- U16 A
- U18 AAA
- U18 AA
- U18 A
- U18 B
- U18 C

U18 AAA Tryout Camp (Invite Only)

The U18 AAA Main Camp will operate as an invite-only camp.

Players may enter the U18 AAA Main Camp through one of three methods:

- previous spring or coach commitment,
- direct invitation prior to fall tryouts, or
- earned invitation through performance in the U18 Elite Tryout scrimmages.

This allows the U18 AAA coaching staff to maintain roster continuity while still leaving space for players to earn advancement during the fall evaluation process.

What Happens if a Player is Released from U18 AAA?

As players are evaluated through the U18 AAA Main Camp, released players will be moved immediately to the next highest eligible tryout stream.

Players born in 2010 or 2011 (U17 AAA eligible)





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Players eligible for U17 AAA who are released from the U18 AAA Main Camp will move directly into the U17 AAA tryout skates.

Players born in 2009

All 2009-born players not selected to continue in the U18 AAA process will be released directly into the U18 AA tryout process.

This ensures that players continue to be evaluated at the highest available level appropriate to both age and ability.

2. U17 AAA Tryout Camp

The U17 AAA Camp is open to players born in 2010 or 2011 who played the previous season at:

- U15 AAA
- U15 AA
- U15 A
- U17 AAA
- U16 AA
- U16 A
- U18 A
- U18 B
- U18 C

In addition to direct registrants, players released from the U18 AAA Main Camp who remain U17 AAA age eligible will be transferred into this process automatically.

The U17 AAA Camp provides another elite development pathway for players capable of competing at the AAA level within their age category.

3. U16 AA / A Tryout Camp

2011 Born Players may enter the U16 AA / A Camp in two ways:

- by registering directly for the U16 AA / A Tryout Camp, or
- by being released from the U17 AAA camp and redirected to the U16 AA/A Tryouts (see player movement)

Important Note:

Players pursuing U16 AA / A hockey do not need to attend the U18 Elite Tryout or the U17 AAA Camp in order to participate in the U16 AA / A selection process.

This allows players and families to choose the most appropriate starting point based on their anticipated level of competition.

Player Movement Between Camps

One of the key principles of the Red Deer Minor Hockey tryout model is continuous advancement and redirection.

As players are released from camps, they will be placed into the next highest available tryout process for which they are eligible. (2011 born players must move through the U16 process)

This means:

- players are always being evaluated at the highest realistic level first,
- no player loses an opportunity by starting in an elite camp,
- and transitions between AAA, AA, and Tiered are seamless throughout the tryout season,
- U18 AA is open to Red Deer Resident and approved players only.



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4. U18 Tiered

Players may enter the U18 Tiered (A, B, C) Camp in two ways:

- by registering directly for U18 Tiered, or
- by being released from the U18 AA or U16 A camps and redirected to U18 Tiered Tryouts.

Important Note:

Players pursuing U18 Tiered hockey do not need to attend the U18 Elite Tryout or the U16 AA/A Camp in order to participate in the U18 Tiered selection process. RDMH will host three, Tiered teams for the season at the A, B and C level. (Please see player movement for further steps from Tiered Tryouts.) This allows players and families to choose the most appropriate starting point based on their anticipated level of competition.

5. U18 NBC (Non-Body Checking) Evaluations

Players registered for U18 NBC will participate in a separate evaluation process.

Red Deer Minor Hockey's U18 NBC teams compete in the Rockies Hockey League, which offers:

- a very competitive tiered structure,
- balanced league play,
- and travel teams.

Because the Rockies Hockey League operates with internal team tiering, Red Deer Minor Hockey will hold evaluations to:

- assess all NBC players,
- and appropriately tier teams for league participation.

This ensures competitive parity and the best possible placement for all participating athletes. We will look to host two NBC in 2026-2027 to accommodate the growing demands of the U18 NBC stream.

U18 / U17 / U16 Tryout Pathway at a Glance

U18 Elite Tryout (AAA / AA)

Eligible previous levels:

- U15 AAA / AA / A
- U18 AAA / AA / A / B / C

Possible outcomes:

- Invitation to U18 AAA Main Camp
- Release to U17 AAA Tryout (2010/2011 born)
- Release to U18 AA Process (2009 born)
- Non-Resident 2009 born are released to their home association.

U17 AAA Tryout Camp

Eligible players:

- 2010 or 2011 born players from U15 AAA, U15 AA, U15 A, U17 AAA, U16 AA, U16 A, U18 A, B, C,
- 2010 and 2011 born U18 AAA released players

Possible outcomes:

- U17 AAA roster selection
- 2010 Red Deer players released to U18 AA Tryout,
- 2011 born released to U16 AA / A tryout (Must be draw zone eligible),



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- All other Non-Resident Players are released to their home associations.

U16 AA / A Tryout Camp

Eligible players:

- 2011 born players registering directly for U16 AA/A (Draw Zone Eligible only)
- released players from U17 AAA within draw zone

Possible outcomes:

- U16 AA or U16 A team placement
- Release to U18 Tiered Tryouts
- Release to U18 NBC by request,
- Non-Resident players not selected for U16 AA released to their home association.

U18 NBC Evaluations

Eligible players:

- players registering for U18 NBC hockey
- players moved from Tiered tryouts to NBC.

Possible outcomes:

- placement and team tiering for Rockies Hockey League participation

Goaltender Evaluations and Placement

Goaltender registration numbers can vary significantly by age division and level of play each season. Red Deer Minor Hockey is committed to communicating with goalie families as early as possible throughout the tryout process should there be a surplus of registered goaltenders within a particular division. Our objective is to provide timelines and transparent information regarding evaluation opportunities, advancement pathways, and potential reassignment options.

Where roster vacancies exist, Red Deer Minor Hockey may evaluate opportunities to move qualified goaltenders upward within the system when age and development considerations make this appropriate. In situations where additional goaltenders are required the association may also extend opportunities within the Elite AA tryout process to second-tryout goaltenders from surrounding communities in order to ensure all available team positions are properly filled.

Our Commitment to Fair Evaluation

Red Deer Minor Hockey believes players should begin tryouts at the highest level they are capable of pursuing and then move through the process based on objective evaluation.

Our integrated AAA, AA, A, and NBC structure ensures:

- maximum advancement opportunities,
- fair player movement,
- age-appropriate redirection,
- and clear communication for families throughout the tryout season.

Our goal is to place every player in the best competitive environment for development, challenge, and success.

Questions?

If you have questions regarding player eligibility, draw zone requirements, or which tryout registration stream is appropriate for your athlete, please contact Red Deer Minor Hockey prior to registering.



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