



US LACROSSE COACHING EDUCATION PROGRAM

Catching in Boys Lacrosse

Regardless of his position on the field, your player should always be prepared to receive the ball—be it on a clear, in transition, during an offensive rotation, or for a shot.

Catching is primarily a function of hand-eye coordination.

There are physical elements that make catching with a lacrosse stick a bit different, and, at times, tricky.

Instill the proper mechanics to make catching seamless.

Teaching the Skill: Catching

It starts with a target.

The player asking for the ball provides a target for the thrower by positioning his stick in “box position,” or the imaginary square above his shoulder and next to his ear.

The target should be clear and unscreened, the entire surface area of the stick showing.

As the ball approaches the player’s pocket, he softens its impact by giving with his top hand.

This means he yields in the same direction of the ball to receive it at a point slightly behind box position.

Instruct your player to keep his eye on the ball from its release point until it is secure in his pocket, seeing it all the way through.

Once the ball is in his pocket, the player begins to cradle immediately to control it and protect from a defender.

In lacrosse, throwing, catching and cradling are a constant combined sequence that allows players to maintain possession of the ball.

A Level 1 player should be fluent in these three skills, first in a stationary position, then on the move. Catching in particular becomes increasingly difficult when performed on the move.

Level 1 focuses on two catching styles: catching the ball while running toward the passer, and catching a “lead pass” while running parallel to the passer.





US LACROSSE COACHING EDUCATION PROGRAM

To catch the ball while running toward the passer, the player's stick head should be in box position near the shoulder and ear, with the pocket facing the thrower as the player runs.

Though his body is moving, the target should be stationary.

To catch the ball while running parallel to the passer, the player extends his stick from the box and out in front of him to receive the ball.

His stick should be in his right hand to receive a pass from a player moving parallel to his left, and vice versa. This ensures that he will receive the pass on the outside.

It allows better stick protection as he receives the ball with his body between the defender and his stick.

In Level 2 of the Coaches Education Program, this skill evolves to include catching over the shoulder.

For now, these two catching styles should be your focus.

Error Detection and Correction

Error:

The player keeps dropping the ball.

Correction:

Beginners tend to stab at the ball.

Make sure he "gives" with his stick and is not extending his hands forward.

Error:

The ball bounces off the plastic part of the stick head.

Correction:

Try having your player choke up on his stick handle, both to emphasize control and to bring it closer in so he can see the ball into his pocket.

