

PLAYER

HOW TO FIT HOCKEY GEAR SAFELY AND COMFORTABLY: A GUIDE TO GETTING THE GEAR RIGHT

How to Fit Hockey Gear Safely and Comfortably: A Guide to Getting the Gear Right, created by Hockey Canada in partnership with Bauer.

If your child is new to hockey, this guide is designed to help make your first steps simple and stress-free. Inside, you'll find parent-friendly tips for each piece of equipment, so you can feel confident that your child is comfortable, protected, and ready to enjoy their time on the ice.

We'll walk you through how gear should fit and highlight a few quick checks you can do at home or at the rink — making the fitting process easier, safer, and more enjoyable for both you and your child.

BASE LAYER

The base layer is the “first layer” your child wears under their gear.

It should be **light, breathable, and moisture-wicking** to help keep them dry and comfortable.

This is also the **minimum attire required** under Hockey Canada’s Dressing Room Policy.

If you have a base layer with a **built-in neck guard**, that’s an excellent bonus for extra protection.

For more about the Dressing Room Policy: [CLICK HERE](#).



JOCK / JILL SHORTS (Pelvic Area Protection)

There are two options: a Jock, which is a protective cup, or a Jill, which is a flatter pelvic protector.

The right protective gear depends on your anatomy, not your gender. Everyone needs pelvic area protection to stay safe on the ice.

Why they matter:

- They protect sensitive areas.
- They help keep shin pads and socks in place.

Tips for parents:

- Look for shorts with built-in protection.
- You'll notice Velcro tabs on the legs — that's where the hockey socks attach.



SHIN PADS

Shin pads protect everything from the knee down to the top of the skate.

How to check the fit:

- The knee should sit comfortably in the centre “donut”.
- You should see **about two finger widths** between the top of the foot and bottom of the pad.
- Straps should be snug but comfortable — no slipping.



SOCKS

Hockey socks go over the shin pads and attach to the Velcro on the Jock/Jill shorts.

Smooth out wrinkles to keep things comfortable.



HOCKEY PANTS

Hockey pants protect the hips, thighs, tailbone, and lower spine.

What a good fit looks like:

- Pants rest comfortably on the hips.
- They overlap the top of the knee pads slightly.
- The front straps and laces should help the pants sit secure.
- They shouldn't sag or restrict movement.

Depending on your child's preference, you can also add suspenders to the hockey pants. This helps keep the pants at the right height while allowing for a more comfortable, looser fit around the waist.



SKATES



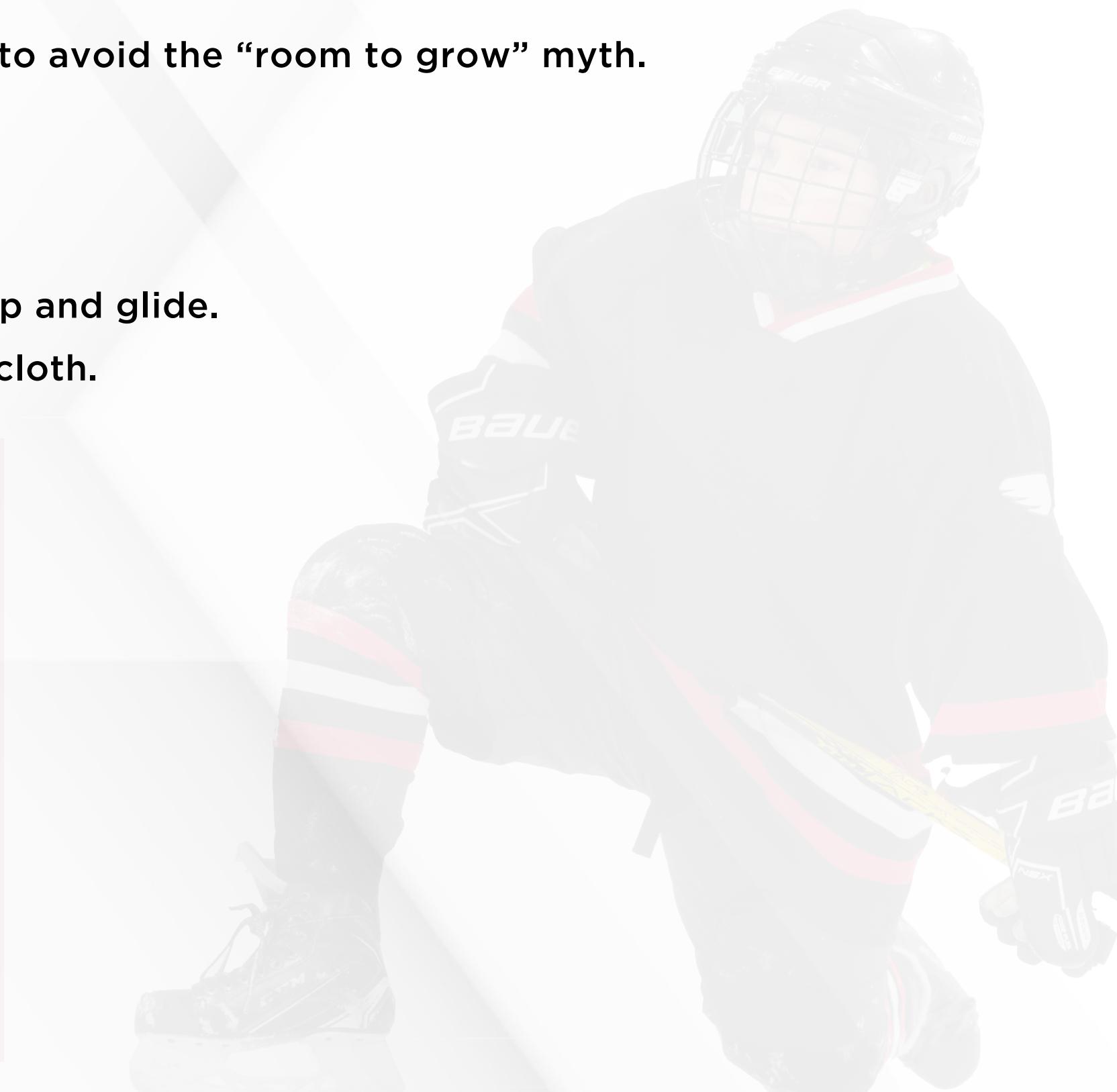
Skates are one of the most important pieces of equipment, and they fit differently than shoes.

Using Skate Fitting Tools:

- Start with a Brannock foot measurement.
- Skates are usually 1-2 sizes smaller than street shoes.

Parent tips:

- A little growth room is okay — too big is not.
- Your child's heel should stay comfortably in place without sliding.
- When trying on skates, a snug fit provides better balance and control — so it's best to avoid the "room to grow" myth.
- When lacing skates, the heel may lift slightly as the player settles — this is normal.
- Tie skates firmly through the middle of the boot, but not painfully tight at the top.
- Make sure you do not tie skate laces around the ankles.
- Sharp skates are safe skates — regular sharpening helps your player get the best grip and glide.
- And finally, keep blades clean and dry after each ice session by wiping them with a cloth.



SHOULDER PADS

Shoulder pads protect the shoulders, upper chest, back, and upper arms.

Fit checklist:

- Slides on easily over the head.
- Sits comfortably on the shoulders.
- Straps secure under the arms and on the biceps.
- Pads should not shift when the player moves.



ELBOW PADS

These protect the elbows and forearms.

How to fit them:

- Make sure the elbow sits directly in the centre pocket ("donut").
- Look for the **Left (L)** and **Right (R)** labels on the pads.
- Straps should be snug but not tight.
- Check that they stay in place when your child bends their arms.



NECK GUARD

Every youth player must wear a BNQ-certified neck guard.

What to look for:

- The BNQ logo (this means it meets the safety standard).
- A comfortable fit around the neck.
- Coverage that protects the entire front of the throat.
- Many are lined with Kevlar for added protection.



For more information on BNQ certification, [CLICK HERE](#).



HOCKEY JERSEY

- Should fit over all gear.
- Loose but not oversized.
- No pulling on shoulders or arms.

Hang dry after washing. Never put the jersey in the dryer!



HELMET



The helmet is the most important piece of safety equipment.

What parents should watch for:

- Always check for the CSA certification sticker.
- For more information, please visit [CSA-Certified Hockey Helmets - CSA Group](#).
- The helmet should sit 1 – 2 fingers above the eyebrows.
- The chin cup should touch the chin comfortably.
 - * Leaving a gap between the chin and the chin cup (also known as hang) is not allowed.
- The chinstrap should be snug enough to prevent wobbling.

At Hockey Canada, the safety and well-being of all participants is our top priority. Organizations are encouraged to work collaboratively with individuals and/or their parents or guardians regarding the wearing of Dāstars, Kirpans, and other cultural or religious observances.

For more information on the guidelines, please [CLICK HERE](#).



GLOVES

Gloves protect the hands, wrists, and fingers — and help your child grip the stick.

Fit guide:

- Fingertips should just reach the end of the glove.
- The wrist should move freely.
- Look for “Free Flex” or articulated thumb protection.
- The palm should feel soft and allow a good stick grip.



STICK

Choosing a stick is easier than it seems!



Step 1: Find the shooting side

- If your child has used a stick before, ask them to show you.
- If not, place a stick on the ground — the hand they reach with first is usually the top hand.
 - * Dominant left hand = shoots right.
 - * Dominant right hand = shoots left.
- Another option: give them a stick and ask them to “shoot” an imaginary puck.

Step 2: Choose the right height

- With skates on, a beginner’s stick should reach around the mouth/nose area.

Step 3: Other features

- Youth sticks are designed to be lighter and easier to flex.
- Ask coaches or staff if you’re unsure — people are happy to help!

Be sure to tape your child’s hockey stick and remember to replace the tape from time to time to keep a good grip and feel for the puck.



HOCKEY BAG

A hockey bag is a spacious, easy-to-carry equipment bag designed to hold all of your player's gear in one place. Built with durable materials, strong zippers, and convenient compartments, it keeps equipment organized, protected, and easy to transport to and from the rink.

Durability: Look for tough materials, reinforced stitching, and strong zippers that can handle regular use.

Right Size & Storage: Choose a bag big enough for all gear, with pockets or compartments to keep items organized.

Ventilation: Mesh panels or air vents help gear dry faster and reduce odour.

Easy to Carry: Padded straps or wheels make it simpler for kids (and parents) to transport.



Every player is different, and there's more than one "right" way to put on equipment — focus on what feels comfortable and works best for your child.

When buying gear, don't hesitate to ask questions. Store staff are great resources, and Bauer.com offers helpful guides to support your decisions.

Safety starts with proper fit. Take a moment to make sure everything is snug, secure, and comfortable.

Before stepping on the ice, do a quick safety check — helmet clipped, neck guard in place, and skates laced properly.

After each session, pack gear neatly and let it dry. This helps equipment last longer and stay fresher.

For more information on Game Change, please [CLICK HERE](#) or explore Bauer.com for full fitting guides.



RESOURCES

- **Hockey Canada** (www.hockeycanada.ca)
- **Bauer** (www.bauer.com)
- **BNQ** (<https://bnq.qc.ca/en/certification/protection-and-safety/neck-protectors-c2.html>)
- **CSA** (CSA-Certified Hockey Helmets - CSA Group)