



7 Things Every Parent Should Know About Lacrosse

eBook Series for Parents Book #1

LAX.com

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First... The Very Basics of Lacrosse

Lacrosse is a team game where a ball is passed and controlled using a stick with a mesh head (or pocket) at one end. If you have never seen lacrosse played, it is probably easiest to compare it to hockey or soccer. It is fast paced with a lot more scoring than those other “net goal” sports. The object is much the same, shoot the ball into the opponent’s goal to score. The ball is made of rubber and is about the size of a tennis ball.

The goals are 6 x 6 feet with a mesh backing or netting much like a hockey goal. Also, like hockey, there is space behind the goal that is part of the field of play.

Part 1 Getting Started

Why lacrosse is awesome and why your child should play.

The origins of the sport of lacrosse wins it some “cool points” for sure. Native Americans invented the game and used it as preparation for war as well as a means to solve conflicts.

Today, lacrosse is the fastest-growing youth, high school, and college team sport in the United States. The combination of cool-looking gear, a fast-paced tempo and the physical nature of the game really does stand out as being a sport born from battle. Also known as “the fastest game on two feet,” lacrosse seems to attract any kind of athlete once they are exposed to it.

THE GREATEST THING ABOUT GETTING YOUR KID INVOLVED IN LACROSSE, IS THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE TO BE PHYSICALLY DOMINATING TO EXCEL. Many of the best players in the nation rely on speed, agility and determination, rather than brute strength or size.



Lacrosse for Boys

Lacrosse for Girls



When analyzing the cool factor of lacrosse across the country right now, it is impossible to ignore the fact that while it is the fastest-growing sport, it is not yet as popular as sports like football, baseball, and basketball but in many areas, it is getting close! Many athletes who play those sports add lacrosse to their schedule as a means to compete, stay in shape, and develop important motor skills such as hand-eye coordination. Lacrosse has also become a MAJOR recruiting and college acceptance consideration at all levels of the game.

As the sport of lacrosse grows there will be more and more opportunities for athletes at all levels to enjoy the sport born centuries ago on the plains of North America from warriors and tribes. Other sports use terms like “going to battle” but lacrosse might be the only one born from actual tribal conflicts, making its origin story pretty hard to beat compared to other sports.

Things to consider when your child begins playing lacrosse.

Involving your son or daughter in any sport means evaluating the positives and negatives before signing them up. Lacrosse is a team sport requiring protective gear and game equipment in order to participate. Costs can vary but, much like hockey, this should be considered for any parent but isn't likely to be the most important consideration.

First, consider the personality of your child. Do they lose interest in new things easily or tend to dedicate themselves? Have they played other team sports and are they looking to replace those or add lacrosse to their activities? Are they competitive and active? These are some of the basic things to evaluate in your child to see if lacrosse makes sense.

Lacrosse is a physical game. It requires near constant movement, which is fantastic for conditioning and overall fitness. Though youth lacrosse doesn't allow body checking, there is still contact between players. The game uses a stick with a head on it that holds a ball. The ball can hurt so bruises can be common on legs and arms. It also isn't unusual for players to get hit by their opponents sticks which can hurt, even with protective gear. It is important to note the physical nature of the game because not all athletes, and not all kids like contact sports. You and your child should talk openly about this as it will be part of your decision to play.

Lacrosse requires coordination. Players use a stick with a head to catch and throw a rubber ball. The coordination required to run, and handle the balls, using the stick as well as being hit by the sticks of their opponents, means that most kids aren't fully prepared until at least third or fourth grade. That doesn't mean you can't start your child out earlier. Stick skills are so important to good play that if they begin really young their aptitude should exceed that of their peers who join later. Every child is different and you know yours better than anyone so evaluate their ability but also their willingness to practice and your willingness to help.

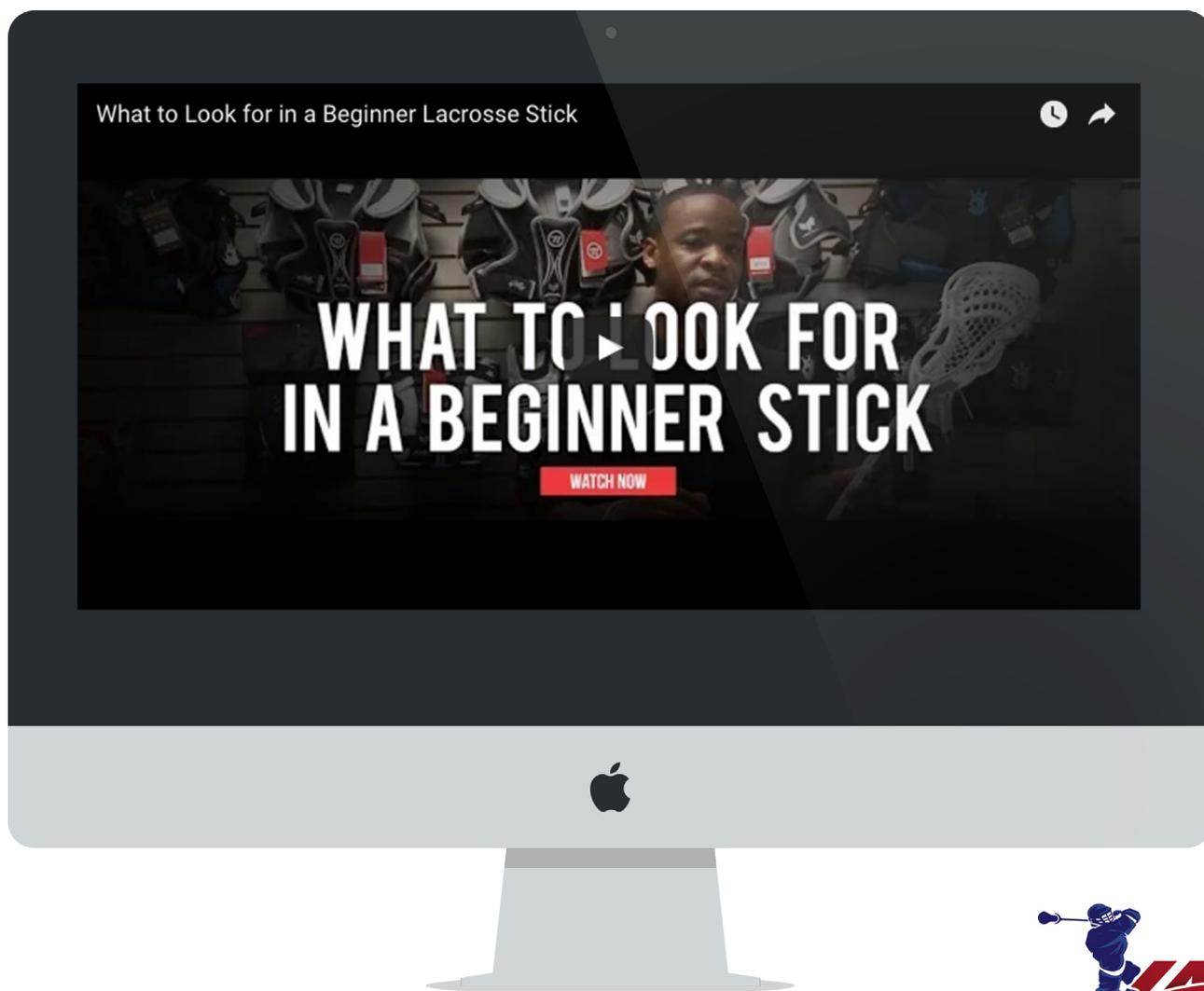
[Learn More About Boys Sticks](#)

[Learn More About Girls Sticks](#)



Lacrosse is a game of practice. As mentioned before, stick skills become a major asset or liability for players. Handling the stick while running and getting comfortable and adept at catching, passing and shooting the ball will require many hours of practice and drills outside of team play. Players can use a tennis ball against a wall to start with, doing various drills to learn techniques for handling their stick but they won't improve without committing to practicing a lot. Everyone develops at a different rate but it is important to consider your child's ability to focus for long periods of time and whether they have the kind of personality that drives them to master something or become frustrated at the first signs of trouble. It takes persistence to excel at anything and lacrosse is certainly no exception.

Lacrosse is all about being part of a TEAM. One of the great things about the sport of lacrosse is, with the sport growing in popularity, there are more opportunities than ever to join a team so kids can start at any time that makes sense for them. While it can take some time to learn the fundamentals and begin to become adept with handling the tools of the sport, the game offers a chance for even the entry level player to compete and enjoy themselves so getting your kid involved should mostly come down to their enthusiasm about embracing a new sport and being part of a team. Lacrosse is not an individual sport. It will quickly teach kids to share, pass, and back up their fellow players.



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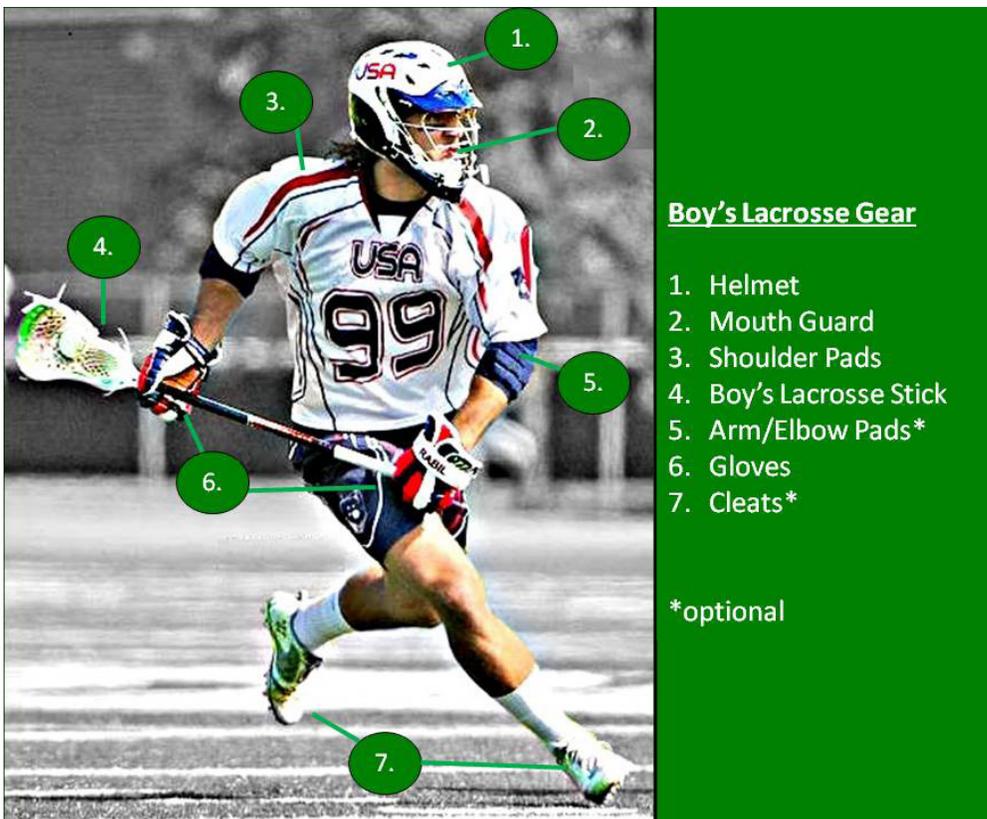


Part 2 The Basics

Boys' Lacrosse

There are 9 players and a goalie per team. There are 3 offensive players lined up usually referred to as “attackmen.” They are exactly what they sound like - players who shoot on their opponent’s net. There are 3 “midfielders” who both take shots and defend their own goal. Then there are 3 “defensemen” who protect their own net. Finally there is a “goalie” - the last defender who blocks any incoming shots.

Players use a stick with a head on it to scoop the ball off the ground, pass it to other players through the air and shoot on goal. Players can run while carrying the ball with their stick (the head, or pocket, to be exact). In the men’s game, players are allowed to kick the ball and cover it with their stick as long as they are not keeping the ball out of play.



Beginner Lacrosse Sets

Starter Helmets

Youth Cleats

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Women's Lacrosse

Women's lacrosse is played with a team of 11 players and a goalie. There are 3 "attackers," 5 "midfielders," 3 "defenders," and 1 goalie.

The size of the women's field is larger and the rules regarding contact are much more strict. As of today, [helmets](#) are not required (but recommended) in many states. Girls wear protective [eyewear](#) and mouthguards instead. Their pockets in their sticks are also shallower, which makes catching the ball and shooting more difficult.

Starting or resuming play is slightly different between the men's game and women's game as well. In the men's game they have a face-off where a player from each team fight for control of the ball from a crouched position. In the women's game, they perform a draw where the ball is placed between the centers from each team who stand toe-to-toe and throw the ball into the air at the whistle. The biggest difference between the two games is the amount of contact that occurs in the men's game versus the larger space of the women's game.



Girls Starter Sets

Youth Cleats

Girls Complete Sticks

Mouth Guards

Gloves

Women's Headgear

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Part 3 Gear Checklist

Lacrosse Gear Required

So what does your child need to get started? Here are some helpful links about what is required and optional gear for every new player needs.

Helpful Links:

[LEARN HOW TO BUY A YOUTH LACROSSE STICK](#)

[YOUTH STARTER EQUIPMENT SETS GUIDE](#)

[STARTER HELMETS](#)

[STARTER SETS FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL PLAYERS](#)

[STARTER SETS FOR GIRLS](#)

Boys' Lacrosse Sticks

Made of wood, laminate or synthetic material with a head (or pocket) at the end. Sticks can be purchased separately as a shaft and head, or as a complete piece. Sticks will vary based on experience, position, style of play and preferences. The length of the stick is 40 - 42 inches for attackmen and midfielders and 52 - 72 inches for defensemen.

ALL NEW PLAYERS SHOULD START WITH THE ATTACK LENGTH STICKS. The head is 6.5 - 10 inches wide. A goalie uses a stick with a larger head: 10-12 inches.



Prices can range from \$30 for big box type beginners sticks to \$129 for an upgraded stick that is lightweight and has a head and pocket that will help players develop faster.

[SEE BOYS COMPLETE STICKS](#)

[SEE UPGRADED BOYS COMPLETE STICKS](#)





LAX.COM LACROSSE STARTER SET BREAKDOWN

PRODUCT VIDEO

WATCH NOW



BOYS' AND MEN'S EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

- [HELMET](#) -With a facemask, chin pad and chin strap, a helmet is required by all players.
- [MOUTH GUARD](#) -Required for all players.
- [GLOVE](#) - Sizing and Fitting Guide
- [SHOULDER PADS](#) - What's the difference?
- [ARM PADS](#) - What's the difference?
- [RIB PADS](#) (optional but recommend under age 12)
- [ATHLETIC SUPPORTER & PROTECTIVE CUP](#)
- [THROAT PROTECTOR](#) (required for goalies)
- [CHEST PROTECTOR](#) (required for goalies)
- [CLEATS](#)
- [BALL](#) -The balls are rubber and you want to get ones that are NOCSAE approved.



Girls' Lacrosse Gear

Helpful Links:

[GIRLS STARTER SETS](#)

[GIRLS COMPLETE STICKS](#)

Made of wood, laminate or synthetic material with a head (or pocket) at the end. The length of the stick is 35.5 - 43.25 inches with the pocket 7 - 9 inches wide and strung traditionally rather than using mesh except for keepers (goalies). The goalie stick is 35.5 - 48 inches and the head can be up to 12 inches wide. When first choosing a stick for a new player, save the money and just get a starter set... These are fine for the first year of play until your young lady is starting to throw and catch... Then she will be ready to upgrade to a better stick with a better pocket.

GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

- [COMPLETE STICK](#) - Required for all players.
- [GOGGLES](#) - All field players must properly wear eye protection.
- [MOUTH GUARD](#) - Required for all players
- [CLEATS](#) - All field players must wear proper footwear - girls can wear boys cleats, which run true to youth sizing
- [GLOVES](#) (optional) - Close fitting gloves protect your hands from cross-checks and assist with a better grip on your stick
- [HEADGEAR](#) (optional) - Emerging, but not mandatory at the moment



The goalkeeper wears additional padding on their arms, legs and shoulders. If your daughter is a goal keeper meet with your coach to learn what is required.

A Note About Cleats: Many female players actually wear men's lacrosse cleats so don't feel limited in what choices are out there. When it comes to sizing for women, if choosing a men's cleat, a good general rule is to size down 1 ½ sizes. A woman who wears a female size 8.5 would likely fit into a men's size 7. Unless they are lacrosse-specific, girls opt for the men's cleats because they offer more ankle support.



Part 4 First-Year Players

The First Year for Player and Parents

Oh the joys of parenting. Whenever your child shows interest in something new, if you are like most parents you think “**how much is this going to cost me?**”

As stated before, by most accounts, lacrosse is the fastest growing team sport in the country. At every level, from youth, to high school, to college, the sport is rapidly expanding. This is good news for cost conscious parents because it drives manufacturers to produce more and better equipment at lower prices. **You can expect to spend about \$175 for a boys complete lacrosse starter set which includes a quality helmet! The cost for a complete set for the girl’s is roughly \$80.**

From a practical standpoint, lacrosse should compare to hockey and baseball in terms of league fees which pay for fields to play and practice on, as well as referees for games. Once a kid reaches high school some teams are self funded while others are not. You will need to check with your school district to see which is the case for your child.



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When purchasing gear you want to make sure you are getting good quality equipment so that your child is protected, but there is no need to break the bank. At [LAX.com](https://www.lax.com) for example, we currently offer a [Youth Lacrosse Equipment Set](#) that includes all the lacrosse gear your son needs for just \$174.99, and for your daughter we offer starter packs for only \$79.99. . You would only need to purchase cleats and perhaps a bag to carry everything, maybe add some practice balls, and you are set.

For budgeting reasons, you should plan on upgrading equipment for the player as they become more experienced but also for the player who breaks some of their gear. Shafts, pads, and heads can break depending on the level of play and the type of player. This is why you want to make sure to get quality gear that is less prone to being damaged or broken but also budget for the inevitability of some gear needing to be replaced.

As your kid becomes more experienced and puts more hours in competing, of course all of the gear will eventually wear out. Gloves, especially inexpensive ones, will tend to wear out on the palms. Other items, like helmets and some pads, might last several years. Players wear gloves not just for warmth, but for protection from stick checks, as well.

In terms of specific costs, looking over [LAX.com](https://www.lax.com) will give you specifics on pricing for all types of gear, from youth to pro level equipment. Gloves can start as low as \$35 and reach upwards of \$200 for example. Sticks and heads are the most likely items that will need to be replaced. Heads can run from \$35 all the way above \$200. Sticks can start for as little as \$15 and rise above the \$200 mark as well. But don't let sticker shock prevent you from moving forward.

There are options for every budget level but it might be a good idea to plan on replacing a stick and head each season and restringing a head at the very least. Girls should be out of their starter-level sticks after their first year of play. They will need to upgrade as their skills develop to keep up with pack.



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Before signing your kid up for lacrosse, talk to some parents, coaches and players to get an idea of the costs involved from their point of view. Always feel free to contact LAX.com and ask any questions. We are dedicated group of players, coaches and parents who have been through this many times. **We may be the biggest online dealer in lacrosse, but our company is grounded in family principals and that is why we are trusted so much.** We are happy to help you navigate the world of lacrosse and assist you getting yourself or your child set up for a sport we love.

Part 5 Safety

Safety Concerns in Girls and Boys Lacrosse

The sport of lacrosse is fast moving, physical and action packed, which probably explains its growing popularity. However, as with any sport, it is important players and parents enter with eyes wide open, evaluating the safety risks associated with the sport. Common sense dictates that a fast-moving contact sport featuring players with sticks chasing, passing, catching, and shooting a hard rubber ball presents a chance of both minor and more severe injuries.

Helmets for Beginners

Girls Goggles

KNOW THE RULES

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The rule differences between boys' and girls' lacrosse allows for much more contact in the boys' game. However, despite intentional body to body contact being illegal and stick checking directed away from an opponent's head and body toward the pocketed end of the stick only, girls' lacrosse can be quite physical. It's inevitable that players battling for the ball risk colliding with other players, and getting hit with sticks and balls.



Lacrosse is considered to be a moderate risk sport with sprains, strains, and bruises making up the vast majority of injuries, along with things like shin splints and blisters. However, severe injuries are possible as well. Knee injuries are the leading cause of lost game and practice time for both girls and boys. Face injuries, less common but still an important consideration for players and parents. Concussions, are also an important consideration. Sports medicine has become much more informed on the potential risks of concussions and lacrosse is not immune to the potential for a head injuries.

Boy's Gloves

Girl's Gloves



HOW CAN INJURIES BE PREVENTED?

While no piece of equipment can totally prevent injury, we recommend that you put your kids out there with the best possible technology that you can afford. Play within the rules. For girls, contact is more limited by rule, don't push the issue. Boys are subject to more contact but good fitness and skill can be an asset in preventing unnecessary injuries.

COMMUNICATE

Make sure trainers, parents, coaches, teammates and anyone involved in the sport are being told about any injuries sustained or any concerns, like damaged equipment or poorly maintained fields. Never take the "I'll tough it out" approach to your own injuries. Parents make sure your kids are encouraged to self-report any injuries or concerns.

WEAR THE RIGHT GEAR

Lacrosse protective gear is important. The earlier checklist of both mandatory and optional gear covered the specific items. A cautious player or parent might want to consider using even optional gear just to be as safe as possible. Make sure the gear fits properly. Never use equipment that is too small or big. Make sure players know how to properly use their gear and when it needs replacing.



DON'T OVERTRAIN

Sports are fun and it can be tempting to continue to compete beyond when you should. Injuries are more likely to happen when players are tired and fatigued. Give your body and mind a rest.

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Part 6 Mental and Physical Conditioning

Mental and Physical Conditioning Tips for Players

Lacrosse is fast-moving and constant motion. It is also a contact sport which puts the body through a bit of abuse. Being in good physical condition is important for the player who not only wants to compete and participate but also to guard against injury.

Staying in shape year round rather than having to gear up as the season approaches is critical. For multi sport athletes this might appear on the surface to be easier but it depends on the particulars of each athlete. Be mindful of these factors when planning a training regiment outside of lacrosse season.

The most important thing is to talk to your doctor and have a plan.

CONDITIONING

While there are slight variations a player might want to emphasize based on their position, the sport requires good cardio conditioning. Sprints, stairs, jogging and water training are all good ways to increase your overall conditioning or maintain your current conditioning. The best rule to follow when focused on conditioning is to move. Get the blood flowing for a set period of time then give your body some rest. Lax.com offers a full line of [Training Accessories](#) that will keep new players on the go.



Bounce Backs

STX Ball Wall

Corner Targets

FLEXIBILITY, STRENGTH, AND AGILITY

Every workout should include some stretching. It helps minimize wear on the muscles that leads to sprains, tears and sprains. Adding resistance training to your regiment will increase muscle and make a player stronger and better prepared for the physical contact inherent in the sport. Adding some drills that focus on agility is especially helpful to the lacrosse player. Jumping rope, cone drills, high knees, and duck walks are examples of agility-focused exercises. Always check with your doctor to make sure the regiment and exercise is appropriate for your player.



SLEEP AND HYDRATION

It might seem obvious and boring to mention getting enough sleep and drinking enough water but you might be surprised how many people fail miserably at both of these items. Professional sports teams are even hiring sleep specialists to come in and work with their athletes to improve their sleep habits. A good mattress and pillow that provide the right support for your body are critical, along with making the time to get enough sleep. It is the time and quality of sleep that matters to your mental and physical health.

Dehydration is common because most people do not drink enough water. Being even mildly dehydrated stresses the body and prevents optimum performance. It can also be dangerous, leading to cramps or even heat stroke. Don't mess around. Hydrate. A lot of people don't realize that electrolytes are vital as well. While most people get plenty of electrolytes through the protein, fruit and vegetables they consume, when you sweat a lot the sodium loss can cause a drop in electrolytes. Beverages that contain electrolytes or even adding a small amount of salt to your water will help replenish.



Part 7 Origins of the Game

Lacrosse is the oldest sport in North America, descending from Native American versions of the game that would sometimes last days and involve hundreds of participants on a massive playing field. Back then it was a game meant to mimic tribal wars but also had a spiritual and religious aspect to it.



While the game was rooted in Native American religion, it was often used to heal and solve conflicts as well as to prepare for war. Lacrosse is a sport closely related to going to battle - a term sports aficionados love to use - more than perhaps any other sport.

The field of play was massive, ranging from 500 yards to several miles played on open plains between tribes. The rules would be decided upon the night before with games often lasting from sunup to sundown.

Participants wore little protective gear and the original sticks had heads that were solid rather than containing nets like you see in the modern game.

When Europeans came over to the New World some condemned the sport for its violence. They were trying to eradicate Native American religious aspects. Eventually, however, the game became quite popular among the colonists. They took a liking to this competition and began to modify the game into resembling what we now see on fields all across America. The modern game of Lacrosse began to take shape in the 1700s, pre-dating most other popular sports. Ultimately lacrosse became much like it remains today when the number of players and size of the field were reduced in 1867. Those changes, along with introducing a rubber ball to replace the original wood ones and redesigned sticks, led to the game being adopted even by girls schools in the 1890s.



We hope you enjoyed this eBook for parents. Please share it!

For more valuable lacrosse information for parents, please [visit our website](#).

LAX.com strives to be the most authentic online retailer, selling the latest products from the top manufactures. We have a state of the art showroom, at our warehouse, if you would like to check out some of the latest gear in lacrosse. If you are looking to place a team order or receive a quote for a team sales purchase send an email to teamsales@lax.com. Be sure to provide your name, contact information, and team information. We will have a member of our sales team contact you personally.

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