



Introduction and 6-Week Lesson Plan



Introduction

Welcome to Lacrosse, a fast-paced team sport suitable for players of all ages and abilities.

This pack contains a brief background to the lacrosse, both internationally and in Ireland. It also includes modified rules for playing 'School's Lacrosse', and a 6-week Lesson Plan for you to follow. A detailed explanation of all drills can be found in the appendices.

This information was drafted by Ireland Lacrosse, the National Governing Body of Lacrosse in Ireland. For further information regarding our School's Programme, including news and competitions, visit our website at www.irelandlacrosse.ie. If you have any questions regarding the training plan, equipment, or general support please contact info@irelandlacrosse.ie.

The rules provided within are adapted to suit lacrosse in a school setting. For the official and full international rules, consult the Federation of International Lacrosse website (www.filacrosse.com).

At Ireland Lacrosse, we are confident that the lacrosse will be a valuable addition to your PE Curriculum. As it gains momentum in Ireland, the sport offers playing opportunities for players of all abilities. For those who wish to learn more about teaching lacrosse and furthering their skills and knowledge base, Ireland Lacrosse offers a Certified Coaching Course.

We hope you find this pack useful. Keep in touch!

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The History of Lacrosse

Lacrosse has its origins in a tribal game played by all eastern Woodlands Native Americans and by some Plains Indians tribes in what is now Canada. The game has been modernized extensively by European immigrants to create its current form.

Lacrosse is one of the oldest team sports in North America. There is evidence that a version of lacrosse originated in Mesoamerica or Mexico as early as the 12th century. Traditional lacrosse games were sometimes major events that could last several days. As many as 100 to 1,000 men from opposing villages or tribes would participate. The games were played in open plains located between the two villages, and the goals could range from 500 yards to several miles apart.



Ball Players by George Catlin

Rules for these games were decided on the day before. Generally, there was no out-of-bounds, and the ball could not be touched with the hands. The goals would be selected as large rocks or trees; in later years, wooden posts were used. Playing time was often from sun up to sun down.

Lacrosse traditionally had many different purposes. Some games were played to settle inter-tribal disputes. This function was essential to keeping the Six Nations of the Iroquois together. Lacrosse was also played to toughen young warriors for combat, for recreation, as part of festivals, and for the bets involved. Finally, lacrosse was played for religious reasons: “for the pleasure of the Creator” and as a form of collective prayer.

By the 20th century, many high schools, colleges and universities had adopted lacrosse as a league sport. Lacrosse became an Olympic sport for the 1904 and 1908 Summer Olympics, but was then dropped as an official sport. After 1908, lacrosse was a sport in the World Games. In the 1930s, an indoor version of the game, box lacrosse, was introduced in Canada. It quickly became the dominant form of the sport in Canada, in part due to the severe winter weather that limited outdoor play. Minor leagues developed for box lacrosse and college lacrosse. Two professional leagues also were created: in 1987 the Eagle Pro Box Lacrosse League was founded; it eventually became the Major Indoor Lacrosse League, and then the National Lacrosse League (NLL). In the summer of 2001, a professional field lacrosse league, known as Major League Lacrosse (MLL), was inaugurated.

Lacrosse in Ireland

The origins of lacrosse in Ireland lie with the establishment of the Ards Lacrosse Club in Newtownards, Co. Down (just outside Belfast) in 1872.

Men's lacrosse flourished in Ireland at the end of the 19th century and into the beginning of the 20th. In these years, two trophies were awarded for lacrosse in Ireland – the Irish Championship Flag and the Irish Challenge Shield – and these trophies still exist and are held in Newtownards, the erstwhile spiritual home of lacrosse in Ireland as the first town to have established a lacrosse club in 1872.

Women's lacrosse emerged in Ireland in the 1920s. Richmond Lodge, which was an all-girls school in Belfast, began playing the game at least as early as 1922. On Monday, the 29th of November, at 2.45pm, at Trinity Hall in Rathmines in Dublin, the (suitably named) Dublin Pioneers Ladies lacrosse team held its first practice.

In 1930, the Irish Ladies Lacrosse Association was founded, as was the first ever Irish Women's National Lacrosse Team which played its first competitive match in a tournament in April of that year at Merton Abbey (southwest London) which featured Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England.

The Modern Era

Men's lacrosse in Ireland emerged in 1872 and died out in the early 1900s, with women's lacrosse then emerging in the 1920s and then subsequently dying out around 1970.

The Irish men's national lacrosse team was (re-)formed to compete in the 2001 European Championships tournament, and has continued to participate in major tournaments from that time. A men's indoor team was added in 2007 and a men's Under-19 team was added for 2016.

In 2005, an Irish women's national lacrosse team was re-established has likewise continued to participate in major tournaments since that time. Planning is underway to establish a women's Under-19 team by 2019.

Lacrosse development within Ireland has continued to go from strength to strength, and in the 2009-2010 season the Irish Lacrosse League was established. This league features men's and women's teams such as the Dublin, Dublin Bay Prawns, University College Dublin (UCD), National University of Ireland (NUI) Galway and Queen's University Belfast, and a newly developed Cork team.

With renewed enthusiasm the work undertaken by the founders of lacrosse in Ireland nearly a century ago continues today!

Playing the Game

Lacrosse Explained

There are four kinds lacrosse played in Ireland: Men's Field, Women's Field, Men's Indoor, and School's Lacrosse. Each game follows slightly different rules. For example, Men's Field and Men's Indoor are full-contact sports, while Women's Field is a limited-contact sport. The rulebooks for the senior versions are published by the Federation of International Lacrosse, and can be found on their website (<http://filacrosse.com/>).

School's Lacrosse Explained

Equipment: In the senior game, the men's stick and the women's stick are somewhat different, due to the varied contact levels. Both are made firm plastic heads, but the men's stick has a deep pocket (or net) while the women's stick has a shallow pocket. A popular choice for schools is POP Lacrosse sticks. These can be cheaper to buy, but the plastic is thinner and more prone to damage. Lacrosse balls are made from a hard rubber. POP Lacrosse sets come with a special kind of ball; and if you are playing with field lacrosse sticks, it is strongly advised that you use tennis balls or light practice balls.

Ireland Lacrosse would be delighted to assist you when choosing which equipment to purchase.

Playing Area: A regulation field is 110 yards long × 60 yards wide. You can play lacrosse outdoors on whatever space you have available, with or without hard lines. You can also play in a sports hall or indoor area. Lacrosse works best when players have the space to spread out and pass quickly, so it do not overcrowd the field.

The Goal: A regulation goal is 6 ft × 6ft. If you do not have a goal, use two cones, a bin, a bag or whatever you have to hand! A goalkeeper uses a special stick and protective equipment, including a helmet and chest guard. If you do not have this equipment, play without a goalkeeper.

Teams: Men's lacrosse is a 10-aside game, while the women's game is 12-aside. In School's Lacrosse, you can play as many as your space will accommodate, but do not overcrowd the space. In a sports hall, for example, 6 or 8-aside will work well.

Contact: School's lacrosse is a non-contact sport that can be played with boys, girls, or mixed teams.

School's Lacrosse in 10 Simple Rules

1. **The Aim** – The aim of lacrosse is to score more goals than your opposing team.
Simple!
2. **The Pitch and Timing**– You can use any size field you have available, and can play indoors or outside. A regular game is played with 30 minutes halves. In school's lacrosse, you can adjust the time to suit the number of players and the time you have available.
3. **Teams** – Lacrosse is played between two opposing teams. You can limit the size of each team by the amount of players you have and the space available to you. Do not overcrowd the field.
4. **Starting Play** – Start play with a 'throw' between two players from opposing teams in the centre of the field. The rest of the teams mark each other like they would in football.
5. **Scoring** – You can keep score by using a goal, bag or bin. Alternatively, you can use an 'Endzone' (see drills).
6. **Moving the Ball** – To move the ball, players pass to each other in the air. Players **cannot** kick the ball or use their hands or any other body part to catch or propel the ball. There is no limit as to how long a player can hold the ball in their stick, or how many steps they can take. It may be useful in some cases, to impose a time limit for possession to encourage a passing game.
7. **Change of Possession** – If the ball goes out of bounds or a foul is committed, possession switches to the other team. To restart play, all players must move 4 yards away from the person with the ball. The player with the ball may pass, run or shoot. If a ball is dropped, any player on either team may scoop it up.
8. **Non-Contact** – School's Lacrosse is a non-contact sport. Players may not initiate body-to-body, stick-to-body, or stick-to-stick contact. If contact is initiated, a foul is committed and possession goes to the other team. All other players move 4 yards from the player with the ball.
9. **Defending** – Defenders **may not** stand or move in front of the goal when the attacking team is in a shooting position.
10. **Fouls** – Fouls include: initiating contact; excessively rough play; propelling the ball with part of your body; throwing the ball in a reckless manner; covering or 'raking' the ball on the group; blocking the goal

6-Week Lesson Plan

Lesson	1 – Introduction to Lacrosse	Duration	45 Minutes Approx.
Objective	Introduce participants to the sport, including basic rules, history and equipment		
Goals	To gain awareness of the basic concepts and skills of the sport To gain confidence in catching, throwing and groundballs		
Skills	Basic knowledge of the sport, catching, throwing, groundballs		
Activities	<p>1. An introduction to the history of lacrosse & the modern game (5 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See ‘The History of Lacrosse’ • See ‘Lacrosse in Ireland’ <p>2. Throwing and Catching (15 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show players the correct way to hold the stick • Guide players throw the correct movements for catching and throwing • Drill: Partner Passing (Partners should be approx.10 meters apart) <p>3. Groundballs (10 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the rules relating to groundballs • Demonstrate the correct way to scoop a groundball • Drill: Triangle Ground Ball <p>4. Modified Game (15 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drill: Endzone • Encourage players to pass correctly • Encourage players to scoop groundballs correctly • Ensure there is not body or stick contact 		
Equipment	Sticks (for each player); Balls (1 for every 2 players); Cones		
Notes	Players should always throw over arm; The ball may not be covered or ‘raked’ on the ground. For helpful videos on technique, search for ‘lacrosse skills’ on YouTube.		

Lesson	2 – Introduction Continued	Duration	45 Minutes Approx.
Objective	Introduce participants to the basic elements of lacrosse		

Goals	To gain confidence in the basic skills of lacrosse To gain confidence in groundballs and cradling
Skills	Groundballs, cradling
Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Catching and Throwing (10 min)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recap on the basics of catching and throwing• Drill: Partner Passing2. Groundballs (10 min)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recap on the basics of groundballs• Drill: Round Up3. Cradling (15 min)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce the idea of cradling• Demonstrate the correct cradling motion• Allow players to try it themselves, static and on the move• Drill: Sharks and Minnows4. Modified Game (10 mins)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drill: Endzone• Encourage players to pass correctly• Encourage players to scoop groundballs correctly• Ensure there is not body or stick contact
Equipment	Sticks; Balls; Cones
Notes	Make sure players are using the correct techniques when throwing, catching and picking up groundballs; For helpful videos on technique, search for 'lacrosse skills' on YouTube.

Lesson	3 – Playing on the move	Duration	45 Minutes Approx.
Objective	Introduce concepts of playing on the move Introduce concepts of defensive play		
Goals	To gain an understanding of the flow of the sport To gain confidence of using basic skills while in motion To develop an understanding of non-contact defensive play		
Skills	Employing skills on the move Maintaining accuracy while passing to a moving target Non-contact defence in a 1 v 1 situation		
Activities	1. Introduction (1 – 2 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief recap of last week’s learning points • Outline plan for today’s session 2. Catching and throwing on the move <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drill: 3 Player Box (10 min) • Drill: Star Drill (10 min) 3. Understanding Defence (5 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the key rules for defence • Demonstrate correct body positioning for non-contact defence • See ‘Defensive Principles’ 4. Defence in action (15 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drill: Snatch the Bacon 		
Equipment	Sticks; Balls; Cones		
Notes			

Lesson	4 – Attacking Principles	Duration	45 Minutes Approx.
Objective	To introduce the principles of 1 v 1 attacking play		
Goals	Develop the ability to get around players in a 1v1 situation		
Skills	Dodging		
Activities	<p>1. Introduction (1 – 2 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief recap of last week’s learning points • Outline plan for today’s session <p>2. 1v1 Dodges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drill: Face Dodge (5 min) • Drill: Roll Dodge (5 min) • Drill: Split Dodge (5 min) <p>3. 1v1 Dodges in play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drill: Gauntlet (15 min) <p>4. Drill: Four Pair Scramble (10 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on defensive body positioning • Focusing on attacking dodges and ball retention • Focusing on attacking movement off the ball 		
Equipment	Sticks; Balls; Cones; Goal/Bin/Bucket/Bag		
Notes			

Lesson	5 – Making Space	Duration	45 Minutes Approx.
Objective	To introduce the use of space in playing lacrosse		
Goals	To be able to identify and utilise space in an offensive position		
Skills	Cutting for the purpose of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• moving into space to receive a pass• Getting away from a defender to receive a pass		
Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Introduction (1 – 2 mins)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief recap of last week’s learning points• Outline plan for today’s session2. Getting away from your defender (10 min)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drill: 2 v 1 Cutting3. Keeping space on offence (10 min)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drill: 3 v 2 in box4. Modified Game × 2 (20 min: 10 min each)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drill: 5-Pass Point		
Equipment	Sticks; Balls; Cones		
Notes			

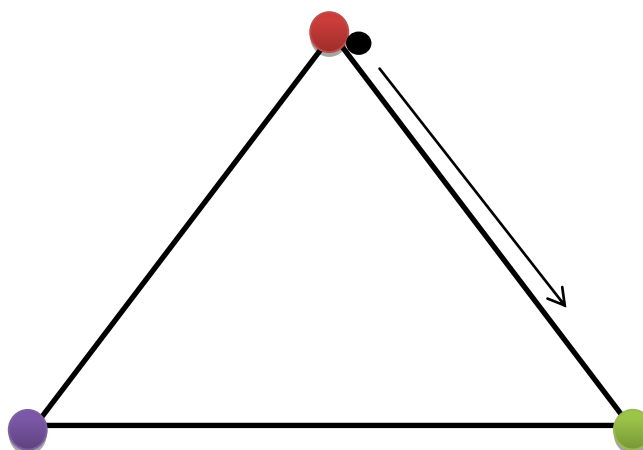
Lesson	6 – Competition Day	Duration	45 Minutes Approx.
Objective	To play games in a competitive, fun and constructive environment		
Goals	To experience competitive gameplay		
Skills	Using all of the skills learned to benefit competitive play		
Activities	1. Recap on rules for gameplay (5 min) 2. Modified Game (4 × 10 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drill: Endzone• Divide the class into 3 teams and play a round-robin format<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Team 1 v Team 2; Team2 v Team 3, Team 3 v Team 1• Each game is 10 minutes• Award 3 points for a win & 1 point for a draw• Two teams with most points play a 'Final'		
Equipment	Sticks; Balls; Cones		
Notes			



Drill Sheets

1.1 Triangle Ground Ball Drill

Players: Groups of 3

Equipment: 3 cones; 1 ball per group; sticks



 Player 1  Player 2  Player 3  Ball

Description: 'Player 1' begins with the ball and rolls it quickly to 'Player 2', who rolls it to 'Player 3'.

Objective: This should be a fast-paced drill with many repetitions. The aim is for players to practice good groundball technique. This means scooping the ball in motion, rather than raking or covering the ball with the stick.

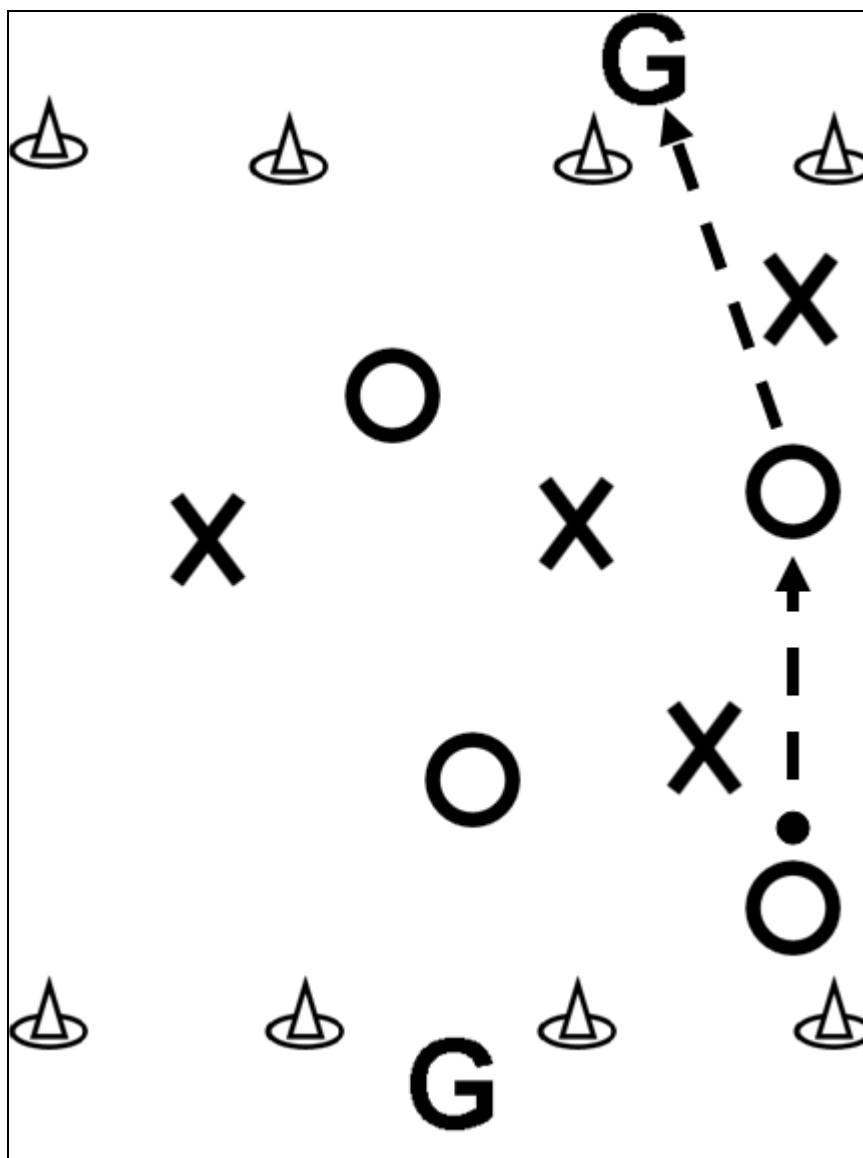
Variation: Players should follow their pass at a run and rotate around the triangle.

1.2 Endzone

Skill: Field Play

Players: All

Equipment: Sticks, ball, cones



Organization : Setup two end zones with a goalie in each end zone. Split the rest of the group into two teams.

Game: Regular style game but teams score by getting the ball to their goalie in the end zone.

Variation: Players may only possess the ball for 4 seconds before passing or scoring.

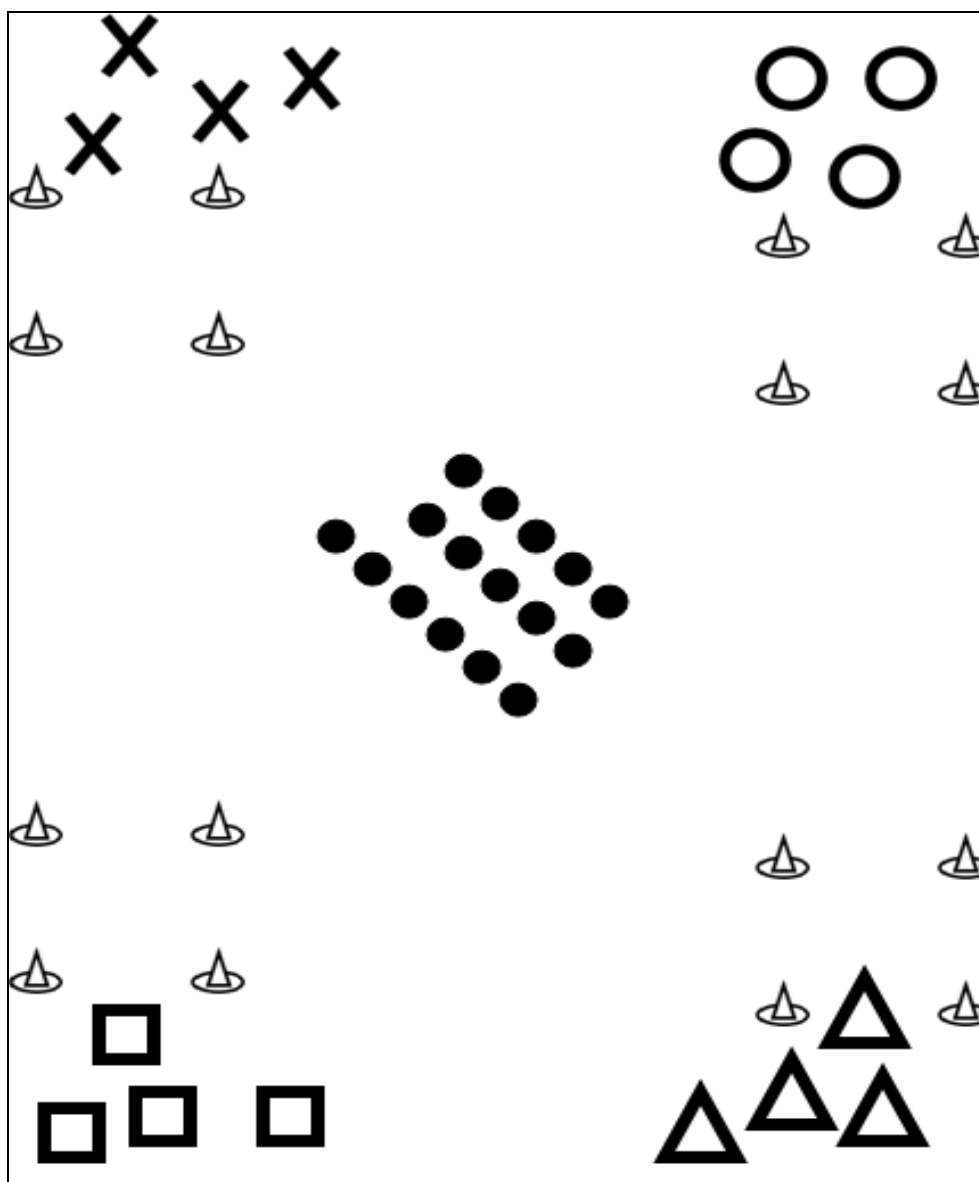
Note: This is a useful format to use as a normal game if you have no goals.

2.1 Round Up

Skill: Ground Balls

Players: All

Equipment: Cones, balls, sticks



Organization - Create four 4 yards squares about 20 yards from each other. Divide teams into groups of 4 or 5 and assign them to a corner.

Game - On the coach's whistle, players one at a time go and retrieve (Round Up) a ground ball and bring it back to their corner. Once all the balls are gone from the

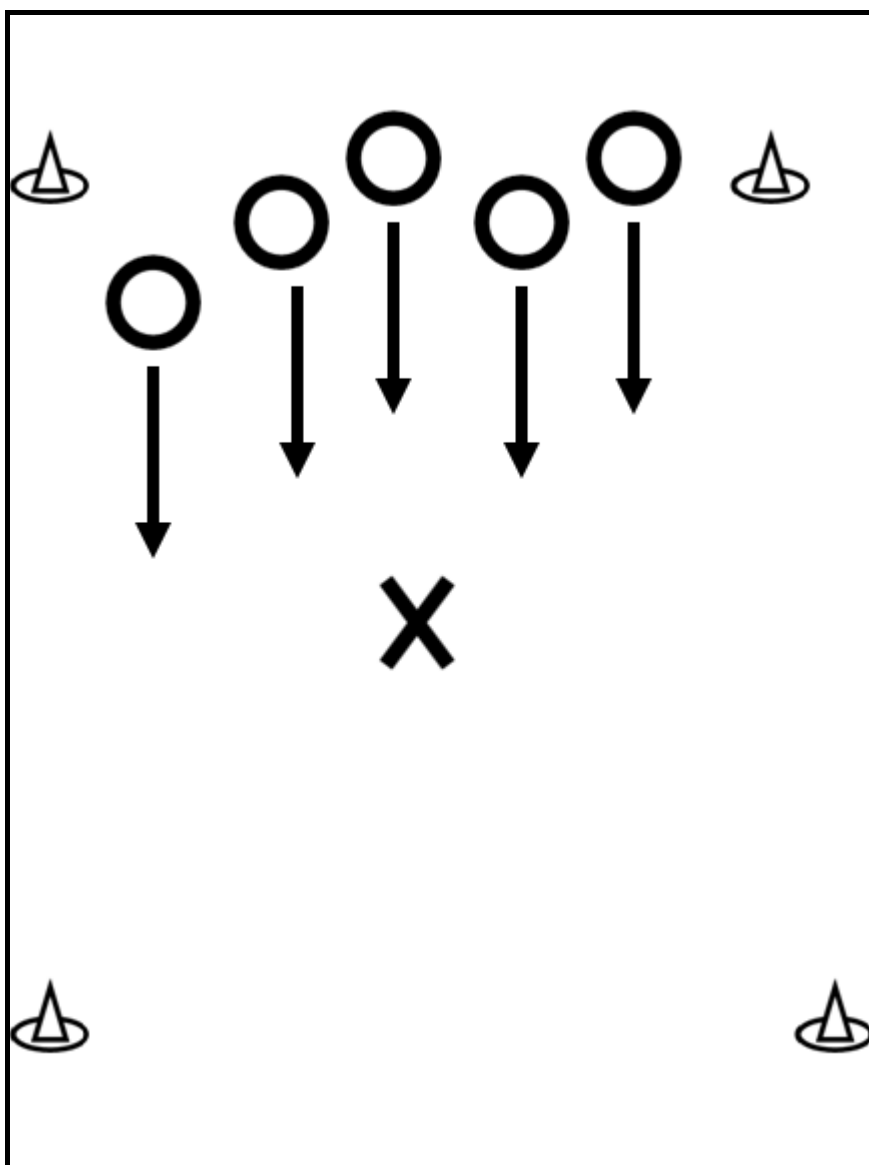
middle, players are now free to go get any ball from any corner and bring it back to their corner. Play for a certain amount of time. The team with the most balls wins.

2.2 Sharks and Minnows

Skill: Cradling

Players: All

Equipment: Sticks, balls, cones



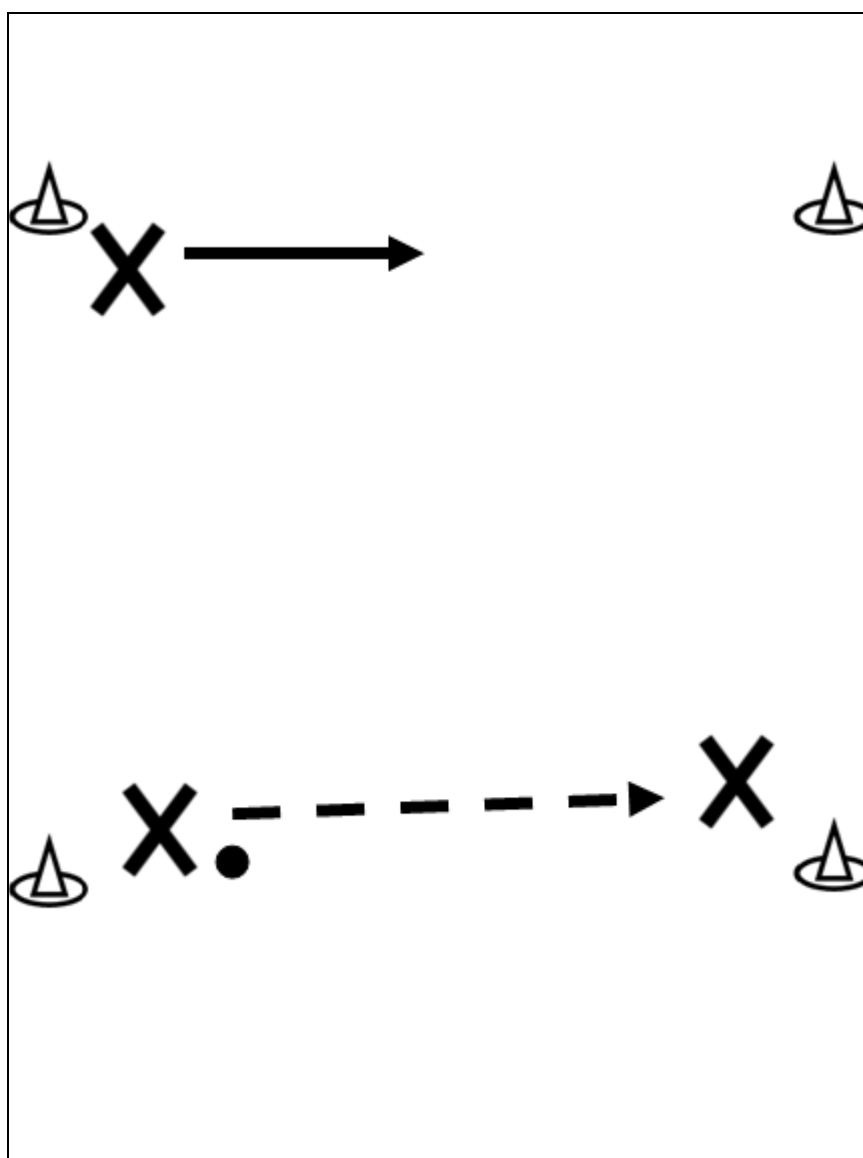
Organization - Create two lines 30 yards apart. Players (the minnows) line up on one line with a ball in their stick. The coach or another player (the sharks) waits in the middle of the field.

Game - On coach's whistle or signal, all players run to the opposite line while

cradling their balls. The sharks try to check the balls away as players run by. If a player's ball is dropped, they become a shark. Once all the players reach the other side, clear away dead balls and repeat. Play until there are one or two players left.

3.1 3 Player Box

Skill: Passing on the move **Players:** Groups of 3 **Equipment:** Balls, cones, sticks



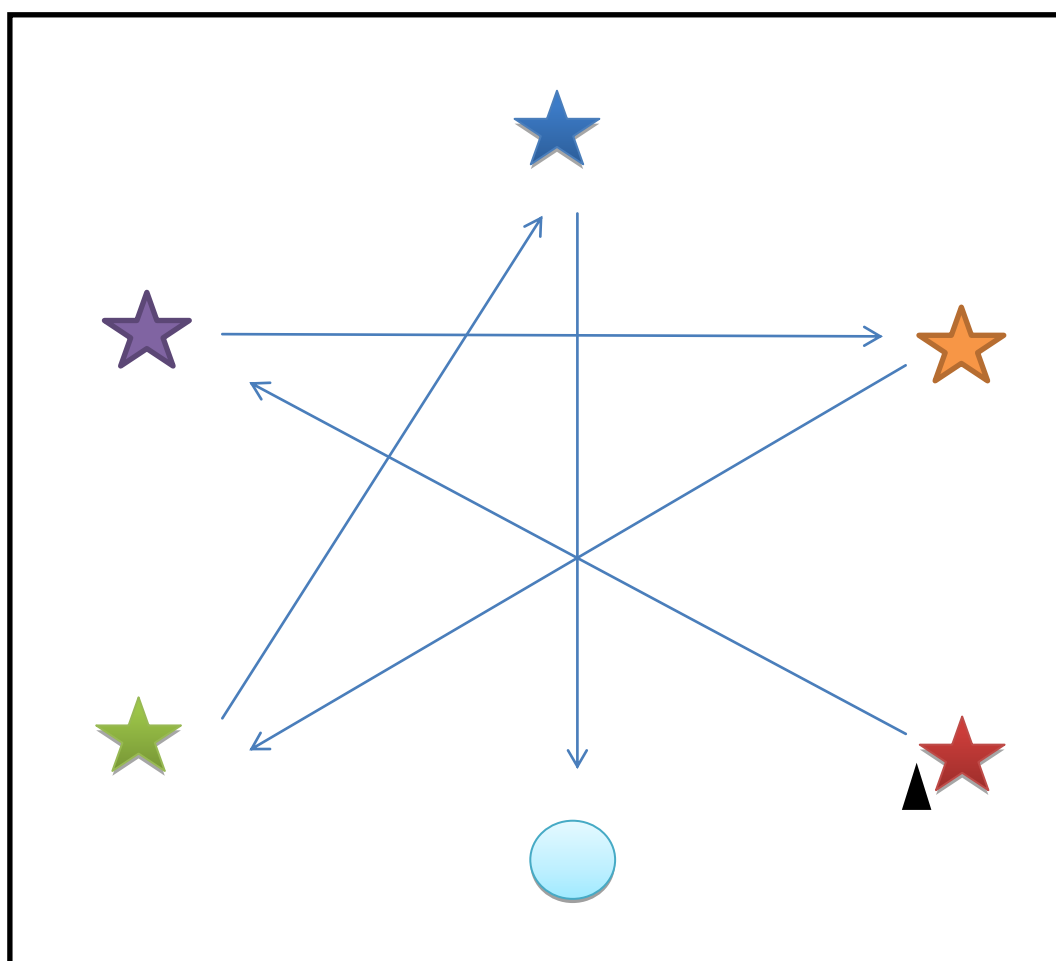
Organization - Create 15 yard box with 4 cones. Organize the players into groups of three, with each player standing at a cone and one ball per box.

Game - Players pass the ball in an anti-clockwise direction. After every pass, one player must run to make sure the player with the ball never has an empty adjacent cone next to them.

3.2 Star Drill

Skill: Passing on the move

Players: All **Equipment:** Sticks, balls, cones



Organisation: Lay out four cones to make a square, with another cone at the top and the coach standing at the bottom (circle). Players form a line at each cone, with the balls at the bottom right line.

Game: Players pass the ball to the line diagonally across from them (see arrows). When the player in the top line receives the ball they must pass back to the coach.

Players should catch the ball on the move, cutting towards the person with the ball.

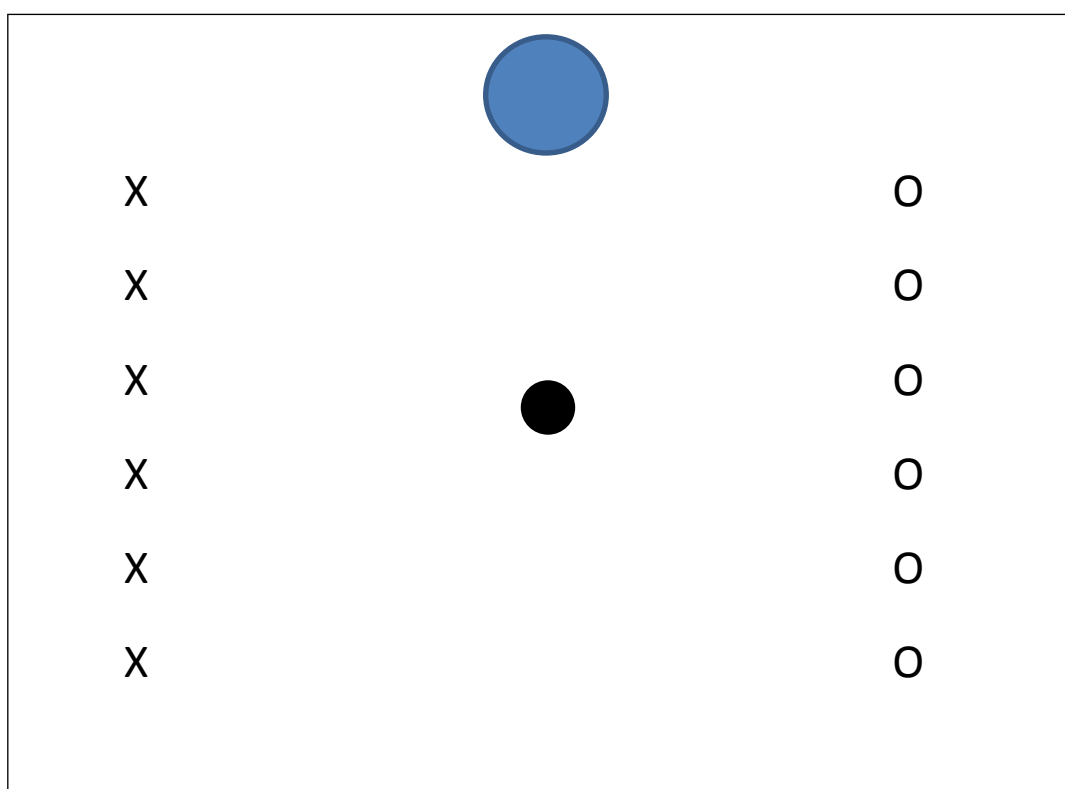
Variation: Instead of returning the ball to the coach, players from the top line aim for a target or a goal.

3.3 Snatch the Bacon

Skill: Defence; 1v1

Players: All

Equipment: Sticks, balls



Organisation: Divide the players into 2 teams, standing across from each other on the field with the ball in the centre. Each player has a number that corresponds to a player on the other team.

Game: When the coach calls out a number, the player from each team with that number must run to the centre and compete for the ground ball. The player who gets the ball has 10 seconds to pass the ball back to the coach to win a point for their

team. The player without the ball must try to prevent the pass using body defensive skills. If they succeed in preventing the pass, the defenders team gets a point.

Variation: Instead of passing the ball to the coach, the attacking player aims for a target.

4.1 Dodges

There are 3 basic dodges that players should use to get around an opposing player.

General tips:

- Players should practice the dodges at a fast pace and always run through the dodge
- The aim is always for the attacker to keep their body between the defender and the ball
- It is useful to see these dodges in motion. There are a number of demonstration videos on YouTube.

1. Face Dodge

When facing a defender, the player with the ball fakes as if to run past them on the right hand side. The ball carrier then moves to the left, while moving the stick across their body so as to keep their body between the defender and the ball.

2. Roll Dodge

When approaching a defender, the player with the ball plants their right foot between the feet of the defender. They then roll around the defender, leading with their left shoulder.

3. Split Dodge

When approaching a defender the attacking player fakes to the right. They then switch their stick to their left hand while at the same time moving to the left of the defender.

In Practice:

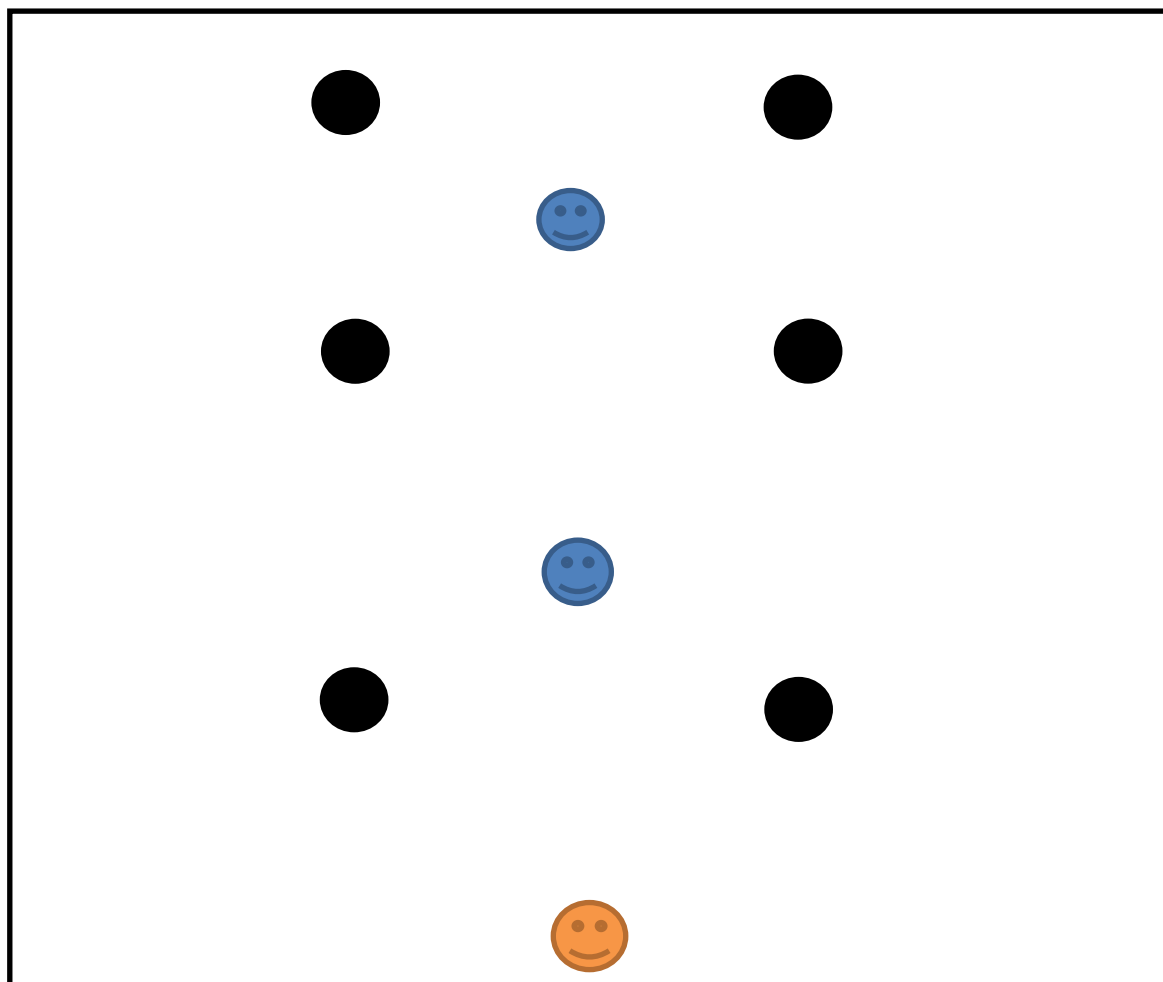
Split players in to pairs, with a stick each and a ball between them. Allow them to take turns practicing each dodge.

4.2 Gauntlet

Skill: Dodges

Players: Groups of 4

Equipment: Cones, balls, sticks



Organisation: Divide the players into groups of three. Using 6 cones set up two small squares. One defender stands in the centre of each square.

Game: The attacking player must get past each defender without dropping the ball or stepping out of the square.

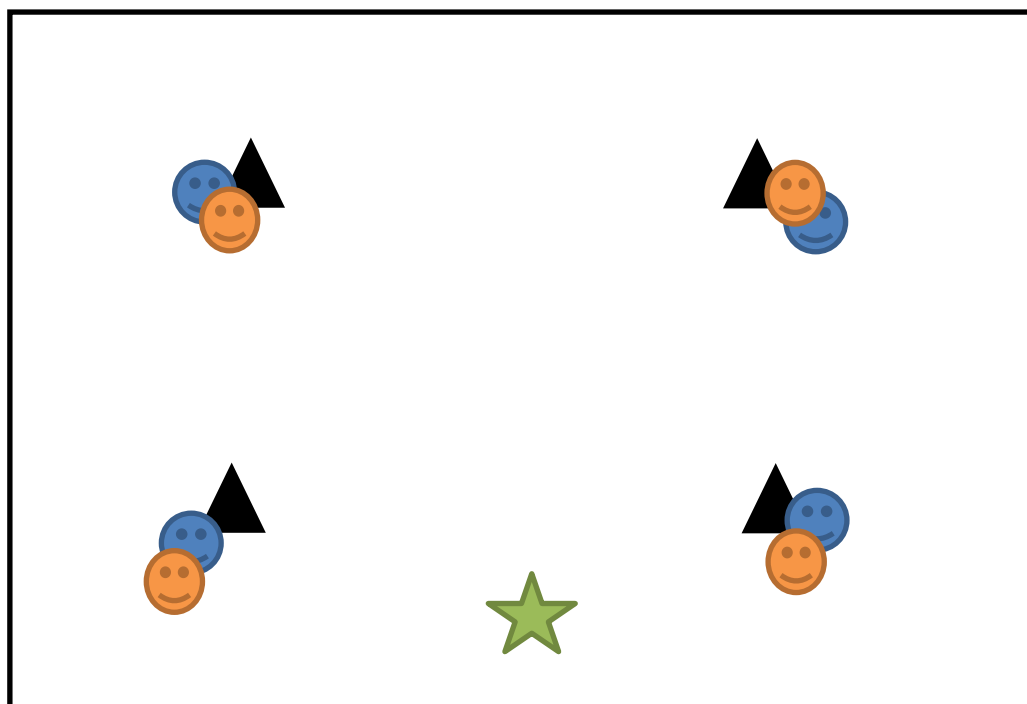
Variation: Begin with having the defenders static, and the attacking player dodging past them. To make it more difficult, allow the defenders to move around within the box. You can also add more boxes .

4.3 Four Pair Scramble

Skill: Game play

Players: All

Equipment: Cones, sticks, balls, bibs



Organisation: Create a square using cones and divide the players into two teams with different coloured bibs. Put one player from each team at each of the four cones. The coach stands at the top of the square with the balls.

Game: The coach rolls a ball into the centre of the square and the pairs run in to compete for the ground ball. Once a player takes possession, their team must get five passes to receive a point. If the balls changes possession, the other team has the chance to win the point if they complete five passes. If a team scores a point or the ball goes dead, swap in four new sets of pairs.