



Junior Hockey Player Information

Do you have questions about Junior hockey? Are you considering a Junior Hockey career but are wondering what it will be like? The following information has been provided to assist you consider the next steps in your hockey journey.

British Columbia boasts the best Junior Hockey programming available to players in Canada. Our Vernon Vipers have captured back-to-back National Championships and at Junior B we are the best in the west as the Revelstoke Grizzlies and Richmond Sockeyes have brought home the last two Keystone Cup Western (BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Thunder Bay) Championships.

All the best,

BC Hockey

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What is Junior Hockey



Junior Hockey is open to athletes between the ages of 16-20. In British Columbia / Yukon, there are three levels of junior hockey available: Junior B, Junior A and Major Junior.

Junior B

Junior B Hockey in British Columbia falls under the jurisdiction of three leagues. The Kootenay International Hockey League (KIJHL) is composed of teams located in the BC interior. Teams from the lower mainland are part of the Pacific International Junior Hockey League (PIJHL) and teams from Vancouver Island compete in the Vancouver Island Junior Hockey League (VIJHL).

Every year the Junior B champions from each league as well as a host team square off to determine who will win the Cyclone Taylor Cup and be crowned as the BC Champion. The winner of the Cyclone Taylor Cup advances to the Keystone Cup. The Keystone Cup is emblematic of the Western Canadian Junior B Championship.

Junior B is often referred to as a 'feeder league' to the WHL and BCHL. This past season 19 players moved on to the WHL and 63 players moved on to the BCHL.

Junior A

The British Columbia Hockey League (BCHL) is the Junior A league in BC. More players from the BCHL have gone on to play university or college hockey at US and Canadian schools than any other league in Canada. These athletes have gone on to both US and Canadian schools.

There are 10 Junior A leagues across the country who battle to become the national champions and take home the Royal Bank Cup.

Major Junior

The Western Hockey League (WHL) is the Major Junior league located in Western Canada and the Northwestern United States. It is comprised of teams in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Oregon and Washington. The WHL is one of three Major Junior Leagues that fall under the Canadian Hockey League (CHL).

The best teams from each league compete annually for the Memorial Cup, the National Major Junior Championship

Advantages of playing Junior Hockey

:

- a. High calibre of hockey
- b. Scouting opportunities are available through League initiatives (All Star Games, Prospects Games, etc.)
- c. Advanced coaching

What you need to know before signing with a Junior Team

- a. In order to play on a Junior team a player must sign a Hockey Canada registration certificate which is registered by BC Hockey.
- b. Once registered as a member of a team, a player remains a member of that team until he becomes overage for junior hockey, or is released by that team.
- c. The release must be signed by the signing officers of his former team and registered with the BC Hockey office before the player is permitted to register with another team.

Note: when transferring teams it is the responsibility of the Manager of the player's new team to contact his former

team to arrange for the player's release. This is not the responsibility of the player or his parents.

Important Dates

Important Dates to Remember

DECEMBER 1

- Junior A teams are provided with 35 player registration cards at the beginning of the season
- Junior B teams are provided with 45 player registration cards at the beginning of the season
- All Junior teams must cut down their rosters to 25 cards on December 1st.

JANUARY 10

- All Junior teams must cut down to 23 players, all Senior teams to 25.
- Junior teams must return two cards, a combination of released, spoiled or blank cards
- A player released after this date may not register with another team in the current season.

JANUARY 25

- Final date to register import players

FEBRUARY 10

- Final date for player registration (Note: player cannot be an import and must have been released by January 10)

Residence Rules/Imports

Residence Rules / Imports

Any player residing within British Columbia who turns 16 prior to December 31 of the current season is eligible to register with a Junior team. Junior teams are allowed to register players from outside BC but are limited to eight "imports" signed in any season. An import player carries his import status for only one season. If an import player elects to register with a BC Hockey team in the following year, he will not be deemed as an import.



Try-Outs / Player Rights

The regulations governing try-outs with Junior teams are subject to change within Hockey Canada and BC Hockey, on a year to year basis, but it is important to keep in mind that in order to avoid any difficulties or be exposed to possible tampering violations all players must acquire a letter of permission to skate from their last registered Junior team before attending a Junior try-out.

What happens if I don't make the team?

Should a player be unsuccessful in making the team for which he is trying out, he must return to his last registered team if still of age, and obtain a new letter of permission to try out with another club, or have his current letter extended. Once joining a new team, he must sign a new Hockey Canada registration card, and is subject to the same conditions outlined above.

There are occasions when a player's release is automatic:

- a. When a player moves to another province or country with his parents.
- b. When a player does not register on a Hockey Canada team for a period of one year or more.
- c. When a player becomes over-age for the division in which he last registered.

Who do I play for, where can I try-out?

A player is considered to be a member of his resident minor hockey association, but Junior Hockey teams do not have a determined "draw zone" within the province of BC, which means that BC resident players may try out for any Junior A or B team registered with BC Hockey. The WHL conducts an annual player draft which determines where a player may try out within their league.

Player Rights - Approval Process

Any player aggrieved for any reason as a result of a decision pertaining to his eligibility to play, a decision of his team not to release him, or a suspension he may feel unwarranted (over 6 games) has the right of appeal to the Association's Board of Directors.

FAQs - Player/Parent

When registering in junior hockey, there are numerous questions that arise from a parental and player perspective. We have outlined some of the more frequently posed questions and answered them in order to assist you.

Player - FAQs

1. What are the ramifications of signing a Hockey Canada card?

Once a player signs a Hockey Canada card with a junior team he will remain a member of that team until such time as he is released by that team.

2. Should you require in writing any understandings arrived at before signing a card?

Yes, it is always advisable that any commitments given to you before signing a card be committed in writing and signed by an authorized person from that team.

3. How much ice-time can the player expect in his first year of Junior hockey?

Junior hockey is not "equal time" hockey. The amount of ice time a player receives at this level is governed by his abilities. DO NOT ask assurances that your son will play Power Play or Penalty kill. No team can make such a commitment over the long term.

4. What is your team policy regarding releases?

Each team's policy will differ, make sure you know this information up front.

5. Does your League support any special events to draw attention to the League and its players?

Policy in this area differs from League to League; some Leagues sponsor SHOWCASE and ALL STAR games, as well as College days to maximize exposure opportunity for players.

6. How does your team maintain contact with Scouts?

Find out if the team does regular mailings on behalf of its players to the WHL and Universities.

7. Who do I contact if I am asked to participate in anything I am uncomfortable doing or against my personal moral code?

BC Hockey annually appoints a Harassment Advisor who can assist any participant with harassment and abuse issues. The Harassment Advisor can be contacted at ha@bchockey.net. Many teams also have a chaplain program that is available to players.

Parent - FAQs

1. What can a team provide a player financially without violating rules or regulations?

A team can provide a player with equipment, financial assistance for travel and education. If the player must relocate then room and board are reasonable compensation as well.

2. Who pays the release fees?

A team acquiring a player's rights is required to pursue his release from his former team. Parents should not get involved in this process. It is the responsibility of his new team to obtain and compensate his former team for his release if required.

3. What is the rate of coach turnover?

Study the coaching turnover rate with the team. It could reflect on the stability of the organization.

4. How involved are parents required to become in the fund raising process?

Most Junior teams raise all their own money. You may be required to help out from time to time. Find out ahead of time so you can budget time and energy.

Insurance

Participants should review or download the entire Safety Requires Teamwork / Safety For All booklet

The document includes:

- Safety For All: A Guide to understanding Bullying, Harassment and Abuse for Parents and Guardians
- Safety Requires Teamwork: An information guide to Hockey Canada's Risk Management and National Insurance