

## Introduction to MLHA Hockey

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Thank you for your interest in the Mt. Lebanon Hockey Association (MLHA Hornets). We'd like to provide you with some information about amateur hockey to help answer some of your questions. Should you have additional questions, please feel free to email [mlhacommunications@gmail.com](mailto:mlhacommunications@gmail.com) and your question will be redirected to the appropriate Board member who will respond to you with an answer.

MLHA is a member of the Pittsburgh Amateur Hockey League (PAHL) whose territory reaches as far as Erie, PA (North), Morgantown, WV (South), State College, PA (East) and Youngstown, OH (West). PAHL falls under the guidelines of the Mid-American District of USA Hockey. You can find out more information on PAHL ([www.pahockey.com](http://www.pahockey.com)) or the Mid-American District ([www.midamhockey.com](http://www.midamhockey.com)) by visiting their websites.

Each amateur organization holds tryouts for their teams the Spring before each upcoming season. MLHA holds tryouts shortly after the National Championships are complete in April. MLHA also typically holds division level skates prior to tryouts to give participants a chance to prepare and skate with their peers.

Amateur hockey divides teams up by both age and skill.

Age is determined by birth year (Jan. 1st – Dec. 31st).

For the 2020-2021 season, birth years are categorized at the various levels as follows:

8U Mite (2012 – 2016)  
10U Squirt (2010 – 2011)  
12U Peewee (2008 – 2009)  
14U Bantam (2006 – 2007)  
16U Midget (2004 – 2005)

Within the 10U Squirt – 16U Midget divisions, there are various teams that are placed by skill level. The placements are set by PAHL in September based on player history. Placements may be adjusted after completion of the pre-season placement games.

Skill divisions are as follows and there may be multiple divisions within each level:

AAA  
AA  
A Major  
A Minor  
B

For 10U Squirt and above, official team practices start in August, and placement games occur during the months of September and October. Competition for the amateur hockey regular season typically runs from October through the end of February with the PAHL playoff season occurring at the beginning of March. Games are only played on weekends. 10U Squirt plays 6 placement games and 14 regular season

games. 12U Pee wee – 16U Midget play 2 placement games and 20 regular season games. Weekly practices for the current season typically run through the end of PAHL playoffs.

Most MLHA team practices are held at the Mt. Lebanon Recreation Center. Each team at MLHA will have at least one weeknight practice and various weekend practices offset by games. Games are only held on weekends.

Practice focus varies by age, and the MLHA goal is to progress using the following breakdown:

- 8U Mite            100% Skill Development
- 10U Squirt       90% Skill Development - 10% Team Tactics
- 12U Pee Wee    80% Skill Development - 20% Team Tactics
- 14U Bantam     70% Skill Development - 30% Team Tactics
- 16U Midget      60% Skill Development - 40% Team Tactics

Since MLHA is part of PAHL, games may be played at any of the PAHL organization's rinks ([PAHL Association List](#)). In addition, some teams may decide to enter hockey tournaments throughout the season. This will be at the discretion of each team, and is not covered as part of the standard fee for playing at MLHA.

#### 8U Mite Hockey

8U Mite Hockey follows USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM) that incorporates small area games and practices by breaking the ice into stations. Games are played in a "Cross Ice" jamboree format that encourages more action, decision making, and touches of the puck. There are no standings, scorekeeping, or playoffs.

8U Mite teams are limited to 10 Jamborees (games) per PAHL regulation. Jamborees take place on Saturdays and/or Sundays within the same PAHL territory mentioned above. 8U Mites have a dedicated weeknight practice (typically Mondays) as well as various practices on Saturdays or Sundays throughout the season. The 8U Mite season runs from September through March. 8U Mite teams may enter into tournaments at the team's discretion (up to 3). Tournament participation is optional, and tournament fees are not covered as part of the standard MLHA 8U Mite fee. For more information on the ADM program for USA Hockey, visit <http://www.admkids.com/>

MLHA does allow season fees to be paid in installments and offers multi-player family discounts.

Thank you for your interest in Mt. Lebanon Hockey Association.