



Hockey Canada Rule Changes, Additions or Amendments for 2024-2026

This list is not meant to replace the rulebook, but to give you an easy reference of what has changed from the 2022-24 rule book to the new 2024-26 book. Remember, the most up to date rulebook is in the rule book section under the “HWRD Resources→Rule Books” on wpgrefs.com.

This list highlights the changes most likely to affect your games. Unfortunately, Hockey Canada has not highlighted the changes in the current rule book, so work together to review your rules and be up to date.

Rule Changes

Here are the primary changes to the rules that affect your games. All rules listed are for the 24-26 rule book not the 22-24 rule book. Changes are in bold.

- **Rule 2.2(a):** Teams may have a maximum of 20 players in uniform **for any game** (up to 18 skaters and 2 goaltenders).
 - **What changed?** In previous seasons Junior, Senior, and U18AAA were permitted to have 20 players. All other levels had 19 players.
 - **Why?** To bring consistency across all levels.
- **Rule 3.6(d):** When a goaltender loses their helmet, facial protector, blocker, trapper, **or skate blade**, the play will be stopped immediately, unless there is an imminent scoring chance that does not pose a safety risk to the goaltender?
 - **What changed?** Skate blade was added.
 - **Why?** A goaltender limping without a skate blade is not safe.
- **Rule 6.3(e)(i):** Any stoppage of play occurring in the end-zone as the result of the puck going out of play or being unplayable will result in the ensuing face-off taking place in that end-zone at the face-off spot nearest to where the puck was last legally played, **regardless of whether the defending or attacking team causes the stoppage. Note 1: Notwithstanding the previous, Referees must penalize any player of either team who deliberately shoots, bats, or throws the puck outside the playing surface, as per Rule 10.1 (ii) — Delay of Game.**
 - **What changed?** Two things. First, previously this rule read “does not give the offending team an advantage.” Second, this rule now emphasizes the need to penalize any player who purposefully causes a stoppage. This is not a rule change, but rather, emphasis.
 - **Why?** This rule change aims to reduce debate about correct face-off location.
 - **Also note:** 6.3(d) and 6.3(e) have switched from 22-24 to the current rule book. In 22-24, 6.3(d) was about end zone face-offs while 6.3(e) was neutral zone. Now (d) = neutral zone and (e) = endzone.
- **Rule 7.1(a):** A **double Minor penalty** will be assessed to a player who commits any of the following acts with a minimal degree of violence and without using such an

action to gain an advantage or inflict punishment or injury: pulls an opponent's hair; grabs the facial protector, helmet, chin strap, or throat protector of an opponent; head-butts or attempts to head-butt an opponent.

- **What changed?** Previously, these acts could be penalized with a minor penalty. Now, these acts are penalized with, at minimum, a double minor penalty.
 - **Why?** This change creates consistency with the head contact rule.
- **Rule 8.7:** Clipping, also known as a “low hit”, is where a player uses their body to make contact **below an opponent's hips**. This may take the form of a player lowering their body prior to making a check or being checked. Players may not crouch down to avoid being bodychecked.
 - **What changed?** Previously, clipping was defined as “below an opponent's knees.” In 24-26, clipping is defined as “below an opponent's hips.”
 - **Why?** This change simplifies the judgement of an official and becomes more affective at reducing checks that result in head-over-heels flips.
- **Rule 8.8(c):** A Match penalty, at the discretion of the referee, based on the degree of violence of impact (including the impact with the ice, **goal, or boards**), may be assessed to any player who slew-foots an opponent.
 - **What changed?** Previously, the brackets read “including the impact with the ice” In 24-26, “...goal, or boards” were added.
 - **Why?** To clarify the definition of “violence of impact” to include the slew-foot, itself, as well as impact with the ice, goal, or boards.
- **Rule 10.2(a):** A hand pass occurs when a player makes **a deliberate attempt** to stop, knock down, or push the puck with their hand, and a teammate in the neutral or attacking zone gains control of the puck. This includes when a hand pass occurs and the puck deflects off any person or object, prior to the teammate gaining possession and control of the puck.
 - **What changed?** Previously, the wording implied that hand passes were deliberate but did not specify “a deliberate attempt”.
 - **Why?** To clarify that hand passes require a deliberate action, rather than accidental, by the offending player.
- **Rule 10.5(a):** A minor penalty will be assessed to any player who throws, shoots, **or kicks** a stick or any other object in the neutral or attacking zone. **Note 1: Discarding a broken stick, as per Rule 3.2 (a), will not be penalized unless it interferes with the play or is done in such a way that poses a risk to other participants.**
 - **What changed?** “...or kicks...” and “note 1” were both added for 24-26.
 - **Why?** This is both clarification regarding the movement of items on the ice by adding “...or kicks...” and “note 1”.

Hockey Winnipeg's “Special Rule” (SR) Changes, Additions, or Amendments

This list is not meant to replace the SRs in the HW rulebook, but to give you an easy reference of what has changed from the 2023-24 rule book to the new 2024-25 Hockey

Winnipeg book. Remember, the most up to date rulebook is in the rule book section under the “HWRD Resources→Rule Books” on wpgrefs.com.

- **SR-1 #4:** For all U9 hockey games, the rink divider shall be set across the centre ice line in accordance with Hockey Canada and Hockey Manitoba U9 hockey guidelines.
 - **What changed?** There was no practical change. This has been the case for several seasons, but now it is written down.
 - **Why?** There were issues with U9 teams moving the dividers to the blue line. This addition gives a clearly written rule.
- **SR-5 #1d:** In playoff hockey, overtime shall be played until a winner is determined.
 - **What changed?** This has been in place for several seasons. No change, practically.
 - **Why?** Clarification.
- **SR-13:** The no-body-checking rule shall be implemented in **U18 A1 NBC, U18 A2 NBC, U15 A1 NBC & U15 A2 NBC** all U13 and below, and Female divisions.
 - **What changed?** Previously, Hockey Winnipeg included “A” level body checking at only the U18A1 and U15A1 levels. In 2024-2025, there will now be separate divisions for body checking or no body checking at all U18 and U15 levels. These different divisions are differentiated by NBC for the no body checking levels.
 - **Why?** Clarification of which levels are no body checking.