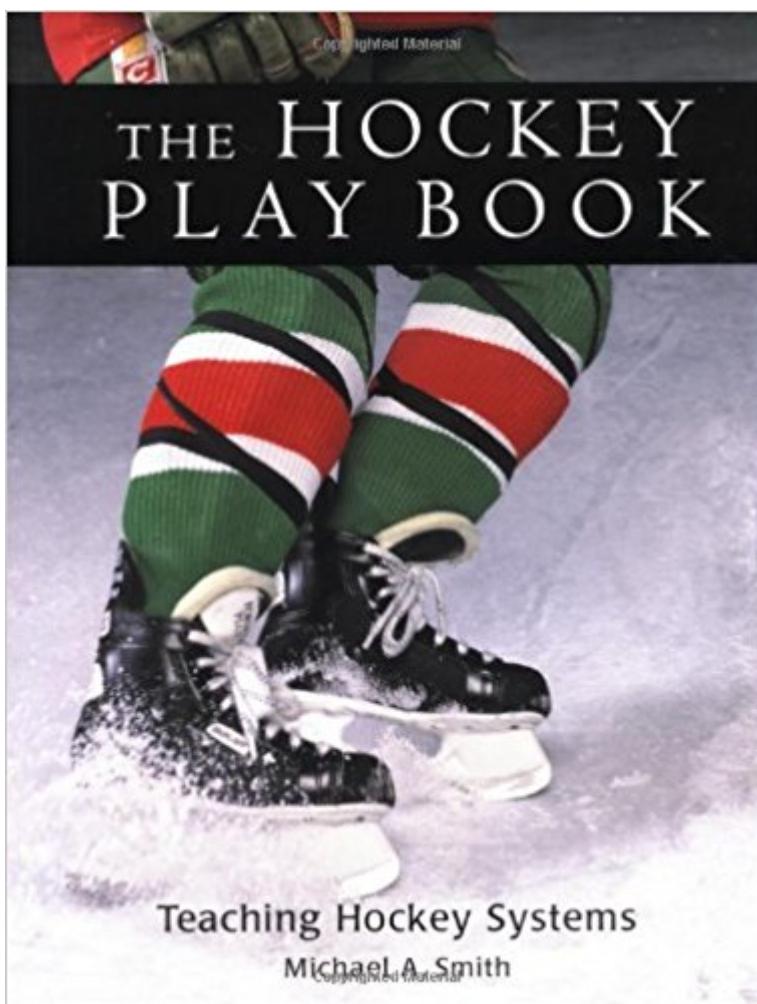


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# The Hockey Play Book: Teaching Hockey Systems



## **Synopsis**

The bible for hockey coaches at all levels of competition. The Hockey Play Book is a practical handbook for coaches seeking better players and better team-play. The book features systems for defensive, offensive and special-team situations, all accompanied by annotated, easy-to-understand diagrams. The systems range from conservative to aggressive -- some are intended for big, physical teams; others for fast-skating and highly skilled teams; and some work for both. Also included are teaching methods and drills for honing specific skills. The first challenge for every coach is to determine the abilities of each skater. The approach in The Hockey Play Book is effective with players of all ages and levels of ability. Coaches can match systems with team strategy, bringing a special creative magic to one of the fastest team sports in the world. The Hockey Play Book includes: 500 step-by-step diagrams Dozens of plays and skill-building drills Conservative and aggressive systems Teaching strategies for all levels of play

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Michael A. Smith has been involved in hockey for over 40 years as a player, as a coach and as general manager of the New York Rangers, Colorado Rockies, Chicago Blackhawks and Team USA. He was an adviser for the National Hockey League and has traveled extensively as a lecturer and studied European training methods in Russia and Sweden. The author of six books on hockey, he lives in West Tisbury, Massachusetts.

General Introduction Hockey is a game played by young athletes and a game in which youth is not

entirely determined by age. NHL players bring the same enthusiasm to the rink as eight-year-olds, and no matter what level the players, it is the coach's responsibility to create an atmosphere and environment that gives shape to that enthusiasm. Games are fun. That is why people of all ages play them. The techniques explained in these pages are cut-and-dried; the diagrams and text are brief and to the point. Coaches reading this book, however, need to remember that their job is to bring these plays to life and that the lessons contained in this book are intended to channel players' excitement, never to stifle it. This book focuses on the different systems that are part of hockey. There is no one system, no best system, no secret system. Hockey systems are not complex or difficult to learn, although some, it is true, can be challenging to execute. They do take teamwork, though, and it is part of the coach's job-actually, a major part-to foster an eager and effective team spirit and, once it exists, to orchestrate its actions. When I started coaching in the early '70s, I thought the road to being a good coach was straight. If I learned A and then B and C, and so on, I would become a skilled coach and know everything I needed to know. But I discovered that the more I learned, the less I knew for sure. What once looked clear and simple often became gray and diffused. I concluded that a good coach had to become an artist and that the process of guiding a hockey team was subjective. I learned that a good coach must constantly create if he is to enable his players and his team to grow. The purpose of this book, then, is to provide resources for coaches who are caught up in their own creative efforts. These chapters include different systems for hockey's defensive, offensive and special team situations. Teaching methods and drills are provided, and the systems run the gamut from the conservative to the aggressive. Some systems are designed specifically for big physical teams or for fast-skating and highly skilled teams or for teams that have both. In this book, there should be a system for every coach. But here is a warning. Despite the look of this book, hockey is definitely not a game of x's and o's. Diagrams help, but a coach is in trouble if ever he thinks players can learn the game from a chalkboard. It is vital not to make hockey rigid. It is a fast-flowing game with the opportunity for physical confrontation, and it is important for the coach to incorporate both the flow and the physical elements into his plans. In a sense, the game of hockey resembles jazz. Talents and skills are necessary, but a basic framework is required within which to exercise these abilities. Both jazz and hockey demand improvisation; the individual player doing the extra unexpected bit makes the system work. The individuals play off each other and constantly adjust to one another, and in hockey, just as in jazz, too much planning can ruin everything. There is no perfect system. Different coaching philosophies emphasize different techniques. Coaches who believe in aggressive, attacking play proceed differently than coaches who believe in a conservative, close-checking approach. Some coaches want aggression in some

zones and conservative play in others, and a coach must come to grips with his philosophy of the game before selecting specific systems for play in any one of them. Once a coach has decided what kind of team he has at his disposal and knows roughly how he wants to proceed, this book can help him lay out his plans. It can help with adjustments to his present techniques, and maybe contains a couple of ideas he hasn't thought of before. Later in the season, when the team is in a slump and enthusiasm is slipping away, perhaps this book can even supply a little of the creative magic that every coach should always be looking for.

After searching the web endlessly for any help with winger positioning, I went ahead and took the risk of buying this book. I was very surprised at how much I didn't know about the game I play. Even though this book is flooded with play after play, I gained a better understanding of all the drills I've had to run over a lifetime of practices. I recommend "reading" this book if you're someone who, like me, needs every line explained and detailed in order to understand why your coach keeps yelling at you when you thought you were executing the play correctly.

Still refer to it all the time for quick ideas and diagrams

Easy to read, easy to navigate. A great amount of plays in various game situations in all 3 zones. The best part are the step-by-step diagrams that display the movements and options available within that specific play. The book doesn't just tell you what's supposed to happen with 1 diagram filled with squiggly lines; it shows you the progression of the play, step-by-step. I love that feature! Tremendous resource for any beginning to novice level hockey coach.

Great book

This is the most important book in my coaching collection. It has everything a coach needs. Positioning, systems, drills, and it has a lot of options for each. This may be the only book a coach needs.

This book is laid out in a well organized easy to read format that explains and describes systems and special teams options for every zone on the ice. I was disappointed that 5 on 3's were not spoken of from a power play and a penalty killing perspective. These can win and lose you hockey games. Overall though, it is and will be a good reference book for coaching.

I remember learning basketball as a kid...watching it on TV was boring, one team scored, the other scored and not much looked different. Then I learned about offense and defense and it all changed...became a lot more enjoyable and to this day I can watch a game and get involved. Well, I'm learning Hockey now...as an adult. I don't have coaches around me to teach me...this book gives a good insight on what to look out for in a game...Offense and defense. After one reading I went to a game....and it was a different experience. More enjoyable...a deeper connection with the game. I didn't know exactly what was happening on the ice, but knew the basics and was able to more fully follow what the guys were trying to do. I look forward to a few more readings through this book...and getting ready to watch the playoffs this year....with a more tuned in eye.

Great book, lots of great strategy and explanations for coaching. Thank you.

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