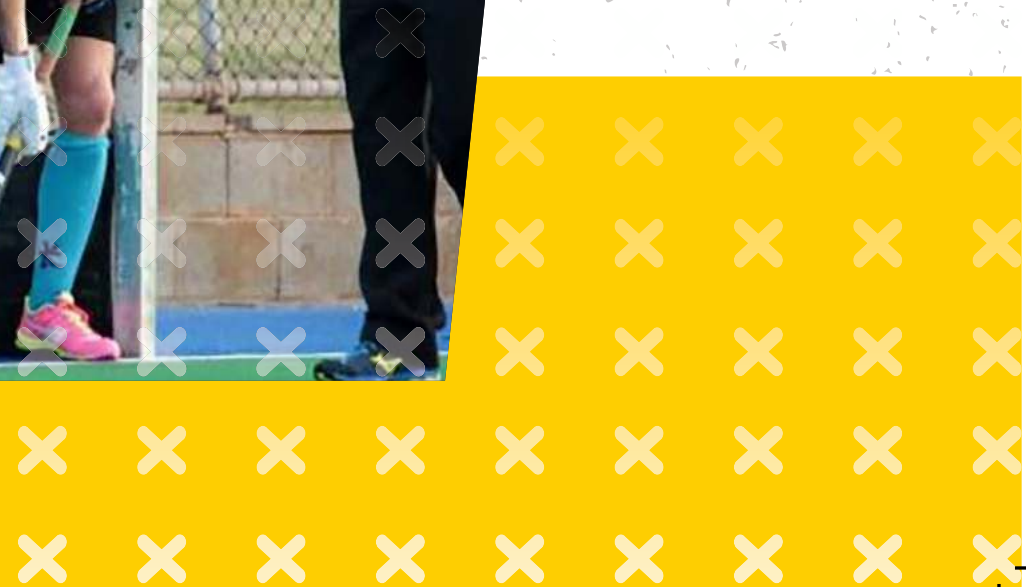


# *How To Umpire Hockey*





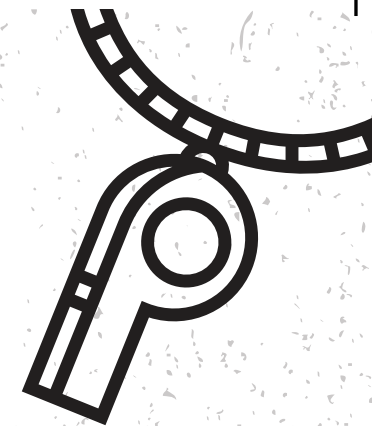
# Contents

<b>Umpires Code of Conduct</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Preparation Prior to Arrival</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Umpire Pre-Match Preparation</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Umpire Pre-Match Discussion</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Umpire Presentation</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Starting a Game</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Positioning &amp; Areas of Control</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Communication &amp; Signals</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Game Management</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Misconduct</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Self Care &amp; Management</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Pathways &amp; Accreditation</b>	<b>15</b>





# Umpires Code of Conduct



- Treat all players with respect at all times
- Accept responsibility for all actions taken
- Exercise reasonable care to prevent injury by ensuring players play within the rules
- Be impartial and maintain integrity in your relationship with other officials, players and coaches
- Be courteous, respectful and open to discussion and interaction
- Be a positive role model in behaviour and personal appearance by maintaining the highest standards of personal conduct and projecting a favourable image of hockey and officiating at all times
- Refrain from any personal abuse towards players
- Show concern and caution towards ill and injured athletes
- Enforce the blood rule and apply procedures regarding ill or injured players according to the rules
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion



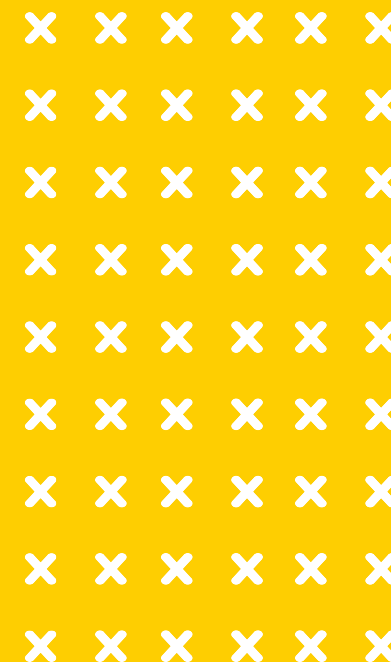
## ***I will...***

- ***Act within the rules and spirit of the game.***
- ***Promote fair play over winning at all cost.***
- ***Encourage and support others.***
- ***Respect officials' and coaches' decisions.***
- ***Thank players, coaches and officials.***



## ***I will not...***

- ***Use bad language or harass or abuse anyone.***
- ***Criticise or ridicule anyone's performance.***
- ***Lose control of my emotions.***
- ***Be dishonest or show unsporting behaviour.***
- ***Be disrespectful***





# Introduction

This booklet provides a guide to assist new and developing hockey umpires. It should be read in conjunction with the current FIH Rules of Hockey and your local association rules and bylaws. This resource provides a 'toolkit' to assist umpires to effectively officiate the rules of the game of hockey.

There are some great resources available to improve your umpiring, such as watching and listening to other umpires, attending umpire briefings, seeking feedback from an umpire mentor or coach and using tools such as video and reflection for self-assessment.

Umpiring hockey can lead to exciting opportunities such as national and international travel for tournaments and result in developing lifelong friendships. Regardless of whether you are going out to umpire your first game or have umpired hockey for years and are looking to improve your performance, it is important to enjoy your umpiring and recognise that you are a necessary part of the game.



# Introduction

Umpires are the 'third team' in a game of hockey and it is important that they work together just like the playing teams do. A game of hockey requires two umpires, with one umpire on each side of the field, or pitch. Umpires don't need to have played hockey, but do need to know the rules of hockey and be fit enough for the game they are umpiring. It is important that the umpires look and act professionally by wearing the correct uniform, being fair and unbiased and performing their role to the best of their ability.



**An umpires' primary role is to make sure the game is safe and enjoyable for the players. Good umpires can improve the standard of the game by:**



**Being prepared**



**Being Fair and Consistent**



**Being in a good position**



**Working together as a team**



**Having a good understanding of the game and rules of hockey**



# Preparation Prior To Arrival

Umpires should prepare for the game just like the players do. You should make sure your fitness and ability suits the game, have the required equipment, know the rules, wear the correct uniform and arrive at least 20 minutes prior to the game start time. Prior preparation prevents poor performance!

## Each Umpire Should Have:



At least one  
pea-less whistle



A stopwatch which  
is NOT a phone



Coloured  
umpiring cards  
(green, yellow  
and red)



Appropriate umpiring  
shirt and footwear



Pen and paper  
to record match  
information



A coin to toss  
before the start  
of the match



*Umpires may find wearing a hat useful to keep the sun out of their eyes. Sunglasses are not recommended as they restrict eye contact with the co-umpire and players.*



# *Umpire Pre-Match Preparation*

There are a number of tasks you should undertake before your match. One of the most important is a pre-match discussion. Just as the teams discuss their strategy and game plan before they take to the field, so should the umpires. It can help to ensure both umpires are consistent in their decision making and may assist to settle any pre-game nerves.

Before the game starts both umpires should do a warm up and check the field and the goals to make sure there is nothing dangerous that could hurt you or the players. Goals should be touching the back of the baseline and should not have holes in the net or anything protruding that could cause injury. Make sure the sidelines are free from obstacles such as sticks, balls and other people, to enable you to safely run outside the field of play when the ball gets close to the sideline.

Umpires are also required to meet the captains and complete a coin toss. The winner of the coin toss will decide either which direction they want to go or whether they want to take the ball first. Captains should be wearing something to help identify them, such as a captains' band or ribbon. Captains are a great way to pass information onto the teams or deal with a player or coaches' bad behaviour during the game, so it is important to know who they are.

Umpires should meet on the field and walk off together at the end of play. Both umpires need to complete and sign the scorecard at the end of each game and may also need to record details such as best players and injuries.



***Before the match it may be helpful to reflect on your performance from previous games, pick out one or two aspects to work on and write them down somewhere, such as the back of your hand, to remind yourself during the game.***

# Umpire Pre-Match Discussion

## Some of the areas to include in your pre-match discussion:

- **Areas of control** - Having a diagram of the field of play can help to clarify which areas each umpire will be making decisions in (see diagram on page 11).
- **Sideline / general areas of assistance** - Are there areas where you would like your co-umpire to provide assistance, such as balls exiting the far side of the circle or attacking sideline free hits on the far side of your 23?
- **Positioning** - How far down the sideline/infield will you go to assist your co-umpire?
- **Timing** - Which umpire is going to keep time and blow their whistle to start and finish the match?
- **Coat hangers** - What happens if both umpires signal a free hit but in the opposite directions? Establish a quick and easy way to decide which umpire will keep their decision, such as using the halfway line (i.e. if the breach occurs in my attacking half I will keep my decision and my co-umpire will change theirs). Ensure both teams have time to set up once the direction of the free hit has been communicated to the players.
- **Game management** - What strategies are you going to use to manage the game? Be proactive in areas such as players being five metres, free hit placement and rolling free hits. Discuss how you can make use of your whistle and cards to control the match.
- **Dangerous play (tackles, raised and lofted balls)** - How are you going to manage bad tackles (look at position, intent and timing)? Would you like assistance with deciding whether overheads are dangerous or not, depending on where they are lifted from or going to land? What will be acceptable in terms of raised/dangerous balls for the level you're umpiring (ALWAYS think danger, not height).
- **Assistance signals / communication** - How will you communicate to your co-umpire what you give a card for? How will you signal to them if you see an infringement that they miss? Will you only signal if they're looking at you, or if you're prepared to blow the infringement? Note: You should NEVER blow in your co-umpires circle.
- **Penalty Corners** - What are you looking for as the disengaged umpire (break/height/stroke)? What will you do if an attacker breaks and the engaged umpire doesn't see it? Where will you stand for the penalty corner and when will you move back to your sideline? How will you signal to your co-umpire if you have seen an infringement they've missed, or if the first hit at goals is too high?
- **5 metres / knocking the ball away / free hit placement** - What standards are you expecting and how are you going to manage it? Will your management be different if something happens in the first five minutes as opposed to the last five minutes of the game?
- **Dissent** - How are you going to manage players questioning decisions and backchat?



For most of these areas it does not matter what you decide, as long as you are BOTH consistent in your decision making throughout the match.

# Umpire Presentation

Presentation is an important aspect of gaining the respect of the players, coaches and spectators. By looking the part and being confident in your decision making you will help to 'sell' your decisions, even if you are nervous and unsure! Fake it until you make it.

## Good presentation includes:

- **Body language** - Stand tall and be confident and enthusiastic. Keep your eyes on the game and don't look down, particularly after you make a decision. Ensure you can always make eye contact with your co-umpire and NEVER turn your back on the play, even after a goal is scored.
- **Uniform** - Umpires should wear the same colour shirts which identify them as umpires. A hat can help to keep the sun or rain out of your eyes. Good shoes are also important.
- **Signals** - Appear confident by looking up and having straight arms when you signal.
- **Whistle** - As well as using signals, your whistle is an important tool for communicating with the players and your co-umpire. It is important that you blow your whistle with confidence and loud enough so the players and co-umpire can hear it. Varying the tone, length and volume will help your whistle 'talk' to the players about what you want and expect.
- **Giving cards** - Umpires should carry a green, yellow and red card to deal with serious infringements and misconduct. When giving a card to a player make sure the card is held high so the other players and your co-umpire can see it and then give a signal to indicate what the card was given for.





# Starting A Game



**To start a game of hockey umpires need to do the following:**

- Call in the captains for the coin toss to determine the direction of play and who will take possession of the ball when the game starts.
- Make sure the captains are wearing something which identifies them as the captain.
- Ensure both teams have filled in the scorecard.
- Make sure there is a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 11 players on the field.
- Each team must play with either:
  - a. a goalkeeper with goalkeeping privileges wearing full protective equipment comprised of at least protective headgear, leg guards and kickers and a different coloured shirt; or
  - b. teams are permitted to play with 11 field players; no player has goalkeeping privileges or wears a different colour shirt; no player may wear protective headgear except a face mask when defending a penalty corner or a penalty stroke; all team players wear the same colour shirt.
- Have one team provide a ball which is in good condition for the game.
- Know which umpire will keep time and blow their whistle to start and finish each period of play.

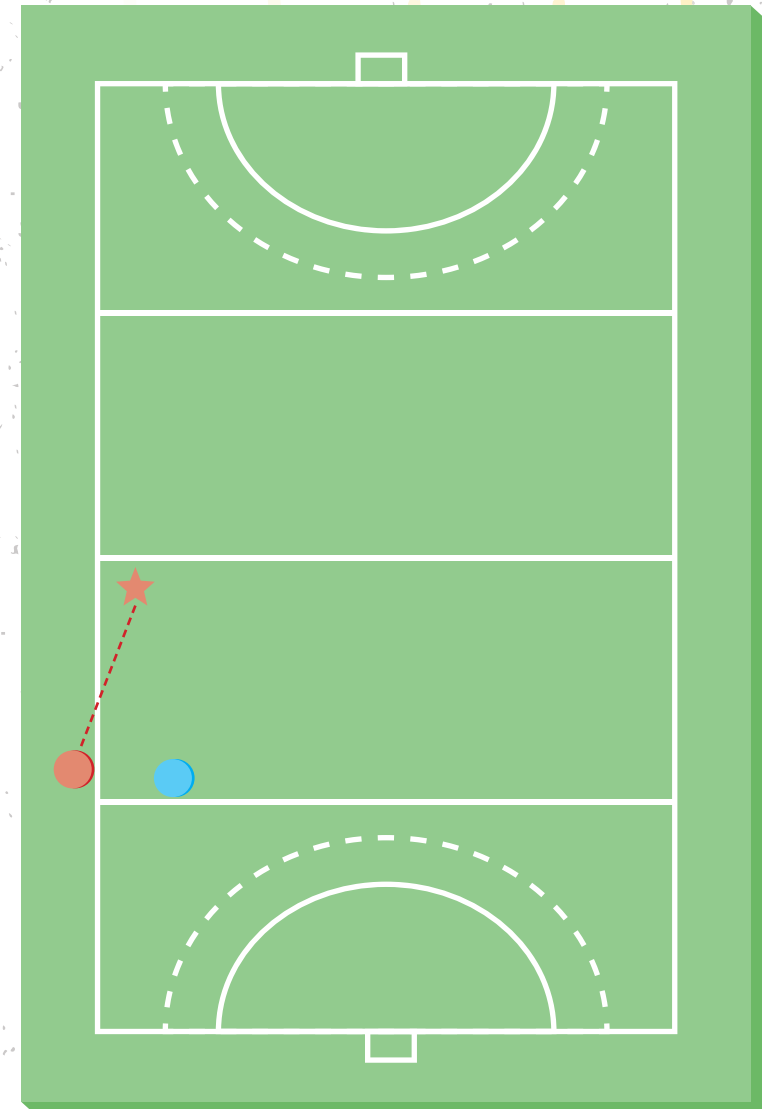


# Positioning & Areas Of Control

## Tips to help with umpire positioning:

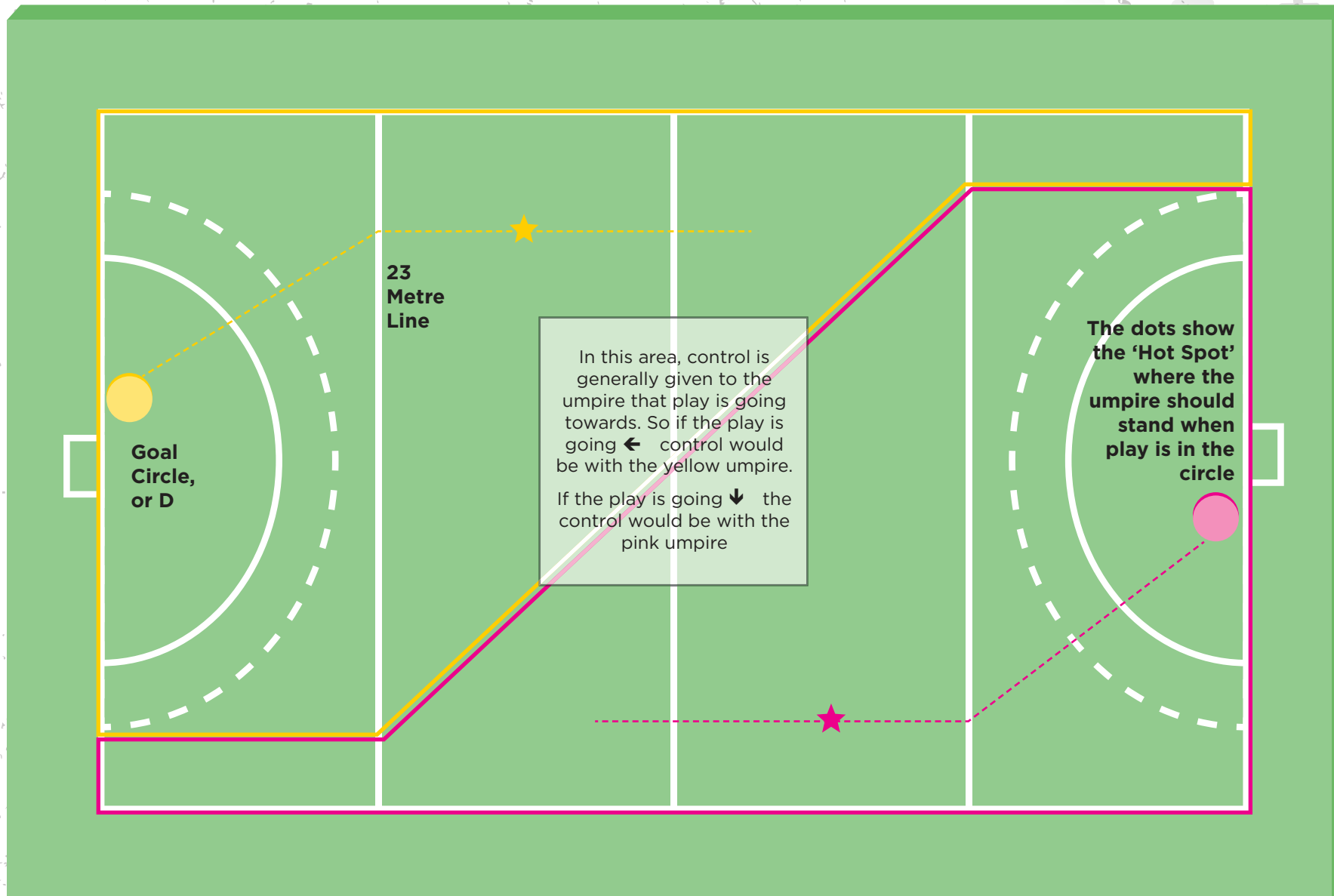
- The umpires should position themselves roughly where the yellow and pink stars are on the diagram at the start of each time period and after any goals are scored.
  - The dotted lines show the rough the umpires should run during the game, similar to a right wing.
  - When one umpire moves with the flow of play the other umpire should follow, as though they are joined with a rubber band. This will enable you to assist your co-umpire when required.
  - A good rule of thumb is to be about 23 metres ahead of the play when it is coming towards your end of the field. This will enable you to be close enough to 'sell' your decisions, but not so close that you get caught up in the play and ball watching. This should mean you're on the 'hot spot' (where the pink and yellow dots are) in the circle when the ball comes into the 23-metre area.
  - Be in the circle early, but make sure you don't become 'stuck' to the spot. Take small steps to see around players, rather than bending over to try and see through them.
  - During penalty corners, the umpire whose circle the PC is being taken in should stand on the 'hot spot', facing towards the top of the circle. The disengaged umpire should stand in the middle of the field in front of the halfway line until the first hit at goals or the penalty corner is over, and then quickly move back to their sideline.
- When an umpire misses an infringement it can be because they are 'looking through' players. Always try to be on an angle, rather than in line, with the ball and play. When the ball comes to your sideline or is near you in the circle, move outside the field of play (i.e over the sideline or behind the baseline) to keep the play on an angle

*View the play  
on an angle,  
not in line  
or looking  
through  
players*



● Umpire ● Player

# Positioning & Areas Of Control





# Communication & Signals

Signals are how decisions are communicated. Umpires should try and be stationary when giving a signal, and hold the signal for long enough so that players and your co-umpire are aware of the decision. Signals should be made with straight arms and should not be made across the body.

*There are a number of different ways umpires communicate with the players and co-umpire:*

- **Whistle** - Your whistle can be a powerful communication tool. Varying the tone and length of time you blow the whistle for will send different messages to the players. It can be helpful to practice blowing your whistle to improve your delivery.
- **Signals** - Images of the umpiring signals required for hockey are on the adjacent page.
- **Voice** - In addition to signals, you can assist with player understanding and improve the game flow by using a loud, clear voice to make calls such as "Stay out, not five", or "Play" to signal advantage.
- **Presence** - You may occasionally need to move towards players and use your physical presence to improve understanding of what you want or to address an issue after blowing a free hit. If you do, you must also ensure you are quick to get back into position so you don't get caught out when play restarts.
- **Eye contact** - Making eye contact can show confidence in your decisions, indicate that you aren't happy with a player and can also be used to 'check in' with your co-umpire to make sure there is nothing they want to communicate to you, such as seeing something you may have missed. It is good practice to look for your co-umpire after you've made decisions in your 23-metre area, such as when you award 15-metre hits, penalty corners and goals, so you are aware of where they are likely to be positioned if you need them in a pressure situation.



Start Time



Stop Time



Free Hit



Sideline Hit



Advantage



15-Metre Hit



Corner (two signals - point to the backline, then to the 23-metre line)



Green Card



Penalty Corner  
(Point at goals)



Penalty Stroke  
(Point to spot)



Goal  
(Point to centreline)

Watching videos of yourself umpiring is a great way to improve aspects of your performance. Ask someone to take some video and when you watch it back ask yourself: Can you hear differences in your whistle tone and volume? If you miss a free hit, where are you positioned? Do you look confident when signalling? Can you hear yourself talking to the players? Are you ahead of the play when it's coming towards you? Make notes and pick out one or two aspects to work on next game.

# Game Management

Game management and control are important elements of umpiring. Good management can be the difference between a clean game and one that gets out of control and where players get hurt.

***Umpires have a range of measures they can use to manage a game, which include:***

- Being consistent between umpires and having an understanding of what steps you will take to manage the game.
- Using your whistle and varying the length and tone to highlight play you are not happy with (so blowing a long, loud whistle for a dangerous tackle or players not getting five metres early in the game to help set the standard for the rest of the match).
- Using your voice to tell players what you want from them (such as “Stay out, not five” if players attempt to make a tackle without getting five metres first).
- Being proactive, by telling players what you want early (i.e. reposition a free hit early if you aren’t happy with where the team is going to take it from, rather than them taking the hit and recalling it).
- Using the captains to manage their teams’ or benches behaviour.
- Using your cards to penalise unwanted behaviour and demonstrate to the teams that it will not be tolerated. If a player receives a card, they cannot be substituted until they have served their penalty.





# Misconduct

There are a number of offences that can be committed by players and a variety of ways, or tools, umpires have to address these offences, depending on the severity.

- Free hit, penalty corner or penalty stroke, for the relevant offences (see the Rules of Hockey for different offences and their penalties).
- Using your whistle, and/or voice, to verbally caution that the behaviour, offence or action won't be tolerated.
- Speaking with the Captains, to have them address their players or coaches behaviour.
- Giving a green card, which is considered a warning. The player will then be required to sit the game out for two minutes, either in front of the technical bench or behind their defending goal if there is no technical bench, such as when playing on a grass field.
- Giving a yellow card. This is a temporary suspension for a minimum of five minutes and generally a maximum of 10 minutes, although it can be longer at the umpires' discretion. If you have someone on the technical bench controlling substitutions and carded players you will also need to signal how long the yellow card suspension is for.
- Giving a red card, which is a permanent suspension from the game. The player receiving the card must immediately leave the grounds. Details of the red card need to be recorded on the back of the scorecard, and the local association may ask you to submit a formal report.





# *Self Care & Management*

Umpiring can be very challenging, so it is important that you look after yourself. Unlike a team environment, often you don't have teammates and coaching staff to support you after a bad game.

Some strategies to help you manage on and off the field:

- Umpires can get distracted and lose confidence when they make a bad call. It is really important to be able to move on to ensure one bad decision doesn't affect the rest of your game.
- Self-reflection can be a good tool to help 'debrief' after a game, particularly if you don't have a mentor or umpire coach to discuss the game with. Review what you did well, what areas you can improve on and focus on one or two areas to work on in your next game.
- Umpiring can be financially rewarding, however, it is important that you don't over commit, particularly if you also play. Umpiring is mentally and physically taxing, and you will do yourself and the players a disservice by taking on too many games in a weekend. You need to be physically fit and able to stay focused for every match you umpire.
- Look after yourself physically. Drink plenty of water, warm up and cool down, maintain a good level of fitness and get any injuries or niggles seen to by a medical professional.



# Pathways & Accreditation

Just as hockey players have pathways to go from playing in their local competition to representing Australia, so does hockey umpiring. Each state and national competition or tournament requires umpires, with umpires progressing as their performance improves. Contact your local or state association to find out more about the umpiring pathway.

Hockey Australia has courses to assist with your development, with courses for community umpires through to the Australian umpire course. For more information about becoming an accredited umpire, visit <http://hockeywa.org.au/officials/become-an-umpire/>







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