

2027 Canada Winter Games Evaluation Criteria

The Athlete Selection Committee will be looking for the following general criteria to inform selection decisions:

Technical

Skating

- Refinement stage of skills such as edge work, speed, and acceleration
- Proficient in forward skating, backward skating, and transitions
- Overall movement demonstrates coordination, agility, and finesse in large and small spaces

Ring

- Consistently maintains ring possession under pressure with strong stick/ring handling
- High percentage of pass receptions (with and without pressure)
- Ability to put the ring on a teammate's stick and lead pass using forehand or backhand
- Hard and accurate forehand and backhand shots, and can properly execute one-timers, close or far from the net

Goalie

- Solid stance and general positioning, with speed and agility in the crease while maintaining proper stance/positioning
- Ability to butterfly while protecting five-hole and can quickly slide/get up in a controlled manner
- Controls rebounds and recovers quickly after shots
- Strong goalie ring with the ability to both toss and shoot passes to varied targets

Tactical & Strategic

Offensive

- Consistently able to make high-percentage pass decisions in all zones, rarely panics under pressure or causes unforced turnovers
- Understanding of timing (e.g., getting open by varying speed and direction, cutting, creating or entering space at the right time)
- Scoring threat with and without the ring (e.g., isolating a defender/2 on 1's, setting picks, drive and dish) and effective decision-making based on the triangle and goalie's positioning
- Utilizes deception (fakes, dekes) to create an advantage and capitalize on scoring opportunities
- Effectively communicates with teammates

Defensive

- Strong body positioning skills: gap control, channeling, contain, pushing out, staying low, boxing out, staying goalside inside
- Can find and stay with a check and anticipate passes to create turnovers; challenges at both blue lines
- Can execute various forechecking strategies (player on player, 2 on, zone)
- Plays/checks aggressively but stays in control and disciplined
- Effectively communicates with teammates

- Effectively breaks out of the zone using proficient ring and skating skills
- Makes effective passing decisions, using support passes as needed, to exit the zone
- Establishes effective support positioning on transitions

Goalie

- Stays square to the shooter while tracking a pass or shot, tracks the ring, using peripheral vision to locate athletes and identify potential threats
- Controlled ring deflection to safe spots and teammates
- Awareness of when to skate to bench for extra attacker
- High percentage of goalie ring completions; uses fakes and reads the play to make good pass decisions, while minimizing loss of possession/5-second counts
- Effectively communicates with teammates

Athleticism

Cardio

- Capacity to go all out for a standard shift length and recover between shifts
- Endurance to perform for an entire game as well as over the course of multiple games and days
- Ability to push through fatigue and stay in control

Strength

- Ability to stay on feet and keep possession of the ring when being pressured/checked
- Competes physically with and without the ring
- Muscular endurance to maintain defensive positioning and goalie stance

Coordination

- Overall movement on the ice looks skillful and sharp
- Can successfully multi-task (e.g., skate with speed and agility while stick-handling through checkers)

Psychological

Confidence

- Plays with purpose and consistency regardless of the score, does not look hesitant; always wants to be in the play
- Communicates loudly
- Not afraid to try new things or learn from mistakes

Resilience

- Quickly recovers from a bad play/goal, shift, or penalty
- Body language and demeanor remain neutral or positive when struggling personally or as a team
- Focuses on what they can control
- Uses effective strategies to remain focused and goal oriented

Grit/Drive

- Pushes themselves out of their comfort zone in training, practice, and competition
- "Never quit" mentality, overall style of play shows they are a competitor, want the ring, and thrive in challenging situations

- Seeks out feedback; thankfully accepts and implements immediately

Character

Conduct

- Carries themselves in a way that conveys respect and a positive attitude and treats coaches, teammates, opponents, officials, parents, and fans with courtesy and respect
- Demonstrates good sportsmanship and is accountable to self and others for their conduct
- Responsible, prepared, and invested in all team activities

Teammate

- "Team first" attitude: understands that the team comes before individual wants/needs; acknowledges and accepts role on the team and contributes to a positive team culture by being constructive, inclusive, and supportive through good times and bad
- Emotional intelligence: ability to understand, use, and manage one's emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict

Lifestyle

- High commitment level and strong work ethic
- Dedication to fitness; trains year-round with their team and on their own – on and off the ice
- Engages in good sleep habits and a nutritious diet
- Avoids or minimizes the consumption of alcohol and other substances that hinder athletic performance
- Good self-awareness around balancing commitments and preventing burnout or overtraining