

Tips from the pros

YOUR FAVOURITE LEAFS SHARE THEIR HOCKEY TIPS

KYLE WELLWOOD ON RECEIVING A PASS

Since very few passes are perfect, it is important to learn how to take all sorts of passes cleanly, including on your forehand, backhand and off your skates. Every good pass receiver will keep their stick on the ice, using it as a target for the passer and “cushion” their stick as the puck arrives.

These simple tips help me accept passes from teammates like Mats Sundin. Practice receiving passes on your forehand, backhand and off your skates. Be prepared to work hard at receiving tape-to-tape and stray passes without breaking your stride.

The ability to receive a pass is just as important as making a pass. Every player on your team should take some time to practice receiving a hard accurate pass while skating forwards and

backwards. It’s a good skill to have!

Don’t forget to “cushion” your pass by softly bringing the blade of your stick back while attempting to maintain control of the puck.

Have fun playing!

ALEX STEEN ON MAKING A TIGHT TURN

Learning how to enter and exit all turns at top speed will help you in every aspect of your game. A tip that Paul Maurice taught me during training camp at Ricoh Coliseum was to turn your stick in the direction that you plan to turn. Think of it as a steering wheel and follow the direction of your stick. This is good practice technique, as is leaning your body forward and into the turn. Also be sure to always turn facing the puck.

Enjoy the thrill of making a tight turn; it’s a lot of fun! Keep working on the little things!♣



Alex Steen

Learn how to enter and exit all turns at top speed.

– Alex Steen

GETTY IMAGES



Tips from the pros

NUTRITION ADVICE FROM THE TEAM CHEF

BRAD LONG
DIRECTOR, RESTAURANT
OPERATIONS/EXECUTIVE CHEF
AIR CANADA CENTRE
ON NUTRITION

WHAT THE PLAYERS EAT: To be the fastest, to be the toughest, to be the smartest, you need to put the finest high-test fuel into your body. The Toronto Maple Leafs know that and you won't catch them leaving their vegetables on their plates. Your body needs the same balance as the pros – so you need to make sure you get enough of the all the good stuff – vegetables and fresh fruit included.

HYDRATION: When the pros play they can lose five pounds in one game just from perspiration. Your whole body needs water: To keep you cool,

to help move fuel and remove waste from your cells and to keep your muscles working at top performance levels. Always keep hydrated – keep drinking lots of fluids to keep your body and game in top shape.

CANADA FOOD GUIDE: In this world of infinite food choices, anybody can become confused figuring out what the best thing to eat should be. There are books, videos, fad diets, member programs, threats, promises and guarantees but do you want to know the very best place to start to learn about what you put into your body? The Canada Food Guide! It's all there.

PROTEIN: You need protein in your diet to help build up and repair your muscles and connective tissue. It's probably the stuff you already like anyway – chicken, beef and shrimp – and there are many other sources that are just as tasty and can round out the types of protein you get. I'm talking about nuts, grains and lots of types of beans. Doesn't matter where you get it – just get it!

CARBOHYDRATES: Your body needs to have fuel all the time but when you really need to pick up speed and put on the pressure it'll be carbohydrates that your body will be looking for. Carbs are simple and complex forms of sugar and you need both kinds to be your best. That means that every meal should include some pasta or brown rice and lots of veggies and then try some fresh fruit just before the game to give you an extra kick.

FAT: This has gotten a really bad rap that can be confusing since in truth you need fat to survive. We now know that foods fried in trans-fat are very bad for you and there are a few others to avoid. But never forget that your brain needs fat to function. The good news here is that the good fats that you need are all around you in bread, cereals, grains, vegetables, nuts – you know – the stuff you eat every day anyway – right?♦

Carbs are simple and complex forms of sugar and you need both kinds to be your best.

– Brad Long



Brad Long

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