

Wall Drills

If anyone is truly serious about becoming a lacrosse player he must PRACTICE!!!! Drills, especially wall work, will sharpen your stick skills. It will also build up muscles, and muscle endurance, in your arms, shoulders, and back that will make you throw further and shoot harder. Many of these wall drills were provided by Coach Janaczyck, who is the head coach at Gettysburg College. His players practice these drills every day as a warm up before they begin practice. If its important enough for college players to stress, imagine how much it could help your game. Do this as often as possible!

Playing with a friend is fun, but the friend does not always catch the ball or throw it properly. **THE WALL NEVER LIES!** If you throw or aim wrong, the wall will let you know immediately, and you can make the proper corrections.

1. All drills must be performed with BOTH HANDS.
2. Any wall will work, but a smooth concrete wall at least 10 feet tall is the best surface
3. Always use your GLOVES when performing this routine
4. Stand about 7-10 feet from the wall (Do not let the ball hit the ground or you will develop bad habits when catching the ball.)
5. Perform this routine 4 to 5 times a week for 15 to 20 minutes

Terms:

1. **Head of the Stick:** The plastic part with the pocket (netting)
 2. **Face:** The front or open side of the head where the ball goes in.
 3. **Throat:** the place where the ball rests in the pocket when the stick is held vertical
 4. **Shaft:** The metal part of the stick
 5. **Butt end:** The bottom of the shaft where the plastic or rubber piece fits over the bottom of the shaft.
 6. **Whole & Part :** Whole: Any whole motion or the entire movement such as throwing the ball using two hands
 7. **Part:** A motion that has been broken down into its parts; such as just throwing with your bottom hand only
 8. **Top hand: (The Push)** The hand that is on the shaft closest to the head of the stick & most importantly the hand that guides or aims when passing and is not the power hand, accuracy
 9. **Bottom hand: (The Pull)** The hand that is on or near the but end of the shaft & most importantly is used for power.
 10. **The Pull:** This is the power, the action that makes the ball travel fast. If you do not pull hard enough the ball will go into the ground. A proper powerful pull with little or no push will make the ball go 10 -15 feet into the air. This is desirable as it is a simple and easy correction with a push that will make the ball go to your target. Think about a catapult that you have seen in old movies: Your stick is the lever, your top hand is the fulcrum, or the place that holds the long arm of the catapult in the middle of the arm, and your bottom hand is the force that swings down to launch the flaming oil barrel toward your enemy.
 11. **The push:** This is the action that aims or guides the ball for accuracy. This is the traditional baseball or football throw that you are used to, you don't need to do this. If you try to push the ball and use your top hand for power, 2 things will happen: the ball will go toward the ground, and it will not be as accurate. Moreover, you might as well put down your stick and pick up the ball and throw with your hand. The purpose of having a stick is to use a lever, which allows you to throw the ball harder and farther using a catapulting action.
 12. **Pull / Push motion:** With effective combination of both actions you will be able to throw the ball with proper velocity and accuracy.
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Effective Body & Hand positioning on your stick:

Throwing a ball / traditional: (4 steps / parts)

1. Turn sideways to your target and have your opposite leg, the outside of your foot and leg Facing your target (Perpendicular to the wall) (right handed this would be your left leg) with your feet about shoulder width apart
2. Make a "T" With your arms
3. Step with your opposite leg
4. Throw the ball & Follow through by pointing your hand at your target.
*Remember if you do this your ball will travel forward but into the ground.

For lacrosse:

1. Same as step 1 above in traditional throwing
 - Hands First:
 - Never grab your stick with your palms --- always in your fingers. This allows more control!
 - **Hips:** To throw the ball using a proper pull / push you must put your hands on the proper part of your stick. Right handed: If you place your left hand on the butt end of your stick and then lay your hand on your left hip bone and then slide your right hand down your shaft until the back of your hand touches your right hip then your hands are approximately where you want them. Many players place a piece of tape on the shaft where your right hand is (now) to remind you where your hand goes for open field passing. Obviously for other situations it is necessary to put your hands in different positions on your stick but this is for basic open field passing and shooting.
2. Like step 2 above but you are making an upside down "L"
 - Raise both hands up into the air about shoulder / head height.
 - **Bottom hand:** your fingers of your left hand should end up on top of your stick; and move your stick back so you can look over the top or your knuckles while facing sideways (remember you are stick should be perpendicular to your target- the wall in this case)
 - **Top hand:** Gripping the stick with your fingers; your index finger should be extended up pointing up to the head of the stick (either underneath or slightly askew) / the ring finger should also go lightly up the stick and your thumb is on the side
 - **Angle:** The stick should be at approximately a 30 degree angle (if under a covered play area aim the head of your stick to the far edge of the roof/ If outside pick a distant tree or roof top)
 - **Butt End:** Point / Aim the butt end of the stick at your target and try to keep this pointed at your target for the entire motion. The path that your stick takes should be in the same vertical flat plane. If you go off of this plane and throw "side arm" (not effective) then you are not guaranteed that the ball will go to your target.
3. Same as step 3 above (Rather than stepping toward your target, you may want to step slightly forward and to the target)
4. Similar to step 4 above: As you are stepping, throw the ball by moving your bottom hand forward and then pull down hard only using your top hand to guide the stick. *(See below for bottom hand control throwing to retrain your body to throw using your bottom hand)
 - Follow Through: The ball should be released and the head of the stick should be pointing at the target, with the face of the stick open to receive the ball in return.

Potential Problems:

1. The ball goes down:
 - Too much push, use more pull
 - You are not pulling down far enough, try pulling to your arm pit or to your opposite elbow
2. The ball goes too high:
 - This is easy to correct, just add a slight push
3. The ball goes left or right:
 - You aimed in that direction
 - Your stick did not start perpendicular to the wall
 - Your stick did not stay in an overhand motion, (or in the vertical plane)
 - You stepped in that direction not to your target
4. The ball spins funny on the wall:
 - Check how you are holding the stick, you are probably grabbing it with your palms too tight and twisting the stick as you throw.
5. Catching the ball:
 - This is opposite of catching (Imagine catching an egg) You need “soft hands” (you should have the stick in your fingers anyway) and give with your stick and both arms and your body. In other words you must time when the ball reaches the face of your stick to move your stick, using both your top and then bottom hand, back wards guiding the ball into a soft landing; and step back as an extra cushioning using your body.

Wall Drills:

1. **Right Hand / Left Hand Regular Throw (Whole motion)**
 - a. 50 times
2. **Bottom Hand Control (R/L) (Part motion)**
 - a. When you throw, keep your top hand fingers open, let the stick rest on it, and let go with your top hand. **DO NOT PUSH AT ALL ...** this teaches the pull and teaches your top hand not to overpower the bottom hand. The ball should go higher than your target. (Thus when adding a slight adjustment with the top hand as guide the trajectory of the ball should then lower to the target).
 - b. **POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:**
 - i. Sometimes players try to use the wrist to propel the ball and in essence are still pushing when they should be pulling. Again, think of a catapult.
3. **Right hand quick stick (catch and immediately throw- NO CRADLE)**
 - a. 50 times (then switch to left hand)
 - i. Choke up on stick with your hands about 12-15 inches apart (25 times)
 - ii. Use a regular grip (25 times)
4. **Right hand Cradle**
 - a. One catch & cradle (as you get stronger make your cradle harder and quicker almost a fake / or add a fake)
 - i. 50 times (then work your left)
5. **Right hand (1 hand only) quick stick**
 - a. 50 times (then work your left)

Running the Wall

6. **Run down the wall passing and catching**
 - a. At the end turn so your back faces the wall and come back throwing with your left hand and repeat. Start off by jogging and increasing speed as you go along.
 - b. **THIS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN STANDING STILL AS THE GAME OF LACROSSE IS PLAYED RUNNING**

- c. You may miss a lot and be running to get the ball, but you need to be in great shape anyway to play this game! IN addition, if you don't like chasing it then you will get better in a hurry!

7. Right hand face dodge & throw cross handed (Left)

- a. Have your normal throwing or shooting position to "sell" the move more effectively,
 - i. Start like you are throwing the ball, roll your bottom hand up on top of the shaft, pull with your bottom hand the stick across your body, (like you are putting away your sword in your opposite pocket), sliding the stick through your top hand (it should be at or near the head now), top hand pushes the stick across your face to the opposite side of your head, and then throw.
*(You can also do this and throw regular)

8. Right hand catch and face dodge

- a. 50 times (then work your left)

9. 'Split Dodge'

- a. Throw right, catch right, split dodge to left hand - throw left, catch left, split dodge to right hand
 - i. In other words Catch the ball right handed, face dodge by pushing the ball across the face, switch hands [move bottom hand below top hand and top hand to bottom], and immediately throw the ball or shoot.

MORE ADVANCED

1. Roll dodge right handed

- a. Roll right throw catch roll left throw

2. Face dodge

- a. Then roll dodge throw

3. Quick stick

- a. Change hands on every toss while ball is in the air

4. Cross handed (right handed but stick on left side of body)

- a. 50 times each hand

5. Over the shoulder (AKA: Around-the-back)

- a. 50 times each hand
 - i. With your hands at hips position, use the push pull method as normal, however, (right handed) push with your bottom hand from your left hip, to and past, your right hip, and pull your right hand up to the top of your shoulder or your head. (NOT around your mid or lower back. If the ball is not coming right back to your right side and into your stick then you are doing it wrong).

6. Underhand throw or shot

- a. Stick should still be perpendicular to the ground; can do this after practicing picking up a ground ball and doing a quick throw.

7. *Side arm after a great hard fake

- a. *SIDE ARM THROWS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED*
- b. However, in certain situations, it is necessary to throw around another player.
- c. 50 times each hand

Be creative have fun and challenge yourself - develop your own drills

* If you are fortunate to have a wall that has a corner or one in back of the other practice by bouncing off of one wall turning and passing to the other and back again; then increase your speed