



Castleknock Hurling Nursery

Some useful ideas for coaches

“Coaches - When teaching a skill to a child it is important that you only correct one fault at a time.”

The Warm Up

Players in a Circle

- Jogging on the Spot
- Weaving in and out between Players until back to where player started from
- Jog for 30 yards and back
- Swinging Arms around in a Circle
- Jumping Left/Right/Forward/Back

Skills

1. Starting Basics

- Throw Hurleys on Ground and get them to pick it up with dominant/strong (writing) hand
- Parts of the Hurley
- Show Ready Position
- Correct Grip
- Tip of Bas always pointing to the sky
- Show Lock Position

- Get Players alternating between Ready and Lock Positions
- Show Lifting Position - Right thumb turns hurley with its toe facing to the right and hurley resting in left hand. Both thumbs facing down towards the bas.
- Get Players alternating between Ready and Lift Positions
- Wrist Turning (thumb firmly on handle)



2. Blocking on the Ground (No Sliotar)

- Start simply with no hurley
- Moving downwards towards ground and back up
- Knees bend and move outwards
- Heels of feet slowly moving until faced inwards

Now, introduce hurley

- Moving from Ready Position slowly down to Block Position
- Hands slide up along hurley
- Bas of Hurley Parallel with Body (Faced outwards)

3. Blocking to both sides on the Ground (No Sliotar)

- Start simply with no hurley
- Moving from side to side bending knees
- Moving foot on side that is going to block outwards
- Turning heel to face in towards the body

Now, introduce hurley

- Moving from Ready Position slowly down to side Block Position
- Hands slide up along hurley

- Foot either directly behind the bas of hurley or closer in to body to act as an extra block
- Bas of Hurley Parallel with Body (Faced outwards)

Vary the drill by:

- Getting the players to block to the side by shuffling over and back along a line (similar to going along a goal line) and blocking as in 2 above

4. Ground Strike (No Sliotar)

Dominant Side

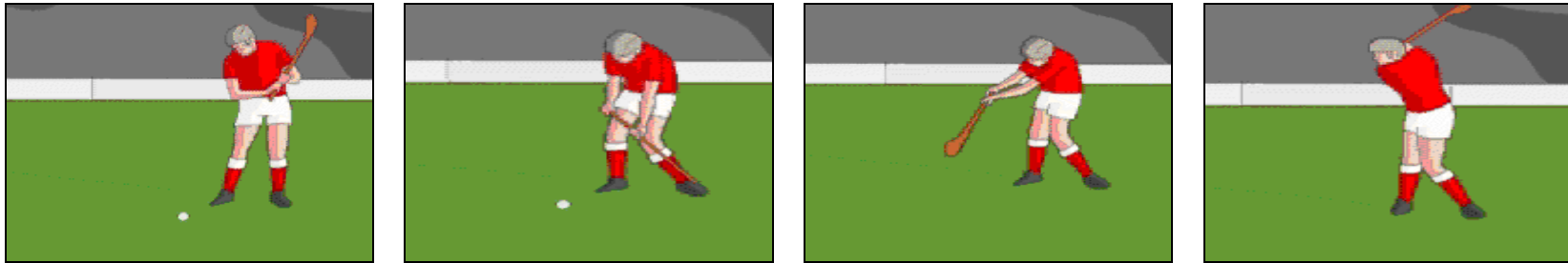
- Start at Ready Position
- Move to 12 o'clock Position (and let left hand move up hurley to Lock Hands)
- Elbows out and back
- Eyes on the ball which should be in front of the left foot
- Feet and shoulders are in line with the intended flight of the ball
- Swing downward with a wristy action (including follow through)
- Strike the ball 'flat-on' with the heel of the hurley near the ground
- All force behind the swing
- Weight transferred from right to left leg
- Head only comes to look at flight of ball when follow through is complete (to achieve full distance and accuracy)



Non-Dominant Side

- Start at Ready Position
- Raise the hurley to your left above and slightly in front of the left shoulder
- Eyes on the ball
- Eyes on the ball which should be in front of the right foot
- Feet and shoulders are in line with the intended flight of the ball
- Swing downward with a wristy action (including follow through)
- Strike the ball 'flat-on' with the heel of the hurley near the ground
- All force behind the swing

- Weight transferred from left to right leg
- Head only comes to look at flight of ball when follow through is complete (to achieve full distance and accuracy)



Vary the drill by:

- Introducing where player picks a blade of grass in front and aims to hit it each time

or

- Simply striking in both directions (following through each time)

5. Blocking on the Ground (with Sliotar)

- Get Players to line up behind each other (maybe 2 mini groups of 3 or 4) → can also be done in pairs
- Throw ball directly towards player who blocks
- Moves to back of queue

Vary the drill by:

- Introducing where player blocks and dribbles ball back to you

or

- Introducing where player blocks, pushes ball to the side and strikes back to you (can also be done in pairs)

Also, introduce a goal (or use the existing goalposts) to make more interesting

6. Blocking to both sides on the Ground (with Sliotar)

- Get Players to line up behind each other (maybe 2 mini groups of 3 or 4) → can also be done in pairs
- Throw ball towards the side of player who blocks
- Moves to back of queue
- Alternate Sides

Vary the drill by:

- Introducing where player blocks and dribbles ball back to you

or

- Introducing where player blocks pushes ball to the side and strikes back to you (can also be done in pairs)

or

- Introducing where player shuffles along on line (similar to goalkeeper) until ball is directly in front of them and then blocks (can also be done in pairs)

Also, introduce a goal (or use the existing goalposts) to make more interesting

7. Running to Sliotar and Ground Striking

- Get Players to line up behind each other (maybe 2 mini groups of 3 or 4) → can also be done in pairs
- Place Sliotar about 3 - 5 yards directly in front of player
- Player runs towards ball, turns to the side and strikes back
- Moves to Back of Queue

Vary the drill by:

- Introducing a goal (or use the existing goalposts) to make more interesting

8. Clashing in Pairs (using Tyre or Large Cone)

- Emphasise Safety. (Players at each others shoulders - either all in (or stay out))
- Players in Pairs behind each other
- Players sprint out to tyre and strike base of tyre 10 times
- Ensure Shoulder to Shoulder and Hip to Hip
- Two-handed fast wristy pull
- Move to back of queue swapping sides



Vary the drill by:

- Introducing a hurley (held by the instructor) instead of the tyre

9. Protecting the Ball from another Player (using Sliotar)

- Players in Pairs behind each other
- First Player moves out to stand over sliotar
- Next Player comes out to try to take ball off that Player (by trying to flick ball away with the hurley)
- Move to back of queue after 10-15 seconds (swapping sides)

10. Frontal Ground Block

- Players in single line behind each other
- First Player moves out to Instructor

- Player places hurley in front of foot with foot firmly against bas (Top of hurley in front of bas)
- Instructor strikes ground clash against Player's hurley 10 times
(Instructor alternates side he strikes from each time)
(Players alternate sides and feet to perform block with)
- Player moves to back of queue after 10-15 seconds
- Older kids can do this in pairs

11. Dribbling in Groups (using Sliotar)

- Players in 2 mini groups of 3 about 10-15 yards apart (2 at one side with the sliotar, 1 opposite)
- First Player dribbles the ball along in front of him/her
- Player at other side receives and dribbles ball back
- Encourage Players to stay running but with ball under control
- Encourage keeping direction while doing this
- Repeat at other side

12. Circle Dribble (using Sliotars)

- Create two circles with 4 or 5 dome markers in each
- Players in 2 mini groups of 3 at 3 equal points around circle (each with a ball)
- All players dribble the ball along in front of him/her around outside of circle at same time (keeping distance between player in front and behind constant)
- Repeat in other direction

Vary the drill by:

- Getting players to weave in and out between markers in the circle

13. Dribbling around Markers (using Sliotar)

- Players in 2 mini groups of 3 behind each other
- 2 Dome Markers in front of each group (the first 5 yards in front, the second 10 yards in front)
- First Player dribbles the ball along in front of him/her around first marker and bring backs
- All players repeat above
- When back to first player, first player dribbles the ball along in front of him/her around second marker and bring backs
- All players repeat again

Vary the drill by:

- Introducing a goal for players to ground strike into when reach end marker

or

- Getting players to ground strike back to next player when round end marker

or

- Increase the number of dome markers to 4 or 5 in a row and get players to weave in and out between markers and back again

14. Doubling On the Ground (Forward Striking)

- Get Players to line up behind each other (maybe 2 mini groups of 3 or 4) → can also be done in pairs
- Throw ball towards player at front
- Player runs towards ball, turns to the side and strikes back
- Moves to Back of Queue

Vary the drill by:

- Introducing a goal (or use the existing goalposts) to make more interesting

15. Ground Striking into Goals

- Create two goals for each pair of players about 5 - 10 yards apart
- Each player blocks ball and shoves it to the side
- Then ground strikes the ball back towards opponents goal

Fun Games

1. Catching in a Circle

- Each has a number
- Simply calling the number of player going to throw sliotar to
- Throw ball to chest area if possible (catching with both hands)
- Repeat throwing high to catch
- Try to encourage sloping the hurley across in front of body for protection



Vary the drill by:

- Getting players in pairs and get them to throw to each other (1 ball between 2)

or

- Getting players in pairs and juggling balls between each other (2 balls per pair each throws at the same time - only for older kids)

or

- Getting players to catch one-handed

2. Cones and Sliotars Relay

- 2 mini groups against each other
- 3 Cones (Sliotars at 2 side cones and 1 cone in middle)
- Player runs to side cone picks up sliotar and puts at middle cone
- Returns to back of group and next goes
- Move sliotars back to side cones

3. Port and Starboard (Can also be used as a warm up)

- Players line up in a straight line facing instructor
- Markers to the left and right about 3 - 5 yards away
- Instructor calls out the instructions:
 - Port: All run to the left
 - Starboard: All run to the right
 - Hit the deck: All sit down
 - Mid ship: All return to the middle
- Increases concentration, then after a few trial runs, when players get it wrong - they are out

4. Snatch the Sliotar

- 2 mini groups of 3 with each player on each team having a number from 1 to 3
- Each group lines up in a row facing each other about 10 yards apart
- Place a sliotar in the middle between the two groups
- Instructor then calls a number from 1 to 3
- Both players of that number from each team run to the middle to grab the sliotar and return to their group without being touched
- Replace sliotar in the middle and repeat
- First team to snatch the sliotar 5 times wins

5. Copy Cat

- Players in a Circle
- All players have to copy the instructor's moves
Examples: Sit down
Turn around
2 Steps forward/back/left/right
Jog on the spot
Jump up in the air
Hop on left/right leg
Hands in the air
Touch ground with left/right/both hands
Pick hurley up with left/right hand
Swap hurley between left/right hands
Swinging arms around in a Circle

6. Duck Duck Goose

- Place players sitting in a large circle
- Place one player 'on'
- The player then walks around the group touching each player on the head saying 'duck' , 'duck', etc.
- As the player goes around then she/he then picks one player and says 'goose'
- The 'goose' then chases that player who is 'on' and if she/he is caught before getting to sit in the place vacated by the 'goose', then she/he is out and sits in the middle of the circle
- The goose is then 'on'
- Restart when down to 3 players

7. Throws and Handpassing into Tyres

- 2 mini groups of 3 with each player on each team having a number from 1 to 3
- Place players around in a circle with 1 tyre in the middle about 1-2 yards in front of each player
- Each player has ball in front of them
- Initially, the instructor calls a number and that player picks up his/her ball and tries to throw into the tyre
- The first team to get a ball in 5 times wins
- Then repeat by getting the players to try to handpass the ball into the tyre (each player tosses the ball slightly into the air and then using their slightly cupped fingers to direct the ball)

8. Grab the Tail

- Mark out a square with 4 cones. Size depends on number of players
- Give all players a bib except one or 2 who are chasers
- Get them to fold the bib and tuck it into the back of their shorts like a tail
- On the whistle the 2 chasers try and grab the tails from the other players
- No physical contact is allowed
- When a player's tail is caught they turn into a chaser
- The last player with a tail is the winner

9. Go Fetch

- Split the group into 2 teams. A and B.
- Team A stand in a circle around a tyre with a ball each at their feet
- Team B are fielders and spread out around the area
- On the coach's whistle all of Team A strike the ball as hard as they can
- Team B have to gather the balls and bring them back and put them in the tyre.
- Coach times how long it takes to get all the balls back in the tyre.
- Team A then becomes fielder with team B striking the balls. The team with the quickest time wins
- For variation the fielders can dribble the ball back to the tyre before picking it up and putting it in the tyre

10. Colour Games

- Scatter different colour cones randomly in a square
- Get all players inside the square
- On the whistle get them to run about in the square without touching the cones.
- The coach then shouts a colour and the players should run and stand at a cone of that colour
- When the coach shouts "space" the players have to find a space that is an arm's length away from another player
- For variation get players to hop on one foot, both feet, run with knees up, walk backwards, etc.

11. Circle Passing

- Players in a Circle
- Players 1, 3 and 5 have a ball
- Players just throw initially the ball to the player next to them
- Player then turns around and receives another from player on the other side of them
- Continue until full circle done twice
- Repeat in the opposite direction
- Repeat with players handpassing in both directions

Matches

All games should be 6, 7 or 8 a-side at most. Except for younger kids where games can go as low as 3 a-side.

For younger kids keep pitches tiny only 20 or 30 yards altogether or even play into one goal (just get them use to fighting for a ball)

For older kids (8-10), can mark out 3 zones on the pitch (with 2 backs and 2 forwards in each). Players not allowed go outside their zone (avoids bunching of players and stronger players dominating the game). Move players to next zone every 5 minutes.

Try to emphasise tackling, striking, blocking, movement and width (especially from puckouts)

Coaching and Organisational Hints

- Gather in a semi-circle
- Separate "Giddy" Players
- Gather in Sliotars
- Face Players away from Distractions & Sun
- Speak with Breeze
- Coach does not have to be able to demonstrate skills
- Match task to child's ability. After a number of weeks it may be necessary to separate into two groups as weaker players may take a little

longer to learn the harder skills than others.

- Give the groups names, such as Bart's group or Lisa's group, so that no one feels inferior.
- The timetable is only a guideline, should not be stuck to rigidly. Skills at stations 1 and 2 should be varied between groups if needed.
- On whistle activity stops. Players jog to coach

“Remember – Encourage and reassure to eliminate “fear of failure”