

PAL 2026

GIRLS YOUTH RULES

GRADES 7/8th-Transitional Checking

Updated 24Feb2026

EQUIPMENT:

- Minimum length is 35 1/2" and the maximum length is 43 "
- Headgear can be worn but is not Required. If headgear is worn the chinstrap must be securely fastened.
- Goggles are Required
- Mouthguards **CANNOT** be attached to the goggles or have protruding tabs
- Balls must be NOCSAE approved in the color of yellow, orange or green
- **GOALKEEPER:**
 - **Crosse**-Minimum length is 35" and the maximum length is 52"
 - **Helmet** – must meet NOCSAE standards, have a facemask, separate throat protector and properly secured chinstrap.
 - **Required Protective Padding** : chest, abdominal/pelvic protector, gloves, leg/shin/ thighs.
 - Uniform shirt must be worn over the chest protector

PRE-GAME PROCEDURES:

- Officials will ask coaches if players are legally and properly equipped. Coaches need to assure officials their players are wearing the proper equipment to start the game.
- Officials will check coaches badges to confirm they are eligible to be on sidelines, a total of three coaches are allowed per team. If a coach does not have their credentials they will have to leave the team's sideline.
- Stick checks will be performed to assure proper stick pockets, mouthguards and goalie equipment is being used.
- Coin toss will be done with no more than three captains and one coach per team. Visiting team will call the toss and winner of toss will choose either side to defend or first Alternate Possession.
- Players are not allowed to wear Jewelry on the field unless it is a medic-alert bracelet. Band-aides over earrings is not acceptable, earrings must be removed.

DURATION OF PLAY:

GAME TIME:

- game consists of four 12 minute quarters for all grade levels.
- The clock will stop in the last minute of each quarter for a free position in the CSA.
- The clock will stop for an injury if the official deems necessary
- A maximum of 3 minutes between quarters 1 and 2 and between quarters 3 and 4
- A maximum of 6 minutes at Halftime
- There is no overtime play.

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GAME CLOCK:

- Should be kept by home team.
- Timer is responsible for counting down the last minute of each half for the referee and a horn is blown as time runs out.
- The referee should not maintain the clock on the field unless there is no timer available on sidelines

TIME OUTS:

- Each team shall be permitted two time outs per game of 2 minute duration.
- Unused time-outs from first half carry over to the second half.
- Teams may call a timeout if they are in possession of the ball or after a goal by either team.
- On a possession timeout the player will leave the ball on the field at the location it was when the timeout was called. Players will take their cross off the field and a coach is allowed to substitute. Any player from the team with possession can start play on the whistle where the ball lies.
- Time Outs, when the ball is in the CSA, will restart on the dot behind the goal, including a ball that is in the goal circle.
- If a time out is taken after a penalty occurs, the player fouled will have to take possession of the ball when the team returns to the field. The player who caused the foul will be placed 4 meters behind.

SUBSTITUTIONS:

- Substitution may take place after every goal, between halves and injury
- You may substitute on the fly during play, but players must exit and enter through their own team's substitution located by the scorer's table.
- Field player must be off the field before their substitute is allowed to enter
- Substitutions are now allowed on possession time outs, girls no longer need to drop their crosses but the ball will remain on the field at the spot it was when the timeout was called.

COACHING

- Coaches may not stand near or walk in front of the opposing team area.
- Coaches are not allowed in the substitution area
- Coaches may not stand behind the end line (behind the goalie).
- Coaches and players must remain behind the level of the scorer's table extended. Violation of this rule is misconduct foul (yellow card).

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PLAYING FIELD:

- **Penalty Area** -The penalty area shall be directly in front of the scorers/timers table. A player serving a penalty must sit or kneel in this area.
- **Spectators** – spectators must be on the opposite side of the field from the team bench area and not the behind the end lines.
- **Critical Scoring Area:** is defined by the 12 meter fan in front of the goal to the endline and 12 meters to each side of the goal circle
- **Soft/flexible cones, pylons or cones** must be used to mark the outside corner of the field. Substitution Area (TSA): Shall be in front of the scorer's table and centered at the midfield line. No player or coach may remain in the TSA except those involved in the imminent substitution.

OUT OF BOUNDS:

- When a player in possession of the ball carries or propels the ball out of bounds or when the player is the last to touch a loose ball before it goes out of bounds, the opponents will be awarded the ball.
- When a player's foot/feet are out of bounds, she may not take an active part in the game.
- During the game, players may not run out of bounds and re-enter to a more advantageous position. To resume play, the opponent nearest the ball will place the ball in her crosse and can stand 2m inside the boundary line from the spot where the ball went out of bounds or she can choose to run the ball onto and down the field without breaking stride.
- A player cannot pass the ball to a teammate while she is out of bounds. This will result in loss of possession.
- Any other player(s) directly involved in the play or in the immediate vicinity of the spot where the ball went out of bounds may also be moved, but they must maintain the same relative position to the player with the ball, when play had stopped and be at least 2m away from the player in possession of the ball.

THE DRAW:

- The ball must be placed in the upper third of each head at its widest point.
- The entire lengths of both crosses are between the ball and the goal they are defending. The entire length of both crosses must be contained within the vertical plane of the center line.
- On the whistle the two opponents must immediately draw their crosses up from the starting position.
- The number of players around the circle shall be limited to 3 players from each team. The remaining eight players from each team are not allowed to cross either restraining line until one of the six players around the circle has possession of the ball.
- The referee who is administering the draw will shout "POSSESSION" and at that time the players can cross the restraining line. If the ball rolls towards the player below the restraining line they can reach over the line with their crosse to play the ball but their feet must remain behind the line.
- They are allowed to play the ball if it crosses the restraining line even if the referee has not called POSSESSION

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EMPTY STICK CHECK

- This minor foul is for intentional stick contact during pursuit of a playable ball.
- When the ball is in the air or on the ground and is playable by both teams, incidental stick contact by players who are actively pursuing possession of the ball is legal.
- When the ball is in a playable situation it is illegal for one player to initiate contact with the opponent's crosse in an effort to prevent her from gaining possession.

TRANSITIONAL CHECKING

- US Lacrosse has introduced a new checking category called transitional checking, this rule is intended to provide a middle ground between full checking at the high school level and the modified checking.
- Transitional checking will help maintain the safety of youth players to check sticks held above shoulders and provide the rule structure for a player development pathway into full checking at the high school level.
- The new 12-inch sphere at the youth level was adopted for safety reasons to protect players' heads from stick contact and to emphasize for the women's game community the importance of the sphere to the integrity of the game.
- A player needs to be on stick side and is not allowed to check across a players body, into a players body or into the opponent's sphere
- The three second closely guarded foul will no longer be called because checking above the shoulder is allowed.

SHOT ON GOAL

- When a shot or deflected shot on goal goes out of bounds, the team whose stick is nearest to the ball when it crossed the boundary line will receive possession of the ball.
- A shooter may follow-through with her crosse over the goal circle but her feet must not touch the goal circle
- The player can run directly onto the field or enter and stand 2 m inside the boundary line from the spot where the ball went out of bounds. Opponents must give the player with the ball at least 2 m of free space.
- If the goalkeeper while within her goal circle is nearest to the ball when it crosses the boundary line, her team will be awarded the ball to restart play.
- If a ball is touched by a player before it goes out of bounds but the ball's momentum never stopped the closest player is still awarded the ball.
- A goal is scored by the whole ball passing completely over the goal line, the shot must be released before time expires

OBSTRUCTION OF FREE SPACE TO GOAL:

- Free Space to Goal is a path defined by two imaginary lines extending from the ball to the outside edges of the goal circle. A defense player obstructing the free space to goal with any part of her body denies the attack the opportunity to shoot safely and encourages shooting at an unprotected player.
- The following points need to be considered before obstruction of free space is called:
 - The ball carrier must be within the critical scoring area (12 meters)
 - The ball carrier must be in active pursuit to goal and must have the opportunity to shoot.
 - A defender intentionally marking within a stick's length of the ball carrier is not obstructing the free space to goal.
 - Defenders who are being drawn into and through the free space by cutting attack players are marking are not obstructing the free space to goal.

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PENALTY ZONE:

- The new penalty zone is the area 8 meters away from the goal circle above the goal line extended and the area created by the extension of the 8 meter mark to the dots and across the dots.
- This is to minimize the risk around the 8 meter free positions as well as to increase pace of play by limiting repeated obstruction calls, the penalty zone must be cleared when a defensive player commits a major foul in the 8 meter arc.
- The defense has first right to the hashes on either side of the player with the ball on a penalty shot.

SELF START:

- Following a whistle blown for a foul outside of the critical scoring area, the player who is awarded the free position, after coming to a stop, may continue the course of play without waiting for an additional whistle from a settled stance (both feet stationary on the ground and the ball positioned in the head of the crosse).
- The player fouled must take the free position within playing distance of the spot of the foul. The offending player shall move 4 meters from the player taking the free position as directed by the official.
- All players must move 4 meters away from the free position.
- Play will commence once the ball carrier steps or passes. Once play has commenced the defenders may engage in play with the ball carrier. The player taking the free position may wait until all players are moved 4 meters away.
- Self Start s are not an option when: The game clock is stopped, Restraining Line Violations, Alternating Possession Restarts and Goalie Restart Possession.
- Self Starts are not an option on an offensive free position in the Critical Scoring Area
- Self Starts are allowed on a Defensive Free Position in the Critical Scoring Area.

FREE MOVEMENT:

- Players are now allowed to move on the whistle. On a foul the only two players that are not allowed to move from the spot are the player that was fouled and the opponent that fouled the offensive player. The Self Start must occur within a sticks length of the spot of the foul.

THREE SECOND VIOLATION:

- The defense may not remain in the 8m arc for more than three seconds unless she is marking a player within a stick's length.
- Within a stick's length is when any part of the opponent's body is inside a crosses' length.
- The three-second rule is in effect when the team in possession of the ball crosses over the Restraining Line in their attacking half of the field.
- The intent of this rule is to prevent crowding by the defense in front of the goal. An offensive player in the 8 meter arc that does not have possession of the ball can be marked by only one defensive player.

THE GOALIE:

- Deputy is not allowed at this level of lacrosse.
- If a goalie gains possession of the ball outside of the goal circle she is now allowed to run the ball back into the goal circle.
- If a goalie leaves the goal circle with the ball and she is played by her opponent she is now allowed to run the ball back into the goal circle

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STICK TO BODY:

- A defensive player is prohibited to initiate stick to body contact
- Horizontal Sticks placed on the body is an automatic whistle

THE PICK:

- This is a technique in which a player without the ball, who by her positioning, forces the opponent to take another route.
- To be legal it must be set within the visual field of the opponent allowing enough time and space to stop or change direction. It may be moving or stationary but not blind.
- The defender must hold her stick within the frame of her body for the pick to be legal.

ISSUANCE OF CARDS:

- Player receiving yellow card will serve a 2-minute penalty and a red card will serve a 4 minute penalty and the team will play short below each restraining line.
- A player who receives a yellow or red card will serve the penalty at the scorers table.
- All penalties are non-releasable.
- Anyone receiving 2 yellow cards in the game will be suspended from further participation in the game.
- Anyone receiving a Red card will be suspended from further participation in that game and the team's next game.
- Should a team receive its fourth card of the game they will play short for the remainder of the game, and an additional player will be removed from the game for each subsequent card received.
- Any card given to a player or head coach will count toward their team's cumulative total.
- The carded player will serve the 2 minute penalty time and she may return to the game only if she has not been suspended or ejected
- If the coach is carded, the coach must designate a player who will serve the penalty.
- If the player receiving the yellow card is the goalkeeper and there is no dressed goalkeeper for the team, the goalkeeper may remain in the game and the coach will designate another field player on the field to take the penalty