FEILD HOCKEY

HOW TO PLAY ?

Nothing is more satisfying than whacking a small, hard ball with a large field hockey stick. In field hockey, you also get to dribble that ball, flick it, roll it, and more. To start playing, you need some basic gear, including a stick and a mouthguard. Study the basic techniques and rules of the game so you can begin playing!

Instructions

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1 Get a field hockey stick and ball.

•There are plenty of brands, so shop around and find a stick that feels comfortable in your hands. A good stick will come up about to your hip when you hold its blade flat against the ground. Play around with the stick, taking some time to push around the small, hard ball used in field hockey games.[1]  
• The average weight of a field hockey stick is about 21 oz (600 g). Many forwards choose lighter sticks that are easier to maneuver. Many players also carry at least 2 sticks in case they play different positions.  
• Every stick has a flat side and a rounded side. The flat side is the part you use to strike the ball. The ball is plastic and about the size of a golf ball.

2 Purchase shin guards and a mouth guard, and goggles.

• These are the basic protective tools every field hockey player needs. The shin guards are similar to soccer shin guards but offer a little more ankle protection. You can wear socks underneath them to make them more comfortable. Mouthguards always tend to feel uncomfortable, but they are the most important protective gear available. Goggles help protect you from flying balls and high sticks. They protect the sides and front of your face.[2]  
• You can get gear online or at most sporting goods stores. If you have soccer shin guards, they can be a good starting point as you learn the game.  
• Goalies also need a lightweight arm and leg padding as well as a caged helmet. Most players don't start off in goal, so consider learning the game as an outfield player before you decide on becoming a goalie.  
• Gloves are optional pieces of equipment. Many players like wearing them for additional protection.

3 Wear field hockey cleats while playing.

• Field hockey matches are played on grass or turf like football, soccer, and other outdoor sports. Field hockey shoes have small, rubber cleats on the bottom that keep you from slipping while you run. Choose a pair of shoes that fit you but don't feel restrictive.[3]  
• If you have soccer cleats, start with those. The cleat studs are longer but still provide plenty of traction on the field. When you get more involved with field hockey, you can then choose specialty field hockey cleats.

4 Hold the field hockey stick with your right hand at the bottom of the grip.

• Turn the stick so that the flat end faces away from you. Place your left hand over the top end of the stick, pointing your thumb down towards the curled end at the bottom. Position your right hand around the bottom of the grip, which is the black or white rubber or leather material ending about halfway down the stick.[4]  
• This basic grip is great for dribbling and controlling the ball.  
• Roughly align your thumb with the curl at the end of the stick. Wrap your fingers around the grip, but be prepared to move them on occasion as you play.  
• There is no such thing as a “lefty” stick. You can switch your hand positioning, but most left-handed players hold their sticks the same way as right-handed players.

5 Crouch down with your knees bent and your back straight.

• Crouching is the normal position you hold while playing field hockey. Bend your body at the waist, pushing your stick out in front of you. Keep the curled end of the stick firmly on the ground with the flat end facing outwards. Make sure you keep your chest up so you are able to see the field ahead of you.[5]  
• Avoid leaning forward. Bend at the waist and keep your knees bent a little so you don't injure your back.  
• You keep this crouched position most of the time on the field. The only time you stand up straight is if you're sprinting after a ball or standing in place.

6 Stand with your left foot forward, pointing towards the ball.

• Aim for the ball, aligning your left foot with it. Place your right foot behind you for support. Keep the ball about a stick's length away from your body.[6]  
• Try to keep the ball in the same position relative to your body at all times. Avoid letting the ball get too close or too far from your body, or else it will be hard to control. If it gets away from you, move towards it instead of bending your back.