



*“Make the player trying to check you, or make the goalie, think you are going to do one thing, and then do something different”*

## **ALL ZONES – MISDIRECTION MOVES**

Watch very skilled amateur or pro hockey players closely when they have the puck and are being chased by players on the other team, or when they have the puck and are about to make a play themselves or pass the puck to a team mate.

Very rarely do these players give away or telegraph the play they are about to make.

In fact, some times they use one of several “tricks” to fool the other team into thinking they are going to do one thing with the puck, and then they do something else which is quite unexpected. We can too. Some examples:

1. Our player with the puck can look one way at one of his team mates as if he intends to pass to him, lean his body, drop his shoulder and pull the puck back on his stick like players do when they pass to “sell it” to the player coming to check him, and then at the last second stop these motions and pass the puck in a different direction to another player
2. Our player may start skating quickly and actually start the passing motion to get their player to assume the puck is going to be passed and then at the last possible second pull the puck back, stop or slow down and let their player at high speed just skate right past him as their player assumes our player will pass the puck before their player has a chance to get there
3. If our defenceman is in his own corner he may make a strong skating move in one direction to get the checking player to start to go there in anticipation and at the last second spin around or pivot going in the opposite direction
4. Our defenceman in his own corner may angle himself to make it look like he is going to pick up the puck to pass it up the near side boards to a team mate and then at the last second reverse the puck to the opposite side behind his net making a D to D pass or ring the puck around the boards to a winger at the opposite side ½ boards
5. Again, our defenceman may just before he picks up the puck in our corner angle towards the back of our net going at full speed to convince their checking player he is going to go around the net and then once the checking player decides to try to cut him off by skating in front of our net to the other side, our defenceman gets half way around the net and stops and goes in the opposite direction
6. Our defenceman who is skating hard back into his own end to beat their player to the puck just over our blue line may feel the checker coming behind him and lean one way getting the checker to do the same and then quickly cut in the other direction up ice using his body to



prevent their checker from adjusting fast enough to poke check or body check our defenceman

7. In the offensive end, our defenceman at their blue line with the puck may wind up for a slap shot expecting their goalie to start coming out onto the white ice and in stead of shooting on net our defenceman can convert his shot into a pass to an open winger at the side of the net with the goalie now out of position too far out
8. In the offensive end, our forward may start going around their net and then at the last second pass out in front to his team mate in the direction he has come from once he has “sold” that he probably is going completely around their net
9. On a break away, our player may come in on an angle carrying the puck at his side or back behind him a bit with his body turned as if he is going to shoot and then at the last second bring the puck forward and deek in stead
10. Our forward may come across the blue line and wind up partially for a slap shot or just draw the puck back making it look like he is going to wrist a shot or snap a shot, and then stop his stick motion and pass off once their defenceman steps towards him or lunges at him to bodycheck or poke check him
11. Our forward skating full speed into the offensive zone may cross the blue line at full speed, slow down for a step or two, and when their defenceman begins to step up towards him our forward speeds up again and catches their defenceman flat footed so their defenceman can’t move sideways in time to stop our forward going around him to the outside or inside

There are a lot of physical skills involved with being able to do any of the above beginning with the fundamental physical skills of skating, puck handling, and passing along with imagination, feel, confidence and timing. Many very good players use these skills very effectively to substitute for their lack of blazing speed or other physical skills.

Practice is the key, first to understand exactly what the moves for misdirection are, and then how to make the moves, and when, and then gradually to make the moves under pressure taking reasonable risks.

Coaches can integrate the teaching of these moves in offensive, defensive or neutral zone drills outlined elsewhere on this site.

### **SO PRACTICE MISDIRECTION MOVES EXTENSIVELY WITH PROGRESSIVE STEPS**