

# Putting the finish on your crease.

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Ten basic fundamentals and a set of [drills](#) for your crease attackmen. The 1990's version of upbeat [lacrosse](#) features speed, transition, and an emphasis on unsettled (fast break/slow break) offensive situations. Seemingly lost in this upbeat game, is the time-honored [position](#) of crease attackman. In the past, the crease attackman was a big, bulky player with enough size and strength to screen the goalie without being pushed around inside.

The "new" crease [men](#) come in all shapes and sizes, but they have to be finishers. Considering the shots they take from right on top of the goal, this should not be a difficult thing to do. However, it remains a skill that takes practice and is mastered by few.

Following are the 10 basic fundamentals that are essential in playing the crease effectively.

1. Move your bottom [hand](#) up off the butt end of the stick and hold the top hand closer to the throat. This enables the creaseman to catch a tight pass in difficult places and to free his arms (get them away from his body) and still keep his stick in the "box" (the area between the player's ear and [shoulder](#)). It also enables them to shoot through a check.
2. Never reach out to catch a pass. Catch the ball with the stick in the "box," using a short recoil - giving [back](#) with the ball. This will enable you to have a quicker, harder release.
3. Take small steps to the ball before catching it. This will enable you to make adjustments to a [poor](#) feed and still keep the stick in the "box," close to your body.
4. Observe the opposing goalie during warm-ups. Determine his stick hand, his strengths and weaknesses. Against a tall goalie, fake high and shoot low. Against a short goalie, fake low and shoot high.
5. Know where the goalie is without having to look. Check the goalie's positioning. If you catch the ball in a certain area, you should automatically shoot to a certain area of the net.
6. Shoot the ball overhand to the low offside of the net. Overhand will give you a better chance of getting the ball on goal. Low because it will give the goalie less surface area to get a piece of the shot.

7. Shoot the ball hard and get it on cage.  
Fire the ball; give the goalie no **time** to react. Shoot for the net.
  
8. Rebounds in the crease area should be poke in. Don't attempt to scoop the ball. If the ball is in the crease, poke it, swat it, or sweep it. If it is outside the crease, gain control for a very quick release shot.
  
9. Behind-the-back-shots are very effective.  
While many coaches disdain the flashiness of the behind-the-back shots or passes, they must understand that it is an effective weapon for the modern creaseman. The stick remains in the "box" and the **deception** makes for a high-percentage shot when cutting near the crease. Don't discourage the shot.  
Encourage your players, and especially the creasemen to practice it.
  
10. Everytime you shoot, think goal.  
A creaseman should believe that any feed can be converted into a goal, no matter how **poor** the pass. Practice shooting **techniques** against a wall.

#### WALL DRILLS:

- \* Right-hand quick stick, 50 times
- \* Left-hand quick stick, 50 times
- \* Right-hand catch & cradle, 50 times
- \* Left-hand catch & cradle, 50 times
- \* Right-hand quick stick, 50 times
- \* Left-hand quick stick, 50 times
- \* Split Dodge - throw right, catch right, split dodge to left **hand**, throw left, catch left, split dodge to right hand.
- \* Quick Stick - change hands on every cross while ball is in air
- \* Cross-handed 50 times, each hand
- \* Around the **Back**, 50 times each hand

#### PRACTICE TIPS:

1. Perform all drills with both hands.
2. Any wall will do, but a smooth concrete wall at least 10 feet high will **work** best.
3. Use your **gloves** when working the wall.
4. Stand about five yards from the wall.
5. Perform this routine 15 to 20 minutes per day, four or five times a week. and your stick skills will begin improving in a very short **time**.

BE CREATIVE, DEVELOP YOUR OWN DRILLS!

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