



CHOOSING THE RIGHT STICK

KEY FACTS

1. There are no left-handed field hockey sticks. No matter which hand is dominant, all sticks are made the same (“right-handed”)
2. Outdoor and Indoor sticks are not the same. Indoor field hockey sticks are much thinner and lighter than outdoor field hockey sticks. Since the game is played on a smaller, flat and hard surface, there are rules that do not allow players to drive the ball or have a backswing. Thus, there is no need for such a sturdy stick
3. Goalie sticks, and field player sticks are not the same. A Goalie stick has a special curved portion above the hook for help in clearing the ball away.
4. There is no one brand better than the other, it all depends on personal preference

LENGTH

Stick lengths typically range from 24 – 38 inches, however the global standard is 36.5 inches. Having a stick that is the correct size for your body will help you better execute skills. Select your stick based on your height, comfort, and ultimately personal preference. Often times preference is based off of what position you play. Slightly longer sticks will allow for a longer reach and more drive on the ball, which is good for defenders and defensive midfielders. Shorter sticks will improve stick handling skills which is better for forwards and offensive midfielders.

In the case of a junior player (up to about the age of 15, or height of 5’3”), it is recommended that the stick be about level with the hip bone. The same rule does not apply as strictly to adults and late teenagers, although the hip is still a reasonable indicator. Adults and more experienced players will have more of an idea of what feels comfortable for them and their style, so it is more of a personal choice.

There are two standard methods for finding the appropriate stick length for you body; the U.S. method and the Dutch method.

U.S. Method:

Place your index finger of your right hand on your hip bone. Then place your middle and ring finger next to you index finger. The top of you stick should reach the side of your finger.

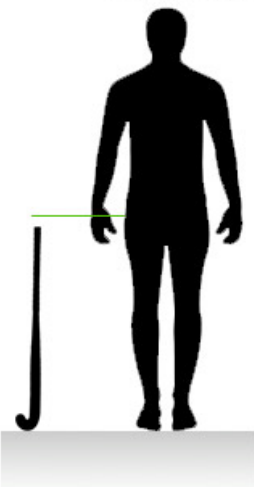
Dutch Method:

Hold the stick upside down. Insert the head of the stick into your armpit, as if it were a crutch. The end of the handle should fall between the middle of your kneecap to no more than two inches below the bottom of your kneecap.

FIELD HOCKEY STICK SIZING

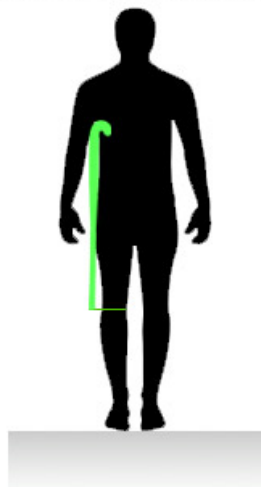
U.S. Method

Based on player height. Hold the stick at your side, the top should be 1-2 inches below your waist.



Dutch Method

Hold the head of the stick in your armpit. The ideal stick should end near the middle of the kneecap.



Common U.S. Size Chart

| Player Height | Stick Length |
|---------------|--------------|
| 5'9" and Up | 38" |
| 5'7" - 5'8" | 37" |
| 5'5" - 5'6" | 36" |
| 5'1" - 5'4" | 35" |
| 4'10" - 5'0" | 34" |
| 4'8" - 4'10" | 33" |
| 4'5" - 4'7" | 32" |
| 4'2" - 4'4" | 30" |
| Under 4'2" | 28" |

The sizing above should be used as a guideline only. Player preference and playing style has much to do with the ideal length of the stick. A defensive player or mid-fielder may prefer a longer stick to provide more reach and hitting power to clear out the defensive zone. Offensive players may prefer a shorter stick for more aggressive stick handling and control.

If you are still unsure about sizing, it is always advisable to consult with your coach.

WEIGHT

Field Hockey sticks typically range in weight from 19 – 24 ounces (approx. 535 – 560 grams). The weight of your stick is very much based on personal preference and often your position on the field. Typically, defenders prefer heavier sticks (and/or weight concentrated in the head) because it is sturdier when it comes to tackling and allows for more momentum when hitting. Offensive players typically prefer lighter weight sticks (and/or weight distributed higher in the stick, towards the handle) because it allows for quicker stick movement, increased speed when dribbling, and easier control for 3D skills (lifted skills, pops or jinks).

- 19-20 ounces (approx. 539 - 567 grams) – Designed for forwards, a lightweight stick for quick stick movements
- 21 ounces (approx.. 595 grams) – Designed for midfielders, a mid-weight stick for versatility
- 22-24 ounces (approx. 623 - 680 grams) – Designed for defenders, a heavier stick allows for more power behind the ball

COMPOSITION

Beginners should start with a wood or lower level carbon stick and work their way up as they progress.



Carbon – Adds stiffness and power to the stick. The higher the carbon percentage the more powerful the output. A stick with less carbon will improve control and make trapping easier. Sticks with higher levels of carbon tend to be more expensive. Carbon content can range as high as 100%, but even 50% carbon will give you a good amount of power. Sticks with higher carbon levels are recommended for more advanced players.

Below is a general guide for carbon content based on skill level:

- 0-30% Beginner
- 30-60% Intermediate
- 60-100% Advanced & Elite

Aramid – Adds durability to the stick and is meant to dampen/absorbs vibrations sent through the stick when striking and receiving balls. This is a great balancing material found in many field hockey sticks.

Fiberglass – Many field hockey sticks still contain some level of fiberglass. It adds strength, durability and feel to a stick. Fiberglass is similar to carbon in nature, but more economical, and acts as reinforcement when in combination with carbon. Fiberglass sticks tend to be lighter and less rigid than carbon-heavy sticks, making them more forgiving and better designed for young, new, or developing players.

Wood – Wood is the least stiff of all the materials and adds an element of flexibility and forgiveness, allowing for clean receptions without needing as much technical skill. Nowadays, most wooden sticks are wrapped in fiberglass to add strength and power. Some players still prefer to use wooden sticks, but generally they are ideal for beginners and have a lower price tag.

Technora – As stated above, carbon adds power and stiffness to a stick. Technora is sometimes used as a substitute, so less carbon can be used without losing power.

Reinforcements:

- **Carbon Fiber Tape** – applied to both sides of the stick and is used as a stiffening agent. This increases the stiffness in the handle for more powerful hits.
- **Kevlar Tape** – applied to both sides of the stick, enhances stiffness and reduces vibration.
- **Kevlar Braid** – woven into a full-length sleeve for all-over impact endurance. Allows for greater shock absorption (vibration) and a smoother feel.
- **Aerospace Tape** – Made from Kevlar, carbon, and fiberglass, is woven and sealed with glue. It wraps around the stick to better absorb vibration and add strength and durability.
- **Ceramic Tape** – an ultra-durable material that is applied to the flat side of the stick to reduce vibration and add strength.

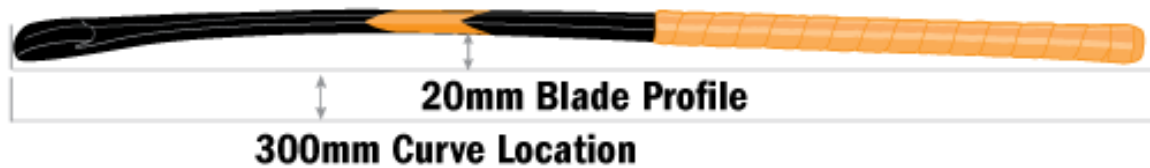
Power Rating:

Each company will have their own rating system, but basically it lets you know how much power you get when hitting. For example, a power ratings scale from 1- 10 means that a stick rated 10 has the highest power level that can be delivered from that brand. It is important to note that a high power rating often means a stiffer stick, so pay attention to the feel and give of the stick as well.

BOW

This is the bend that you can see from the handle to the toe of the stick. It typically ranges from 20mm – 25mm. Bow choice will depend on preference, age and skill level. The more bend the stick has, the easier it will be to lift the ball for shots, aerals and dragflicks, having less bend will improve control and prevent accidentally lifting the ball.

STANDARD



Main Bow Types:

- **Regular/Standard bow** (20-22mm) – the highest (most dramatic) point of the bow falls in the middle part of the stick, which is ideal for every aspect of the game, from ball control to advanced skills.



- **Mega/Control bow** (23-24.75mm) – the middle of the bend is closer to the toe of the stick and provides extra power when lifting the ball and for dragflicking. This is ideal for more advanced players.



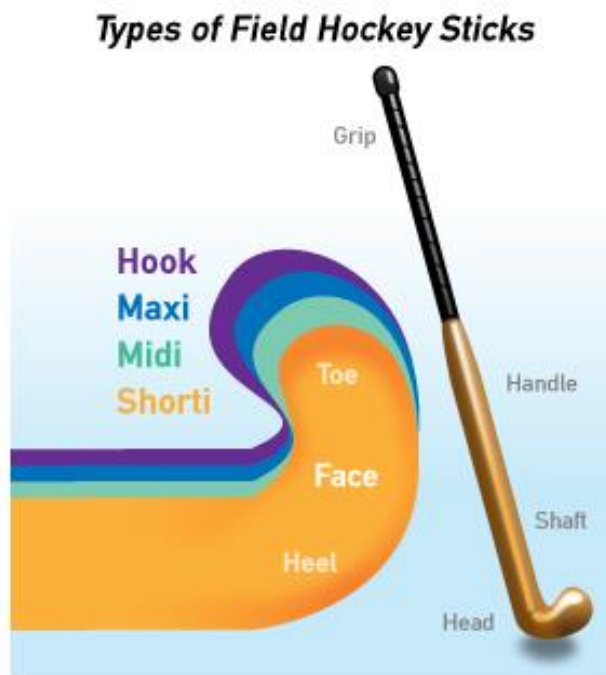
- **Low/Late bow** (25mm) – this bend is closest to the head of the stick and helps with controlling and lifting the ball, aerals and dragflicking. This is ideal for elite level players.



TOE/HEAD

There are 3 main head shapes: J-shape, Midi, and Maxi. The Maxi and J-shape are the same length, but the Midi head is 1/4" shorter. Smaller toes provide more agility but limit power while larger toes provide a larger surface area to strike and receive the ball but reduce movement.

- **J-shape/Hook**– has a larger surface area, which allows for increased ball control, better dragflicks and using reverse skills. Ideal for players with an upright style and is good on grass surfaces.
- **Maxi** – larger than the midi, so it has increased trapping area and the hitting power of the midi head. Great for dragflicks, injectors and reverse stick control. This toe shape is ideal for defensive players.
- **Midi** – Most used toe shape for beginners. Improves technique and offers close control. Great sweet spot when hitting. Ideal for midfielders or players that like to move the ball quickly when dribbling.
- **Shorti** - A classic shape that is ideal for high speed, close control and stick skills. Ideal for offensive players.



WEAR & TEAR

Due to the nature of the game, the paint on the stick may chip after a hard hack, hit, or repetitive dragging. Paint chips are considered normal wear and tear and are not qualified to warrant a replacement. If you feel there is significant damage to your stick,



most companies handle warranty claims on a case-by-case basis, so you should contact the manufacturer if this occurs.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD YOU REPLACE YOUR STICK?

Some sticks last years while others only last a season. Some players may prefer to get a new stick every year or two, while others use theirs for several seasons. It is based both on preference and the wear of the stick. Sometimes as a player, you may feel your skill levels have outgrown your stick and decide to look for one that better suits you current skills.





POPULAR STICK BRANDS

- Adidas
- Alfa
- Aratac
- Aryans
- ATLAS
- Brabo
- Brine
- Byte
- [CranBarry](#)
- [Dita](#)
- EDGE (Australia)
- Grays
- Gryphon
- [Harrow](#)
- Indian Maharadja
- Kookaburra (Australia)
- Matador
- Mazon
- Model
- Mohinder
- NedStar
- OBO
- [Osaka](#)
- Piranha
- Princess
- Prodigy
- Rage
- Ritual
- Slazenger
- STRYK
- [STX](#)
- Talon
- Tempest
- TK
- Tribaal
- Voodoo

*[highlighted](#) brands are current sponsors of USA Field Hockey. Also visit [Longstreth](#) for more stick brands and equipment!

GOALIE STICKS & ATTIRE

Goalie sticks have a special curved shape above the hook for help in clearing the ball away. Same as a field player, select your stick based on your height, comfort, and ultimately personal preference. Measure using the U.S. or Dutch method as mentioned above.

