

2025 Boys Lacrosse Penalty Reference Guide

Rule 5: Personal Fouls

Greg Hite Updated: January 16, 2025

Personal fouls are those of a *serious nature*: illegal body checking, slashing, cross-checking, tripping, unnecessary roughness, unsportsmanlike conduct, checks involving the head/neck, and the use of an illegal crosse and/or illegal equipment. The penalty for a personal foul shall be suspension from the game of the offending player for one to three minutes, depending on the official's judgment of the severity and perceived intent of the personal foul. The ball shall be given to the team fouled. Must take into account level of play, physical ability, temperature of game, type of game and specific rules that apply.

Penalty	Time	Exceptions	Special Situations
<p>Cross-Checking Rule 5.2</p> <p>Occurs when a player uses the <i>handle of his crosse between his hands</i> to make contact with an opponent <i>thrusting away</i> from the body or by <i>extending</i> from the body.</p>	1-3 minute releasable only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross Check Hold with hands no wider than shoulders is legal (Rule 6.3.3). 	
<p>Slashing Rule 5.7</p> <p>When a player's stick makes <i>vicious, deliberate, or reckless contact</i> with an opponent in any area other than the stick or gloved hand on the stick. Must have <i>reasonable access</i> to the opponent's crosse. Contact alone is not enough for this foul to be called.</p>	1-3 minute releasable only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact alone is not enough i.e. a <i>brush</i> (Rule 5.7.1 Situation). Gloved hand on crosse (Rule 5.7.3). In the act of passing, shooting, or scooping (Rule 5.7.3). Contact is made but is the result of the player is <i>attempting to dislodge the ball</i> and the <i>opponent use his body to shield his crosse</i> (Rule 5.7.2). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact is not required (Rule 5.7.1). <i>Can include</i> contact to the head (Rule 5.7.1 Situation). <i>Repeatedly striking the lower gloved hand</i> on crosse with <i>no attempt to dislodge the ball</i> (Rule 5.7.3 Situation B) Back slash: <i>defender is beaten</i> and attempts a check that lands on the <i>back or shoulder</i> of an opponent (Rule 5.7.3 Situation D)
<p>Tripping Rule 5.8</p> <p>When a player obstructs his opponent <i>at or below the waist with the crosse, hands, arms, feet or legs</i>.</p>	1-3 minute releasable only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal check on crosse. Tripping over one's <i>own crosse</i> (Rule 5.8). Leg of <i>stationary</i> defender (Rule 5.8 Situation A). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swinging leg out to trip opponent is a foul (Rule 5.7.3 Situation C).
<p>Illegal Body Check Rule 5.3</p> <p>A body check must be below the shoulders and above the waist, and both hands of the player applying the body check must remain in contact with his crosse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> body checking an opponent who is <i>not in possession of the ball or within five yards</i> of a loose ball. <i>avoidable</i> body check of an opponent after he has passed or shot the ball. body checking an <i>opponent from the rear or at or below the waist</i>. body checking an opponent <i>above the shoulders</i>. Body checking an opponent who has anything other than his feet touching the ground. 	1-3 minute releasable only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a player turns at the last-minute making what would have been legal contact illegal, the official has the option to ignore the contact. (Rule 5.3.4) 	

<p>Unnecessary Roughness Rule 5.9</p> <p>Occurs when a player commits <i>any avoidable act with body or crosse</i> using <i>excessive or violent</i> force, a check that is <i>avoidable or late</i> or a check delivered with a <i>punching blow</i>. (i.e. not within 5 yards). May involved a <i>legal</i> body check (e.g. a bull dodge that knocks over a stationary opponent).</p>	<p>1-3 minute releasable or <u>non-releasable</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not seeing a player setting a screen. (5.9.2 Situation) <i>Unavoidable</i> checks e.g. “bang-bang” play; look for <i>continues motion</i>) (Rule 5.9.3 Situation A). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violent contact with a player setting a screen; <i>must see the player</i> setting the screen (Rule 5.9.2 Situation and E). Contact with player receiving “Buddy Pass” if <i>avoidable</i>. (Rule 5.9.3 Situation B). <i>Avoidable</i> contact after substituting through box (Rule 5.9.3 Situation D)
<p>Contact to the Head and Neck Rule 5.4 Article 1-4</p> <p><i>Violent, excessive, uncontrolled</i> contact by a player’s crosse or body to the head and neck is illegal. Spearing is illegal; may be called on Team A or B.</p>	<p>1 minute <u>non-releasable</u> if contact was <i>indirect</i>.</p> <p>2-3 minute <u>non-releasable</u> or ejection if contact was <i>direct</i>.</p>		
<p>Defenseless Player Rule 5.4 Article 5</p> <p>A player shall not body check a player in a defenseless position which includes but is not limited to a player:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> from the "blind side;" who has the head down playing a loose ball whose head is turned away to receive a pass, even if that player turns toward the contact immediately before the body check aka a “buddy pass”). laying on the ground (i.e. anything more than feet on the ground). 	<p>2-3 minutes <u>non-releasable</u> or ejection only.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violent contact with player receiving “Buddy Pass.” (Rule 5.9.3 Situation B). Immediately checking a player near the substitution are after substituting on the fly (Rule 5.9.3 Situation D). Note use of word <i>vulnerable</i>.
<p>Targeting Rule 5.5 Article 6</p> <p>A player may not <i>intentionally</i> make violent and excessive contact with an opponent’s head/neck of an opponent or a player in defenseless position. Not a lacrosse play!</p>	<p>3 minute <u>non-releasable</u> or ejection only.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One foul for all violations. If both crosse and equipment violations occur, penalize the most severe violation.
<p>Illegal Crosse Rule 5.5</p> <p>A player may not use a crosse that does not conform to specifications (e.g. length, depth, stringing, construction, altered etc...). Once fixed the crosse may return to the game.</p>	<p>2 minutes non-releasable only.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the <i>scorers crosse</i> is found to be illegal the goal is waived (Rule 5.5 Situation F) Note: additional one minute non-releasable if player adjusts crosse before handing it to official (see USC).

<p>Illegal Equipment Rule 5.5</p> <p>A player may not use a crosse that does not conform to specifications and must wear all mandatory equipment (helmet, elbow pads, shoulder pads, gloves, shoes, etc...) as the manufacturer intended.</p>	<p>1 minute non-releasable only.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not include mouthpiece violations (Rule 6.5.2) 	
<p>Unsportsmanlike Conduct Rule 5.10</p> <p>Non-releasable USC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguing with or attempting to influence officials. Threatening or profane language or gestures. Taunting. Grabbing the ball or opponents crosse on a faceoff. Throwing a crosse at a player, official or ball. Pulling strings on crosse <i>after</i> an official has requested crosse for inspection (Rule 5.5 Situation D). Using an opponent's crosse. 	<p>1-3 minutes <u>non-releasable</u> only.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Inadvertent</i> touching of ball <i>when the hand is grasping the crosse</i> is not USC (Rule 4.3.m). <i>Inadvertent</i> touching of ball <i>when the hand is NOT grasping the crosse</i> is a technical foul (Rule 4.3.m). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using an <i>opponent's crosse</i> (Rule 5.10.1 Situation C). Pulling strings on crosse <i>after</i> an official has requested crosse for inspection (Rule 5.5 Situation D).
<p>Non-releasable USC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach on field obstructing play. Repeatedly committing same technical foul. Fail to return to field of play immediately. Non-goalkeeper entering crease and acting as a goalie. 	<p>1-3 minutes releasable only.</p>		
<p>Fouling Out Rule 5.11</p> <p>Any player who accumulates <i>five minutes of personal fouls</i> shall be disqualified from the game.</p> <p>There is no additional foul for fouling out; a team is not man-down. A substitute for that player may enter the game when the disqualified player would have been permitted to re-enter had the player not fouled out.</p>	<p>Disqualification from remainder of contest. Not an ejection (Rule 5.11 Situation).</p>		
<p>Ejection Rule 5.12</p> <p>A player, substitute, non-player, or coach shall be ejected from the game for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Deliberately striking or attempting to strike</i> an opponent. Tabacco use. Second non-releasable unsportsmanlike conduct foul. Flagrant misconduct. 	<p>Coach: 1 minute non-releasable only.</p> <p>Coach must leave facility.</p> <p>Player, Substitute or non-player: 3 minutes non-releasable only.</p>		<p>Note: any form of taunting which is intended or designed to <i>embarrass, ridicule or demean others</i> under any circumstances including on the basis of <i>race, religion, gender or national origin</i>.</p>

	Must leave facility is supervision is available.		
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