

FIRST EDITION

YOUTH RULES  
& BEST PRACTICES

GUIDEBOOK  
FOR GIRLS



Supplement to Lacrosse Magazine

# US LACROSSE » WELCOME



US Lacrosse, the national governing body of men's and women's lacrosse, is in the midst of a comprehensive effort to improve the quality of experience for everyone associated with youth lacrosse. A key component of this

effort is the development of consistent national rules that are based on the physical, cognitive and psychological development stages of children. The US Lacrosse youth rules have been developed with those stages in mind to focus on player development, team play, sportsmanship and safety.

This inaugural edition of the Youth Rules and Best Practices Guidebook is an educational tool for players, parents, coaches, officials and administrators to help explain the rules and the rationale behind the rules. The best practices included in this book are as important as the rules. They provide guidelines for youth lacrosse organizations to make sure the emphasis is where it should be – on the health and well-being of the children playing the sport, and their enjoyment and development in the game.

The rules and best practices in this book were developed in conjunction with the US Lacrosse Sports Science and Safety Committee, a diverse group of professionals that specialize in a variety of disciplines within the sports medicine field. The goal of this committee is to utilize the existing sports medicine literature, and to grow the body of lacrosse safety knowledge in order to objectively advise US Lacrosse and the lacrosse community on factors that may enhance the safety and quality of experience in the sport of lacrosse at all levels.

The guidebook is a supplement to the Official Rules for Girls' and Women's Lacrosse, published by US Lacrosse, and is focused on play at the U15 level and younger. The rulebook is available for free download or a hard-copy purchase on the US Lacrosse website at [www.uslacrosse.org](http://www.uslacrosse.org). Additional copies of this guidebook may also be purchased from US Lacrosse, and it is also available for free download.



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# US LACROSSE » WOMEN'S GAME

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# US LACROSSE » ABOUT

US Lacrosse is the national governing body of lacrosse. Since 1998 we have been dedicated to providing leadership, support and resources to members of the lacrosse community. Fueled by a passion for the game, US Lacrosse plays a central role in the rapid growth of the sport throughout the United States and abroad. Devoted to promoting the game while preserving its integrity and spirit, US Lacrosse provides programs and services to nearly 375,000 members in communities across the nation.

**Mission:** Through responsive and effective leadership, US Lacrosse strives to provide programs and services to inspire participation while protecting the integrity of the game.

**Vision:** We envision a future which offers people everywhere the opportunity to discover, learn, participate in, enjoy and ultimately embrace the shared passion of the lacrosse experience.

US Lacrosse offers the most comprehensive, responsive and user-friendly programs and services available for lacrosse, through which it has provided support to over 50,000 coaches, players, officials, administrators and fans. These programs include various financial grants, the BRIDGE Initiative and Emerging Groups (for underserved communities), Coaching Education Program, Fast Break Initiative, Officials Training Programs, the U.S. National Teams Programs, National Team Clinics, New Start Program, Positive Coaching Alliance Partnership and the Sports Science and Safety Committee.

## Support Our Mission

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, US Lacrosse relies on the generosity of its members and donors to fund its activities and support its mission. The organization provides a leadership role in virtually every aspect of the game throughout the United States, and offers a number of programs and information services to its national membership and lacrosse enthusiasts throughout the country. **To make a secure online gift to US Lacrosse, please visit our website at [www.uslacrosse.org](http://www.uslacrosse.org).**



<http://www.uslacrosse.org/UtilityNav/AboutUSLacrosse/Overview.aspx>



# US LACROSSE » PROGRAMS

## COACHING EDUCATION PROGRAM

The US Lacrosse Coaching Education Program (CEP) provides a national standardized approach to teaching the sport to coaches. CEP includes online courses, in-person instructional clinics, Positive Coaching Alliance courses, and multiple levels geared towards an individual's experience. As part of the CEP, US Lacrosse also offers coaches the opportunity to be certified by the organization.

## EQUIPMENT GRANTS

Through its first 12 years, the USL Equipment Grant program made awards to over 500 programs nationwide with a retail value totaling more than \$2 million dollars. Brine, Cascade, deBeer/Gait, Maverik, Onyx, STX and Warrior are sponsors of this program with Great Atlantic, 6M Sports and Lax World coming on board.

In 2012, the equipment grants will transition into The First Stick Program, a three-year program that provides comprehensive resources that new programs will need to build a solid foundation that ensures long-term viability under US Lacrosse standards and best practices.

## FAST BREAK INITIATIVE

Fast Break, an initiative that started in 2005, is designed to infuse a fledgling lacrosse area with resources to launch the sport from the roots up through educating coaches, officials, players and administrators.

## GRANTS

US Lacrosse offers a variety of grants, including Automated External Defibrillator (AED), Chapter, Physical Education and Sportsmanship grants that help grow the sport in a responsible manner and create a safe environment for players.

## NATIONAL LACROSSE HALL OF FAME

Located at US Lacrosse headquarters in Baltimore, the National Lacrosse Hall of Fame highlights the sport's history and traditions and honors more than 350 greats that have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

## MEMBER VALUE

US Lacrosse offers a robust member value program that includes a subscription to Lacrosse Magazine, a comprehensive insurance program, access to US Lacrosse programs, services and events, and discounts through a variety of affinity programs, including Champion, Marriott, Nationwide, The Sports Authority and U.S. Bank.

# US LACROSSE » PROGRAMS

## NATIONAL CONVENTION

US Lacrosse hosts the largest educational opportunity in the sport each year – the US Lacrosse National Convention. More than 5,000 coaches, officials, administrators, vendors and fans come together each year to learn, network and kick off the season.

## NATIONAL TEAMS

US Lacrosse coordinates the National Teams Program for both men's and women's lacrosse. The U.S. national teams have been very successful on the field, winning 24 of 29 Federation of International Lacrosse world championships since 1974, and give back to the sport through numerous clinic programs.

## NEW START

The US Lacrosse New Start Program offers guidance and free resources to help new teams get off to the right start. Over 2,300 new teams have received start-up assistance through this program since 2004.

## OFFICIALS TRAINING PROGRAMS

US Lacrosse offers the only national, standardized officials' training programs for men's and women's lacrosse in the United States. The training prepares officials to safely and effectively manage games at all levels.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

US Lacrosse has developed a teacher-friendly, easy to use co-ed curriculum designed for use with soft-lacrosse equipment to introduce people to the sport.

## PLAYING EVENTS

US Lacrosse offers several national playing events each year, including the Women's Collegiate Lacrosse Associates National Championship, the National Tournament, regional championships at the U11, U13 and U15 age groups and the U15 National Championship.

## US LACROSSE FOUNDATION

The US Lacrosse Foundation operates in support of US Lacrosse, the national governing body of men's and women's lacrosse. The principal aims and objectives of the Foundation are to encourage, foster and promote the sport of lacrosse, as played by both men and women, and in particular, to benefit and support the programs and activities of US Lacrosse.



# US LACROSSE » CODE OF ETHICS

The US Lacrosse Code of Ethics promotes sportsmanship and character by teaching, advocating, modeling and enforcing ethical principles, while preserving the integrity of the game.

Below is a brief overview of the code:

**RESPECT:** individuals should value the opinions, views and roles of others who work to further the mission of the organization. All should safeguard the dignity, privacy and freedom of individuals regardless of their race, color, creed, socio-economic status, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or nationality.

**FAIRNESS:** making decisions without favoritism or prejudice. Anything that creates an unfair advantage violates the spirit, as well as the integrity, of the sport of lacrosse.

**TEAMWORK:** defined as a cooperative or coordinated effort on the part of a group of individuals who work collectively in the interest of a common goal. All members of US Lacrosse should adopt and promote the philosophy that greater success can be achieved when individuals sacrifice their desire for personal accomplishment in favor of the benefits of their team.

**COMMUNICATION:** US Lacrosse members should communicate with clarity, honesty, timeliness, and openness. Clear, honest, timely communication allows collaboration and cooperation to occur, building a stronger game and community for sport.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** present in any instance in which the actions of an individual could result in actual or perceived personal gain or advantage, and/or have an adverse effect on the interests, mission or integrity of US Lacrosse. Individuals who represent and serve US Lacrosse, at all levels, have a duty to disclose any financial interest or personal obligation that may, actually or perceptually, affect the independence of their judgment.

**LEGALITY:** all members of US Lacrosse must comply with all applicable laws. US Lacrosse reserves the right to review violations of the law, which may result in revocation of organizational and/or member status.

# HISTORY » WOMEN'S LACROSSE

The oldest sport in North America, lacrosse was one of many stickball games being played by American Indians at the time Europeans arrived. Rooted in Native American religion, lacrosse was often played to resolve conflicts, heal the sick, and develop strong, virile men.

Legend tells of games with as many as 1,000 players per side, playing on fields from one to 15 miles in length. Games sometimes lasted for days. Balls were made out of wood, deerskin, baked clay or stone.

The evolution of the modern game began in 1636 when Jean de Brebeuf, a Jesuit missionary, documented a contest in southeast Ontario, Canada. Lacrosse was given its name by early French settlers.

The first women's lacrosse game was played in 1890 at the St. Leonard's School in Scotland. In 1926, Miss Rosabelle Sinclair established the first women's lacrosse team in the United States at the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore, Maryland.

Men's and women's lacrosse were played under virtually the same rules, with no protective equipment, until the mid-1930s. Today, women's rules limit stick contact, prohibit body contact and, therefore, require little protective equipment.

In 1933, the United States Women's Lacrosse Association (USWLA) held its first national tournament in Greenwich, Conn. The first NCAA women's championship was played between the University of Massachusetts and Trenton State University in 1982. That same year, the first IFWLA World Cup was played in Nottingham, England with the United States defeating Australia 10-7 in the gold medal game. In 1998, US Lacrosse was established as the national governing body for men's and woman's lacrosse.



<http://www.uslacrosse.org/UtilityNav/AboutTheSport/History.aspx>



# THE GUIDE » USING THE QUADS

**WHAT IS IT?** A quad is US Lacrosse's exciting new way to provide everyone involved with youth lacrosse a quick understanding of the game and the rules that help make it safe, rewarding, and fun.

**WHEN** tells you when you should expect to see it

**WHERE** tells you where on the field it occurs

**WHO** tells you who is involved in it

**WHY** tells you why it exists as a rule

## FUNDAMENTALS

**READ** Four points offer a quick view to the basics of what's going on and how to execute it properly.

**UNDERSTAND** Presents a better understanding of the rule or component.

**REFERENCE** Refers to other places to learn more about a particular rule or component of youth lacrosse.

**LINK** Links to related pages and online subject areas will be supplied throughout the quads and guidebook.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» Highlights important modifications for different youth age groups.

» **U9** – age-specific color coded

» **U11** – age-specific color coded

» **U13** – age-specific color coded

» **U15** – age-specific color coded

## PLAY SAFE

» First and foremost, lacrosse can be an exceptionally safe and healthy team activity.

» Tips on how to keep it safe, healthy and fun for everyone are listed here.

» Tips relate to the skill/rule/category being described in this quad.

» Tips are to increase everyone's awareness of ways to keep youth lacrosse safe, healthy and fun.




» The QR code to the left may be scanned with your smartphone to obtain further information on the topic online. If no smartphone is available, the URL provided links to additional information online.





## VIOLATIONS

- » Topic headings depend on definitions of roles, rule infractions, responsibilities or rules with possible fouls.
- » Major responsibilities specific to the topic may be listed here.
- » Relevant foul calls will be shown here and in the arm signals section. Severity of infraction is color coded as follows:

-  **RED STOP SIGN** indicates automatic card foul
-  **YELLOW BALL** indicates major foul
-  **GREEN BALL** indicates minor foul

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Ways to help make the game a better experience for all involved are presented here.
- » US Lacrosse recommends “Best Practices” to improve many aspects of the game.

## PERSPECTIVES

This section provides interesting perspectives for different participants:

-  Parents
-  Coaches
-  Umpires

## SITUATIONS QUADS

Many unique situations can arise during a game. Situations section offers insight on how to address these situations when they occur.



# THE GUIDE » TERMS

## DEFENDING

**BLOCKING:** a player causes illegal contact by moving into the path of the ball carrier, giving her no chance to stop or change direction.

**CHECKING:** using stick-to-stick contact to try and dislodge the ball.

**MODIFIED CHECKING:** checking the stick only if the entire stick is below shoulder level. The check must be down and away from the body.

**CLEAR SPACE:** indicates the space between players which is free of sticks or any parts of the body.

**MARKING:** closely guarding an opponent within a stick's length.

## ATTACKING

**CRITICAL SCORING AREA:** an area in front of and to each side of the goal and 9 meters behind the goal. An 8-meter arc and a 12-meter fan are marked in this area.

**PICK:** a player without the ball, who by her positioning, forces opponent to take another route. It must be set within the visual field of the opponent allowing her time and space to stop or change direction, but she doesn't have to be stationary.

**SCORING PLAY:** a continuous effort by the attacking team to move the ball toward the goal and generate a shot on goal. The scoring play is over when a shot is taken, the attacking team fouls, loses possession, passes or carries the ball behind the goal line and stops the continuous attempt to score.

**FREE SPACE TO GOAL:** a cone-shaped path extending from each side of the goal circle to the attack player with the ball that a defender may not occupy unless closely guarding an opponent.

**INDIRECT FREE POSITION:** awarded to the offense when a minor foul is committed by the defense inside the 12-meter fan. Player may run or pass but not shoot until another player has played the ball.


# THE GUIDE » TERMS


## PENALTY ADMINISTRATION


**SLOW WHISTLE:** a held whistle, with a flag raised, when the defense commits a major foul and the attack has entered the critical scoring area and is engaged in a scoring play.

**THROW:** occurs when there are off-setting fouls. Two players stand next to each other and the umpire tosses the ball between them to get possession.

**CARDS:** used by the umpire to issue penalties to a player, team or coach for repeated and flagrant or dangerous major fouls.

 **GREEN CARD:** presented to the captain indicating a team caution for delay of game. Next team offense results in a green/yellow card.

 **YELLOW CARD:** given as a warning to an offending player, coach, or team personnel and a player is suspended for two minutes of elapsed playing time. A substitute may not take her place, and the team must play short at both ends of the field. A second yellow card to the same individual will result in their ejection from the game.

 **RED CARD:** given to an offending player, coach or team personnel, who is immediately ejected and prohibited from participating in the team's next game.



# THE GUIDE » TERMS

## PLAYER PLACEMENT

**FREE POSITION:** an opportunity awarded to one player when a major or minor foul is committed by a player from the other team. All players must move 4 meters away from the player with the ball. When whistle sounds to resume, player may run, pass or shoot, unless it's indirect.

**MAJOR FOULS:** offending player stands 4 meters behind player taking the free position.

**MINOR FOULS:** offending player stands 4 meters away with respect to the direction she was heading before committing foul.

**TEAM FOULS:** closest defender takes free position at the spot of the ball, no closer than 8 meters from the goal if the attack fouls. If defense fouls with ball outside critical scoring area, attack is awarded free position at the spot. If ball is within the critical scoring area, free position is at the top of the 12-meter fan.



**GOAL CIRCLE FOUL:** if defense fouls, an indirect free position is taken 12m out to either side level with the goal line. If attack fouls, goalie is awarded a free position inside the goal circle.

**STAND:** when whistle is blown, all players must stand where they are. Ball is considered dead until whistle blows again.

# THE GUIDE » TERMS

## FIELD AREAS

**COACHING AREA:** the area on the bench/table side of the field extending from the substitution area to their end line in U15 play. U13 and U11 utilize the entire field including behind the opponent's bench. One coach is allowed on the field in U9.

**SUBSTITUTION AREA:** the area in front of the scorer's table, centered at midfield, and between two hash marks 5 yards from the center line

**TEAM BENCH AREA:** the area from the end of the substitution area to the team's restraining line.

**8-METER ARC:** a semi-circular area in front of the goal used for the administration of major fouls. A defender may not remain in this area for more than three seconds unless closely marking her opponent.

**12-METER FAN:** a semi-circle area in front of each goal circle bounded by an arc 12 meters from the goal circles.

**GOAL CIRCLE:** the circle around the goal to protect the goalkeeper. No player's stick or body may "break" the plane of the goal circle.



<http://www.uslacrosse.org/TopNav2Right/Rules/WomensRules/FieldDiagram.aspx>



# DEVELOPMENTAL »

*The US Lacrosse Sports Science and Safety Committee, a diverse group of professionals that specialize in a variety of disciplines within the sports medicine field, released a position paper “Boys’ and Girls’ Youth Lacrosse Participation Recommendations” that form the basis of this section. More information about the work of the Sports Science and Safety Committee, and a complete copy of the paper, can be accessed by scanning the QR code on the following page, or by visiting the link listed.*

## FAIR PLAY

Although limiting aggressive play in lacrosse is necessary to protect the safety of its young players, other approaches that involve incentives for safe play may serve as an effective complement to rules. Programs like that may help to foster a greater emphasis on sportsmanship while protecting the safety of its players.



Other recommendations to maintain healthy and fair play are to not let players participate in games below their age grouping, ensure everybody plays and de-emphasize winning for fun and participation.

To ensure the emphasis at the younger levels stays on skill development and team concepts, tournaments should not be played at the U9 level nor all-star teams be created for U9 and U11 players.

## NUTRITION

Children who participate in a physical activity like lacrosse while they are growing require extra attention to their energy intake requirements. Problems in this area can be exacerbated by all day tournaments, strenuous summer camp schedules, and intense competition on very hot days. Active girls ages 9-12 will burn around 1,600 calories a day while active older girls will burn around 2,800 calories in a day.

For active children of all ages, it is paramount that they eat three well balanced meals with two snacks daily. A snack and hour-or-two before games is also recommended.

# DEVELOPMENTAL »

## ATHLETE

Dr. Richard Ginsburg, member of the [US Lacrosse Sports Science and Safety Committee](#) and sports psychologist at Harvard Medical School, published the 10 tips for coaching youth adapted below:

- 1) Have fun. Kids remain active in a sport if they are having fun. Performance improves when participants enjoy playing the game.
- 2) Teach sportsmanship early. Coaches must impart good values (integrity, respect, compassion, etc.) and model good behavior.
- 3) Kids are not mini-adults. They are a work in progress and must be treated and coached differently than adults.
- 4) Design age-appropriate practices. Coaches should consider the physical, psychological and cognitive abilities of youth players when developing practice plans. In addition, coaches should minimize the amount of time spent standing around during practice.
- 5) Define success appropriately for each age group. For pre-kindergarten and kindergarten aged kids, focus on fun and safe activity. Among elementary school aged youth, emphasize developing skills and friendships. With middle school and high school players, define and recognize individual strengths and weaknesses.
- 6) Provide positive feedback. Research shows that a ratio of at least 5:1 between positive and negative feedback is needed.
- 7) Save specialization for older kids. Research shows that an unrealistic number of hours of activity is necessary to move a person's skill set to a significantly upgraded level.
- 8) Avoid over-training. Ginsburg says youths should play just one sport per season, and have at least 1-2 days off per week, and a break of at least two or three months from the game. He also cautions against increases in training levels that increase the risk of injury.
- 9) Use appropriate equipment. Avoid ill-fitting hand-me-down equipment and make sure equipment fits properly.
- 10) Avoid moving kids into older age groupings based on skill level or physical development. Ginsburg says players risk injuries and social alienation when moved up.



<http://www.uslacrosse.org/TopNav/NewsandMedia/PressReleases/YouthParticipationRecommendations.aspx>



# DEVELOPMENTAL »

## OVERUSE AND BURNOUT

In 2007, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) addressed the need to help prevent burnout and overuse injuries in young athletes and made the following recommendations:

- » Encourage early diversification in playing a range of sports, rather than early specialization (there's no data to support that early specialization in lacrosse leads to improved performance or greater expertise).
- » Take 1-2 days off per week from competitive sports.
- » Take 2-3 months away from a specific sport during the year.
- » Emphasize fun, safety and sportsmanship as goals of sport.
- » No sport specialization before puberty.
- » Participate on only one team per season.
- » Reduce excessive playing time in all-day, weekend tournaments.
- » Encourage participation in multiple sports throughout the year.
- » Younger athletes should have 1-2 days off per week from competitive athletics and training to recover.
- » Weekly training time should not increase by more than 10 percent weekly.
- » Young athletes should have at least 2-3 months away from a specific sport during the year.
- » Young athletes should play on only one lacrosse team during a season.



# DEVELOPMENTAL »

## HYDRATION

There are critical issues regarding hydration among children in sports.

First, children are more vulnerable to dehydration than adults as a function of the following:

- » Children have a greater surface area-to-mass ratio than adults.
- » Children lack adequately functioning sweat glands, reducing their capacity to sweat and lose heat.

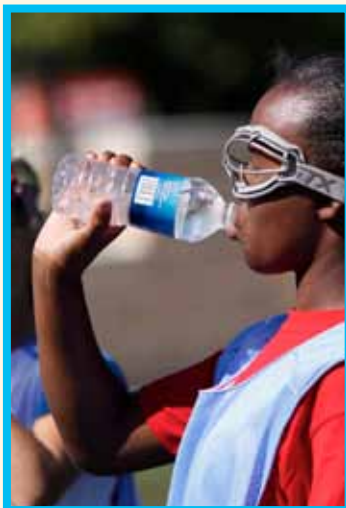
Second, children who train and compete over long periods of time, such as tournaments or camps, on intensely hot days are particularly vulnerable to dehydration. To manage risks, the following is suggested:

- » Provide longer periods of rest between matches and games.
- » Attend to heat acclimatization, fluid and energy intake, proper clothing, air temperature and humidity.
- » Encourage drinking between bouts of exercise and during games. Drink enough fluid so that urine color is pale throughout the day.

Thirst is not a reliable indicator of dehydration. Experts recommend that young athletes drink fluids every 15-20 minutes during physical activity.

Athletes need to drink enough fluid to replace lost fluids within 1-2 hours after exercise. At least one hour of rest is necessary to allow for enough time for proper re-hydration and snacking.

Water should be the primary source of hydration throughout the day and before exercise. Sports drinks are only recommended for children and adolescents who have participated in vigorous exercise for longer than 60 minutes.



<http://www.uslacrosse.org/UtilityNav/AboutTheSport/HealthSafety/Nutrition.aspx>



# AGE & ELIGIBILITY » GUIDE

## RULES AND GUIDELINES

US Lacrosse establishes eligibility standards in order to promote the game of lacrosse among the youth of America in a safe and sportsmanlike environment. This goal can best be achieved by facilitating playing opportunities that seek to establish a “level playing field” among players of a similar age, size and ability.

Teams should be balanced as to physical size, cognitive and developmental stages. Any player who is age-eligible to U15 lacrosse should not be denied an opportunity to play.

### AGE GUIDELINES (BY AUGUST 31 PRECEDING COMPETITION YEAR)

**U9** 8 years old or younger as of August 31 of the previous year

**U11** 10 years old or younger as of August 31 of the previous year

**U13** 12 years old or younger as of August 31 of the previous year

**U15** 14 years old or younger as of August 31 of the previous year

Although possible, it is not recommended that players play up a level. Players may not play down a level.

Teams playing by US Lacrosse rules will be organized by age. When multiple teams exist in an age group, physical size, skill and maturity should be considered when organizing teams.

## BEST PRACTICE

US Lacrosse believes that prohibiting checking for beginning players will enable them to develop the critical skills necessary to play and enjoy the game before being introduced to stick checking. Once they have mastered the basics, modified checking below the shoulders will be introduced at the U13 level.



# YOUTH RULES » U9 AND U11

## GAME MODIFICATIONS

Youth lacrosse rules are designed to emphasize player safety, enjoyment and retention through the development of individual stick skills, team play, safety and sportsmanship.

Youth rules highlighted below are modifications of US Lacrosse rules and aimed at supporting the physical, cognitive and skill progression of each age group.

**COACH:** allowed on U9 field to instruct players. Keeping score optional.

**CHECKING:** absolutely no checking allowed in U9 or U11.

**FIELD:** U9 plays on a modified field with reduced number of players.

U11 may play on modified field or regulation field.

**GAME TIMES:** maximum 20-minute running time halves. No overtime.

**PLAYERS:** U9 is 7v7, goalie and keeping score optional. U11 either 12v12 or 7v7.

**STICKS:** regulation field stick with or without modified pocket. Sticks may be cut to match length of a player's arm. Goalies are allowed mesh pockets and sticks up to 52 inches long.

**EQUIPMENT:** requirements same for all levels.

**UMPIRES:** at least one US Lacrosse-certified umpire. Two US Lacrosse-rated umpires are recommended.

**PENALTY ADMIN:** cards are issued at all levels of play. No shooting from free position if no goalie or open net. No offside if 7v7. No follow through into goal on shots and offensive 3 seconds called if defense in checkable position.

**DEPUTY:** no deputy is allowed.

## BEST PRACTICE

Coach and administrators should establish team guidelines and a code of conduct for players/parents prior to the season to be distributed and acknowledged by all.



# YOUTH RULES » U13 AND U15

## GAME MODIFICATIONS

The rules listed below are to support the physical, cognitive and developed skills progression of older players.

**CHECKING:** modified checking below the shoulder in U13. Full checking is allowed in U15 if there are two USL umpires officiating, one of which must have a Local rating or higher.

**FIELD:** U13/U15 - regulation sized field with appropriate markings.

**GAME TIMES:** maximum 25-minute halves, running time. Two 3-minute overtime periods after 5-minute rest. First goal wins; ties allowed.

**STICKS:** regulation field stick with no modified pocket. Goalies are allowed a mesh pocket.

**EQUIPMENT:** requirements same for all levels.

**UMPIRES:** it is strongly recommended that two US Lacrosse-certified umpires be used in U13 and U15 games. Teams with 15-plus players should have a minimum of two certified coaches. U15 must have two USL-rated umpires for full checking; one must have local rating.

**PENALTY ADMINISTRATION:** cards are issued at all levels of play. A red card must be given for an intentional check to the head during full check games. No follow through into goal on shots and offensive 3 seconds called if defense in checkable position.

## BEST PRACTICE

Rules are written with the safety of all players being of the utmost importance. Umpires have the authority to penalize any foul, unsafe play, or unacceptable behavior. Youth lacrosse should be fun, challenging and safe.

# OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME

Girls' lacrosse is a non-contact game played by 12 players: a goalkeeper, three attackers, five midfielders, and three defenders. Seven field players may cross the restraining line and four stay behind. The object of the game is to shoot the ball into the opponent's goal. The team scoring the most goals wins.

After warm-ups and the pre-game equipment check with the umpires, the game begins with a draw at the center of the field. Only five players from each team are permitted between restraining lines at the time of the draw. Once the signal for the draw occurs, the players behind the lines may cross over.

Only seven attacking players are allowed over the restraining line and only eight defenders are allowed in their defensive end. Players may exchange places during play, but the player must have both feet over the line before a teammate enters.



When a whistle blows, all players must stop in place. Field players may pass, catch or run with the ball in their stick. Rough checks and contact to the body with the stick or body are not allowed.

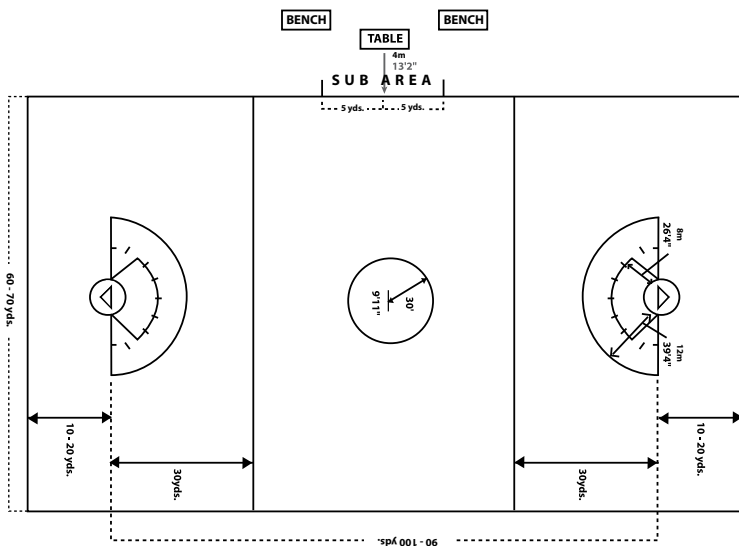
Fouls are categorized as major or minor, and the penalty for fouls is a "free position." For major fouls, the offending player is placed 4 meters behind the player taking the free position. For a minor foul, the offending player is placed 4 meters from where she approached her opponent before committing the foul, and play is resumed.

When a minor foul is committed in the 12-meter fan, the player with the ball has an indirect free position, in which case the player must pass first before the team may shoot. An immediate whistle is blown when a major foul, or obstruction of shooting space occurs, which jeopardizes players' safety.

If a game is tied at the end of regulation, sudden victory may be played at the older levels. Youth girls lacrosse rules are designed to emphasize the proper development of stick skills, team play, player safety and sportsmanship.



# FIELD » PLAYING AREA



**DIMENSIONS:** 110-140 yards wide, 60-70 yards wide, goals 90-100 yards apart, 10-20 yards behind goal line

**RESTRAINING LINES:** 30 yards in from goal lines

**CENTER CIRCLE:** middle of field, for draws

**ARC AND FAN:** 8-meter arc and 12-meter fan half circles from goal line

**SUBSTITUTION AREA:** players enter game through this area

**TEAM BENCH AREA:** between scorer's table and restraining line

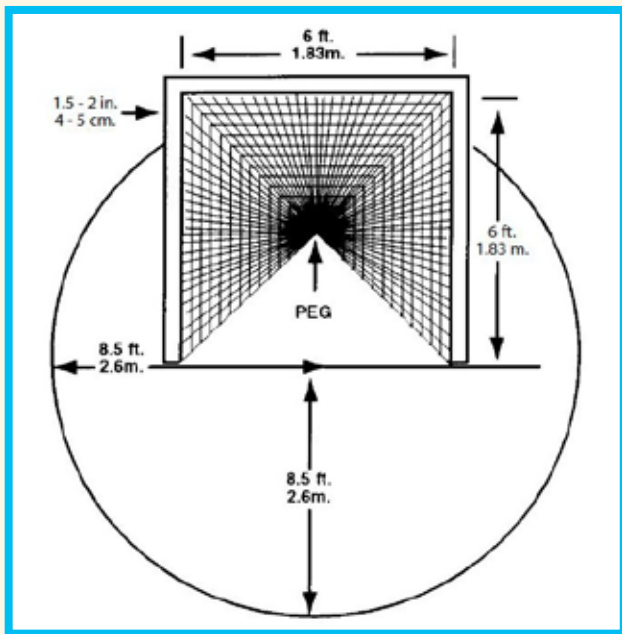
**SCORER'S/TIMER'S TABLE:** score, time, substitution area

**COACHING AREA:** where coaches may roam, age levels have different rules

**SPECTATOR AREA:** four meters from sideline opposite bench areas and never behind goal line



# FIELD » NEEDS



**GOALS:** 6x6 feet with 1.5-2" pipes and net attached

**REGULATION LACROSSE BALLS:** yellow or orange

**SCORE BOOK:** scorekeeper to record goals, assists, etc.

**GAME CLOCK:** for keeping official game time

**HORN:** to alert umpires when time is over

**CONES:** help to identify boundary lines at the corners

**WATER:** containers with water for both teams

**MEDICINE KIT:** supplies to handle most on-field incidents

**AED:** an automated external defibrillator (AED) is recommended to be available on site. Visit [www.uslacrosse.org](http://www.uslacrosse.org) and click "Programs & Grants" for info on securing an AED.



# EQUIPMENT » STICKS



## FIELD STICK

- » Length: 35.5" minimum, 43.25" maximum. U9 and U11 may shorten to the length of player's arm
- » Stringing: 4-5 leather or synthetic strings, 8-12 stitches or cross-lacing, maximum of two "shooting" strings
- » Pocket: no mesh - legal when ball remains above the wall when pressure applied in horizontal stick
- » Head: triangular affixed in same plane as handle
- » Shaft: wood, composite or metal alloy

## GOALIE STICK

- » Length: 35.5" minimum, 52" maximum in youth lacrosse
- » Stringing: goalie sticks come standard with mesh pockets
- » Pocket: legal when ball moves freely in pocket and stick meets manufacturing specs from Rule 9 in "Official Rules for Girls and Women's Lacrosse" rulebook published by US Lacrosse
- » Head: extra-wide triangle in same plane as handle
- » Shaft: wood, composite or metal alloy

Sticks are checked at pre-game line-up and umpires may remove illegal sticks from game. Umpires will recheck illegal sticks at halftime and allow for use if the stick passes.



# EQUIPMENT » UNIFORMS

## UNIFORM SHIRTS AND KILTS OR SHORTS

With the exception of the goalkeeper, all team members must be dressed uniformly with:

- » Same colored kilts or shorts
- » Shirts of same color and design
- » Clearly visible numbers of a color that contrasts the shirt color will be worn
- » U13/U15 team members with visible undergarments must wear same color and be of one solid color, either white, black, grey or team's uniform colors
- » Uniform shorts or kilts must be worn
- » Team members' shoes and socks need not match



## GOALKEEPER

- » Goalie's shirt must be of same colors as her team and bottom must be in agreement with her team's predominant color, or be black or grey
- » Shirt must be worn over protective equipment and sweat pants are acceptable

## HOME AND AWAY

Coaches or schools agree on contrasting colors before game day. Home team will wear numbered pinnies or vests of a contrasting color if both teams have uniforms of similar or same colors.



# EQUIPMENT » FIELD PLAYER



# EQUIPMENT » FIELD PLAYER

## PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR

All field players must wear proper eye protection (goggles). Eye protection is essential for providing a safe environment and must meet the most current ASTM Specification Standard F803 for women's lacrosse, be tested at a PECC approved testing facility and be listed on the US Lacrosse website.

## MOUTHPIECE

All players must wear a professionally manufactured intra-oral mouthpiece without protruding tabs that fully covers the upper jaw teeth. It can be of any color, except white or clear, and may not be altered to decrease protection.

## GLOVES

Close-fitting gloves may be worn by players.

## FOOTWEAR/CLEATS

Composition or rubber soled shoes must be worn and may have plastic, leather, or rubber cleats-studs. Spikes are not allowed.

## OTHER PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Nose guards, soft headgear, and protective devices necessitated by medical grounds may be worn. No equipment, including protective devices, may be used unless it complies with the rules, and manufacturers' specs and is deemed not dangerous to other players by the umpires.

\* *EQUIPMENT NOTE: Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, splints, etc.) on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm or shoulder are prohibited unless padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than 1/2" thick. Knee and ankle braces that are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production do not require any additional padding.*



<http://www.uslacrosse.org/UtilityNav/AboutTheSport/SportsScienceandSafety/ApprovedEyewearList.aspx>



# EQUIPMENT » GOALKEEPER



# EQUIPMENT » GOALKEEPER

## HELMET

Goalkeepers must wear a protective helmet with facemask and chin strap that meets the NOCSAE test standard.

## MOUTHPIECE

Goalies must wear a professionally manufactured intra-oral mouthpiece that fully covers the upper jaw teeth. It can be of any color, except white or clear and may not be altered to decrease protection.

## GLOVES

Padded gloves must be worn. They shouldn't have webbing or increase the size of her hands excessively. Boys' lacrosse gloves may be used.

## CHEST PROTECTOR

A chest protector, preferably with additional arm and shoulder protection must be worn. If the chest protector has shoulder flaps, the uniform shirt must cover those flaps to keep them in place.

## THROAT PROTECTOR

A separate device designed specifically to protect the throat must be worn. The throat protector must be approved for use with a NOCSAE-approved helmet.

## SHIN AND THIGH PADDING

Padding protecting the shins and thighs must be worn, excluding field hockey pads.

## BEST PRACTICE

All teams that use a goalie should properly equip the goalie with lacrosse-specific equipment, not equipment that has been designed for other sports.



# ROLES » COACH

**WHAT IS IT?** The coach is a responsible adult role model whose job is to empower young athletes. The coach should teach kids how to play women's lacrosse, teamwork, sportsmanship and the many life lessons the sport has to offer.

**WHEN** during practices and games

**WHERE** at practices and games

**WHO** an adult who knows the game, is enthusiastic and is a US Lacrosse CEP-certified women's lacrosse coach

**WHY** to teach the game and make it safe and fun for all involved

## FUNDAMENTALS

**POSITIVE** A coach must use positive reinforcement to build player confidence.

**FUN** Stress that winning is secondary to enjoying the game.

**SAFETY** Players' safety is the number one priority.

**COMMUNICATION** A coach must communicate clearly with parents, players, and officials.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

- » **U9** - One coach is permitted on the field to instruct players
- » **U11** - Coaches may go the length of the field, moving behind opponent's bench
- » **U13** - Same as U11
- » **U15** - Coaches permitted from substitution area to their end line
- » Coaches should ensure equal playing time.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- » Certify to umpires that all equipment is legal under the rules.
- » Indicate a substitute for an injured or suspended player.
- » Approach umpire respectfully during pre-game, halftime, or timeouts for clarifications.
- » Request timeouts from umpire.
- » Coach should always approach practices with a clear and age-appropriate plan.





## VIOLATIONS

Teams will incur fouls if coach fails to curtail:

- Excessively rough, dangerous or unsportsmanlike play.
- Persistent or flagrant violations of the rules.
- Excessive dissent or abusive language by coach or players.
- Coaches leaving coaching area.
- Second requests to inspect any stick meeting specifications.
- Not ready after a two-minute team timeout or following half.
- Requesting too many timeouts.

## SITUATIONS COACH

Coaches must assist officials in keeping a game under control, including spectators not conducting themselves properly. The head coach is responsible for all persons officially connected to the team or institution.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » It is highly recommended that all youth coaches be US Lacrosse-certified.
- » Although practices should focus on technical and tactical skills, including game-like situations, they should also be fun and enjoyable.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Cheer for everyone on the team, leave the instructing to coach.
- C** The younger the player, the shorter the attention span – plan drills accordingly.
- C** Never underestimate the power of a compliment! Praise small victories. Always be truthful and specific.
- C** A flexible attitude helps when things don't go as planned.
- U** Some coaches may not be familiar with all of the rules. Explain calls when appropriate.



# ROLES » TEAM

**WHAT IS IT?** Girls' lacrosse is a team sport. There are eleven field players and a goalie. Because lacrosse is a fast-paced game, substitutions are frequent to allow players to rest and share playing time.

**WHEN** at all times

**WHERE** everywhere on and off the field

**WHO** a group working towards a common goal

**WHY** working as a team is fun, rewarding and helps build lifelong skills

## FUNDAMENTALS

**POSITIVE** Good teammates support and help each other get better with verbal and non-verbal praise and positive feedback.

**FUN** Organized sports are recreation designed to keep kids active, safe and having fun.

**ACCOUNTABLE** All teammates are responsible to each other on and off field.

**COOPERATION** Members of the team must all work together to achieve shared goals.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» **U9** - Play involves only seven field players. A goalie is optional.

» **U11** - Plays on a small field, with seven players or 11 and a goalie if on a full-size field.

» Girls develop coordination at different rates. Some players will master new skills more quickly.

» All players on all teams should be within their age group designation and not play up a level.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

» Three attack players use quickness and strong stick skills to score goals and assist others.

» Five midfielders play both offensive and defensive sides of the field. Speed and endurance are key to these position.

» Three defenders defend the goal by "marking" (guarding) opponents. Vision, footwork and communication are important.

» The goalie protects the goal with quick hands and courage, and leads the defense with strong communication skills, quick hands and feet.



## VIOLATIONS

- » **U9:** Cards will be issued for cardable offenses at this level.
- » **U9:** Carded players will leave the game for two minutes.
- » **U11/U13/U15:** All cards will be used at all levels.
- » **U11/U13/U15:** All carded players must leave the field for two minutes. No substitute can take her place. Teams must play short on both ends of the field.
- » Teams will play short after the fourth card for the remainder of the game, except at the U9 level where they do not play down a player (no restraining line).

## SITUATIONS TEAM

Some coaches may substitute several players at once to share playing time equally.

If a team receives a yellow or red card, there will be fewer than 12 players on the field.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Visiting captain calls coin toss and side. Team captains indicate that their team's ready and request umpire clarification at any time.
- » It is crucial that girls learn all positions and have the opportunity to play all of them in game situations.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Teach kids to be encouraging of all teammates, regardless of skill level.
- P** Being part of a team helps girls learn important life skills like cooperation, patience and teamwork.
- C** Because midfielders are involved with play all over the field, they will need substitutions more often.
- U** Violations of rules and penalties can be explained when appropriate, especially at younger levels.



# ROLES » PARENTS

**WHAT IS IT?** A child's parents are as important to her positive experience playing lacrosse as the coach and her teammates. Parents play a major role in making the game a rich and rewarding life experience for all involved, not just their child.

**WHEN** every day, all the time

**WHERE** at home, before, during, after game and practices

**WHO** parents, relatives, caregivers and friends of young players

**WHY** to help maximize the player's potential and fun

## FUNDAMENTALS

**UNDERSTAND** Learn the game's rules by reading this guidebook and referencing it often.

**ROLE MODEL** Display good sportsmanship at all times to coaches, officials, and athletes.

**ENCOURAGE** Young athletes should be encouraged to try new things, take risks and even make mistakes.

**RESPECT** The decisions of umpires and coaches must be respected at all times.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

- » Be sure your child is in the correct age group, as it is essential to her healthy physical and psychological development.
- » **U11** - May use modified field or regulation field when appropriate
- » Stick checking and body contact rules help make the game safe and to focus on skills development.
- » Parents should be aware of modifications based on age groups.

## PLAY SAFE

- » Bring water, oranges, etc. to keep the athletes hydrated.
- » Medical issues should be known in advance and communicated to coach/administrator.
- » Monitor your child's athletic "calendar" and activities to avoid overuse injuries and burnout.
- » Ensure your player has the proper equipment and clothing and has removed all jewelry before playing.
- » Parents need to make sure they have turned in the medical release/contact information for their player.



## RESPONSIBILITIES

- » Get involved. Offer to help keep score or time, raise funds, organize carpooling, line field, photos, websites, etc.
- » Spectators should stand opposite the team benches if possible.
- » Confirm start time and game location in advance.
- » Be your child's "home field advantage" by giving her unconditional support regardless of how she performs.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Be supportive of your child by giving encouragement, listening, and showing interest in her team. Positive reinforcement promotes learning and fun.
- » Research has shown that five positive reinforcements (verbal, non-verbal) for each negative (criticisms, corrections) are ideal for helping athletes do their best.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Let the coaches coach. Refrain from giving players advice during games.
- P** Offer positive reinforcement to coaches by letting them know they're doing a good job.
- C** Explain coaching philosophy and educate parents on differences in boys' and girls' lacrosse rules and objectives.
- U** Coaches are responsible for controlling misbehaving spectators.

## SITUATIONS PARENTS

After a game or practice, use open-ended questions to discuss the event with your child, such as, "What do you think your team could have improved?" This way your child gets to talk about things the way she saw it, not what you think she could do better.



# ROLES » UMPIRES

**WHAT IS IT?** Umpires ensure that the game is played safely, fairly, and in accordance with the procedures recommended in the rulebook. At least two US Lacrosse-trained umpires should officiate a game.

**WHEN** 30 minutes before game and until they leave the venue

**WHERE** at the playing venue

**WHO** US Lacrosse umpires

**WHY** to enforce the rules fairly, safely and consistently

## FUNDAMENTALS

**KNOWLEDGE** Umpires must clearly understand, apply and explain the rules of the game.

**IMPARTIAL** An umpire's calls will not give unfair advantage to either team.

**USL CERTIFIED** Umpires should successfully complete a US Lacrosse certification and field rating.

**SAFETY** The rules of lacrosse are in place to maintain player safety, and calls made by umpires advocate safety.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» **U9** - At least one USL-rated umpire

» **U11** - At least one USL-rated umpire

» **U13** - Two USL-rated umpires

» **U15** - Two USL-rated officials; one MUST have a local rating or higher. This is a mandatory requirement for use of full checking.

» Foul calls should be explained to players whenever possible.

## PLAY SAFE

» Players must respond immediately to the umpire's repositioning and directions.

» When two or more umpires officiate a game, they work as a team to make the best calls.

» An umpire's arm signals indicate the calls being made.

» All players must immediately stand or stop moving on umpire's whistle.

» Umpires work to ensure the game runs smoothly without delay and that play is safe and fun.





## RESPONSIBILITIES

- » Ensure scorekeepers and timers understand their jobs.
- » Inform timer on length of half.
- » Be available for questions from captains and head coach.
- » Make final decision to continue a game due to weather or other circumstances.
- » If scorebook is required, sign to make it official.
- » Umpires need to inspect grounds, goals, balls, sticks, clothing, shoes and protective equipment to ensure compliance with the rules.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » It is always a good practice for umpires to introduce themselves to both coaching staffs and other game personnel before a game.
- » The umpiring team should meet before games to discuss umpiring styles, objectives, responsibilities and strategies.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Officiating is difficult. It is impossible to see every infraction.
- C** It is appropriate to ask for clarification on a call, but it is inappropriate to argue.
- C** Teach players to be respectful of officials and their calls.
- U** Umpires will obtain verbal certification from head coaches that all equipment is legal and meets current standards.

## SITUATIONS UMPIRES

If a situation occurs after the game and before the officials leave during which conduct occurs that would warrant a red card during play, the officials can issue a post-game ejection to be served in the team's next game.



# ROLES » ADMINISTRATORS

**WHAT IS IT?** The designated home team must assign a person to ensure the venue is prepared for competition and manned with umpires, official time and score keepers, and sideline manager, as needed.

**WHEN** before and during a game

**WHERE** at home, before, during, after games and practices

**WHO** assigned administrator or, if none, home team's coach

**WHY** to ensure game can proceed safely under the rules

## FUNDAMENTALS

**COMMUNICATION** Administrators should communicate their expectations of behavior to parents and fans before the game.

**SAFETY** Play must stop when conditions are unsafe due to variables like poor weather determined by game officials.

**SCORER'S TABLE** Each game should have a scorer/timekeeper at a table in the substitution area with a horn, scoreboard, and timer.

**ORGANIZATION** Administrators are responsible for the details necessary to have a successful game.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» **U9** - Fields should be rectangular, 60-70 yards long and 30-40 yards wide

» **U11** - May be the same as U9 or full regulation field when appropriate

» Coaches should be US Lacrosse certified and background checked. Umpires should be US Lacrosse-rated

## PLAY SAFE

» In case of lightning, play should stop for 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder or flash of lightning as determined by game officials.

» If a player is bleeding she should be treated immediately and a substitution must replace her.

» Administrators should promote good sportsmanship for players, fans and coaches.

» The field must be clearly marked and of the proper dimensions.

» Medical kit and water supplies should be available. It is also strongly recommended that an AED be in close proximity.



## RESPONSIBILITIES

- » A designee or the administrator should be present on spectator side of field.
- » Ensure all necessary field and sideline equipment is available, working and compliant with rules.
- » Confirm start times with both teams and umpires in advance.
- » Communicate the safe place to go in case of inclement weather.
- » Identify trainer or other first aid personnel and procedures for both teams.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Play should be stopped by the official at any time if a player is exhibiting signs of injury, especially a concussion, cut or dehydration.
- » Administrators must learn state or program's concussion policies and ensure coaches and umpires know courses of action if a player has suffered a head injury.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Make sure your athletes come to games prepared to play with goggles and mouthguard, etc., plenty of water and have eaten a healthy snack.
- C** Keep all emergency contact information available during games in case of injury.
- C** The home team is responsible for providing a scorer/timekeeper.
- U** Umpires should check with administrators before games to confirm field and safety details are in place.

## SITUATIONS ADMINISTRATORS

Coaches should have extra uniforms in case a player gets blood on her uniform.



# ROLES » OFFICIAL SCORER

The official scorer will be from the home team and will sit at the scorer/timer's table opposite the center circle. The official scorer will be responsible for the following:

- » Record the starting lineups of both teams in the score book 10 minutes prior to the game and make sure the jersey numbers of the players on the field correspond to the numbers in the book. A roster with names and numbers of all players must be at the score table prior to the start of the game.
- » Keep an accurate record of the goals scored in the official home team score book. It is a good practice for the visitors to have a scorer and book at the table.
- » Display continuously an accurate score, for the players, coaches and umpires.
- » Accept substitutes and enter their names and numbers prior to entering the game.
- » Notify umpire on first ensuing stoppage if there has been an illegal substitution.
- » Record any cards next to the player or coach's name in the score book: delay of game (green-"g", green/yellow-"gy", green/red-"gr"); warning (yellow-"y"); ejection (red "r").
- » Notify the umpire immediately when a second warning is given to the same player.
- » Record the delay of game suspensions including the time on the game clock when a player is suspended.
- » Record the time on the game clock when a player is given a yellow or red card.
- » Notify the umpire immediately if a team receives a fourth card.

# ROLES » OFFICIAL TIMER

The official timer will be from the home team and will sit at the scorer's/timer's table opposite the center circle. The official timer will be responsible for the following:

- » Start the clock on the whistle at each draw.
- » Sound a horn at the first stoppage of play:
  1. to notify the umpire of an illegal substitute.
  2. if a clock has malfunctioned.
  3. to alert the umpire when there is a four-goal differential.
- » Sound a horn for substitution after goals.
- » Notify the umpire when there are two minutes remaining in each half of the game.
- » Indicate to the nearest umpire when 30 seconds remain in each half.
- » Sound a horn to indicate the end of the half and the end of the game.
- » Stop the clock for any other circumstances only upon the timeout signal and whistle from the umpire.
- » Notify the umpire when a team requests a timeout and use a separate clock to time the timeout.
  1. Time 2 minutes.
  2. Blow the horn at 1 minute, 45 seconds.
  3. Blow the horn at 2 minutes.
- » Note the time on the clock when a player is issued a green/red card for delay of game and time the two-minute elapsed playing time penalty, and notify the coach when the two-minute penalty time has ended.
- » Note the time on the clock when a player is issued a yellow or red card and time the two-minute elapsed playing time penalty, and notify the coach when the two-minute penalty time has ended.



# TIME FACTORS » TIME & SCORE

**WHAT IS IT?** The home team will assign a timekeeper to keep the regulation playing time and agreed-upon halftime. A separate scorekeeper to record the score is preferred but not required.

**WHEN** all games

**WHERE** scorer's/timer's table on the sideline at midfield

**WHO** home team appointed personnel or volunteers

**WHY** keep regulation time and score

## FUNDAMENTALS

**BEFORE** Decide duration of halftime with coaches and umpires before game.

**RUNNING CLOCK** All time is running time unless tournament rules dictate otherwise.

**SCORING** U9 and U11 may choose not to keep score.

**OVERTIME** U13 and U15 games can end in a tie or result in a maximum of two 3-minute sudden victory running time periods after a 3-minute rest and coin toss to choose field side.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» **U9** - 20 minute halves with scoring optional

» **U11** - 20 minute halves with scoring optional

» **U13** - 25 minute halves

» **U15** - 25 minute halves

» There is no overtime in U9 & U11.

## PLAY SAFE

» Each team is allowed two timeouts per game, none in last five minutes if the running clock cannot be stopped.

» A coach or player on field may request a timeout after a goal or during a dead ball situation by the team in possession.

» 10 minute halftime unless discussed before the start of the game.

» Teams change ends to begin the second half.



## VIOLATIONS

- » Teams can have many different fouls called on them by the umpire, if they are not aware of or abuse the rules relating to time.

**RESUMPTION OF PLAY:** failure to be ready to start play after a timeout or following halftime for a draw.

**ILLEGAL TIMEOUT:** a team requesting more than two timeouts.

## SITUATIONS TIME AND SCORE

If there is no winner after the six minutes of overtime, the game will be considered a tie. There is no overtime in U9 and U11 age groups. Games can end in ties or with no score in U9.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » It is strongly suggested that teams identify those individuals willing to volunteer with timing and scoring in advance of competition.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** If there is no timekeeper, a parent may assume the role of timekeeper.
- C** Knowing how much time is left is an important part of managing the game. Always wear a watch!
- C** Players should be discouraged from asking scorekeeper about personal stats during games.
- U** When there is no timekeeper, umpires should keep a record of time to increase game awareness.



# GAME PLAY » THE DRAW

**WHAT IS IT?** The draw is a chance for either team to gain possession. The centers' sticks are held above hip level and back-to-back so both sticks are between the ball and the goal they are defending.

**WHEN** to start each half and after each goal

**WHERE** center circle on 50-yard line

**WHO** each team's center

**WHY** to resume or start play

## FUNDAMENTALS

**QUICK HANDS** Quickness allows the "push" center to push or pull the ball up first and gain control.

**STICKS UP** Centers must pull/push their sticks up.

**RIGHT HAND UP** Center faces the goal she is attacking, and she wants to direct the ball to her teammates.

**LEFT HAND UP** Center's back is to the goal she is attacking, and she wants to direct the ball to her teammates.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

- » **U9** - Uses a single center line in place of two restraining lines. Players should practice keeping their low defenders behind the center line.
- » If a four-goal-or-more differential exists, then the team with fewer goals will be given possession after a goal at the center line instead of taking a draw.
- » The coach of the trailing team may choose to continue to draw.

## PLAY SAFE

- » Up to five players from each team, including the centers, are allowed in the midfield between the restraining lines during a draw.
- » Players cannot step on or enter the center circle or restraining line until the whistle blows for the draw.
- » Except their heads, centers taking the draw may not move after the official says "ready."
- » Players should be ready to snatch balls out of the air or chase down ground balls.



## VIOLATIONS

**ILLEGAL DRAW:** the other team gets the ball, and the center moves 4 meters away, 45 degrees from the center line if:

- » She draws too soon.
- » No attempt is made to draw.
- » Movement is not upwards.
- » Player taking draw moves after the umpire says “ready.”
- » They step on-or-over center circle or illegally across the restraining line before whistle.

### RE-DRAW IF:

- » Ball does not go higher than heads of players drawing.
- » Ball goes out of bounds before either team can touch the ball.

## SITUATIONS THE DRAW

“Toeing” the line means the players’ feet do not go over or on the center line, center circle, or restraining line.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » With the open pocket facing the player’s goal, her right sidewall will be placed downward toward the line. Take time in practice to figure out which side of the stick your player is most comfortable standing on. She may push or pull, and sticks must be above both hips. Practice with players of different heights.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Draws are exciting plays but closely called to eliminate dangerous play around the head.
- C** Possession is key! Teach players to legally “box out” opponents before chasing the ball.
- C** Encourage your players to watch where the ball goes. They should try to set up where the ball typically lands.
- U** When setting up the draw, umpire should place ball in the top 1/3 of the stick to ensure no advantage is given.



# GAME PLAY » OUT OF BOUNDS

**WHAT IS IT?** When the ball exits the playing field by moving over the boundary lines, the umpire blows the whistle to stop play and then again to restart play.

**WHEN** ball touches line or ground outside of line

**WHERE** the lines around the perimeter of the field

**WHO** all players on the field

**WHY** designates legal playing area of field

## FUNDAMENTALS

**STAND** Players must not move after the whistle is blown.

**TURNOVER** The team that last touched the ball before it went out of bounds will lose possession.

**SHOTS** When a shot goes out of bounds, player nearest the ball will gain possession 4 meters inside the line.

**RESTART** Player with ball moves 4 meters in from the line and all other players stay in relative positions.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» **U9** - See smaller field size specifications

» **U11** - Smaller field optional

» **OUT OF BOUNDS** calls are important in games. Practice so that players understand what they can and can't do and begin learning how to use the boundary to their advantage.

» **CARRYING** or throwing the ball out of bounds is always a change of possession and not a foul.

## PLAY SAFE

» A ball carrier may hold her stick outside the boundary line as long as her feet are not on or over the line.

» Players directly involved with the play or near the out-of-bounds ball will be moved before umpire restarts play to their relative positions before ball went out.

» When the ball carrier steps on or over the boundary line, the ball is out of bounds.

» The player with possession at the restart may play on with no limitations.



## VIOLATIONS

### RULE 5

- » A player may not run out of bounds and re-enter to a more advantageous position.
- » When a player's foot or feet are out of bounds, she may not take an active part in the game.
- » A player may not deliberately push, flick, or bat the ball into an opponent's body to make the ball go out of bounds.
- » A player may not deliberately push, displace, trip or check a ball carrier out of bounds.

## SITUATIONS OUT OF BOUNDS

If the goalie in her goal circle is nearest to the ball after a shot when it crosses the backline she remains in her goal circle to restart play.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Practice fields should be lined to regulation dimensions so the players are familiar with playing in a contained field, including small fields and goal placement.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Any part of the body touching a boundary line is considered to be out of bounds.
- C** Train your players to automatically chase down errant shots at all times.
- C** When the ball is clearly headed out of bounds, teach players to start moving to a more advantageous position before whistle blows.
- U** Players may only move after the whistle and before the restart of play upon the direction of the official.



# GAME PLAY » OFFSIDE

**WHAT IS IT?** Offside refers to a team with more players over the restraining line than allowed. Play is stopped, and the team with too many players over the line will receive a penalty.

**WHEN** too many players on one side of the field

**WHERE** at the 30-yard lines - no offside in U9 play

**WHO** both the attack and defense can be called for offside

**WHY** keep play safe and fair

## FUNDAMENTALS

**OFFENSIVE** A team may not have more than seven players on or over the restraining line in its offensive end.

**DEFENSIVE** A team may not have more than seven players plus a goalie on or over the restraining line in its defensive end.

**RESTRAINING LINE** One of two solid lines 30 yards up-field from each goal line and extending from one side of the field to the other.

**COMMUNICATE** In transition from one part of the field to another, players should communicate who is going over the line.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» **U9** - No offside in 7v7. Emphasis on stick skills over field awareness

» **U11** - Same as U9 unless playing full field 12v12

» **U13** - Offside now called and will demand greater field awareness and communication from players

» **U15** - Same as U13

## PLAY SAFE

» Offside applies whether or not the ball is inside the restraining line.

» The team with too many players will have a player moved back on side with a free position at the spot of the ball.

» Players may reach over the restraining line to play the ball, as long as no part of their feet is on or over the line.

» Players may exchange places during the play, but the player must have both feet out before the player replacing her may enter the attacking end.





## VIOLATIONS

- » If on defense: outside the critical scoring area or below goal line extended, the ball is given to an attacker at the spot of violation.
- » If on defense: inside the critical scoring area and above goal line extended, the attacker receives a free position at the top of the 12-meter fan; the lane is cleared, and nearest defender must stand 4 meters behind.
- » If the attack fouls, the closest defender will be awarded a free position at that spot (no closer than 8 meters to the goal circle). The attack player goes 4 meters behind.

## SITUATIONS OFFSIDE

When attacking team is offside and scores, goal is disallowed and ball awarded to other team. If defensive team is offside, goal counts and no penalty. Both teams offside would result in no goal and a throw.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Develop players to be comfortable on both sides of the restraining line; both offensively and defensively. Practice playing down a player on offense and defense.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** The coach may rotate players into the settled attack or defense.
- C** Players must always know the number of teammates on the field.
- C** Teach your players to defend past the restraining line and to trust that their teammates will cover for them.
- U** Make sure players always understand when a team is a player down.



# GAME PLAY » GOAL AREA

**WHAT IS IT?** The goalie or goal-keeper is the player who is responsible for keeping opponents' from scoring. The goalie is protected by special equipment, a larger stick with pocket and the goal circle.

**WHEN** games and practice

**WHERE** within and around goal circle and in front of the goal

**WHO** one player from each team

**WHY** to protect the goal from shots and help clear the ball

## FUNDAMENTALS

**GOAL CIRCLE** A circle measured 8.5 ft from the center of the goal line to the outer edge of the circle's line.

**GOAL** A net on two 6' high posts connected by a 6' crossbar with a triangular base. The goal line is drawn between the two posts.

**EQUIPMENT** A helmet with a face mask, separate throat protector, padded gloves, mouth piece, chest protector, thigh/shin guards.

**STICK** The goalie stick with its deeper pocket is larger and longer than a field player's stick.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» U9 - Goalie optional

» U11 - All players take turns in goal

» U13 - It's a good practice to rotate multiple players in goal during games and practices

» There will be no deputy allowed for youth play at any level.

\* *A deputy is a field player who may enter the goal circle when the goalie is not present. Only allowed in high school and above.*

## PLAY SAFE

» The goalie is allowed in the goal circle at any time.

» Goalie may reach her stick out of her circle to bring the ball back provided no part of her body is "grounded" outside the circle. She may also "rake" the ball back in as long as no opponent is able to play the ball.

» The goalie's stick is the only stick that may use a mesh pocket and have more than two throwing strings.

» Teams should have two goal sticks for everyone to share.

» The goalie may not exchange sticks with a field player.



## VIOLATIONS

- The penalty for goal circle fouls by the defense is an indirect free position on the 12m fan.
  - The penalty for a goal circle foul by the attack is a free position for the goalie inside the goal circle.
  - The goalie must clear the ball within 10 seconds after it has entered the goal circle.
  - A goalie may not step back into the goal circle when she has first gained possession inside the goal circle.
- » The goalie may stop the ball with her hand, body or stick.

## SITUATIONS GOAL AREA

When a team gains possession of the ball in the goal circle and the ball is cleared, the team cannot intentionally return the ball to the goal circle until ball's been played by another player.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Goalies must wear a lacrosse helmet with face mask and chin strap that meet NOCSAE standards.
- » Goal circles are complex areas to understand. The intricacies and subtleties of attacking and defending in the goal area should be explained and learned early.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** The best goalies are very athletic, strong communicators and have quick reflexes.
- C** Require players to take turns in goal so no one feels “stuck.”
- C** Goalies should be trained to quickly look to transition the ball up field after saves.
- U** A goalie outside her circle loses her goalie privileges and should have fouls enforced as if she were a field player.



# GAME PLAY » SUBSTITUTIONS

**WHAT IS IT?** Teams may substitute an unlimited number of players and it must always be done through the substitution box. Substitutions may be made “on the fly” without waiting for a stoppage in play.

**WHEN** during play, after goals and halves, not during stopped play and injury time outs or dead ball timeouts

**WHERE** from the substitution area in front of scorer’s table

**WHO** players on either team

**WHY** allow all players to play

## FUNDAMENTALS

**COMMUNICATION** A substitute should call her teammate’s name so she will know she’s being replaced.

**ENTRY** A substitute cannot step onto the field until the player she is replacing has entered the substitution area, including the goalkeeper.

**SUBBING AREA** A player must enter the game through the substitution area, unless it’s after halftime.

**QUICKLY** Players must enter field in a timely manner and may only be in sub area if substitution is imminent.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

- » U9 - 7 players on field with goalie optional
- » A team may not have more than 12 players on the field at any one time. A full team is 11 field players and a goalie.

## PLAY SAFE

- » The player leaving the field must have both feet over the side line before the substitute can enter field.
- » After a goal, substitutes may enter the game immediately through the substitution area.
- » If a player is removed from the field for any reason, no other players on the field may substitute or exchange positions on the field.



## VIOLATIONS

- » If an illegal player is discovered on the attacking team after a goal is scored and before play is restarted, the goal does not count. The opposing goalie gets the ball.
- » The penalty for illegal substitution is a free position for the opposing team at the spot where play was to resume before the substitution occurred.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Substitutions at the U9, U11 and U13 levels should be continuously rotating to give each player equal field time to become familiar with rules of play and team concepts.
- » During practice, players should simulate the substitution procedure to ensure they enter and exit through the substitution area according to the rules. An illegal substitution results in a change of possession.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Equal playing time is strongly encouraged at the youth level.
- C** Teach your players when and how to substitute. The best time is when your team has possession in a settled attack.
- C** Don't substitute players in your defensive end when the opponent has the ball.
- U** Make sure that there are not too many players on the field.

## SITUATIONS SUBSTITUTIONS

A player is running toward her team substitution area when the whistle blows to stop play. She continues moving and attempts to complete the substitution. Ruling: **ILLEGAL**. She must be directed to return to where she was when the whistle blew.



# GAME PLAY » THE WHISTLE

**WHAT IS IT?** The official's whistle is used to start and stop play. The ball is dead when the umpire blows the whistle, and no player may move unless directed by the official until play restarts with another whistle.

**WHEN** throughout the game to stop and start play

**WHERE** anywhere on the field

**WHO** the umpires

**WHY** to call fouls and infractions, start and stop play, and manage game

## FUNDAMENTALS

**STAND** When the whistle blows, all players must stop moving.

**ARM SIGNALS** With the whistle, umpires will use arm signals to indicate penalties and direction of play after whistle restarting.

**RESTART** Play resumes when the umpire blows the whistle and drops her arm straight down to the side.

**SAFETY** For the safety of all players, everyone must respect the umpires' whistles and calls.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» **U9** - The whistle offers a teaching opportunity to explain why it was blown and learn how to avoid it.

» **U11** - The whistle offers a teaching opportunity to explain why it was blown and learn how to avoid it.

» At all levels, players should learn the rules and understand where to go after the whistle is blown and during a held whistle.

## PLAY SAFE

» The whistle is used at the draw starting a half or restart play after goals.

» If a foul occurred, a free position is awarded according to the infraction.

» After a goal, the official will blow a long whistle and use an arm signal to verify that the goal counts.

» On an injury or timeout, players must drop their sticks where they stand.

» Only the goalie may move within her goal circle when the whistle has been blown to stop play.



## VIOLATIONS

- **FALSE START:** before the whistle, a player may not make any movement simulating the beginning of play designed to gain an advantage.
- **SLOW WHISTLE:** on a held flag, a free position will be awarded to the attack player nearest the spot of a foul if the attacking team does not shoot, the shot the shot wouldn't have garnered an advantage, or defense commits cardable foul.

## SITUATIONS THE WHISTLE

The whistle has blown and the umpires are setting up a free position at a hash mark in the 8m arc. If players are failing to stand on the whistle they will be returned to their original spots when the whistle was blown. A green delay of game card may be issued.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Players should be taught the distance of 4 meters so they can place themselves properly during penalty administration. Failure to move 4m away as instructed by the umpire may result in a green card for delay of game.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Umpires blow their whistles often during girls games to ensure safe and fair play.
- C** Condition your players to respond to the sound of the whistle by using it during practice.
- C** Teach your players to take advantage of stopped play to see the field to decide where to go next.
- U** Use whistle tone to indicate the severity of the foul.



# MAJOR FOULS » STICK CONTACT

**WHAT IS IT?** Stick checking is an attempt to dislodge the ball from an opponent's stick by using controlled stick-to-stick contact. To keep the game safe, rules are in place to control the sticks of players. Uncontrolled stick-to-body contact is prohibited.

**WHEN** an opponent has the ball

**WHERE** anywhere on the field

**WHO** player defending ball-carrier

**WHY** to regain possession of the ball by checking the ball loose

## FUNDAMENTALS

**CONTROL** Checks must be under control and never toward an opponent's head or body.

**PATIENCE** Good defensive body positioning can cause the ball carrier to drop ball or expose stick to check.

**STICK UP** Players should hold sticks up to "mirror" ball carrier's stick to block passes and shots.

**STICK DOWN** Modified checking allows a downward motion below the shoulders, away from body.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» U9 - NO STICK CONTACT!

» U11 - NO STICK CONTACT!

» U13 - Modified checking **BELOW THE SHOULDERS** in downward motion away from the body

» U15 - Same as U13 unless umpired by two USL umpires (at least one must have local rating), then full checking allowed

## PLAY SAFE

- » Sticks are hard and can cause serious injury if used in an uncontrolled manner.
- » Checks must be outside the 7-inch "sphere" surrounding head and away from the body.
- » No player's stick may hit or cause her opponent's stick to hit the opponent's body.
- » Players should only check using the sidewall of the head of the stick.
- » Rough and reckless checking can cause injury to either player and warrant a yellow or red card.



## VIOLATIONS

-  CHECK TO THE HEAD
-  SLASH
-  ROUGH/DANGEROUS CHECK
-  CROSS-CHECKING
-  ILLEGAL CONTACT
-  ILLEGAL USE OF THE STICK
-  HOOKING
-  REACH ACROSS THE BODY
-  MODIFIED CHECKING VIOLATION

## SITUATIONS STICK CONTACT

Defense is called for a dangerous check and a yellow card is issued. Play is stopped and ball carrier is awarded a free position. Carded player is removed from field. The defense now plays short for two minutes.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Stick checking should be taught as a progression as the player ages. Emphasis should be on fundamental defensive positioning.
- » Modified checking allows youth players to develop proper checking and positioning skills while encouraging good cradling and stick handling for all players.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Don't get frustrated by frequent calls; they're essential to keeping the game fun and safe.
- P** Umpires may call a foul anytime they feel a player is using her stick in a dangerous or intimidating way.
- C** Reinforce stick control and safe play.
- U** Repeated dangerous checks should be carded.



# MAJOR FOULS » BODY CONTACT

**WHAT IS IT?** Girls' lacrosse is a non-contact sport although minor body-to-body contact may occur.

**WHEN** during the course of the game

**WHERE** all over the field

**WHO** all players

**WHY** players compete for the ball or positioning to get an advantage

## FUNDAMENTALS

**ANTICIPATION** By anticipating where the ball will go, players can adjust their position relative to others.

**AWARENESS** Players should be aware of the location of themselves and other players.

**SAFETY** Any overly aggressive or uncontrolled contact is unsafe and dangerous.

**HUSTLE** The first player to the ball has a better chance of establishing position and gaining possession.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

- » It is essential to enforce rules at practice to ensure consistency and safety for players.
- » Young athletes need to practice agility and footwork in order to learn positioning properly, especially children recently experiencing a growth spurt.

## PLAY SAFE

- » Incidental contact may occur when two players are going for a loose ball.
- » Legally boxing out or sealing off an opponent is an important part of winning the ball off the draw.
- » If a player overruns a ground ball, she may not shield the ball, nor cover the ball with the back of her stick, preventing another player from gaining access to that ball.
- » Body-to-body contact may be called charging, blocking, pushing, or no call at all if it's clearly incidental.



## VIOLATIONS

- **CHARGING:** a player may not charge, barge, shoulder, or back into her opponent (pictured).
- **PUSHING:** a player may not push an opponent with her hand, body or stick.
- **ILLEGAL PICK:** a player may not set a moving or stationary pick out of an opposing player's field of vision, not giving her the time or space to avoid contact.
- **BLOCKING:** moving into the path of the ball carrier with no chance to avoid contact.

## SITUATIONS BODY CONTACT

There is NO CALL when incidental contact occurs between opposing players when both players are going for the ball.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Teaching proper defense positioning is crucial for player development and should be among the first fundamentals taught to players.
- » Drop the stick. Drills should be designed that focus on body positioning and footwork without using a stick.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Some body contact is a natural part of the sport, just like soccer or basketball.
- C** It is essential to enforce rules at practice to ensure consistency and safety for players.
- C** Youth players will sometimes back into defenders to keep the ball protected. Explain why this is unsafe and impractical.
- U** Watch for players jockeying for position on the center circle during the draw.



# MAJOR FOULS » SHOOTING

**WHAT IS IT?** Shooting the ball at the goal to score is fundamental to lacrosse. Protecting players from injury is paramount as well. Shooting on goal is both exciting and highly regulated so that girls lacrosse can be the safe and fun sport it is.

**WHEN** the attacking team is trying to score

**WHERE** in the critical scoring area around the goal

**WHO** attacking ball-carrier or shooter

**WHY** to score goals safely

## FUNDAMENTALS

**AIM** Good shooters extend their top arms towards they're aiming point, with follow through dictating placement.

**PROTECTION** The ball carrier's body should stay between her stick and the defender.

**CRITICAL SCORING AREA** An area at the end of the field where the attacking team is shooting for goal. It is about an area in front of the goal circle, behind the goal line extended, including each side of the goal circle.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

- » Encourage players to visualize railroad tracks going in a straight line through the opponent.
- » Not all shots need to be power shots. Finesse and placement are important.
- » Well-developed catching and dodging skills are essential to setting up controlled and safe shots.
- » No one is allowed to shoot at or through an opponent.

## PLAY SAFE

- » When dodging, the ball carrier must be in control of her body and stick.
- » Players must be able to see the goal before they shoot.
- » A player may not shoot from an indirect free position until they have passed the ball to another player.
- » The free space to goal within the critical scoring area is defined by two lines extending from the ball to the outside of the goal circle. It is expected that a shooter will not shoot if a defender is in this space.





## VIOLATIONS

- SHOOTING SPACE:** a player may not use any part of her body to guard the goal in a manner that denies the attack the opportunity to shoot safely and encourages shooting at a player (pictured).
- DANGEROUS FOLLOW THRU:** a shot cannot end with the offensive player's stick in a dangerous position relative to her defender.
- DANGEROUS PROPELLING:** when a player throws the ball without control in the direction of another player.
- DANGEROUS SHOT:** a player may not shoot at the goalie in a dangerous way.
- GOAL CIRCLE FOUL:** a shooter's stick may not extend into the goal circle.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Encourage safe, smart shooting at practice, before and during games.
- » A goal is not scored when the ball deflects off the body of an attacking player.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Dodges are the moves players make to get away from pressure, like crossovers in soccer.
- C** Using targets in the goal will help with shooting accuracy.
- C** Discipline players to automatically look at the goal and position of players around her before shooting or passing.
- U** Anticipate where defenders are and be ready to make appropriate foul calls.

The ball goes into the goal as attacker hits the defender on the shoulder with her follow through. Ruling: the goal is disallowed, the shooter is carded, and the defender gets the ball.



# PENALTY ADMIN » FOULS

**WHAT IS IT?** When a foul occurs, the umpire will blow the whistle and all players must stand while the official gives the call and repositions players as necessary.

**WHEN** anywhere an infraction occurs

**WHERE** on and around the field

**WHO** the umpire directs all players and coaches involved

**WHY** to keep the game safe and fun

## FUNDAMENTALS

**MINOR FOULS** Fouls that give an unfair advantage. The offending player will stand 4 meters away in the direction from which she approached.

**MAJOR FOULS** Fouls that are dangerous. The offending player will stand 4 meters behind the player awarded possession.

**THE THROW** In the event of offsetting fouls, a throw, like a jump-ball in basketball, is taken.

**FOUR METERS** No player or her stick is allowed within 4 meters of the player awarded possession.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

- » **U9** - No shooting on free positions unless using a goalkeeper or modified goal
- » Teach defenders to quickly mark opponents when inside the 8m arc to avoid 3-second fouls.
- » Infractions should be identified in practice and explained why they happened and how to avoid.

## PLAY SAFE

- » A yellow card is given as a warning to an offending player, coach, or team personnel. The player must leave the field for two minutes and the team must play short a player below the restraining lines on each end of the field.
- » A red card is an ejection from the game. Anyone receiving a red card must immediately leave the field.



## RESPONSIBILITIES

- » Players must stop immediately when the whistle is blown.
- » Players, coaches, umpires, administrators and parents should understand the rules before games are played.
- » Fouling players must immediately move 4 meters in the direction indicated by umpire.
- » At the U9 and U11 levels, officials should take time to explain fouls to players.

## SITUATIONS FOULS

When the defensive team commits a major foul when the attack is on a scoring play in the critical scoring area, the official raises a yellow flag indicating a slow whistle. The flag is put away if the attacker scores a goal or the scoring play ends. If no shot taken, an 8m free position is awarded at spot closest to the foul.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Rulebooks are available through US Lacrosse. Coaches and parents are encouraged to review the various major and minor fouls.
- » Players and coaches can earn yellow and red cards for unsportsmanlike conduct both on and off the field. For example, screaming at an opponent is a misconduct foul.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Stopped play is crucial to keeping the game safe. The rules are in place to prevent injury and ensure fair play.
- C** Call fouls in practice. Explain why the fouls and penalties exist so players learn to play safely and intelligently.
- U** Be sure to explain rules to youth players if they repeatedly commit the same fouls.



# FOULS » SCORING AREA

**WHAT IS IT?** The critical scoring area indicates the area of the field where the attacking team is shooting for goal. Play stops and girls stand in places defined by the type of foul called.

**WHEN** fouls occur by either team in critical scoring area

**WHERE** near the 8m arc/12m fan

**WHO** either team

**WHY** to keep play safe and fair

## FUNDAMENTALS

**SCORING PLAY** Continuous effort by the attacking team to complete a shot. It is over when: a shot is taken, the attacking team loses possession, stops its scoring drive, or fouls occur.

**FREE POSITION** The entire 8m arc is cleared when a free position is awarded to the attacking team in this area.

## MAJOR FOULS

### OUTSIDE THE 8-METER ARC

- » For a major foul by a defender, the free position will be at the spot of the most recent foul. All players must be cleared from the penalty lane.
- » If the scoring play ends inside the 8m arc with an additional foul, the free position will take place on a hash mark nearest to the spot of the foul.

## MAJOR FOULS

### INSIDE THE 8-METER ARC

For a major foul by a defender inside the 8-meter arc:

- » All players' bodies and sticks must be cleared from the arc and penalty lane.
- » The goal keeper may return to the goal circle as long as she did not foul
- » All players must take the shortest route out.
- » The player who was fouled will move to a hash mark on the 8-meter arc nearest to the spot of the foul.
- » The player who fouled moves to the 12-meter fan directly behind the player taking the free position.



## MINOR FOULS

### INSIDE THE 12-METER FAN

For a minor foul by a defender:

- » The player fouled will move to the nearest spot on the 12-meter fan.
- » All other players shall remain in their same positions with the exception of the fouling defender who shall move 4m from the player taking the free position, relative to their position at the time of her foul.
- » This is an indirect free position and no shot may be taken by the player awarded this free position until the ball has been played by another player.

## SITUATIONS SCORING AREA

An attacker gets called for a minor foul. The player fouled will take the free position at the spot of the foul, but no closer than 8m from the goal circle, unless the goalkeeper's fouled in goal circle.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » In taking the shortest route out of the arc, the arc is cleared relative to one's position inside the arc. If a defender is ball-side of an attacker when the whistle is blown, the defender is entitled to a ball-side position on the arc, not necessarily at a harsh mark.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** The frequent whistles on scoring plays are necessary to keep players safe.
- C** When your players scrimmage at practice, make the calls like an official would so the players learn to understand the rules.
- U** Umpires are encouraged to hold their whistle and show advantage, when a minor foul is committed by a defender and the attack player may have the opportunity to shoot.



# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

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## DIAGRAM

## UMPIRE'S MOTIONS

## MAJOR FOULS

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### BLOCKING/ILLEGAL PICK

Open hands on hips moving in an in-and-out motion.

Block opponent by moving into her path and giving no chance to stop or change direction.

Set a moving or stationary pick out of the visual field of a defender so that she has time to stop or change direction to avoid contact.

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### DETAINING

Fists in front of hips, one facing up and the other one down.

Detain an opponent at anytime by holding or pushing against her body, clothing, or stick with an arm, leg, body or stick. A player may not hold her stick in a manner that could restrain or hold back a player.

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### CHECKING INTO SPHERE

A chopping motion with the hand close to the head.

It is illegal (and dangerous) for a player to hold her stick within the sphere around the face or throat of an opponent. The sphere is a 7-inch space around the head.

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# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

DIAGRAM	UMPIRE'S MOTIONS	MAJOR FOULS
	<b>3-SECOND RULE</b> Three fingers are raised with palm facing out.	Defenders within the 8 meter arc, remain in that area more than 3 seconds unless one is marking an opponent within a stick's length. The 3-second rule is in effect when the team with the ball crosses over the restraining line into their attacking end of the field.
	<b>ILLEGAL CRADLE</b> A cradling motion is made pulling their hand close to their face.	Holding, with or without cradling, the head of her crosse in front of her face or her teammate's face, within the sphere or close to her body, or her teammate's body, making a legal or safe check impossible.
	<b>CHECK TO THE HEAD</b> A chopping motion with the hand close to the head.	No player's stick may hit or cause her opponent's stick to hit her own head.  A check to the head may warrant a card.



# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

## DIAGRAM

## UMPIRE'S MOTIONS

## MAJOR FOULS



### DANGEROUS SHOT

An open palm moving in-and-out in front of their face.

Shooting dangerously or without control:

- A dangerous shot is based on the combination of distance, force and placement.
- A shot can't be directed at the goalkeeper's body, especially her head or neck. Doesn't apply if she moves into the path of the ball.
- A shot may be uncontrolled even if it misses the goal.



### SLASH

A long swiping motion of the extended arm across the body from high-to-low.

A reckless and/or dangerous swing of the crosse at an opponent's crosse or body, whether or not the opponent's crosse or body is struck.

### MANDATORY CARD



### OBSTRUCTION OF FREE SPACE TO GOAL

Arms in front of body with palms toward face. Hands held up with hand closet to the face and palms in a line about 6" from face.

Obstructing free space between the goal and the goal circle with any part of her body which denies the attack the opportunity to shoot safely and encourages shooting at a player.

- Positioning applies only if initiated by the defender and not if she is drawn into the free space to goal by an attacking player, or when a defender's not marking a player within a stick's length.

# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

## DIAGRAM

## UMPIRE'S MOTIONS

## MAJOR FOULS



### PUSHING OR BODY CONTACT

A pushing motion is made with both arms out in front of body.

To push an opponent with the hand or body.

This motion could also apply to other fouls that entail pushing.



### ILLEGAL STICK-TO-BODY CONTACT

Fists in horizontal position in front of hips, one up and one down, arms then pushed outward.

Initiate crosse to body, or body to crosse contact.

### OFFENSIVE FOUL

Right hand placed behind head.

Call used when an attack player fouls the defender, such as backing into, charging, illegal pick or pushing off.



# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

## DIAGRAM

## UMPIRE'S MOTIONS

## MAJOR FOULS



### ROUGH CHECK/ ILLEGAL CHECK ON BODY

Use the arm to make a large chop motion against the wrist of the opposite arm

Roughly or recklessly check another player's stick.

It is illegal to use the stick in a dangerous or intimidating manner, such as directly poking or waving a stick near opponent's face, a sweeping check from behind, lowering stick's head to make stick-to-body contact, or any other action with the stick that the umpire deems dangerous or intimidating.



### DANGEROUS FOLLOW-THROUGH & DANGEROUS PROPELLING

Throwing the ball in a dangerous or uncontrolled manner at any time. **MANDATORY CARD**

Following through with her stick in a dangerous or uncontrolled manner at any time. **MANDATORY CARD**



### FORCING THROUGH

Front hand brought up and thrust out with back hand brought to back of head.

While in possession of the ball, trying to force her stick through an opponent's stick to purposely cause her own stick to contact her body.

# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

## DIAGRAM

## UMPIRE'S MOTIONS

## MINOR FOULS



### OFFSIDE

Open hand is raised above head to indicate the foul.

A team must not have more than 7 players on-or-over the restraining line in their offensive end or have more than 8 players on-or-over the restraining line in.



### GOAL CIRCLE FOUL

Simultaneous directional signal with one arm, and chopping motion toward goal circle with the other arm.

A field player must not have any part of her body or stick on-or-in the goal circle at any time.

Ball can't intentionally be returned to goal circle after a clear until it's been played by another player.



# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

## DIAGRAM

## UMPIRE'S MOTIONS

## MINOR FOULS



### WARDING OFF

Forearm used in an upward motion away from the body.

If one hand is removed from the crosse, the free hand may not be used to ward off an opponent with or without contact. Elbows can't be used to protect stick.



### COVER

Arms extend downward in front of body with the right palm held on top of the left.

Guard a ground ball with her foot or crosse.



### 10-SECOND GOAL CIRCLE COUNT

One arm, shoulder high, moving from chest (90 degree bend) to full extension.

The goalkeeper must not allow the ball to remain in the goal circle longer than 10 seconds, reach beyond the goal circle to play the ball her hand, draw the ball into goal circle if any part of her is outside, step back into the goal circle with ball, throw any part of her equipment to another player.

# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

DIAGRAM	UMPIRE'S MOTIONS	MINOR FOULS
	<b>ILLEGAL BALL OFF BODY</b> Indicated by pointing to the body part that touched the ball.	Allow any part of her body to deliberately impede, accelerate or change the direction of the ball. However, if the goalkeeper blatantly attempts to stop a shot on goal by playing the ball off her body while outside the goal circle, a Major Foul will be called.
	<b>EMPTY CROSSE CHECK</b> The right hand is used with a clapping motion on the left hand.	Check or hold an opponent's stick when it's not in contact with the ball. Applies only if the opponent could have received or gained possession of the ball.
	<b>3-SECOND RULE</b> Three fingers are raised with palm facing out.	When an attack player holds the ball for 3 seconds while closely marked in a modified checking game.



# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

## DIAGRAM

## UMPIRE'S MOTIONS

## PROCEDURAL CALLS



### GOAL SIGNAL

Turns toward center of field, arms raised and then lowered, pointing horizontally toward center of the field.

The umpire calls all goals and then points to center of field.



### NO GOAL

Arms extended toward the ground and swung out and in so that they cross each other.

Goals that are scored illegally are quickly reversed by the umpire. Possession is awarded to the defending team.



### TIME IN

Hand is open above the head with arm fully extended and then dropped in a chopping motion to start the clock.

After legal team and injury timeouts or the start of play, the umpire will indicate when play resumes and the clock should start again.

# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

## DIAGRAM

## UMPIRE'S MOTIONS

## PROCEDURAL CALLS



### TIMEOUT

Turns towards the timer and crosses fully extended arms at the wrist above the head.

The umpire will alert the timekeeper when to stop the clock. Although games use running time, certain conditions like legal timeouts, injury timeouts and equipment checks will require the clock to be stopped.



### DIRECTIONAL OF POSSESSION/HELD WHISTLE

Arms are raised horizontally at shoulder level in the direction of the goal the offended player is attacking.

The umpire will indicate a change in direction when a violation dictates or that an offense checks play on during a held whistle after an attacking player has been fouled.



### RE-DRAW

Crossed palms are placed in front of body with hands together and then quickly extended up and out.

Due to any number of illegal procedure violations, draws must be done again. A minor foul may be called if either player draws too soon, movement of the crosse is not up, player taking the draw moves before umpire's whistle, a player step into center circle or crosses the restraining line before the whistle.



# UMPIRES » ARM SIGNALS

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## DIAGRAM



## UMPIRE'S MOTIONS PROCEDURAL CALLS

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### THROW

One hand is moved back and forth in an underhand motion.

When the umpire calls offsetting fouls, the ball is tossed between two players giving them both equal access to gain possession.

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# UMPIRES » GAME MISCONDUCT

US Lacrosse works closely with the game's umpires to ensure youth lacrosse is not only fun and informative but safe as well. To that end, youth games should be called closely with dangerous fouls and misconduct addressed immediately. The penalty for misconduct is the same as a major foul. In addition to a free position being awarded, time will be stopped and a yellow or red card will be issued. The offending player will need to serve penalty time in her team bench area with no substitute. A player getting a red card means immediate ejection and suspension from team's next game. Misconduct fouls are:

- » Excessively rough, dangerous, or unsportsmanlike play.
- » Persistent or flagrant violation of the rules.
- » Deliberately endangering the safety of an opposing player.
- » Baiting or taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule, or demean others.
- » Excessive dissent or abusive language.
- » Non-playing team member leaving their team bench area during the game.
- » Coach leaving their coaching area.
- » Re-entering the game before yellow card or green/red card penalty time has elapsed.
- » Any type of behavior which in the umpire's opinion amounts to misconduct.



# GAME SKILLS » STICK HANDLING

**WHAT IS IT?** Essential to long term success and enjoyment, basic stick skills must be developed at the earliest ages. Girls' sticks have a shallow pocket so for the ball to stay in the stick, players must master cradling the ball, passing and catching accurately.

**WHEN** the ball is in play

**WHERE** on and around the field in games and practice

**WHO** anyone touching the ball

**WHY** get or maintain possession, advance ball, learn to pass and catch accurately

## FUNDAMENTALS

**SOFT HANDS** Stick rests comfortably where fingertips meet palm of top hand.

**BIG ARMS** Elbows and hands are kept extended from the body.

**TRIPLE THREAT** Stick head should be slightly above and behind the shoulder so she can pass, catch or shoot.

**PROTECTION** Keep the body between the stick and defenders.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

- » Many youth programs require 3 attempted passes before a team can shoot on goal; which is a solid team discipline to learn early.
- » 3 second rule. There is no holding the ball for more than 3 seconds when closely guarded by an opponent who can safely check, if checking permitted.
- » As ball skills are mastered, right and left handed stick work should be encouraged at practice.

## PLAY SAFE

- » Lacrosse is an aerial game. Accurate, strong passes move the ball quickly and efficiently up the field.
- » Players should use a push/pull motion with top and bottom hands to ensure clean and accurate throws.
- » Players need to get low and run through ground ball pickups.
- » Players may not play through other players' legs to reach the ball.
- » Watch for youth players backing into their defenders to protect their cradles.



## VIOLATIONS

- ILLEGAL CRADLE:** players cannot cradle too close to their head or body so as to make an otherwise legal check impossible.
- DANGEROUS PROPELLING:** players can't pass, throw, flick or shoot the ball in a dangerous or uncontrolled manner.
- WARDING OFF:** cradling with one hand and using the other arm to ward off a defender.
- COVERING:** a player may not guard a ground ball with her foot or stick.
- HAND BALL:** the only player that may play the ball with her hand is the goalie when she is in her goal circle.
- SQUEEZE HEAD OF CROSSE:** a player may not use her hand or body to keep the ball in her stick.
- BODY BALL:** she can't allow any part of her body to intentionally impede or affect the ball's direction.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Passing, catching and ground ball drills should be emphasized at all practices and before games.
- » Get instruction on common skill errors and how to correct them through the USL Coaching Education Program.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Stick skills, like all others, will only improve in time with practice.
- C** Hand-eye coordination varies from player to player and develops with practice. Exercise patience with new players.
- C** Mistakes happen. Tell the girls to pick-up dropped balls and just keep playing.
- U** Covering the ball is frequent on ground ball pick-ups and should be discouraged and called when there is a disadvantage to the opponent.



# GAME SKILLS » OFFENSE

**WHAT IS IT?** When the team has the ball in the attacking end, the attacking players must work together to create good scoring opportunities.

**WHEN** the attacking team has possession of the ball

**WHERE** below the restraining line on their attacking side of the field

**WHO** the attacking team

**WHY** learn offensive strategies through passes and picks

## FUNDAMENTALS

**MOVEMENT** Players should pass and move off the ball to create open lanes to goal.

**ASSIST** An assist is a pass that leads directly to a goal.

**BALANCE** The attackers should spread out around the critical scoring area.

**PATIENCE** Players should be patient when looking for scoring opportunities. Forcing poor shots can lead to fouls and turnovers.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

- » Passes should be kept short to learn the basic skills required to catch and throw on the run.
- » Introduce concepts of cutting and setting picks away from the ball to create open spaces to goal.

## PLAY SAFE

- » A fast break occurs when the ball is turned over and one player gets ahead of the pack, looking to take advantage of a player-up situation.
- » When a team settles its attack, there should always be at least one player behind the goal-line to back up errant shots, pass to open cutters, and look to roll around the crease and score.
- » Set plays should be introduced slowly and used wisely.



## VIOLATIONS

Calls on the offense might be:

- **OFFSIDE:** more than 7 players on offense below restraining line.
- **BLOCKING:** an opponent's path
- **CHARGING:** into defender
- **ILLEGAL PICK:** of a defender
- **FORCING THROUGH:** opponent with stick and body
- **ILLEGAL SHOT:** from indirect free position

Safety drives automatic cards:

- **DANGEROUS PROPELLING**
- **DANGEROUS FOLLOW THROUGH**

## SITUATIONS OFFENSE

When an attacking team turns the ball over, the attack players become the first line of defense. Teams use a “ride” which is similar to a full-court press in basketball to keep ball in zone.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » It is a good discipline for teams to have their own “pass rules” to limit the length of passes and ensure three or more passes are made before shooting.
- » Players should always look for assists on goals and should receive praise for both goals and assists.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Coaches will utilize a variety of offensive plays, which are designed to help teams score.
- C** Develop teamwork in your attack by allowing all players the opportunity to participate in scoring plays.
- C** All players should have equal opportunities to play all positions.
- C** Use a building block approach by starting with smaller situations such as 2v1, 2v2, etc.
- U** Strictly enforce and explain calls around dangerous propelling.



# GAME SKILLS » DEFENSE

**WHAT IS IT?** A team defense means all players are working to prevent the opposing team from taking its best shots, and trying to regain ball possession.

**WHEN** in a team's defensive end

**WHERE** between the restraining line and end line

**WHO** 7 field players allowed on defensive side of field and a goalie

**WHY** to stop opponent from scoring

## FUNDAMENTALS

**COMMUNICATION** The defensive players must talk so they can support each other.

**FOOTWORK** All defenders should stay light on their feet ready to move.

**VISION** Field players must see the ball and the girl they are marking at all times.

**GOAL SIDE** Generally, each defender should position herself between goal and player she's marking.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» **U9** - Coaches should discourage double teaming

» **U11** - Coaches should discourage double teaming

» Stick shadowing and solid body positioning should be taught and encouraged everywhere on the field.

» Body contact of any kind should not occur in practice or games.

## PLAY SAFE

» Team defense can be player-to-player (each player marks-up an attacker), or zone (defender marks any player who enters her area).

» Marking up means defender is matching herself up within a stick's length to an opponent.

» Defensive team will want to clear the ball (passing or running) out of their defensive end quickly.

» The shooting space rule is in place to keep defenders safe and to encourage safe shooting by the attacker.



## VIOLATIONS

**SHOOTING SPACE:** a player may not stand in the free space to goal if she is not marking an opponent within a stick's length.

**3 SECONDS:** while defending in the 8-meter arc, a player cannot remain in that area unless marking within a stick's length.

**DETAINING:** a player may not detain an opponent at any time by holding or pushing against her body, clothing, or stick.

## SITUATIONS DEFENSE

A defensive player marking the player directly behind the goal is exempt from 3 seconds, but not from shooting space.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » Footwork, body and stick positioning are all more important to master before checking.
- » Good defenses are always talking loudly! They should have common terminology that everyone understands, such as "I've got ball," "ball is right," "slide" and "ball down."

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** Shooting space is in place to keep defenders safe.
- C** Teach your players to avoid shooting space violations by leading with their stick as they move to ball carrier.
- C** Watch for players who "ball watch" and lose sight of their marks.
- U** Make sure to see a bigger picture than just the ball carrier and her defender. Seeing shooting space, 3 seconds and more at the same time leads to a safer game.



# GAME SKILLS » GOALKEEPER

**WHAT IS IT?** This is a critical position requiring special skills, protective equipment and a big stick with a deep pocket.

**WHEN** games and practices

**WHERE** in the goal circle

**WHO** courageous athletes with quick hands and good eye-hand dexterity

**WHY** to stop the ball from entering her team's goal

## FUNDAMENTALS

**STANCE** A goalie should have feet shoulder-width apart with her knees and elbows bent.

**BODY MOVEMENT** A goalie should step toward the ball.

**STICK** Both hands are on the stick extended to make the save, then "give" as ball lands in her stick.

**COMMUNICATION** The goalie needs to help her teammates by telling them where the ball is.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

» U9 - Goalie optional

» U11 - All players should experience playing goal

» U13 - Goalie required

» U15 - Goalie required

» Teach the shooting angles in practice in front of the goal to help goalies block more shots, and to help attackers take better shots.

## PLAY SAFE

» Goalies should always get their bodies behind the save, in case the ball bounces out of their stick.

» If the ball carrier goes behind the goal circle, the goalie should stay in front of the open net and can face the player to mirror her as she moves around the crease.

» After a saved shot, the goalie has 10 seconds to quickly clear the ball out of the goal circle.

» Goalkeepers should always be properly equipped with lacrosse specific gear that fits properly and is in good condition.



## VIOLATIONS

- Penalty for goal circle foul by the defense is an indirect free position on the 12-meter fan.
- Penalty for circle foul by the offense is free position awarded to the goalie within her circle.
- Goalie must clear ball within 10 seconds of it entering circle.
- Goalie may stop the ball with her hand, body, or stick.
- Goalie may not step back into the goal circle with the ball after first gaining possession

## SITUATIONS GOALIE

The goalie may leave her goal circle to be a passing option, get ground balls and interceptions, and chase the ball before it goes out of bounds. When the goalie is out of her goal circle, all field player rules apply.

## BEST PRACTICES

- » All young players should try playing goalie in games and practice. Even if they don't play the position, learning shooting angles and saves, clears and communication will provide a better understanding of field positions.
- » A goalies must communicate to her defense at all times, including practices, where the ball is, where cutters might be going and where and when to move.

## PERSPECTIVES

- P** The best athletes are often the best goalies.
- C** The best goalies have quick reaction time and minimal flinch/blink reflex.
- C** In drills let the play continue after the shot to help the goalie work on clears and rebounded shots.
- U** Youth goalies are often scared and may need reminders to clear.



# BEST PRACTICES » SAFETY

Participants in girls' lacrosse must be aware of the "Official Rules for Girls' & Women's Lacrosse," published by US Lacrosse. Participants are expected to play, coach, officiate and watch games according to the spirit and intent of women's lacrosse.

Emphasis is placed on safety and good sportsmanship. Everyone involved with the women's game must act with consideration for the safety of others.

- » Players must ensure that their behavior, equipment and uniform conform to all required and allowable standards, as defined by US Lacrosse rules.
- » Coaches must ensure that they are teaching their players to play by the rules. Coaches should participate in continuing lacrosse-specific education and training that helps them to understand and teach new rules and address safety concerns.
- » Umpires must ensure fair and safe play by consistently enforcing the rules. Umpires must take part in continuing lacrosse-specific education that helps them understand and interpret new rules.
- » Spectators must contribute to a safe-play environment by demonstrating positive and sportsmanlike conduct. Those watching girls' lacrosse must understand and appreciate the unique rules and culture of the girls' game.

The girls' and women's rules annually are voted on in September by the US Lacrosse Board of Directors, and are issued under the authority of US Lacrosse as the official rules for Women's Collegiate Lacrosse Associates (college club) team play and girls' youth (U15) play. They are endorsed by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) as the official rules for girls' and women's lacrosse.



# BEST PRACTICES » CONCUSSION

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness to have suffered a concussion.

## COMMON SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION

- » headache
- » fogginess
- » difficulty concentrating
- » easily confused
- » slowed thought processes
- » difficulty with memory
- » nausea
- » lack of energy, tiredness
- » dizziness, poor balance
- » blurred vision
- » sensitive to light and sounds
- » mood changes; irritable, anxious, or tearful

## SUGGESTED CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

- 1) No athlete may return to game play or practice on the same day of a concussion.
- 2) Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health care professional that day.
- 3) Any athlete with a concussion must be medically cleared by an appropriate health care professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
- 4) After medical clearance, the decision for a player to return to play should follow a step-wise protocol. There should also be provisions for delaying a player's return based on any signs or symptoms of a concussion.
- 5) Return to play guidelines are subject to state regulations.



<http://www.uslacrosse.org/TopNav2Right/Rules/WomensRules/ConcussionInformationVideo.aspx>



# BEST PRACTICES » BLOOD

The official US Lacrosse policy regarding the handling of blood/bleeding situations during games is as follows.

- » When a player suffers a laceration or wound where oozing or bleeding occurs, the game should be stopped, and the player should be given appropriate medical treatment. The player may return to the game with the approval of medical personnel (team doctor, trainer, or other designated person with medical training). She may re-enter the game in the same half.
- » If the umpire stops the game because a player is bleeding, the player must leave the game and a substitute may enter. If the umpire stops the game because an injury has occurred, the regular injury time out procedure is followed. If an injury time out has been called because of a bleeding problem, the player must leave the game, even if medical personnel/coach have not come onto the field. A substitute must enter.
- » In cases where a goalkeeper is bleeding, and is the only dressed goalkeeper, the game should be stopped. Then, the goalkeeper should be given appropriate medical treatment, and she may remain in the game.
- » If there is blood on any part of a player's uniform or personal equipment, medical personnel should determine whether it has soaked through the uniform to the player's skin or is capable of being transferred to another player and a change is required. In the absence of medical personnel, the umpire(s) will make this determination. A uniform is considered saturated when blood can't be removed. The same criteria should be applied to a player's personal equipment (stick, gloves, knee brace, etc.). If a uniform shirt is changed, the player's new number must be recorded in the scorebook before she re-enters the game.

# BEST PRACTICES » PREVENTION

Lacrosse is considered a “moderate risk” sport, but injuries can and do occur. Minor bruises and strained hamstrings, quadriceps, and groins are common, and ankle and knee ligament sprains occur frequently. And, like most athletes, lacrosse players deal with small injuries, such as shin splints, foot blisters, and abrasions.

Players occasionally suffer head and face injuries, including concussions. These types of injuries are usually the result of inadvertent stick or ball contact.

Here are some general rules for reducing injuries in girls’ lacrosse:

- » Obey the rules. Illegal play can result in injuries.
- » Discuss goals and health concerns with your coach, trainer, parents, and health provider.
- » Stay in shape.
- » Warm up properly, drink water, and rest after games and practices.
- » Wear the right equipment. Make sure it fits.
- » Players should take at least one or two days a week and one or two months a year away from lacrosse to recover and prevent injuries.
- » If you’re hurt, speak up. Also, if you experience strain or discomfort, cut back on playing and training time.
- » Lacrosse leagues and organizations should prepare plans for medical situations and emergencies. Coaches, assistants, athletes and others involved in the game should be aware of these procedures.

Coaches, assistants, and players should be aware of injuries and conditions specific to female athletes:

- » **MENSTRUAL CYCLE CHANGES:** some female athletes experience longer than normal menstrual cycles. Low estrogen levels associated with missed periods can affect muscle function.
- » **INADEQUATE CALORIE INTAKE:** some female athletes do not consume enough calories to have the energy to play competitive sports.
- » **BONE DENSITY:** some girls have lower bone density, which can lead to stress fractures now or later in life.



# BEST PRACTICES » DISEASES

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Athletes and coaches are in regular, close contact with one another, which increases the risk that communicable diseases can be spread. For this reason, everyone involved in competitive lacrosse should take steps to prevent the transmission of disease.

Common ways that infections can be transmitted include coughing, sneezing, and spitting, and coming in direct, physical contact with a sick person or a contaminated object. Body-contact sports like lacrosse present many opportunities for disease to be transmitted. An on-field injury could force someone to come in contact with an ill player's blood or mucus, or an athlete or coach may touch a sick teammate while in the locker room, on the sidelines, or riding to a game.

To prevent the spread of disease, teams should develop guidelines. Proper cleaning equipment should be available at games and practices, and coaches and staff members should be trained to safely and effectively deal with wounds and injuries. In addition, rules should be set to exclude players from games and practices if they exhibit:

- » a fever greater than 100.5
- » vomiting
- » stiff neck or headache with fever
- » a rash
- » irritability or lethargy
- » jaundice, diarrhea, skin lesions
- » drainage from the eyes or nose

In addition, players and coaches should shower and wash thoroughly after every game and practice. A strong emphasis should be placed on regular hand-washing, one of the most effective safeguards against the transmission of disease. Here are some hand-washing tips:

- » Use plenty of soap and water.
- » Wash the wrists, tops of hands, between fingers, under and around rings, palms, and fingernails.
- » Scrub vigorously for at least 30 seconds, rinse well, dry.
- » Turn off the faucet with a paper towel.

# BEST PRACTICES » GENDER

## POSITION STATEMENT WITH RESPECT TO GENDER CLASSIFICATIONS IN LACROSSE

### OVERVIEW

The issue of gender classifications has been the subject of periodic inquiries received by US Lacrosse. The Executive Committee of the USL Board voted to adopt the following position on Gender Classification in Lacrosse in January of 2006:

- A) Lacrosse as a sport encompasses two separate and distinct games, the women's game and the men's game.
- B) US Lacrosse respects and supports the integrity of both the women's game and the men's game and the fact that both tradition and the rules of play for the women's game are intended to limit participation in the women's game to females and tradition and the rules of play for the men's game are intended to limit participation in the men's game to males.
- C) It is the position of US Lacrosse that consistent with applicable laws, participation in the game of women's lacrosse should be limited to females and participation in the game of men's lacrosse should be limited to males. US Lacrosse therefore supports separate teams for males and females, and encourages and supports development of separate programs for both genders at youth, scholastic, non-scholastic, collegiate and post collegiate levels.

### BACKGROUND

The issue of gender classifications in men's lacrosse and women's lacrosse is largely determined on a state-by-state basis, and the particular facts and circumstances of each situation will largely determine the outcome. As a result, it is not possible for US Lacrosse to provide definitive guidance on this issue to local youth lacrosse organizations. It is clear that a completely private lacrosse program with no connections to the state (including cities and towns) or federal government is not subject to the equal protection laws. Therefore, if it chooses to do so, such a private program should be able to enforce gender classifications in relation to men's lacrosse and women's lacrosse.



# BEST PRACTICES » EMERGENCY

US Lacrosse recommends that all organizations, facilities, teams, and coaches develop an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) that includes management of adverse weather conditions such as lightning, as well as other emergencies. Circumstances differ at different levels of lacrosse in terms of medical support, proximity to help, and training of those in charge, but at all levels an EAP is valuable to the management and outcome of emergencies.

Below is an outline that can be used to develop and provide this information on site.

- 1) Designate someone in charge of management of an emergency.
- 2) Ideally, an adult with a minimum of basic first aid training should be on site.
- 3) At a minimum, a basic first aid kit with materials to clean, cover, or immobilize an injured body part should be on site.
- 4) Make sure cell phone access is available for 911 calls. If not, have a back-up plan for making calls in case of an emergency. Have needed emergency numbers on site.
- 5) At the youth level, more than one adult should be present to deal with the emergency and the other team members.
  - a. Number of Emergency service if not 911 \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Number of first person to begin emergency chain \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Number of back-up person to call if needed \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) At the youth level, a phone chain should be established to notify parents of appropriate situation.
- 7) Know where the closest emergency care is located and how to give directions to emergency personnel, if necessary.
- 8) Make sure gates are open and access to the field and the athletes is not blocked.
- 9) Person in charge must control the scene and initiate the EAP.



# BEST PRACTICES » LIGHTNING

US Lacrosse recommends following an emergency action plan (EAP) to deal with severe weather, including lightning. The EAP should include the following:

- 1) Individuals responsible for game management and medical issues should be designated. The umpire usually makes the call to leave the field in inclement weather, but coaches and others should provide input.
- 2) A person should be designated to watch the weather. If a thunderstorm is imminent, the practice/game should be suspended or postponed. If lightning is seen or thunder is heard, activities should stop and everyone should seek shelter.
- 3) The designated “weather watcher” should consult television news, Internet, cable and satellite weather programming, lightning monitoring systems, and the National Weather Service ([www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)).
- 4) In case of lightning, people should be moved to safe locations like buildings with grounded wiring and plumbing and vehicles, including school buses, with a hard metal roof and closed windows.

Some unsafe locations to avoid are the showers or plumbing of a building, small covered outdoor shelters, areas connected to or near light poles, towers and fences, and any location that is at the highest point in the area.

- 5) To reduce the chance of lightning-related injury:
  - Thunder may be hard to hear, and lightning may be difficult to see.
  - Cell phones and cordless phones are preferred over landlines.
  - If one feels the hair on the head, neck or arms stand on end, or feels skin tingling, then a lightning strike may be imminent.
  - Everyone must wait 30 minutes between the last sound of thunder and/or the last flash of lightning before resuming activity.
  - Initiate emergency treatment immediately if a person is struck.



<http://www.uslacrosse.org/UtilityNav/AboutTheSport/HealthSafety/RiskManagement/PositionStatementLightningPolicy.aspx>



Who  
is the fairest  
one of  
all?

BFF. (BE FIERCE + FAIR)

Rules Rule.

