



Hurling/Camogie

Key Stage 1

BEGINNER Movement

It is important that the players are familiar with holding the hurling stick and are able to move freely while holding it. This section develops these basic skills.

Introduction

Demonstrate to the players how to hold a hurling stick and how to move a ball on the ground with the stick. Give each player a ball and a stick. Allow the players to move within the area, using the stick to move the ball along and encourage them to keep the ball close.

Game: Attack and Defend

Mark out a square area with cones. Give each player a ball and a stick. Explain to the players that they must move their ball around the area using the stick only. While doing this, the players must also try to knock another player's ball out of the area. If they do this, that player is out. Therefore, it is important to defend their own ball while at the same time attacking another player's ball to knock it out of the area. The last person in the area with their ball is the winner.

INTERMEDIATE Ground Passing

When the ball is on the ground in hurling, the players can pass the ball to a teammate by striking it along the ground to the other player. This skill requires hand-eye co-ordination.

Introduction

Put the players into pairs with a stick each and a ball between two. Place the players a small distance apart initially. Ask them to practise hitting the ball along the ground to the other player. If necessary, the players can stop the ball with their stick first before striking it back.

Game: Hit the Target

This game develops the player's ability to pass the ball accurately to a teammate. Set out various targets for the players to aim at. Explain to the players that the different targets are worth different points, for example a target that is far away is worth more points. Then allow the players to take turns striking the targets with a set number of balls. The player who scores the most points is the winner.

ADVANCED Hockey Style Game

Players have been using the skills to move the ball and pass the ball along the ground. Now the players are ready to combine these skills and attempt a game using these ground skills only.

Game: Hockey!

Select teams of four players. Set out a rectangular area with a football or Gaelic net or a rectangular board at each end. Explain to the players that they can only move the ball with their stick. The aim of the game is to pass the ball to their teammates and work towards the other team's goal. When the player is close enough, by hitting a ground shot they can try and score a point for their team. One team will be scoring in one net and the other towards the other net.



General

- Use a flat, hard playing surface.
- Ensure the adult to player ratio is appropriate so that every player has a chance to be involved.
- Divide players with difficulties evenly between teams.
- Remind players that there is a mixture of abilities on the court and it is important not to run into each other.
- Allow wheelchair users and those with difficulties and impairments more time.
- Make sure that tackling is restricted to appropriate players and make a rule that others can only hold onto the ball for a certain length of time.
- Ensure inclusion by introducing a rule that every player must receive the ball before the team can score.

Physical Disability

- Reduce the size of the pitch for players with mobility difficulties.
- Lower the cross bar, if necessary.
- Allow the player to use a hurling stick with a shorter handle and larger foot to help them control the ball.
- Use a softer or lighter ball instead of a sliptar (hurling ball).
- Allow wheelchair users to:
 - take part by catching and throwing a ball;
 - lift the ball and carry it a certain distance or length of time before passing to a teammate;
 - throw the ball instead of striking with the hurl.
- If several wheelchair users are playing, they may need to use a bigger ball.

Hard of Hearing or Deaf

- Demonstrate the game using a sign language familiar to the player.
- Use a visual sign to show that game time has started or stopped, e.g. a flag or "time out" sign.

Sight Impaired or Blind

- For players with minor visual impairments use a brightly coloured ball that contrasts with the playing surface.
- Ensure that team bibs clearly contrast with each other.
- Make sure that cones and equipment marking the boundaries of the playing area are brightly coloured and clearly contrast with the playing surface itself.
- Use an audible ball (ball that makes a sound) with players who have a serious visual impairment.
- Allow the player to use a hurling stick with a shorter handle and larger foot to help them control the ball.
- Allow an adult or 'seeing' player to guide them around the pitch using directions or a hand on their shoulder.
- Allow an adult or peer to guide the player around the playing area using directions or a hand on their shoulder.

Useful Links

Ulster GAA

ulster.gaa.ie/coaching-old/special-needs



Hurling/Camogie

Key Stage 2

BEGINNER

Carrying Ball (Sliotar)

In hurling, it is vital that a player can carry a ball by balancing it on the end of their stick. This section helps develop this skill.

Introduction

Give each player a stick and a ball. Demonstrate how to hold the stick and where to balance the ball on the stick. Ask players to attempt to balance the ball on the stick while standing still, then while walking, running etc.

Game: Tidy the Toxic Factory (Using a Hurling Stick)

Scatter different colours of small balls over the area. Place buckets (matching the colour of the balls) in the corners of the area. Give each player a stick. Explain to the group that they are workers in the toxic factory and they need to get rid of the toxic waste, but they cannot touch the waste. Therefore, they must use the sticks to carry the toxic waste. Then explain that when the whistle blows, the players must run around the area and collect each ball and place it in the correct bucket. When the floor has been cleared, the activity is over. If the players are capable, you can show them how to lift the ball using the 'jab' lift.

INTERMEDIATE

Striking and Catching

To make a pass out of the hands in hurling or strike a ball towards the goal, it is important that the players can hit the ball accurately in the air.

Introduction

Demonstrate to the players how to strike a ball by dropping the ball to a height to be hit on the volley. Give the players plenty of opportunities to develop this skill. Allow the players to work in pairs and practise hitting the ball to each other and ask players to catch the ball.

Game: Catch a Point

Divide the players into two teams. Explain to the players that to gain a point, they must pass the ball in the air to a teammate. If their teammate catches the ball cleanly without it touching the ground, then that is a point. Players from one team are not allowed to tackle players from the other team, they can only intercept a ball in the air or a dropped ball. After a set length of time, the team with the most points are the winners. (If players are able, then perhaps you could demonstrate a hand pass and introduce this into the game.)

ADVANCED

Game

Players have now gained the basic skills to play a simplified game of hurling.

Game

Divide the group into teams of five or six players. This will allow the players to have more opportunities to run with the ball and more chances to pass and catch the ball. Use an area of appropriate size for the hurling pitch depending on the group's ability. Encourage the keepers to change so that everyone has a turn in nets. When the game starts, encourage the players to lift the ball immediately and avoid them moving the ball on the ground only. If some players are having difficulties with moving with the ball on the stick, allow them to move without being tackled (but they must pass after a certain length of time). The same applies for passing. If players are having difficulty with passing, encourage them to drop the ball and hit it on the ground. If some players are more able, limit how far they can travel before passing and shooting. Ensure the time set for each half is suitable for the age and ability of the players. Explain that a goal gets the team three points and an over the bar gets the team one point.



General

- Use a flat, hard playing surface.
- Ensure the adult to player ratio is appropriate so that every player has a chance to be involved.
- Divide players with difficulties evenly between teams.
- Remind players that there is a mixture of abilities on the court and it is important not to run into each other.
- Allow wheelchair users and those with difficulties and impairments more time.
- Make sure that tackling is restricted to appropriate players and make a rule that others can only hold onto the ball for a certain length of time.
- Ensure inclusion by introducing a rule that every player must receive the ball before the team can score.

Physical Disability

- Reduce the size of the pitch for players with mobility difficulties.
- Lower the cross bar, if necessary.
- Allow the player to use a hurling stick with a shorter handle and larger foot to help them control the ball.
- Use a softer or lighter ball instead of a sliptar (hurling ball).
- Allow wheelchair users to:
 - take part by catching and throwing a ball;
 - lift the ball and carry it a certain distance or length of time before passing to a teammate;
 - throw the ball instead of striking with the hurl.
- If several wheelchair users are playing, they may need to use a bigger ball.

Hard of Hearing or Deaf

- Demonstrate the game using a sign language familiar to the player.
- Use a visual sign to show that game time has started or stopped, e.g. a flag or "time out" sign.

Sight Impaired or Blind

- For players with minor visual impairments use a brightly coloured ball that contrasts with the playing surface.
- Ensure that team bibs clearly contrast with each other.
- Make sure that cones and equipment marking the boundaries of the playing area are brightly coloured and clearly contrast with the playing surface itself.
- Use an audible ball (ball that makes a sound) with players who have a serious visual impairment.
- Allow the player to use a hurling stick with a shorter handle and larger foot to help them control the ball.
- Allow an adult or 'seeing' player to guide them around the pitch using directions or a hand on their shoulder.

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Key Stage 3

Game Development

Introduction

Hurling is a complex and difficult sport for young players to grasp. The sport requires great balance and hand-eye co-ordination. A player should not take part in a full 15-a-side game until they are comfortable with most aspects of the game. Smaller games may be more suitable as they will ensure the players receive more touches of the ball (sliotar) and allow them to practise the skills with more time.

Inclusion and Accessibility

While we would like all pupils to be included in Physical Education along with the others in their class, this is not always possible when it comes to playing the full version of the sport.

If a pupil has physical disabilities that mean they cannot safely take part in the game along with the other pupils in their class, then this pupil should be given the opportunity to take part in other physical activity. For example, a class could be split into groups, with some pupils practising the drills and others playing the game. The smaller group could practise the skills needed for the sport, or for the disabled version of the sport, alongside the rest of the class. These smaller groups would work in rotation, giving everyone an opportunity to play the sport and practise their skills.

Alternatively, some pupils may prefer to do a physical activity that they are particularly interested in, for example practising the drills needed for a sport they play outside of school.

Tips

- Divide the group into teams of five or six players. This will allow the players to have more touches of the ball and more space in the area. Then gradually increase the size of the pitch and the number of players in each team.
- Use an area of appropriate size for the hurling pitch, depending on the group's ability.
- Encourage the keepers to change so that everyone has a turn in nets.
- Ensure the time set for each half is suitable for the age and ability of the players.
- If players are having difficulties with some aspects of the game, call a timeout and give them a demonstration.
- Relax some of the rules and allow players to lift the ball off the ground, throw the ball etc. until the players have gained more experience. Perhaps introduce these rules gradually.
- Ensure all players are included in the play and ensure a coach is on the field to help with any players who are finding it difficult to grasp certain concepts of the game.
- Ensure players are wearing protective head gear and ensure the players are careful when tackling one another with their sticks.



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