



JUMP START LACROSSE

Program Overview

- Duration: 6 Weeks (1 hour per week).
- Week 1: Introduction to Lacrosse
- Week 2: Catching and Throwing
- Week 3: Ground Balls & Scooping
- Week 4: Shooting
- Week 5: Defensive Skills
- Week 6: Games and Review

Jump Start Lacrosse will introduce kids to lacrosse and teach fundamental skills, teamwork, and the enjoyment of the game, through engaging and fun activities.

The 6-week, 75 minute sessions focus on fun, encouragement and gradual progression of knowledge of the game.

By the end of the Program, children will have an understanding of cradling, throwing, catching, scooping ground balls, shooting and defense.

Field Setup

- Four large cones delineating the field in a rectangular configuration (about 35 yards x 20 yards)
- One set of goals set up about 10 feet inside the longer ends so that there is space behind the goals.
- Cones around the goal to delineate a crease.
- Cones along the sidelines.

Equipment Checklist (Needed Every Session)

- Clipboards
- Roster
- 30 youth lacrosse sticks
- 50 pink “soft” training lacrosse balls
- 50 hard yellow/white hard lacrosse balls (for the older players)
- 4-6 small practice lacrosse nets
- Hula Hoops
- Whistles
- 40 cones
- 20 pinnies

Coach Arrival & Check-In Focus

- Coaches will check in the kids as they arrive.
- Other coaches will maintain supervision of unorganized play.
- Emphasize professional demeanor & courteous manner.

- Maintain awareness & supervision of kids who have arrived already.
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Coaches will emphasize...

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- Professional demeanor
- Courteous manner
- Maintaining awareness & supervision of participants who have arrived already

Video Links

- LACROSSE 101! - 4 Basic [Skills](#) to Teach Beginners
- Beginner Series: How To [Cradle](#) In Lacrosse
- How to [Cradle](#) a Lacrosse Ball // LAX 101
- Lacrosse Tips - Stick Skills And [Cradling](#)
- How to [Catch](#) a Lacrosse Ball
- How to [Pass](#) in Lacrosse | POWLAX Backyard
- How To [Scoop](#) A Lacrosse Ball
- LACROSSE [DEFENSIVE](#) TIPS | How to Play Better Defense | BTB Lax

JUMP START LACROSSE - WEEK 1

Intro & Cradling

Coaches will emphasize...

- **Main cradling principles**
 - Hold stick in your fingers – NOT your palms
 - Top Hand does all the work
 - Bottom hand acts as pivot and guide hand
 - Cradle with wrist, elbows, and hands
 - Limit your motion and exposing the stick
- **Introduce Hand Positioning**
 - "Let's start with how we hold the stick. Take your dominant hand and place it near the top of the stick. Make sure your palm is facing you, like you're holding a baseball bat."
 - "Now, take your other hand and place it lower on the stick. This hand should grip the stick like you're holding onto handlebars. Great! This will help you control the stick better."
- **Demonstrate the Cradling Motion**
 - "Now, let's practice the cradling motion. Imagine you're curling a weight with your arm. Move your dominant hand back and forth while keeping your non-dominant hand steady."
 - "Try to keep the stick close to your body, like you're hugging it. This will help protect the ball from defenders."
- **Explain Types of Cradles**
 - "There are two main types of cradles we'll use: the full cradle and the half cradle."
 - "For a full cradle, swing the stick from one ear to the other. Let's try that together!"
 - "Now for a half cradle, we'll make shorter movements from your ear to your midline. This helps you move quickly while keeping control of the ball."

I. Welcome, Warm-up & Introduction (20 Minutes)

- **10 Minutes - Coaches Intro & Dynamic Warm-up:**
 - Coach conducts introductory talk.
 - Coach leads dynamic stretching: Light jog, Arm circles, High knees, Butt kicks, Torso twists.
 - Incorporate a Fun Movement Game (e.g., tag) and a quick game of "Simon Says" for agility.
- **10 Minutes - Equipment & Game Basics (History Talk):**
 - History of Lacrosse: Explain it as the first sport native to America and the forerunner of hockey.

- Explain the lacrosse stick, ball, and protective gear.
- Demonstrate proper stick grip.
- Describe the objectives of the game.

II. Cradling Focus & Practice (25 Minutes)

- **5 Minutes - Cradling Demo (Led by Coach):**
 - Coach demonstrates the proper cradling technique (rocking motion, protecting the ball).
- **5 Minutes - Stationary Cradling Practice:**
 - Practice cradling while standing still.
 - Progress to walking and cradling in a straight line.
- **15 Minutes - Fun Cradling Drills (Apply Skills):**
 - **Cradle Relay Race:** Kids race up to a cone and back while cradling the ball. Coaches should stop participants if they are "egging" the ball (not cradling properly).
 - **Cradle Obstacle Course:** Navigate through cones while cradling (can incorporate a relay).
 - **Cradling Tag / Keep Away:** Use a quick game where players must cradle while moving quickly and changing direction to avoid a tag, or pass to maintain possession.

III. Gameplay & Finale (15 Minutes)

- **10 Minutes - Gameplay (Small-Sided): (Reduced time)**
 - **Format:** Small sided games (e.g., 6 v 6 or 7 v 7). Group players by age/skill.
 - **Rules:** Enforce one completed pass before shooting.
 - **Coaching Focus:** Spread players out when they get bunched. Call out player names for ground balls if necessary. Teach basic offensive and defensive positioning.
- **5 Minutes - Cool down/Recap (Consolidated):**
 - Lead gentle stretches.
 - Discussion on the basics and history of lacrosse and the importance of cradling (to protect the ball).

JUMP START LACROSSE - WEEK 2

Throwing & Catching

- **Introduction to Catching**
 - "Alright, everyone! Today, we're going to learn how to catch the ball in lacrosse. Catching is super important because it helps us keep possession of the ball and make great plays!"
- **Proper Stick Positioning**
 - "First, let's talk about how to hold your stick. I want you to create a box with your stick. Hold it up by your ear and down to your shoulder. This is called 'the box.'"
 - "Make sure your stick is flat and angled slightly up, like you're ready to catch a butterfly!"
- **Hand Positioning**
 - "Now, put your top hand near the throat of the stick and your bottom hand at the end. This grip will help you control the stick better."
 - "Keep both hands on the stick when you catch. It gives you more power!"
- **Soft Hands Technique**
 - "When the ball comes to you, use 'soft hands.' Imagine you're catching an egg—don't snatch at it! Instead, let your stick move back a little as you catch the ball."
 - "Try to absorb the ball's energy so it stays in your stick."
- **Body Positioning**
 - "Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and bend your knees a little. Lean forward slightly—this will help you move quickly toward the ball."
 - "Always be ready to adjust your position as the ball comes toward you!"
- **Eyes on the Ball**
 - "Remember, keep your eyes on the ball! Watch it all the way into your stick. This is really important for making sure you catch it."

I. Welcome, Warm-up & Review (10 Minutes)

- **Coaches Intro & Talk (Led by Coach):**
 - Conduct introductory talk and inspiration.
 - Coach leads dynamic stretching: Light jog, Arm circles, High knees, Butt kicks, Torso twists.
 - Incorporate a Fun Movement Game (e.g., tag) and a quick game of "Simon Says."
- **Review (Cradling):**
 - Coach reviews the basics of cradling (rocking motion, protecting the ball).

II. Demonstration & Skill Practice (15 Minutes)

- **5 Minutes - Throwing/Catching Demonstration (Led by Coach):**

- Demonstrate proper catching form (stick in the box, soft hands).
- Demonstrate Throwing technique (Bottom hand pull, Top hand push, step to target, stick head stays above shoulder).
- **10 Minutes - Drill 1: Partner Throwing Practice (Whole Group):**
 - Participants pair up. Practice stationary throwing with a focus on the demonstrated technique.
 - Focus: Ensure both hands and the front foot point to the target upon completion of the throw.

III. Catching & Throwing Stations (30 Minutes)

- Action: Groups rotate through the following stations (approx. 7.5 minutes per station).

1. Station 1: "Soft Hands" Catching Zone

- Drill: Wall rebounds (catch after 1 bounce) and partner tosses from 10 feet away.
- Focus: Absorbing ball momentum and watching the ball into the stick pocket.

2. Station 2: Movement Catching

- Drills: Stationary catching, then catching while walking and side-stepping in small cone lanes.
- Focus: Foot movement and maintaining body positioning relative to the ball while moving.

3. Station 3: Target Catching Challenge

- Challenge: Catch a pass, then immediately attempt to hit a target (hoop/circle) 10 feet away.
- Goal: Builds hand-eye coordination and adds a competitive element.

4. Station 4: Reaction Catching

- Drills: Quick-release passes, unexpected, and unpredictable tosses from varied distances and angles.
- Focus: Anticipation and developing quick hands to adjust to poorly aimed passes.

IV. Application & Finale (5 Minutes)

- Fun Drill (Relay Race):
 - Run the Catching and Throwing Relay Race: Player cradles around a cone, returns, and completes one throw/catch cycle with a teammate before the next player goes. (Time is compressed).
- Game Play (Compressed - 5 Minutes):

- **Run a very short small-sided game.**
 - **Focus: Enforce one completed pass before shooting to encourage skill use.**
- **Cool down/Recap (Consolidated):**
 - **Lead gentle stretches.**
 - **Discussion on cradling, throwing, and catching.**

JUMP START LACROSSE - WEEK 3

Ground Balls

Coaches will emphasize...

- **Stance and Positioning**
 - "Alright, team! Let's start with our stance. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and bend your knees a little. This helps you stay balanced!"
 - "Now, hold your stick out in front of you, parallel to the ground. Your top hand should be close to the head of the stick, and your bottom hand should be at the end."
- **Eye on the Ball**
 - "Always keep your eyes on the ball! Watch it closely so you know where it's going. If you see it rolling, get ready to move!"
- **Scoop Technique**
 - "When you're ready to scoop, step towards the ball with your front foot. This gives you a strong base!"
 - "Bend your knees more instead of leaning over. We want to stay low and balanced!"
 - "Now, use a smooth scooping motion. Bring your stick down to the ball, then lift it up gently as you scoop. Remember, don't stab at it; scoop it up!"
- **Follow Through**
 - "After you scoop the ball, bring your stick close to your helmet. This keeps it safe from defenders trying to check you!"

I. Welcome, Warm-up & Review (20 Minutes)

- **10 Minutes - Coaches Intro & Dynamic Warm-up:**
 - Conduct introductory talk and inspiration.
 - Coach leads dynamic stretching: Light jog, Arm circles, High knees, Butt kicks, Torso twists.
 - Incorporate a Fun Movement Game (e.g., tag) and a quick game of "Simon Says."
- **5 Minutes - Full Skill Review (Led by Coach):**
 - Coach reviews the basics of cradling, catching, and throwing.
- **5 Minutes - Ground Ball Demonstration (Led by Coach):**
 - Coach demonstrates the proper technique for scooping: "Get low, bend your knees!" and "Scoop through the ball, don't stab at it!"

II. Ground Ball Skill Stations (20 Minutes)

- **Action:** Groups rotate through four stations every 5 minutes (reduced from 10 minutes) to allow time for all activities.

1. Station 1: Basic Ground Ball Technique

- **Drill: "Scoop and Protect"**
- **Focus: Practice the proper scooping technique. Emphasize immediately bringing the stick to the helmet to protect the ball after the scoop.**

2. Station 2: Ground Ball Relay

- **Drill: "Race and Scoop"**
- **Action: Players compete in teams to scoop and return balls from the middle area.**
- **Focus: Running fast to the ball and scooping cleanly while moving.**

3. Station 3: Ground Ball Under Pressure

- **Drill: "Sharks and Minnows"**
- **Setup: Small square area. One "shark" tries to get the ball from "minnows."**
- **Action: Coach yells "DROP!", players drop their ball, scoop, and continue running. If a player loses their ball, they become a shark. Focus: Scooping under chaos and protecting the ball.**

4. Station 4: React and Scoop

- **Drill: "React and Scoop"**
- **Action: Player 2 throws the ball from behind Player 1. Player 1 must react quickly, scoop the ball, and return it to the line.**
- **Focus: Anticipation and transitioning quickly from stationary to scooping motion.**

III. Gameplay & Finale (20 Minutes)

- **15 Minutes - Gameplay (Small-Sided): (Reduced time)**
 - **Format: Small sided games (6 v 6 or 7 v 7).**
 - **Focus: Spread players. Coach emphasizes Ground Balls by calling out the names of players near a loose ball. Enforce one completed pass before shooting.**
- **5 Minutes - Cool down/Recap:**
 - **Lead gentle stretches.**
 - **Discussion on groundballs and why they are the most important part of lacrosse.**

JUMP START LACROSSE - WEEK 4

Shooting Focus

Coaches will emphasize...

- **Dodging**
 - Instruction: "When you dodge, use quick movements to change direction. Fake one way and then go the other! Keep your head up so you can see where your teammates are."
- **Moving Without the Ball**
 - Instruction: "Always be ready to move! When you don't have the ball, look for open space and cut towards it. This helps create passing opportunities."
- **Give-and-Go**
 - Instruction: "After you pass the ball, immediately cut towards the goal for a return pass. This is called a give-and-go!"
- **Game Awareness**
 - Instruction: "Always keep an eye on what's happening around you. If a defender is close, think about how you can create space or pass to a teammate."
- **Communication**
 - Instruction: "Use your voice! Call out for the ball when you're open and let your teammates know what you're doing."

I. Review & Demonstration (10 Minutes)

- **5 Minutes - Skill Review (Led by Coach):**
 - Coach reviews the basics of ground balls (scoop technique and protection).
- **5 Minutes - Shooting Demo (Led by Coach):**
 - Coach demonstrates the basics of a proper shooting technique (stepping, turning, and follow-through).

II. Skill Stations Rotation (25 Minutes)

- **Action:** Groups rotate through the following 5 stations (approximately 5 minutes per station).
- **Goal:** Focus on technique, accuracy, and shooting under game-like pressure.

1. Station 1: Shooting with No Goalie (Technique Focus)

- **Action:** Players shoot on an open net, solely practicing the proper technique

(stepping toward the target, turning the shoulders).

2. Station 2: Cradling and Dodging

- **Action:** Navigate a zigzag cone course, focusing on proper cradling while practicing a change of direction at each cone.
- **Progression:** Finish the run with a shot. *Add passive defenders if time allows.*

3. Station 3: Accuracy Challenge (Target Shooting)

- **Action:** Mark various shooting spots around the goal with cones. Players start at one cone and must make a successful shot before moving to the next cone.
- **Goal:** The first player to score from all spots wins the internal round.

4. Station 4: Ground Balls and Shooting

- **Action:** Line of players 15 yards from the goal. Players must scoop a ground ball cleanly and then immediately take a shot on goal.
- **Focus:** Emphasize proper technique for both the scoop and the immediate shot transition. *Add light defensive pressure for progression.*

5. Station 5: Keep Away to Shot (Strategy Focus)

- **Setup:** 15x15 yard square (3v1 or 4v2 keep away).
- **Action:** Offensive players try to maintain possession. If they keep the ball for 5 seconds (or a set count), one player can take a shot.
- **Focus:** Moving without the ball to create passing lanes and using possession to set up a shot.

III. Gameplay & Finale (25 Minutes)

- **20 Minutes - Gameplay (Small-Sided):**
 - **Format:** Small sided games (e.g., 6 v 6 or 7 v 7).
 - **Rules:** Enforce one completed pass before shooting.
 - **Coaching Focus:** Spread players out. Encourage shooting with the proper stepping motion.
- **5 Minutes - Cool down/Recap:**
 - Lead gentle stretches.
 - Discussion on shooting fundamentals and accuracy.

JUMP START LACROSSE - WEEK 5

Defense Focus

Coaches will emphasize...

- **Understanding Positioning**
 - "Always stay between your player and the goal!"
 - Explain: "This means you should always be in a spot where you can block your opponent from getting a clear shot. Imagine there's an invisible line from your player to the goal, and your job is to stand right in the way!"
 - "Use your feet first!"
 - Explain: "When you're moving, think about using your feet to get in the right spot before you use your stick. Quick steps help you stay balanced and ready to react."
- **Awareness of the Ball**
 - "Keep your eyes on both the ball and your player!"
 - Explain: "You need to know where your player is and where the ball is at all times. If your player doesn't have the ball, still keep an eye on them so you can react quickly."
- **Communication**
 - "Talk to your teammates!"
 - Explain: "Use your voice! If you see something happening, like an opponent trying to cut towards the goal, shout out their name or say 'I got ball!' so everyone knows what's going on."
- **Footwork**
 - "Get into an athletic stance!"
 - Explain: "Bend your knees a little and keep your feet shoulder-width apart. This helps you stay balanced and ready to move in any direction."
 - "Practice your drop step!"
 - Explain: "When the attacker moves, take a quick step back with one foot to keep up with them. This helps you stay in front of them without losing your balance."
- **Stick Skills**
 - "Let's practice our checks!"
 - Explain: "When you try to poke the ball away, make sure you're doing it gently and with control. Keep your stick low and aim for their stick or the ball, not their body."
- **Angling**
 - "Force them away from the goal!"
 - Explain: "If they're trying to get closer to shoot, angle your body so they have to go around you instead of straight toward the goal. Think of it like guiding them away from where they want to go."

I. Welcome, Warm-up & Review (15 Minutes)

- **10 Minutes - Coaches Intro & Dynamic Warm-up:**
 - Coach conducts introductory talk and inspiration.
 - Coach leads dynamic stretching: Light jog, Arm circles, High knees, Butt kicks, Torso twists.
 - Incorporate a Fun Movement Game (e.g., tag) and a quick game of "Simon Says."
- **5 Minutes - Review & Defense Demo (Led by Coach):**
 - Coach reviews the basics of shooting.
 - Coach demonstrates the basics of defense (stance, body positioning, and stick-on-the-ground).

II. Defensive Skill Stations (25 Minutes)

- **Action:** Groups rotate through five stations every 5 minutes (reduced from 7 minutes).
- **Goal:** Develop footwork, body positioning, and stick checking discipline.

1. Station 1: Defensive Positioning

- **Drill:** "Stay Between Your Player and the Goal."
- **Action:** Defensive player, often starting with no stick, practices always keeping their body between the offensive player and the cone/goal (the goal).

2. Station 2: Footwork

- **Drill:** "Quick Feet Drill."
- **Action:** Players move through a zigzag cone pattern, focusing on maintaining a low, athletic stance and staying on their toes without crossing their feet.

3. Station 3: Stick Skills

- **Drill:** "Poke Check Practice."
- **Action:** Offensive player cradles slowly. Defender practices gentle, controlled poke checks, aiming for the opponent's stick or the ball, NOT the body.

4. Station 4: Communication and Awareness

- **Drill:** "Eyes Up Game."
- **Action:** Players move around, cradling. Coach calls out commands (e.g., "Find a red shirt!" or "High five someone!").
- **Focus:** Players must follow instructions while maintaining cradling control and keeping their head up.

5. Station 5: "Modified Sharks and Minnows"

- **Action:** "Minnows" (cradling players) try to run from one end to the other. "Sharks" (defenders, sometimes no sticks) try to tag minnows or knock the ball out.
- **Goal:** Practice defensive pursuit and puck protection in a high-energy environment.

III. Gameplay & Finale (20 Minutes)

- **15 Minutes - Gameplay (Small-Sided): (Reduced time)**
 - **Format:** Small sided games (e.g., 6 v 6 or 7 v 7).
 - **Rules:** Enforce one completed pass before shooting.
 - **Coaching Focus:** Coaches actively coach defensive positioning and force players to use their feet and sticks correctly.
- **5 Minutes - Cool down/Recap:**
 - **Lead gentle stretches.**
 - **Discussion on defense and the importance of keeping the stick low and feet moving.**

JUMP START LACROSSE - WEEK 6

Finals & Medal Ceremony

Coaches will emphasize...

- All skills covered in the previous sessions

I. Welcome, Warm-up & Review (15 Minutes)

- 10 Minutes - Coaches Intro & Dynamic Warm-up:
 - Coach conducts introductory talk and inspiration.
 - Coach leads dynamic stretching: Light jog, Arm circles, High knees, Butt kicks, Torso twists.
 - Incorporate a Fun Movement Game (e.g., tag) and a quick game of "Simon Says."
- 5 Minutes - Quick Skill Review (Led by Coach):
 - Coach gives a quick recap and practice of cradling, catching, throwing, scooping, shooting, and defending.

II. Game Application & Tournament (35 Minutes)

- 15 Minutes - Mini Games (Fun Application):
 - Divide participants into small teams.
 - Play quick, fun lacrosse games (e.g., Keep Away, fast-paced shooting drills) focusing on using all the skills learned.
 - Rotation: Rotate teams frequently to ensure everyone plays with and against different participants.
- 20 Minutes - Gameplay (Structured Small-Sided Game): (Adjusted time)
 - Format: Small sided games (6 v 6 or 7 v 7). Group players by age/skill.
 - Rules: Enforce one completed pass before shooting.
 - Coaching Focus: Encourage players to spread out and work to win Ground Balls (calling out names of players near the ball).

III. Medal Presentation & Finale (10 Minutes)

- Medal Presentation:
 - Have participants line up (e.g., on the endline).
 - Call each player up individually and encourage all parents and players to cheer for every player.
- Recap: Briefly recap all the skills learned throughout the six weeks.
- Break Out: Conclude the session with the team mantra: "Play Hard, Play Smart, Play Together, Play True."