

Women's Lacrosse Basics

Rules of Play

The Youth and HS have different rules, and the youth have different levels of play based on age. The guides on <https://www.uslacrosse.org/rules/girls-rules> can get you more familiarized for your athletes age level. The rest of the information here can give you a sense of the flow of play.

Start of the game

The game begins at the start of each half and after each goal with a [draw](#) at the center of the field. The team that takes possession of the ball during the draw is on offense.

Offense and Defense

Offense:

Women's lacrosse is a fast-paced game; since players are spread across a large field, speed is the key factor to success. Teamwork is critical! Good passing leads to scoring chances and prevents the opposition from taking possession of the ball. Field players run while **cradling** the ball and look to pass to open teammates with the objective of creating an open shot at the goal. Some basic offense strategies include settle, motion, drive, cut and shoot.

- **Settle Offense:**
- **Motion Offense:**
- **Drive:**
- **Cut:**
- **Shoot:**

Defense:

The defense attempts to stop the offense from scoring by deflecting or intercepting passes, taking the ball from the opponent, or forcing bad shots. Physical contact is not permitted; however the defender can guide the offensive player out of the 8M and safely stick check the opponent's Crosse to knock the ball loose. Defenders will either play "man-to-man" defense, in which each player is assigned to guard a certain opponent, or "zone defense," in which defensive players guard a specific area of the field.

- **Got Ball:**
- **Got Help:**
- **Double:**
- **Cutter:**
- **Backdoor:**
- **Zone Defense**
- **Man-to-man**

Equipment

The “Crosse,” or stick, has an aluminum or titanium shaft that connects to the head of the stick. The head is usually made of plastic and has strings or mesh that form a pocket to aid in catching and throwing the ball. The pockets of the sticks in women’s lacrosse are relatively shallow compared to those used in men’s lacrosse, making it more difficult to maintain control of the ball. Goalies use a larger stick and pocket. The ball is solid rubber and is about the size of a baseball. The women's game requires very little protective gear because it is non-contact.

All players are required to wear eyewear, mouth guard and may wear gloves. Goalies don additional padding including helmet, gloves, and chest pad. Players also wear skirts, short-sleeved jerseys, and cleats.

Terminology

Restraining line: Divides area where a maximum of seven offensive players and eight defensive players (including the goalkeeper) are allowed; otherwise, a team is called for off sides. See field chart below.

Twelve-meter Fan: 12-meter semi-circle used in the administration of minor fouls. Also called the “fan.”

Eight-Meter Arcs: 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 she is within a stick's length of her opponent.

The Draw: A technique to start or resume play in which a ball is placed in between the sticks of two opposing players, a whistle is blown, the sticks are drawn up and away, and the ball is sent above the heads of the player before one of the players takes possession of it.

Goal: Points are scored when the ball passes through this six-foot by six-foot square.

Deputy: A defender who can enter the goal circle in the absence of the goalie when her team has the ball.

Cradling: Running with the stick in either one or both hands in a manner that keeps the ball in the pocket.

Scooping: Picking up a ground ball in the Crosse pocket.

Ball Down: When the Ball is on the ground every player **YELLS** “ball down.” This a signal to everyone that the ball is on the ground and we need to get it! Games are lost because teams can’t get to ground balls before their opponents. Very important to get and control ground balls!

Marking Up: When the other team/opponent has the ball the entire team plays defense and “marks-up” or covers a player from the other team. When you see a mismatch tell your teammates or if you are covering more than your man **YELL** “I’ve Got 2” or something that tells your teammates there is a mismatch. Very important that every player understands this term.

Clearing: Passing the ball up field or carrying the ball out of your defensive end.

Cutting: Cutting is an offensive term used to describe an action the offensive player makes when she cuts through the 8M Arc to get a pass or move the defense. Cutting creates shooting opportunities for the ball carrier and the player cutting through the Arc. Never cut towards the ball carrier because it brings more defense to the ball!

Pick: Offensive player impedes opponent's ability to defend a teammate. Must be within the visual field of the opponent.

Fast break: An opportunity to score in transition to offense with at least a one-man advantage.

Free space to goal: Inside the critical scoring area, defenders must stay out of the space between the player with the ball and the goal circle, unless they closely mark an opponent.

Scoring play: A single possession of the ball in which the offense moves the ball in an effort to score.

On the fly: Substituting during play. When one player exits the field through the team substitution area, another can enter.

Critical scoring area: Unmarked area 15 meters in front and to the side of the goal, and 9 meters behind it. Includes the "fan" and the "arc." Defenders must allow free space to goal when the offense is inside this area. Also, penalties within this area have special consequences.

Sphere Violation: An imaginary bubble, about seven inches around the head of a player, that an opponent's Crosse cannot enter to ensure safety.

Pushing:

Cross the Body:

Cover:

Slashing: Recklessly swinging the Crosse at an opponent's stick or body.

Offside: Occurs when a team has too many players over the restraining line (more than 7, excluding the goalie)

Blocking: Moving into path of a player without providing space for the player to stop or change direction.

Charging: Player with the ball comes into contact with a defender who has already established position.

Checking: Hitting the opponent's Crosse to dislodge the ball.

Free position: After a foul, all players must be at least four meters away from the player who was fouled. The attacker may run, pass, or shoot the ball after the whistle is blown to resume play.

Free shot: Penalty awarded from a hash mark on the 8-meter line when a major foul is committed within the 8-meter arc. All players, except the goalie, must move outside the arc. When the umpire blows the whistle, the player can take a shot on goal or pass while the defense moves in.

Indirect free position: Following a minor foul within the 12-meter fan, play resumes from the 12-meter fan and the player may run or pass, but cannot shoot.

Penalty lane: The path that is cleared between the player with the ball and the goal when a **free position** is awarded to the attacking team inside the critical scoring area.

Slow whistle: Permitting play to continue during a penalty inside the critical scoring area on a scoring play to allow an offense to maintain its advantage.

Three-second rule: Defensemen may not remain in the arc for more than three seconds without guarding another player.

Hash marks: Five marks on the eight-meter arc used for a free shot. Play resumes from the closest hash mark to the foul.

Goal circle: Circle that surrounds the goal and indicates the area in which only the goalie can enter. Also called the “crease.”

Center circle: Circle in the middle of the field where a draw is held.

Team substitution area: Area where substitute players may enter the field on-the-fly.

Different Types of Fouls

Minor fouls (misplay, procedural)

- Contested ground balls
- Covering the ball
- Minimum pass rule
- 3 Seconds closely guarded
- Goalkeeper fouls (no more than 10 sec. to hold the ball)(step back into the crease after leaving it)

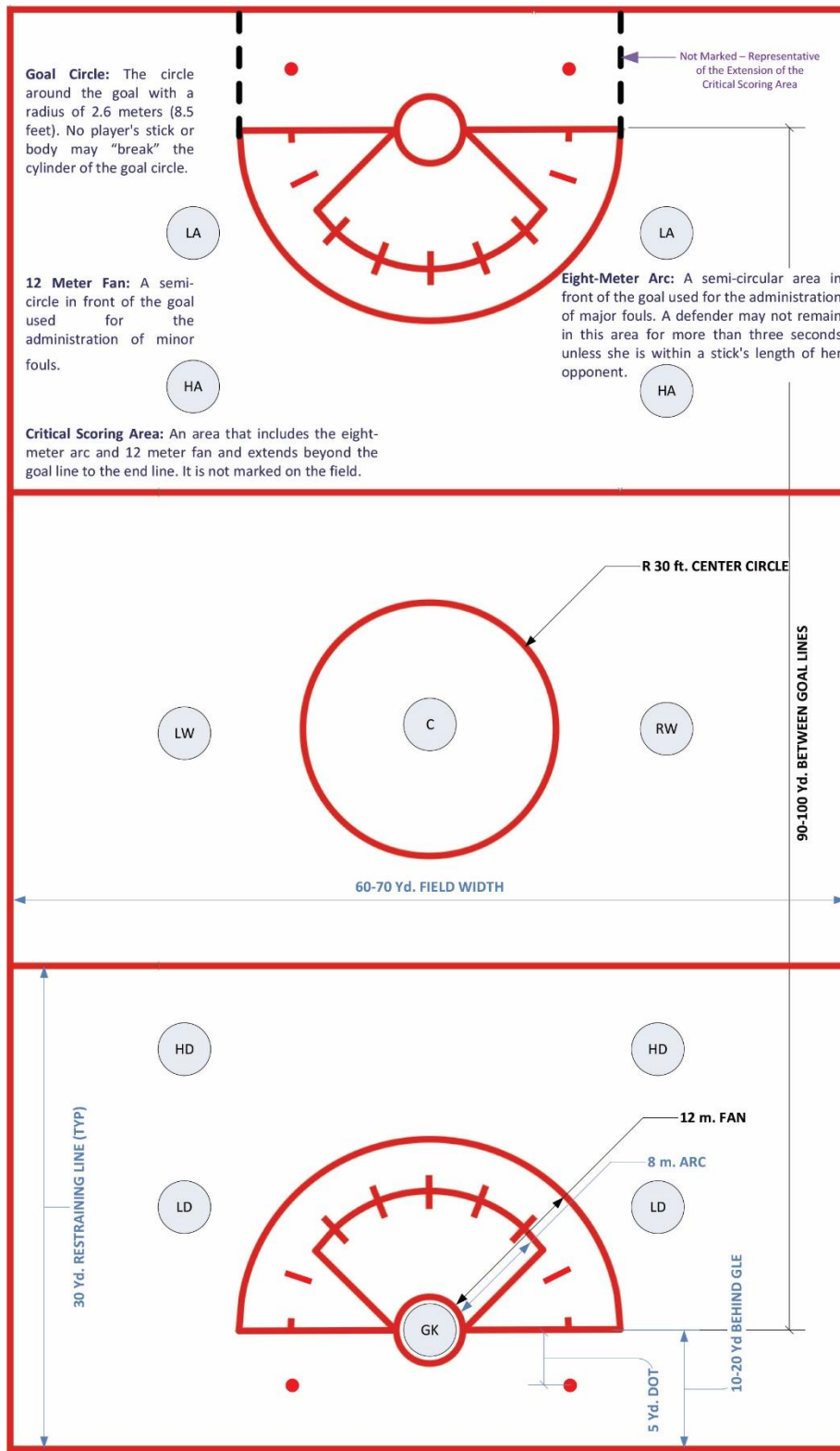
Major (safety) (Major fouls result in 8M arc free shot)

- Restraining Line violation
- 3 Seconds in the arc (when D is not within stick lengths away)
- Shooting Space
- Goal circle violation (no player is allowed in)
- Illegal check

Major – Cardable (Major fouls result in 8M arc free shot)

- Contact (stick to body/horizontal stick)
- Shooting fouls - Dangerous Propel (dangerous shot at goalkeeper, without control) or Dangerous Follow Through (stick goes into goal circle)
- Unsportsmanlike conduct

The Field



ATTACKERS

LA – LOW ATTACK

The low attack responsibility is to score. Located in front of the goal, they must continually cut toward the goal for a shot, or cut away from the goal to make room for another player. She should have excellent stick work. She should be able to shoot well from every angle and distance from the goal.

HA- HIGH ATTACK

The high attack wings are also responsible for transitioning the ball from defense to attack. Wings should have speed and endurance and be ready to receive the ball from the defense and run or pass the ball and setup an offense.

MIDFIELDERS

C – CENTER, LW – LEFT WING, RW – RIGHT WING

The center's responsibility is to control the draw and play both defense and attack. Wings should have speed and endurance and be ready to receive the ball from the defense and run or pass the ball in transition and also need to play defense. They are the most versatile and must be the best conditioned players.

DEFENDERS

HD – HIGH DEFENSE

The wings are responsible for marking the attack wings and pressuring the ball; also clear the ball into the attack area. Wings should have speed and endurance.

LD – LOW DEFENSE

Marking LA – Low Attack. She should be able to receive clears from the GK, run fast and have good footwork for defending in tight spaces and around the goal circle.

GK -GOALIE

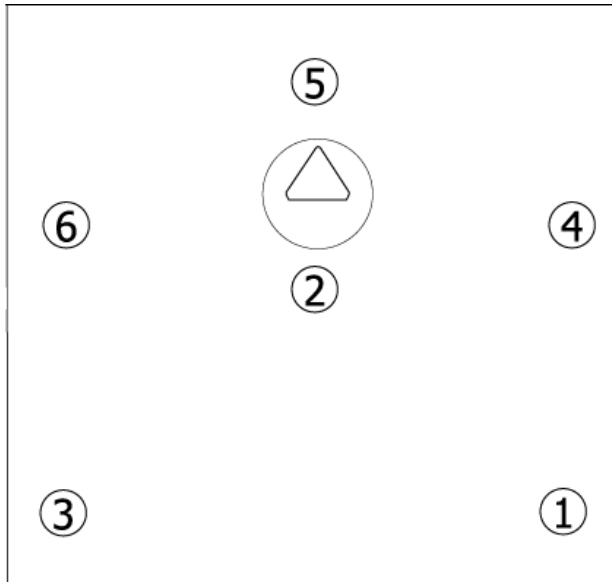
The goalkeeper's responsibility is to protect the goal. She should have good stickwork, courage and confidence.

MOTION" 2-3-1 Offense

This is referred to as a "motion offense." If run correctly, you almost do not need to call plays, as everyone is simply moving all the time in unison; whereby everyone knows where their fellow players are and will be. You determine if you are on the right or left Side by looking at/facing the goal.

In the diagrams below, you can see the rotation of a 2-3-1 offense.

Setup



Motion or Rotation

