

What is athletic retirement?

Athletic retirement is a lifestyle transition athletes go through when they stop playing their sport competitively. This makes the athlete change their view of themselves and the world that surrounds them.

Retiring from elite level hockey will allow you to have much more freedom and free time to experience a lifestyle change. However, this will have a physical and psychological impact on you and will take a while to get used to your 'new life'. You will need to find a new routine that is right for you which will take time to find what's right for you and get used to.

This leaflet has been developed for you, to help you and be on hand to aid you through the transition to retirement. Within this leaflet it will provide advice and ways to make the transition as smooth as possible for you as you move to the next stage in your life as a retired athlete.

Steps to a smooth transition...

Step 1:

Plan your retirement - making a plan for retirement is an effective way to make the transition easier as you have a written plan on what you are going to do next. Discuss career and education options with your support network (family, career advisors etc.).

Step 2:

Stay physically active - continuing regular exercise will allow you to continue to keep a good routine and continue a healthy lifestyle both physically and mentally.

Step 3:

Hobbies - With more time on your hands it is the best opportunity to explore different hobbies you couldn't while being in a full-time programme. This will allow you to continue broaden your knowledge.

Retirement

A guide on transitioning out of elite field hockey

—
For senior and Elite Development Programme Players

Emma Malcolm

Things to consider when retiring

Each player's reason behind retiring will be different and personal to them. You should consider all options before making a final decision. Conversations with your support network will help you make the right decision and support you in your final decision.

Retirement is split into two categories, voluntary and involuntary - which one are you?

Voluntary retirement is when the decision is made by you to retire. This may be because you have achieved all your goals and are ready to move on, or maybe due to changing priorities and hockey may not be your top priority anymore.

Involuntary retirement is when there are very few options but to retire. It is not what you wanted or what is planned but is what needs to happen. It might occur if you have suffered a career-ending injury or were unexpectedly dropped from the selection squad.

Your categorisation of retirement can affect the way you feel when going through the transition into retirement as voluntary retirement can be easier to deal with than involuntary so it is important to understand what category you fall into.

Obstacles you may face

It is important to think about the problems you may face. Retirement will be difficult in different ways for different people, especially if retirement was involuntary.

Obstacles you may face include loss of athletic identity. If you have been an elite player for a long time and are known as a hockey player, then you may feel like you will lose your purpose and self-worth which can be stressful and upsetting, it is important to remember that you have always been more than an athlete.

As a previous athlete you may also start to notice weight gain but discovering new sports and a new gym routine will help control this and allow you to still stay fit and healthy.

You may start to question your purpose and feel out of place in day to day life. However, this is only temporary and talking to your support network will help with coming to terms with these new feelings and worries.

Opportunities you WILL face

Retirement comes with many benefits and ways that can positively impact you and the world that surrounds you.

- You will experience a lot of free time - This will allow you to explore new exciting hobbies, careers or opportunities that you couldn't prior to retiring, allowing you to create a 'new life'.

- Spend more time with your family and friends without feeling restricted to timings or diets that you experienced as an athlete. This will allow you to relax and enjoy your time in the moment with loved ones.

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While settling into retirement, remembering the positives will encourage you to relax and enjoy the process while taking advantage of ever