

LACROSSE FOR NEWBIES

THE FASTEST SPORT ON TWO FEET!

MEN'S LACROSSE

FIELD POSITIONS

- **ATTACK:** The attackman's responsibility is to score goals. He generally restricts his play to the offensive end.
- **MIDFIELD:** The midfielder's responsibility is to cover the entire field playing both offense and defense.
- **DEFENSE:** The defenseman's responsibility is to defend the goal. He generally restricts his play to the defensive end of the field.
- **GOAL:** The goalie's responsibility is to protect the goal and stop the opposing team from scoring.

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 (usually 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.

PERSONAL FOULS

The penalty for a personal foul is 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.

- **SLASHING:** Occurs when a player's stick 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 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, obscene language or gestures, and arguing.
- **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 the crosse was altered to gain an advantage.
- **ILLEGAL BODY CHECKING:** Occurs when any of the following actions take place: (a) body checking of 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 of an opponent from the rear or at or below the waist; (d) body checking of an opponent by a player in which contact is made above the shoulders of the opponent. A body check must be below the neck, 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

The penalty for a technical foul is a thirty 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.

- **HOLDING:** Occurs when a player impedes the movement of an opponent or an opponent's crosse.
- **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 players, or both players are within five yards of a loose ball.
- **OFF SIDES:** 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 illegally when an offensive player moves into and makes contact with a defensive player with the purpose of blocking him from the man he is defending.
- **STALLING:** Occurs when a team intentionally holds the ball, without conducting normal offensive play, with the intent of running times 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.

MEN'S LACROSSE FAQ

What is the object of lacrosse?

The object is to put the ball into your opponent's goal.

How does the game begin?

A lacrosse game begins with a face off at the mid-field line at the X spot in the center of the field.

What is a face off?

A face off consists of the two center players at the mid-field line crouching down and placing their sticks on the ground so that the heads of the sticks have their backs to each other. The official then places the ball on the ground between the heads of the sticks, steps back and blows a whistle which signals to the players they can fight for possession of the ball.

When are face offs used?

At the beginning of a game, at the beginning of each quarter and after each goal is scored

How many men are there on a lacrosse team?

Squads range from 25 to 30 men normally.

How many men are there on the field for one team?

There are ten men consisting of one goaltender, three defense men, three mid-fielders, and three attack men.

What are the goaltender's special privileges?

He uses the largest stick on the field with a maximum width of 12 inches. He is the only one allowed to use a stick this large. He cannot be checked if he has gained possession of the ball within the crease area nor is an opponent allowed in the crease area.

What is defined as "in the crease area"?

A goaltender is considered in the crease as long as he has one foot on or within the 18- foot diameter circle. If he lifts his foot up and puts it back down while in the possession of the ball, it is called "out and in" and he loses possession of the ball.

How long can a goaltender stay in the crease with the ball?

A goaltender has four seconds to step out of the crease or throw the ball to a teammate. If he does not do this, he loses possession of the ball.

THE LACROSSE FIELD

What is the mid-field line?

This line divides the field exactly in half. At the beginning of a game, at the beginning of each quarter and after each goal is scored, the ball is faced off at the mid-field line at the X spot.

What are the wing areas?

These two lines indicate where the two outside mid-fielders must stay until the official blows his whistle to start a face off.

What is the crease area?

A goal crease is a circle 18 feet in diameter that marks an area where an offensive player can never enter under any circumstances except one.

What is the one exception that allows an offensive player to enter the crease area?

If an offensive ball player should fall into the crease such that he lands with his feet outside the crease and both hands on his stick within the crease in a push up position he may then get up and out of the crease with no stoppage of play.

What are the restraining areas?

These areas mark where all the players other than the three players who are the mid-field line must stay in during a face off until either team has gained possession of the ball. In the defense restraining area there are three defense men plus the goaltender. In the offensive area there are three attack men. Leaving the restraining areas before the referee signals possession will result in loss of the ball.

How big is a lacrosse goal?

The front of a lacrosse goal is a perfect square, six feet by six feet.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

HOW TO PLAY WOMEN'S LACROSSE

- A game begins when the two centers from each team "draw" at the center of the field: a ball is placed between their two sticks pressed together back-to-back. When the umpire calls "draw," the centers attempt to control the ball when they push the ball up and out of the circle -- the area around the face-off. (Think of the tip-off in basketball.)
- Then, the players around the circle -- usually the attack wings, defense wings, 3rd Homes and 3rd Men from both teams -- sprint for the descending ball. Once control is attained by a team, it works pretty much like some other sports: players run and pass the ball to push it down field toward the goal.
- Cradling is the method by which a player holds the ball in the stick's pocket. Unlike men's lacrosse, women's sticks may not have a deep pocket in which to hold the ball securely; a player "cradles" the ball to keep it in the pocket. Cradling uses centripetal force -- the force generated by moving something in a circle -- to press the ball into the back of the pocket. (You can feel centripetal force at the amusement park when a ride spins and pushes you out from the axis around which you're turning.)
- To learn to cradle, hold a pen or pencil with your right fist around the top, and the left hand around the bottom (for lefties, reverse it -- left hand on top.) Now bring both fists and the pen to your right shoulder, keeping the pen vertical. Then bring it to your left shoulder, keeping the pen vertical. Although you won't be able to see the centripetal force at work using this example, very basically, this is cradling.
- When a player has an opening to the goal, she shoots the ball by pushing the head of the stick forward, and pulling the shaft back. The shots can be extremely accurate and fast.
- Passing is the fastest way to get the ball down field, but it can also be one of the hardest things to do. Releasing the ball with speed and accuracy can take LOTS of practice to make it effective.
- Passing is done in the same manner as shooting, but catching the pass is often the hardest part. Not only does the ball have to land in your stick, but you must also learn to put the catch immediately into a cradle to gain control of the ball and prevent yourself from being checked.
- Checking is the technique in which a series of short, sharp, controlled strikes to an opponent's stick is used to force a player carrying the ball to drop it.
- A player can check the head or shaft of the stick, or body check.
- Body checking sounds like a player would strike an opponent's body, but it's actually accomplished when a defender sticks close to her opponent in an effort to intimidate the player into dropping the ball, or changing the opponent's path towards the goal.
- There are 12 players on each team, including the goalie.
- Attack positions are: Center, Right Attack Wing, Left Attack Wing, 3rd Home, 2nd Home, 1st Home
- Defense positions are: Right Defense Wing, Left Defense Wing, 3rd Man, Cover Point, Point, Goalie
- Player Equipment: Stick, Cleats, Mouthguard, Numbered shirt and kilt or shorts, and Padded Gloves (optional)
- Goalie Equipment: Helmet with face-mask and throat protector, Padded Gloves, Arm Pads, Chest Pad, Leg Pads, and goalie stick
- The Field: There are four types of demarcation lines around the goal: the circle, the arc, the fan, and hash marks. The circle envelopes the goal cage and no one but the goalie is allowed in the circle. The goal is guarded by a single goalie and measures about 6 feet by 6 feet. The field has no boundaries, but is usually enclosed by existing borders, such as trees, a track or fences.

WOMEN'S RULES

- Before the game begins, the umpire checks every stick (except the goalie's) for legality. The most common illegality in a stick is that its pocket is too deep. The strings at the bottom of the stick's head can be pulled to tighten the pocket.
- If a player commits a foul, the umpire blows the whistle and play stops. The player fouled wins or retains the ball, while the player who fouled her is moved several yards behind or to the side of the player she fouled.
- If a major foul is committed in the arc by the defense, the umpire blows the whistle, and a "free shot" on goal is taken by the player fouled. All of the defense players are required to clear the arc to the border closest to which they were standing when the whistle blew.
- The attack player who was fouled takes her place at the hash mark closest to which she was standing when she was fouled. The defense must move away at least four meters from the fouled player. When the umpire blows the whistle again, the player can take a shot on goal or pass while the defense moves in.
- There are no boundaries to the field, but if a ball enters an area that is dangerous, unplayable or not clearly visible to the umpire, the player who retains it or is closest to it (if the ball has been grounded), at the umpire's whistle wins it. The player then waits for the second whistle to begin play again, either by running with or passing the ball.
- When the umpire blows the whistle because a foul has occurred, or the ball has gone "out of bounds" all players must stop and check all forward movement. Play resumes and the players can move when the umpire blows the whistle again.
- Checking -- the method by which a player knocks the ball from another's stick -- is prohibited when it is: directed toward the face