

# Field Hockey

## Basics

- ▶ Each game consists of two 35-minute halves.
- ▶ The offside penalty has been discontinued in order to promote more scoring.

## 1996 medalists

### Men

**Gold:** Netherlands  
**Silver:** Spain  
**Bronze:** Australia

### Women

**Gold:** Australia  
**Silver:** South Korea  
**Bronze:** Netherlands

## Hitting

Players must keep the stick below their heads on the backswing.



Only the flat side of the stick may be used when hitting the ball.

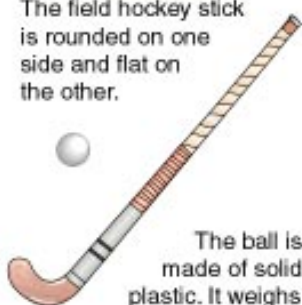


Players are not permitted to hit the ball in the air unless they are taking a shot on goal.



## Equipment

The field hockey stick is rounded on one side and flat on the other.



The ball is made of solid plastic. It weighs about 5.5 ounces and is about 9 inches in circumference.



Hockey's origins date back as far as 4,000 years. It is believed to be the world's oldest stick-and-ball sports. Defenders on the Australian women's field hockey team are shown above preparing for an attack in the 1996 Games at Atlanta.

## The field

Olympic field hockey is played on artificial turf. The field, which is also called the pitch, is 100 yards long and separated into four quarters. Play begins with each team lined up on its own half of the field.

The goal is 7 feet high and 12 feet wide.



## Fouls

### Obstruction:

Players may not use any part of their bodies or sticks to prevent opponents from hitting the ball.



### Dangerous play:

Since the ball and sticks are hard, players are penalized for high-sticking and hitting the ball when they are not taking a shot.



### Tripping



### Hooking



## The goalkeeper

The goalkeeper is the only player who is allowed to use his or her hands and feet on the ball.



Sources: International Olympic Committee; Olympic Coordination Authority; United States Olympic Committee; "Rules of the Game"; "Summer Games Access"; "What's What in Sports"