

## Press Releases & News

# 2016 Rule Changes Announced for Girls' High School and Youth Lacrosse

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By [Paul Ohanian](#)



US Lacrosse today announced rule revisions for women's lacrosse, ranging from changes in overtime to new carding procedures for dangerous contact. Most of the rule changes are effective for the 2016 girls' high school and youth lacrosse seasons, with some additional revisions for equipment and uniforms effective beginning in 2017 or 2018.

US Lacrosse writes the rules for high school girls' lacrosse, and those rules are endorsed by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). The rules also govern collegiate club lacrosse (WCLA) and youth girls' lacrosse. In some instances, US Lacrosse provides some additional modifications to the WCLA and youth rules.

Noteworthy changes for 2016 include the implementation of the alternate possession to eliminate the throw, the introduction of sudden victory in overtime (first goal ends the game), and a new mandatory yellow card for dangerous contact.

“While some body contact will occur during normal play, there is no justification for deliberate and violent collision by any player, especially intentional player-to-player collisions with defenseless players,” said Lissa Fickert, chair of the US Lacrosse women's game rules subcommittee. “The increase in the severity of the penalties is intended to send a strong message that this type of play is unacceptable.”

A closer look at all the rule changes approved by the US Lacrosse Women's Game Committee is below. Rule references are from the 2015 US Lacrosse Women's Lacrosse Rule Book.

**Rule 1, Section 9:** Two small circles/dots shall be added to the field marking and placed five yards below the goal line in line with the 8-meter mark on goal line extended. These marks will designate the spot for the ball to be put in play when a foul occurs in the critical scoring area below the goal line.

**Rule 2, Section 5:** The ball may be lime green in addition to yellow or bright orange in color.

**Rule 2, Section 8:** Mouthpieces shall be any color other than clear or white and must not have graphics of white teeth. This adjustment makes it easier to determine if a player is properly wearing a mouthpiece.

**Rule 2, Section 9:** Eyewear used in 2016 may meet the ASTM standard of F803 or F3077. The new ASTM standard (F3077) shall be in effect on January 1, 2017.

**Rule 2, Section 10:** Effective January 1, 2017, the only optional headgear allowed for use must meet the new ASTM standard, F31317.

**Rule 2, Section 14:** Effective January 1, 2018, home team jerseys shall be light in color and visitor jerseys must be dark in color.

**Rule 2, Section 16:** Effective January 1, 2018, visible undergarments (long or short sleeve) must correspond to the team's predominate jersey color, or be light in color with a light jersey and dark in color with a dark jersey.

**Rule 2, Section 17:** Eye black must be one solid stroke with no logos/numbers/letters and shall not extend further than the width of the eye socket or below the cheekbone.

**Rule 3, Section 10:** Beginning January 1, 2017, the game must be officiated by at least two certified officials. Three officials are recommended.

**Rule 4, Section 7:** Overtime play shall be sudden victory (first goal ends the game).

**Rule 4, Section 7:** In overtime, there shall be no substitutions during the changing of ends.

**Rule 5, Section 1 and Rule 5, Section 19:** The goalkeeper must remain below the restraining line on the draw.

**Rule 5, Section 2 and Rule 5, Section 19:** The goalkeeper may not draw, shoot or score for her own team.

**Rule 5, Section 20:** The throw shall be eliminated and replaced by a procedure of alternate possession. The winner of the coin toss shall have the option of choosing ends of the field or having the first possession that occurs.

**Rule 5, Section 23:** The penalty administration for an illegal player discovered after a goal and before play is restarted shall be at the center.

**Rule 5, Section 28:** Stick check requests must include the number of the player whose stick is to be checked.

**Rule 6, Section 1:** A new foul for dangerous contact has been added. Dangerous contact shall be any action that thrusts or shoves any player, with or without the ball, who is in a defenseless position. This includes blind side, head down, or from behind.

**Rule 6, Section 1j:** The free position for a three seconds violation will be the spot of the ball.

**Rule 7, Section 28:** The delay of game progression has changed. The first violation remains the same. On the next delay of game, the official will show a green and yellow card to the offending player and award the appropriate penalty (major foul). The offending player must

leave the field for two minutes of elapsed playing time. No substitute is allowed. Any subsequent delay of game calls will result in a yellow card for misconduct.

**Rule 7, Section 31:** On goalkeeper misconduct, if a second goalkeeper is dressed, she must enter the game. A field player may not substitute for the goalkeeper.

**Rule 8, Definition of Terms:** The Critical Scoring Area shall be defined by the 12-meter fan in front of the goal and the area behind the goal between the 12-meter marks at the goal line extended and extending to the end line.

Three rule changes were made specifically to the youth rules:

1) Three seconds shall not be in effect for U-9 and below as players in this area are required to be playing 1-on-1 defense.

2) Also for U-9 and below, possession of the ball after goals shall alternate and restart at the center.

3) For U-11 and below, games should feature 7-vs-7, including a goalkeeper if there is one, and should be played on a modified field.

US Lacrosse and the NCAA have also specified a number of stick and pocket guidelines designed to minimize the aftermarket changes being made to sticks and pockets and to assist in determining their legality for play. These guidelines are incorporated as part of the Manufacturers Specifications in Appendix B. New and adjusted language is noted in red.

Section 1: A crosse may be deemed illegal if its design is a clear attempt to circumvent the rules.

Section 2: Recessed screws must be used to attach the head of a plastic/molded crosse to the handle.

Section 2: US Lacrosse approved heads may not be altered. Prohibited alterations to heads include, but are not limited to, baking, drilling additional holes, breaking and/or reconstructing with adhesive material, stretching, pinching and shaving.

Section 8: Each attachment to the sidewall shall be no more than 1.5 inches from its adjacent attachment when measured in a straight line from hole to hole.

Section 20: The pockets of all field crosses shall be strung with four or five longitudinal

leather and/or synthetic thongs. Mesh pockets are not allowed. Longitudinal leather or synthetic thongs and/or other second material shall be 0.3 cm to 1.0 cm wide. Each thong must be made of one material (leather, synthetic leather or nylon cord) and run the full length of the head. Thongs must nominally be the same width along their full length. Thongs must be attached to the head through holes in the scoop and at the ball stop. A second material may be used to allow attachment to the scoop and the ball stop of each thong to the head. However, this second material may not be more than .5 inches from the scoop and no more than 1.5 inches from the ball stop. The thongs at the ball stop must extend 5.1 cm beyond the ball stop. Thongs must not be bunched along the width of the head (top to bottom) and may not be more than 1.5 inches apart as measured from the inside of adjacent thongs, regardless of the material. The loose ends of the thongs may not be woven back up through the pocket or the sidewall of the crosse. The loose ends of the thongs must remain below the ball stop. Any additional strings used for attachment of the pocket to the head of the crosse may not be tied behind the pocket above the ball stop. Additional strings not directly required for attachment of the pocket to the head of the crosse are not allowed.

**Section 22:** Cross-lacing in a premanufactured detachable pocket is defined as 8 to 12 evenly spaced pocket nylon laces that are sewn, traditionally woven, glued or otherwise safely affixed between properly spaced longitudinal thongs.

**Section 23:** The nominal diameter of the shooting/throw string (hereinafter “shooting string”) nylon cord and sidewall nylon cord shall be 0.3 cm maximum. The nominal diameter of pocket nylon must be less than 0.3 cm.

**Section 25:** Any shooting string must be directly attached to both sidewalls in the upper third of the head, or, the top shooting string must be directly attached to both sidewalls in the upper third of the head and the bottom shooting string may be an inverted “U” in shape and must be directly attached to both sidewalls in the upper two-thirds of the head, as measured from the top outside edge of the scoop (Diagram 15). Shooting strings may not be crossed. Shooting strings may not touch from outside the outermost thongs to the sidewall.

**Stick Certification Procedures:** Approved crosse heads and/or pockets may not be sold as US Lacrosse approved if the head, the pocket, or how the pocket is attached to the head, is altered in any way from its original lab approval. The testing lab will send the approval documents for heads and pockets to the US Lacrosse Women’s Game Senior Manager and the Rules Committee Chair. All documents will include photos of the side and the front of the head with an attached pocket. Pre-sewn/synthetic pockets may only be certified by the lab

when attached to a head. The attachment must meet all stringing specifications. The US Lacrosse Rules Committee has the final authority to either approve or deny stick stringing and/or designs independent of lab approval.

For more details on the rules for girls' high school, WCLA and youth play, please visit [\*\*uslacrosse.org/womensrules\*\*](http://uslacrosse.org/womensrules).

Suggestions for future rule changes and modifications may also be [\*\*submitted here\*\*](#) at any time. All submissions are reviewed by the US Lacrosse women's game rules subcommittee.

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