



ENGLAND
HOCKEY

What should I be considering when designing my sessions?

What is your focus? Carrying the ball? Moving the ball? Keep your intended learning outcome in mind at all times.

Try and tick off all elements of the Golden Thread within every practice of your session.

Consider the players you will have, what are their individual wants/needs/motivations for being there? What does “fun” mean to them?

Are there opportunities for all players to be stretched both mentally and physically?

Try and develop games that stimulate and develop decision making and creativity in the players, this will help further increase their understanding of the game.

By playing something that looks like the game, players will be working on both attacking and defending, and so developing all areas of their game.

The most important thing is practice design.

Good practice design will mean that there are appropriate numbers of players, so everyone is getting plenty of touches of the ball and making decisions.

It also makes it easier for a coach to analyse what is going on and provide feedback.

How Can I Change It?

When delivering your sessions ask yourself the following questions:

- Are the players enjoying and / or engaged in the game?
- Is the purpose of the game being achieved?
- Are all the players being challenged appropriately? (is it too difficult, too easy, one-sided)

If the answer to any of the above questions is NO, it is likely you are not covering all elements of the Golden Thread, you can use “Change It” to help with this.

Below are some ideas of how you could “Change It”, or check out the [Golden Thread in Action](#) section of Hockey Hub to see some of these ideas in actions.

It is free to register on Hockey Hub and you will find a number of resources to support you in your coaching.

C	Coaching Style Use questions to set challenges for specific aspects of a game e.g. when should you move to receive a pass? Provide discrete coaching, where required, without interrupting the game. Use player role models to highlight skilful play. Vary how you communicate according to players you have in front of you.
H	How you score Increase opportunities to score points or earn bonus points to try and encourage your learning objectives e.g. a point for three passes if your session is focused on moving the ball, or a point for a successful elimination if your session is focused on carrying the ball
A	Area Increase or decrease game difficulty by changing the shape and size of the playing area e.g. long and narrow to focus on getting the ball forward fast, or wide if you want to focus on promoting width in your play
N	Numbers Consider using different team sizes or varying the number of turns a player gets e.g. imbalance teams such as 4 v 2 giving the attackers more options to deal with defenders.
G	Game rules Change the rules slightly e.g. introduce a no tackling / interception only rule to give players more time to make passes.
E	Equipment Vary the size of the equipment used e.g. use a Rush Hockey ball
I	Inclusion Ask the players what options would improve the game for them and how their involvement could be increased
T	Time Reduce or extend the time to perform actions e.g. shot clock, counting down from 10

Observation	What is happening?	What to do	How to CHANGE IT
Let them play the game Observe player involvement Is the purpose of the game being achieved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too easy (high success) - Players not challenged enough - Both sides scoring often - Skills required easily performed - Little motivation 	CHANGE IT UP increase challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add rules that increases difficulty - Set challenges that make it more difficult - Increase team sizes ("joker" player) - Decrease playing area
Are all players engaged? Are players coping with the skills required? Are players enjoying the game?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too difficult (low success) - Little or no scoring - Poor levels of possession - Players not coping - Little motivation 	CHANGE IT DOWN decrease challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simplify the rules - Set challenges that make it easier - Decrease the players per team to increase the opportunity to play - Vary the playing area
Do all players understand the game? Is it safe?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too one-sided - One team dominating - Some players not getting a chance - Little motivation 	CHANGE IT even up challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shuffle the teams and swap players - Introduce additional rules to the dominant side - Introduce zoned areas - Develop a scenario (e.g. your team is two goals down with 60 seconds left)