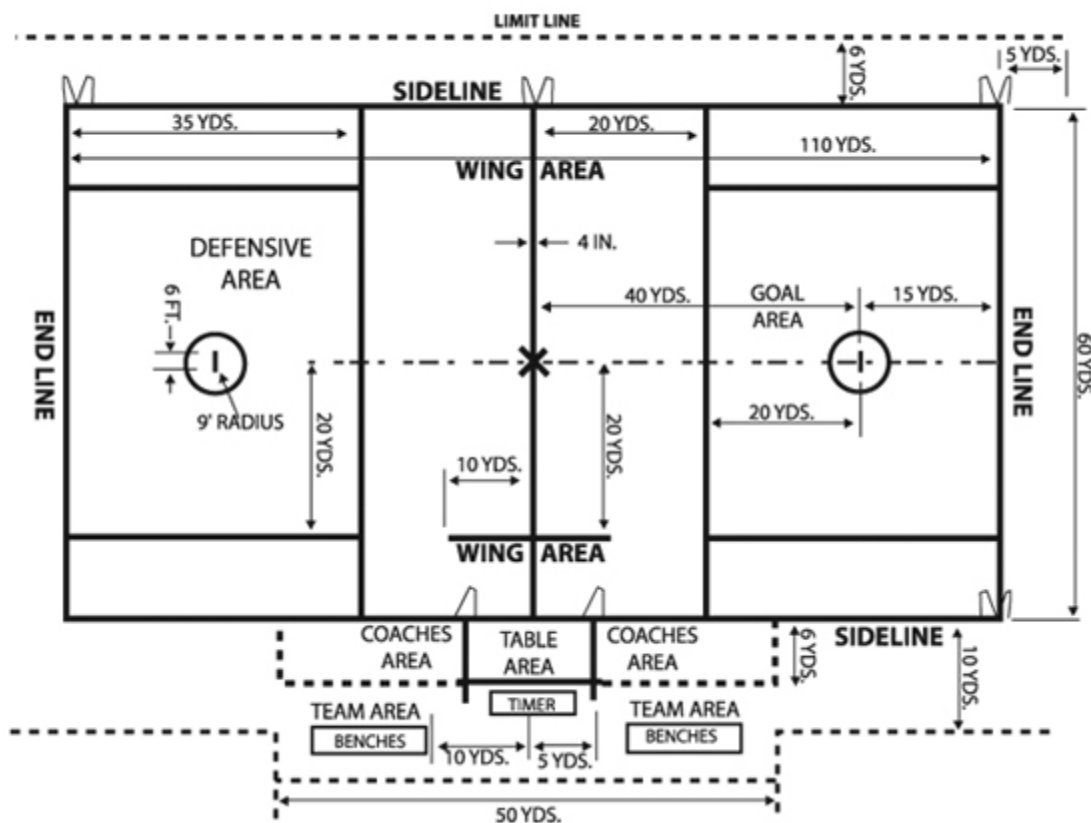


RULES

Men's lacrosse is a contact game played by ten players: a goalkeeper, three defensemen, three midfielders and three attackmen. The object of the game is to shoot the ball into the opponent's goal. 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.
- Generally, high school games are 48 minutes long, with 12 minute quarters. Each team is given a two minute break between the first and second quarters, and the third and fourth quarters. Halftime is ten 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.
- 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 release; the other players must wait until one player has gained possession of the ball or the ball has crossed the goal line.
- Center face-offs are also used after a goal and at the start of each quarter.
- Players may run with the ball in the crosse, pass and catch 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, which includes 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. However, all contact must occur from the front or side, above the waist and below the shoulders. An opponent's crosse may also be stick checked if it is within five yards of a loose ball or ball in the air.
- If the ball or a player in possession of the ball goes out of bounds, the other team is awarded possession of the ball. If the ball goes out of bounds after an unsuccessful shot on goal, 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.

Youth and High School Men's Lacrosse Field of Play



Terms

Attack Goal Area: The area defined by a line drawn sideline to sideline, 20 yards from the face of the goal. Once the offensive team crosses the midfield line, it has ten seconds to move the ball into its attack goal area.

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

Box: An area on the sideline 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 alert the defender to find his man and call out his number.

Clamp: A face-off maneuver executed by quickly pushing the back 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, nine feet in radius, into which only defensive players may enter.

Crosse (Stick): The equipment used to throw, catch and carry (cradle) 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 positioned correctly, usually due to a loose ball or an unsuccessful clear.

Extra Man Offense: A man advantage that occurs following a time-serving 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 placed between their sticks.

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

Ground Ball: A loose ball on the playing field.

Handle (Shaft): The pole connected to the head of the stick.

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

Loose Ball: A situation in which neither team has control of the ball.

Man Down Defense: The situation that results from a time-serving penalty which causes the defense to play with a least a one man disadvantage.

Midfield Line: The line bisecting the field of play.

On-the-Fly Substitution: A player substitution made during play. Usually executed while the ball is being handled offensively.

Pick: An offensive maneuver in which a stationary player attempts to block the path of a defender with his body.

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

Rake: A face-off maneuver in which a player sweeps the ball to the side.

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 or she may re-enter the game.

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

Men's Lacrosse Positions

THE ATTACK The position of attack requires the most stick skill of all positions, with the exception of the goalie. Attackmen should demonstrate good stick work with either hand and have quick feet to maneuver around the goal in heavy traffic. Effective attackmen have good peripheral vision, precision passes, and can effectively dodge, screen and shoot. The attackmen are always on the field as a scoring threat and, given an even match up, should score often. Typically the attack work behind the net, called the "X" area, and on the flanks of the crease, called the "wings". This gives the attackmen the most room to dodge and cut. Attackmen generally restrict their play to half of the field. They must work with the midfield to run an effective offense. An attackman should be quick, alert, and confident in one-on-one situations and be able to withstand physical punishment by the opposing defensemen.

The attack use dodging, picks (just like in basketball), and passing to generate a good shot. Similar to basketball, the object is to move the ball around until the defense breaks and someone is left with an open shot. One way to do this is by letting an attackman go one-on-one with a defender. The attackman tries to beat his defender by dodging, causing another defenseman to slide, creating an unbalanced situation in which he can either shoot or pass to someone else who is wide open. The attackman can move in any direction with any amount of force, as there are no charging rules. The attackman, however, like all players cannot clamp the ball in his stick with his thumb, chest, or helmet. He is also not allowed to push or hit the defenseman's stick with his arms or hands. This is called warding.

THE MIDFIELDER (MIDI) The midfielder is considered by many to be the backbone of the lacrosse team. Good midfielders need speed, stamina, hustle and determination. They are required to play both defense and offense. However, the middies are largely responsible for a key aspect of the game - transition. Transition is by far the most important part of the game and helped create the nickname, 'The Fastest Game on Two Feet'. It involves retrieving loose balls, or clearing saved shots and running and passing the ball up the length of the field. If a team can get the ball and have an extra man advantage on the offensive end of the field, even for a split second, they have a good opportunity to score. When this advantage occurs in transition it is called a fast break. A midfielder should be able to shift quickly from offense to defense. Midfielders do not have to be proficient scorers, but should be able to "read" what is about to happen next.

Along the center of the field is the midfield line. It is this reference point that determines whether a team is off sides or not. The rules for off sides are simple: you must have 4 players on your defensive end at all times, and 3 players on your offensive end at all times. Since it doesn't matter which players stay on what side, it is up to the midfield to keep their team on sides, by staying on one side or the other. Since the position requires so much running, the midfielders often changes lines on the fly, as in hockey.

THE DEFENSEMAN The defenseman's responsibility is to defend the goal. Although size aids the defenseman, more importantly defensemen should be quick, agile and aggressive. Speed is always a valuable commodity, but the ability to act and react, to judiciously apply pressure and to recover are the key ingredients to an effective defenseman.

They must keep the attack at bay. Their job is to keep the ball away from the net so the opposing attack doesn't get a good look at the goal. The job is difficult: A defenseman doesn't know where the attackmen are going or what they are going to do. In his arsenal the defenseman has a long stick (14U and above). This stick allows a defender to keep the attackmen at a distance, thus allowing him to throw checks without being beaten on foot. Good footwork is an extremely important part of playing good defenseto be able to apply pressure and be aggressive, without lunging a foot and body forward is key, otherwise the offensive player can then easily go around the overly aggressive defenseman. A defenseman must be able to think and react quickly, and most importantly communicate with his fellow defensemen.

Defensemen are allowed to check the attackmen they are covering. What this means is a defenseman is allowed to use his stick to hit the attackman's stick and arms. A defenseman cannot strike the attackman on the head, and cannot strike the attackman's body with the stick with any significant force. This penalty is called a slash. Most slash penalties occur when a defenseman employs the use of a 'slap' check, which is when the stick is swung perpendicular to the attackman's shaft in a slapping motion. The other common check is the 'poke' check, in which the defenseman simply jabs straight on at an attackman's stick in a motion like that of a pool cue. When the attackman is close enough, a defenseman can use his body for defense. Body checking, or hitting, in lacrosse is very similar to that in hockey. A legal body check is any hit that is head to head (no hitting from behind). People who are legal targets are anyone standing within five yards of a loose ball, or anyone with possession of the ball. Hitting someone without the ball, while another player has possession is called interference.

THE GOALIE The position of goalie in lacrosse is probably one of the most intense positions of all sports. Essentially, you must play catch with people at a very high speed. Unfortunately for the goalie, most people don't throw at his stick. The goalie wears additional protective equipment: throat guard and chest protector. A goalie stick is typically of normal length, 40-50 inches, with an extra wide head. Unlike goalies in hockey, lacrosse goalies must be very mobile. They often come out of the circular crease that surrounds the 6'x6' goal. Explosive speed and very quick hands are key ingredients in making a goalie, as well as a tolerance for pain. When a goalie comes out of the crease to fetch ground balls or to clear a saved shot, he becomes a target, much like the quarterback in football.

A good goalie leads the defense by reading the situation and directing the defensemen to react. A goalie also directs the clearing patterns and provides intangible cohesion that binds a team together. A good goalie should have excellent hand/eye coordination and a strong voice. Quickness, agility, confidence, a "thick skin" by not getting too down when scored on and the ability to concentrate are also essential.

The goalie defends a square goal six feet wide by six feet high. Around the goal is a circular crease. The crease area is limited to entry by the goalie and defensive players only. Once the goalie makes a save he has 4 seconds to either pass the ball or run the ball out of the crease. In these four seconds no one may touch him. Once the goalie steps outside the crease he is no longer allowed back into the crease unless he yields possession of the ball.