



Guidelines for Boy's Lacrosse

2011

Positions: 9 field players and a Goalie

- Three Midfielders, three Attack, three Defenders and a Goalie.
- Every position is important, not just the people who score goals.
- As players figure out what their strong points are, they can determine which positions fit best.

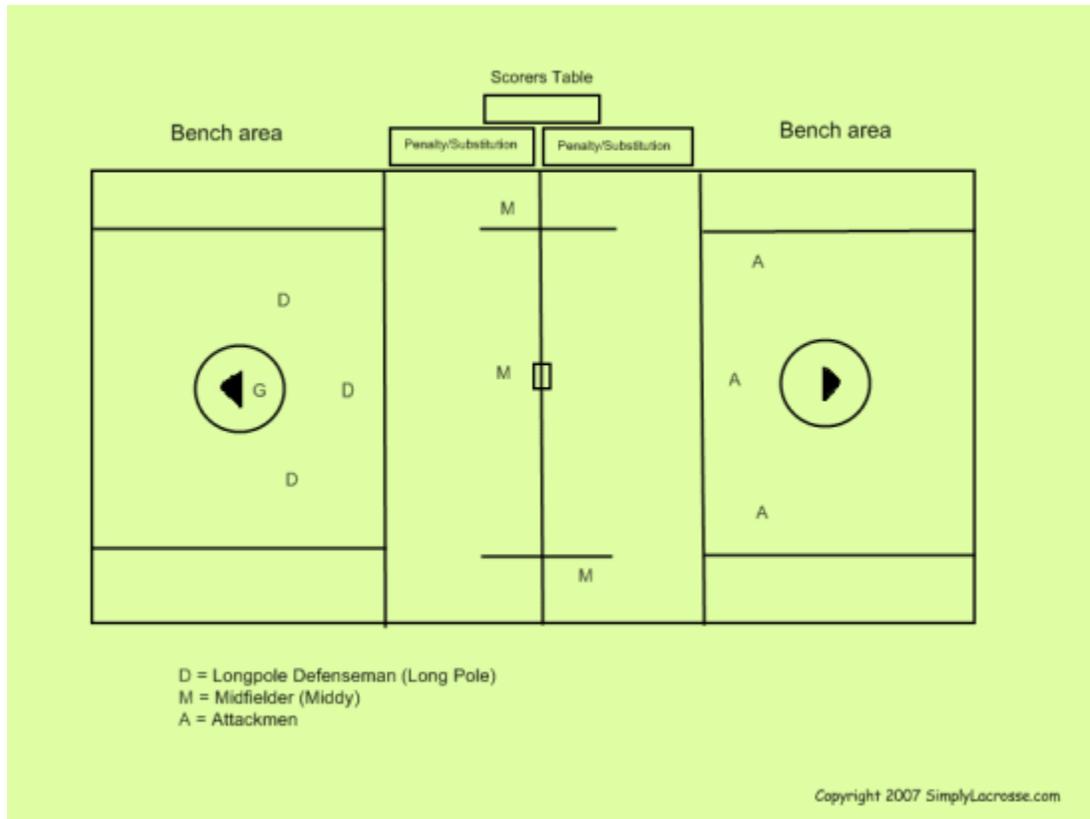


Figure 1 - Boys Lacrosse Field Layout

Defense: *Defensemen* (Long Poles) are the enforcers. They are the players who are capable of dictating to the opponents attack where they can go, and where they will be punished for going. They need to be very physical, but still extremely agile. They utilize much longer sticks up to nearly 60" long which allow them to disrupt the opponents attack. Great defensemen need to have exceptional feet. Position on the field is the key to being a great defender. Cutting off the opponents angles to the goal is critical. The long pole will generally abuse the enemy with a barrage of checks from the longer pole and work themselves between the attacker and the goal, all the while working to dislodge or intercept the ball. Long poles, like the attackmen, must stay on the defensive half of the field unless replaced by a middy. The defenders job is often also to "Clear" the ball down the field after a turnover out of the defensive zone. One of the most exciting plays is when a long pole runs down the field and a middy stays back to allow the long pole to run all the way to the opponents end and shoot or pass to a fellow attacking player. It is lacrosse's version of running the floor on a fast break in basketball, and it is thrilling.



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Midfield: *Midfielders* (also commonly known as Middy's) roam the entire field. They should typically be your best all around athletes and they need to be in very good condition because they cover an enormous area. Middy's need to be good defenders, and they need to be able to be strong on the attack, but their real value is in their ability to transition the ball from the defensive to the offensive ends of the field. Middy's are the real work horses of the lacrosse team.

Attack: *Attackmen* typically spend their entire lives in the opponent's end of the field. They cannot cross the midfield line during play unless they are replaced by a midddy, so that there are always at least 3 players in the offensive end. Attackmen need to be extremely agile and excellent stick handlers. Good attackmen should be equally capable with either hand. The real test of a great attackmen is not just how adept they are at scoring goals, but how well do they pass (feed) the open man to set up the goal. Great attackmen usually also have large numbers of assists as well as goals.

Goalkeeper: *Goaltenders* (Goalies) of all the lacrosse positions are probably the most important on the team. No one is under as much pressure to be perfect as the goalie. They are required to stand in front of a 70 plus mile per hour missile that is the size of a tennis ball but weighs much more, and is hard rubber like a hockey puck. Believe me when a ball gets through the armor it will leave bumps, bruises, and welts. Goalies need to be very courageous. Many people believe that Goalies should be large to take up space in front of the goal, clearly the more space you can cover the harder it is for the enemy to find a hole, but in my opinion it is far more important to be agile like a short stop or catcher with lightening hand eye coordination and reflexes. I have seen very small goalies with quick reflexes play great in goal. The goalie also needs to be a smart player as he usually will be the one barking orders to the defense. He has the best vision to who has the ball. You can overcome a lot of adversity with a great goaltender.

Field:

Lacrosse is played on a large rectangular grass or turf field. The field has markings with specific functions:

Midfield line: Divides the field into equal halves. The X centered on this line is where face-offs take place. Also, the proper number of players on each team must remain on each half of the field to avoid being called for [offsides](#).

Sidelines and endlines: Mark the boundaries. When a ball or player goes out of bounds, the opposing team takes possession. Following a shot, the player closest to spot where the ball went out of bounds has possession. Therefore, a teammate should always be in a position to back up a shot.

Goal: Points are scored when the ball passes through this six-foot by six-foot square.

Crease: Circle surrounding the goal that the offense cannot enter. Players can reach into the crease with their stick to gain possession of a loose ball, but cannot touch the goalie. Crease violations result in a penalty.



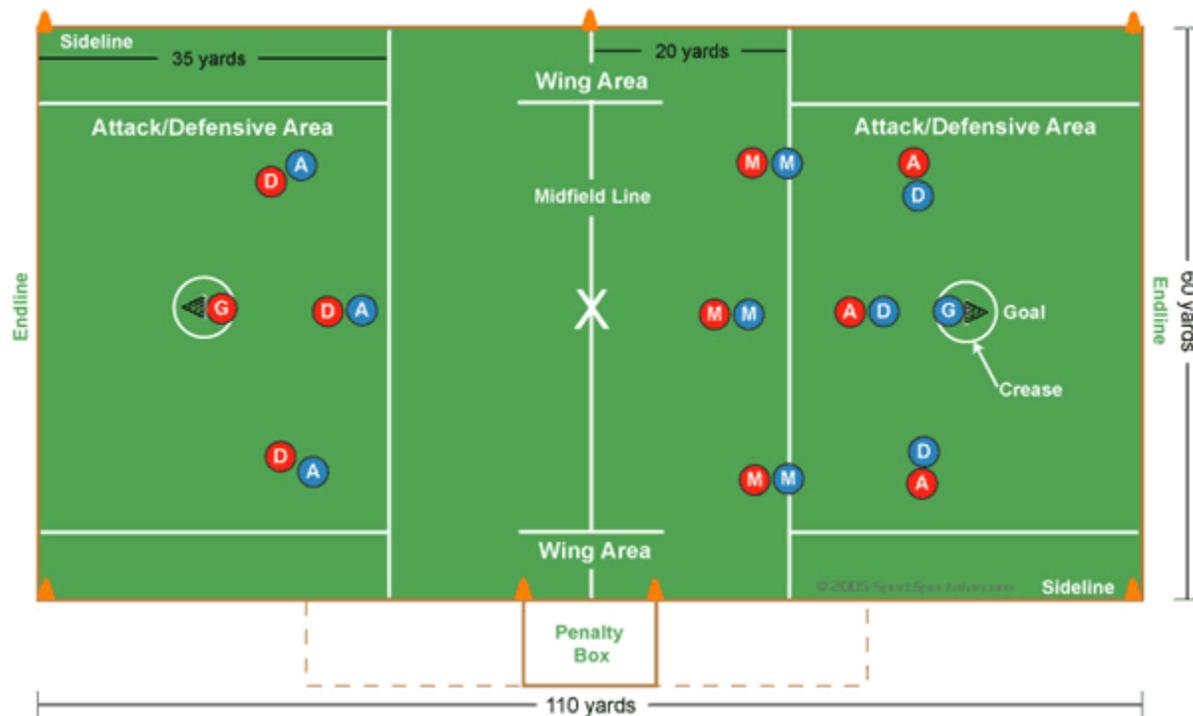
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Attack area/defense clearing area: The offense has 10 seconds to move into this area after crossing the midfield line. Once the defense has possession of the ball, it has 20 seconds to clear midfield. Once the midfield line is crossed, the team in possession has another 10 seconds to get the ball into the box (this rule may not apply to all age groups) Also, attackers and defenders must remain in these areas during the face-off.

Penalty box: Used as a holding area for players to wait out their penalties. It is also the access area for substitute players entering and exiting the field for on-the-fly substitutions.

Wing area: Two of the three midfielders must remain in the wing area until the face-off starts.



Game Length: A high school game is divided into 4 quarters of 12 minutes typically (age groups may vary: 8- to 15-minute quarters). There are 2-minute breaks between each period with a 10-minute intermission after the second period. Teams switch playing sides after each period and have two time-outs per half. If there is a tie after four periods, the first team to score in overtime wins. Tournament games may vary in length according to that particular tournament. It is common to finish a tournament game tie with a 'Brave Heart'. Youth games follow the same structure as above.

Start of the game: The action begins at the start of each period and after each goal with a face-off at the center of the field. The team that takes possession of the ball during the face-off is on offense.



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Fouls: Two officials—a referee and an umpire—usually govern the game to ensure fair and safe play. Any violation of the rules results in a penalty. A player called for a foul is sent to the penalty box and his team must play without that player, or **man down**, until the penalty is over or the opposition scores. If the defensive team commits a penalty when the opposing team has the ball, play is allowed to continue until the opponent loses possession of the ball, at which time the penalty is enforced. This delayed penalty is called a **slow whistle** and allows the offense to maintain its advantage. Personal fouls, such as **slashing**, **tripping**, cross checking, **unnecessary roughness**, and **unsportsmanlike conduct** are major violations. The official determines the length of the penalty, which ranges from one to three minutes. Technical fouls are minor infractions that lead to a 30-second penalty. These fouls include crease violation, **offsides**, **interference**, holding, illegal **screens**, illegal procedure, **stalling**, and **warding off**. A player is ejected from the remainder of the game if he commits five fouls. Additionally, players can be ejected from the game for fighting, playing too violently, or arguing with an official.

Substitution: Players sub on the fly and all substitution must take place through the Team Substitution Area. There is unlimited substitution. Subbing may also occur after goals and injury or team time outs.

Safety Equipment: Helmet, mouthpiece, shoulder pads, arm pads, gloves, and an athletic cup are required. You will also need a lacrosse stick!

Commonly used terms in alpha order:

Body check: Contact from the front that is permitted between the shoulders and waist when an opponent has possession or is within five yards of a **loose ball**.

Clamp: Quickly covering the ball with the backside of the head of the stick during a face-off.

Clearing: Transferring the ball from the defensive half of the field across the midfield line.

Cradle: Running with the stick in either one or both hands in a manner that keeps the ball in the pocket.

Cutting: When an attacker runs toward the goal to receive a pass and take a clear shot.

Face-off: A player from each team stands face-to-face with their sticks on the ground along the centerline. The official places the ball between the two stick heads and blows the whistle. The two players then attempt to gain control of the ball using their sticks. Typical face-off moves include the **clamp** and **rake**. If a penalty is called before or during a face-off, possession goes to the opposing team.

Fake: To make a throwing motion with the stick just before shooting it to deceive the goalie.

Fast break: When the offense exploits an unsettled defense with a quick transition downfield. Many goals are scored this way.

Feed: Passing the ball to a player to create a scoring opportunity.



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Ground ball: A **loose ball** that is on the ground. Players **scoop** the ball with the stick to pick it up.

Illegal body check: A late hit, or contact from behind, above the shoulders, or below the waist.

Interference: Limiting the free movement of an opponent who does not have possession of the ball and is not within five yards of a **loose ball**.

Isolation: Offensive players clear out of the way to allow an opening for a teammate to drive towards the goal with the ball.

Loose ball: Ball not controlled by a player (e.g. on the ground or in the air).

Man-down: When the defense is at a disadvantage due to a penalty. Also called penalty kill.

Man-to-man defense: Each player guards one specific player. Each defenseman matches up with an attacker, and each midfielder matches up with an opposing midfielder.

Man-up: When the offense has an advantage following a penalty. Also called a power play.

Offsides: Violation called when a team has fewer than four players on its defensive side of the field, or fewer than three players on its attacking side.

On-the-fly: Substituting during play. When one player exits the field through the penalty box, another can enter.

Pick: Attackers or middies stand in a position to block the path of a teammate's defender to create space for the teammate to receive a pass.

Pushing: Illegal shoving of an opponent from behind.

Rake: Face-off move in which a player sweeps the ball to the side for a teammate to pick up.

Release: When a penalized player re-enters the game.

Riding: Attempting to prevent a team from clearing the ball.

Scoop: Picking up a ground ball in the crosse pocket.

Screen: Offensive player stands outside the crease in front of the goalie to block the goalie's view.

Slashing: Illegal **stick check** to the body of a player that results in a personal foul.



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Slow whistle: Permitting play to continue during a penalty until the offense loses possession of the ball to allow an offense to maintain its advantage.

Stalling: Intentionally holding the ball without advancing toward the goal.

Stick check: Defenders attempt to dislodge the ball from an opponent's stick by executing a poke check or a slap check.

Tripping: Impeding an opponent at or below the waist and causing him to fall.

Unnecessary roughness: Excessively violent and usually calculated contact to the opposition.

Unsportsmanlike conduct: Physical or verbal actions considered to be abusive, obscene, or threatening by a game official.

Warding off: While in possession of the ball, using a free hand to control an opponent's stick or body.

Zone defense: Strategy in which players defend a specific part of the field, close to the goal, instead of guarding a single opponent.

Glossary:

www.sportsSpectator.com – A Fan's Guide to Men's Lacrosse

www.simplylacrosse.com