



OWFL Rule Modifications Summary Chart 2025

Last Updated: February 19, 2025

World Lacrosse Rule	2024 OWFL Modifications	New in 2025
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NOTE: This document only highlights rules that are called differently at various levels of OWFL play. Most fouls (illegal contact, block, offside, etc.) are not outlined in this document. For a list of Major, Minor, Restraining-Line and Goal-Circle fouls, see the most up-to-date version of the [World Lacrosse Women's Field Rules Book, 2025-2026 edition](#). Rule modifications contained in this document should be taken as the official OWFL rule when they conflict with a rule in the Rule Book.

	U9	U11	U13	U15	U19	JEWL	2025-2026 WL Rule Book
GAME DURATION & SET-UP							
Ball Used	Pink soft ball is used.			Yellow rubber lacrosse ball used. (NEW for U11)			
Field & Lines	Mini Field 11m Fan + 15m MA lines.			Regular Field 11m Fan + 15m MA lines. See the OWFL 2025 Field Lining Guide.			
# of Players	6 + GK (7 total) / 4v4 hold 2 + GK			Regular – 9 + GK (10 total) / 6v6 hold 3 + GK			
Quarter Length	10 min.			12.5 min.		15 min.	
Stop Time	All whistles, last 30 seconds of every quarter. When self-start is permitted, players may self-start during stop-time.			All whistles, last 30 seconds of Q1, Q2, Q3, and 2 min of Q4. When self-start is permitted, players may self-start during stop-time.			
Rest Time	2-min between quarters total/inclusive; call teams back onto field at 1.5 min. 5-min half time total/inclusive; call teams back onto field at 4.5 min.					Same as OWFL but the half time break is 10 min.	
Shot Clock	No shot clock in use.					80 Seconds. Other changes as per new Rule Book.	
After Goals	Draws to start quarters only. Goalies clear the ball after goals. After a goal, players from the team that scored MUST retreat and touch centre-line with their stick before re-defending. Violation = Major Foul. Ball carrying team awarded the ball at centre-line. Opponent moved 4m behind. Whistle start.		Draws after every goal.				
Mercy Rule	Time runs in last 30 sec of all quarters when a team leads by 12 or more goals.		Whenever a team leads by 12 or more goals, the losing team will be awarded the ball at centre following every goal. If the score differential becomes less than 12 goals, resume draws after goals. In either instance, play is restarted with a whistle. There are always draws to restart quarters, regardless of the goal differential. When the mercy rule is in effect, the clock runs in the last 30 sec of Q1, Q2 and Q3 and 2 min of Q4.		No mercy rule in effect. (NEW For JEWL)		
Timeouts	As per rule book. Possession timeouts are permitted outside either AFA. When a timeout is called after a goal by either team, play will restart with the goalie in their Goal-Circle. Whistle start. All attacking players must start along the centre-line (sticks or feet touching the line). Attackers may redefend following the whistle start. This is to mimic the retreat/touchback that is required after goals at U9/U11 (see After Goals, above).		As per Rule Book. Possession timeouts are permitted outside either AFA.				
Goggles	Goggles are mandatory for all levels of OWFL play. Violation = Minor Foul (Illegal Equipment).					Goggles are not mandatory.	
GOALIES & THE GOAL-CIRCLE							
General	The goalie MUST be the one to clear the ball following a goal with an overhand pass. Otherwise, during live play, Rule 17 applies (i.e. defense may pick up a loose ball in the Goal-Circle and exit the Goal-Circle with the ball).		Rule 17 Goal-Circle Rules & Penalties applies as written in the Rule Book, i.e. defense may pick up a loose ball in the Goal-Circle and exit the Goal-Circle in possession of the ball and various other changes.				
Goalies Required	A goalie MUST always be on the field for each team. A team cannot play without a goalie.		Goalies are not a requirement to play.				
Goalie Leaving the Goal-Circle	When the attacking team has the ball, or was the last team to possess the ball, and the goalie leaves the Goal-Circle (BOTH feet outside/off the Goal-Circle line), the attacking team is automatically granted their required passes to shoot/score. Exception: The defensive team, including the goalie, has the ball, or was the last team to possess the ball, and the goalie is outside the Goal-Circle, the attack will not automatically be granted 1 pass if/when they regain possession. The goalie MUST return to the Goal-Circle following a turnover. Violation = Goal-Circle Foul.		Goalies may leave the Goal-Circle at any time.				





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Draw Set-Up							
Draw Usage	Draws only at the start of every quarter.		Draws start every quarter. Draws following every goal unless the Mercy Rule is in effect (see above).				
Goalie Positioning on the Draw	Goalies must remain in their Goal-Circle during the draw.		Goalies must remain below their defensive Restraining-Line during the draw.				
Goalie Positioning after the Draw	Goalies may not cross the centre-line , which serves as the attacking Restraining-Line.		Goalies may not cross their team's attacking Restraining-Line.				
Player Positioning on the Draw	3 players in on the draw. All other players need to be inside/below either 11m MA line .		3 players per team between the Restraining-Lines on the draw (including the people taking the draw). All other field players below either Restraining-Line.				
Possession on the Draw	No possession required. All players released/may move on the whistle.		Possession is required for other players to enter the midfield between the Restraining-Lines.				

GAME PLAY & FOULS							
Body-to-Body Contact	Legal defense-initiated body-to-body contact, which may include the shaft of a stick that is NOT horizontal, is only permitted in a team's defensive Advantage Flag Area (AFA). Violation = Major Foul.		All legal body-to-body contact is permitted.				
Stick-to-Body Contact	No horizontal stick-to-body contact is permitted at any time. The intent is to eliminate the middle of the shaft of a defender's stick from contacting the ball carrier's arm once or multiple times in a row. The defender's stick head should NOT be parallel to the butt-end of the stick or (as on the draw) within approximately 30° from being parallel with the ground. Violation = Major Foul.		All legal stick-to-body contact is permitted.				
Stick Checking	No stick checking is permitted. All stick-checking is a Major Foul. Violation = Major Foul. Incidental stick-to-stick contact may occur and is not inherently a foul.		<p>Legal stick checking is permitted.</p> <p>Covering is now Withholding the Ball (Rule 19.A.8).</p> <p>Empty Stick Checks = NO FOUL. The only time it is illegal to check an opponent's empty stick is when that opponent is attempting to catch a pass in the air (Rule 19.A.9).</p>				

U9/U11 Only							
5 Second Rule (U9 & U11 Only)	<p>Closely Guarding: A defender who is <u>goal-side</u>, <u>within a stick length</u>, with their <u>stick 'up'</u>, their torso typically facing a ball-carrying opponent. When a defender does these first three underlined actions together, they are actively engaging their attacker, and the 5 Second Count begins. An attacker must run, dodge, back away, sidestep, pass or shoot (if permitted) to break one or more of the three above components to end the count. The count always resets from zero when the same or another ball carrying attacker becomes closely guarded.</p> <p>① <i>Stick "up", means that the head of the defender's stick is above the butt of their own stick. Their stick should not be horizontal, as no horizontal stick-to-body contact is permitted at U9/U11. Defenders on-ball may take one hand off their stick to block a passing lane or occupy more space, and the 5 Second Count stays ON if activated. Two hands on a stick is not a requirement.</i></p> <p>① <i>Stick length, includes the length of a defender's stick and arm when the stick/arm is extended.</i></p> <p>① <i>Goal-side means the defender is between the ball carrier and their own Goal-Circle/net.</i></p> <p>① <i>Officials should not start the Five Second count immediately after a new player receives a pass or picks up a ground ball. The official may give a new ball carrier 2 seconds to situate themselves with the ball before enacting the 5 Second Count. This is necessary as we do not want athletes to be rushed and officials are not always looking on-ball. The count should be signaled with an audible "1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5" and a low, chopping motion with one arm, as per the 5 Second Count on the goalie clearing the ball from the Goal-Circle.</i></p> <p>① <i>For clarity, the 5 Second Count is not called when:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A defender is within a stick-length with their stick up, but not goal-side. • A defender is goal-side and within a stick-length, but their stick is not up. • A defender is goal-side and their stick is up, but they are outside of a stick-length. 						
1 Attempted Pass Rule (U9 Only)	<p>1 overhand pass is required before an attacking team may take a shot on goal/score. A caught pass will count OR a successful "attempted pass" will count. Attempted Pass: In U9, when an overhand pass <u>contacts a teammate's stick</u> and then drops to the ground, the pass will count only if that teammate picks up the ball after one or multiple bounces or when the ball rests on the ground, so long as it is <u>not contested by anyone other than their immediate defender</u>, including their own teammate(s).</p> <p><i>(i.e. A scenario involving more than one opponent or any additional teammates(s), means the pass will NOT count, with the caveat by being within a crosser length, approx. 3-5 meters. A pass thrown into a group of teammates will not count unless it is caught.)</i></p> <p>The pass/attempted pass must be caught or picked up in the <u>attacking end</u> of the field to count. Teams are encouraged to attempt multiple passes before going to goal. The ball is live off a rebound (the attacking team may continue to shoot until the defense gains possession of the ball). 1 pass is automatically granted to the attacking team when there is a defensive foul within the 15m MA, including Major, Minor, Goal-Circle and Restraining-Line fouls. Violations (i.e. a shot is taken prior to one attempted pass being made) = No goal. Turnover to the goalie. Whistle start. Protocol when a team shoots when they did not have 1 Attempted Pass: If a goal is scored, the goal will NOT count. If the ball is saved or goes wide, the ball should restart with the goalie (whistle start). In either instance, officials may use the NO GOAL signal. This is a change of possession, not a foul.</p>						
1 Pass Rule (U11 Only)	<p>1 pass, from an overhand throw, must be caught in the offensive end of the field before an attacking team may take a shot on goal/score. The ball is live off a rebound (the attacking team may continue to shoot until the defense gains possession). 1 pass is automatically granted to the attacking team on all Free Positions inside the 15m MA, including Major, Minor, Goal-Circle and Restraining-Line fouls. Violation (i.e. a shot is taken) = No goal. Turnover to the goalie. Whistle start.</p>						





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Summary of World Lacrosse Rule Changes (Confirmed January 2025)

NOTE: All motions listed below will be adopted into OWFL play in 2025, but not necessarily at every level of play. Adopted at All Levels | U9/U11 Modification

Field Lining
(Motion 1) Coach Walk: A fixed 14m from the Sub Area, not varied based on field length.
(Motion 13) The Dots: 4m inside the end line (was 2m), to allow for more consistent penalty administration near the boundaries.
(Motion 27) Field Markings (15m MA, 11m Fan): Reintroduce the previous version of the 11m MA lines and markings (in addition to the current 15m line). Changes to penalty administration within these areas.
Timing & Restart of Play
(Motion 11) Stoppage Time: The clock stops on all whistles in the last 30 sec Q1, Q2, Q3, 2 min of Q4 and during overtime. OWFL Note: <i>The OWFL was already doing this.</i>
(Motion 12) Stoppage Time - Restarts: Clock will now restart on a self-start within the last 30 seconds of quarter 1,2,3, and the last 2 Minutes of quarter 4 and during overtime. Whistle no longer required to restart.
(Motion 13) Restart of Play Near Boundaries – Out of Bounds: On all boundary balls, play will restart 2m inside of the boundary via self-start. Players no longer need to go to the nearest dot to self-start within the AFA.
(Motion 13) Restart of Play Near Boundaries – Fouls: On all fouls near a boundary outside the AFA, play may restart 4m inside of the boundary via self-start (was 2m).
Equipment & Sticks
(Motion 2) Gaps in Crosse Pocket: No holes/gaps in a field player’s pocket larger than 4.27cm. This is the size of a standard golf ball.
(Motion 3) Rule Book Reorganized: Stick specifications from Rule 3 moved to Appendix H.
(Motion 4) Stick Stringing Specification Changes: See Rule 3 and Appendix H.
(Motion 6) Approved Crosses List: Eliminated. Sticks must still be legal according to Rule 3 and Appendix H. Added a multi-step process to Appendix H on how a stick will be inspected.
(Motion 7) Mouthguard Colour: Clear and white mouthguards are permitted. OWFL NOTE: <i>Invisalign and similar products should not be worn as mouthguards.</i>
(Motion 8) Pre-Game Crosse Inspections Removed: The OWFL removed pre-game Crosse inspections after the 2022 season. Coaches will be asked to certify that their team is legally equipped to play prior to the game.
(Motion 20) Stick Exchange On-Field: Players may exchange sticks while they are not in possession of the ball on the field. A coach may hand a player a stick from the sidelines only when the play is dead.
Goalkeepers
(NA) Goalkeeper Helmet: The goalkeeper must wear a helmet <i>designed for field lacrosse</i> [...]
(NA) Goalkeeper Gloves: The goalkeeper <i>must</i> wear padded gloves and may wear shoulder/arm pads as designed by the manufacturer. Thumb protectors, if attached during the manufacturing process, are legal.
(Motion 5) Goalkeeper’s Crosse Length: Length can now be between 90cm and 140cm (was 130cm) max.
(Motion 23) Goalkeeper Goal Score Foul Removed: If a GK throws the ball into the opponent’s goal, there is no foul and if a goal is scored, the goal will count. A GK may still not cross the attacking end Restraining-Line.
Gameplay
(Motion 9) Possession Timeouts Permitted: [...] when in possession of the ball outside of either AFA (defensive and offensive).
(Motion 18) Attack Has the Ball, Defense Through the Crease: Players in their Defending Area may move through their Goal-Circle. Defensive Players are permitted to run through any portion of their Goal-Circle while defending; however, only the defensive player(s) marking the ball carrier within a Crosse length, may remain in the crease while defending. OWFL Note: <i>The OWFL was already doing this.</i>
(Motion 19) Defense Has the Ball, Defense Through the Crease: When the defending team has possession, players on the defending team who do not have possession of the ball may move through or remain in the Goal-Circle in their defensive end of the field. Any defensive player in possession of the ball must abide by Rule 17.A.4.
(Motion 24) Body Ball Foul Eliminated: It is now legal to kick the ball. You may not kick the ball into the goal (no goal).
(Motion 25) Clarifying “In” the MA for Three Seconds: A defender must not remain in the MA for more than 3 seconds unless they are marking an opponent within a Crosse length. Only one defender may mark the same opponent without the ball in the MA. For a defensive player to be considered “inside” the MA both feet must be fully in the MA. Once one foot is on the MA line or beyond, this defensive player is considered “out”.
Alternate Possession & Coincidental Fouls
(Motion 14) Coincidental Foul Scenarios: Clarifying what to do when there are coincidental/simultaneous fouls.
(Motion 15) Multiple Coincidental Fouls: Clarifying what to do when there are multiple coincidental/simultaneous fouls.
(Motion 16) Severity of Fouls in Penalty Administration: The severity of a foul matters for penalty administration; Red Card > Yellow Card > Major Foul > Minor Foul (including RL violation & Goal-Circle violation).
(Motion 17) Implement Alternate Possession: Replaces the Throw.
(Motion 21) “Covering” Changes to “Withholding the Ball”: A player must not trap a loose ball on the ground with their stick longer than is necessary to control the ball and pick it up in one continuous motion if an opponent is able to make a legal play on the ball. Raking the ball is permitted. A player must not withhold the ball from play with any part of their body when it prevents an opponent from making a legal play on the ball. A player must not withhold the ball from play in any other manner. Exception: If the goalkeeper is grounded in their Goal-Circle they may trap the ball as per Rule 17.A.1.b.
(Motion 22) Changes to Empty Stick Check: A player must not check/tackle an opponent’s empty Crosse while the opponent is trying to gain possession of the ball in the air. This rule only applies when an opponent is attempting to receive a pass. Guidance: Incidental contact between Crosses while playing a ball in the air is not a foul. OWFL Note: <i>All stick checking is illegal, including Empties. Incidental stick-to-stick contact is legal.</i>

