



*“Sometimes discretion is the better part of valor.”*

## ALL ZONES - TAKING/AVOIDING HARD BODY CHECKS

You can't play hockey effectively, being cautious and worrying about injury on the ice but there are steps you can take to avoid setting yourself up for checks that could produce injuries that could be avoided without hurting your team at all. In fact, you will help your team by not getting injured and still being able to contribute.

Be aware of the positions when you are most vulnerable to hard checks when you have or are about to get the puck and some actions you can take to blunt or avoid contact, not sacrificing puck control.

1. When you have your head down looking for, receiving a pass or trying to get control of the puck.
  - **Action:**
    - Take just quick glances or no glances down to the puck preparing yourself for contact by keeping your legs and skates wide apart, your knees bent, your upper body crouched, your stick gripped firmly for stability and your whole body ready for impact (“hit ready”)
2. When you go into a corner first and their player is right on you and you can't skate by him or when you are trying to beat their defenceman wide as you cross their blue line.
  - **Action:**
    - Pass off and become hit ready.
    - Become hit ready, put the puck between your skates and create no body separation or space between you and the boards so you are not hit into the boards, eliminating the jolt and perhaps making you fall.
    - Put the puck between your skates and jump up a little to reduce the impact.
    - Put the puck between your skates, spin 360 degrees avoiding any impact.
    - Put the puck between your skates, jump back avoiding any impact.
    - Knock the puck back in the opposite direction you are going and stop, or curl back avoiding any impact.
    - Put the puck between your skates, become hit ready and put your arms up a little keeping your elbow and stick down.
    - Put the puck between your skates, make contact with him with your shoulder before he makes contact with you.
    - If you think he is only going to get the back piece of you, bend your body forward, curling it into a hit ready position, keep skating, take the hit and keep going.
3. When you are going into the middle in the neutral zone to get a pass.
  - **Action:**
    - Be hit ready and besides the above actions think about redirecting the pass to one of your players rather than receiving it if a hit is unavoidable.



4. When you are cutting across the middle in their end just over the blue line.
  - **Action:**
    - Be hit ready and besides the above actions think about redirecting the pass to one of your players rather than receiving it if a hit is unavoidable.
5. As you are shooting, when your are in front of their net, or trying a wrap around.
  - **Action:**
    - Be hit ready.
6. When you are receiving a soft past with your head turned or down.
  - **Action:**
    - Avoid