

Minnesota Polocrosse Club (MNPC)

New Member Packet





Welcome to the Minnesota Polocrosse Club!

The Minnesota Polocrosse Club is a welcoming, team-oriented group of riders who share a passion for horses, competition, and camaraderie. Whether you are brand new to polocrosse or bringing years of experience, you are now part of a supportive club that values sportsmanship, growth, and fun.

Inside this packet, you'll find everything you need to get started — from practice details and membership information to safety guidelines and ways to get involved. We can't wait to see you on the field!

Club Contacts

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A Clear Path for Beginners

We understand that trying a new equestrian discipline can feel intimidating. That's why polocrosse clubs focus on:

- Clear beginner education
- Welcoming weekly practices
- Structured skill development
- Transparent expectations about time and cost



- Supportive coaching and mentorship
- You do not need a “finished” horse.
- You do not need to be an elite competitor.
- You do need a willingness to learn and be part of a team.
- It also helps if you can laugh at yourself 😊

Weekly Practice Schedule

During the spring, summer, and fall polocrosse season, weather permitting, our club (MNPC) hosts practices almost every Sunday from 1:00–4:00 pm, weather permitting. These structured, team-focused practices are a great opportunity to build skills, connect with fellow riders, and enjoy time in the arena.

For the most up-to-date schedule information, please follow our Facebook Page and join our Facebook Group (MN Polocrosse), as weather and event schedules may occasionally require adjustments. Non-members are welcome and simply need to purchase a “day” club membership to participate. A completed liability waiver and registration form are required for all riders attending practices or events.

MNPC Practice Locations During the Outdoor Season:

Finch Family Farm
13580 40th Street South
Afton, MN 55001

Doelz Family Farm
7673 175th Street St E
Prior Lake, MN 55372

MNPC Practice Locations During the Indoor Winter Season:

Park Place Dressage
7946 165th Street E.
Prior Lake, MN 55372

What Makes Polocrosse Different

Polocrosse uniquely offers:

- A true team sport within a strong community based equine culture
- Co-ed competition, with men and women playing together
- Family participation across ages and various skill levels
- Clear rules, structured umpiring, and strong horse welfare standards
- Skill development without judged competition
- A welcoming, club-based community



- A true sense of belonging

For many riders, polocrosse provides something they have been missing — belonging, purpose, and a supportive team environment. Most riders discover polocrosse through invitations, barns, or friends — and once they try it, they stay for the community.

A Quick Overview of the Rules

Polocrosse is a fast-paced, team sport played on horseback that combines elements of polo and lacrosse. It's exciting, strategic, and incredibly fun to play — but the basic rules are simple to understand.

Each team has six players, divided into three sections of two players. Only one section from each team is on the field at a time. Games are played in short periods called chukkas, and teams rotate sections throughout the match.

The objective is straightforward: Move the ball down the field and score by throwing it between the opponent's goal posts.

Here are the key basics:

- The ball is thrown in to start play and after each goal.
- Players must carry the ball in their racquet and bounce it every few strides (called “bouncing” or “running the ball”) to maintain possession.
- The ball can be passed between teammates.
- Defenders can attempt to dislodge the ball using a controlled racquet check (no contact with the horse or rider).
- Ride-offs (shoulder-to-shoulder horse contact) are allowed when done safely and parallel.
- Safety and horse welfare are always the top priority.

It's competitive, but also highly sportsmanlike. Polocrosse rewards teamwork, horsemanship, and smart strategy — and it's welcoming to new players of all ages and riding backgrounds. If you can ride, you can learn to play!

Team Structure

Each team consists of six players, divided into two three-person sections. Only one section is on the field at a time, and sections alternate chukkas (periods of play) so both riders and horses have time to rest.

Within each section, players have defined roles:



- **#1 – Attack**
The only player who can score goals and must be inside the scoring area (“the box”) to shoot.
- **#2 – Center**
Plays only in the middle third of the field and must be equally strong offensively and defensively.
- **#3 – Defense**
The only player allowed inside the defensive scoring area to protect the goal.

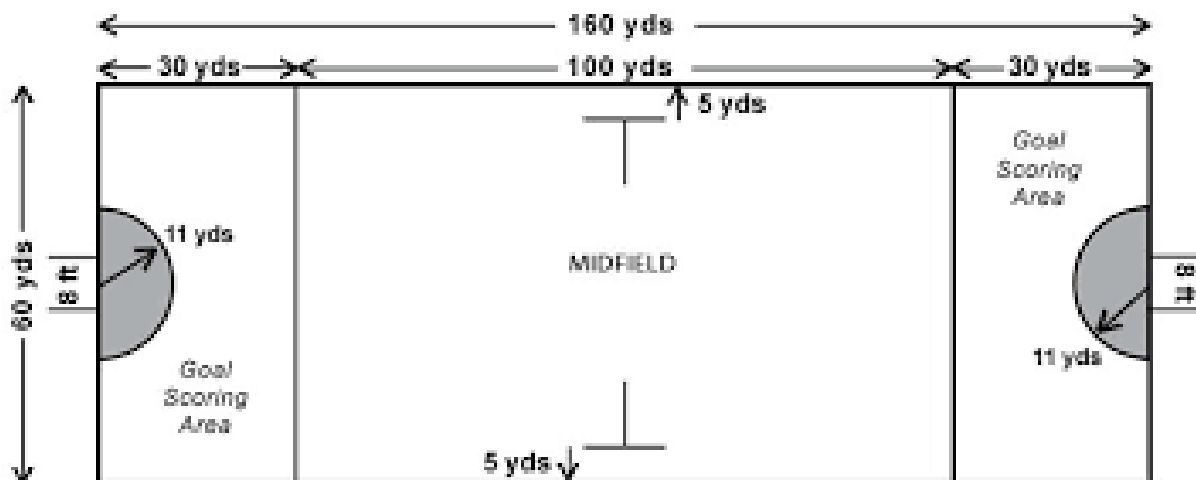
This structure keeps the game strategic, fast-moving, and team-focused.

The Field & Scoring

A regulation field measures:

- 160 yards long
- 60 yards wide
- Goal posts are 8 feet apart

Each end of the field has a 30-yard penalty line that creates the scoring area, known as “the box.” Inside the box is an 11-yard semi-circle around the goal posts. The #1 must be inside the box but outside the 11-yard arc to score. Special possession rules apply when crossing the 30-yard line to promote passing, teamwork, and fair play.





Polocrosse Gear for the Horse

Polocrosse is a fast-paced sport that requires horses to accelerate, stop, turn quickly, and stay balanced while their rider handles the ball. Because of this, proper gear is essential for both performance and safety.

Polocrosse tack is designed to provide stability, protection, and comfort — allowing the horse to move freely while minimizing the risk of injury. Here is a list of the equipment you will need to play polocrosse with your horse.

1. Saddle & Breast Collar

A secure, well-fitted saddle is critical. Most players use a lightweight saddle that allows close contact and freedom of movement. A breast collar is required to help keep the saddle stable during sharp turns and rapid transitions. Most common saddle used is the Australian Stock Saddle, but any saddle without a horn is acceptable. No matter the saddle a breast collar is required for tournament play.

However, we encourage new players to use whatever tack they already have when first trying polocrosse at a club practice. The polocrosse community is supportive and always eager to help, and so club members are often happy to share equipment so newcomers can get started without needing to invest in new gear right away.

2. Protective Leg Wraps

All four legs are wrapped to protect tendons and joints from interference and impact during play. These wraps provide essential support during quick stops, spins, and physical pressure from other horses.

3. Bell Boots

Bell boots protect the heel bulbs and coronet band from overreach injuries, especially during hard acceleration and tight turns.

4. Bridle & Bit

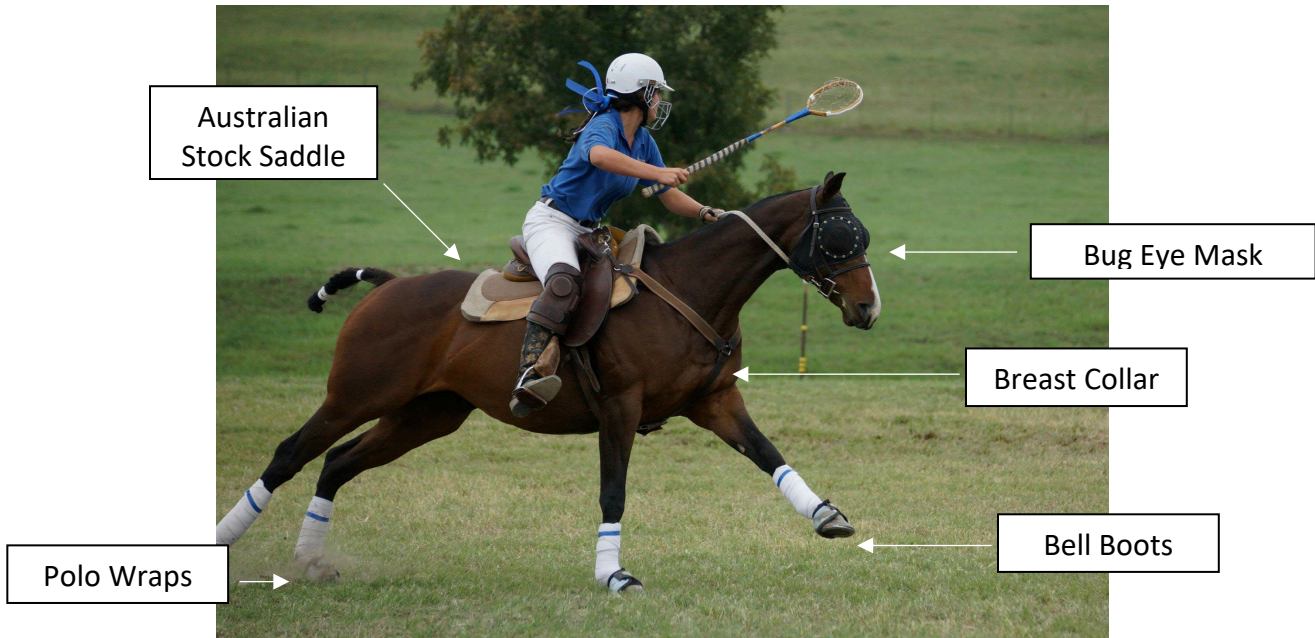
When it comes to bits in polocrosse, our goal is simple: keep horses comfortable, safe, and able to perform at their best.

Riders are welcome to choose the bit that works best for their horse, as long as it meets a few basic safety guidelines outlined in the APA Standards of Play. Bits with protruding side bars are not allowed, and any leverage action must be built into the main ring of the bit rather than extending outward.

If you're new to the sport, don't worry — most common, well-fitted bits used for regular riding are perfectly acceptable. And if you're ever unsure, just ask! Experienced players are always happy to help make sure you and your horse feel confident and ready to step on the field.



If you're curious about getting started or want help ensuring your horse is properly equipped, visit www.mnpolocrosse.com for guidance and resources.



What Does a Polocrosse Player Wear and Use?

Polocrosse gear is practical, safe, and designed for comfort in the saddle. If you already ride, you likely have most of what you need.

Required Equipment

To step onto the field, every player must have:

- **Helmet with chin strap** – An approved equestrian helmet is required at all times while mounted.
- **Riding boots** – Boots with a heel to safely ride in stirrups.
- **Riding attire** - Players typically wear jeans, breeches or any kind of comfortable riding pants.
- **Saddle and bridle with approved bit** – Properly fitted and in good condition (see above.)
- **Polocrosse racquet** – A cane or composite stick with a netted head used to catch, carry, and throw the ball.
- **Polocrosse ball** – A small, lightweight rubber ball designed specifically for the sport (provided during play).
- **Horse protective boots** – Leg protection for your horse during games.



Optional (But Recommended)

Many players also choose to wear:

- **Knee pads** – Helpful for protection during quick turns and ride-offs.
- **Gloves** – For better grip on the racquet and reins.
- **Face Mask and/or Mouthguard** – Added protection, especially for more competitive play.
- **Spurs or whip** – If appropriate for your horse and used responsibly within APA guidelines.

Polocrosse is fast-paced and athletic, but the gear is straightforward and rider-friendly. If you're new, don't worry — most clubs have equipment you can borrow while you're getting started, and experienced players are always happy to help you feel comfortable and confident before your first chukka.

Check out our club website www.mnpolocrosse.com for instructional videos on how to use the racket and throw the ball.

Horse Welfare & Safety

Horse welfare and safety are the foundation of the sport. Polocrosse places horse care above competition. Horses must be sound, properly conditioned, and well-managed throughout tournaments. Strict limits on playing time, rest periods, hydration, and overall care ensure the wellbeing of our equine partners.

For families and riders considering a new sport, this structure matters. Clear rules, defined umpiring, and strong welfare standards create a safe and supportive environment for both horses and riders.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How can I try Polocrosse?**
We welcome everyone to come and try polocrosse. This is very much a family sport so it does not matter how young or old you are we can get you involved. We have members as young as 5yrs old and as old as ...well they don't like to divulge their ages 😊
- **How do I know my horse can play Polocrosse?**
One of the keys to enjoying Polocrosse is the horse. Many horses have the basic good qualities that make a great polocrosse horse. The most important safety rule is that the horse needs to not kick during play in close quarters with other horses, which can endanger other riders and horses.

Riding in close quarters can take a little conditioning so don't pass up polocrosse because you are not sure how your horse will do. We are here to help every team member learn including your horse. With that said we will also be up front with you if we think that your horse may not be a good fit for polocrosse. We understand that you AND your horse are both new to the sport and will help you through the training process.



- **Is Polocrosse dangerous?**

Like any equestrian sport, polocrosse involves risk — but safety and horse welfare are always our top priorities. We follow APA Standards of Play, require helmets, and create a supportive learning environment. New players are introduced gradually so both horse and rider can build confidence safely.

- **Do I need to be an advanced rider?**

No. If you can walk, trot, and canter confidently and steer your horse, you can learn polocrosse. We teach the game step-by-step, and many riders improve their overall horsemanship because of it.

- **How much does it cost?**

Club practices are typically very affordable, and many clubs offer “day memberships” for first-time players. Because you can use the tack and equipment you already own, startup costs are minimal compared to many equestrian disciplines.

- **Do I need special fitness training?**

No special training is required to start. Polocrosse will naturally improve your balance, coordination, and fitness over time — for both you and your horse.

- **What is the time commitment?**

You can participate at whatever level fits your lifestyle. Some members just practice locally. Others travel to tournaments across the state, country, or even internationally. You choose your level of involvement.

- **What makes Polocrosse different from other equestrian sports?**

Polocrosse combines horsemanship, teamwork, and fast-paced strategy. Unlike many equestrian disciplines, it’s highly social and team-oriented. You’re not competing alone — you’re part of a section and a club community.

- **I’m nervous to try — is that normal?**

Absolutely. Almost everyone feels that way before their first practice. The good news? Polocrosse players are known for being welcoming and supportive. We remember what it was like to be new — and we’re excited to help you get started!