

## **Team Formation Policy**

Our overarching goal is to place every player at the level best suited to his experience and athletic ability. We believe that our players' personal enjoyment and growth is maximized when they are grouped with players of similar ability levels.

Teams are formed based on age. Boys in the same grade will generally be grouped in the same age bracket, provided that they meet the age cutoff date. Please see the AYL website ([here](#)) for detailed information on age groups.

The AYL divides lacrosse boy's teams into three competitive levels in each age group:

- Red/Elite Division (competitive) - Most competitive and most experienced teams. Available in U10-U15 age groups. Generally formed by tryout.
- White Division (intermediate) - Teams with experienced players that may not be quite ready to play in a fully competitive division. White Division contains the majority of AYL teams and often has 1-3 subdivisions further stratifying competition within the division.
- Blue Division (basic) - Teams generally consisting of many players who are new to the sport or who have less than one year of experience.

The competitive division of your player's team your player is determined largely by the team's previous record, the overall makeup of the team and the head coach's assessment of the team's competitive abilities.

Teams for in the u8 and u9 age groups will be formed primarily on the basis of previous experience and coach selection.

Teams for the Blue and White skill divisions of the u10-u15 age groups will be formed on the basis of coach selection, previous experience and skills assessments. Please see the Hawks Skills Assessment Policy ([here](#)) for more information about how players are placed onto Blue and White teams.

Boys teams for the Red/Elite skill division of the u10-u15 age groups will be formed on the basis of coach selection and tryouts. Please see the Hawks Tryout Policy ([here](#)) for more information about our tryout process.

Please note that players do not have to participate in tryouts or skills assessments. We will automatically assign these players to the appropriate level team on the basis of their experience and coach input from previous seasons.

Hawks accepts requests for specific coaches and/or teammates during registration. Although we try to honor coach and teammate requests as best we can, they cannot be guaranteed. Further, we cannot guarantee that any player will be placed on the same team from year to year.

Each spring, Hawks Lacrosse receives parent requests for players to "play up" to the age group above their natural age level. Please see the Hawks Lacrosse Play Up Guidelines ([here](#)) for more information on how Hawks treats these requests.

In the end, team formation is an art, not a science, and every new season we must reconcile a number of competing objectives in order to produce viable rosters. Every offseason, we spend hours generating the rosters which will be released. In most cases, once rosters are released, they are final and changes are not likely.

We recognize that some parents may not agree with their son's placement, as they may have a different evaluation on their son than his previous coaches or tryout evaluators. Sometimes we make mistakes. So we hope that parents will recognize that our goal is always to place a player on the team which will give him the best opportunity to develop and succeed.

We appreciate your passionate support of Hawks Lacrosse, as we continue to grow each season, and we look forward to seeing you at the lacrosse field.