

# Parents' Guide To The Sport Of Boys Lacrosse



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## Bill of Rights for Young Lacrosse Players

1. Every young lacrosse player has the right to participate in the sport of lacrosse.
2. Every young lacrosse player has the right to play in every game, regardless of physical ability or the relative importance of the game.
3. Every young lacrosse player has the right to play as a child, and be treated on a level appropriate with the emotional and physical maturity of the player's age.
4. Every young lacrosse player has the right to participate in a safe and healthy environment, and have access to proper medical treatment.
5. Every young lacrosse player has the right to be taught the fundamentals of lacrosse by qualified adult leadership.
6. Every young lacrosse player has the right to have a coach who is more concerned with fun, social interaction and skill development than winning.
7. Every young lacrosse player has the right to have a coach who is supportive and patient, who takes the time to work with each player, and who allows players to make mistakes.
8. Every young lacrosse player has the right to be treated with respect and dignity by coaches and other players.
9. Every young lacrosse player has the right to report to the coach any physical pain or emotional concerns without fear of rejection or ridicule.
10. Every young lacrosse player has the right to have fun.

## The Role of Parents

You, the parent, are equally as important to your child's positive lacrosse experience as the coach of the team. In order for your child to get the most out of playing lacrosse, it is important that you do the following:

1. Be supportive of your child by giving encouragement and showing an interest in his/her team. Positive reinforcement encourages learning and fun. Research has shown that a ratio of 5 positive statements (compliments, positive recognition) for each negative statement (criticisms, corrections) is ideal for helping athletes do their best. Try to maintain a 5:1 ratio in your comments to your child.
2. Attend games whenever possible. If you cannot attend, ask how your child did, not whether the team won or lost. Some questions that you might ask before asking about the final score include: "Did you try as hard as you could? Did you have fun? Did you learn anything today that might make you a better player in the future?"
3. Be a positive role model by displaying good sportsmanship at all times to coaches, officials, opponents and your child's teammates. "Honoring the Game" is an important part of what US Lacrosse stands for. Help us by honoring the game in your behavior as a spectator.
4. Let your child set his own goals and play the game for himself. Be your child's "home court advantage" by giving him or her your unconditional support regardless of how well he or she performs.
5. Let the coach coach. Refrain from giving your child advice when he or she is playing. Use positive reinforcement with your child's coach. Let the coach know when he or she is doing a good job.
6. Respect the decisions of the referee or umpire. This is an important part of honoring the game. Your child will pay more attention to how you act than to what you say.
7. Read the rulebook. A full understanding of the rules will help you enjoy the game and educate others.
8. Get to know who is in charge. Meet with the leadership of the program to discuss topics such as cost, practice and game scheduling, insurance coverage, emergency procedures, etc.
9. Get involved. Volunteer.
10. Sit back and enjoy the game. Remember, lacrosse is played for FUN.

## Volunteering

A great way to support your child's lacrosse experience is by becoming a volunteer for the lacrosse program. It's best to get started when your child first signs up for lacrosse, so that you both can start together.

Volunteers are always need to do the following:

- Coach or assist the coach
- Keep score
- Run the clock
- Line the fields
- Manage equipment
- Chaperone trips
- Organize a booster club and manage booster activities
- Organize coach and player clinics
- Hold cookouts and social events
- Organize carpooling and practices and games
- Assist in making schedules
- Assist during registration
- Photograph players and games
- Create a yearbook or program
- Take children to local and national lacrosse games and events

## The Role of the Coach

US Lacrosse and the Brunswick Lacrosse Program is committed to the principles of Positive Coaching and will work in partnership with Positive Coaching Alliance, a national nonprofit organization based at Stanford University with the mission to transform youth sports so sports can transform youth.

US Lacrosse and the Brunswick Lacrosse Program wants every player to enjoy their experience with the sport of lacrosse and to learn positive character lessons that will help them in every aspect of their life. We expect our coaches to embody the principles of the Positive Coaching Alliance, including the following:

1. A Positive Coach is a positive motivator and refuses to motivate through fear, intimidation or shame. He establishes order and discipline in a positive manner.
2. A Positive Coach works to remain positive even through losing streaks. He recognizes that it is often when things go wrong that a coach can have the most positive impact and teach the most important lessons. Regardless of the adversity involved, he refuses to demean him or his players by resorting to fear, intimidation or shame. He always treats athletes with respect regardless of how well they perform.
3. A Positive Coach coaches for mastery rather than victory, which he sees as a byproduct of the pursuit of excellence. He focuses on effort rather than outcome, learning rather than comparison to others.
4. A Positive Coach recognizes that mistakes are an important and inevitable part of learning and encourages an environment in which players are willing to risk making a mistake.
5. A Positive Coach sets standards of continuous learning and improvement for himself and his players. He encourages and inspires his players, whatever their level of mastery, to strive to get better without threatening them. He is committed to becoming the best coach he can be and continually seeks to improve his own effectiveness.
6. A Positive Coach "Honors the Game". He feels an obligation to the sport he coaches. He loves his sport and shares his love and enjoyment with his players. He feels privileged to be able to take part in his sport.
7. A Positive Coach respects his opponents, recognizing that a worthy opponent will push his team to do their best.
8. A Positive Coach understands the important role that officials play and strives to show them respect even when he disagrees with their decisions.
9. A Positive Coach values the rich tradition of his sport and works to honor the spirit as well as the letter of its rules.
10. A Positive Coach demonstrates personal integrity and would rather lose than win by dishonoring the game. Dishonoring the game is worse than defeat.

## The History of Field Lacrosse

With a history that spans centuries, lacrosse is the oldest continuously played sport in North America. The sport is rooted in Native American religion and was often played to resolve disputes, heal the sick and develop strong, virile men. To some Native Americans, lacrosse is still referred to as "The Creators Game." Ironically, lacrosse also served as a substitute for war. Stories tell of as many as 1,000 players per side, from the same or different tribes, who took turns engaging in a violent contest the Algonquians called *baaga'adowe* (*baag* means hit, *a* means be an instrument, *adow* means ball and *e* is an abstract ending to the word. Contestants played on a field as much as 15 miles in length and games sometimes lasted for days. Some tribes used a single pole, tree or rock for a goal, while other tribes had two goalposts through which the ball had to pass. Balls were made out of wood, deerskin, baked clay or stone.

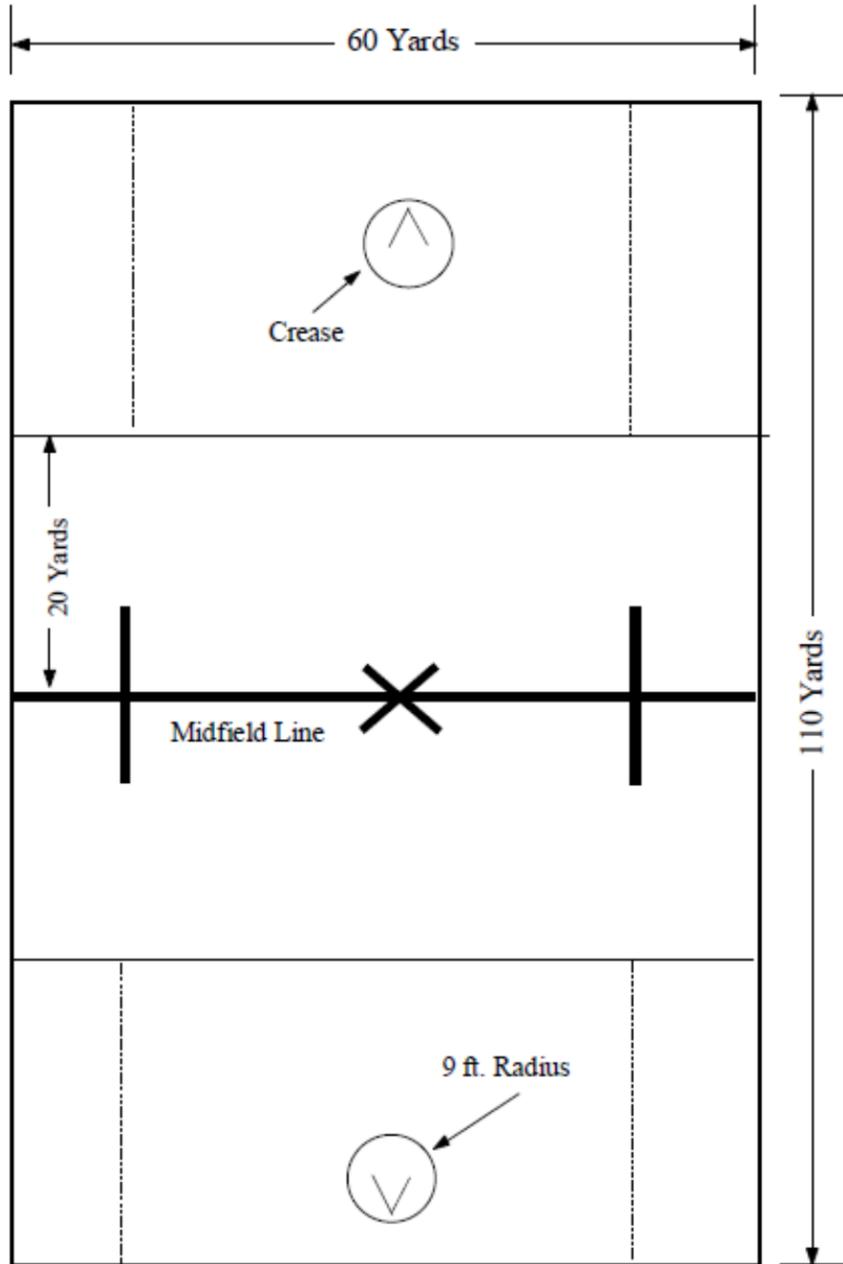
The evolution of the Native American game into modern lacrosse began in 1636 when Jean de Brebeuf, a Jesuit missionary, drew attention to a Huron contest in what is now southeast Ontario, Canada. At that time, some type of lacrosse was played by tribes scattered throughout what is now southern Canada and all parts of the United States. French pioneers began playing the game avidly in the early 1800s. Canadian dentist W. George Beers standardized the game in 1867 with the adoption of set field dimensions, limits to the number of players per team and other basic rules. New York University fielded the nation's first college team in 1877, and Philips Andover Academy (Mass.), Philips Exeter Academy (N.H.) and the Lawrenceville School (N.J.) were the nation's first high school teams in 1882. There are currently over 600 college and 2000 high school lacrosse teams from coast to coast.

The first women's lacrosse game was played in 1890 at the St. Leonard's School in Scotland. Although an attempt was made to start women's lacrosse at Sweet Briar College (V.A.) in 1914, it was not until 1926 that Miss Rosabelle Sinclair established the first women's lacrosse team in the United States at the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore, MD. Men's and women's lacrosse were played under virtually the same rules, with no protective equipment, until the mid-1930's. At that time, men's lacrosse began evolving dramatically, while women's lacrosse continued to remain true to the game's original rules.

Men's and women's lacrosse remain derivations of the same game today, but are played under different rules. Women's rules limit stick contact, prohibit body contact and, therefore, require little protective equipment. Men's lacrosse rules allow some degree of stick and body contact, although violence is neither condoned nor allowed.

Field lacrosse is sometimes perceived to be a violent and dangerous game, however, injury statistics prove otherwise. While serious injuries can and do occur in lacrosse, the game has evolved with an emphasis on safety and the rate and severity of injury are comparatively low. Played by “boys” and “girls” who range in age from six to sixty, lacrosse is one of the fastest growing team sports in the United States. In recent years, lacrosse has experienced unprecedented growth throughout the world. A unique combination of speed, skill, agility, grace, endurance, finesse, and historical significance, lacrosse may just be, according to basketball inventor James Naismith, “the best of all possible field games.”

# Boy's Lacrosse Field



# **Boys Lacrosse Field Positions**

## **Attack**

The attackman's responsibility is to score goals. The attackman generally restricts his play to the offensive end of the field. A good attackman demonstrates excellent stick work with both hands and has quick feet to maneuver around the goal. Each team should have three attackmen on the field during play.

## **Midfield**

The midfielder's responsibility is to cover the entire field, playing both offense and defense. The midfielder is a key to the transition game, and is often called upon to clear the ball from defense to offense. A good midfielder demonstrates good stick work including throwing, catching and scooping. Speed and stamina are essential. Each team should have three midfielders on the field.

## **Defense**

The defenseman's responsibility is to defend the goal. The defenseman generally restricts his play to the defensive end of the field. A good defenseman should be able to react quickly in game situations. Agility and aggressiveness are necessary, but great stick work is not essential to be effective. Each team should have three defensemen on the field.

## **Goal**

The goalie's responsibility is to protect the goal and stop the opposing team from scoring. A good goalie also leads the defense by reading the situation and directing the defensemen to react. A good goalie should have excellent hand/eye coordination and a strong voice. Quickness, agility, confidence and the ability to concentrate are also essential. Each team has one goalie in the goal during play.

## Equipment for Boys

### The Crosse

The crosse (lacrosse stick) is made of wood, laminated wood or synthetic material, with a shaped net pocket at the end. The crosse must be an overall length of 40-42 inches for attackmen and midfielders, or 52-72 inches for defensivemen. The head of the crosse must be 6.5-10 inches wide, except a goalie's crosse which may be 10-12 inches wide. The pocket of a crosse shall be deemed illegal if the top surface of a lacrosse ball, when placed in the head of the crosse, is below the bottom edge of the side wall.



### The Ball

The ball must be made of solid rubber and can be white, yellow or orange. The ball is 7.75-8 inches in circumference and 5-5.25 ounces. 99% of the time a white ball is used.



### The Helmet

A protective helmet, equipped with face mask, chin pad and a cupped four point chin strap fastened to all four hookups, must be worn by all players. All helmets and face masks must be NOCSAE (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment) approved.



### **The Mouthpiece**

The mouthpiece must be a highly visible color and is mandatory.



### **The Glove**

All players are required to wear protective gloves. The cutting or altering of gloves is prohibited.



### **Shoulder Pads**

All players except the goalie must wear shoulder pads.



### Arm Pads

All players except the goalie must wear arm pads.



### Special Goalie Equipment

#### Chest Protector



#### Throat Protector

Straps onto the helmet to protect the throat area.



# Lacrosse Rules for Boys

*The following describes FIELD lacrosse (not indoor lacrosse)*

Boys (men's) lacrosse is a contact game played by ten players: a goalie, three defensemen, three midfielders and three attackmen. The object of the game is to shoot the ball into the opponent's goal and to keep the other team from scoring. The team scoring the most goals wins.

Each team must keep at least four players, including the goalie, in its defensive half of the field and three in its offensive half. Three players (midfielders) may roam the entire field.

Collegiate games are 60 minutes long, with 15-minute quarters. Generally, high school games are 48 minutes long, with 12-minute quarters. Likewise, youth games are 32 minutes long, with eight-minute quarters. Each team is given a two-minute break between the first and second quarters, and the third and fourth quarters. Halftime is 10 minutes long.

Teams change sides between periods. Each team is permitted two timeouts each half. The team winning the coin toss chooses the end of the field it wants to defend first. The players take their positions on the field: Four in the defensive clearing area, one at the center, two in the wing areas and three in their attack goal area.

Men's lacrosse begins with a face-off. The ball is placed between the sticks of two squatting players at the center of the field. The official blows the whistle to begin play. Each face-off player tries to control the ball. The players in the wing areas can run after the ball when the whistle sounds. The other players must wait until one player has gained possession of the ball, or the ball has crossed a goal area line, before they can release.

Center face-offs are also used at the start of each quarter and after a goal is scored.

Field players must use their crosses (sticks) to pass, catch and run with the ball.

Only the goalkeeper may touch the ball with his hands.

A player may gain possession of the ball by dislodging it from an opponent's crosse with a stick check.

A stick check is the controlled poking and slapping of the stick and gloved hands of the player in possession of the ball.

Body checking is permitted if the opponent has the ball or is within five yards of a loose ball. All body contact must occur from the front or side, above the waist and below the shoulders, and with both hands on the stick. An opponent's crosse may also be stick checked if it is within five yards of a loose ball or ball in the air. Aggressive body checking is discouraged.

If the ball or a player in possession of the ball goes out of bounds, the other team is awarded possession. If the ball goes out of bounds after an unsuccessful shot, the player nearest to the ball when and where it goes out of bounds is awarded possession.

An attacking player cannot enter the crease around the goal, but may reach in with his stick to scoop a loose ball.

A referee, umpire and field judge supervise field play. A chief bench official, timekeepers and scorers assist.

There are personal fouls and technical fouls in boys lacrosse. The penalty for a personal foul results in a one-to-three minute suspension from play and possession to the team that was fouled. Players with five personal fouls are ejected from the game.

The penalty for a technical foul is a 30-second suspension if a team is in possession of the ball when the foul is committed, or possession of the ball to the team that was fouled if there was no possession when the foul was committed.

## ***Personal Fouls for Boys***

### **Slashing**

Occurs when a player's stick viciously contacts an opponent in any area other than the stick or gloved hand on the stick.

### **Tripping**

Occurs when a player obstructs his opponent at or below the waist with the crosse, hands, arms, feet or legs.

### **Cross Checking**

Occurs when a player uses the handle of his crosse between his hands to make contact with an opponent.

### **Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

Occurs when any player or coach commits an act which is considered unsportsmanlike by an official, including taunting, arguing, or obscene language or gestures.

**Unnecessary Roughness**

Occurs when a player strikes an opponent with his stick or body using excessive or violent force.

**Illegal Crosse**

Occurs when a player uses a crosse that does not conform to required specifications. A crosse may be found illegal if the pocket is too deep or if any other part of the crosse was altered to gain an advantage.

**Illegal Body Checking**

Occurs when any of the following actions takes place:

- A. Body checking an opponent who is not in possession of the ball or within five yards of a loose ball;
- B. Avoidable body check of an opponent after he has passed or shot the ball;
- C. Body checking an opponent from the rear or at or below the waist;
- D. Body checking an opponent above the shoulders. A body check must be below the shoulders and above waist, and both hands of the player applying the body check must remain in contact with his crosse.

**Illegal Gloves**

Occurs when a player uses gloves that do not conform to required specifications. A glove will be found illegal if the fingers and palms are cut out of the gloves, or if the glove has been altered in a way that compromises its protective features.

***Technical Fouls for Boys*****Holding**

Illegally impedes the movement of an opponent with the ball.

**Interference**

Occurs when a player interferes in any manner with the free movement of an opponent, except when that opponent has possession of the ball, the ball is in flight and within five yards of the player, or both players are within five yards of a loose ball.

**Offsides**

Occurs when a team does not have at least four players on its defensive side of the midfield line or at least three players on its offensive side of the midfield line.

**Pushing**

Occurs when a player thrusts or shoves a player from behind.

**Screening**

Occurs when an offensive player moves into and makes contact with a defensive player with the purpose of blocking the man he is defending.

**Stalling**

Occurs when a team intentionally holds the ball, without conducting normal offensive play, with the intent of running time off the clock.

**Warding Off**

Occurs when a player in possession of the ball uses his free hand or arm to hold, push or control the direction of an opponent's stick check.

**Withholding The Ball From Play**

Occurs when a player clamps a loose ball against the ground more than momentarily or clamps the ball against his body to prevent it from being dislodged.

## **Skills For Boys**

**Catching** The act of receiving a passed ball with the crosse.

**Checking** The act of attempting to dislodge the ball from an opponents stick.

**Cradling** The coordinated motion of the arms and wrists that keeps the ball secure in the pocket and ready to be passed or shot when running.

**Cutting** A movement by an offensive player without the ball, toward the opponent's goal, in anticipation of a feed and shot.

**Feeding** Passing the ball to a teammate who is in position for a shot on goal.

**Passing** The act of throwing the ball to a teammate with the crosse.

**Poke Check** A stick check in which the player pokes the head of his stick at an opponent's stick through the top hand by pushing with the bottom hand.

**Slap Check** A stick check in which a player slaps the head of his stick against his opponents stick.

**Scooping** The act of picking up a loose ball with the crosse.

**Screening** An offensive tactic in which a player near the crease positions himself so as to block the goalkeepers view of the ball.

**Shooting** The act of throwing the ball with the crosse toward the goal in an attempt to score.

**Wrap Check** A one-handed check in which the defender swings his stick around his opponent's body to dislodge the ball.

## Glossary of Terms for Boys Lacrosse

**Attack Goal Area** The area around the goal defined by the endline, the Goal Area Line and the two broken lines located 20 yards on either side of the goal. Once the offensive team crosses the midfield line, it has 10 seconds to move the ball into its attack goal area.

**Body Check** Contact with an opponent from the front – between the shoulders and waist – when the opponent has the ball or is within five yards of a loose ball.

**Box** An area used to hold players who have been served with penalties, and through which substitutions “on the fly” are permitted directly from the sideline onto the field.

**Check-Up** A call given by the goalie to tell each defender to find his man and call out his number.

**Clamp** A face-off maneuver executed by quickly pushing the ball of the stick on top of the ball.

**Clearing** Running or passing the ball from the defensive half of the field to the attack goal area.

**Crease** A circle around the goal with a radius of nine feet into which only defensive players may enter.

**Crosse (stick)** The equipment use to throw, catch and carry the ball.

**Defensive Clearing Area** The area defined by a line drawn sideline to sideline 20 yards from the face of the goal. Once the defensive team gains possession of the ball in this area it has 10 seconds to move the ball beyond the Goal Area Line. Once beyond the Goal Area Line, the defensive team may not pass or run the ball back into the Defensive Clearing Area.

### **Extra Man Offense (EMO)**

A man advantage that results from a timeserving penalty.

**Face-off** A technique used to put the ball in play at the start of each quarter, or after a goal is scored. The players squat down and the ball is place between their crosses.

**Fast-Break** A transition scoring opportunity in which the offense has at least a one-man advantage.

**Ground Ball** A loose ball on the playing field.

**Handle (shaft)** An aluminum, wooden or composite pole connected to the head of the crosse.

**Head** The plastic or wood part of the stick connected to the handle.

**Man Down Defense (MDD)**

The situation that results from a timeserving penalty which causes the defense to play with at least a one man disadvantage.

**Midfield Line** The line which bisects the field of play.

**On-The-Fly Substitution** A substitution made during play.

**Pick** An offensive maneuver in which a stationary player attempts to block the path of a defender guarding another offensive player.

**Pocket** The strung part of the head of the stick which holds the ball.

**Rake** A face-off move in which a player sweeps the ball to the side. NOT a way to scoop ground balls.

**Riding** The act of trying to prevent a team from clearing the ball.

**Release** The term used by an official to notify a penalized player in the box that he may re-enter the game.

**Unsettled Situation** Any situation in which the defense is not positioned correctly, usually due to a loose ball or broken clear.

## Resources

**US Lacrosse**

[www.lacrosse.org](http://www.lacrosse.org)

**Brunswick Lacrosse Club**

[www.brunswicklacrosse.com](http://www.brunswicklacrosse.com)

Ohio Middle School Lacrosse Association

[www.omsla.com](http://www.omsla.com)

Ohio High School Lacrosse Association

[www.ohsla.com](http://www.ohsla.com)