



## What is the "C - Cut Push" and how is it used in Hockey

When I first started teaching power skating in 1971 I needed to find a name for a certain push that is used or incorporated into many hockey maneuvers. Because I believe in using visualization techniques to enhance learning I finally came up with the name "C - cut" to describe this push.

As far as I know, this term was not previously used or even defined. In my first book (1977) I devoted an entire chapter to C - cuts. Amazingly the term "stuck". Today it is commonly used in the hockey world. I often hear coaches telling their players, "C - cut, C - cut," during backward skating moves.

The C - cut maneuver is done with both skates on the ice. The C - cut push is usually executed by pushing the outside skate (and leg) against the inside edge of the blade while gliding on the inside skate.

**The Forward C - Cut:** When skating forward the C - cut push cuts an upside down letter "C" into the ice. The following explanation uses the left leg for power (pushing leg) and the right leg for direction (gliding leg).

Start by pivoting the pushing (left) skate at a right angle to the gliding (right) skate that is pointed forward along the direction of travel. The skates are now in a reverse "L" position. Push the left skate and leg first to the back, then out to the side, then forward. To complete the push you must then recover the skate and leg inward to the midline of the body. During the entire maneuver the gliding skate travels forward in a straight line.

The pattern that the push cuts into the ice resembles the letter C. When pushing with the right skate and leg the push resembles an upside down and reverse letter C.

The forward C - cut push is important when doing tight turns. It is the first push of the tight turn; it is used when entering the turn. It is also used with great success in a maneuver I call "bulling" or "protecting the puck" to power around a defender who is trying to take the puck or to take you out of the play. The advantage of using C - cuts in this situations is that both feet are always on the ice, allowing the player to maintain balance while at the same time being able to push powerfully.

Goalies use forward C - cut pushes when moving a short distance out of the net and backward C - cut pushes to quickly back up into the net.

**The Backward C - Cut:** When skating backward the C - cut push cuts the letter "C" into the ice. The following explanation uses the left leg for power (pushing leg) and the right leg for direction (gliding leg).



Start by pivoting the pushing (left) skate at a right angle to the gliding (right) skate which is pointed straight backward along the direction of travel. The skates are now in a reverse and upside down "L" position. Push the left skate and leg first to the front, then out to the side, then back. To complete the push you must recover the skate and leg inward to the midline of the body. During the entire maneuver the gliding skate travels backward in a straight line.

When skating straight backward the C - cut push IS the push of the backward stride. It also is the very important first push of backward crossovers and backward crossover starts.

All hockey players need to be comfortable skating backward as well as forward. When you can skate backward with speed and mobility you can be counted on during power plays and in short handed situations. Think of how much more ice time you'll get. Think of how valuable you'll become to your team!

SPEED is the name of the game. The C - cut push is one of the important components of speed.

by Laura Stamm © March, 2004