

Cleaning Lax Gear (Suggestions & helpful tips)

HELMETS

Wipe down the outside with a damp cloth. Clean the inside with warm water, some parents swear by Lysol spray to kill bacteria and then THOROUGHLY wipe it down after with a clean damp cloth to remove any chemicals.

Give extra attention to the chinstrap and try and wipe that out between uses as it can cause acne breakouts.

MOUTH GUARD

Mouth guards can be soaked with warm soapy water and rinsed or soaked in a cup of Listerine Mouthwash to kill bacteria.

You should ALWAYS keep an extra mouth guard in your lax bag (put one in a small Ziploc bag) you can't play without one (it's nice to have an extra one to lend to teammates who might need one in an emergency).

SHOULDER & ELBOW PADS

Shoulder/chest pads can be gently wiped down and air dried. Elbow pads at your discretion can be washed in the washing machine occasionally in cold water on the delicate cycle. Or they can be soaked in cold water with a mild detergent and then the scrub them a bit then use a wet cloth. If you're soaking them, make sure you have enough time between games or practices to hang them up to REALLY dry them well. Nothing smells worse than slightly damp pads shoved into a lax bag). I highly suggest air drying for at least 24 hrs. Avoid the dryer machine, if possible.

CLEATS

Spray Lysol to kill bacteria and smell. Rainy days and soaking wet cleats, here's a drying tip: Put newspaper and dryer sheets overnight (the newspaper helps keep their shape and absorbs smell - dryer sheets will give it a nice scent).

ATHLETIC CUP

This is mandatory and every player must wear one. If you can carry a spare in your bag, do it. There will be cup checks by coaches and officials for your own safety.

GLOVES

Lacrosse gloves are probably the single most disgusting pieces of sports equipment. They fill with sweat during every game and just pool there in the fingers. They always smell awful and with all the leather and protection on the outside it seems like they never really dry out.

Some parents wash the gloves in the washing machine in a garment bag. Just beware some leather gets ruined and laces get lost or balled up, they never seem to dry properly and keep their shape.

The best method is to wipe down the outside and the inside of the leather palm area and air dry. Sometimes opening the glove up and spraying Lysol will help kill bacteria. If the gloves are really bad use the Ziploc bag put in freezer method.

LACROSSE STICK & POCKET

No real cleaning of the stick is necessary, but the mesh sometimes needs cleaning if it's muddy, and caring for the stick and pocket is important.

There's different mesh types, ask your coach or an experienced teammate. It's really player preference, what works for them. Wax mesh has virtually no break in time, the hold is great and with the wax covering it holds up to rain and wet grass. Wax mesh won't hold the water, which means that it won't get heavy during a game or practice and it holds the pocket better.

Regular mesh requires a bit more work. To rinse off muddy regular mesh or dry out wet regular mesh, try and dry your mesh as much as possible with a towel, then push your pocket back out to where you want it (use a lacrosse ball to position the pocket) then line the pocket with a dry paper towel and replace the ball with crumpled up newspaper (the paper towel protects the mesh from any newspaper print that could bleed out and stain the mesh.) The newspaper and paper towel help to absorb the water and keep the form of the mesh. As the regular mesh dries, it will shrink back to normal depth if it didn't stretch too much while wet.

Anytime that your mesh gets really wet and stretched out, the pocket should be reformed and carefully dried (unless it's wax mesh - it retains its shape). **PLAYER SHOULD CHECK TO ENSURE THAT HIS POCKET IS STILL LEGAL.** Nothing is worse than having a stick check during a game and finding that the pocket is too deep. A stiff penalty is enforced.

******After a game you should push your pocket inward before putting it in your bag (this helps to protect your pocket from being stretched or drying wrong in your bag) Sticks shouldn't be stored in your bag for any extended period of time - **ESPECIALLY** in hot trunks during summer months. Take them out between games and practices, make sure the pocket is formed correctly and bring them inside where it's cool and dry. Sticks left in a shed, garage or trunk in the cold winter months can crack and split. You should occasionally check your head screws to make sure it's secure and tight.

Check your shooter strings, sidewall, top strings and bottom strings regularly. They come untied often and will cause your passing/shooting to be off. If any of the strings are fraying on the edges you can take a lighter and melt them so they form a hard end that will stop the fraying and protect that from happening in the future.

We have a local player that has a business of stringing lax heads, if you're interested contact registrar@canbylacrosse.com

I hope this information helps. My #1 advice is – **Don't leave wet gear in bag! Air dry overnight, and clean gear on a regularly basis.**