



## Introduction to Forechecking Part I

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It is important when designing your defensive system, that your team's play without the puck is both structured and coordinated from zone to zone. This article will outline two different forechecking systems as well as key teaching points of each system.

### WHAT VARIABLES INFLUENCE YOUR FORECHECK?

- Size of rink
- Score of the game
- Type of player you have
- Your opponents breakout system
- Redline or no redline
- Your schedule

### TWO TYPES OF FORECHECKS

#### WINGBACK AGGRESSIVE

##### Offensive Zone

- F1 pressure hard / angle and make contact / react defensively if the puck is moved away
- F2 stagger (top of circle, dot width) read the angle F1 establishes / prepare to pounce on the first pass or respond to a loose puck
- F3 stay high and wide (top of circle, dot width) prepare to: a) come down and pressure, b) protect mid ice lane, pressure puck on the breakout, c) support offensively
- D1 keep a tight gap / no pinch
- D2 plug the mid ice seam, wide lane responsibility

#### TRAP / WEDGE FORECHECK (1-2-2)

##### Offensive Zone

- F1 stops in front and keeps feet moving / steer the puck carrier up one side into F2 / use stick to block the low passing lane / if picked back out and switch with F2 or F3
- F2 stays inside the dots / close on the puck carrier when F1 forces him up the boards / back up then jump up / switch with F1 if the puck is moved back
- F3 protect mid ice until redline then pick up wide lane pick up 2<sup>nd</sup> man out on your side
- D1 back up in line with the dots / cover any stretch players / pick up loose pucks in behind F2
- D2 hold the middle / close down on any motion through mid ice



### Neutral Zone

- D1-D2-F3 play 3 across / D2 deflects the attack to the outside / all three players try to stand up in the neutral zone / stay in your lanes if crossing occurs on the attack.
- F1/F2 backcheck through mid ice / pressure the rush from behind / look for late attackers

### Neutral Zone

- Sometimes the trap is initiated late or used exclusively as a NZ forechecking system
- F1 forces the puck carrier wide – sealing mid ice
- F2 pressures the boards or switches with F1 if the puck is moved back or across the ice
- F3 protects mid ice then locks the wide lane
- D2 stands up deflecting the attack
- D1 supports behind
- D1-D2-F3 all try to hold the blue line

### KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL FORECHECK

- Teach individual skills first
  - Angling
  - Stick position
  - Contact
  - Above screens
- Protect the mid ice seam / check from mid ice out
- Play physical by in control (eyes up – stick down)
- Communicate
- Anticipate / Recover
- Hard work (F2 and F3 close the gap from behind)
- Avoid pics / stay above screens
- Good puck placement