

Hawks Skills Assessments

Hawks Lacrosse believes that there is an optimal team for every lacrosse player – one that maximizes the player's enjoyment and growth. Playing on a skill-appropriate lacrosse teams allows coaches to create practice plans that help each player develop at a healthy pace. Hawks Lacrosse strives to find that perfect team for each of its players.

The league that Hawks teams compete in has three levels of competition in each age group: Elite/Red (advanced; U10-U15), White (intermediate; U9-U15) and Blue (basic; U8-U15).

Prior to each spring season, Hawks Lacrosse generally conducts Skills Assessments to form White and Blue teams in the U9, U10, U11, U12, U13 and U15 age groups. Skills Assessments also help balance teams with an appropriate number of players at each position. At Skill Assessments, Hawks Lacrosse coaches lead players through drills and exercises to help determine which competitive level will best help each player learn, grow and enjoy lacrosse.

While Skills Assessments are not mandatory, Hawks Lacrosse *strongly encourages* all players who are not already rostered on a Red/Elite team to attend so that we can place them on the correct team.

Skills Assessments are typically led by Hawks coaches and last about 60 minutes.

At Skills Assessments, players will be put through a series of drills to assess their skill level. The following areas will be covered:

- Cradling: proper hand placement, protects stick adequately, cradles at eye/ shoulder level, avoids flat cradle in traffic.
- Ground Balls: player gets low with two hands on stick, with top hand near or on the head of the stick, scoops through the ball, brings stick to face/ear, runs through.
- Passing: player has proper mechanics, foot placement, follow-through, consistent accuracy.
- Catching: player presents target, calls for ball, accepts pass with soft hands.
- Dodging: player shows proper set-up, footwork, stick orientation for split dodge, face dodge and roll dodge.
- Defensive Footwork: player is able to run hip-to-hip, stick-on-stick with opponent, takes drop-step to adjust to changes of direction.
- Stick & Body Checks: player uses a variety of stick checks, poke, lift, slap and knows how to bump-and-recover with body.
- Following Directions and Moving to Stations: Players will be rated on their ability to follow instructions and move to drill stations.

Hawks Lacrosse coaches understand that all players may not have been taught all of the skills listed above, or taught them improperly. Coaches will also consider a player's effort, natural athletic ability, potential and enthusiasm.