

An Overview of Field Lacrosse Rules

Field lacrosse rules are different from box lacrosse. Cross checking is not allowed, and body checking is allowed only when a player is within nine (9) feet (2.74 meters) of the ball. The stick may be used to stick check another player, but use of the stick to contact another player's arms or body is not allowed.

Field lacrosse is played with 10 players on the field – 1 goalie, 3 defenders, 3 midfielders, and 3 attackers. The attackers must always stay on the offensive side of center, and the defenders must always stay on the defensive side of center. The midfielders can go all over the field. If a team has less than 3 players in the attacking zone, or less than 4 in the defensive zone (3 defenders plus a goalie) the team is off-side and possession will be awarded to the other team.

Players may substitute any time during the game and may change “on the fly”. There is a special substitution area and a “gate” marked on the field where players must enter and exit when substituting. The player must exit the field first before the substitute can enter the field. A team may have up to 13 substitute players (23 players in total).

The nets in field lacrosse are 6 feet wide and 6 feet tall (1.83 meters). The net is placed about 15 feet from the end of the field, so players can run behind the net and around the net and still be in-bounds. The goal crease is a circle with a radius of 9 feet. Only the goalie may play the ball in the crease.

Body checking is allowed against any opponent who is within 9 feet (2.74 meters) of a loose ball. Body checks may be thrown from the front or side and must be between the neck and the hip. Checking from behind, checking too high (above the neck) and checking too low (below the hip) will draw a penalty. A player must not body check an opponent who has fallen down or is on his knees.

When a player runs out of bounds, or a pass or shot travels out of bounds, the other team will be awarded a free play. The referee will give the ball to the player closest to the point where the ball went out of bounds. On a free play, the other team must allow the player with the ball 5 yards (4.57 meters).