

Overview of Girl's Lacrosse Rules

There are three levels of rules for youth girls lacrosse; A, B and C. Level C is the most relaxed allowing for deeper stick pockets, shorter halves, etc. Level A is the most like the game played at by high school and college players. The middle school league (seventh and eighth graders) in WA State adheres to level A rules. The youth league (fifth and sixth graders) plays with level C rules.

EQUIPMENT:

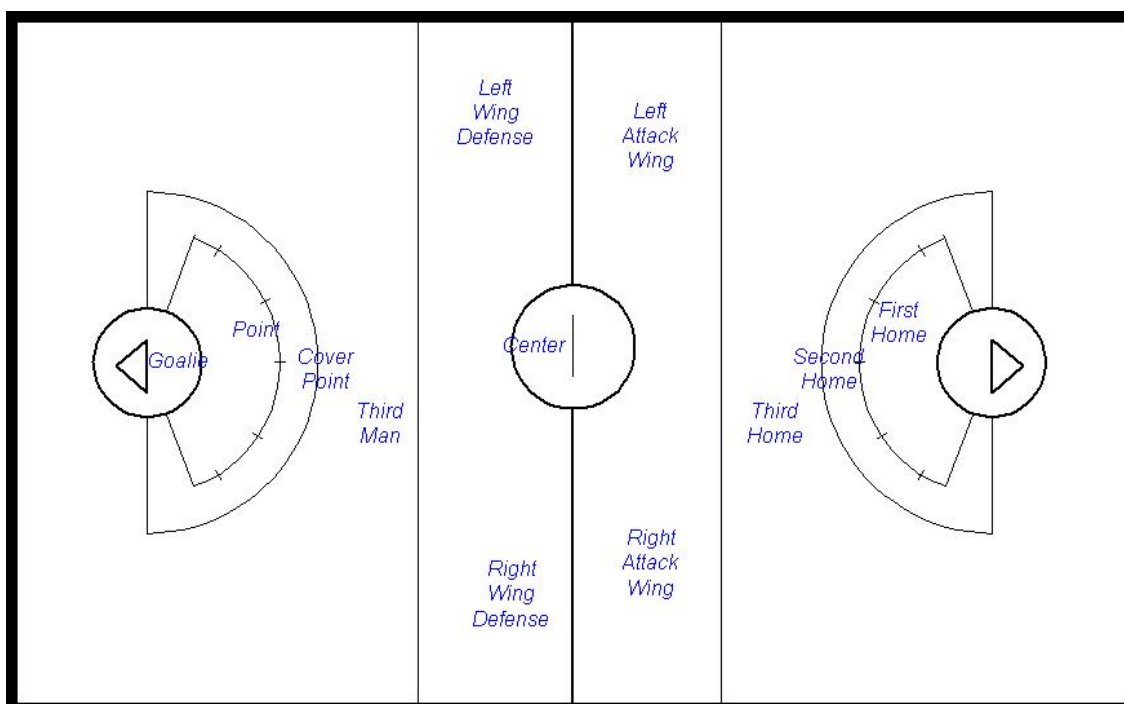
The ball is slightly smaller than a tennis ball and made of dense rubber. Girls' games are played with a yellow ball while boys with a white ball. *Sticks* (correctly, but rarely called "*crosses*"), have to be between 35-1/2" to 43-1/4" long. The *pocket* is considered legal if the top of the ball is even with or above the sidewalls of the stick head when dropped into the pocket and slight pressure is applied. Mouth guards and eye protection are mandatory. Goalies wear a helmet with throat guard, gloves, and chest protector. (Many elect to wear additional protection.)

LENGTH OF GAME:

Middle and high school games are two 25-minute halves. The only time the clock stops is after every goal and on any whistle within the last two minutes of each half. If a team has a four-goal advantage the clock will run after goals.

PLAYERS AND POSITIONS:

There are 11 field players plus a goalie for each team. The traditional names for these positions appear in the following diagram:



The lines on either side of the centerline are called *restraining lines*. Only seven field players from each team are allowed into the offensive side of their restraining line. This prevents too much congestion in front of the goal. *First, second, and third home*, also known as "line attack", have roles that are primarily offensive; shooting on goal and feeding cutters. They will typically stay behind their opponents restraining line. The *attack wings, center, and defense wings*, also known as *midfielders*, are counted on to play equal parts offense and defense and they run the

length of the field. The *point*, *cover point* and *third man*, also called line defense, are defensive specialists. They tend to stay behind the restraining line when the ball is on offense.

The goal cage is 6' by 6'. The circle around the goal is 8.5' in diameter and is called the *crease*. Field players must treat this line as a cylinder and cannot break the plane of this cylinder with their bodies or sticks. The goalie is allowed to cover the ball when the ball is inside the crease. If the goalie leaves the crease with the ball in her stick, she may not step back in while still in possession. If the goalie leaves the crease a field player may go into the crease and take her place if her team is in possession of the ball. This deputy (the unpadded field player's new name in goal) is not allowed to block shots.

The other lines around the goal are known as the *12-meter fan* and the *8-meter arc*. Major fouls by the defense occurring within its 8-meter arc result in a *free possession* for the offense. The player who is fouled moves to her nearest hash mark on the arc. The defensive player who committed the foul must stand on the 12-meter line behind the ball carrier. The arc is cleared of all other players. Any player who is within 4 meters of the player taking the free position must move to be 4 meters away. Upon the ref's whistle, the player with the ball is allowed to shoot, pass or maintain possession.

The center circle is used for the *draw*, which happens after every goal and is done in a standing position with the ball placed between the backside of the two players' sticks.

CENTER DRAW:

The *draw* takes place at midfield to start each half and after every goal. The ball must go higher than the midfielder's head or else there is a redraw. Besides the players conducting the draw, 4 players from either team may stand on the edge of the circle. The other players must be behind their respective restraining lines. Players may move before the whistle but must remain outside the circle or behind the restraining line. A team with a 4 goal or more deficit is awarded an *indirect free position* at the center of the field in lieu of a draw. The opposing center must be 4 meters away at a 45° angle. The center with the ball may not score without first passing the ball.

Occasionally you will see a *throw*. This is used when a draw has not been legal or when there are offsetting fouls (one by each team) on the field.

OUT-OF-BOUNDS:

Out of deference to the games heritage as a Native American war game, there are no uniform boundaries in girls' lacrosse. The ball is awarded to the player closest to the ball when it goes out of the playing area. That is why you see players running hard after the ball as it's going out of the playing area until they hear the whistle.

STAND ON WHISTLE:

All players must stop and stand still when the whistle blows to stop play. A player moving after the whistle can be called for a foul and change of possession awarded.

SUBSTITUTION:

Substitution is unlimited and may occur at any time. Substitutions must check in at the scorer/timer table and enter the field through the team substitution area. The player coming off the field must completely exit the field before her substitute may run onto the field.

FOULS:

There are two types of fouls: *Major* and *Minor*. Major fouls usually pertain to offenses that are potentially dangerous. Players may not use their sticks recklessly or impede the progress of an opponent. Attackers may not hold or cradle the ball directly in front of her face. Players may not push, trip or back into an opponent with their bodies or set illegal picks.

Some major fouls occur only within the 8-meter arc. A defender cannot play zone within this arc for more than 3 seconds; they must mark up and get within an extended stick's length of an offensive player. Likewise a defensive player cannot be within the *shooting space* of an attacker, (defined as the cone between a ball handler in the act of shooting and the goal), unless they are within a stick's length of the attacker.

Minor fouls are things like checking an empty stick, covering a ground ball with a stick, (raking), or guarding the ball with ones feet. Players may not ward off with a free arm or play the ball with their hand or body. A minor foul by the defense that occurs within the 12-meter fan results in an *indirect free position*, which means the player with the ball must pass the ball before a shot can be taken on goal. The player who committed the foul is moved 4 meters away behind the player with the ball. A minor foul occurring within the 8-meter arc also results in an *indirect free position* but the defensive player committing the foul is placed on the 8 meter arc directly in front of the player with the ball who is positioned on the 12 meter fan.

When type of foul is committed outside of the arc or fan, (the *critical shooting area*), change of possession is awarded and the player committing the foul must stand 4 meters behind the player with the ball.

MODIFIED CHECKING:

Checking is the striking of an opponent's stick head in an effort to dislodge the ball. Stick checks should be controlled, short, quick taps. There should not be a backswing. A defender may never check toward the head or body. The *modified version of checking* is employed at grades 7 and 8. A defender may not check a stick head that is above the opponent's shoulder. To counter the advantage this gives the player with the ball, a 3-second count is employed when the defender has both hands on her stick and is in good position to check a stick that is above the ball handler's shoulder. If the player with the ball doesn't reposition her stick away from the defender or pass the ball by the end of the 3-second count, it is considered a *minor foul* and possession is awarded to the defender.