

Practice Plan

09-3

Practice plan #3 - Beginner

Time	Drill	Pg.	Coaching Tips
00 to :10	Dodging, scooping and taking shots	-	Loosen up and work on shot
:10 to :15	Full body stretch	-	Shoulders, legs, groin, and lower back
:15 to :25	Jog around the field, maybe some sprints	-	Limbering up and preparing for drills
:25 to :35	Cradle the ball	5	Proper technique
:35 to :38	Water break	-	-
:38 to :45	Passing / catching	15	At this point, proper technique is everything
:45 to 1:00	Distance passing	15	Helps with getting the right strength on a pass
1:00 to 1:10	Box area	6	Pass reception technique is key
1:10 to 1:20	Catch and shoot	17	Proper box reception and then shot
1:20 to 1:30	Screen roll pass	26	Basic technique for young players
1:30 to 1:35	Water break	-	-
1:35 to 1:45	Midfield give and go	26	Passing and catching technique
1:45 to 1:55	Two on ones	28	Great drill for passing and shooting in game situation
1:55 to 2:00	Cool down	-	Stretching, and taking a few shots

Ball Control – Scooping and Catching

This is the first, most basic concept in lacrosse, but it still is extremely important. Without the ability to control the ball, a team cannot generate good offensive chances. Just like in hockey or basketball, without control of the ball or puck, then you just don't have control of the game – and you can't score.



Cradle the ball

Cradling is an essential skill for young players to learn right away.

What you need – Players should have their sticks and of course, full equipment to do this drill. Players can spend some time practicing this at home, because it does require some dexterity to do well.

How this drill works – Each player should have their stick and carrying a ball. Cradling is necessary to control the ball while the player is running down the floor and dodging other players on the field.

Coaches should notice the following: **Grip, Wrist and arm action, and stick position.** This is a skill based lesson – and not so much of a drill for the younger players.

Grip – The top hand should be in a position that allows it to control the bounce inside the pocket. The bottom hand will direct the stick when the player is running and if they are trying to make a pass or take a shot. When standing still, the top hand should be underneath the stick, and the bottom hand should be on top.

The wrist and arm action – These should work in conjunction with one another. The idea is to create the least amount of bounce in the pocket of the player's stick. The forearm on the top hand should work like a hinge, and not moving all over the place. The wrist should not curl or flex too much.

Stick position – The stick position for the beginner should be horizontal when they are stationary. It is a standard pose for any player, except for when they may be experiencing pressure.

When a defender must shield their stick from a defender, the stick moves to a vertical position, almost parallel with the player's body.

Passing and Shooting

You can't score goals if you can't shoot the ball. You can't shoot the ball unless you are in a good position. You can't get into a good position without the help of passing. The combination of the two goes hand-in-hand and that is why we have put the two drill types together.



Passing and catching

Two fundamentals that should be first on the list of skills

What you need – You can pair players up, or you can put them in groups of threes to do this drill. Each group has one ball they are to pass around.

How this drill works – This is a skill-based drill, so the players are essentially just learning the proper technique for passing and catching the ball.

Passing: Players should be faced at their target with their lead foot being the opposite of his top hand on the stick. The top hand is just under the pocket and the bottom hand is the pivot point for the stick. When a pass is made, the top hand should reach no more than six inches above the shoulder and the pocket should not fall too far back or the ball might fall out. The top hand and arm push the ball in the direction of the pass, but then the bottom arm is the power hand and is pulled toward the body.

Catching – The form is very similar to that of the passing stance, except that the stick is going to be held more parallel to the body – rather than off slightly to the side. The major difference is that the ball should be caught in the box area – mainly to try and protect it from a defender.

Players should work the ball back on forth with close coaching so that they can get the technique properly.

Result – Basic skills are learned and reinforced through this drill.



Distance passing

Younger players need to understand how much force put on the ball when they are passing to get it from point A to point B.

What you need – Pair up players of relatively equal skill and start them at about 5 yards apart. Each pair will need a ball to pass back and forth.

An easy drill to build on this position is just to have players carry the ball around, either on the run, or just walking around. Coaches should watch for technique.



Scoop drill

When the ball is loose, players need to be able to pick the ball up – and proper technique is important.

What you need – Players with sticks and proper equipment.

How this drill works – If you have ever coached baseball, you will know that players have to gain position and then use the proper technique to scoop up a grounder. The same could be said for picking up a lacrosse ball.

After the coach prepares the player with the finer points of how to scoop the ball, he or she can split the players into two groups and then roll or bounce a 'grounder' to the players to pick up. Proper form is the key to this drill – and will build a solid fundamental base for the young player.

Result – Players will be able to control the ball when it is loose.



Box area

This is the catching area that player's need to learn to accept the ball from passes.

What you need – Two lines of players, each with a coach and some practice balls.

How this drill works – Although players can catch the ball from a variety of areas during the course of a game, it is important players learn the **box area** – the area a few inches away from their pocket side ear. This is the prime receiving area because it provides protection from defenders and it allows for optimum hand-eye coordination – which is essential for good receiving.

To get used to receiving the ball properly, coaches can toss the ball softly so a player can control it in the box area. Once players gain a little more confidence, the coach can increase the speed of the ball.

Result – Good ball reception technique – which is an important skill to learn. Can be combined later with passing drills.



Catch and shoot

This combines two skills into one drill

What you need – One passing line and one line that is going to receive the pass and shoot the ball. This can also be divided into two groups of each if you have appropriate numbers. One or two nets will be needed for this drill.

How this drill works – The shooting player drives (jogs to start) towards the net, and the passing side makes a pass. At this point, coaches should be looking for proper technique in passing form and reception.

Then once the shooter gains control of the pass, then he or she will turn, aim and shoot on the net. In order to get work for the goalie, you can put a goalie in for this drill.

Result – Your players will get the hang of getting a pass, and making a quick transition into a shooting position to get the shot.



Dodge passing drill

A player can use the dodge to open up an area to make a good pass.

What you need – You can set up two stations that will have three groups: attackers, defenders and pass receivers.

How this drill works – A player must be taught the basic dodge moves, and then use them on the defender in order to create space for him or her to make a safe pass to one of their teammates.

Players should try to use the basic face dodge to start, as that is likely to one that will be taught the most at this level. But, if players are taught other dodges, they should practice this.

The key is to get a player to be able to execute a good dodge, and then set up for the proper passing technique to their teammate.

You can also make this the **dodge shooting drill** if you want. It would be essentially the same, except players will be getting into proper shooting form instead.

Result – Mastering the skill of dodging and passing to gain an advantage.

Offensive and Defensive Tactics

The tactics in lacrosse are quite similar to those in basketball, with the different motion offenses, the defensive skills and the use of picks, rolls, and driving to the net. In this section, we are going to go through several different drills that are going to help simulate these certain game plays and situations.



Screen and roll pass

This is a basic drill to help players understand the use of a screen and roll technique.

What you need – Put players in groups of three to run this drill. Include one ball with each group of three players.

How this drill works – This is a simple screen and roll to open up space to move and then to pass the ball. One player should start with the ball and be covered by a defender. The third player is the one that sets the screen.

The screen player communicates with the passer on which side the screen should be set. The ball carrier moves to his or her left or right, and the screener sets a screen to provide open space. Then the screener rolls toward the net to receive a pass, and then takes a shot on net.

Result – This teaches younger players how to use the screen to their advantage.



Midfield give and go

This uses the midfielder and attacker to give and go to get a shot

What you need – Have a midfielder at the restraining line (you can set up two groups, one on each side) and groups on each side of the net.

How this drill works – This is a basic give and go to the middle of the net. The groups on the side of the net start with the ball, pass it to the midfielder, who returns the pass to them as they break towards the net. After the return pass, the player takes a shot on net.

Result – This is learning just another basic offensive maneuver.



One on ones

This teaches players to challenge one another in one on one situations.

What you need – Have two goals set up (goalies are optional) about 40 yards apart. On one side of each net (opposite sides from each other) you can line up three or four players. Have a few balls ready to go for this drill.

How this drill works – The drill starts on whatever side wants to start on offense. The player at goal one (starting side) will carry the ball and be met by the defender from the other side. This is when the one on one begins.

The two players will battle, with the attacker trying to get a shot on net. The defender tries to prevent this from happening. If the play results in a shot, goal, or a save, the attacker will take the defenders spot and the next player in line at goal two becomes the attacker and the original player from one becomes the defender.

If the play result in a steal, or defensive recovery, then the defender immediately becomes the attacker and tries to score on goal one with the original attacker as the defender.

Result – Besides being quite competitive, this drill teaches players the basics of one on one attacking and defending.



Two on one drill

This will help players decide what kind of play they want to execute on the defense.

What you need – You have two players on offense and one on defense, you can include a goalie in this drill.

How this drill works – Using some of their basic skills (screens, dodges, etc) the offensive players must try to get a shot on the net. They have 10 seconds (or five if you want to be tough on them) to get a shot on net.

The defender wants to try and prevent a shot or steal the ball from a player.

Result – The players should be able to develop good two on one skills and the defender is going to get a good taste of what it is like to face this difficult game situation.