




**USA**<sup>TM</sup>  
**LACROSSE**

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

**GRADES 6-8**

**LESSON PLAN SUPPLEMENT**



Dear Educator,

Whether you are new to the sport or you are already familiar with the “fastest game on two feet”, USA Lacrosse is excited to offer this updated, comprehensive co-ed Physical Education Lacrosse curriculum for grades Kindergarten to 5th grade in collaboration with SHAPE America. We envision a world where students have the opportunity to experience our exciting sport while learning teamwork, building physical literacy, and most importantly—having fun!

By choosing to expose your students to lacrosse in your learning space, you will expand their knowledge of the game, introduce them to the cultural origins of North America’s oldest team sport, and potentially provide the foundation for them to participate in the sport at a competitive level outside of school.

We encourage you to utilize the resources provided through the curriculum or the individual resources available through the PE section of the USA Lacrosse website ( <https://www.usalacrosse.com/physical-education-lacrosse>). By learning about the rich history of the game, the unique elements of men’s and women’s lacrosse, and the fun of participation in the sport, you can help open up a new lifetime sporting experience for your students.

USA Lacrosse is committed to supporting potential, new, and current members, and the growth of the sport through offering a variety of resources. For PE Educators, there is a PE Equipment grant that equips you with the necessary resources as well as supporting resources for this curriculum. Should your school and/or community desire other resources, feel free to review the “Grants” portion of our website (<https://www.usalacrosse.com/grants-and-scholarships>) that can aide your community in pursuing further opportunities in lacrosse.

Thank you for your dedication to physical education and for your willingness to teach the sport of lacrosse to your students. We wish you and your students the best!

Sincerely,

USA Lacrosse



**USA Lacrosse** (<https://www.usalacrosse.com/about-usa-lacrosse>)

As the sport's national governing body, USA Lacrosse provides national leadership, structure and resources to fuel the sport's growth and enrich the experience of participants. We envision a future that offers everyone a lifelong opportunity to enjoy the sport of lacrosse. USA Lacrosse aims to make the sport safer, train and certify coaches, train and certify officials, create opportunities to play, elevate the sport's visibility, pioneer national standards, and educate the lacrosse community.



**SHAPE America** (<https://www.shapeamerica.org/about/default.aspx>)

SHAPE America - Society of Health and Physical Educators serves as the voice for 200,000+ health and physical education professionals across the United States. The organization's extensive community includes a diverse membership of health and physical educators, as well as advocates, supporters, and 50+ state affiliate organizations.

Since its founding in 1885, SHAPE America has defined excellence in physical education. For decades, SHAPE America's National Standards for K-12 Physical Education have served as the foundation for well-designed physical education programs across the country. Additionally, the organization helped develop and owns the National Health Education Standards.

SHAPE America provides programs, resources and advocacy that support an inclusive, active, kinder and healthier school culture, and the organization's newest program — health. moves. minds® — helps teachers and schools incorporate social and emotional learning so students can thrive physically and emotionally.

# PREFACE

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A quality physical education program includes activities that are inclusive and age appropriate for all of the students. This standards-based curriculum has been planned to provide educators with the resources necessary to understand the game of lacrosse while having the freedom to be creative in tailoring lessons to meet the needs of the learners they are serving. With physical literacy and fun in mind, students will be given many opportunities to discover and practice skills so that they are able to gain confidence in success while meeting appropriate *Grade Level Outcomes* as set forth by SHAPE America.

This curriculum is structured using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL)—an approach that aims to give all students equal opportunity to succeed by framing teaching and learning accordingly. As such, this curriculum incorporates social emotional learning, adaptive elements, and cultural responsiveness that are imperative in today's learning space.

Lessons include developmentally appropriate activities which give students ample opportunities to practice, cooperate with one another, compete, and acquire skills in realistic situations geared towards safety and motivation. This curriculum is developed with both the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children in mind. The creators of this curriculum planned activities that provide students with opportunities to work together for the purpose of developing social skills (cooperative and competitive) and responsible behavior. Situations are designed for purposeful teaching of the skills. A variety of resources and teaching styles such as video, music, posters, problem solving, questioning, peer motivation, discovery, and self-assessment help to encourage learning through meaningful activities.

This curriculum allows students to learn the basic skills of lacrosse with the opportunity to put all of their skills together in one of USA Lacrosse's newest versions of lacrosse—Flex6 Lacrosse© (<https://www.usalacrosse.com/flex6-lacrosse>). Unlike the traditional version of lacrosse, Flex6 Lacrosse is a mixed gender, non-contact version of lacrosse that allows for more autonomy from participants and easier rules to follow along with for facilitators.

When planned and taught with student success in mind, lacrosse is an exciting, challenging, and appropriate activity for elementary school co-education classes. Educators like you add the spark, expertise, enthusiasm, and adaptations necessary to make the curriculum work for your school.

If you have any questions, ideas, feedback, or anecdotes about this curriculum, feel free to send your feedback to [cdp@usalacrosse.com](mailto:cdp@usalacrosse.com).

# EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Only use a soft, pliable ball—no regulation lacrosse balls should be permitted as we do not recommend requiring pads, helmets, eyewear, or protective equipment for this curriculum. Another alternative could be the use of bean bags, yarn balls, or even balled-up socks, given that they do not bounce and are typically bigger than a lacrosse ball.

## Stick and Ball Combinations:

Combination One: Traditional youth stick and softer balls:

Tennis ball



Practice Ball-This the same size as a standard lacrosse ball but is a softer and springier. Pink or Orange in color, it is also sometimes referred to as a “pinkie” ball.



*Use either ball with youth sticks, which are shorter in length. Pictured below is a boys' youth stick and a girls' youth stick sample. The sticks are about 36" in length and may need to be cut down before starting your lessons. Students will probably have more initial success with the boys' stick which has a deeper pocket off the shelf. The girls' stick would need to have the pocket loosened, but there is no maximum depth for girls sticks at this age (girls sticks are manufactured more tightly out of the package).*



### **Combination Two: Soft-Stick and Soft-Stick Ball from PE Grant**

The soft-stick ball is larger than a standard lacrosse ball and will only fit in the soft stick above. Soft sticks may be too long for your students and may need to be cut down before starting your lessons depending on the age of your students.



### **Combination Three: Unified Stick and Practice or Tennis Ball**

The unified stick mixes elements of traditional boys' and girls' lacrosse sticks given the adjustable pocket. The stick can be used at all ages and is approved for field play for ages 10 and under. Learn more about unified sticks here: <https://www.usalacrosse.com/unified-stick>

# NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## English

Standard 1: The physically literate individual demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.

Standard 2: The physically literate individual applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance.

Standard 3: The physically literate individual demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.

Standard 4: The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.

Standard 5: The physically literate individual recognizes the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and/or social interaction.

## Español

Estándar 1: La persona físicamente alfabetizada demuestra competencia en una variedad de habilidades motoras y patrones de movimiento.

Estándar 2: La persona físicamente alfabetizada aplica el conocimiento de los conceptos, principios, estrategias y tácticas relacionadas con el movimiento y el rendimiento.

Estándar 3: La persona físicamente alfabetizada demuestra el conocimiento y las habilidades para lograr y mantener un nivel de actividad física para la mejora de la salud.

Estándar 4: La persona físicamente alfabetizada demuestra un comportamiento personal y social responsable que muestra respeto por sí misma y por los demás.

Estándar 5: La persona físicamente alfabetizada reconoce el valor de la actividad física para la salud, el disfrute, el desafío, la auto-expresión y/o la interacción social.

## Citation

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1900 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191, [www.shapeamerica.org](http://www.shapeamerica.org). All rights reserved.

# GRADE LEVEL OUTCOMES

A list of primary outcomes for each grade level as they connect to USA Lacrosse’s core athlete development principles is below. In addition to the primary principles below, others are suggested or secondary outcomes in the individual lesson plans. Multiple outcomes can be designated as priority outcomes without changing the skill focus or activity.

USA Lacrosse’s core athlete development values are located here:

<https://www.usalacrosse.com/athlete-development>.

## FOUNDATIONAL AND EMERGING SKILLS

6th	7th	8th
Performs pivots, fakes and jab steps designed to create open space during practice tasks. (S1.M6.6)	Throws with a mature pattern for distance or power appropriate to the activity in a dynamic environment. (S1.M2.7)	Throws with a mature pattern for distance or power appropriate to the activity during small-sided game play. (S1.M2.8)
Performs the following offensive skills without defensive pressure: pivot, give and go, and fakes. (S1.M7.6)	Throws, while moving, a leading pass to a moving receiver. (S1.M5.7)	Catches using an implement in a dynamic environment or modified game play. (S1.M3.8)
Maintains defensive-ready position, with weight on balls of feet, arms extended and eyes on midsection of the offensive player. (S1.M11.6)	Executes at least 1 of the following designed to create open space during small-sided game play: pivots, fakes, jab steps. (S1.M6.7)	Passes and receives with an implement in combination with locomotor patterns of running and change of direction, speed and/or level with competency in invasion games such as lacrosse or hockey (floor, field, ice). (S1.M4.8)
Creates open space by using locomotor movements (e.g., walking, running, jumping and landing) in combination with movement (e.g., varying pathways; change of speed, direction or pace). (S2.M1.6)	Performs the following offensive skills with defensive pressure: pivot, give and go, and fakes. (S1.M7.7)	Executes at least 2 of the following to create open space during modified game play: pivots, fakes, jab steps, screens. (S1.M6.8)
Executes at least 1 of the following offensive tactics to create open space: moves to open space without the ball; uses a variety of passes, pivots and fakes; give and go. (S2.M2.6)	Slides in all directions while on defense without crossing feet. (S1.M11.7)	Executes the following offensive skills during small-sided game play: pivot, give and go, and fakes. (S1.M7.8)
Creates open space by using the width and length of the field/court on offense. (S2.M3.6)	Reduces open space by using locomotor movements (e.g., walking, running, jumping and landing, changing size and shape of the body) in combination with movement concepts (e.g., reducing the angle in the space, reducing distance between player and goal). (S2.M1.7)	Shoots on goal with a long-handled implement for power and accuracy in modified invasion games such as hockey (floor, field, ice) or lacrosse. (S1.M10.8)
Reduces open space on defense by making the body larger and reducing passing angles. (S2.M4.6)	Executes at least 2 of the following offensive tactics to create open space: uses a variety of passes, pivots and fakes; give and go. (S2.M2.7)	Drop-steps in the direction of the pass during player-to-player defense. (S1.M11.8)
	Creates open space by staying	Opens and closes space during small-sided game play by combining locomotor movements



<p>Transitions from offense to defense or defense to offense by recovering quickly. (S2.M6.6)</p> <p>Demonstrates respect for self and others in activities and games by following the rules, encouraging others and playing in the spirit of the game or activity. (S5.M6.6)</p>	<p>spread on offense, and cutting and passing quickly. (S2.M3.7)</p> <p>Reduces open space on defense by staying close to the opponent as he/ she nears the goal. (S2.M4.7)</p> <p>Transitions from offense to defense or defense to offense by recovering quickly and communicating with teammates. (S2.M6.7)</p> <p>Demonstrates the importance of social interaction by helping and encouraging others, avoiding trash talk and providing support to classmates. (S5.M6.7)</p> <p>Praises the movement performance of others both more skilled and less skilled. (S4.E4.4a)</p> <p>Accepts players of all skill levels into the physical activity. (S4.E4.4b)</p>	<p>with movement concepts. (S2.M1.8)</p> <p>Executes at least 3 of the following offensive tactics to create open space: moves to create open space on and off the ball; uses a variety of passes, fakes and pathways; give and go. (S2.M2.8)</p> <p>Creates open space by staying spread on offense, cutting and passing quickly, and using fakes off the ball. (S2.M3.8)</p> <p>Reduces open space on defense by staying on the goal side of the offensive player and reducing the distance to him/ her (third-party perspective). (S2.M4.8)</p> <p>Transitions from offense to defense or defense to offense by recovering quickly, communicating with teammates and capitalizing on an advantage. (S2.M6.8)</p>
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# SKILL FOCUS

The skills and strategies in these lessons can be stretched out over a longer period, as appropriate for your students. Please note we did not include “warm up” activities here. Warm-up activities for grades 6-8 should be simple games to increase body temperature and socialization. Suggestions for warm up activities can be a review of previous material taught, or games such as tag which are available in the K-2 curriculum.

## GRADES 6-8 LESSON TARGETS AND ACTIVITIES

Lesson	Target	Activities
1	Basic skills review	Musical cradling 2 on 2 keep away
2	Basic dodging principles, changing speed and direction.	Mirror mirror shadow game, Mirror mirror with sticks.  Noodle tag (review stick grip)  Capture the flag lacrosse.
3	Face dodge and roll dodge	Students execute both dodges using cones as defenders focusing on changing speed and direction.
4	Switching hands and split dodge.	Musical cradling, but every time you pick up a new ball you will switch hands.  Students will split dodge a cone.
5	Dodging review and defensive footwork	Students practice dodges with a ghost defender.  Steal the bacon with an empty net.
6	Creating, using and defending space in game play. (Pivots, Fakes, Jab Steps,  V-Cut, Give and Go and backdoor cut)	3v3 game play.

# CULTURAL FOCUS

The cultural focus outlines the following progression: basic conversations about culture → general understanding of culture → students incorporating their own culture into conversations → how culture and movement (or through movement) enhances our overall wellness → students researching how lacrosse started as a cultural game → how lacrosse has grown and impacted different people of different cultures in different ways → presenting lacrosse's culture to their classmates. For example, students can discuss access, opportunity, and community outreach through the evolution of the game.

## GRADES 6-8

Students will learn how lacrosse is referred to as the medicine game, and learn about how physical activity and sport can support the mental and emotional health of all people.

Students will learn how lacrosse is referred to as the medicine game, and learn about how physical

# SELF FOCUS

The self-focus is intentional and consistent. We have provided the priority outcomes as well as secondary outcomes here. The priority outcome should be present throughout the activities and should be the consistent focus to optimize the impact of learning.

## GRADES 6-8

**Target:** Students will learn how to limit and resolve conflict while playing the game.

**Activity:** Students will create and implement a checklist for resolving conflicts or disputes with their peers, rather than having the teacher do it for them.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL LACROSSE CROSS-CURRICULAR CONCEPTS

This lacrosse unit can be related to many simple cross-curricular concepts. The activities below are just some examples of ways the physical education teacher can work with the class teacher to relate lacrosse to other subject areas.

## English/Language Arts

- Compare/contrast paper or chart about men's and women's lacrosse.
- Compare/contrast lacrosse to other sports.
- Writing about the experience of learning new skills.
- Interview a parent or other family member to find out how much they know about lacrosse.
- Develop a lacrosse ad or brochure to promote lacrosse in your school or community.

## Math


- Students can find out area and perimeter of a field.
- Counting passes, consecutively.
- Graphing and charting-number of catches in a minute over several minutes etc.
- Percentages—what is your catch to drop percentage?
- Ratios—drops to catches etc.

## Physical Education

- Physical Education teachers can promote during Parent/Teacher Night, PTA events, or during parent/teacher conferences.
- Open House is a good time to promote lacrosse using a power point presentation for P.E . using shots or movie clips of students playing.
- An after-school activity for parents and students to play lacrosse.
- Students can generate articles for the school newsletter highlighting lacrosse.
- Distribute a student designed ad or brochure to be sent home informing parents about lacrosse in P.E.
- Encourage students to develop lists of contacts to pursue lacrosse and post this information on various bulletin boards throughout the school.

## Social Studies

- History – Students can do research about the history of the game of lacrosse, which was originally a Native American (Indian) sport
- Compare/contrast men's and women's game – Students can research the differences and similarities between men's and women's lacrosse.

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- International lacrosse – Students can research the different countries that play lacrosse.
  - Lacrosse leagues locally – clubs, college, community leagues

### Science

- Physics of Lacrosse
- Centrifugal Force – cradling uses centrifugal force to keep the ball inside the pocket
- Centripetal Force
- Lever – throwing uses the stick shaft as a lever to create force to throw the ball
- Catapult

### Reading Resources

- *L is for Lacrosse, an ABC Book* by John R. Sardella
- *The Spirit in the Stick* by Neil Duffy
- *The Warrior* by Joseph Bruchac
- *The Great Ball Game* by Joseph Bruchac



# **SAMPLE ASSESSMENTS**

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KWL Chart

K What I <u>Know</u>	W What I <u>Want</u> to Know	L What I <u>Learned</u>

<b>Lacrosse Assessment</b>			
Name _____		Grade _____	
Teacher _____			
Pre-Assessment		Post-Assessment	
Scoop		Scoop	
1st Attempt	(E:)	1st Attempt	(E:)
2nd Attempt	(E:)	2nd Attempt	(E:)
3rd Attempt	(E:)	3rd Attempt	(E:)
4th Attempt	(E:)	4th Attempt	(E:)
Catch		Catch	
1st Attempt	(E:)	1st Attempt	(E:)
2nd Attempt	(E:)	2nd Attempt	(E:)
3rd Attempt	(E:)	3rd Attempt	(E:)
4th Attempt	(E:)	4th Attempt	(E:)

<b>Lacrosse Assessment</b>			
Name _____		Grade _____	
Teacher _____			
Pre-Assessment		Post-Assessment	
Scoop		Scoop	
1st Attempt	(E:)	1st Attempt	(E:)
2nd Attempt	(E:)	2nd Attempt	(E:)
3rd Attempt	(E:)	3rd Attempt	(E:)
4th Attempt	(E:)	4th Attempt	(E:)
Catch		Catch	
1st Attempt	(E:)	1st Attempt	(E:)
2nd Attempt	(E:)	2nd Attempt	(E:)
3rd Attempt	(E:)	3rd Attempt	(E:)
4th Attempt	(E:)	4th Attempt	(E:)

<b>Lacrosse Assessment</b>			
Name _____		Grade _____	
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Scoop		Scoop	
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2nd Attempt	(E:)	2nd Attempt	(E:)
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4th Attempt	(E:)	4th Attempt	(E:)
Catch		Catch	
1st Attempt	(E:)	1st Attempt	(E:)
2nd Attempt	(E:)	2nd Attempt	(E:)
3rd Attempt	(E:)	3rd Attempt	(E:)
4th Attempt	(E:)	4th Attempt	(E:)

<b>Lacrosse Assessment</b>			
Name _____		Grade _____	
Teacher _____			
Pre-Assessment		Post-Assessment	
Scoop		Scoop	
1st Attempt	(E:)	1st Attempt	(E:)
2nd Attempt	(E:)	2nd Attempt	(E:)
3rd Attempt	(E:)	3rd Attempt	(E:)
4th Attempt	(E:)	4th Attempt	(E:)
Catch		Catch	
1st Attempt	(E:)	1st Attempt	(E:)
2nd Attempt	(E:)	2nd Attempt	(E:)
3rd Attempt	(E:)	3rd Attempt	(E:)
4th Attempt	(E:)	4th Attempt	(E:)





Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Assessment/Circle: Self Peer Teacher

- 1 - Beginning Student
- 2 - Satisfactorily learning the skill
- 3 - Accomplished performance of the skill

**Grip**

	The shaft should lie across the fingers of your top hand, which then curl around the shaft.
	The bottom hand should gently grip the butt end of the stick.
	The stick should be held vertically to the side of the body near the ear.

**Scoop**

	The tip of the head of the stick moves down towards the ball.
	Top hand should be choked up to the stick throat.
	The butt end of the stick will be low to the ground the front foot will to the side of the ball.
	Push under the ball and bring it up quickly with the top hand pulling up towards the body.
	Don't stop your feet, keep moving through the pick-up.
	Begin cradling the ball while raising the stick.

**Cradle**

	The head of the stick is close to the head at ear level and the ball facing toward the head.
	Elbows out, arms away from the body.
	The wrists will be rotated back and forth, the stick should move ear to nose and back to create centrifugal force.

**Switching Hands**

	Hold the stick vertically and facing your ear.
	Change position of hands as the stick moves across under the chin to the other side of the body.
	Slide stick down through bottom hand and replace top hand to bottom, bringing stick back up on opposite side of the body.

**Throwing/Passing**

	Top hand arm back and as high as the ear or higher.
	Shoulder on ball side rotates back.
	Opposite foot steps forward, opposite shoulder forward, point bottom of stick toward target.
	The bottom hand will loosely grip the bottom of the stick and will loosely pull and guide the stick towards the target.
	Bottom hand pulls toward the body as top hand pushes the ball toward the target to complete the throw.
	Follow through.

**Catching**

	Stick should be extended to the side of the body of top hand.
	When catching the ball, the head of the stick must give back toward ear so that the ball is cushioned and is protected in the stick. Imagine catching an egg or water balloon.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Name \_\_\_\_\_

Personal and Social Responsibility Self-Assessment

Circle the answer you feel describes you best.

Questions: Circle Y (Yes), N (No), or S (Sometimes)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>
1. Did I listen attentively to the teacher today?	Y	N	S
2. Did I listen to fellow students?	Y	N	S
3. Did I take on new challenges with enthusiasm?	Y	N	S
4. Did I work hard to practice my lacrosse skills?	Y	N	S
5. Did I help other students?	Y	N	S
6. Did I work independently without prompting from the teacher?	Y	N	S

7. My goal for the next lesson is:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from: *Sport Foundations for Elementary Physical Education* by Stephen Mitchell, Judith Olsin, and Linda Griffin, 2003, Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

## Lacrosse Skill Review Stations Indoor or Outdoor

### Station #1- Rolling Scoop

Students pair up and roll the ball to their partner. The partner scoops up the ball using correct technique and then rolls the ball back to his or her partner who repeats the task. Students are told that the ball may not always be stationary on the ground during a game and this station improves the skill of scooping up a moving ball.

### Station #2- Underhand Toss and Catch

Students pair up and toss the ball underhand to their partner. The partner uses correct technique to catch the ball in the pocket of the stick. That partner then returns an underhand throw back to his or her partner. Students are told that sometimes they may receive a soft pass during a game and this station improves that lacrosse skill. Also, this station gives an opportunity for all individuals to succeed in catching the ball as the speed of the throw is diminished.

### Station #3- Stationary Scoop

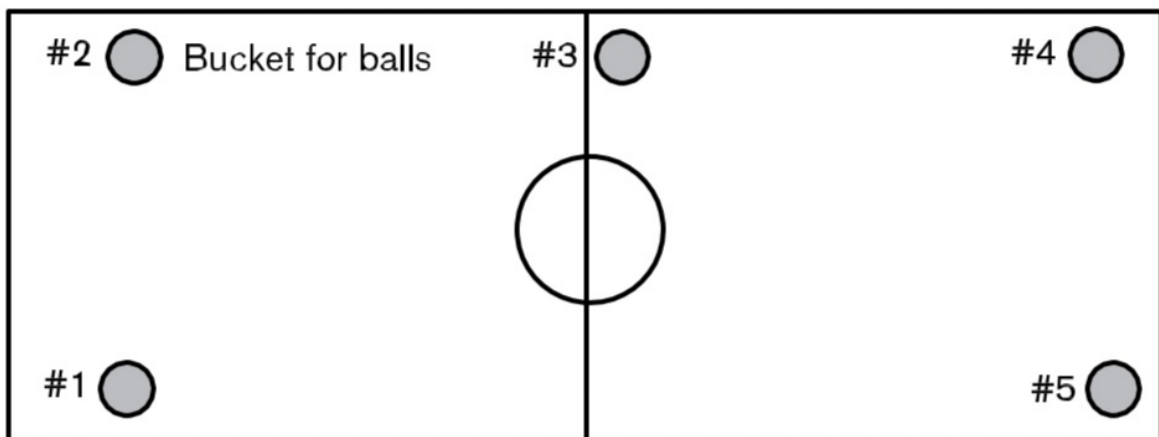
Students work individually at this station with their stick and a ball. They work on correct technique for scooping up a ball. Students are told to focus on foot placement, grip on their stick, head over the ball, and finishing in the cradle position.

### Station #4- Throwing

Students work individually at this station with their stick and a ball. They work on correct form for throwing a ball with their stick. Students aim at a target on the wall and receive multiple throwing opportunities as they don't have to chase the ball, it comes right back to them.

### Station #5- Overhand Throw and Catch

Students pair up and throw the ball overhand to their partner. The partner uses correct technique to catch the ball in the pocket of the stick. That partner then returns an overhand throw back to his or her partner. Students are told that sometimes they may receive a hard pass during a game and this station improves that lacrosse skill. Also, this station gives an opportunity for individuals to succeed in catching the ball if they are showing advanced lacrosse abilities.







# **GAMES TO TEACH SKILLS**

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# INTRODUCTION TO SKILL DEVELOPMENT

## OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

Why are USA Lacrosse games different from what you may find elsewhere? Our games are set up so that, when the appropriate progressions and constraints are used, athlete success is a given. Athletes whose coaches use USA Lacrosse games within their team will have fun and learn more because they are engaged with the games that are most appropriate for their current skills and abilities.

## THE USA LACROSSE PHILOSOPHY

Why do we call our activities “games” and not “drills”? Quite simply, games are fun and more exciting to participate in! Structuring activities and drills as mini-games provides opportunities for athletes to engage in a fun, competitive, athlete-centered environment that supports growth and learning. Ultimately, athletes *want* to play games.

## BACKGROUND

USA Lacrosse believes coaches and teachers can create optimal opportunities for athlete growth and development by carefully choosing tools for their toolbox and understanding how to maximize their use. USA Lacrosse provides many tools for coaches, including live training, virtual workshops, self-paced online courses, certification programs, a mobile coach app, drill and game resources, access to a nation-wide coaching network, and much more.

To effectively apply our tools, coaches should first understand the spectrum of athlete development and identify the current development stage of their athletes. To maximize effectiveness, coaches should also understand their athletes’ stage of cognitive development, sport age and chronological age. Coaches should also understand and adhere to USA Lacrosse's [Core Values of Athlete Development](#).



## ABOUT OUR GAMES

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Each game (also referred to as a "drill" or "activity") from USA Lacrosse provides the following Information:

**Theme:** What is it you're trying to do? What is the learning objective for players?

**Field Location:** On what part of the field does the game occur?

**Player Position:** Who is the beneficiary of the game as written?

**Time Needed:** Approximate, based on athletes in the fundamentals stage

**Athlete Development Stage:** This tells you which stage of development the game is best suited for as it's currently written. Any game can be adapted for any stage with the appropriate progressions and/or constraints.

This template helps coaches understand how to customize a game for their specific team.

## ABOUT PROGRESSIONS

Progressions are the way the game is structured. Games are structured according to your coaching goals and the needs of the team at any given time. The execution of any game can be adjusted according to your goals by progressing (or regressing) a game to fit the development stage and cognitive stage of your athletes. For example, a game can begin with no sticks because the goal is to focus on movement. Once the targeted movements have been achieved, a coach could progress to adding sticks and balls to the same movements. From there, you may add defenders or add a pass depending on what your goal is.

## ABOUT CONSTRAINTS

Constraints are the variables a coach can typically manipulate in order to achieve a desired outcome. Typical lacrosse constraints are the amount of time, physical space, the number of balls and players. Like progressions, constraints can be adjusted by the coach to ensure player success with any game. For example, when using a box for games, a coach could use a 5yd x 5yd box instead of a 10yd x 10yd box.

All skill development games, descriptions, time parameters and other constraints can also be found in [USA Lacrosse Mobile Coach](#).

# CAT AND MOUSE

## GAME DETAILS:

**Theme:** Defensive body positioning

**Field Location:** Anywhere

**Field Position:** All

**Time Needed:** 5-10 minutes

**Athlete Development Stage:** Any

## OBJECTIVE:

This game is played in groups of 3, reinforcing defensive body positioning and communication.

## DESCRIPTION:

Coach sets up a 4 cone 5 x 5-yard box. 3 players are in each box. Assign each player a position: cat, mouse, or grandma/grandpa.

## EXECUTION:

The cat tries to "catch" the mouse, while grandparent protects the mouse by staying in front of the cat. If the cat tags the mouse, then the three switch roles and play again. Play until each athlete has been in all roles.

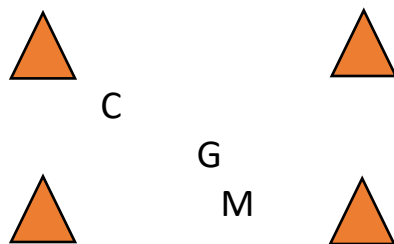
## SKILLS PRACTICED: S

- Defensive body positioning
- Vision
- Communication

## VARIATIONS:

- Change the size of the box
- Add more players in different positions

## DIAGRAM:





# HUNGRY HIPPOS

## GAME DETAILS:

**Theme:** Reinforcement of Fundamentals (Ground balls, passing, catching)

**Field Location:** Anywhere

**Field Position:** All

**Time Needed:** 5-10 minutes

**Athlete Development Stage:** All

## OBJECTIVE:

Athletes get the most balls for their team.

## DESCRIPTION:

You will need a minimum of 3-4 balls per player and 5 cones. Set up cones in a "+" shape. Place all balls in the center. Players are positioned in equal lines at each end of the "+".

## EXECUTION:

When the coach says "go", players run to the middle and pick up a ground ball.

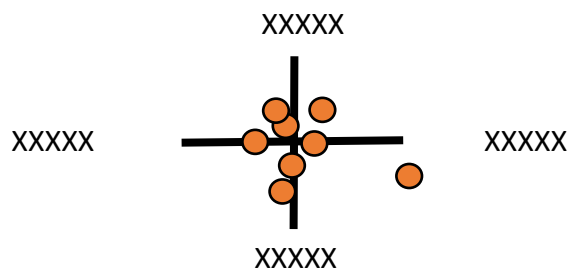
## SKILLS PRACTICED:

- Scooping, passing, catching

## VARIATIONS:

Pass to a teammate on the way back. Add a box; players must run through box and dodge a coach before returning to their team. Set up 4 cages (one per line facing the line) in the middle, and players must score instead of picking up a ground ball.

## DIAGRAM:



# MESSY BACKYARD

## GAME DETAILS:

**Theme:** Ground Balls

**Field Location:** Any

**Field Position:** All

**Time Needed:** 5-10 minutes

**Athlete Development Stage:** Discovery, Foundations, Fundamentals

## OBJECTIVE:

Players try to keep the balls away from their side of the field. The team with the fewest number of balls wins.

## DESCRIPTION:

Players are divided into two teams, with each team being placed on one half of the field. The coach scatters an equal number of balls on each half of the field.

## EXECUTION:

You will need a minimum of 3-4 balls per player. When the coach says “go”, players run around, scoop a ball on their side and roll it onto the other side. After 1-2 minutes, stop play and have the players count the number of balls on their side.

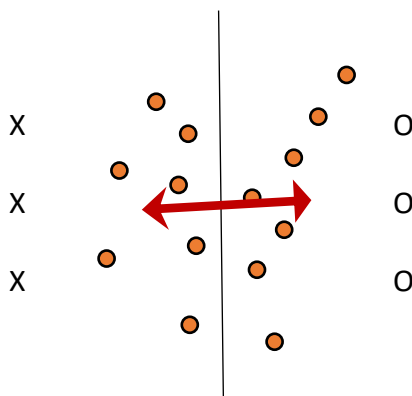
## SKILLS PRACTICED:

- Scooping, Throwing, Cradling

## VARIATIONS:

Change hands for pick up. Vary the field size and the number of balls available.

## DIAGRAM:



# PINNIE TAG

## GAME DETAILS:

**Theme:** Dodging, Cradling, Stick Protection

**Field Location:** Any

**Field Position:** All

**Time Needed:** 5-10 minutes

**Athlete Development Stage:** All

## OBJECTIVE:

Players protect their pinnie while working to take another player's pinnie.

## DESCRIPTION:

Players are divided up into pairs by the coach and placed in a 5x5 yard box. Each partner will tuck a pinnie, flag, or similar into the waistband of their pants or shorts.

## EXECUTION:

On the coach's whistle, they must try to take their partners pinnie. If they succeed, they get one point, give it back and restart the game.

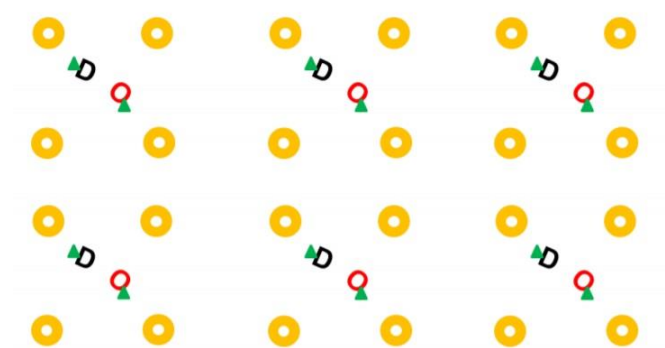
## SKILLS PRACTICED:

- Dodging, Stick Protection, Agility

## VARIATIONS:

Add a stick and have the opponent try to touch it. Hold a ball in their open palm to work on cradling motion. Keep one foot as a pivot only foot. Play the game as a whole team instead of in boxes.

## DIAGRAM:



# SHARKS AND MINNOWS

## GAME DETAILS:

**Theme:** Dodging, Stick Protection, Cradling

**Field Location:** Any

**Field Position:** All

**Time Needed:** 5-10 Minutes

**Athlete Development Stage:** All

## OBJECTIVE:

Minnows pass through the sharks to get to the other side of the "pond".

## DESCRIPTION:

You will need one ball per minnow to play this game. The "pond" can be goals, hula hoops, or cones.

## EXECUTION:

Players are divided up into two groups of either sharks or minnows. There are half as many sharks as there are minnows to start. All the minnows have a stick and ball. The sharks only have a stick. When the coach says "go", the minnows must pass through the sharks and get to the other side of the "pond". If they lose their ball, they become a shark. Play until all minnows are gone.

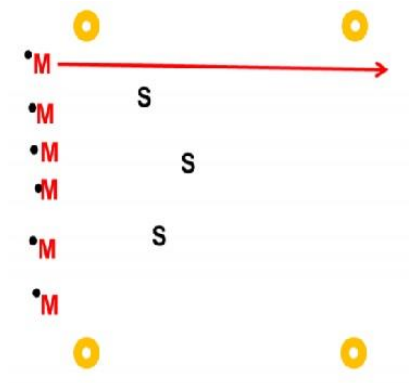
## SKILLS PRACTICED:

- Dodging, Stick Protection, Cradling

## VARIATIONS:

Alternate which hand is used to hold the ball.

## DIAGRAM:



# KEEP AWAY

## GAME DETAILS:

**Theme:** Ball Protection, Cradling

**Field Location:** Any

**Field Position:** All

**Time Needed:** 5+ minutes

**Athlete Development Stage:** All

## OBJECTIVE:

Players keep the ball away from the opposing team.

## DESCRIPTION:

Players gain (or maintain) possession of the ball for as long as possible (or a duration of the coach's choice).

## EXECUTION:

Set up balls and multiple cones 10-15 yards apart. For one-minute intervals, the team with more players must keep possession of the ball. Defenders (D) may use any age-appropriate legal tactics to try and gain possession of the ball. The Offense (O) receives one point for keeping possession and the Defense receives a point for either forcing an O outside of the box or acquiring the ball.

## SKILLS PRACTICED:

- Cradling, Dodging, Stick Protection, Defense

## VARIATIONS:

Set up teams with odd number of players to work on man down/man up situations. Have players use different dodge types. Defense can check or use other age appropriate defensive tactics as necessary.

## DIAGRAM:



# SQUIRRELS AND NUTS

## GAME DETAILS:

**Theme:** Teaching Goal Orientation and Movement Patterns

**Field Location:** Any (recommendation: critical scoring area)

**Field Position:** All

**Time Needed:** 5-10 Minutes

**Athlete Development Stage:** Discovery, Foundations, Fundamentals

## OBJECTIVE:

This game teaches basic movement anywhere on the field.

## DESCRIPTION:

You will need hula hoops and 3-4 balls per athlete. The coach will scatter balls all over the field.

## EXECUTION:

Players start at their “Nest” (a hula hoop) and on the coach's whistle run to a ball and pick it up while on the move. They then run back to their “Nest” and drop it in. Players continue picking up balls until the field is cleared. They should be trying to get as many balls as possible into their “Nest.” (Tip: Be strategic about where the hoops and balls are placed to adjust the difficulty level).

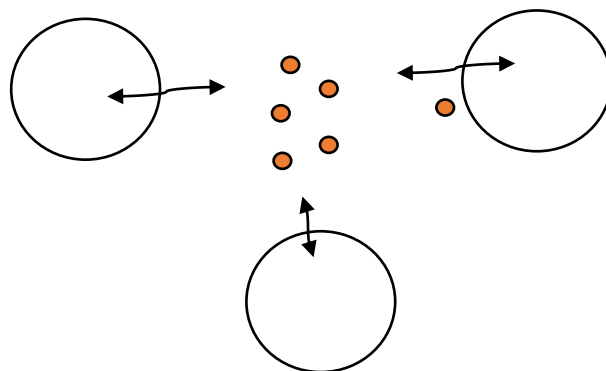
## SKILLS PRACTICED:

- Movement and goal orientation

## VARIATIONS:

Add a stick to layer in ground balls. Add a player or goal near the hula hoop to pass to or score.

## DIAGRAM:



# HAVE ONE – NEED ONE

## GAME DETAILS:

**Theme:** Passing, Catching, Movement

**Field Location:** Anywhere

**Field Position:** All

**Time Needed:** 5-10 minutes

**Athlete Development Stage:** Foundations, Emerging Competition, Competitive, High Performance

## OBJECTIVE:

This game is played in groups, providing a high number of repetitions, and reinforces passing, catching, communication and movement with multiple teammates.

## DESCRIPTION:

- Start with slightly fewer balls than players
- Players with a ball must call, “Have 1”, while players without a ball must call, “Have 1”.
- When a player hears “Have 1”, they must locate the player and pass the ball.

## EXECUTION:

- Coaches should stress constant movement.
- Game can be used to focus on options such as moving to the ball or moving away and working on over the shoulder passing/catching.
- Work on focusing on team communication and awareness in traffic.

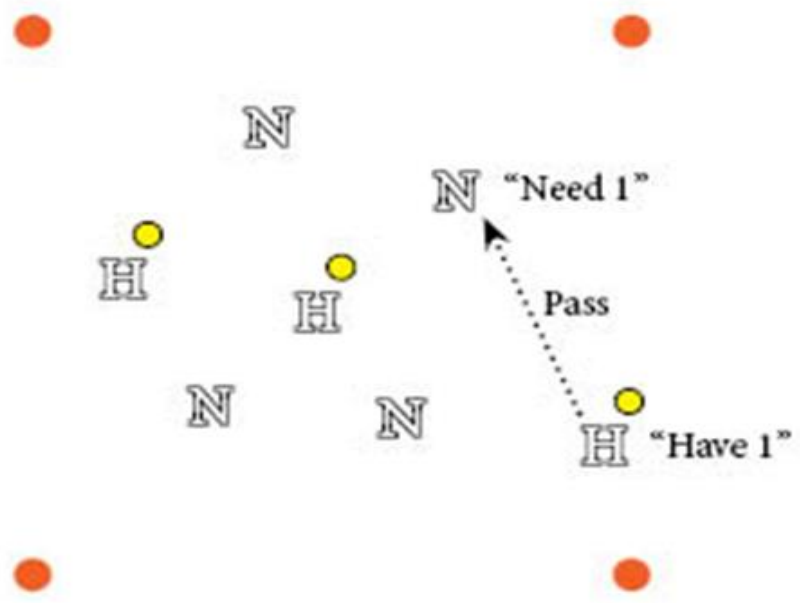
## SKILLS PRACTICED:

- Passing/Catching
- Vision
- Communication
- Stick Protection

## VARIATIONS:

- Have players make creative passes to focus on catching (potentially) bad passes. Also helps promote creativity.
- Use for ground balls and passing.
- Use constraints to increase intensity such as smaller spaces for more intensity, or larger spaces to incorporate more conditioning.
- Turn into a competition and see who can catch the most passes.

## DIAGRAM:





# 4-POINT 1 V 1 GAME

## GAME DETAILS:

**Theme:** 1 v 1

**Field Location:** Offense or Defense

**Field Position:** Attack

**Time Needed:** 10 minutes

**Athlete Development Stage:** Foundations, Emerging Competition, Competitive, High Performance

## OBJECTIVE:

This game is excellent for teaching players 1 v 1 tactics and skills on both offense and defense. The objective is to either beat your player to the goal for a shot, or to defend in proper form and cause a turnover or a low angle shot.

## DESCRIPTION:

Set up 4 cones around the attack box or inside the 8-meter, one at X (Behind the cage) and one at the top or point. Then have 2 other cones out wide. Have a line of both offense and defense at each cone. The offensive player will be going 1 on 1 with the defender.

## EXECUTION:

The coach starts each 1 on 1 by throwing the ball to the offensive player at each line. Coaches may also roll the ball to start with a ground ball. The player will gather the ball and go to goal, taking the defender 1 on 1. The coach should give each 1 on 1 4-5 seconds to develop into a shot or take away. After each 1 on 1, the coach will throw to another line and start that line. Have the players on offense rotate clockwise and the defense rotate counterclockwise, so that you get a different mix of players going 1 on 1 each time.

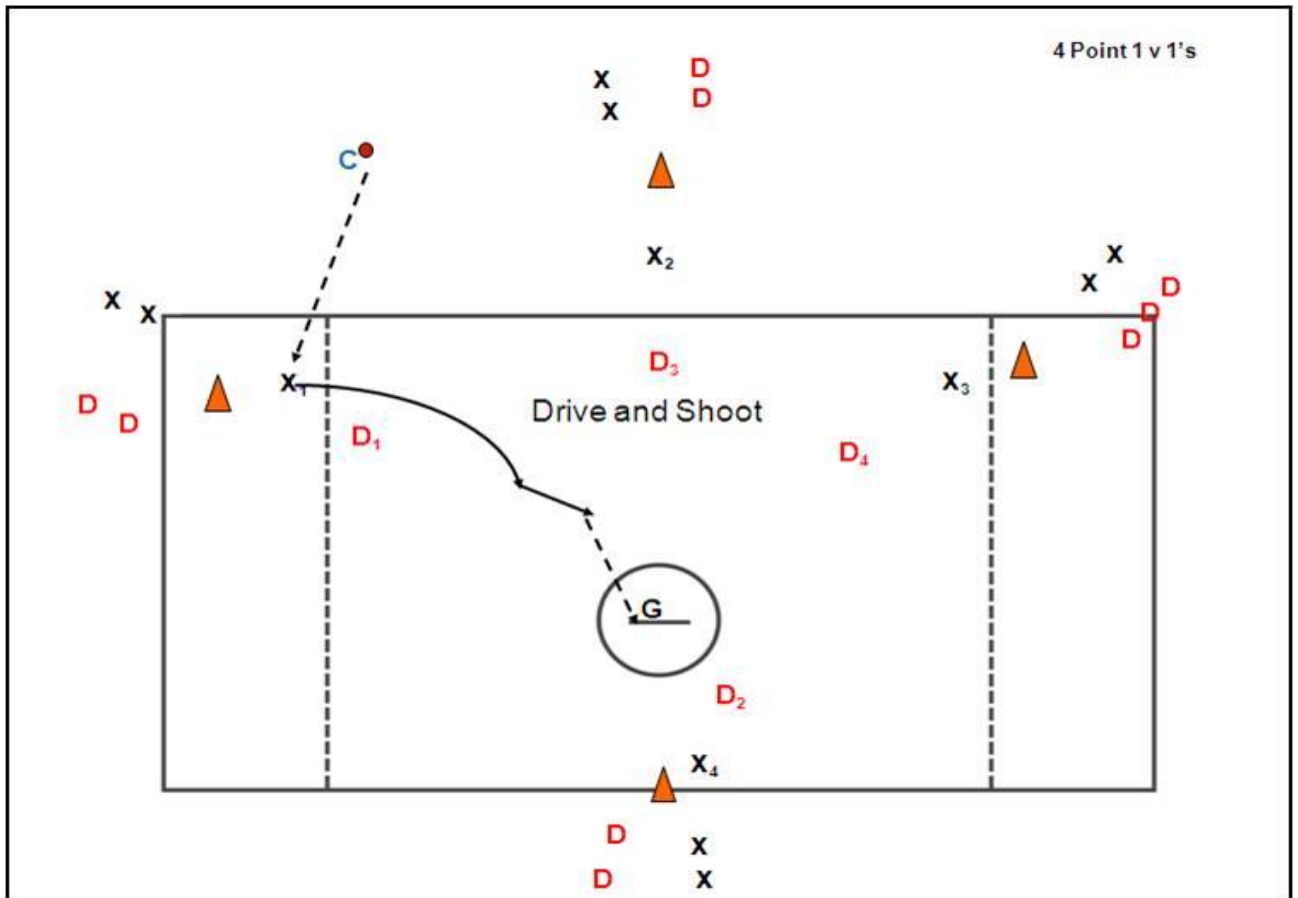
## SKILLS PRACTICED:

- Dodging
- Cradling
- Defense Positioning
- 1 v 1

## VARIATIONS:

Vary the locations where the 1 on 1 will start. You may also have the goalie clear out each save, or even clear each goal to a breaking defender. This can work on a re-break situation.

**DIAGRAM:**



# GO GET 'EM CIRCLE

## GAME DETAILS:

**Theme:** Offense and Defense; Forcing a Turnover

**Field Location:** Goal Circle/Crease

**Field Position:** All

**Time Needed:** 5-10 minutes

**Athlete Development Stage:** Foundations, Emerging Competition, Competitive, High Performance

## OBJECTIVE:

This game is played in two teams. Offense is trying to score while defense attempts to stop the ball.

## DESCRIPTION:

Set up alternating lines of offense and defense around the crease or goal circle. Coach stands to the side with a pile of balls.

## EXECUTION:

Two teams of players run in a circle around the goal. When the coach calls one of the players name, that player must run out and scoop the ground ball. Offense (O) will try to score, Defense (D) is trying to clear the ball. Each group of players gets 3 reps before substituting out.

## SKILLS PRACTICED:

- Ground Balls
- Passing, Catching, Shooting
- Off Ball Play

## VARIATIONS:

- Add or subtract players to change the level of difficulty

## DIAGRAM:

