

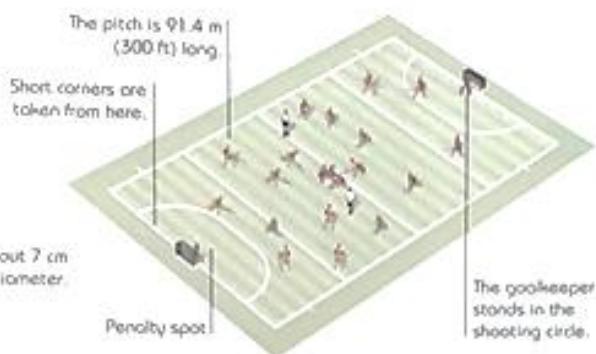
Field hockey

Hockey is a team sport that has been played in various forms for thousands of years. Today, it is played indoors and outdoors in more than 120 countries.



Sticks are 95 cm (3 ft) long.

Balls are about 7 cm (2.7 in) in diameter.



Sticks and pitches

The crook-shaped end of a hockey stick is flat on the one side and rounded on the other. Players must use the flat side of the stick to hit the ball. Traditionally, hockey was played on a grass pitch. Today, however, it is also played on an artificial surface, which allows the ball to travel at great speeds around the pitch.

Aim of the game

The 11 players in a team (7 push, and pass a ball with sticks to score goals.

Goals can be scored only from inside the opponent's shooting circle. When the ball crosses the opponent's line between the goal posts. The team with the most goals at the end of the match wins.

A match lasts 70 minutes and is split into two halves of 35 minutes each.

Only the goalkeeper can use his or her feet to stop the ball.

If an opposition player commits a foul around the goal area, then a short corner is awarded. Here, a free hit is taken from a mark inside the shooting circle.

Faults in the shooting circle result in a penalty stroke, where one player shoots at goal from the penalty spot with only the goalkeeper to beat.

Attack and defence

A hockey team is made up of attackers and defenders. Attackers include the wingers, inside forwards, and centre forwards. Their job is to move the ball up the pitch to score goals. The opposition's defence will try to stop them. Defenders include the fullbacks, half backs, and the goalkeeper. Players are not allowed to make contact with their opponents. If they do, they are penalized by the referee.



A field hockey goal is 3.7 m (12 ft) wide and 2.1 m (7 ft) high.

The goalkeeper wears protective clothing, including a face mask and chest pads.