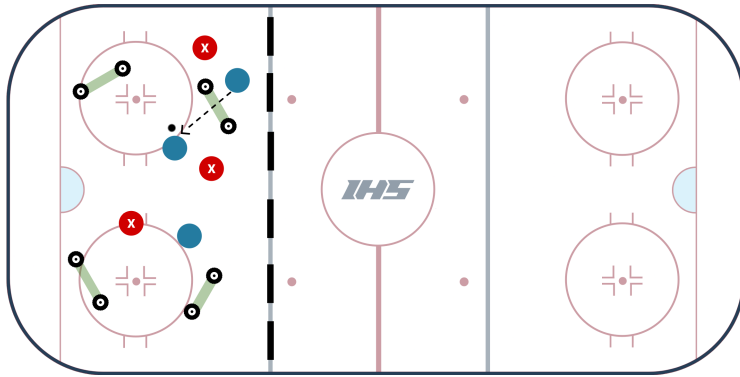


# Gates of Buffalo 3 on 3 Game



Notes / Coaching Points

Description



Gates of Buffalo 3 on 3 Small Area Hockey Game builds off of the [Gates of Buffalo Passing Game](#) by adding a 3 on 3 game element to it. The goal is to pass the puck through gates to score more goals than the other team. This game is great for practicing puck protection, moving to open space, communicating and passing.

***This game framework will help players learn to play with their head up, communicate with teammates and move to open space.*** This game will look extremely messy at first, but players will get better with each repetition. Moving to open space, and moving the puck will eventually become second nature to the team. As a coach, If you commit to working on games like this instead of memorization drills for a portion of each practice, you will marvel at how your team begins to work together.

## GAME OBJECTIVE

- Score goals by passing through the "Gates."
- Score more goals than the opposing team.
- You can not pass through the same gate twice in a row!

## SETUP & ACTIVITY VARIABLES

- **Players:** great for 2 on 2, 3 on 3, 4 on 4 or 5 on 5 games.
- **Time:** You can rotate through groups of players in 30, 45 or 60-second shifts and count how many goals are scored.
- **Space:** can be set up to be within a zone, or half of a zone (station) or a smaller area. The smaller the space, the more challenging it will be for the players as they are forced to make quicker decisions.
- **Group Competition:** Count the number of successful goals made to naturally bring out the competition between teams.
- **With a Goalie:** You can require the players to make 2 (or more) passes through a gate before they can shoot on net. After they shoot on net, they need to make the required number of passes through the gates again. *The goalie should work on tracking the puck when the team is not actively shooting on net.*
- **Gates:** You can add 3 or more gates. They can be made of tires, cones, pucks and other materials. Change up the sizes of the gates for an extra challenge. The smaller the gate, the more accurate the pass must be!

## Setup Suggestions for Elite Players

- Make the gates much smaller.
- You can add a hockey stick at the bottom of each gate so players must "saucer" through a gate and over the stick for the point.
- Add various obstacles on the ice such as sticks that players must be aware of and pass around or saucer over.
- If you have a goalie, require 2 or more passes through the gates before players are allowed to take a shot on net. Even though the goalie will not get as many shots, they can work on tracking the puck!



Notes / Coaching Points

## COACHING POINTS

- Encourage players to always move to open space on the ice. Do not allow them to stand still and pass the puck back and forth.
- Encourage players to find "passing lanes" for good passes.
- Encourage verbal communication (calling teammate by name, saying you are open, etc).
- Encourage non-verbal communication (good eye contact, showing a passing target, tapping a stick, etc).
- **Allow players to make mistakes. It will take time to get comfortable with these activities. But as time goes on you will see them picking their head up to make a decision, which is the goal of this small area game.**

*Why do we call this small area game "Gates of Buffalo 3 on 3 Game?" The game has been called "gates" in the world of soccer and we decided to add Buffalo to it for two fun reasons: First, IHS has strong ties to Buffalo, NY. Secondly, the imagery of a Buffalo can help drive home to your youth players why you are practicing this game. If you do not pick your head up and use your teammates while playing the game of hockey, you run the risk of getting trampled by the other team. This can feel like getting run over by a Buffalo (physically or on the scoreboard). This game helps prevent both of those situations by forcing players to keep their head up while communicating and working with teammates to score goals.*

Description