

# Get Going

By Karen Asmundson, Simply Ordered, LLC

Last month's article focused on things parents can do to get back into gear prior to the start of hockey season: register, check, trade-in and clean equipment, and prepare back-up supplies. Now that hockey has started, here's a checklist to help your family get going and stay on track during the season:

## □ **Get it down**

As soon as registration is over, get your child(ren)'s ice times onto one master calendar. Locate this calendar in a convenient spot in your home where everyone will be able to see it. The fridge or a bulletin board in the kitchen is a great location. Any schedule changes should be posted on this calendar and all other personal calendars should reference this master calendar. Kids at the Squirt level can be encouraged to make any schedule changes with mom or dad's help. Pee-Wees should be able to note schedule changes by themselves.

## □ **Get to the right rink, with the right kid, at the right time**

Make two copies of your child(ren)'s ice times. To protect the schedules from wear and tear, place them in plastic page protectors (available at office supply or discount stores). Put one copy in mom's car. Put the other into dad's car. Now, if you ever catch yourself wondering who needs to go where and by when, you'll have a handy reference. While you're at it, get a copy of [Minnesota Ice, A Guide to Minnesota Ice Arenas](http://www.minnesotaice.net) (www.minnesotaice.net) so you'll have directions to those out of town games and tournaments. RinkFinder.com is another source.

## □ **Hang it up and dry it out**

Let's face it, hockey gear can really stink. To minimize the odor and maximize the durability of hockey equipment, air it out between EACH practice and game. This should be the player's responsibility. However, parents can assist this process by setting up a specific area in the home or garage where the equipment has a chance to dry in circulating, warm air.

A simple rope clothesline can be used to separate equipment, keep it in one place, and keep family members from tripping over it. Place the clothesline at a height where your kids can easily reach it. Another option is to use open shelving where each kid gets 1-2 shelves for his/her stuff. Praise your kids when they put their gear away. If good behavior is rewarded, it is more likely to become a habit.

□ **Get your gear**

Have you ever pulled into the parking lot at hockey practice and realized that your child's skates are by the back door at home? Ever left a uniform in the laundry room on game day? Most likely every hockey family has at least one story about forgotten or lost equipment. To prevent this problem, a little planning can help here too.

The easiest way to make sure equipment doesn't get lost is to put it away in the same spot each time it's aired out (see previous step). An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The next easiest way to make sure all of your child's gear gets to the rink is for her/him to wear it there. A third option is to "Make Your Man". This is a phrase that hockey mom Kim Kuenzi has used to help her kids lay out all of their equipment to make sure they have two gloves, two skates, etc. Lay out the equipment on the floor from head to toe and then put each piece into the hockey bag.

With the help of graphic artist Susanne Short, hockey mom Karen Asmundson has taken this one step further. Karen developed Get Your Gear™ cards to help her kids get their equipment together. Get Your Gear™ cards are visual lists of all the pieces of equipment needed for a particular sport. The hockey card shows a picture and word for each item so both readers and non-readers can get their stuff together without parents having to nag and without the kid having to remember a particular type of equipment. Get Your Gear™ cards are great for new hockey players, forgetful hockey players, and hockey parents alike.

□ **Get a phone/address list for teammates, coaches, and team manager.**

Does your daughter need a ride to practice? Is your son going to miss a game? Keep a phone list by the master calendar (and in each car) so you can call when you need to. Most coaches expect that players (Squirt level and above) will call them if they are going to miss a practice or game.

When you know what to take, where to go, and who goes where, getting to practices and games will be less chaotic and more enjoyable for everyone. Have a great hockey season! See you at the arena!

About the author:

Karen Asmundson is a hockey mom and professional organizer. One of her sons is a Squirt, another is a varsity goalie, and her husband coaches at the college level. Her objectives during the hockey season are to support her family and have fun, but above all, to maintain her sanity. She has a passion for organizing and for helping families get organized by creating practical solutions for everyday living. She is the owner of Simply Ordered, LLC, a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO) and the Minnesota Chapter of NAPO (NAPO-MN).

For more information about Simply Ordered or Get Your Gear™ organizing products, visit [www.SimplyOrdered.com](http://www.SimplyOrdered.com).