

Practice Plan

09-5

Practice plan #5 - 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	Scoop drill	6	Scooping is key in lacrosse
:45 to 1:00	Shooting drill	16	Accuracy and technique is more important than speed
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	Scoop keep away	7	Use proper scoop techniques
1:45 to 1:55	Grid Freeze tag	7	A great finishing game
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.

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.

How this drill works – The players will start off just 5 yards apart and they will pass the ball back and forth. Coaches should be watching for proper technique and that the players are passing accurately and under control.

On the coaches whistle, the players will take one giant step backwards and they will continue the drill. Once again, the coaches will watch for proper form. Once everyone is doing things correctly, they will take another giant step back.

You can repeat this process until the players are about 20 yards apart. This might be as far as many of the younger players can throw the ball.

Result – Players will begin to develop a sense of how much power they need to put into each of their passes, when a player is at a different distance.



Shooting drill

This will be a player's first taste of taking a shot on the net

What you need – If you have more than two nets, this drill works better because players will get more repetition. But, they line up about 10 yards in front of the net, in as many stations as you can put together.

How this drill works – Really, just start firing away at the net. Players can move from side to side, they can change their distances, pick the corners, whatever they would like to start getting the feel of shooting the ball.

Coaches should make sure that proper technique is followed. Some quick pointers are:

- Standing facing the target with foot opposite shooting hand ahead of the other.
- Rotate at the waist so that the shoulders are perpendicular to the goal.
- The shooting motion is very similar to the passing motion

Speed is generated in a quick trunk rotation followed by the hinging motion of the bottom hand to pull the stick forward, making the whole thing act like a catapult towards the goal. Also, the larger the stride toward the goal, the more speed.

Players can continue taking shots. This is a good drill to warm players up, and also to warm up goalies.

Result – Repetition of a basic technique, reinforcing good shooting skills.



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.



Scoop keep away

This is a drill that will reinforce the scoop technique.

What you need – Make a 15-yard by 15-yard square area with pylons. Inside this area, you can have 5 offensive players and 1 defensive player. Include 2 balls.

How this drill works – The players must stay inside the square area, and there is one player that starts off as the defensive player. The other five players must roll the ball (a passing skill) along the field to one another in order to build their low scooping skills.

After players continue building their scooping skills, you can add in another defender to make it a little more difficult to roll and scoop.

Results – This drill will not only build basic passing skills, but it helps a player develop their scooping skills.



Grid freeze tag

This drill will reinforce the basic skills of holding the stick and running properly with it.

What you need – Set up an area of about 30-yards by 30-yards with 8 to 10 players, and one 'defender'. Each player should be carrying their stick, but there are no balls in this drill.

How this drill works – This is really just a simple game of lacrosse tag. You put the offensive players in the middle with the defensive player (or players) and it becomes a game of tag. Players must stay inside the square area.

The players must hold their sticks properly, and carry them around using proper technique when they are running around. Two hands need to be on the stick (they will learn the one-hand form later), when running. Coaches should 'freeze' players that are not using the proper technique.

The desire of this drill is to teach players to use their stick properly, and to be able to change direction while staying in control.

Results – This will reinforce the basic skill of holding the stick.