

Lacrosse Goalie

Essential to every team is a good goalie. A goalie needs to be a leader with very good knowledge of the game, its rules and understanding of the needs of the team. The following covers the Fundamentals technique of playing lacrosse goalie.

Fundamentals

Simple Concept: intercept the ball in its path with your stick or body before it goes in the goal.

Musts: Cup, Helmet, Goalie Stick, Chest protector, throat guard, and gloves. Anything else is up to you.

Goalie Positioning

- Fingers should hold the stick, but not choke it. Handle should be in fingers not palms.
- Hands should be about 12" apart in a comfortable relaxed position.
- Arms should be away from your body, but you should not have flying wings, far enough so you can easily maneuver the stick in a clock and counter clock- wise fashion (like a baseball player). Far enough away from your head so you don't hit your mask when you move it from stick side high to off stick side high.
- Feet should be shoulder distance apart and weight should be forward. Not necessarily on your toes but definitely not back on your heels.
- Body position should be similar to a linebacker, a tennis player: an athlete.
- Goalie Stick should be positioned just off your shoulder covering the "Box Area". If you are right handed, you hold the top of the stick (toward the stick head) with your right hand and the bottom hand (left hand for righties) should be about 12" away. Arms bend at elbows and away from your body. Head of stick should be slightly forward and you should be ready to step toward the ball in an easy fluid motion.

Step to the ball – Legs come together

- Attack the ball. Get your whole body in the path of the ball. Your stick gets there first while starting to step to the path of the ball.
- You should step to the ball beginning with the foot and leg from the side the ball came from. If the ball (bounce, high, or low) came toward you from the right of your body, you should step with your right foot and leg followed by your left foot and leg coming together with your right foot and leg. If the ball came toward you from the left side of your body, you should step to the path with your left foot and leg followed by your right foot and leg coming together with your left foot and leg.
- If the ball is a bounce shot position your chin at the point of the bounce while stepping to get in the path of the ball. Your stick gets to the ball first with your whole body following.

- This is true for any shot. Every time. Practice, Practice, Practice! Attack, attack, attack

Goalie Position in the Goal

- When the ball is in front of the opening of the Goal, you should be in the goalie position on the imaginary “half moon” between the pipes and move as the ball moves. As the ball moves from pipes, side, front (top) right and left, you should be moving on the half moon to be in position to attack any shot that comes near the goal.
- When the ball is behind at X (directly behind the goal) or off pipes right and left, you should be positioned at the center of the moon, waiting in goalie position except with your bottom hand at the end of the handle so that you are in position to “steal the ball”. Only make the attempt if you can be successful. Do not be over anxious so as to be out of position for the next opportunity to make a save.
- When the ball is thrown from back to front, you move with the side the ball went to first. If I am standing at the x of the moon, and the ball is thrown from back right to side left, I turn (clockwise) with my right side moving first to get my stick to the ball side as fast as I can the rest of my body follows my head. If the ball is thrown from back right to side right I move (counter clockwise) my right side to the ball first followed by stepping with my right foot to the right side of the goal.

Catch the ball

- Don't pop at it. Cradle it into your stick like other players do. Don't stab or pop it. Catch it.
- Make sure your pocket is broken in.
- Make sure your stick is in good repair. Fixing any loose or broken strings prior to game.

Throw the ball

- You must be able to cradle and throw just like any of your teammates. They must be able to rely on you to control the ball, catch the ball, cradle the ball, and throw the ball with consistency and accuracy. Half field accurate and consistent throws at a minimum.
- To throw the ball you position your hands in a throwing position. Bottom hand at the end of the handle and top hand about 12 to 18 inches away as to allow the “levered” throwing of the ball. Always step toward your target and lead the runner just like a quarter back would lead a wide receiver. Don't throw buddy passes.
- After you pass the ball, look to get back in the cage.

Crease

- The crease is yours; it is your domain; it is your protection. Your sole responsibility is to keep the ball from going into the goal. You can use the crease to help you do that.

- Remember to always clamp on the ball with your stick when it is near the crease. Rake it back to you but be careful not to allow it to pop out. Get your defensemen to know what “clear the crease” means.
- After you have possession of the ball, you have three seconds to get the ball out of your crease (pass it or walk/run it out).
- Look for the idiot attack man standing in front of your crease while you are attempting to make a clear.
- If there is no fast break or out let pass, take the ball behind.
- You cannot go back into the crease after you have left it with the ball. You can enter the crease at anytime without the ball. Remember the ball in the back of the net trick.

Communicate

- Talk to your coach about the proper calls he wants you to make. You need to use an authoritative voice without yelling. Know everyone’s name, nick name. Talk to provide information not to talk.
- Some of the calls we covered:
- Stick side high, med. Low, off stick high, med. low
- Check sticks
- Square right or left
- Stick on Stick
- Front (top) left, center right
- Side left, Red Zone, Side right
- Pipe (post) side left, Pipe (post) side right
- Back left, X (back Center) and Back right
- Clear the crease
- Clear
- Redirect
- Who’s got man, Numbers?
- The hole and who has got the hole?
- Fast Break
- Who’s backing up?
- Ball, ball down
- Watch the pick, who has his back.
- Stick save and a beauty!

Have Fun! Lacrosse is a blast! Cradle it Baby!