



RINGETTE ONTARIO

U12 TEAM FORMATION GUIDELINES

Ringette Ontario, in active partnership with clubs, players, coaches, families, and the community is committed to fostering the values of fairness, sportsmanship, safety, and leadership to all members.

U12 TEAM FORMATION OBJECTIVES

Teams are formed within each Club and participate in a system of competition following the program principles focused on sport for life, long-term athlete development and long-term participant development. All Clubs can support community-based “Club” teams, built around skill development, fun, and age groups.

Ringette Ontario encourages smaller roster sizes for U12 Club teams to facilitate increased ring touches, player engagement and overall enjoyment of the game. In addition, smaller rosters assist with the following player development initiatives:

- Increased engagement for all players as they are more active during practices and games
- Increased opportunities to experience playing different positions
- Increased opportunity for skill development
- Increased opportunity for players to experience different game situations; and
- Increased opportunities for coaches to train and develop all the athletes on their team while recognizing individual skill levels of players.

TEAM FORMATION

A club should start by creating a Team Formation Committee consisting of impartial coaches, and knowledgeable members that have experience in skill assessment and the [athlete development matrix](#) for the age group. Final team sizes and player distribution should be solely determined by the Team Formation Committee and may be adjusted at any point up until the final roster deadline as determined by Ringette Ontario. Team formation results should be posted in a timely manner.

- U12 player evaluations are to be done after September 1st of the current season.
- The U12 division will be categorized as mixed gender at all levels of play to align with the [Ringette Canada Equal Opportunity for Participation Guidelines](#).
- Releases for level of play are not permitted. (ie a player cannot leave their Home Club to play at a higher calibre if their Home Club offers U12 programming.)
- Combine with neighbouring clubs(s) only if the Club(s) do not have enough to form a full team (or second/third team) based on numbers coming to be evaluated.
- U12 teams will be tiered as an A, B or C team. The programs for these teams should look the same regardless of the level of play the team identifies as. Clubs (and groups of neighbouring Clubs) look to offer extra development sessions grouped by skill level.



- If a Club has enough players to host multiple U12 teams, they can choose to tier the teams or balance the teams depending on the level of skill and experience the group has based on the evaluations done at sort outs. If a Club can form more than one team within a tier, the teams will be balanced to allow those teams to compete under the same competition structure.

Items taken into consideration in team formation, but not necessarily limited to or constrained by, are:

- Team Viability (Minimum 10 skaters + 1 goalie required on Team Registration Form (TRF))
 - Up to 2 over-aged players will be permitted to be on the TRF.
 - Over-aged players at U12 will be approved by the RO Office. The player will not be activated in RAMP on the team assigned until Ringette Ontario membership coordinator has approved of the request.
 - No under-age players, unless required for team viability.
 - Clubs must submit a [request to RO](#) and be approved prior to adding any under-age players to a TRF.
- Long Term Development (LTD)
- Availability of Coaches
- Availability of Ice
- Player Placement Requests
- Goaltender allocation
- Player Positions

Once formed, the team has certain obligations to their Club and to Ringette Ontario. The team personnel, players, and parents have certain rights with respect to the team and how it operates.

Responsibilities include:

- Qualified team staff and support staff at all team activities
- Season plan
- Transparency and regular updates to the team budget
- Familiarity with all timelines, guidelines and policies required by Ringette Ontario
- Completion of a safe sport training module be completed by at least one guardian of each athlete ([Respect in Sport for Parents](#)). This is the responsibility of the Club to track.

Coach Selection

The Head Coach(es) should be selected prior to evaluations whenever possible. All other coaches may be named after team formation is completed.



GUIDELINES FOR THE USE IN DETERMINING TEAM FORMATION

Player evaluations are recommended and should be conducted at the beginning of each ringette season. Evaluations should be done according to the Club's Player Evaluation processes. Notice should be provided via the Club Website and the Club Board of Directors outlining the evaluation process for the current season.

Evaluations should be completed by knowledgeable coaches and 18+ athletes that are completely unbiased towards the athletes being evaluated and/or the team(s) that are being formed. To simplify the process, the Club's Team Formation Committee should appoint one person as the Evaluations Coordinator. Results of the evaluations should be submitted to the Evaluations Coordinator who then will pass the results directly to the Team Formation Committee. At no time should parents or coaches be privy to these results.

The Club should offer each registrant a minimum of two evaluations of ice times.

For viability purposes, teams must have at least 10 skaters and 1 goalie on their Team Registration Form. Maximum of 18 players per team, but registration numbers dictate the size and number of teams.

On completion of the evaluations, the respective Evaluation Coordinator should collect the results and meet with the Team Formation Committee to form the teams. It is recommended that the Head Coach be included in the team formation process once the official evaluations have been completed.

In situations where there is more than one team at a tier, teams are to be evenly balanced based on skater and goaltender evaluations. The following method is an example of how the teams can be formed: Team 1 – player 1, Team 2 – player 2, Team 3 – players 3 & 4, Team 2 – player 5, Team 1 – player 6 & 7. This is continued until all skaters are placed on a team. Goaltenders are to be divided along the same lines. A random draw will be used to determine placement order, Team 1 would get the top skater and Team 2 the top goaltender.

On completion, the teams will be reviewed by the Club to ensure balance based on evaluation results; movement may occur to ensure balance. If a player has identified a preferred position during registration, this may be considered during team formation.

There will be circumstances where a player may not be available to be evaluated either due to absence, sickness, or injury. In such situations, the player may be placed at the level where they have consistently played without evaluation. The decision for team placement should be made by the Club Board after consultation from the Team Formation Committee. Clubs should only transfer players in and out of the Club where it is needed to form teams, or in situations where a neighbouring Club has too many players at the applicable age group or does not have enough players to form a team at the level of the player(s).



ATHLETE EVALUATION PROCESS

Resource: Ringette Canada Skills Matrix: [Ringette Technical Skills Matrix | Ringette Canada](#)

- Two sessions over two separate days for initial evaluations skills.
- Skating and Technical Skills:
 - Forward & Backward Skating
 - Starting & Stopping
 - Pivots & Turns
 - Ring Control Skills:
 - Passing & Receiving
 - Shooting
- Competitive drills designed to test work ethic and determination.
 - Does the athlete work their hardest at all drills or is their work ethic inconsistent or less than 100%?
 - Does the athlete perform the drill as described?
 - What is the athletes' attitude towards evaluations and drills?
 - Does the athlete listen to the directions? Do they want the ring, and do they work hard to get it?
 - Do they work hard at getting to openings and/or participating in the play?
 - Does the athlete only work when they have the ring, or only when on offense?
- Teaching to see which players understand, listen, and can apply to the drill situation.
- Scrimmage time during sessions to give athletes the opportunity to demonstrate their ringette game knowledge, experience, and skill.
- Additional sessions may be held to select the final team.
- Format of additional evaluation sessions are at the discretion of the Coach and Team Selection Committee and may include:
 - Individual skills and tactics
 - Team tactics
 - Teamwork
 - Team plays and exhibition games



U12 Team Formation FAQ

So, there shouldn't be U12A/B/C tryouts?

No – there should be U12 evaluations. The top evaluated players would be put into the highest tier that the club is going to offer, next highest evaluated into the next tier, and so on. If clubs do not have the numbers to form a team in a specific tier, then they can look to combine with a neighbouring club for team viability on both sides.

Since RO encourages smaller rosters at this age group, if a Club has a large roster can they combine with another Club to create 2 or 3 smaller teams?

Yes, if it helps the other Club(s) form a team(s).

If a Club has players that evaluate as A level, and C level, neither level will be suitable to all players, would RO support combined teams?

Build a team for your club – if you have only enough for one team and they range from A to C, then it's a B team. If you have more than enough, form a team at the higher tier first and the rest can form a second, lower tiered team. If there is not enough for 2 full teams, then look to combine with a neighbouring Club to form the second.

When Clubs combine, are player releases needed?

Yes, a release will be required for those who do not belong to the host Club. If two Clubs combine to make a team(s), then an athlete whose home Club is one of the combining Clubs does not require a release. See RO Athlete Release Policy (2026–2027 policy will be available September 1st)

Can a player be on a two-team agreement in U12?

There should not be any two-team agreements for U12 players. Since U12 is considered community-based teams, no matter the tier, two-team agreements in the traditional sense do not apply. On rare occasions, two team agreements will only be approved to aid team viability within the home Club. Approval is done per the [Two-Team Player Procedures](#)

What approvals are required to combine a team between Clubs?

A player release is required for those who do not belong to either of the combining Clubs.

Can you combine with more than one Club?

Yes, if it means having a viable team(s).

Can we transfer players between Clubs without combining?

Combining or transferring means that you are more than likely holding evaluations at the same time with the neighbouring Club(s) or at least are working collaboratively to find a place for all U12 athletes to have a place to play. Everyone moving from one Club to the other will need a release, no matter what the purpose is.



Should we add up to a maximum of 2 over-aged players to every team or only take them to make a viable team?

An overaged player should only be put on a TRF based on their level of play, or to make a team viable. For example, if a new player to the sport should be in U14 by age but is better suited to start in U12 to gain experience with competition.

Why is RO removing competition from U12?

There are still plenty of competitions available for U12 teams at all levels through our sanctioned events and leagues across the province. All U12 teams will have an opportunity to participate in a year-end event within their tiered level within their League or Region. The sanctioned events list will be available in July, so there will be plenty of time to apply for tournaments once teams are formed in September.

Can a Club/Neighbouring Clubs host extra skill and game play nights with like-skilled players?

Yes! Clubs and their neighbours are encouraged to offer skill enrichment nights so that players can practice with other like-skilled players and learn from other coaches. Keep in mind the athlete development matrix to guide these sessions. Introduction to team and individual tactics may also be done at these enrichment sessions.

Additional Questions? Contact Savannah Baker – savannah@ringetteontario.com