

BOX LACROSSE CONCEPTS

Defense

Keep your knees bent and hips flexed (shoulders over knees)

Keep your feet wider than your shoulders

Keep your weight on the balls of your feet (stay light on your feet)

Always keep one eye on the ball and one on your man (head on a swivel)

Don't let anyone between you and your goalie (protect the prime scoring area)

*On face-offs, shooters line up on defense behind their checks and **stay on them** (don't go for the loose ball or the pass or you might give up a breakaway; better to take the body!)*

When we lose possession on offense (except on a power-play), sprint back past mid-court (near the other teams door), turn, look for the ball and find a check coming down the floor or out their door.

*If we have the ball on offense with the 30 second shot clock nearing zero and you don't have the shot and aren't open for a pass, **start running back on defense***

Match up by size and speed (our best defenders on their best players)... we may try to create these match-ups from the bench

If you're checking the ball-carrier, call out "I've got ball"

*Start checking the ball-carrier when he's 25-30 feet in front of our goalie and **don't let him wind-up for the shot***

Call out your check loudly and touch him with your stick

*Stay with your check unless the ball-carrier is running at your goalie unchecked (then **slide and cross-check the ball-carrier as hard as you can**)*

If your check goes behind the net without the ball, go through the crease to meet him and hit him when he reenters the 24 foot area.

Stay on the ball-carrier behind the net, unless we're killing a penalty (on PK stay in the zone, keep your stick up and look and listen for cutters)

*If you are beaten (with or without a pick), call "switch" **and cover the next open player.***

"Blast through" the pick if you think you can!

If your teammate just left his check to hit the ball carrier, you may need to slide also to the ball-carrier or to the open man

***Knock the shooter down** (no bull-fighting side steps as he shoots)*

Check legally (cross check down using your stick from your chin towards his elbow and chest; beware of ball-carriers who “duck”)

Don't swing at the ballcarrier's stick or lunge; cross-check properly, reset your feet and repeat.

Take away the ballcarrier's forehand.

On penalty kills especially, switch hands (if needed) so that the head of your stick is to the middle of the court (and is on the head of your check's stick)

Take away the ball-carrier's most direct path to the front of the net (push him towards the corner).

If the ball-carrier is trying to run you over, plant your feet and cross-check just above his waist (if your feet are completely planted, the ball-carrier has to run around you; if he bulls over you, it should be called a “charge” and result in change of possession or a penalty)

If the other team has possession and your check is in the 24 foot zone without the ball, place your stick on his chest and push your check out of the 24 foot zone then stop.

If your check is near our crease, push him into the crease (without back-checking)

To hit the ball-carrier running along the boards, take the proper angle, visualize the chest logo, then aggressively pin the ball carrier against the boards. (**never hit from behind**)

*No hitting players when the ball is loose (when you hear “loose”, **play the ball**)*

Loose balls

The two closest players go hard to every loose ball (unless we're killing a penalty)

Get low, box out with your hips, scoop through, bring the ball to your face as you cradle and run to the clear and look for an open teammate.

“Own” the loose balls!

Breakouts

Turn breakouts into fast breaks: two players closest to the bench sprint to the change box, so that the first new player can try to beat the defense deep to the net

Headman the ball to the open player (use a long pass only if a breakaway is likely)

Breakout along the boards (never pass the to middle or back towards your goalie)

Protect the ball, scan for your open teammate on the boards, pass quickly but accurately; watch the ball as you head towards the bench: **if we retain possession, then change.**

Don't try to make moves or go through players if you're the last man back.

Support the ball (at least one player stays about 10 feet behind our ball-carrier until the ball is deep in our offensive zone).

Offense

Protect the ball, keeping it close to your face, with two hands on your stick and your lower elbow out. Roll off the cross-check and roll away from the boards.

Run up the correct side of the floor (your stick to the middle: lefties on the right, righties on the left); especially when you have the ball.

On odd man fast breaks, run hard to the net to draw the defense and/or get a pass

Set up on the correct side of the floor; if you're on the wrong side and we have clear possession of the ball, it's better to run behind the net and look for the pass as your reemerge on the correct side of the crease on your forehand. The other option (if you're really tough) is to run through the crease to draw hits and distract the defense so your teammate can run through from the other side on his forehand and get the pass in front of the net.

Keep moving without the ball; keep the defense guessing and turned the wrong way.

If the defense is soft and gives you the crease position down low in front of the net, then **post-up**, catch the ball, shoot and score!

*Pee Wee crease-men can stand (unchecked) just outside the 24 foot zone next to the crease (but behind the goal-line) and when the defense isn't looking, **sneak in and post-up** next to the goalie; don't get checked into the crease*

Shooters (who are up high on either side of the point) should always set picks without the ball. The pick and roll down low is best.

Get the ball down low (to the prime assist area)

To set the pick, run to your team-mates **strong side**, nearly touch the defender, freeze, then roll the net, looking for the pass.

Another pick option for the shooter (especially on the power play) is to set a pick up high for the point or the other shooter, then look for a rebound in front of the net; if no shot is taken, go back to your original position (reset).

Use the pick properly: ***Drive hard around your teammate, take a power step or 2 or 3 and shoot before you get checked.***

If you have the ball and a definite mismatch, with a clear path to the net, take it!

When shooting or passing, don't hang or twirl your stick (or it will get back-checked).

Shoot quick, low and hard, stepping towards the net with your opposite foot. Keep one hand length between your hands, rotate your hips and **snap your wrists** (practice this on the boards before every practice)

If you are bouncing the ball too far in front of the goalie, then usually you have too much of a hook in your stick and you or your coach need to loosen your shooting strings.

Try to hit the net every time. No sub-shots. If you miss, then miss low and hit the goalie, so the rebound goes in front of the net and not all the way down the court.

Aim for just outside the goalies shins most of the time.

*On breakaways, fake low then elevate and **dunk** the ball over the goalies shoulder.*

Don't shoot from a bad angle or from more than 25 feet from the goal (unless you hear your coach yell "shoot" because of the clock).

If you have the ball at a bad shooting angle or on your back-hand, go behind the net.

If you pass from behind the net, be **very** careful not to give the defense a turnover and a fast break on our goalie (on even strength with the ball behind the net, pass only to the crease or the point man cutting in; both shooters should stay high and ready to run back).

Don't make passes more than 15 feet across the attacking zone unless your teammate is wide open.

Use the classic “give and go play”: pass the ball, hesitate to fool the defense into focusing on the ball-carrier, then sprint to the net, catch, shoot and score.

Always pass to your teammate if he’s open and in a better position to score than you: goals are great, but assists are more important!

If their goalie gets the ball, don’t hit him unless he’s well out of the crease and you’re checking his stick (“running the goalie” is a major penalty).

Powerplay

Get good quality shots, get the loose ball, reset the half-court offense and start again.

If we loose possession, stay away from the goalie, but have 2 players on the ball-carrier and tight man-on-man coverage on everyone else (full court press); don’t let a speedster run past you for a break-away pass

Penalty Kill

Bench doors change so that next PK line is closer to our goalie. Bench doors change back at or near end of PK.

Set up the 4 man box with two at the top, then two at the crease. Best hitters at the top if possible. Close the middle of the box (don’t let ballcarrier drive down the middle).

Don’t take another penalty when we’re on the PK (unless to stop a sure goal).

If 5 on 3 or 4 on 3, set up a triangle with two at the top and the fastest player on the crease, running side to side.

*Breakout for the PK: fastest player (usually a creaseman) sprints down the floor, looking for the pass from the goalie **off the far boards** (never up the middle); the other PK stay back until our speedster has possession. If he doesn’t get possession, but is close to our change box, he sprints to the change box on the way back (this is only time we change on defense).*

On the PK, we have only 10 seconds to get the ball over the far white line and can’t let the ball go back over that line.

If we have the ball in their zone, we’ll usually try to hold the ball while we’re completing our change...When there are 10-12 seconds left on the shot clock, try to work a simple play so we can get a good shot that hits the net.

Forechecking

On even strength, depending on the game situation, we might have zero, one or two forecheckers (speedsters that can hustle back on defense if they don't get possession).

When the game is tight, we might use a full court press at the beginning of the second period or at the end of the game... **full court press means that every player is on his check's hip pocket everywhere and ready to hit or get the loose ball; this only works if all 5 players are 100% committed defensively and ready to transition to offense.**

Goalie

Besides stopping the ball, the goalie has to make good passes **to the boards** on the breakout. The goalie has 5 seconds to get the ball out of the crease and can not go back in. If no one is open along the far boards and he doesn't hear "here's your help" from the near boards, he'll throw the ball toward the **far** boards (away from the bench) as far as possible, where our closest player(s) should go to try to get the ball.

If the ball comes fast from our offensive zone towards our goalie's corner, then our goalie gets the ball and **at least 2 players** come back to get a short pass up the boards from our goalie.

When we have the ball and the referee raises his hand to signal a penalty on our opponent, our goalie should sprint to our change box so we can go 6 on 5.

General

Have a light meal (low-fat, low sugar) 2-3 hours before each game and practice

Hydrate 1-2 hours before the game and keep drinking throughout the game, especially during time-outs and intermissions.

Don't drink sports drinks unless you are playing more than one game or heavy practice that day; if so, drink the sports drink between games.

Visualize the moves you want to make and the way you want to play before each game. Take time to sit quietly and close your eyes and calmly think about the upcoming game.

Stretch properly before each game and practice; let your coach know about any injury that is hampering your performance.

Practice like it's a game, because how you perform in practice will be how you perform in the game.

Play offense, then defense, then change.

Never try to injure an opponent.

Never take the same penalty twice in one game.

Never retaliate to a dirty hit, slash or insult (“take one for the team” so we get the power play and you don’t get a penalty/ejection/suspension yourself)

If you have to say something to an opponent who’s bothering you, say “ain’t so bad” or “just play the game” or “show some respect for the game”.

Don’t talk to the refs unless you’re a captain.

Tell the coach what happened and keep your emotions in check; the coach will ask the captain to speak with the referees.

If you’re really hurt, stay down so the ref will blow the whistle; and stay calm.

If you’re slashed to the voice box, stay down and breathe slowly in through your nose.

Never give up. It’s common for 5 goals to be scored by one team in the last 5 minutes.

Remember: **H**ustle
Execution
Attitude
Respect
Teamwork

Lacrosse is only a game, but so is life. It’s also the fastest and best sport on 2 feet!

Never stop competing, no matter what the score is.

Work hard and have fun!