

## Holliston Youth Lacrosse - Fundamentals of Individual Stickwork

Lacrosse is a team sport that relies on the player's ability to scoop, pass, catch, and shoot. The better you execute these skills, the more you will enjoy playing lacrosse. Proper technique is essential to giving you the highest chance of success. The further you progress in the game, the more important proper technique will become. Your opponents will be more skilled, and your opportunities to execute a skill will happen faster and with a narrowing margin of error.

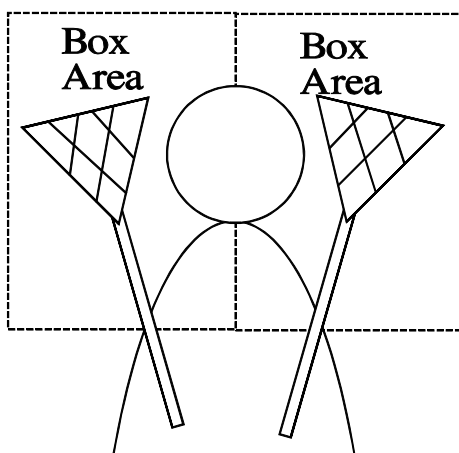
- **Proper Technique**-The best way to have proper technique is to learn the correct way to execute skills when you are starting to learn to play. Always execute skills the way you would on the field of play. If you have picked up an incorrect technique, the sooner you correct it, the easier it is to correct.
- **Minimum Movement**-Resist the temptation to add unnecessary motions when you execute a skill. It adds time to the execution of a skill, which you do not have. It also adds to the risk that you will lose the ball and hurt your team. Play as cleanly and efficiently as you can.
- **Offhand**-Lacrosse unlike many sports requires skills using both hands. It may feel uncomfortable to play with your off-hand, but you must use it to develop it. Your coaches will always support you using your off-hand when appropriate, even if you cannot execute as well as your strong hand. One-handed lacrosse players do not exist on any team that seriously competes in lacrosse.
- **Team Play**-Your investment in your skills is the foundation of team play. The ability of a team to execute all of the facets of team play, like faceoffs, fast breaks, offense or defense rests on the foundation of your individual skills. Without proper passing, catching and scooping techniques, the break in the chain of individual skills that make up team play will prevent the successful execution of the team play.
- **Practice**-The best way to develop individual skills, even better than having a catch with your teammates, is to play against a brick wall not located near breakable windows and repeat the throwing and catching motions. Use both hands until the motions can be executed smoothly and naturally.

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## Facets of Individual Play

1. Passing
  - a. holding the stick
  - b. stepping towards the target
  - c. follow-through
  - d. cracking the elbow
2. Catching
  - a. stick position
  - b. stick movement
3. Scooping
  - a. body position
  - b. stick position
4. Individual Offense
  - a. cradling the ball
  - b. dodges
  - c. picks
  - d. cuts
  - e. shots
5. Individual Defense
  - a. body position
  - b. stick checks
6. Face Offs
  - a. body position
  - b. clamp, turn, and scoop
7. Goalie Play
  - a. crease rules
  - b. body position
  - c. ball and stick movement
  - d. break pass
  - e. GOALIE TALK
8. Skills Matrix

General Comments: Passing, catching is done almost entirely in the box area. While passing, catching, or cutting the head of the stick should be at your head level, next to your ear. **Always be moving when you pass, catch or scoop! Always work your off-hand as much as your strong-hand.** You must be able to catch and throw with **both** hands. This will allow you to keep your stick protected from defending players that are trying to check you. Generate your passing power by using your legs and lower body, not by hanging your stick behind you. You will get checked and lose the ball.



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## 1. Passing

### Right Handed Pass

- a. Holding the stick- the best position for your hands for accuracy and distance is shoulder width apart. The left hand should be on the butt end of the stick.
- b. Stepping towards the target- with your right foot perpendicular and your left shoulder pointing towards the target, a comfortable step should be made towards the target. This will shift your weight towards the target, providing more power to the pass.
- c. Follow-through- after the pass the head of your stick should be pointing to the precise spot you wish the ball to go.
- d. Cracking the elbow- if the follow-through has been done correctly the stick should be resting parallel with your forearm and your bottom hand resting on your elbow.

## 2. Catching

General Comments: **Always present a stationary target for the passer** by keeping your stick in the box area, and calling "Here's Your Help" if you are open. Help the passer by making passes about fifteen yards. If you are further than fifteen yards cut towards the passer. If you are closer than fifteen yards get open by moving away from the passer.

### Catching- Moving Towards the Ball

- a. Stick position- your stick should be perpendicular to the ground, with the head of your stick next to your ear. Present a target to the passer. You can move your top hand up the throat of your stick to increase your stick control.
- b. Stick movement- upon impact of the ball with pocket of your stick, you may either pull the stick directly back, or gently turn into the ball.

### Catching- Moving Away from the Ball

- a. Stick position- your stick should point slightly in front of you, your back should be to the passer and angle of your cut so you can comfortably catch the ball over your shoulder. Your top hand should be the closest one to your shoulder.
- b. Stick movement- follow the ball into your stick and wait for the ball to arrive. If the pass is short, turn to meet the ball instead of reaching back. Move your feet before moving your stick to catch an off target pass.

## 3. Scooping

General comments: Your top hand should slide up the shaft of the head of the stick. Keep your bottom hand at the butt end of the stick and as low to the ground as possible. **In order to scoop you MUST keep your bottom hand down and get low!** This makes your stick parallel to the ground. As soon as the scoop is done, bring your stick into the box area so you are ready to pass or feed. **Remember your objective is to get the loose ball, not beat up on the opposing player!**

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One on one

a. Body position- to scoop the ball, it is necessary to get as low to the ground as possible by bending at the waist. Your head should be down, following the path of the ball. The scoop is executed when your nose is directly over the ball. Use your body to shield the ball from the opposing player by keeping your body between the other player and the ball.

Two on One- "Man, Ball"

a. Body position- the player closest to the opposing player calls "Man" and uses his body as a shield to protect the ball. You must be within five yards of the ball to make contact with the opposing player. Your teammate will call "Ball" and scoop the ball. As soon as he gets possession of the ball he calls "Drop Off" so the opposing player can be released.

### 4. Individual Offense

General Comments: **If you have possession of the ball you must protect it while moving it towards the goal.** Keep your body between the defensive player and your stick. This means that sometimes you will have to pass or catch with your off-hand. Take the opportunity to develop your off-hand! You can help keep the ball in your stick by gently cradling the ball. Do not twirl your stick! If you want to twirl, be a cheerleader not a lacrosse player.

If you are open, have an angle, and are within fifteen yards of the cage then **shoot and score**. If someone else is open then pass the ball to them. They will **shoot and score** and you will get an assist. Make your passes have a purpose. Do not throw into a pile. You create offense by moving the ball **AGGRESSIVELY** towards the cage! This opens opportunities to shoot or pass. Create offense by dodging a defensive player and taking it to the cage, or by drawing two defenders and passing to a teammate that is cutting towards the open area.

If you do not have the ball make the defense play you by moving. **The biggest mistake you can make on offense is to stand still! Lacrosse is the fastest game on two feet. You cannot be fast while you are standing still!!!!**

a. Cradling the ball- is done by keeping your bottom hand stationary and below your waist while you gently roll the wrist of your top hand. The path of the ball should form a half circle. Cradle the ball in the box area so that it is next to your ear. If you keep the ball next to your ear, it will tell you when it is time to **shoot and score**.

The "tuck" position is used keep the defending player from checking your stick. Hold the stick 6-8 inches from the head with your forearm parallel to the ground. The stick is perpendicular to the ground and held close to the body while cradling. The head of your stick should be next

















