

Forechecking is often the key to winning hockey games. Most players love to get in and forecheck the opposing team's defencemen. However, to be effective you must follow a plan. The following is a system for forechecking.

Forechecking is recovering pucks in the offensive zone. It usually refers to shoot-in recoveries.

### **Shoot-Ins**

- When you can't carry the puck across the blueline
- When your team is changing
- When the Coach wants a "dump and chase" shift

### **Types of Shoot-Ins**

- *Chip-Ins* off the boards versus a defenseman who is staying "up" at the blueline
- *Soft Dumps* to the near corner
- *Diagonal* if your wide winger is driving hard
- *Rims* if you think you can get the puck past the goaltender
- *Flips* if no offside results

### **First Forechecker**

1. Reads the play-pressure or contain depending on your support
2. If pressuring, get to the puck carrier quickly.
3. Force the puck carrier to move the puck.
4. Use your stick to deflect pass attempts
5. Finish the check when possible
6. QUICK – STICK – MAN

### **Second Forechecker**

1. Take away nearside boards
2. Be ready to support first checker and recover the puck
3. If puck goes to forwards, lock the middle so you are the third or safety man

### **Third Forechecker**

1. Take away far side boards
2. Be ready to lock the middle and support pinches

### **Point Men**

1. Move up quickly on the play
2. Be ready to pinch down the boards if there is pressure and support

### **On Recovery**

1. Get open for a quick play if possible
2. Be ready to cycle and get the puck to the net
3. Good cycling will test the opposing team's coverage and can draw penalties

### **Forechecking Principles**

- All forwards should keep themselves in the play by being ready to backcheck on a turnover
- All forwards must back-up pinches by the defense
- “High-man” changes in aggressive forechecking
- In scrums along the boards, the second man get the puck
- The Defensive partner can move over quickly to support a pinch and present a 2 on 1 against
- On changes, the first man over the boards hustles to guard against plays up the far boards

**Forechecking Summary**

1. HUSTLE – get to the puck carrier quickly
2. TAKE AWAY the boards
3. Need QUICKNESS, GOOD STICKS and FINISH CHECKS
4. On RECOVERY, get puck to the net

Remember, good forechecking is the key to controlling the game. Good luck and remember to have fun!

Your friend,

Roger Neilson