



US LACROSSE COACHING EDUCATION PROGRAM

Defensive Stance and Positioning in Boys Lacrosse

Defensive Stance/Positioning

Defense can be a difficult concept to teach to beginners.

It starts with good stance and sound positioning.

Resist the urge to put a long pole in your player's hands.

Focus first on footwork, then checks and holds.

After these concepts are ingrained, move onto defensive team concepts, backups, communication and slide schemes.

This is not a positional enterprise, either.

Every player, whether he fashions himself a defenseman, midfielder or attackman, should learn these defensive fundamentals.

After all, defense wins games.

Teaching the Skill: Defensive Stance/Positioning

The proper defensive stance allows your player the mobility to move laterally as well as in other directions, in an effort to prevent the offensive player from receiving the ball or taking a shot.

Teach your defender to always keep his body between his man and the goal.

His knees are bent, and his body square to the opponent, to allow him the ability for quick movements in any direction.

He stands with one foot offset from the other, keeping his weight on the balls of his feet – not on his toes or the back of his heels.

When moving with his opponent, the defender side-shuffles, never crossing one foot in front of the other.





US LACROSSE COACHING EDUCATION PROGRAM

This helps him maintain his balance and change direction quickly as he mirrors the offensive player.

The defender should use a drop step when the offensive player changes directions.

He drops one foot back, gives a little ground to the opponent, and remains square to him while running parallel.

When the offensive player tries to break him down, the defender assumes the following stance – shoulders square, head down (lower than the opponent's head), knees bent and stick out in front of his waist.

The defender's stance from there depends on the defensive task at hand.

Note:

A rule of thumb is to keep the brim of your helmet at level or lower than the chin of your opponent.

If he wants to play the ball carrier straight up, his feet should be shoulder-length apart and parallel to the opponent's.

If he wants to deny a particular area of the field and force his opponent the other way, he should stand perpendicular.

This stance can be used to deny an opponent's strong side or to force him towards the sideline.

Error Detection and Correction

Error:

The defender cannot keep up with his opponent or he is easily beaten.

Correction:

Make sure he is not crossing his feet, that he assumes the proper break-down stance and that he drop-steps to mirror the opponent's offensive movement.

