

How to Flick the Puck (also a review for when your flick is failing you)

- Body Position - hips near the pool bottom, shoulders higher than hips, head up
- Arm Position - with the stick starting below (or slightly in front of) the shoulders, the arm is bent (90 degrees or so), the elbow high, the wrist cocked back.
- Starting near the hand, practice rolling the puck off the length of the stick. At first, any method of getting the puck rolling is ok. Next, try using primarily the wrist (rather than the whole arm) to get the rolling effect.
- Next, add dropping the elbow which should start 'turning over the wrist' (following thru to the thumb up position). This seems counterintuitive to many beginners as they try to get under the puck by lifting the elbow *up* and the tip of the stick down.
- For beginners the first goal should be to get the puck to spin up on to its side after it rolls off the stick. Practice this over and over as it indicates correct basic technique. As this is perfected add more power and the puck should start to actually flick.
- Notice there has been no mention of extending, or straightening, the arm. The two main components of the flicking motion are 1) extending the wrist forward from a cocked-back starting position, and 2) turning the wrist to the outside (dropping the elbow adds leverage and power to this motion). Combining the two begins with the thumb pointing approx. 45 degrees back and the palm of the hand facing down and finishes with the thumb pointing forward (or the direction of the flick) and palm facing inward (thumb on top). The puck can be flicked quite a distance blending only these two motions. Focusing on the extension of the arm will often hurt the other components of the flick more than it will help. More importantly, if you can learn to flick without the full arm extension follow-thru you can release the puck within *at least* a foot less space. With practice it is possible to flick the puck forward with a release point behind the shoulders as far down as the waist. You will be able to attempt more flicks in traffic and you will get stuffed less.

Other points regarding flicks:

- For high flicks move up on the height of the puck and fully turn over the wrist
- For low shots move down on the height of the puck and don't turn the wrist over so much
- Some people can flick low by turning it over even more, in other words go past the usual release point and flick the puck down from the top of the stick in the vertical position
- Practice flicking over things
- Practice flicking under things
- Practice hitting targets on the bottom
- Practice hitting targets on the wall
- Practice flicking thru ring targets suspended in the water column
- Most people find the cross-body/forward pass the most natural. Don't just practice that. *Practice flicking at all possible angles in relation to your body.* When flicking to the same side as your stick hand, drive the (stick side) shoulder down as you flick
- Practice shoot and chase. Maintain a consistent kick with no hitch at the release point.
- Stack up several pucks and flick them one at a time off the top. When you can do this you can release the puck without needing a lot of space.
- Don't throw in a lot of body English. You don't want to give away when you are going to squeeze the trigger.
- Practice the slap shot. Initiate the flick at the same instant you make contact with the puck. The puck will jump off your stick to the defenders surprise. Some beginners find this flick easier get than the regular one. Try it.

- The low flick is shorter and faster than the high “rainbow”□ flick. Use the low flick every time unless you need to go over something, and then go only as high as you need to. You’ll get your flicks knocked down less often and your passes will get where they’re going sooner.