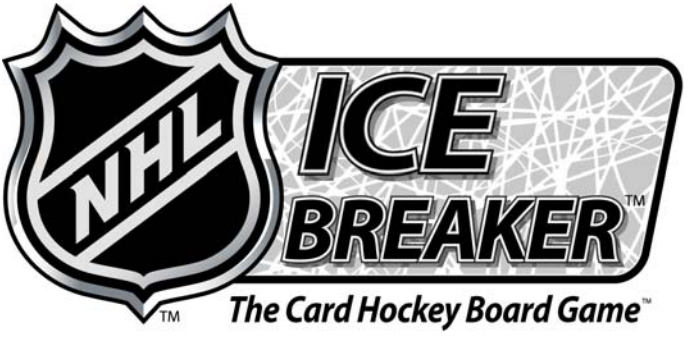


Official Rulebook

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Welcome to ***NHL® Ice Breaker: The Card Hockey Board Game***, the game that captures all the thrilling aspects of NHL® hockey in an easy-to-learn, fast-paced board game. ***NHL Ice Breaker*** game play is built on the standard 54-card playing deck and some familiar classic card game mechanics, allowing you to take the shots, make the saves and ultimately control your own destiny.

Are you ready to play?

Object of the Game

Just like the game on the ice, the object of ***NHL Ice Breaker*** is to outscore your opponent through three (3) periods of hockey action. Players move the puck up and down the ice by winning hands, and try to get the puck into the *Shooting Zone* for a shot on net. Once in the *Shooting Zone*, it's a showdown between shooter and goaltender.

This rulebook includes all the rules for the two-player (one-on-one) game format.

Game Components & Set Up

Here are the components of ***NHL Ice Breaker***:

Playing deck: Each card in the 54-card deck can execute all the functions of the game (depending on the situation), including *Pass/Skate*, *Shot*, *Goaltending* and *Ice Breaker*. Once cards have been played, place them into Discard Piles at the side of the game board.



The deck also represents the clock. Each time through the deck is one (1) period of play.

Game board: The game board includes the playing area (the ice), each team's scoreboard, and a period tracker. On the ice, there is the grid area, which tracks movement of the puck up and down the ice, and the opposing *Shooting Zones*.

Game puck: The puck is placed at center ice for a face-off to start the game, at the start of each subsequent period, and after a goal is scored. When a player wins a hand, the puck is moved up the ice the number of spaces and in the direction indicated on the winning card. The objective is to move the puck into the *Shooting Zone* for a shot on net.

Score & period markers: included with your game are three (3) markers, which are used on the game board to keep track of each team's score, as well as the period. To start the game, place markers on zero (0) for each team's score, and another to indicate that the first period is about to start.

Game Card

Each card in the ***NHL Ice Breaker*** deck is divided into four sections: *Pass/Skate*, *Shot*, *Goaltending* and *Ice Breaker*. Here's a breakdown of each element of the game card:



1 – Card suit and value (rank)
2 – Number of spaces to move, if the hand is won
3 – Direction of movement, if the hand is won
4 – *Shot* section team logo
5 – Description of the shot (goal), if the hand is won
6 – *Goaltending* section team logo
7 – Description of the save, if the hand is won
8 – *Ice Breaker* action

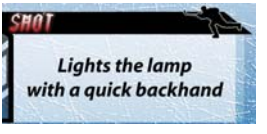
Game Card Functions

Pass/Skate



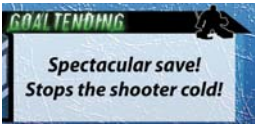
Indicates the number of spaces (i.e. squares) the player moves the puck after winning the hand in the grid area of the ice, as well as the direction that the puck is moving (left-diagonal, right-diagonal or straight forward). This function simulates the constant battle for puck possession. *Pass/Skate* hands are played until one player enters the opponent's *Shooting Zone* for a shot.
NOTE: In the case of a tie, play another hand to determine who gains possession.

Shot



Once in the *Shooting Zone*, this section of the card describes the type of shot and how the goal is scored if you win the hand. **NOTE:** In the case of a tie (i.e. both players play a card/hand of the same value), the goaltender wins (i.e. makes the save).

Goaltending



Once your opponent enters your *Shooting Zone*, this section of the card describes the type of save that is made if you win the hand. **Remember,** ties go to the goaltender.

Ice Breaker

The orange-bordered squares on the game board are *Ice Breaker* squares. When the puck stops on one of these spots on the board, it triggers the *Ice Breaker* function.

After landing on an *Ice Breaker* square, flip a card off the top of the Draw Pile, read aloud the text in the *Ice Breaker* section and place the card in your discard pile. **NOTE:** *Ice Breaker* actions always affect the player who has landed on the *Ice Breaker* square, unless specifically noted on the card.



Ice Breaker Definitions

Here's a brief description of each *Ice Breaker* action:

PENALTY – One-card disadvantage. Face-off at nearest circle.
Place the puck at the nearest square containing a red face-off circle (also called a face-off 'dot'). Since the penalty is charged to the player who landed on the *Ice Breaker* square, he/she refills his/her hand to only four (4) cards, while the opponent refills to the customary five (5). In addition, **the penalized player can only refill his/her hand once all four (4) cards have been played, or after the opponent scores, whichever happens first**. So, even if there is a stoppage during the opponent's power play, the penalized player cannot replenish his/her hand back up to five (5). **NOTE:** If the penalty occurs after the final refill of the period (see "Refilling Your Hand" section), the penalized player must allow the opponent to remove one of the remaining cards from his/her hand (face down) and place it in his/her discard pile.

BIG BODY CHECK – Opponent plays up to 2 free cards
Your opponent plays ***up to*** two (2) uncontested cards out of his/her hand for free movement up the ice toward your goal (indicated in the *Pass/Skate* section). The card indicates "up to" since the player may only have to play one (1) card. For instance, if only one card is needed for your opponent to enter the *Shooting Zone*, no additional free card is played. Or, if your opponent lands on an *Ice Breaker* square on his/her first free card play, he/she must play the *Ice Breaker* (i.e. pick a card off the Draw Pile and perform the action indicated in the *Ice Breaker* section) ***instead*** of playing a second card for a movement up the ice.

TURNOVER – Opponent plays a free card
Your opponent plays an uncontested card out of his/her hand for a free movement up the ice toward your goal (indicated in the *Pass/Skate* section).

PUCK OUT OF PLAY – Face-off at nearest circle
Place the puck at the nearest square containing a red face-off circle. Both players refill hands back up to five (5) cards (if applicable), then play the next hand.

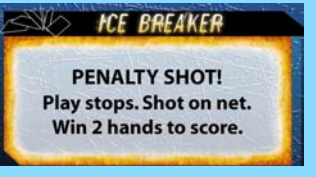
GREAT PASS – Play a free card
You play an uncontested card out of your hand for a free movement up the ice toward your opponent's goal (indicated in the *Pass/Skate* section).

GIVE-AND-GO PASS – Advance 4 spaces in any direction
Move the puck four spaces in any direction – forward, backward or sideways.

TAPE-TO-TAPE PASS – Advance to Shooting Zone
Move the puck directly into your opponent's *Shooting Zone*. The next card(s) you play is/are for a shot, while your opponent plays for goaltending (save).

PENALTY SHOT! – Play stops. Shot on net. Win 2 hands to score.
You are taking a penalty shot on your opponent. In order to score, you must win two (2) consecutive hands.

- If you lose the first hand, the penalty shot has been saved. Both players refill their hands (if applicable) and a face-off is taken at the face-off dot to the left or right of your opponent's goal. You do not play a second hand if the first one is saved.
- If you win the first hand and lose the second hand, the penalty shot has been saved. Both players refill their hands (if applicable) and a face-off is taken at the face-off dot to the left or right of your opponent's goal.
- If you win both hands, you have scored (woo hoo!). Both players refill their hands (if applicable) and a face-off is taken at center ice.



The only exception to the win-two-hands-to-score rule is if either player happens to play a Power Hand on a penalty shot. If that is the case, all five (5) cards can be played for a penalty shot goal (or save). See "Game Play – Power Hands" section for more.

NOTE: If you land on an *Ice Breaker* square and there are no cards left in the Draw Pile, shuffle all the discards and play a card off the top of the deck.

Game Play – High Hand Wins

Each action in ***NHL Ice Breaker*** is based on the simple mechanic of high hand wins. The player with the highest card (or hand, if multiple cards are played) executes the play indicated on their card. Opponents play a single (1) card from their hand **at the same time**. Card value rankings are as follows: twos (2s) are low, Aces are high, Jokers are highest. **NOTE:** In standard play, Jokers are **not** "wild" cards.

EXAMPLE: Player A plays the King of clubs; Player B plays the 9 of hearts. Since the King is the higher card, Player A wins the hand. If the card was played in the grid area of the ice, Player A moves the puck up the ice five (5) spaces diagonally to the left (indicated in the *Pass/Skate* section of the card). If the card was played in the *Shooting Zone* for a shot, the result is a goal. If played for goaltending (also in the *Shooting Zone*), the result is a save.



Game Play – Playing Multiple Cards

In ***NHL Ice Breaker***, cards can be played individually, in pairs (two of the same card), two pair (two sets of two of the same cards) or three-of-a-kind (three of the same card). The ability to play multiple cards adds a level of control, strategy and excitement that you will not find in any other sports game.

Though you always start each hand by playing a single card at the same time as your opponent, you can "follow up" in order to complete a pair, two pair or three-of-a-kind. This way, even if you intend on playing a pair, you do not tip off your opponent to what you have. You also avoid playing a card that you didn't need to play.

Once the first card has been played, additional cards can be added to win the hand. This can continue so long as one player or the other can complete a better hand than his/her opponent.



A **Pair** (two cards of the same value) will beat any single card. The action executed is the top card of the pair played (i.e. the card showing face up in your discard pile).

Two Pair (two sets of two cards of the same value) will beat any single card or any pair. The action executed is the top card of the two pair played. **NOTE:** If both players end up playing two pair on the same hand, the player with the highest pair wins.

Three-of-a-Kind will beat any single card, any pair or any two pair. The action executed is the top card of the three-of-a-kind played.

EXAMPLE: Player A plays a 10 of clubs; Player B plays the 6 of spades. If Player B has a second 6, it can be added to the hand played – a pair of 6s beats a 10. Conversely, if Player A has a second 10, it can be added to the hand played – a pair of 10s beats a pair of 6s. And so on until the winner of the hand is determined.

Remember, in standard play, the Joker is **not** a "wild" card. It cannot be used in combination with other cards to build a pair, two pair or three-of-a-kind.

Game Play – Power Hands

Another exciting element of ***NHL Ice Breaker*** is the ability to play "Power Hands". Power Hands are rare, five-card hands, which include (in reverse order of strength):

Straight – five ordered cards (e.g. 2-3-4-5-6 or 10-J-Q-K-A)

Flush – five cards of the same suit (e.g. 3-5-6-10-Q of hearts)

Full House – three-of-a-kind and a pair (e.g. 4-4-7-7-7)

Four-of-a-Kind – four cards of the same rank (e.g. 5-5-5-5 + any other card)

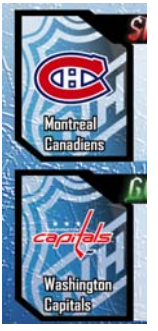
Straight Flush – five ordered cards of the same suit (e.g. 6-7-8-9-10 of spades)

Royal Flush – 10-J-Q-K-A of the same suit

If you manage to get a Power Hand, all five (5) cards can be played at the same time for an automatic goal **if played in a *Pass/Skate* or *Shot* scenario**. If you play a Power Hand in a *Goaltending* situation, the result will be an automatic save, not a goal.

Remember, in standard play, the Joker is **not** a "wild" card. It cannot be used in combination with other cards to build a Power Hand. **NOTE:** Aces can be high or low in a Power Hand.

Team Cards



Each ***NHL Ice Breaker*** game card has two team logos associated with it – one in the *Shot* section and the other in the *Goaltending* section. Playing the appropriate Team Card in either a *Shot* or *Goaltending* scenario will 'trump' your opponent's hand and lead to a goal (or save) – regardless of whether the value of your Team Card is higher or lower than the opponent's card(s). Team Cards will beat any single card, any pair, any two pair and any three-of-a-kind. The only hand that will beat a Team Card is a five-card Power Hand.

- Team Cards have no trump ability outside the *Shooting Zone*.
- Playing your Team Card as part of a pair, two pair, three-of-a-kind or a Power Hand **negates** it's 'trump' ability. Team Cards can only trump if played individually.
- If both teams play their respective Team Cards in the *Shooting Zone*, the standard rule of 'high card wins' prevails (ties go to the goaltender).

Break Away Squares

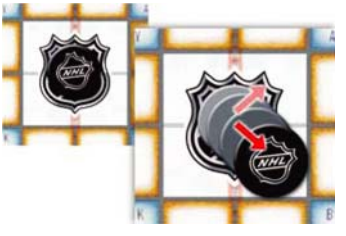


There are four (4) blue-bordered squares on the ***NHL Ice Breaker*** game board marked "BREAK AWAY". The player that lands on the Break Away square moves the puck directly into the opponent's *Shooting Zone* for a shot on net.

Starting the Game

Now that you know the basics of game play, it's time to take the ice. Here's how you start a game of ***NHL Ice Breaker***:

1. Each player selects a team. This is important if and when you draw a card with your team logo on it. Players should also determine which player is the home team.
2. Shuffle the ***NHL Ice Breaker*** deck. This is both the Draw Pile and game clock.
3. Alternately deal out five (5) cards to each player. Place the Draw Pile beside the game board.
4. Place the puck at center ice for a face-off.
5. Each player starts by playing a single card **at the same time** into their own discard pile. After the first card is down, either player can "follow up" and add to the first card played, as necessary, to see who wins the face-off. As usual, high hand wins.
   NOTE: In the case of a tie, each player plays an additional hand until there is a winner.
6. The player with the highest hand selects the left or right face-off square (on his/her half of center ice) to start from. The player then moves the puck the number of spaces and in the direction indicated in the *Pass/Skate* section of the card played.



Hands are played continuously in this manner, as opponents battle for puck possession up and down the ice.

Refilling Your Hand

- Players refill their hands to five (5) cards after each stoppage in play (i.e. after a goal, if the puck goes out of play, etc.) **before** "the final refill" (see below).
- If play is in progress and you run out of cards, refill your hand back up to five cards. Think of it, in hockey terms, as a 'line change on the fly'.
- If you are out of cards and you land on an *Ice Breaker* square, flip the *Ice Breaker* card off the top of the Draw Pile **before** refilling your hand.
- After a goal, both players refill their hands (if applicable) and face-off at center ice.
- Approaching the end of the period, if one or both players need to refill their hand(s) and there are not enough cards left in the Draw Pile, the player should take the remaining cards, then re-shuffle the discards and refill his/her hand to five (5) cards. This is known as "the final refill." Players do not refill their hands again for the remainder of the period.

TIP: After the final refill of the period (after you shuffle the discards), take the top-half of the re-shuffled Draw Pile, turn it 90 degrees, and place it on top to form a "+". This will serve as a reminder not to refill your hand again.



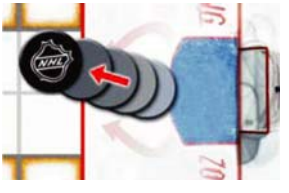
- After the final refill of the period, cards are only played off the Draw Pile in the following scenarios:
  A. If required for landing on an *Ice Breaker*.
  B. If a timeout is called (see "Timeouts" section).
  C. If one player runs out of cards before the other. In this case, the player who has run out of cards draws a card randomly off the top of the Draw Pile.
- The period ends when **both** players are out of cards.

After a Save

After a save, the goaltender has two (2) options:

A. **Freeze the puck for a face-off**
Play stops and re-starts with a face-off at either face-off circle closest to the goaltender. If the shot was taken from the right-hand side, the face off is held in the right face-off circle, and vice versa.
Both players refill their hands to five (5) cards (unless they are past the final refill, in which case neither player replenishes). The player who made the save refills their hand first (if applicable).

B. **Play the puck forward**
The goaltender can play the puck to either of the two squares directly in front of the goal (indicated with the red arrows). Play continues with the cards in hand. Players **do not** refill.



Penalties & Penalty Shots

For more on penalties and penalty shots, refer to the "*Ice Breaker* Definitions" section.

Pulling the Goalie

At any point **in the third period only**, a player can "pull the goalie" (i.e. take their goaltender out of the net for an extra skater) by adding a sixth (or extra) card to his/her hand. While pulling the goalie gives you the benefit of an extra card, **your opponent will be credited with a goal is he/she enters your *Shooting Zone***.

To pull the goalie:

1. Player verbally declares "pulling the goalie".
2. Player takes one card off the top of the Draw Pile and adds it to his/her hand to a maximum of six (6) cards.
3. Player continues to re-fill to six (6) cards (if applicable) until he/she verbally declares "goalie back in net" or the third period comes to an end.

In the event that a player holding six (6) cards has a Power Hand, he/she plays only the five (5) cards that make up the Power Hand and keeps the sixth.

Timeouts

To call a timeout, a player must verbally declare "timeout" **during a stoppage in play**. The player that calls a timeout can discard, then replace, up to two (2) cards from his/her hand, one card at a time. If a timeout is called after the final refill, the player does not have to discard, so long as the maximum cards in hand does not exceed five (5). The card(s) that are discarded must be shown face up in the player's discard pile, and replacement cards are taken off the top of the Draw Pile.
NOTE: Each player can call only **one (1) timeout per game**.

Periods

The 54-card deck represents one period of ***NHL Ice Breaker.*** Once the period is over, shuffle all the cards and deal out five (5) to each player. Move the period marker to indicate the start of the next period with a face-off at center ice. There are three (3) periods in a standard game.

Overtime

If the score is tied at the end of the third period, proceed to a sudden-death Overtime period. The Overtime period works as follows:

1. Shuffle the deck and count out 20 cards face down. This will represent the time of the Overtime period.
2. Alternately deal out **four (4) cards** to each player.
3. Start the Overtime period with a face-off at center ice.
4. Always re-fill your hand to four cards, *not* five, in Overtime.
5. The first player to score a goal is the winner.

Shootout

If the game is still tied after the Overtime period, proceed to a Shootout. The Shootout works as follows:

1. Shuffle the deck.
2. The home team decides whether to shoot first or to defer to the opponent (if the home team was never determined, flip a coin to decide who it is).
3. The shooting team draws a single (1) card off the top of the draw pile for the shot

on net. The goaltending team then draws a card to attempt a save. As usual, high card determines if the goal is scored or the save is made (ties go to the goaltender).

4. The player with the most goals after the three-shot shootout is the winner.
5. If the shootout is tied after three (3) shots, it continues in a sudden-death format (i.e. one team must score a goal and save the opponent's shot).

Game Notes, Tips and Hints

- A play is not over until your finger is off the puck.
- A card laid is a card played.
- If you land on an *Ice Breaker* square and draw a "Play a free card" *Ice Breaker*, you **must** play a card out of your hand.
- It is up to the player to indicate that he/she has played a Team Card. If you forget or fail to notice that you have played your Team Card (before the next hand is played), you lose the Team Card's 'trump' ability for that particular hand.
- The player who wins the previous hand refills his/her hand first.
- If a player flips the "Opponent plays up to 2 free cards" *Ice Breaker* and the opponent lands on another *Ice Breaker* square before the second free card is played, the new *Ice Breaker* play takes precedence.
- If the Draw Pile has been played through, but one or both players still needs to refill his/her hand, take both discard piles and re-shuffle. Then take the top-half of the re-shuffled Draw Pile, turn it 90 degrees and place it on top to form a "+". This will serve as a reminder not to refill your hand for the rest of the period.
- If you hit the boards during a diagonal *Pass/Skate* movement of the puck and still have spaces to move, advance those remaining spaces straight ahead.
- In the unlikely occurrence of a second penalty being called against the same team during the same "penalty kill", the penalized player refills to a maximum of three (3) cards (like a 3-on-5 disadvantage). The penalized player cannot refill his/her hand until all three (3) cards have been played or a goal has been scored by the opponent, whichever happens first.

All-Star Game Mode

Have you mastered the standard rules of ***NHL Ice Breaker***? Ready for a little different challenge? All-Star Game mode is a game play variation that adds a little more strategy and hand management to the game. All other standard game rules apply, with these important exceptions:

1. Players refill hands to five (5) cards **after each play** completed outside the *Shooting Zone* (in the grid area).
2. Players **do not** refill hands upon entering the *Shooting Zone*. In the *Shooting Zone*, a shot must be taken (and a save attempted) with the remaining cards on hand.

Single-Player Mode

The most notable variation from standard play in the single-player mode is that you deal yourself only two (2) cards, *not* five (5). Play a card out of your hand first, then play a card for your opponent (i.e. "The System") by drawing a card off the top of the Draw Pile.

Here are the rules of the single-player mode (all other standard rules apply):

1. Select a team for yourself and a team for 'The System'.
2. In each battle for possession, always play your card first, then flip The System's card off the top of the Draw Pile.
3. There are no timeouts in the single-player mode.
4. You must play both cards out of your hand before drawing a new hand of two (2) cards.

Four-Player Mode

Four-player mode allows two players to team up against two others. Your cards are always played against the opponent directly across from you. All standard rules apply, except for:

1. You and your teammate alternate plays. Once your play is completed, your teammate plays his/her card(s) next, and vice versa.
2. The period ends when the Draw Pile has been played through and all four players have played all their cards.

More Information

Need a new playing deck? Lost your game puck? Have a question? We welcome you to visit our website at **www.csegames.com** to order replacement game pieces and submit your comments. Be sure to keep an eye out for web-exclusive ***NHL Ice Breaker*** game play features and downloads.

For discussion and reviews of ***NHL Ice Breaker*** and other great board games, check out **www.boardgamegeek.com**.

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Notes