POSITIONING

In order to set the appropriate tone and "make the call," the official must have in-depth knowledge of the rules and be in good position to see the play. The key to good positioning and movement on the field is familiarity with the game and knowledge of techniques and patterns of play. An awareness of how the ball can move from defense to attack can help you anticipate where the pass or play will go.

Understand the basis for most rules is safety. Call a foul sooner rather than later if you think a check is dangerous, call it. Don't worry about holding the whistle. It is better to stop a play and maintain game control than to be too concerned about the flow of the game. That will come with practice and experience.

Be aware that when determining rough, reckless, or dangerous checking, sound does not necessarily equal a rough check. When sticks make contact with one another, it may make a loud sound.

A check may be so forceful that it knocks the stick from the player's hands. You must determine if this is a rough, dangerous check, or was the player with the ball not expecting a check and therefore had her stick knocked away.

After a shot on goal or deflected shot on goal, as the ball goes over the boundary line, blow your whistle and then determine team possession. Don't wait to see who is closest to the boundary line where the ball went out. Sound the whistle and make the decision at that moment. If both players are equally close to the boundary line, use the alternate possession procedure (AP) to determine which team will gain possession for the restart of play. In an intense contested game, players "play to the whistle." The official cannot rely on a player to slow down as she reaches the boundary.

Be sure that all players stand when the whistle blows. Insist on it. Move players back if they have moved. The idea is that players cannot reposition, either to gain additional advantage or to recover from losing an opponent. Play stops completely when the whistle blows, and it is restarted with the situation as it was. Only those players who you determine must be moved may move. The player being awarded the ball must always be moved 2m in from the boundary.

When a minor foul is committed, be firm in positioning players 4m away from the free position, and in the direction from which they approached. Don't let a player on a minor foul move 4m in front of an opponent when she was approaching from the side of the rear. In positioning a player after she has committed a minor foul, place her 4m directly behind the player taking the free position and all others 4m away in the same relative position. If a player is awarded the ball on an out of bounds situation, that player is moved 2m from the boundary onto the field. All players in the immediate area will retain the same relative position with at least 1m of space from the ball carrier.

Be aware of the importance of your positioning around the goal circle. If you are not in position to call a goal circle violation and a goal results, don't make the call, just because you think the player might have violated the goal circle. Talk with your partner pre-game and establish the kind of help you would like with goal circle violations. Generally, one Lead Official does not want the Trail Official to initiate a goal circle call. But a Lead Official may very well confer with her partner through visual contact prior to signaling the goal if she senses a goal circle violation and feels her partner may have seen it. The Trail Official watches every shot for a possible dangerous follow through. This must be whistled crisply, firmly, and immediately. If the ball does cross the goal line, the Trail Official must alert the Lead Official with a "no goal" whistle and signal before the Lead Official has a chance to signal the goal.

Watch the ball carrier closely. You will learn to tell what she intends to do: carry, shoot, pass, or shoot. This will help you anticipate what will follow, both with regard to possible fouls, and with the flow of the play. If you can tell that she is going to pass, you could expect only certain fouls to occur. For example, checking on the hands as the pass is made. If you see that she is going to continue with the ball, look for an acceleration and possible body contact to result. Then determine the call — blocking, charging, holding, or "no call". If she gets by her opponent, look for tripping, dangerous checking, or slashing. Be aware of the consequences of a change of speed by the ball carrier.

If her opponent is not quick enough to adjust, some kind of contact will often result. Change of direction can produce the same type of fouls. When a player loses the ball by being checked, be alert for possible dangerous checking to follow due to emotion and/or poor positioning.

When the ball is on the ground, anticipate that there may be a lot of hitting of empty crosses or pushing an opponent off the ball, especially if the skill level is not the best. While there may well be stick to stick contact, be sure to evaluate if it is really an empty stick check or just incidental contact as two players vie for the ball. Don't become so focused on the ball and sticks that you miss the possible pushing and shoving that may occur. One way or the other right away.

Positioning, anticipation, familiarity with the game, and an in-depth knowledge of the rules are the keys to good umpiring. An official must be repositioning frequently so as to look between players where contact is likely to occur.

Anticipating what the player is going to do prepares the official to be in the best possible position to see and make the call. Review your rulebook and manual often, both before and during the season. Take pride in knowing rules, interpretations, guidelines, and intent of the rules. Practice as much as you can, with a more experienced official helping you if possible. Seeing fouls as a spectator is very different from seeing them on the field and having to make the call. Remember that no one is perfect, but resolve to do the very best you can each time you step onto the field to official.
A. General Suggestions and Techniques

When an official steps onto the field, she is there to provide the opportunity for the players to compete safely and fairly. It is the players’ game and a good official will keep it that way. As an official you must have a thorough knowledge of the rules, be in good physical condition, give your best effort during each game, and be in position to see the play and make the correct call. You must be in position to look between players rather than trying to look through, across, or around them. This may require you to reposition frequently so that your view of the ball is never blocked by the players. Anticipate play! Come into the field when necessary, but be prepared to move out of the players’ way as play develops. Overall safety and play around the goal areas are the officials’ top priorities.

If you are the Lead Official, i.e., officiating the goal area, you must be aware of the ball at all times. Establish a neutral position or a “home base” to the side of the goal then adjust your positioning, based on the movement of the ball – either moving higher or dropping lower, at times even lower than the goal line extended. Open your shoulders to the whole field rather than focusing all your attention on the goal circle. This will allow you to get the best picture of on-ball as well as off-ball play and will help you anticipate what might happen next. While you may not always be “on the ball,” you must know where the ball is at all times. One of your most important responsibilities as the Lead Official is to be “on tangent” when a shot on goal is taken. To be on tangent means that you position yourself at a right angle to the approaching ball carrier. Being on tangent will not only help the guesswork out of making goal circle violation calls, but generally it will place you in the best position to see fouls against the ball carrier.

Boundary balls for a rolling or bouncing ball, whether on the side line or the end line, can be challenging. It is critical that you move to be in good position to see who touched the ball last or who is closer (stick or body) on a shot or a deflected shot on goal to correctly award the ball in out of bounds situations. Avoid standing and looking directly at the player’s back as they near the boundary line as you will have no angle to make a proper judgment. For endline calls, you will need to go below the level of the goal to get the best view and the best angle. Get in a position to clearly see and make the call when the ball or a player’s foot or stick touches the boundary. Get in position to clearly see which player is nearer to the ball (stick or body) on a shot or deflected shot that goes out of bounds. The alternate possession (AP) procedure is only used when the official, by virtue of good position on the boundary, is absolutely certain that the opponents are equidistant from the ball.

Whether you are part of a two person or a three person officiating crew, communication and eye contact with your partner(s) are essential. Prior to the draw, you want to look at your partner(s) to be sure they are ready to start play. Eye contact and a simple nod of the head is all that’s needed. After a goal is scored, you’ll want to wait an extra second or two before signaling goal as you look towards your partner. If you are unsure about a possible goal circle violation because of a quick shot being taken before you could get on tangent, look to your partner to indicate if a dangerous follow-through has occurred. Partners must also communicate that a verbal warning or a card has been given, and partners must make eye contact before play is restarted after a carding situation has occurred.

B. Two Person System - Specifics

When officiating the two-person system, the officials will be called the Lead Official and the Trail Official and each will:

1. Be responsible for the goal area to her right side.
2. Be the Lead Official when the ball is coming toward her, and for the duration of the attacking play.
3. Become the Trail Official when the ball is moving away from her.

LEAD OFFICIAL

As the Lead Official moves down field and to her right, her position is angled for the best visibility and she is responsible for out of bounds calls on the sideline nearest to her. She always works to be ahead of the play as the ball moves towards her goal circle area. Once the ball is in her goal circle area, the Lead Official is primarily responsible for on-ball fouls, goal circle calls and out of bounds calls over her end line. She must also call obstruction of the free space to goal fous in the area in front of goal nearest to where she is standing. While she may call three second violations, illegal picks and off-ball fouls, these are primarily the responsibility of the Trail Official.

Note to officials learning the three-person system: When working a two-person system, with a partner who is also learning the three-person system, work on a B-Lead position (Lead moving to her left) rather than an A-Lead position (Lead moving to her right). This will prepare you for one of two major position additions in the three-person system.
TRAIL OFFICIAL
The Trail Official follows the play down field and is responsible for out of bounds calls on the sideline nearest to her. She must be "field conscious" at all times and watch the overall picture as the Lead Official concentrates on the ball and the goal area. As the ball approaches the goal area, the Trail Official takes a position near the Trail Official will shift laterally with the play in order to see obstruction of the free space to goal on her half of second violations. The Trail Official must anticipate a change of possession and be ready to quickly transition to become the Lead Official at the other end of the field.

The officials share the responsibility for calling fouls in the midfield. Who makes the foul is based on who is closest, but sometimes who had the better angle to see the ball and the players may be the deciding factor. Work something that may look like a foul to you from across the field may not look the same to your partner who is right on top of the play.

In the two-person system, the opening draw of each half is generally administered by the official on the side of the field away from the scorer's table. Subsequent draws after a goal are always taken by the Trail Official. The Lead Official quickly retrieves the ball from the goal area and hands it to his partner. When officials choose to exchange positions or rotate, it is recommended that the officials choose a predetermined number of goals (2, 3, or 4, only) and must follow that rotation for the entire game.

TWO PERSON SYSTEM DIAGRAMS
The Draw

![Diagram of the two-person system draw](image)

The official administering the draw is responsible for calling a draw illegal. After setting the draw, official 1 moves away from the center to her right. Official 2 is standing back from the edge of the center circle and watches for potential off-ball fouls by the players who are outside the circle and for players crossing the restraining line before the ball has gained possession.

If a player loses possession of the ball, the official witnessing it first will wind her arm and loudly verbalize "Possession". The other official(s) will echo this call by winding her arm and/or verbalizing possession so the entire field will know the draw has ended.

When There Is A Change Of Possession

![Diagram of the change of possession](image)

As soon as there is an apparent change of possession (defense going for a loose ball, the goalkeeper in possession of the ball, an interception, etc.); there is a transition in which the Trail Official becomes the Lead Official and vice versa. In preparation for this, the Trail Official drops steps with her right foot and moves out toward the sideline. She must adjust the angle and the time of movement so as not to interfere with potential cutters or players already in motion. Anticipate, think ahead, and make your move before the players. Keep ahead of the play and, as much as possible, keep the players inside your position as you move up or down field. The Lead Official who transitions to the Trail Official position will follow the play up the field, keeping the players inside of her position as much as possible.
The Trail Official - Midfield and Restraining Line

Note: The Trail Official never moves laterally past center into the Lead Official’s half of the field.

The Trail Official follows the play on a change of possession. She repositions on or near the restraining line and moves laterally from left of center of the arc over to her left, towards her side boundary and/or from the side boundary to her right towards the left of center in relation to the ball so that she can observe:

1. Obstruction of the free space to goal
2. Three second violations
3. Dangerous follow through after a shot on goal
4. Off-ball fouls such as illegal picks, detaining, or pushing
5. Restraining line violations
6. Side line boundary calls

The Trail Official needs to be prepared to become the Lead Official when there is a change of possession.

TWO-PERSON SYSTEM - RESTARTING PLAY IN L1/T1 AREAS

Restarts below the RL and near the Lead Official:
- The Lead Official (L1) shall restart play whether play is coming toward or going away from L1.

Restarts in the CSA:
- The Lead Official (L1) shall restart play whether play is coming toward or going away from L1.

Restarts between the RLs and at the sideline boundary nearest to the L1/T1 official:
- If Lead (L1) --- set up play, get ahead of play, and restart play.
- If Trail (T1) --- set up play, stay behind play, and restart play.

Restarts below the RL and near the Trail Official OR in the “coffin corner”:

The Trail Official (T1) must communicate with the Lead Official (L2) about who will restart play.
- When play is going toward the Lead Official (L2) the Trail Official (T1) may restart play because of the Trail Official is nearest to the restart position
- When play is going toward the Trail Official (T1) the Lead Official (L2) may restart play because the Trail Official is transitioning to the Lead Official position (T1 to L1).
TWO-PERSON SYSTEM - RESTARTING PLAY IN L2/T2 AREAS

Restarts below the RL and near the Lead Official:
- The Lead Official (L2) shall restart play whether play is coming toward or going away from L2.

Restarts in the CSA:
- The Lead Official (L2) shall restart play whether play is coming toward or going away from L2.

Restarts between the RL’s and at the sideline boundary nearest to the L2/T2 official:
- If Lead (L2) --- set up play, get ahead of play, and restart play.
- If Trail (T2) --- set up play, stay behind play, and restart play.

Restarts below the RL and near the Trail Official or in the “coffin corner”:
The Trail Official (T2) must communicate with the Lead Official (L1) about who will restart play
- When play is going toward the Lead Official (L1) the Trail Official (T2) may restart play because the Trail Official is nearest to the restart position.
- When play is going toward the Trail Official (T2) the Lead Official (L1) may restart play because the Trail Official is transitioning to the Lead Official position (T2 to L2).

TWO-PERSON SYSTEM - RESTARTING PLAY IN SHARED AREAS

Restarts between the RLs in the middle of the field:
The officials must communicate and make a decision about who will restart play based on the direction play is to resume.
- If play will be moving toward L1, then L2 (who is transitioning to T2) will restart play.
- If play will be moving toward L2, then L1 (who is transitioning to T2) will restart play.
QUADRANTS

There are 4 Quadrants in the Critical Scoring Area (CSA) that are defined by a vertical axis that splits the goal circle in half and is perpendicular to the goal line and by a horizontal axis that runs parallel to the goal line and intersects the goal circle at the top and is perpendicular to the vertical axis. The Lead Official is constantly repositioning in quadrants 1 and 2. The horizontal axis serves as the “home base” from which the Lead Official makes adjustments according to the developing offensive play and the position of the ball.

See Figure 1 – “A” Lead Official

HOME BASE

![Diagram of Home Base Quadrants]

Figure 1
“A” Lead Official
Home Base

Official Movement

When the ball is in Quadrant 2 the Lead Official is in Quadrant 1 and “on tangent”.

When the ball is in Quadrant 3 the Lead Official is in Quadrant 2 and “on tangent”.

OFFICIAL ANTICIPATION

When the ball is in Quadrant 4 or Quadrant 1 below the goal line extended the Lead Official is in Quadrant 1 observing the developing play — what will the ball carrier do with the ball — pass or roll? [Note: It is not possible for the ball carrier to shoot from below the goal line extended.]

The Lead Official makes adjustments in Quadrant 1 to be “on tangent” as the ball carrier rolls from Quadrant 1 toward Quadrant 2.

See Figure 5 – “A” Lead Official

![Diagram of Anticipation and Movement]

Figure 5
“A” Lead Official
Anticipation and Movement

Official Movement

The Lead Official makes adjustments from Quadrant 1 to Quadrant 2 to be “on tangent” when the ball carrier rolls in Quadrant 4 toward Quadrant 3.

See Figure 7 – “A” Lead Official

![Diagram of Additional Anticipation and Movement]
TANGENT

Being “on tangent” requires understanding a mathematical principle — the tangent is a straight line that touches the outer edge of a curve (i.e., the goal circle) at only one point and is at right angle to or perpendicular to the approaching line of the ball carrier/shooter. The Lead Official that achieves being “on tangent” is in the best position to call fouls and violations associated with the ball carrier approaching the goal to shoot.

KEY:

- Path of the shooter and/or shot on goal
- Lead Official on tangent

A Shot From The Left

A Shot From The Right