

Rec League Program Information & FAQ's



Our Philosophy- To develop great people through hockey and build an environment that reflects fun, pride, teamwork, sportsmanship, and integrity. Our program follows USA Hockey Models for developing hockey skill and life lessons throughout the program.

Our youth programs are recognized as a [Model Club Association through USA Hockey](#) and we are dedicated to age-specific skill development, in accordance with USA Hockey's American Development Model.

Welcome to the Rec League! With the addition of the Great Park Arena in Irvine, we have split the league geographically into the following divisions: **West (Lakewood & Westminster) - East (Anaheim & Yorba Linda) - South (Great Park Ice) & Poway Rec League.**

*It's all about development-*USA Hockey's age-appropriate, age-specific programming promotes the integration of high-performance cross-ice practices and games into youth hockey. This programming enhances player's skills, creativity, and participation, while also creating a positive environment for every child to play, love, excel and reach their full potential.

What is the goal for The Rinks & Great Park Ice Hockey programs?

As a USA Hockey Model Association, we ultimately want practice and game programming that emphasizes engagement, competition, skill repetitions & FUN. These are the core values of USA Hockey and are the values we will implement into the In-House program.

More Puck Time

One of the biggest emphases of the ADM ([American Development Model](#)) is maximum puck touches. To develop a player's skill, he/she must maximize their puck touches in games, practices, and clinics. While we have done a good job in non-game environments, games still have too much of a gap in skill that results in the stronger players getting all the touches.

Age-Appropriate Training

While all our players are in respective leagues based on birth year, we still have players coming right out of initiation, Learn to Play, essentially less than six months of experience competing with players at the club level with five years' experience.

How does this relate to In-House Rec Hockey?

We want all players to play at the appropriate skill level. Some players may be the same age, but some have skated for 6 years, and some have skated on for 6 months. We believe balancing divisions by skill would enhance players' growth, engagement, competition and allow players to reach their full potential.

Increased Repetitions and Like Competition

Often, we see a clear disinterest from lower-level players because they don't have the ability to make a difference in competition. Rather than rising to the challenge they shut down and lose confidence. We feel having players of like skill level together will result in more puck touches, frequent battles for the puck, hockey decision-making and confidence.

Split Upper/Lower divisions depending on enrollment. How do we decide to place a player in an upper or lower division?

Many factors come into the decision, but the main points are skating, puckhandling, competitiveness, and where the player will be able to have success. If we feel a player will develop better in a certain situation, we will place them appropriately. Things can change and this process will be fluid to allow players to move divisions depending on their skill progression.

The ADM will give your child the *best* opportunity to be successful in hockey over the long run. It's more important to be the best midget player than the best mite or squirt player!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to the Hockey Department.



Rec League FAQ's

- Frequently asked questions to assist with your ice hockey journey-

Q: How many seasons do offer a year and what is the length of season?

A: We currently run three seasons per year Winter/Summer/Fall. Currently we are offering 20 touches 14 games and 6 practice/clinics.

Q: How do I know what division my child plays in?

A: We follow USA Hockey Age Classifications. (See website for details for your current season)

Q: Do boys and girls play on the same team?

A: Yes, all our programming is coed. Although we do offer a girls' program under the lady Ducks.

Q: Where are practices/clinics and games held?

A: The Rinks offers our Youth Rec League in three different divisions:

- East – Anaheim ICE, Yorba Linda ICE
- West – Lakewood ICE, Westminster ICE
- South – Great Park Ice
 - East/West/South division practices and clinics will take place at each league's specific rinks, and games will rotate amongst all the Rinks including Great Park Arena depending on ice availability.
- San Diego, Poway (*Runs independent league*)

Q: May I request to be placed with a specific player or coach?

A: Request are not guaranteed, teams are selected by The Rinks & Great Park hockey departments with a strong emphasis on parity and overall player progression. If you have a special request, you will need to speak with the Hockey Manager from your division.

Q: What is the Draft Skate Evaluation?

A: The Draft Skate is our attempt to evaluate all players and draft teams evenly and competitively within each division. This may be followed up with a jamboree style of games to make final player and team evaluations.

Q: When are practices/clinic and games?

A: Events can take place during the week and on the weekends. If an event is during the week, they usually do not start till after 5pm. Events on the weekend can start at 7am and take place as late as 7pm. Most of our program scheduling happens on the weekends.

Q: How do I know if my child is ready for Rec League Hockey?

A: It's important to have strong fundamentals such as skating and puck handling skills prior to making the jump to league play. If you are unsure of whether your child is ready or not, the hockey department can provide an accurate evaluation to guide you and your child to the Next Steps and the appropriate program.

Q: Do jerseys and socks come with registration?

A: No, the Rinks jerseys and socks are an additional cost. More information can be found on the website or through our hockey department staff.

Q: Do I need a Rinks league jersey?

A: Yes, all players will need to have a Rinks home & away jersey, using another (Jr. Ducks or any other Ducks jersey) jerseys will not be allowed and cannot be used a substitute for a Rinks jersey. You may use your Rinks jerseys season to season.

Q: How do I order the jerseys and socks?

A: All ordering is done online; the Jersey production time is generally 2-3 weeks. More information is posted on the Rec League website with instructions. If you need sizing help you may reach out to your rink's hockey department.

Q: Will my team have individual team practices?

A: Yes, teams will have a combination of practices and skills development clinics depending on ice availability. As a USA Hockey Model Association, we ultimately want practice and game programming that emphasizes engagement, competition, skill repetitions & FUN

Q: Can my child play club and rec league?

A: Yes, However the Hockey Department reserves the right to move players up a level as they see fit. Using rec league to gain added touches is wonderful, playing rec league to pad stats will not be permitted.

Q: Where do I find my child's schedule and team assignment? -What is *Kreezee* and how do I use it?

A: We use *Kreezee* as our scheduling and statistics platform to schedule all games, practices, clinics and record games and player stats. (Except 6U/8U, no statistics are kept from grassroots games).

1. [Kreezee](#)
2. Look for your season, then division
3. Go to schedule
4. Click on team name
5. Go to team schedule on left side again to see full team schedule

Q: How do I know when my child is ready for travel or club hockey?

A: It's not a race. Be sure your player has strong fundamentals, skills, and confidence before putting them in a competitive environment. Our staff can assist you with this evaluation and suggestions. *The All-World Hockey Institute* summer camps are a great way to improve your skills and prepare your child to play more competitive hockey. Our organization offers all the next steps of progression ready for you. (*Jr Ducks, Lady Ducks, OC Hockey Club, Anaheim Ducks High School Hockey and much more*).

Meet our Rinks & Great Park Hockey Management Team. Please feel free to contact our hockey staff for anything you need.

Vince Valles-Hockey Manger: Lakewood, Westminster

vvalles@therinks.com

Lakewood Youth Hockey Coordinator:

Tyler Wilkerson twilkerson@therinks.com

Westminster Youth Hockey Coordinator:

Zealin Cronk zcronk@therinks.com

Jon Mainberger-Hockey Manager: Anaheim, Yorba Linda

jmainberger@therinks.com

Anaheim Youth Hockey Coordinator:

Carlos Rich crich@therinks.com

Yorba Linda Youth Hockey Coordinator:

August Aiken aaiken@therinks.com

Brett Kurtz-Hockey Manager: Great Park

bkurtz@therinks.com

Great Park Youth Hockey Coordinator:

Nick Ganga nganga@therinks.com

Dean Wilson-Hockey Manager: Poway

dwilson@therinks.com

Rick Hutchinson-Director of Hockey: The Rinks & Great Park Ice

rhutchinson@therinks.com