

# Modern Hockey League

## Season 1 Pilot Guide

**Simple. Competitive. Organized.**

**Season:** Season 1 Pilot Season

**Game:**

EA SPORTS NHL

**Platform:**

Xbox Series X|S / PlayStation 5 Crossplay

**League Format:** 8 NHL Teams

**Game Nights:** Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

**Version:** 1.0

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## Read This First

Season 1 is a **pilot season**.

That means it is a real season, but it is also being used to test the MHL-Bot, website, rosters, availability, stats, standings, scheduling, playoffs, and league systems before Season 2. It is officially time to modernize online NHL leagues!

Games are played on:

- **Wednesday**
- **Thursday**
- **Friday**

Each team plays **9 games per week**.

Game times are:

- **9:00 PM ET**
- **9:35 PM ET**
- **10:10 PM ET**

Players must use:

- The official MHL Discord
- The team Discord that MHL gives them

The MHL-Bot will send you the invite to your team discord in a direct message.

Players must submit availability on the weekly game posts inside their team Discord.

Each team has **17 active roster players**:

- 9 forwards
- 6 defensemen
- 2 goalies

ECUs are part of their assigned team, but they are not active roster players unless they are officially called up.

ECUs can play any position when needed. They must play their signed-up position once called up to the active roster.

Every player must be signed up and properly assigned before playing in an MHL game.

**Simple Rule:** No signup = cannot play.

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# 1. What This Document Is

This document explains the basic setup for **Modern Hockey League Season 1**.

Season 1 is a **pilot season**. That means it is a real season, but it is also being used to test the league before MHL moves into the official bidding format in Season 2.

This guide is meant to be easy to understand.

More detailed rules may be listed in other MHL documents, such as:

- MHL Regular Season & Game Night Rulebook
- MHL Draft, Rosters & Transactions Rulebook
- MHL Discipline & Complaints Rulebook
- MHL Playoff Rulebook
- MHL Manager Handbook
- MHL Bot & Website Guide

**Simple Rule:** This guide explains the basics. Other MHL rulebooks may explain the full details.

# 2. What Season 1 Is

Season 1 is being used to test the league before the official launch in Season 2.

The main purpose of Season 1 is to test:

- The MHL-Bot
- The MHL website
- Player signups
- Automatic roles
- Team Discords
- Rosters
- Availability
- Weekly game posts
- Scheduling
- Stats
- Standings
- Roster moves

- Waivers
- ECUs
- Playoffs
- Manager tools
- Staff procedures
- Bug reports and feedback

Season 1 will still be competitive. Teams will play real games, standings will matter, and playoffs will happen.

However, everyone should understand that Season 1 is also being used to find problems, fix bugs, and make the league better.

**Simple Rule:** Season 1 helps us build a better Season 2.

### 3. Important: Season 1 Rules May Change

Because Season 1 is a pilot season, MHL Staff may adjust rules, deadlines, or processes during the season if needed.

This may happen if something needs to be fixed, explained better, or improved.

Rule changes may be made to:

- Fix bot issues
- Fix website issues
- Stop abuse
- Prevent confusion
- Protect competitive balance
- Keep games from being forfeited
- Make the league easier to run
- Improve the player experience

Any important changes will be announced in the official MHL Discord.

By playing in Season 1, players and managers understand that this is a test season and that reasonable changes may be made if needed.

**Simple Rule:** Season 1 is real, but it is also a test.

## 4. Teams, Draft, and Playoffs

### 4.1 Teams

Season 1 will use an **8-team NHL format**.

These 8 teams will play regular season games to decide playoff seeding.

MHL is starting small on purpose. This lets the league test the bot, website, managers, rosters, stats, scheduling, and playoffs before expanding in future seasons.

### 4.2 Regular Season Purpose

The regular season is used to determine playoff seeding.

Teams will play their scheduled games and earn points in the standings.

At the end of the regular season, teams will be ranked from 1st to 8th based on the official MHL standings.

### 4.3 Playoff Qualification

All 8 teams will make the Season 1 playoffs.

The regular season decides the playoff matchups.

Season 1 playoff matchups will be:

- 1 seed vs 8 seed
- 2 seed vs 7 seed
- 3 seed vs 6 seed
- 4 seed vs 5 seed

The higher seed gets home-ice advantage unless MHL Staff announces otherwise.

Full playoff details may be included in the **MHL Playoff Rulebook**.

**Simple Rule:** Everyone makes playoffs. The regular season decides seeding.

## 4.4 Season 1 Draft Format

Season 1 will use a standard draft.

There will be:

- No bidding
- No salary cap
- No player contracts
- No re-signs
- No draft pick trading unless MHL Staff announces otherwise

The draft is being used to create teams quickly and fairly for the pilot season.

Season 1 draft results do not create long-term player rights.

Season 2 is planned to begin the official MHL bidding system.

Full draft details may be included in the **MHL Draft, Rosters & Transactions Rulebook**.

**Simple Rule:** Season 1 uses a draft. Season 2 is planned to start bidding.

## 5. Discord and MHL-Bot

### 5.1 Official MHL Discord

All players **must** join and stay in the official MHL Discord.

The official MHL Discord is where players will find:

- League announcements
- Rule updates
- Staff messages
- Bot commands
- Support channels
- Bug report channels
- Loadout and trait rules
- League information
- Player information

If you leave the official MHL Discord, you may not be able to play until you rejoin.

**Simple Rule:** If you play in MHL, you must be in the MHL Discord.

## 5.2 Use the Team Discord MHL Gives You

Each team will be given an official team Discord by the league.

Teams **must** use the **team Discord that MHL gives them** for MHL business.

This is very important because the MHL-Bot is connected to the team Discords provided by the league. The MHL-Bot is the bread and butter of the league.

The MHL-Bot helps manage:

- Team roles
- Player access
- Weekly game posts
- Availability posts
- Game reminders
- Manager tools
- Team organization
- League tracking

When a player receives their team role, the MHL-Bot will automatically send that player a direct message with their team Discord invite or team Discord instructions.

Players should make sure their Discord direct messages allow messages from MHL-Bot.

If you do not receive your team Discord message, contact MHL Staff.

**Simple Rule:** Use the team Discord that MHL gives you for MHL business.

## 5.3 Extra Team Discords

Teams may have their own extra Discords for things like:

- Scouting
- Casual team chat
- Playing other games
- Random hangouts
- Non-league activity

That is allowed.

However, MHL business should stay in the league-assigned team Discord.

MHL business includes:

- Weekly availability
- Game posts
- Lineup communication
- Player reminders
- ECU coordination
- Manager announcements
- League-related team messages
- Anything staff may need to review

If something important happens in a private or unofficial Discord, MHL Staff may not be able to verify it.

**Simple Rule:** Extra Discords are fine, but the league-provided Discord is the official team home.

## 5.4 The MHL-Bot

The MHL-Bot is one of the biggest benefits of Modern Hockey League.

The bot is built to make life easier for players, managers, owners, and staff.

Managers do not need to be Discord experts. The league provides the team Discord structure, and the MHL-Bot helps manage it.

The MHL-Bot may help with:

- Player signups
- Automatic roles
- Team roles
- Roster tracking
- Schedule posting
- Weekly game posts
- Availability collection
- Game reminders
- Stats
- Standings
- Roster moves
- Waivers
- ECU assignments
- Manager tools
- Staff tools
- Bug testing

**Simple Rule:** Players focus on playing. Managers focus on managing. The bot handles the busy work.

## 5.5 The Bot Handles Roles

All MHL roles are tracked and assigned based on the MHL system.

This means roles are handled automatically when possible.

This may include:

- Player roles
- Team roles
- Manager roles
- Staff roles
- ECU roles
- League status roles

Players and managers should not try to bypass, abuse, or manipulate the role system.

If your role is wrong, report it to MHL Staff.

**Simple Rule:** Do not fight the bot. If a role is wrong, tell staff.

## 6. Schedule and Availability

### 6.1 Weekly Schedule

MHL games are played on:

- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday

Each team plays **9 games per week**.

## 6.2 Game Times

Official game times are listed in Eastern Time.

Wednesday games:

- 9:00 PM ET
- 9:35 PM ET
- 10:10 PM ET

Thursday games:

- 9:00 PM ET
- 9:35 PM ET
- 10:10 PM ET

Friday games:

- 9:00 PM ET
- 9:35 PM ET
- 10:10 PM ET

The bot and website should show game times in each user's local time zone whenever possible.

If there is ever confusion, the official league schedule is based on Eastern Time unless MHL Staff says otherwise.

Full schedule and deadline details may be included in the **MHL Regular Season & Game Night Rulebook**.

**Simple Rule:** Games are Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Three games per night.

## 6.3 Weekly Game Posts

All weekly games will be automatically posted in each league-assigned team Discord.

Players are expected to submit their availability on those official weekly game posts.

This keeps everything easy to find.

Availability should be submitted on the official weekly game posts unless MHL Staff approves another method.

**Simple Rule:** Submit availability on the official weekly game posts.

## 6.4 Availability Minimum

Players are expected to give at least:

### **6 out of 9 games per week**

If you give less than 6 games of availability, your manager may have trouble fitting you into the weekly schedule.

Players who do not submit availability may be treated as fully available for scheduling unless MHL Staff announces a different rule.

## 6.5 Player Responsibility

Players are responsible for submitting their own availability.

Managers should not have to chase every player every week.

Check your team Discord. Find the weekly game posts. Submit your availability.

**Simple Rule:** Do not make your manager hunt you down.

## 6.6 Manager Responsibility

Managers are responsible for checking availability and making weekly lines.

The MHL-Bot is built to make this easier.

Managers should report missing game posts, missing availability, wrong roles, or bot issues to MHL Staff.

# 7. Rosters and ECUs

## 7.1 Active Roster Size

Season 1 active rosters have a set size.

Each team will have:

- 9 forwards
- 6 defensemen
- 2 goalies
- 17 total active roster players

This is the official Season 1 active roster structure.

Managers are responsible for keeping their team organized and making sure players know where to submit availability and when they are scheduled.

Full roster details may be included in the **MHL Draft, Rosters & Transactions Rulebook**.

**Simple Rule:** Each team has 17 active roster players: 9 forwards, 6 defensemen, and 2 goalies.

## 7.2 Late Signups and ECUs

Players who sign up after the draft will be placed into the league's ECU system.

Late signups will be assigned across the league as evenly as possible by MHL Staff, the MHL-Bot, or the MHL system.

ECUs are assigned to one team.

ECUs are members of their assigned team, but they are not on the active 17-player roster unless they are officially called up.

**Simple Rule:** Late signups become ECUs and are assigned to a team.

## 7.3 What Is an ECU?

An ECU is a team member who is not currently on the active roster.

ECUs are still part of their assigned team.

They are expected to be active, submit availability, communicate with management, and be ready to play when needed.

ECUs may play **any position** when filling in for games.

Being active as an ECU is the best way to earn more chances and possibly move up to the active roster.

**Simple Rule:** ECUs are part of the team. They just are not on the active roster yet.

## 7.4 ECU Usage

ECUs **must** play for the team they are assigned to.

Managers may use ECUs when the team needs help filling a game, avoiding a forfeit, or covering a missing roster player.

ECUs are assigned team members in the MHL system.

An ECU **cannot** play for another team.

**Simple Rule:** Use your own ECUs only.

## 7.5 ECU Call-Ups to the Active Roster

An ECU may be called up to the active roster.

Once an ECU is called up, they become one of the team's active roster players.

If an ECU is called up, another roster player must be moved off the active roster through the correct MHL process.

This may include that roster player being placed on waivers or another approved roster move.

Managers cannot simply add an ECU to the active roster without making the roster legal.

All ECU call-ups must go through MHL Staff, the MHL-Bot, or the MHL website system.

Full waiver and roster move details may be included in the **MHL Draft, Rosters & Transactions Rulebook**.

**Simple Rule:** An ECU can earn their way onto the active roster by staying active and ready.

## 7.6 One-Night Signup Rule

For Season 1, MHL will allow one special rule to help prevent forfeits.

If a team cannot get one of their assigned ECUs for a game, they may use a player who is **not currently signed up for MHL**, but only if that player signs up before game time.

This is the only legal way to use a new player on short notice.

The process is:

1. The team cannot get one of their assigned ECUs.
2. The team finds a player who is not signed up for MHL.
3. That player must complete MHL signup before the game starts.
4. MHL Staff or the MHL-Bot temporarily assigns that player to the team for that night.
5. The player may play for that team that night only.
6. After that night, the player is removed from that temporary assignment.
7. The player is then assigned into the league's ECU system as evenly as possible.

This rule exists to help prevent forfeits during the pilot season.

**Simple Rule:** No signup = cannot play.

## 7.7 No Unregistered Players

Every player in an official MHL game **must** be:

- Signed up for MHL
- Properly assigned before game time
- Eligible to play that game

A team may not use a random player who is not signed up.

A team may not use a secret fill-in.

A team may not use someone playing on another person's account.

If a team uses a player who was not signed up or not properly assigned, that player may be considered illegal.

**Simple Rule:** Everyone who plays must be in the MHL system first.

## 8. Game Night Basics

### 8.1 Weekly Lines

Managers are responsible for submitting weekly lines by the league deadline.

Weekly lines should be submitted through the official MHL bot or website system when available.

If the bot or website has an issue, MHL Staff may allow managers to submit lines manually through Discord.

Managers are expected to schedule players fairly based on:

- Player availability
- Roster needs
- Position needs
- League rules
- ECU rules

Because Season 1 is a pilot season, lineup issues should be reported clearly so the league can fix bot, website, or process problems.

Full lineup rules may be included in the **MHL Regular Season & Game Night Rulebook**.

**Simple Rule:** Use availability, make fair lines, and report issues early.

## 8.2 Player Expectations

All players are expected to help make Season 1 successful.

Players **must**:

- Join the official MHL Discord
- Join their assigned team Discord
- Use their correct EA ID
- Submit weekly availability on the official team Discord game posts
- Show up for scheduled games
- Communicate with management if unavailable
- Follow game-night rules
- Use legal builds and traits
- Respect teammates, opponents, managers, and staff
- Report bugs or issues clearly
- Save screenshots or clips when disputes happen

**Simple Rule:** Show up, communicate, and do not make things harder for everyone else.

## 8.3 Manager Expectations

Managers are expected to help test the league structure and keep teams organized.

Managers **must**:

- Draft responsibly
- Keep their roster organized
- Communicate with players
- Use the league-assigned team Discord
- Review availability from the weekly game posts
- Submit weekly lines on time
- Help players understand the bot and website
- Submit stats when required
- Report no-shows or issues properly
- Use ECUs fairly
- Report bugs to MHL Staff
- Maintain a respectful team environment

Managers are not expected to be perfect during Season 1.

Managers are expected to communicate, stay active, and help the league improve.

The MHL-Bot is built to make management easier. Managers should use the bot and website tools whenever possible so the league can properly test and improve them before Season 2.

Full manager procedures may be included in the **MHL Manager Handbook**.

**Simple Rule:** Managers run the team. The bot helps with the boring stuff.

## 8.4 Game Night Expectations

Players should be ready before their scheduled game time.

Players are expected to:

- Be online before game time
- Join the correct lobby or club
- Use the correct team setup
- Use legal builds and traits
- Communicate with their manager
- Stay for the full game
- Avoid unnecessary delays
- Save proof if something goes wrong

Managers should make sure their team is ready and that any issues are reported quickly.

Full game-night details may be included in the **MHL Regular Season & Game Night Rulebook**.

**Simple Rule:** Be ready before the game starts.

## 8.5 Banned Builds and Traits

MHL will have a channel in the official MHL Discord that shows the banned player loadouts and banned traits.

This channel will include a graphic showing what is banned.

The simple loadout rule is:

**If it is not on the banned graphic, it is allowed.**

Players do not need to guess.

Check the official banned loadout and trait graphic in the MHL Discord.

If a loadout or trait is shown as banned, it may not be used in official MHL games.

If it is not shown as banned, it is allowed unless MHL Staff announces a change.

Players are responsible for checking the banned loadout and trait channel before playing.

Using a banned loadout or banned trait may result in discipline, game penalties, stat changes, or other rulings depending on the situation.

Because Season 1 is a pilot season, MHL Staff may update the banned loadout and trait list if needed.

Any updates will be posted in the official MHL Discord.

**Simple Rule:** Check the graphic before you play.

## **8.6 Late Starts and Forfeits**

Teams are expected to be ready at the scheduled game time.

If a team is late:

- 5 minutes late = 2-minute penalty
- 8 minutes late = second 2-minute penalty
- 11 minutes late = forfeit eligible

A forfeit may be claimed if a team cannot field the required number of players by the forfeit deadline.

MHL Staff may review forfeits if there are bot issues, website issues, server problems, or other unusual circumstances.

Full forfeit details may be included in the **MHL Regular Season & Game Night Rulebook**.

**Simple Rule:** Play the games whenever possible.

## 8.7 Disconnects and Restarts

Disconnects happen. The goal is to handle them fairly, quickly, and clearly.

Players and managers should stay calm, communicate, and save proof when needed.

Full disconnect rules may be included in the **MHL Regular Season & Game Night Rulebook**.

Basic disconnect rules:

- If a player disconnects before both teams fully load in, restart with no penalty.
- If a player disconnects at or before the opening faceoff, stop and restart with no penalty.
- If a player disconnects after the opening faceoff, play to the next whistle, record the time, restart, and the disconnected team takes a 2-minute penalty.
- If the player cannot return, use an eligible ECU.
- If a goalie disconnects, record the time, and restart properly.
- If a player has a black screen or visual glitch, get proof right away.

Teams should save proof for any disconnect or restart issue.

Useful proof includes:

- Screenshots
- Video clips
- Stream/VOD
- Game clock time
- Messages between managers
- Proof of players trying to reconnect

If teams disagree about what happened, MHL Staff may review the proof and make a decision.

**Simple Rule:** Do not guess. Stop at the right time, record what happened, and restart properly.

# 9. Stats, Website Testing, and Bug Reports

## 9.1 Stats and Website Testing

Season 1 will be used to test stats, standings, schedules, and player profiles.

Because the bot and website are still being tested, stat issues may happen.

Players and managers should report:

- Missing stats
- Incorrect scores
- Wrong player stats
- Wrong goalie stats
- Incorrect standings
- Schedule display issues
- Timezone issues
- Roster display issues
- Command errors
- Website bugs
- Incorrect role assignments
- Missing team Discord messages
- Missing weekly game posts

## 9.2 Stats Submission

Stats should be submitted through the official MHL system when available.

If the official system is not working, managers should save screenshots or clips and report the issue to MHL Staff.

MHL Staff may manually adjust stats if needed during Season 1.

## 9.3 Bug Report Details

When reporting a bug, include:

- What happened
- What should have happened
- Screenshot or clip if possible
- Game ID or matchup if available
- Time and date of the issue
- Device or platform if relevant

**Simple Rule:** The more details you give, the easier it is to fix.

## 9.4 Feedback

Season 1 players and managers are encouraged to help improve the league.

Bug reports and feedback should be posted in the proper Discord channels.

Good feedback includes:

- A clear explanation of the issue
- Screenshots or clips
- What command or page was used
- What team, game, or player was affected
- Whether the issue happened once or more than once

Feedback should be respectful and useful.

The goal is not just to point out problems. The goal is to help MHL become better before Season 2.

**Simple Rule:** Report problems clearly. Do not just complain.

# 10. Roster Moves and Waivers

Season 1 roster moves will be kept simple.

Roster changes may be allowed, but they must be approved through MHL Staff, the MHL-Bot, or the MHL website system.

MHL Staff may deny or reverse any roster move that appears unfair, abusive, inactive, or harmful to the pilot season.

Because Season 1 is a test season, roster changes are mainly intended to:

- Keep teams active
- Prevent forfeits
- Replace inactive players
- Test league tools
- Keep the season stable

Season 1 may be used to test roster tools on the bot or website.

This may include:

- Roster updates
- ECU usage
- Player removals
- Team changes
- Role changes
- Waivers

If a tool fails or displays incorrectly, managers should report it to MHL Staff.

Full roster move and waiver details may be included in the **MHL Draft, Rosters & Transactions Rulebook**.

**Simple Rule:** Roster moves must go through the MHL system or staff.

# 11. Discipline and Complaints

## 11.1 Discipline During the Pilot Season

Season 1 discipline will focus on keeping the league active, fair, and respectful.

Possible punishments include:

- Warning
- Game penalty
- One-game suspension
- Multi-game suspension
- Removal from team
- Removal from Season 1
- League ban for serious issues

Serious issues may include:

- Cheating
- Playing on another account
- Letting someone else play on your account
- Harassment
- Threats
- Intentional throwing
- Refusing to play
- Quitting games
- Repeated no-shows
- Trying to damage the league
- Abusing the bot or website
- Trying to manipulate automatic roles or league systems

Full discipline details may be included in the **MHL Discipline & Complaints Rulebook**.

**Simple Rule:** Do not ruin the league for everyone else.

## 11.2 Complaints and Evidence

Players and managers should provide proof when making complaints.

Useful evidence includes:

- Video clips
- Screenshots
- Full Discord message context
- Game screenshots
- Stream or VOD links
- Bot command screenshots
- Website screenshots

Complaints without proper evidence may be denied.

False complaints, edited evidence, or misleading reports may result in discipline.

During Season 1, MHL Staff may also use complaints to find unclear rules, broken tools, or processes that need improvement.

**Simple Rule:** If you want staff to review something, bring proof.

## 12. Season 2 Transition

Season 2 is planned to be the official competitive launch of Modern Hockey League.

Season 2 is expected to introduce:

- Bidding
- Salary cap
- Player contracts
- More formal roster rules
- More detailed roster move rules
- Expanded team count if supported
- Improved bot and website systems
- Updated rulebooks based on Season 1 feedback

Season 1 will begin with 8 teams.

Future seasons may expand toward a full 32-team NHL format once player count, manager depth, and bot/website stability support expansion.

Season 1 is the test run.

Season 2 is where the league begins its official bidding era.

Unless MHL Staff announces otherwise, all Season 1 players will return to the Season 2 player pool.

**Simple Rule:** Season 1 tests the league. Season 2 starts the real bidding era.

## 13. Final Note

Modern Hockey League is being built to be simple, competitive, and organized.

Season 1 is the first step.

MHL is being built so players can focus on playing, and managers can focus on managing instead of fighting with Discord setup, manual roles, and messy availability tracking.

Players, managers, and staff are all part of helping the league grow the right way.

Season 1 may not be perfect, but it will help build the foundation for a stronger Season 2 and beyond.

**Simple Rule:** Help us test it, help us fix it, and help us build it better.

