

"In keeping with the overarching emphasis on player safety and sportsmanship at the youth level, USA Lacrosse and NHYLA expects stricter enforcement of the Cross Check, Illegal Body Check, Checks involving the Head/Neck, Slashing, Unnecessary Roughness, and Unsportsmanlike Conduct rules than is common at the High School level."

2026 Boys Youth Lacrosse Rules Guide				Updated March 5, 2026
Rule	8U & 10u small field	10U Full field	12U	14U
Length Of Game	(4) 12 Minute running or 8 minute stop quarters	(4) 12 Minute running or 8 minute stop quarters	(4) 10 Minute Stop quarters	(4) 10 Minute Stop quarters
Overtime	No Overtime	No Overtime	4 Minute Overtimes -- 2 Max	4 Minute Overtimes until sudden victory
Timeouts	Two 2-minute timeouts per half	Two 2-minute timeouts per half	Two 2-minute timeouts per half	Two 2-minute timeouts per half
Cross	37" - 42" for all players.	37" - 42" for all players.	NFHS Rules	NFHS Rules
Specifications	No long poles	No long poles		
	Hanging strings limited to 2"	Hanging strings limited to 2"	Hanging strings limited to 2"	Hanging strings limited to 2"
	New head size - not enforced	New head size - not enforced	New head size - not enforced	New head size - not enforced
Equipment**	Goalie arm pads optional	Goalie arm pads optional	Goalie arm pads optional	Goalie arm pads optional
	Protective cup required	Protective cup required	Protective cup required	Protective cup required
	NO Hockey helmets	NO Hockey helmets	NO Hockey helmets	NO Hockey helmets
Uniforms	Game Jerseys and colors should not be strictly enforced. Home team is responsible for contrasting colors.	Game Jerseys and colors should not be strictly enforced. Home team is responsible for contrasting colors.	Game Jerseys and colors should not be strictly enforced. Home team is responsible for contrasting colors.	Game Jerseys and colors should not be strictly enforced. Home team is responsible for contrasting colors.
Advancing the Ball	No defense or offensive Counts Goalie: 4 second count	No defense or offensive Counts Goalie: 4 second count	Defensive: 20 second count Offensive: 10 second count Goalie: 4 second count	Defensive: 20 second count Offensive: 10 second count Goalie: 4 second count
Final 2 Minutes	Stalling rule will be waived	Stalling rule will be waived	During the final 2 minutes of regulation play, stalling rules are in effect for the team that is ahead by 4 goals or less. When the score differential is 5 goals or more, neither team is forced to keep the ball in the goal area unless warned to "keep it in"	During the final 2 minutes of regulation play, stalling rules are in effect for the team that is ahead by 4 goals or less. When the score differential is 5 goals or more, neither team is forced to keep the ball in the goal area unless warned to "keep it in"
Facing Off (Mercy Rule)	6 goal mercy rule The losing coach can waive it.	6 goal mercy rule The losing coach can waive it.	All NFHS rules will be followed. In 2nd half a 12 goal differential will result in running time	All NFHS rules will be followed. In 2nd half a 12 goal differential will result in running time
Coach on Field	1 coach allowed on the field Must stay in the wing	Coach allowed whole sideline but restricted from other teams bench area and scoring table. Not allowed on field - 30 sec technical.	Coach restricted to coaches' box Not allowed on field except for injured player, to warm up a goal keeper, or at half time. 30 second technical	Coach restricted to coaches' box Not allowed on field except for injured player, to warm up a goal keeper, or at half time. 30 second technical
3 yard rule	All stick checks, legal holds, and legal pushes must be on a player in possession of the ball or within 3 yards of a loose ball or ball in flight.	All stick checks, legal holds, and legal pushes must be on a player in possession of the ball or within 3 yards of a loose ball or ball in flight.	All stick checks, legal holds, and legal pushes must be on a player in possession of the ball or within 3 yards of a loose ball or ball in flight.	All stick checks, legal holds, and legal pushes must be on a player in possession of the ball or within 3 yards of a loose ball or ball in flight.
Penalties & Fouling Out	8U: Player leaves the field. No time serving penalties. 10U: Enforced per NFHS rules Players serve penalty time A player who accumulates 3 personal fouls will be disqualified from the game	Enforced per NFHS rules Players serve penalty time Any player who accumulates 3 personal fouls or 5 minutes in personal foul penalty time shall be disqualified from the game	Enforced per NFHS rules Players serve penalty time Any player who accumulates 3 personal fouls or 5 minutes in personal foul penalty time shall be disqualified from the game	Enforced per NFHS rules Players serve penalty time Any player who accumulates 3 personal fouls or 5 minutes in personal foul penalty time shall be disqualified from the game
Slashing	Any one handed stick check will be considered a slash, even if no contact. Stick checks must begin below the shoulder.	Any one handed stick check will be considered a slash, even if no contact. Stick checks must begin below the shoulder.	Any one handed stick check will be considered a slash, even if no contact. Stick checks must begin below the shoulder.	Any one handed stick check will be considered a slash, Violent Slashes to the head or neck will serve full time

Body Checking	No body checking of any kind is allowed.	No body checking of any kind is allowed.	No body checking of any kind is allowed.	Body checking is permitted. To be legal a body check must be delivered in a generally upright position with both hands on the stick and the player initiating the check may not use his lowered head or shoulder to make the initial contact. No body checks to a player in a defenseless position.
	Legal pushes and holds are allowed.	Legal pushes and holds are allowed.	Legal pushes and holds are allowed.	
NEW Flag down, Play will be stopped using "GOODIE" (see bottom of sheet)				
** All goalkeepers and Field players must wear lacrosse chest protectors/shoulder pads that meet NOCSAE ND200 and contain the SEI certification mark.				
* Any Unsportsmanlike Conduct calls on a coach must be reported to Christian Day (603) 235-7417				
* No more than 3 coaches on the sideline with the team				
* Only the head coach can communicate with the officials				
Running time games have running time penalties.				
*On a Face-off, if a player is serving a non-releasable penalty, they are not released from the box until "Possession" is called even if their time expires.				
Rule	8U & 10u small field	10U Full field	12U	14U
Field Size	50 or 60 yards X 40 yards	Full field Regulation size but may be adjusted -- if coaches agree	Full field Regulation size but may be adjusted -- if coaches agree	Full field Regulation size but may be adjusted -- if coaches agree
Players	7 versus 7 of which one must be the goalie 4x4 Goals are REQUIRED 6x6 Goals are not allowed	10 versus 10 of which one must be the goalie	10 versus 10 of which one must be the goalie Goals cannot be upside down	10 versus 10 of which one must be the goalie Goals cannot be upside down
Offsides	3 players on the defensive end 4 players on the offensive end	4 players on the defensive end 6 players on the offensive end	4 players on the defensive end 6 players on the offensive end	4 players on the defensive end 6 players on the offensive end
Officials	1 Youth -- 2 recommended	2 youth or 1 NHLOA & 1 Youth (*)	1 NHLOA & 1 Youth (*)	1 NHLOA & 1 Youth (*)
Substitution	On the Fly	On the Fly	On the Fly	On the Fly
Officials	Certify the Coaches	Certify the Coaches	Certify the Coaches	Certify the Coaches
Procedures	Coin Toss/Goals 4X4 Line up - starters Stick checks after the 1st & 3rd quarters Score the game/NOCSAE Ball	Coin Toss/6 X 6 Goals Line up - starters Stick checks after the 1st & 3rd quarters Score the game/NOCSAE Ball	Coin Toss/6 X 6 Goals Line up - starters Stick checks after the 1st & 3rd quarters Score the game/NOCSAE Ball	Coin Toss/6 X 6 Goals Line up - starters Stick checks after the 1st & 3rd quarters Score the game/NOCSAE Ball
Face-offs	Start of Game & after each goal Wing Players released at whistle All others released on possession **From the face off, players are required to attempt 1 pass or bring ball through X before a shot on goal	Start Game after each goal Wing play allowed *Knee down is permitted*	Start Game after each goal Wing play allowed Standing Neutral Grip	Start Game after each goal Wing play allowed Standing Neutral Grip
Scrum Situation	If a loose ball cannot be picked up w/3 or more players in a scrum wait approx. 4 seconds then award ball via Alt. Possession	If a loose ball cannot be picked up w/3 or more players in a scrum wait approx. 4 seconds then award ball via alt possession	If a loose ball cannot be picked up w/3 or more players in a scrum wait approx. 4 seconds then award ball via alt possession	Same as NFHS Rules
"Designated Defender"- A Coach must designate a starting defender to serve the Goalie's penalties if a team does not have another goalie suited up				
*No game, under any circumstance, can be played with only 1 Official.				

Rule	8U & 10u small field	10U Full field	12U	14U
Defensive Player in Crease as Goalie	The 2nd and subsequent violation by team shall result in a releasable unsportsmanlike penalty served by the offending player	The 2nd and subsequent violation by team shall result in a releasable unsportsmanlike penalty served by the offending player	The 2nd and subsequent violation by team shall result in a releasable unsportsmanlike penalty served by the offending player	The 2nd and subsequent violation by team shall result in a releasable unsportsmanlike penalty served by the offending player
Long Poles	None allowed	None allowed	Maximum of 4	Maximum of 4
*All stick penalties are 2-minutes non-releasable				
*Play can re-start as soon as the offensive player is ready and no team mate is within 5 yds. The defender has to get 5 yds away or give a free lane to the player with the ball.				
* If a player loses any piece of required equipment, stop play IMMEDIATELY, regardless of proximity of opposing players				
* No defensive player, other than a properly equipped goalie, can enter their own crease with the perceived intent of blocking a shot or acting as a goalie. Defensive players are allowed to be in or pass through the crease but never with the perceived intention of blocking a shot. 1st time is 30 sec. ** Penalty: 1st is a Conuct foul, 2nd becomes an USC **				
* Unnecessary Roughness - 2 or 3 minute non-releasable penalty				
* Targeting the head - 3 min and an Ejection				
* If the official deems that the game is out of control he/she is to stop and end the game.				
If any issues arise from a game contact Christian Day at (603) 235-7417				
* 5-Min Misconduct penalty: A player can be assessed a 5-Min Misconduct penalty in addition to any time serving penalty.				
The team will get a player back after the initial penalty time has elapsed but the player who was assessed the Misconduct will then serve 5-Min of game time				
"GOODIE" - Goal, Out of bounds, Offensive violation or penalty, Defence gains possession, Injury, End of Quarter				