

NFHS vs. NCAA Men's Lacrosse Rule Differences for 2009

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Note: Some sections revised since last year appear on a gray background.

All Documented NFHS vs. NCAA Rule Differences 2009

	Procedures	NFHS	NCAA
1.	Failure to give 24 hr notice of event that could delay start of game or 2nd half	No mention	Illegal procedure
2.	Forfeits	Procedures determined by state or local associations	NCAA authority; score is 1-0. If team does not show up, a "no contest" is recorded
3.	Electronic equipment used for coaching during game	Audiotape allowed; computer, film, television, and video prohibited	No mention
4.	Phones and headsets	May be used by coaches but not players	Cannot use to communicate with field players
5.	Coaches' Certification	Full version required	Brief version permitted
6.	Artificial limbs	State associations may authorize if safe and fair	No mention
7.	Hearing instruments	State associations may authorize if medically prescribed and not dangerous	No mention
8.	Meeting with officials during halftime	No mention	Permitted; each team must be allowed to have a representative present
9.	Chief bench official	May be used	No mention
10.	Sportsmanship	Officials address coaches/players before game	No mention
11.	Unconscious player	Needs written clearance from MD or DO to return	May return to game
12.	Procedure for high heat and humidity	Additional officials' timeouts to allow players to cool off and get extra water	No mention
13.	Warm-up when replacing goalkeeper	Penalized or injured goalie is permitted 1:00 warm-up; otherwise must call TO	Timeout required to warm up; be "reasonably lenient" for time to switch
14.	Team A refuses to put a legally-equipped goalkeeper on the field	NFHS 1-6-1 and 2-1 implies this is a forfeit	Team A forfeits
15.	Expelled player	Adults leave premises. Minors leave premises with school official; otherwise confined to bench	Must leave premises
16.	Suspension of expelled player for subsequent game(s)	Per league policy; assignor must notify player's school of expulsion	Mandatory

	The Field	NFHS	NCAA
17.	Field width	Field may be 53 1/3 to 60 yds wide (attack area must be 35 yds by 40 yds)	Variations in alterable dimensions must be agreed to in writing prior to game day
18.	Line-marking material	Must be non-toxic and non-caustic	No mention
19.	No spectator lines	No penalty	3:00 NR penalty plus possession
20.	Center of field	Center X	Contrasting-color 4-inch square
21.	Illegal field or goals	No penalty for field; 3:00 for illegal goals	3:00 NR penalty plus possession

	The Ball	NFHS	NCAA
22.	Lime-green balls	Prohibited	Permitted
23.	Legal balls	Must bear NFHS authenticating mark	No specific markings required
24.	Ball color if coaches disagree	No mention	White balls will be used
25.	Slightly textured ball	Permitted if they bear NFHS authenticating mark	Permitted if coaches agree

	Uniform Regulations	NFHS	NCAA
26.	Jersey color/numbers	Must be solid color (plus very limited trim) with numbers at least 8" high on front and 12" on back	Numbers at least 10"/12" (front/back); need not be solid color
27.	Jersey trademark	Limited to 2.25-inch square; can also have US flag and commemorative patch	No mention

28.	Jersey colors conflict	Visiting team responsible, but officials may require that home team change	Home team must change colors
29.	Visible compression shorts	Everyone on team must wear same solid color	Everyone must wear same solid color (white, gray, or team color)
30.	Sweat pants	Everyone on team must wear same solid color	Everyone on team must wear same solid color (white, gray, or team color)
31.	Uniform violations	One technical foul is assessed prior to the start of the game to cover all violations	Each time a player enters game with one or more uniform violations it constitutes one technical foul

	The Crosse	NFHS	NCAA
32.	Crosse specifications	No changes	Extensive changes take effect in 2010
33.	Metal cap on shaft butt end	Cap must be wood or plastic or be taped to prevent injury; unclear if metal cap can be taped	Explicitly prohibited
34.	Ball stop	Not required but may be used	Not required but may be used if no larger than 2" x 1.5" x 0.25"
35.	Hole cut in mesh designed to snare ball during face-off	3:00 NR penalty	No mention; could be covered by NCAA Rule 1-18 Note 1
36.	Multi-colored mesh	No mention	Illegal; 3:00 USC penalty for trying to mislead opponent with ball painted in mesh
37.	Length of hanging strings	Limited to 6"	Limited to 2"

	Personal Equipment	NFHS	NCAA
38.	Mouth guard	Must cover all upper or all lower teeth	Must cover all upper teeth
39.	Hard substances (e.g., casts)	Must be covered with one-half-inch of high-density foam and have doctor's note	Officials' discretion
40.	Helmets	Must be same color or colors; all decals issued by school	Everyone must wear helmets that are same dominant team color
41.	Eye shield	Must be clear by rule; cannot be tinted even with medical approval. No penalty for first violation	Must be clear (or tinted with medical approval)
42.	Sunglasses	May be worn unless an eye shield is also worn	No mention, but likely enforced similarly
43.	Glove color	No mention	Non-GK players must wear same team color
44.	Shoulder pads	Velcro portions are considered optional; pads may not be cut or otherwise altered	There must be a pad on the shoulder; pads may not be cut or altered
45.	Cleats	Extensive list of technical specifications	Cleats no longer than 0.5 inches

	Timing and Scoring	NFHS	NCAA
46.	Timer/scorer at game site	No mention	Twenty minutes before the game
47.	Required timer/scorer equipment	Working horn; illegal procedure if not provided	Working horn, table, scorebook, and working clock; illegal procedure if not provided
48.	Team roster in scorebook	Must be complete/correct before game starts; team is assessed one technical foul if players added later	No mention about when roster must be complete
49.	Quarters	12 minutes stop time	15 minutes stop time
50.	Variations in playing time	Not permitted (unless game is interrupted)	Shorter periods permitted if both teams agree
51.	Mercy rule	Running time in 2nd half if lead is 12 or more	None
52.	Interruption of game because of events beyond the control of game authorities	By agreement of head coaches and referee, game may be terminated or shortened (unless league rules apply)	Game will be continued unless the teams agree otherwise (or unless other league rules apply)

	Face-offs	NFHS	NCAA
53.	Face-off position	Sticks within 4-inch-wide center line	Sticks and gloves outside 4-inch-wide center line

54.	Start of face-off	Official tells players "Down," then "Set," then blows whistle	Official tells players "Down," then blows whistle when players are in position
55.	Violation during face-off, after whistle but before possession	Possible play-on; if ball is awarded it starts one step over center X	Possible play-on; if ball is awarded, it starts at the spot where the ball was or outside box
56.	Penalty expires before possession during face-off	Player may return to field provided the wing area was left vacant for face-off	Player must wait for possession even if wing area is left vacant
57.	Wing-line violations on a face-off	Play-on (but ignore if there was a pre-whistle violation by one of the face-off men)	Immediate whistle (ignore if there was a pre-whistle violation by a f/o man); face-off man must sub out
58.	Pre-whistle face-off violation	Offended team awarded possession just past mid-field	Offending team's face-off man must sub out; play begins immediately with offended team in possession

	General Game Play	NFHS	NCAA
59.	Restarts	No specific guidance on where ball restarts	Added Rule 4-6-e to cover all restarts explicitly
60.	Out of bounds player establishing himself back in	No mention	When he no longer touches out of bounds and touches in bounds with some body part
61.	Player partly in bounds and partly out touching ball	If touched passively, no mention; if touched intentionally, illegal procedure	Ball is out off of that player regardless of whether it touches part of him or his crosse in bounds or out of bounds; illegal procedure if touched intentionally
62.	Offside	Ball awarded as any other technical foul except when Team A is offside and in possession in its offensive end ball is awarded to Team B at center X	Restarts where the ball was when play was suspended or outside the attack area
63.	Play stopped for injured player	Player must leave game until the next allowable point of substitution; team may not call TO to keep player in the game	Not explicitly mentioned; common interpretation is that the team may call a timeout to keep the player in the game
64.	Airborne player	No general rule (but an airborne player is not in the attack are for purposes of 10-count)	Player is where he left from (except attack area for purposes of 10-count)
65.	Attacking player touches goal or net with crosse (not as part of a shot) while playing loose ball	No mention	Explicitly legal
66.	GK intentionally loses or breaks equipment to try to stop play	No mention	Two-minute non-releasable USC penalty
67.	Play stopped for lost goalie equipment with ball in crease	Award possession to defense in the alley	Alternate possession
68.	Failure to have a legally-equipped goalie on the field	States that it is "illegal" without specifying a penalty (implied illegal procedure per 6.5 Situation B)	Illegal procedure
69.	Goalie in crease contacts attackman on follow-through after a clearing pass	No mention	Goalie interference against the attackman if follow-through is legitimate
70.	Head coach/field player from team in poss. calls live ball TO	Permitted no matter where the ball is on the field	Permitted with player in possession in contact with ground past offensive restraining line

	Equipment Inspections and Violations	NFHS	NCAA
71.	Mouthpiece violation	1-minute NR Personal foul	Technical foul
72.	Equipment check each half	All equipment inspected	Only stick inspected
73.	Player pulls strings at any time or adjusts crosse after official requests it	No goal if player just scored; 1:00 NR USC penalty. Continue with equipment check if planned.	No goal if player just scored; 1:00 NR USC penalty. Do not continue with planned equipment check per directive from convention
74.	Jewelry	Prohibited (exception: religious/medical, which must be taped to body); 1:00 NR	Permitted unless deemed dangerous by officials
75.	Multiple crosse and equipment violations	Penalize the most serious violation	No mention (but common interpretation of Rule 5 A.R. 14 is to penalize most serious violation, although it refers only to equip. and not to the crosse)

76.	Player without required equipment other than crosse	Stop play if player is in or enters scrimmage area. Ball awarded to team in possession or by AP (or to defense in alley for loose ball in crease)	Stop play if player is in or enters scrimmage area. Technical foul to participate if ball is loose or player is from team not in possession. For player from team in possession, no foul and team retains possession.
77.	Player loses required equipment, shoots and scores	If player is unguarded, play continues and goal counts; if player is guarded, stop play	No goal, but offense is awarded possession

	Counting and Stalling	NFHS	NCAA
78.	Offensive 10-second count for Team A during play	Starts with: (1) Team A possession in Zone 3 or (2) after the ball exits Zone 4 while loose, A1 gains possession outside of Zone 4	Starts when ball or player in possession: (1) leaves Zone 4 and touches something outside of Zone 4 (2) touches something on or over midfield to end 20-second count
79.	10- or 20-count on restart	Count is determined by the location of ball	Once a 10-count begins, all other counts are 10-counts unless there is an intervening defensive possession
80.	Stalling with ball in attack area	Warning can be issued at any time	Team B must play ball before warning is issued to Team A

	Substitution	NFHS	NCAA
81.	Substitute deliberately violates rules for entering field	Releasable 1:00 USC foul	Illegal procedure
82.	Delayed special substitution (A1 leaves and is not immediately replaced by A2)	Releasable 1:00 USC foul if deliberate; illegal procedure otherwise	Silent play-on, with technical foul called if sub gets involved in play; offside rules still apply
83.	During regular substitution, 20-second timer goes off with Team A having too many or too few players	Illegal procedure technical foul on Team A	Illegal procedure for too many men; no mention of too few men

	Personal and Technical Fouls	NFHS	NCAA
84.	Body check	Allows the concept of an "unavoidable" body check	All body checks are considered avoidable
85.	Tripping when player stumbles"	No mention	Tripping may be called even if player doesn't fall
86.	Body check during "buddy pass"	Specifically addressed as unnecessary roughness	Not specifically mentioned, but can be construed as unnecessary roughness
87.	Second NR USC foul against same player or coach	Expulsion and 3:00 NR penalty	Usual penalty is assessed
88.	Player takes a dive or feigns receiving a foul	No mention	Illegal procedure
89.	Player kicks dropped crosse, without ball in it	No foul if accidental; interference if done intentionally to keep player from recovering	No foul if accidental; USC if done intentionally to keep player from recovering
90.	Player kicks dropped crosse, with ball in it	If player attempts to retrieve crosse, IP. Otherwise, players from either team may kick or flip crosse to try to gain access to the ball	If ball stays in crosse when dropped, withholding per Rule 4-7
91.	Holding the crosse of the opponent using any body part	No mention, but generally called "holding" anyway	Holding per NCAA 4-a-5; interference per NCAA 6-8 (Note 2)
92.	Goalie interference while there is a flag down	No mention	Time-serving technical foul

	Penalty Enforcement	NFHS	NCAA
93.	Restart for simul. fouls with both teams serving time	Restart is at the spot where the ball was (or moved to the alley if in the attack area) for live-ball simul. fouls (no free clear); no mention of dead-ball fouls.	Restart is at the spot where the ball was (or moved to the alley if in the attack area) for live- or dead-ball fouls (no free clear)

94.	Period ends with A1 serving a penalty and a flag down for a foul by B1	Team A starts next period with possession	Since the flag-down creates an even situation, the next period starts with a face-off
95.	Multiple penalties	Any number of players from one team may be in the penalty area	Penalties "stack"; a team is never down more than 3 men at once
96.	Player deliberately leaves penalty area early; goal is scored by opponent	Unexpired time wiped out for releasable penalty, but player must serve new 30 seconds; unclear on face-off	Unexpired time wiped out for releasable penalty and new foul cancelled by goal
97.	Flag down with ball in attack area and ball touches ground	Whistle blows when ball touches ground (not on a shot) or a shot is completed	Once ball enters the attack area, play continues until one of a number of conditions is met
98.	Loose-ball foul with ball in attack area and flag down	Not possible since whistle blows when ball touches ground	All such loose-ball technical and personal fouls result in additional flags; play continues
99.	Shot during flag down hits GK or goal, rebounds, hits something other than GK, then goes in goal	No goal if rebound hits official or any player other than GK	Goal (whistle does not blow under NCAA procedure when ball becomes loose inside the attack area)
100.	Penalty on B1 is released or waved off by a goal, then a goal by A1 is disallowed because A1's crosse is illegal	B1 must serve remainder of penalty	No mention (but presumably B1 must serve remainder of penalty)

	Errors	NFHS	NCAA
101.	Inadvertent whistles	Ball awarded to team in possession; if loose, AP (unless in crease; then ball goes to defense)	Ball awarded to team in possession or entitled to possession; otherwise, alternate possession (unless in crease; then ball goes to defense)
102.	Inadvertent flags/horns	Ball awarded to team in possession when flag is thrown; if loose, AP (no mention of inad. horn)	Award possession or face off depending on the result of the play (7-13)
103.	Mistakes by officials	No mention	Addressed in 7-12
104.	B1 released early from penalty, play stops and restarts, then B2 scores goal	Goal does not count; B1 returns to serve remaining time. Technical foul if player left on his own. Once face-off occurs after goal, the situation is no longer correctable (see NFHS 7.13 Situations B and C)	Goal counts and player stays in game per NCAA Rule 7 A.R. 69 whether player left on his own or was incorrectly released
105.	Challenging the application of a rule by head coach	Permitted; if appeal denied, coach is charged TO (or technical) and may use remainder of TO	No mention; can speak with officials only during halftime

NCAA vs. NFHS Rules Differences Eliminated for 2009

The following is a list of rule differences between NCAA and NFHS that have been eliminated since 2008. Review this list to ensure that you still aren't calling things differently when those differences no longer exist.

Topic	Specific Change
Palmless or fingerless gloves	Illegal whether bought that way or modified by the player (NFHS used to allow palmless gloves manufactured that way).
Crosse with double ball stop	Stick is confiscated and 3:00 NR penalty is assessed (Note: NFHS I.6.2 Situation from p. 19 amended per 1/22/09 NFHS Bulletin.)
Dislodged/broken goalie equipment (other than stick) or broken goalie crosse	Stop play immediately (but allow shot in flight to come to conclusion). Goalie can be flagged for participating without a crosse but not for playing with a broken crosse or other missing or dislodged equipment.
Timeout after end line out of bounds	Does not change location of restart: the ball starts at the spot unless there was a play-on or flag-down in effect before the OOB or unless there is a dead ball foul, in which case the ball starts in the alley. (Note: live-ball timeouts always move restart to the alley).
Regular substitution	No horn required after goal or time-served penalty (NFHS used to require horn)
Special substitution with play suspended for equip. violations	Permitted under both rule sets (NFHS used to prohibit special subs in this situation)
Coach-requested equipment checks	One per team per dead ball under both rule sets; no "extra" free checks between periods or during charged timeouts (NFHS used to have no limit)
Multiple equipment violations	If a player has multiple equipment and crosse violations, NFHS 5.5 Situation C now explicitly says to penalize the most serious violation; common interpretation in NCAA is to do the same
Player pulls strings on crosse after scoring a goal	If a player pulls string before or after the officials request to inspect the crosse, there is a 1:00 NR USC penalty and the goal is disallowed (NFHS used to only disallow for pulling strings after official's request)
Team A is under stall warning (not in the last 2:00) with flag down; B1 gains possession	Stall warning is in effect when play resumes (NFHS used to consider B1's possession as ending stall warning)
Stall warning in last 2:00 with tie score	Either team may be warned to "keep it in" if they are keeping the ball from play. (NFHS did not previously mention this case.)
Ball-in-flight technical foul	Play-on, with play-on ending if ball is caught (Note: NFHS 6.5 Situation from p. 43 amended per 1/22/09 NFHS Bulletin.)
Simultaneous technicals (or personals with total penalty time equal) and face-off pending	Face-off under both rule sets (NFHS used to award by AP)
Play suspended after a foul with ball in the attack area	Move the ball to the alley (NFHS used to move to closest point outside attack area)

Most Important NFHS vs. NCAA Rule Differences 2009

Procedures	NFHS	NCAA
Warm-up when replacing goalkeeper	Penalized or injured goalie is permitted 1:00 warm-up; otherwise must call TO	Timeout required to warm up; be "reasonably lenient" for time to switch
Field width	Field may be 53 1/3 to 60 yds wide (attack area must be 35 yds by 40 yds)	Variations in alterable dimensions must be agreed to in writing prior to game day
Illegal field or goals	No penalty for field; 3:00 for illegal goals	3:00 NR penalty plus possession
Mouth guard	Must cover all upper or all lower teeth	Must cover all upper teeth
Glove color	No mention; teammates need not match	Non-GK players must wear same team color
Shoulder pads	Velcro portions are considered optional; pads may not be cut or otherwise altered	There must be a pad on the shoulder; pads may not be cut or altered
Quarters	12 minutes stop time	15 minutes stop time
Mercy rule	Running time in 2nd half if lead is 12 or more	None
Face-off position	Sticks within 4-inch-wide center line	Sticks and gloves outside 4-inch-wide center line
To start face-off, official:	Calls "Down," then "Set," then blows whistle	Calls "Down," then whistles when players are down
Violation during face-off, after whistle but before possession	Possible play-on; if ball is awarded it starts one step over center X	Possible play-on; if ball is awarded, it starts at the spot where the ball was or outside box
Penalty expires before possession during face-off	Player may return to field provided the wing area was left vacant for face-off	Player must wait for possession even if wing area is left vacant
Pre-whistle face-off violation	Offended team awarded possession just past midfield	Offending team's face-off man must sub out; play begins immediately with offended team in possession
Offside	Ball awarded as any other technical foul except when Team A is offside and in possession in its offensive end ball is awarded to Team B at center X	Restarts where the ball was when play was suspended or outside the attack area
Head coach/field player from team in poss. calls live ball TO	Permitted no matter where the ball is on the field	Permitted with player in possession in contact with ground past offensive restraining line
Mouthpiece violation	1-minute NR Personal foul	Technical foul
Equipment check each half	All equipment inspected	Only stick inspected
Jewelry	Prohibited (exception: religious/medical, which must be taped to body); 1:00 NR	Permitted unless deemed dangerous by officials
Offensive 10-second count for Team A during play	Starts with: (1) Team A possession in Zone 3 or (2) after the ball exits Zone 4 while loose, A1 gains possession outside of Zone 4	Starts when ball or player in possession: (1) leaves Zone 4 and touches something outside of Zone 4 (2) touches something on or over midfield to end 20-second count
10- or 20-count on restart	Count is determined by the location of ball	Once a 10-count begins, all other counts are 10-counts unless there is an intervening def. possession
Delayed special substitution	Releasable 1:00 USC foul if deliberate; IP otherwise	Silent play-on, with IP called if sub gets involved in play
20-second timer expires during regular sub. situation	Illegal procedure technical foul on team with too many or too few players	Illegal procedure for too many men; no mention of too few men
Second NR USC foul	Expulsion and 3:00 NR penalty if two on one person	Usual penalty is assessed
Player kicks dropped crosse, without ball in it	No foul if accidental; interference if done intentionally to keep player from recovering	No foul if accidental; USC if done intentionally to keep player from recovering
Player kicks dropped crosse, with ball in it	If player attempts to retrieve crosse, IP. Otherwise, players from either team may kick or flip crosse to try to gain access to the ball	If ball stays in crosse when dropped, withholding per Rule 4-7
Period ends with A1 serving time, flag down for B1 foul	Team A starts next period with possession	Since the flag-down creates an even situation, the next period starts with a face-off
Multiple penalties	No limit to number of players in the penalty area	A team is never down more than 3 men at once
Flag down procedure	Whistle blows when ball touches ground (not on a shot) or a shot is completed	Once ball enters the attack area, play continues until one of a number of conditions is met
Player without required equipment other than crosse	Stop play if player is in or enters scrimmage area. Ball awarded to team in possession or by AP (or to defense in alley for loose ball in crease)	Stop play if player is in or enters scrimmage area. Technical foul to participate if ball is loose or player is from team not in possession. For player from team in possession, no foul and team retains possession.