






# *Halifax Hurricanes Lacrosse Club*

Basic drills matching  
player development

# THE OFFENSIVE FUNDAMENTALS

## HOLDING THE STICK

<p><b>Thumbs and Fingers</b></p> 	<p>The handle rests in the pads of the fingers and the thumbs are along the shaft. <i>Holding the stick this way helps keep the hands soft and the wrists flexible.</i></p>
<p><b>The Ready Position</b></p> 	<p>The bottom hand is at the butt of the stick and the top or strong hand is placed anywhere from the butt to the throat, depending on how the stick is being used. I.e. Hand position will be different for catching, cradling, throwing, reaching and checking.</p> <p>In the ready position the head of the stick is held about shoulder height with the top hand near the throat and the bottom hand at the butt of the stick.</p>
<p><b>Common Faults</b></p> 	<p>The natural way to hold the stick is to let the arms hang. If this position becomes a habit, players find it very difficult maintaining the ready position while on the floor and end up missing many opportunities to maintain or gain possession of the ball.</p> <p><b>Gripping the Stick</b></p> <p>New players tend to grip the stick with too much pressure, with their thumbs wrapped tightly around the handle in a "punching" grip and with their top hand stuck to one spot on the handle.</p>

## Appendix A Age Related Skills and Concepts

The following is a list of the Lacrosse skills in the order they should be presented. However, it should be remembered that this is only a guide and that growth and development factors, years of experience and the coaches ability, all affect the rate of learning. Beginners, regardless of age, must go through some version of the following steps. However, older players will progress more rapidly than younger players. For example, a 12 yr. old may take a year to learn the first stage, an eight year old two years and a six year old three years.

### **LACROSSE SKILLS Level 1 Year 1 (Tykes may take two years)**

(All skills should be demonstrated, taught and practised using both hands)

	<b>Sample Activities &amp; Advanced Skills</b>
1. Holding the stick Ball control Cradling	Start beginners with tossing the ball in the air and letting it bounce before catching; then toss in the air and catch. Cradling – stationary with wrist flexion, handle down and head up. Cradle while walking, jogging and then running.
2. Pick-ups: scoop, trap & scoop;	Pick up a rolling ball from different angles.
3. Catching	Hand toss, roll or bounce the ball to the receiver if there is a problem with hand eye coordination.
4. Throwing	Players can throw to an assistant coach, at a goal or target and off the boards.
5. Give & Go	Throw to an assistant standing at the point position, look for a return bounce pass and then shoot.
6. Checking	Use follow the leader games, mirror games and keep out games to teach players to first stay with their checks and then to maintain proper position.
3. Three player motion offense (crease, corner & point)	Use an assistant coach on the weak side to receive and pass the ball. This activity is an advanced give and go game or drill that programs the use of the weak side.
4. Throwing and Catching with peers.	Start with letting the ball bounce and then progress to
5. Changing the stick from one hand to the other while jogging with the ball.	

**LACROSSE SKILLS Level 1 Year 2 (Novice)**

See the Lacrosse Pre-Level 1 Manual for minor games and practice plans on teaching the Fundamentals to five to ten year olds.

Scrimmages and games are : - directed by the coaches when they teach how to use the skills and minor games that have been taught;  
- undirected to give players the time to experiment and use their creativity.

Do not use goaltenders until the goaltending skills have been taught.

1. Dodging	Teach using a weight shift to change direction.
2. Checking — one-on-one keep-out games or drills	Introduce the idea of using body position to keep players from going where they want to go.
3. Face-offs	Introduce as an activity where all players are playing the face-off game.
4. Introduce the concept of combining the pass and catch with the give and go.	Use two players to give and go from the 10 second line to the goal.
5. Defence — add two defenders to drill # 4.	Introduce the concept of two players maintaining a "keep-out" position while the offensive players are playing catch.
6. Goaltending — the players are working in pairs.	Use tennis balls and soft passes to introduce the skills of stopping shots with the stick and the body.
7. Motion Offense — use three players only. (crease, corner and point positions)	This drill introduces the concept of one player getting ready for his/her turn to receive while the other two execute their give-and-go.
8. The break-out. Give and go down the floor.	The players only run when they don't have the ball and then stop to catch. The receiver cradles and protects the ball while waiting for the partner to get into position.
6. Playing defense in a scrimmage Situation.	Add the defense to activities 7 and 8.
9. The Game — Coaches should be on the floor to this point.	For players to understand the concept of playing a regular game, they must be taught how to link the minor games of give and go, catch and shoot, keep-out etc...

## AGE RELATED TEAM CONCEPTS

Once again, the following stages are the approximate time the skills and concepts would be introduced to players starting lacrosse at age 6. It is more important, however, to use player readiness as the guide rather than player age. Older players starting the game will go through all the steps but at a faster rate.

Introduce the Skills and Fundamentals of the previous sections concurrently with the Team Offensive and Team Defensive Concepts.

### LEVEL 1    Year 2    (Novice)

#### **Offence**

1. Introduce the concept of maintaining a balanced floor with the stick to the centre.
2. Introduce the give and go as a way to create offensive opportunities.
3. Introduce working the ball up the floor with short passes.
4. Introduce the Motion Offence to play keep-a-way when a man short.
5. Introduce loose ball situations and how the team is to react.
6. Introduce formal line changes.
7. Introduce goaltender initiated offence from a shot.
8. Introduce basic offensive terminology: creaseman, cornerman/shooter
9. Introduce the games within the game that can be played when players don't have the ball. engaging, picks, floor balance, creating space etc.

#### **Defence**

1. Start goalie training with all interested players.
2. Develop one-on-one positional play of defense and the appropriate use of the stick.
3. Introduce appropriate checking distances (sagging).
4. Introduce man-to-man defence as a game within a game i.e. a personal challenge to "play keep-out" to protect the goalkeeper.
5. Develop the habit of identifying ones check before each face-off.
6. Develop the habit of withdrawing to centre and finding the number of the person to be checked as soon as possession is lost.
6. Emphasize man to man defence with the stress on body and stick positioning.

**LEVEL 2 Years 3 & 4****(PEEWEE)****Offence**

1. Develop the Motion Offence stressing floor balance, position and movement.
2. Introduce short pass breakout patterns.
3. Introduce 2 on 1 and 3 on 2, situations.
4. Introduce power play and man short offence.
5. Introduce the team concept of the triple threat position and engaging the defensive player.
6. Introduce the one-on-one to beat a man and draw a man.
7. Develop the break-out from loose ball situation and include the line changes.
8. Develop the team involvement in face-offs.
9. Develop the offensive opportunities from the give-and-go.
10. Develop the goaltender initiated fast break.
11. Introduce pick plays.
12. Introduce the concept of shooting away from the goalie rather than at the corners and passing away from the defense instead of to the stick.

**Defence**

1. Teach the concepts of the sagging man-to-man defence using the 3 on 2 situation.
2. Develop the full sagging man-to-man defense.
3. Develop overplaying the stick side.
4. Develop the commitment for getting back quickly and calling out checks in preparation for applying pressure.
5. Introduce defending the give and go and increasing the level of concentration.
6. Develop the one-on-one checking skills for keeping players out of the prime scoring zone.
7. Develop the man short defensive skills, all players.
8. Introduce defending screens and picks.

**LEVEL 2    Years 5 & 6    (BANTAM)****Offence**

1. Introduce the pick as a team concept.
2. Develop the full Motion Offence including all the pick plays.
3. Speed up the short pass breakout in order to create an odd man situation in the offensive zone.
4. Develop 2 on 1 & 3 on 2 situations as they occur in the Motion Offense.
5. Develop power play and man short offence.
6. Emphasize the triple threat position in developing one-on-one opportunities within the pattern of the motion offence.
7. Refine all aspects of team play to increase speed and intensity of play.

**Defence**

1. Develop defending the Motion Offence. As the offence becomes more sophisticated the defenders must become more alert and focussed.
2. Refine overplaying the stick side by emphasizing switching hands to match the stick being checked.
3. Develop goalie and player skills to defend against different shots, different styles of shooting and shots from different spots.
4. Introduce defending the 2 on 1, and 3 on 2 fast break situations.
5. Develop aggressive defending of picks and screens.
6. Develop the man short defensive specialists and strategies.
7. Develop team pressure defenses designed to disrupt offensive flow.
8. Develop strategies for defending the surprises when face-offs and loose balls are lost.