



## The Hockey Stop

The hockey stop is that sudden, flashy move that sends snow flying and has spectators gawking. It is the move that players use to "stop on a dime". Many coaches insist that when changing direction, their players should use stops and starts rather than wide turns; they feel that when properly executed, stops and starts are faster and more efficient than turns.

The hockey stop leaves players well prepared to start out either in the same or in the opposite direction.

### **Following are some important things to remember when executing hockey stops:**

1. All stops require that the skates slide or skid against, rather than cut into, the ice. Use shallow edges when stopping. The front or outside skate should be on the inside edge; the back or inside skate should be on the outside edge.
2. Both skates are used to stop. Body weight distribution is usually 60% on the front (outside) skate and 40% on the back (inside) skate.
3. Hockey stops involve a 90 degree change of direction. To effectively execute the hockey stop the following steps are essential:
  - When gliding forward in preparation for stopping, release your weight by unbending your knees.
  - Now flip your hips 90 degrees (so you are facing sideways).
  - Re-bend your knees deeply as you scrape the ice with the skate blades.
  - Scrape the ice by applying pressure to the ice with the balls of your feet, not with the heels. The heels will dig into the ice, causing a turn rather than a stop.
  - Keep your feet at least shoulder width apart as you scrape the ice and re-bend your knees.



by Laura Stamm, © January, 2002