



Guide to Buying Ringette Equipment

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To ensure the proper protection of the players, the following is a guide for ringette equipment and what to look for. Each family has different needs and this guide may not be for everyone, but it provides general information, especially for those starting out.

Where to buy equipment

- ask family/friends for used equipment, buy it off of them;
- stores around the West Island carry new and used ringette equipment.

The importance of price/quality/safety

- it becomes a question of personal preference and budget;
- comfort and fit are important aspects to ensure safety.

Equipment Checklist

Skates

- skates should never hurt, and there is really no such thing as a "break-in period";
- skates should be comfortable, with a proper length and width fit;
- if you can, take out the insole to measure the size;
- perfect length fit is the toes 1/8" away from the tip when the skates are tied (some parents buy skates 1 to 1.5 sizes larger to accommodate for growth spurts), although buying much bigger skates is not recommended;
- perfect width fit is important, D denotes regular width skates, E and EE denote wide skates (you need to ask a sales rep if you are not sure if your daughter has wide feet or not).

Ringette Stick

- ringette sticks are not cut-off hockey sticks, they are tapered with a reinforced tip designed for spearing/shooting;
- proper height for the stick - with skates on, the stick MUST come under the armpit of the player, anything higher compromises the ability of the player to perform properly due to the stick being too long;
- wood, wood with plastic tip, graphite or composite sticks are all a matter of preference/budget;
- more advanced players use sticks with plastic ribbed tips that help shoot the ring, for girls just starting out and younger girls should buy the most basic stick so they can learn the game.

Neck Guard

- Approved neck guard;
- a protective bib in addition to a neck guard protects the lower neck and collarbone.

Helmet

- CSA certified helmet - note that all helmets have expiry dates where their certification/safety standard seal expires;
- proper helmet fit - snug fit in all directions (front, side, and chin cup) with no gap in any area, leave the helmet on for at least 5 minutes to test comfort and proper circulation;
- tip - check the helmet once a month, and use loc-tite on all screws to prevent loose screws during the season.

Visor / Ringette Cage

- ringette visors are not hockey visors, a ringette visor is designed to stop the narrow tip of an errant ringette stick from penetrating into the facial area of a player;
- there are different size visors, so make sure you buy the visor suited for your child's face/helmet size;
- some players use acrylic (clear) visors, others use cages;
- the advantage of cages is the almost zero-maintenance factor, including no-scratch-marks or fogging issues;



- the advantage of clear is the sightline is better;
- tip 1 - ringette cages are expensive, try buying used where possible, or if buying new, shop around;
- tip 2 - for clear visors, use a drop of baby shampoo to wipe the interior before each game to prevent fogging;
- tip 3 - carry a clear visor in a helmet bag or old pillow cover to prevent scratching of the visor.

Elbow Pads

- probably the most underrated pad, does the majority of impacts on falls in a very fragile area (elbows);
- proper elbow pad fit - doesn't impede with the shoulder pad, and comes right up to the gloves;
- tip 1 - consider a more padded elbow pad if your child tends to battle a lot and is in possession of the ring often.

Gloves

- gloves are hockey gloves which protect the hands from sticks and other impacts;
- proper glove fit - the fingertips are within 1/8" of the tips of the fingers;
- tip 1 - due to the nature of stick checking, ensure that the glove in combination with the elbow pad covers the wrist and forearm areas properly.

Shin Pads

- proper shin pad fit - doesn't impede with the skate or skate tongue;
- tip 1 - when buying shin pads, bring skates and try on different models;
- tip 2 - buy shin pads that are easy to take on and off.

Shoulder Pads

- proper shoulder pad fit - comfortable, doesn't constrict movement;
- tip 1 - bulkier pads are heavier and provide additional protection in the collarbone and stomach areas, but prohibit free flowing movement;
- tip 2 - for the velcro strap over the bicep, do not tighten it all the way, allowing for freer movement of arms for shooting the ring and spearing.

Hip Pads

- some ringette associations use hockey pants, but BKRA standardizes on hip pads with jill pad;
- proper hip pad fit - comfortable, does not go below knees or interferes with shin pads;
- tip 1 - wear shin pads when fitting hip pads;
- tip 2 - some referee pads work, but don't forget the jill pad protection area.

Practice Jersey

- proper practice jersey fit - child should be able to easily outstretch arms and put palms together without the jersey being stretched (if it does not, the jersey is too tight)

Ringette Pants

- BKRA sells the pants at cost to all players (see your team manager for details on how to buy), and for all BKRA teams, these pants are mandatory for league games.

Tips on Clean Equipment

- always air out equipment after each practice/game, preferably in a well-ventilated area;
- consider using Febreze, Cow Brand baking soda, or some other anti-microbial spray to minimize odours;
- when cleaning smelly equipment, use hot water to presoak, then wash in a cup of baking soda, and a small amount of non-sudsing laundry detergent in a bathtub, soaking for 1 hour, rinsing, and drying outdoors or in a well ventilated area.