

Haverhill Youth Lacrosse Equipment Guide

(Updated February 2022)

Points of Emphasis for All Players

- All equipment you purchase must be approved by the governing bodies, but one should always keep in mind that rules and standards can and do change. This means you should always make sure your equipment adequately meets safety standards.
- The equipment you purchase should be considered an expense. Kids particularly will eventually grow out of their equipment and it is only there to protect him or her. A perfect fit will always lead to better protection.
- Sticks are an investment. Not necessarily in a financial sense but rather that the maintenance of all pieces of a stick directly impacts how a player plays and develops.
- Do not hesitate to contact the Haverhill Recreation Department or any of the Haverhill Youth Lacrosse Coaches at any time regarding safety, equipment, or any other questions that may surface.
- Haverhill Youth Lacrosse has no color requirements for equipment.

Girls' Lacrosse

Required Equipment:

Goggles or Women's Helmet
Stick
Mouthguard
Cleats

Optional Equipment:

Turf Shoes
Gloves



About:

Goggles are a set of eyewear with metal bars to protect the player's eyes from the ball. Styles vary as do the cost. The differences in them come from bar placement and materials that influence comfort and weight of the goggles. Goggles do differ in sizes and shapes, so it is best to try a couple pairs on in order to find the best fit. The best fit is going to rely more so on shape and size than price. Prices typically range from \$30-\$100. There are also women's' helmets on the market now which are more expensive but provide a flexible shell around the players' head. While it can be more protective in certain situations, most players still use the standard goggles. Both are allowed at the youth level currently but being a progressively

changing sport, there is a chance that this standard changes in the future. Nothing currently is set in stone for these rule changes. All goggles should be meet current ATSM F3077



specifications if they were manufactured in the last 2-3 years. STX 4Sight+ youth are recommended for young players who have narrow foreheads. When looking at the forehead, it is small and rounded across the front vs. having a wider, flatter center. Alternatively, for young youth players who have a wider and/or flatter center on their forehead, the standard STX 4Sight+ goggles will work well. The good news with these is they should be able to wear for years and years to come. There are high-end goggle options as well, but those are the 2 top-selling youth girl goggles as of January 2022. Frankly, the adult-sized one has traditionally been the # 1 for youth and beyond. A few other things to keep in mind: Some styles of goggles do have more give to the band, so it is more comfortable should parents want to spend \$100 instead of \$45. Due to varying safety requirements, these above-mentioned 4Sight+ Lacrosse goggles **cannot** be worn to Field Hockey. However, the 2See Field Hockey goggles **CAN** be worn for lacrosse. All goggles have two straps and are most comfortable and stable when one strap is put under the back of their head and the other on top, ideally with a ponytail, bun, etc., in between the two straps. There are more styles other than the ones listed here.

Sticks come in many styles. The stick is made up of the head, shaft, strings, and butt end. Shafts come in different shapes and diameter, but all heads and shafts will fit together though some may require a shaft adapter to fit snugly with the head. Shafts are made from a variety of materials that can raise the price if bought separately.

Heads have direct shapes and angles because they are designed either for a specific position or function. For example, there are sticks designed for Defense which have wider head faces so that it is easier to block and catch passes in the air. There are also heads designed with flatter scoops at the top, so groundballs are much easier to pick up. As for cost, usually sticks are categorized into 3 categories: Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced. Beginner sticks run \$40-\$70, Intermediates are \$80-\$120 and Advanced range from \$150-\$250. Price point is not indicative of a player's skill level. Using a \$250 stick at age 8 won't definitively make you a better player. In order to buy a stick that holds up at higher levels, look to the intermediate level but also be sure to properly care for the stick.



Stringing also factors into the price of sticks. The center piece of women's heads is called a tracker. Each style of tracker does differ in the same ways a head shape may also function. There are trackers which can help make shots and passes more accurate as well as provide a quicker release, but also may make it a little more difficult to possess the ball for long periods

of time. Any tracker can be strung into any head no matter the age or price. Over the last few years, mesh has been developed for the women's game which is easier to replace and provides the same performance as previous stringing materials. Regardless of what is strung into the heads, it all wears out eventually. It is recommended to replace your strings every year, and trackers every other. During this time, you have the opportunity to change the colors of the string to almost anything imaginable at no additional cost. Full restrings including tracker can be \$25-\$35 if you have it done by a retailer. Some players and coaches also have the expertise to string sticks, please don't hesitate to reach out to your coach with any questions regarding who can string. Despite the recommendations, most women and girls end up replacing their entire stick instead of restringing. Over the last few years, the WARP line of sticks has released. WARP sticks do not require restringing and are great for young players or newcomers to the sport of Lacrosse. The only downside is there is no customization with color and if anything breaks you need to replace the entire stick. Those typically are priced at around \$250. Women's Mesh is also a new aspect of stringing that has entered the market since US Lacrosse altered stick stringing rules. Be careful if purchasing separately from the stick as it looks identical when in the packaging to the Men's Mesh. Women's Mesh provides all the same weather resistance benefits as the Men's as well.

The buttend is simply a rubber cap at the bottom of the shaft to cover up any exposed metal that could injure someone. It also functions as a stop for the player's hand, so it doesn't slip off the end. Most players will wrap tape around it in order to secure it better and keep it from falling off.

Mouthguards must be worn at all times. You can use whichever mouthguard you choose however rules state that you cannot use a white mouthguard, it must have a color or pattern to it.

Cleats are highly recommended since almost all practices and games take place on grass or turf. There are specialized Lacrosse cleats however they tend to be a bit more costly. Soccer cleats work fine Softball cleats cannot be used.

Turf shoes and Gloves are optional pieces of equipment. Turf shoes are also a good option for turf but not grass. Gloves aren't made with thick padded material, but they do help grip the shaft and provide protection against incidental scrapes from other players. They can be helpful in colder weather since they do help insulate a bit.



Starter packages will give you a stick bag, beginner stick, and goggles for about \$80-\$120

If you would like any specific recommendations, please contact Recreation Director Ben Delaware at bdelaware@cityofhaverhill.com

Boys' Lacrosse

Required Equipment:

Helmet
Gloves
Arm Pads
Shoulder pads
Stick
Mouthguard
Cup
Cleats



Optional Equipment:

Rib pads
Turf Shoes

About:

Helmets have a hard-plastic shell with a metal facemask. They do come in a few sizes depending on the helmet. Most helmets suitable for youth or high school players have a range of sizes while the more expensive models are typically one size fits most. The one size fits most comes with 3 color-coordinated sets of inserts to fit a player's head size. Helmets usually cost between \$120-\$350 depending on model and customization. No helmet will prevent a concussion so most of what you're paying for with the fancier models are comfort and customization. Most helmets under \$200 only come in black or white. The ones over \$200 range in price based on what you're customizing. Stores will only stock black, white, and sometimes local town colors. When you order a custom helmet, there are additional charges for facemask color, whether the shell is matte or gloss finish, different chinstrap colors, and there can be additional charges based on supplemental stickers added to the shell. Chin straps are universal. When adjusting the chin strap, make sure to adjust the top 2 snaps before the lower 2 snaps while the player holds the chin piece to their face. Players should also be looking through the top 2 holes of the facemask for a proper fit and thusly protection.





Gloves are sized differently depending on the manufacturer. Sometimes they are sized by inches (10", 11", 12", etc....) and sometimes it is by typical sizing (sm, md, lg, etc....). In case you run into this issue, 13" is equivalent to a Large. Some models list both on their gloves as well. The difference in gloves come down to the types of padding in them. This obviously affects the price but the gloves themselves also have different cuts and fits to them. For example, you could try on 2 sets of 13"/Large gloves and have one feel smaller than the other. Again, it really all comes down to comfort when picking out a new pair.

Arm pads actually come in 3 different styles: elbow pads, arm pads, and arm guards. Manufacturers recommend them based off a position's tendency for contact. Elbows for the defensemen who get hit the least, and arm guards for attackmen who get the most. There is no rule requiring one position to wear a certain style over another, but elbows do provide for the least protection, as opposed to arm guards which provide the most. These usually aren't a factor until higher level youth and the player can choose what is most comfortable for him.



Shoulder pads have changed a lot over the last 10 years. They cover the player's rib cage up to the neck. It is harder to find shoulder pads with hard plastic shoulder pieces, but instead they are softer which allows for more maneuverability and comfort. Lacrosse pads no matter the piece, are designed for mobility first and protection second. That doesn't mean they are non-protective but rather they tend to have a lot of flexibility unlike hockey pads which can be very stiff. Shoulder pads also come with bicep pads which are attached via velcro to the shoulder pieces. Any Velcro piece of protective can be removed however it is recommended that youth players leave them on. There are also shoulder pads classified as "liners" which do not come



with the optional pieces. The big industry shift right now is to cover less area for increased mobility but also to incorporate denser, harder chest pieces to minimize risk of injury to the chest cavity and cardiac system. There are new standards in effect for this risk to be implemented in 2022. All 2022 compliant shoulder pads will have a logo somewhere present that looks like a heartbeat.

Boys' Sticks are just as complicated as the Girls' sticks are. Same basic pieces: head, shaft, strings, buttend, but they have much stricter standards for the head shapes and shaft sizes. Unlike with women's/girls' sticks, men's/boys' sticks are almost always sold in pieces if they are not beginner sticks. Recently there have been exceptions to this as manufacturers have been shipping complete sticks for multiple skill levels to retailers to ease purchasing by players and parents.



Heads are designed for position but there is no requirement that you must use a defense head for defense or any other position. It is up to the player for what they prefer. The heads themselves can last up to 5 years. Heads usually are \$90 or less and come unstrung.

Most players use mesh in their sticks and it comes in semi-soft and semi-hard. Mesh nowadays is completely weatherproof and lasts 3-5 times longer than the old stuff. This new mesh is known as performance mesh which started becoming widely used over the last ten years. It is still recommended to be replaced every year. Boys are more likely to restring their sticks before getting a completely new one and they can change the colors to almost anything. Full restrings can be \$35-\$50 depending on the type of mesh if you have it done by a retailer. You can still have traditional leathers and strings put in instead of mesh which is cheaper but due to not being weatherproof, requires constant adjustment and maintenance which means it is not recommended for most players.

Shafts come in 3 sizes, Attack/Midfield, Defense, and Goalie. You cannot use a Defense shaft until 5th grade (U13) and even then, it is shortened 12 inches (head and shaft should equal 60"). 7th grade starts the use of the 60" defensive shaft (head and shaft should be 72") and remains that size in all levels above. Shafts are made from different materials like aluminum or carbon fiber and that impacts the price. They can also come in different shapes or "grips". Same thing as most other equipment: rely on comfort to make the decision.



Buttends are the rubber piece at the bottom of the shaft to keep the player's hand from slipping off and covers up the edge of the metal which can sometimes be sharp. All shafts fit with all heads. Some may fit snuggier than others, and the screw holes may not line up, but they fit. Most come with a self-tapping screw so it creates its own hole anyways so you can mix and match brand names of your pieces.

Overall price of sticks is a giant margin. For a complete stick you can pay anywhere from \$30-\$350 but this is based off what you are buying. \$30 would be a standard beginner stick without performance mesh, \$350 would be the top of the line everything. \$225 is about the average price of buying a completely new stick and having it strung. Intermediate and Advanced complete sticks can be a bit cheaper (under \$200) but you lose the ability to customize the colors or pieces off the shelf. They can be edited later however. Over the last few

years, the WARP line of sticks has released. WARP sticks do not require restringing and are great for young players or newcomers to the sport of Lacrosse. The only downside is there is no customization with color and if anything breaks you need to replace the entire stick. Those typically are priced at around \$250.

Mouthguards must be worn at all times. You can use whichever mouthguard you choose however rules state that you cannot use a white mouthguard, it must have a color or pattern to it.

Player's should also be wearing a **cup or athletic supporter**. This is a required piece of equipment for field players when playing in the MBYLL. There is no appropriate way to check for a cup, so it is a verbal affirmation from player to coach and coach to official when asked. Every coach is asked if his or her players are "properly equipped" by the official before every game which covers all equipment including mouthguards and cups.

Cleats are highly recommended since almost all practices and games take place on grass or turf. There are specialized Lacrosse cleats however they tend to be a bit more costly. Essentially Lacrosse cleats are a hybrid designed of a couple other sports. Soccer or football cleats work fine.

Rib Pads are additional, optional pads which provide extra protection for the belly area of a player below the shoulder pads. It is your choice whether to use the or not, use varies depending on age group which is why they are optional. **Turf Shoes** are also optional as they are specifically designed for use on artificial surfaces.



There are starter packages which include helmets, beginner stick, gloves, arm pads, and shoulder pads. These are between \$240-\$280 no matter what brand or retailer you get them from.

If you would like any specific recommendations, please contact Recreation Director Ben Delaware at bdelaware@cityofhaverhill.com

Goalie Equipment is on the next page...

Goalies (Boys and Girls)

Equipment:

Stick
Helmet
Throat Guard
Gloves
Shin guards
Cup/Pelvic Protector
Padded Pants
Arm pads

About:

Most of the equipment is the same between boys and girls. Where difference may occur is what is required at specific levels. Goalies will wear more padding at the youth levels more often than not.

Sticks are as pictured. Depending on the height of the player and age level, you may be able to shorten the shaft to fit the players' needs. Same stringing aspects apply as the boys.

Haverhill Recreation Department supplies all teams within Haverhill Youth Lacrosse with all gear to create a proper set of goalie equipment EXCEPT for the athletic supporter/pelvic protector. Players can purchase their own equipment if they would like. If you would like any specific recommendations, please contact Recreation Director Ben Delaware at bdelaware@cityofhaverhill.com

