

Hurling Fundamentals

It is generally accepted that it is impossible to teach sport specific skills if athletes do not have a good basic foundation of the fundamental movement skills. However it is important to point out that for the game of Hurling/Camogie these skills must be executed always with a hurley and sometimes with a hurley and ball in the child's hands.

Therefore 'Fundamentals' for Hurling/Camogie should as early as possible should involve the use of a hurley. The ABC's and RJT's of Athletics are important ingredients of Gaelic Games and need to be practiced from an early age. However from a Hurling/Camogie perspective these skills should be practised while carrying a hurley at all times.

Some Key Points

- **Safety:**

Helmets with visors are to be worn at all times. Children should not be allowed leave the dressing room without wearing a helmet. It is also suggested that the specially modified rubber bas hurley is ideal for introducing children to the skills of the game.

It is also recommended that all hurleys up to and including size 28" should not have a metal band.

Finally a smaller ratio of coach/children leads to a safer and greater learning experience.

- **Size of Hurley**

It is vital that a child is given the correct size of hurley from the very outset.

Coaches can encounter major problems when teaching the skills if the hurley is too big and too heavy. Hurleys are manufactured in all sizes from 20" up

The hurley should not be higher than the hip joint. Note that this is where the leg meets the hip and not the waist.

- **Sliotars**

When starting off it is recommended that a larger ball (e.g. Olympic handball) should be used. The next progression would be to the 'First Touch Sliotar' and then to the 'Quick Touch Sliotar'. The rate of progression will depend on the level of ability of the children rather than age.

- **Correct Grip**

We can never emphasise enough the importance of the correct grip.

Pupils should hold the hurley with the stronger (or dominant) hand on top of the handle with the weaker hand locked underneath it when striking the ball.

However, some pupils will have a preference to hold the hurley with the weaker hand on top (golf style). These pupils should be encouraged to change. If corrections are not made at the fundamental stage it will be more difficult at a later stage.

Progression

The general progression for introducing children to the game would be to teach the correct grip first, then the ready position, how to carry a hurley and ball at the same time, the dribble, blocking a ball and the ground strike.

Obviously all of these skills would not be taught at once. However it is important to point out that the game is a striking game and the sooner you can progress to that skill the better

The following is a brief teaching progression for the game of Hurling/Camogie

Introduction

Grip – preferred hand

Shake Hands

Make an X

Mimic the Teacher

Write Initials/Name

Touch big ball on both sides with hurley (using one hand)

Ready Position

Running

Walking in Ready Position

Running in Ready Position

Running with ball and hurley in hand

Running with ball balanced on open palm

Running and moving ball from cone A to cone B

Throwing

Handing over ball with hurley still in hand

Throwing ball with hurley in hand

Throwing ball out in front and picking while ball is moving away

Throwing two balls out in front at the same time (no hurley)

Dribble big ball with hand

Dribble big ball with hurley

Striking

Lock position

Swing

Strike big ball with hand

Strike big ball with big bas

Remember:

Children should be encouraged to practise the skills at home.

To perfect your skills all you need is (1) A Hurley, (2) A ball (3) A wall