

# A1 Introduction to Balance on Ice and the Sideway Motion of Skating

## **Key Points:**

We walk and run with a front to back movement of our legs. Skating is a foreign movement because it is side to side. Gaston uses balls and pucks to introduce beginners to the side to side weight transfer. Dr. Gaston Schaeffer introduces this unnatural movement along with proper skating posture with a sequence of exercises using balls, pucks, hurdles, etc. The entire sequence is shown on the video cards in the Hockey Coaching ABC practice video folder on the site. It is with older players and the new video at the bottom is young players with the balls and pucks. (big guy in red and white is Dany Heatley when he was playing for Wisconsin) The video cards are at.

<http://www.hockeycoachingabcs.com/mediagallery/album.php?aid=36&page=1>

## **Description:**

- Walk across the ice.
- While standing on the same spot, try and bend the body in all possible positions.
- Walk to a puck, bend over, pick up the puck, return to starting point and repeat.
- While standing try to stand on 1 foot, then the other.
- Walk and then glide on 2 feet.
- Take a puck in your hand and throw it ahead of you; go to it; pick it up and repeat the exercise until you have crossed the width of the rink.
- Walk on the ice.
- The coach spreads pucks all around on the other side of the ice. Walk to where the pucks are, by stepping over the sticks laid on the ice. See how many pucks you can collect.
- Put hurdles on the ice (24-28"/60-70 cm in height) get the skaters to pass under hurdles to go and collect the pucks (this forces them to bend the knees).
- Combine the going over the sticks and under the hurdles, to provide a new challenge.
- Introduce the tennis ball. Start by having skaters pass the ball from hand to hand while walking across the width of the arena.
- Try to do the same thing while skating backwards for a short period of time (to prevent boredom and frustration).
  - Develop the glide by trying to pass the ball from hand to hand as you stride.
  - Introduce the bouncing of the ball while walking or gliding across the ice.
  - Skate across the ice skating under and over hurdles of different height ranging from 4-28"/10-70 cm.
  - Skate backwards by passing the ball from hand to hand.
  - Skate backwards by trying to move a puck between your feet.
  - Skate forward by passing a puck between your feet.
  - Skate forward passing the puck between your feet and the ball from hand to hand. • Skate while passing the puck from 1 foot to the other.
  - Skate while bouncing the ball from hand to hand at the same time as you move from 1 foot to the other.
  - Skate, passing the ball from hand to hand as you skate from 1 foot to the other.
  - Skate, passing the puck between the feet and the ball from hand to hand while skating forward.
  - Same exercise as above but backwards.
  - Put up some hurdles – try to jump over (4"/10 cm) some and slide under others (16"/40 cm).
  - To increase the level of difficulty, add low hurdles, asking the skaters to first step over them while bouncing the ball on the ice.
  - Spread pucks around the ice – the players move around the ice and pick up the pucks by bending their knees and keeping a straight back. They then put the pucks into the puck bag. This activity works on the

proper skating posture and balance.

- Skate forward and hop over a low hurdle then, as quickly as possible, turn around and catch the ball thrown by a teammate or coaching assistant.
- Same as above but upon landing turn around in the opposite direction.
- Skate forward and hop over the hurdle, then fall in a roll – get up, turn around and catch the ball.
- Same exercise but the other direction (turning around the other way).
- Jump over a hurdle, crouch under the next hurdle then do a slalom around 5 pylons on 1 foot, then jump over the last hurdle and catch the ball as you jump.
- Repeat the same exercise but doing the slalom on the opposite foot.
- Skate forward and stop – as you stop, you will catch the ball thrown to you at the same time as the command.
- Skate backwards – at the command turn around as your the partner throws the ball for you to catch.
- Same exercise but turn around the other way.

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