

ACTIVITY: Bench hockey

INCLUSION 2024

Winter Sports in the Inclusive Sports Programme

BACKGROUND

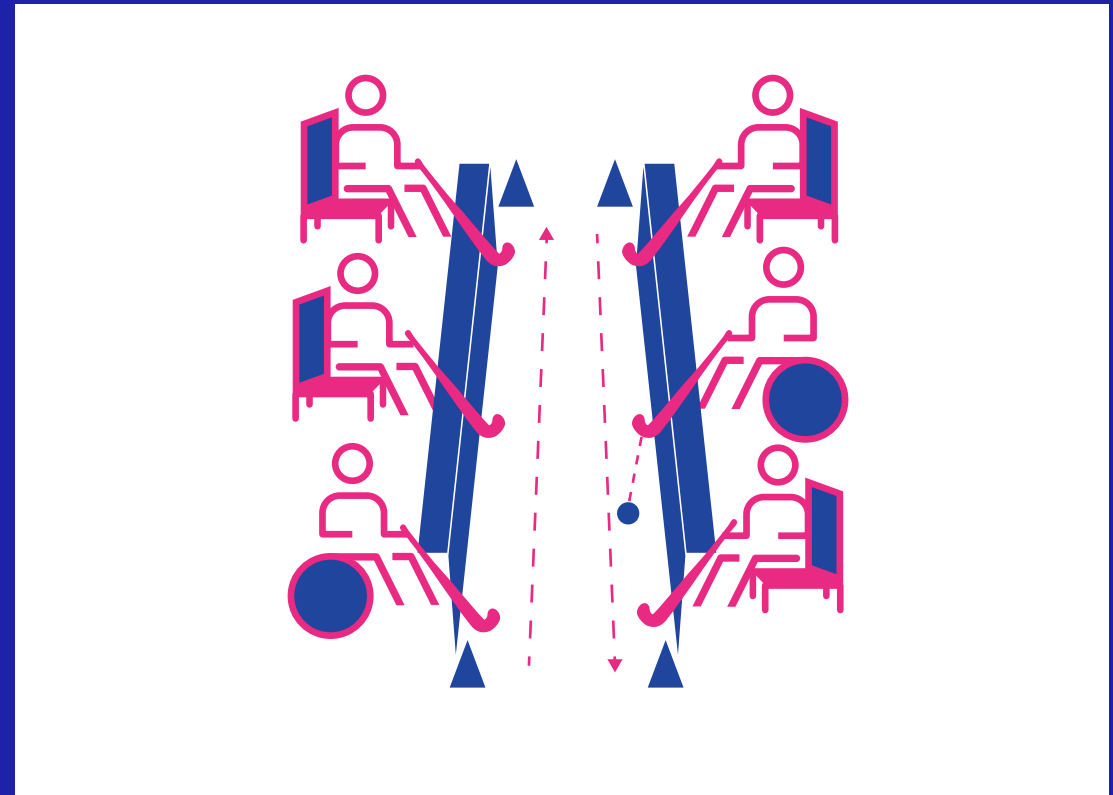
Ice hockey has been a major sport in the Winter Olympics since 1920. Sledge hockey, played at the Paralympics, became part of the programme in 1994. This inclusive hockey game is based upon ice versions but can be played anywhere.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Indoor or outdoor surface.
- Two benches.
- Marker discs or cones to create goals.
- Hockey sticks or equivalent.
- Puck (as in sledge hockey) or substitute; see STEP for equipment ideas.
- Lightweight hockey ball, air flow ball or other alternative balls.
- Chairs for each player.

HOW TO PLAY

- Place two benches on their sides, facing each other, about one metre apart, creating a channel between them.
- Make goals, using marker discs or cones, at either end of the channel.
- Bench hockey works best in teams of 3 to 6.
- Players on the same side all shoot the same way.
- Players should change position after every 3-5 scores.
- Frequent scores in this fast-moving game motivate the players to keep going.



THINK ABOUT

Playing the ball with a controlled, pushing action; no wild swinging of the stick!

Use the **STEP** adaptation tool to ensure that players of all abilities can participate

SPACE

- Increase the width of goal markers to increase success rate; make the goals smaller to challenge the players.
- Make more space between each player to stretch the game (or add another two benches).

TASK

- Introduce a goalkeeper at each end to make it harder to score.
- Use a different kind of target, for example, a skittle, to increase difficulty.

EQUIPMENT

- Instead of a puck, try a lightweight hockey ball, air flow ball or other alternative balls.
- Try different size balls; larger, more dense balls (like a sponge ball) or bigger pucks (like a frisbee) may prolong the rallies; a smaller, harder ball may require faster reactions.
- Use a sound ball to help with visual tracking.

PEOPLE

- Make sure players rotate regularly to play in different positions.
- Note that some players may prefer or need to play backhanded and may have to sit in a specific way to make this easier.



DEVELOPING TACTICS

Bench hockey enables players who have mobility or balance impairments to play alongside non-disabled peers.

- Keep the stick in contact with the floor to make sure the ball does not slip underneath and into your goal.
- Some players can try a standing version of this game; play the ball with control along the line!
- Try placing players from each team on opposite sides of the channel to help develop more advanced stick manipulation skills.



SAFETY

- All sticks must stay below knee level.
- Keep hands and feet away from playing area.