

Common Lacrosse Terms

Body Check - Contact with an opponent from the front or side (but not a blind side check) — between the shoulders and waist — when the opponent has the ball or is within 5 yards (high school) or 3 yards (youth) of a loose ball.

Box - An area drawn in both ends of the field surrounding the crease area. Also called the goal area or defensive area.

Clear - A clear is a lacrosse term that means getting the ball out from the defensive half of the field and into the offensive half (i.e. a goalie clear).

Cradling - A technique used to keep the ball in the lacrosse stick when running, etc.

Crease - A circle around the goal with a radius of 9 feet into which only defensive players may enter.

Cut - Offensive players cut towards the goal (trying to elude a defender) in order to receive a pass and hopefully score.

Dodge - Dodges are where players use various moves to bypass opposing players in order to pass or score.

EMO - A man advantage resulting from an opponent's time-serving penalty. Also known as "man-up."

Failure To Advance - Penalty called when a clear fails to move across the midfield line within a set period of time.

Fast Break - A player or players are racing up field with the ball and have gotten past their defenders. This is a transition play and often leads to a scoring opportunity. Teams need to practice fast break drills.

Feed - This is where a player passes to (feeds) a teammate for a score. This is an assist for a goal.

Faceoff - This technique is used to put the ball in play at the start of the game, each quarter, half, or after a goal is scored.

Gilman - A "Gilman" clear is a desperation clear where the goalie (or a defender) chucks the ball as far down the field as possible (and tries to get it into the offensive side of the field). For example, a Gilman clear might be done when a goalie is under heavy pressure during a clear and cannot find an open man to pass the ball to. Rather than turn it over, the goalie might attempt a Gilman clear.

Go To X - A coaching yelling "Go to X" is telling an attacker to take a position behind the goal.

GLE - Goal line extended

HOLE - Another name for the area outside/in front of the crease area, the imaginary box, 10 yards by 10 yards in front of the goal. A defensive area in front of the goal. You will hear "Get back in the hole!"

Man-Down - Due to a penalty (i.e. slashing), a Man-Down Situation is where a team is playing with one less player for a set period of time. The team is down "a man" in numbers.

Man-Up - Due to a penalty on the opposing team, a Man-Up Situation is where a team will have a man advantage because the other team loses a player for a set period of time.

Middie Back – If a defender crosses the midfield line with the ball, a midfielder must stay back in order to maintain three “defenders” plus the goalie in the defensive half of the field. You will hear players yelling “Middie Back” to tell a midfielder to stay on the defensive side of the field in order to avoid an off-sides penalty.

Midfield Line – The line that divides the field in half (into offensive and defensive halves).

Off-Sides – A penalty where the requisite numbers of players are not on their side of the field (i.e. three defenders and the goalie). Someone has gone “off-sides” and there are now too many players on one half of the field.

Penalty Box – This is where a player serves his time for a penalty (i.e. a slashing penalty). He must stay in this box until his time is up and he is released to play again.

Pick (or Screen) – Where player takes a stationary position in order to block an opponent in order to free a teammate for a pass or shot.

Ride – A ride is a lacrosse term for when an offensive player will “ride” an opposing defensive player with aggressive stick checks in order to force a turnover and get the ball. For example, on a clear, a goalie could pass the ball to one of his defensemen and an opposing attackman will ride the defender in order to force a turnover or to prevent a possible fast break.

Screen (or Pick) – Where player takes a stationary position in order to block an opponent in order to free a teammate for a pass or shot.

Screening – Where an attacker attempts to block the vision of the goalie (by positioning himself between the goalie and the shooter) so a teammate can score.

Slash -

A poke into the ribs, chest, neck or back. A vicious uncontrolled swinging of the stick whether contact is made or not. The gloved hand on the stick may be legally checked.

Slide – Where a defenseman has left his position or player to help another defender (especially if the other defender has been beaten by an offensive player).

Stick Check – A legal defensive technique where a player uses his stick to stop an opposing player (i.e. poke check). Visit our lacrosse checking page for more details.

Top-Side – This is where an offensive player tries to get above a defender into the middle of the field for a better percentage shot. A defender will try to prevent an opposing player from getting top side.

Tripping – A foul where a player trips an opposing player (i.e. places stick between the legs of an opposing player).

Warding – Warding is an illegal technique where a player does a one arm cradle and moves his free arm to block an opposing player’s stick (versus keeping it stationary).

X – X is a position about 5-10 yards behind a lacrosse net.

Zone Defense – Players take defensive positions based on the zones around the goal versus playing man-to-man defense.