



SMYLA U9 RULES AND GUIDELINES

(updated March 1, 2022)

SMYLA's U9 program is intended to give players exposure to the game of lacrosse with an emphasis on instruction, inclusion and fun! Therefore SMYLA has embraced the recommendations of USA Lacrosse and has adopted a modified set rules for this age group that combines many of the USA Lacrosse recommendations along with SMYLA's philosophy for player development.

SMYLA U9 teams keep score and maintain league standings. At the end of the season, teams play for a U9 League Championship in a tournament bracket format at SMYLA Championship Weekend.

While these "Rules at a Glance" are offered as a quick overview of the SMYLA U9 Rules, the SMYLA By-Laws and Handbook are the governing documents for all levels of play and are incorporated by reference to this document. Please refer to the SMYLA By-Laws and SMYLA Handbook for more details.

GAME EQUIPMENT

- Full protective gear is mandatory, including helmet, shoulder pads, gloves, elbow pads and mouthpiece. It is **STRONGLY** recommended that players adhere to the mandate by USA Lacrosse for NOCSAE chest protector and shoulder pads.
- Regulation lacrosse stick – no fiddle sticks or trick sticks
- Stick length – Minimum 36" / Maximum 44"

THE FIELD

- Reduced field size. U9 fields are shortened fields run side to side on regulation size fields.
- Smaller 4' x 4' goals are used at this level.
- Creases should be visible and regulation size and should be strictly enforced.
- Spectators must be on opposite side of field from the players' bench.
- No coaches on the field. Coaches must instruct from the sidelines. No more than four coaches / adults on the team sideline / side of the field. This includes photographers, water boys, high school aged helpers, and any other helpers.

GAME TIME

- Four 10-minute running clock quarters with faceoff beginning each quarter.
- Clock stops every 5 minutes for substitutions. Coaches are encouraged to rotate players at positions and to offer equal playing time when possible.

- Coaches may substitute at their discretion on the fly or during any stoppage of play.
- One timeout per team, per half.

GAME PERSONNEL

- 7 on 7 format (2 attack, 2 middies, 2 defenders, 1 goalie). Offsides is enforced.
- Goalies are REQUIRED at this level.
- Coaches are NOT allowed on the field at this level. They should instruct from the sidelines.
- Both teams should supply a table representative and maintain a scorebook
- Game score is reported to the league and standings are maintained and used for seeding at year-end playoffs. U9s play for a League Championship.
- One referee is required at this level

GAME RULES

- Teaching sportsmanship is an important foundation of our league. Games begin with a team lineup at the center of the field and end with a team handshake or stick tap. We encourage safe distancing whenever possible on the sidelines and to avoid close huddles when possible.
- Faceoffs begin each quarter. During a faceoff, the wing players are released but may not have contact with the two players facing off until possession is called or until the ball pops loose from the faceoff area.
- Change of possession after each goal with the goalie clearing the ball unless one team is leading by 5 or more goals at which time there is a free clear at the midfield line.
- All basic lacrosse rules apply, such as offsides, slashing, pushing, etc. No bodychecking. No one-handed stick checks. No raising stick above shoulders to check.
- One pass must be attempted in the offensive side of the field before a shot can be taken. A pass “across” the midfield line does not count as an attempt. If games become lopsided, coach of dominating team should adjust to two pass attempts on offensive side and/or encourage off-hand use.
- A defensive player may run through the crease but may NOT jump in the goal or crease area to stop shots or act as goalie unless wearing goalie equipment. (This is a safety issue)
- U9s waive the rules of 20 seconds to clear / 10 seconds to enter offensive box and the 2-minute stay in the box rule at the end of the game.
- There are no time-serving, man-down situations. Teams should play at equal strength using the same number of players throughout the game. While there are no time serving penalties or man-down situations, any player committing a serious infraction or repeatedly violating the rules (slashing, bodychecking, etc.) immediately should be removed from the field and replaced with another player. While off the field, the sideline coach should instruct player before he returns to the game. Officials have the authority to remove a player for the remainder of the game for out-of-control behavior or if player continues to commit egregious fouls after coach’s instruction.