

These are the most frequently asked questions from clubs. You will recognise most of these ideas.

1. How do we get new umpires?

As we all know, this is really difficult. People want to play; few are happy to umpire. The ideas below may be useful, and we are happy to discuss things with you, but there's no getting away from the fact that the responsibility for providing umpires for your games (bar elite level) rests solely with your club. There is no hidden army of club umpires you could tap into. Your members will need to step forward one way or another.

2. How do other clubs get their umpires?

Clubs that are good at this usually have a structure in place this may look like:

Someone with a specific recruitment role. They're usually the club's Umpire Liaison Officer, and are often qualified as a Club Umpire Developer, County Umpire Developer or are qualified to Level 2. They are constantly on the lookout for candidates, and know how to ease people into umpiring.

Support of the club management team, who regularly get across to the membership that people need to step forward to help the club - to take responsibility. If pushed correctly, members will think "that's fair enough", and volunteer.

A few clubs have gone as far as requiring all playing members to have passed the Level 1 online rules test (free of charge).

Another approach is to encourage a handful of volunteers at the same time - so that no individual becomes lumbered. Over time, and with the right approach, good clubs build up a sizeable group of willing and able umpires, with no-one feeling put upon.

Most clubs look to players to become qualified (75% of qualified umpires also play), as well as anyone retiring or injured. However, also look to others around the club, even if they've never played

- Parents of juniors are often present at training sessions and games anyway. They are one of the best sources of new club volunteers, including umpires.
- Players' partners/friends are often around too.

When approaching anyone new, be up to speed on the options for a gentle introduction to the game. Getting started as an umpire is not as daunting as it may seem. England Hockey's [Getting Started page gives an overview](#).

3. How do we provide an introduction to the game for those interested?

Newbies need both knowledge and gentle match practice, and can be supported in other ways.

- Knowledge
 - The [worldwide Rules of Hockey are here](#), and there's an app too.
 - England Hockey provides an 'Introduction to Umpiring' online course, aimed at those with little or no umpiring knowledge. [Find one here](#).
- Practice is obviously important. Until they're confident enough, avoid full adult league games that might put them off. Gentler options include:
 - Matches during adult training sessions - easily organised. Discuss with your club's coaches and find out if they have any specific outcomes for the session, such as reactions to intentionally incorrect umpiring decisions.
 - Junior training sessions/games. If your club doesn't have a junior section, nearby ones that do may well be able to help.
 - Back to Hockey sessions - if your club, or others nearby, run them.
 - Summer hockey.
- Support
 - Accompany newbies to sessions and talk before and after.
 - Pair them with an experienced umpire, using radios if possible.

4. How do we prepare someone for Level 1 assessment?

- They need to complete the Level 1 Online Course. [Find one here. at the Hockey Hub](#) - free registration is required.
 - Provided by England Hockey, it covers theoretical aspects of umpiring the 11-a-side game.
 - The Hockey Hub contains a range of other umpiring resources.
 - The course is now free.
- Review the [Level 1 Assessment Forms](#). These show the criteria used.

5. How do we arrange a Level 1 assessment?

This obviously involves finding both a suitable game, and an assessor that can make it.

Matches must be 11 a side and over 60 minutes long, with a competitive element. Summer games are ideal.

If your club has a Level 1 Assessor, or Level 2 or (higher) umpire, things will be easiest to arrange. If not:

- Contact: areclubumpiring@london.hockey with details - club, the candidate's name, and possible dates

6. How can we show that we value and support our club umpires?

Umpires who feel part of your club are more likely to stay involved. There are many ways that this can be done.

- Support them:
 - Offer to reimburse their online course fees.
 - Offer to pay for any travel expenses.
 - Provide radios. This can be tricky if sets are shared between umpires, but they not only help accuracy on the pitch, they help umpires chat and socialise. Contact officiatingclubliaison@london.hockey if you need advice.
 - Make sure your umpires know of [London's umpire welfare reporting form](#), reminding them once or twice a season.
 - Get your club to also remind captains - perhaps all players - of this reporting system at least once a season.
- Value them:
 - Consider buying them a pair of umpiring shirts. This will make them look more professional, and is a way of showing that you value them for the long term. [England Hockey's shop can be found by logging in here](#).
 - Always thank umpires at your end of season awards.
 - Provide free entrance to club socials for anyone umpiring a lot of games.
 - Some clubs pay umpires per match. Universities have paid umpires for their games for many years. Juniors and students are likely most interested.
 - Payment isn't realistic for most clubs as a permanent option, but can help if you're desperate week to week.
 - Perhaps offer payment for a single season, but only for qualified umpires - thereby encouraging new people to become qualified.

7. Where can we get more advice? Who can we talk to?

- Clubs' point of contact with London Hockey is officiatingclubliaison@london.hockey
- <https://london.englandhockey.co.uk/officiating-in-london/club-umpiring>