

Goalkeeping is a specialist skill in the game of hockey. Some attributes required are; Courage, Decision Making, Mobility & Agility, Concentration and Visual Awareness. This is the last line of defence, not just a physical presence but also the ability to read play and be decisive.

This position can be very frustrating when the athlete needs to be focused on the game and may only touch the ball two or so times in a game. The position also has that hero (save a goal) or villain (errors resulting in goals against) and often the other elements of the position are not recognised. Examples, calling and directing defensive play, early set in position.

Gear

Strong shoes - (hard toe is good)

Kickers – if need add extra padding on the instep

Leg Pads – fit neat not sliding around

Pelvic Protector – compulsory

Padded Pants (depending on athlete size to leg pads)

Chest Protector – Compulsory

Helmet – must not restrict vision adjust if required / need maintained /

Throat guard – choker is preferred option

Stick – own preference (usually flat & lightweight)

Optional

Elbow / arm guards

- Correct equipment is important is must be comfortable enough to move freely.
- And give the athlete confidence of protection. (Or the Athlete will hesitate)
- The athlete should learn to 'gear up' him or herself in good time.
- Never turn your back.

Goalkeeping is fun and rewarding but it isn't for everyone. Saving a goal is as important as a goal scored by the team at the other end.

Skills

Fitness – Quick movements need to be fastest player from baseline to top of the circle and the agility to change direction. Stretching is important that replicates a save hamstrings, groin, and hip flexor.

Stance – “Nose over knees over toes” hasn't changed as a general rule. Balance even weight ready to move in either direction quickly, hands up ready not too high generally at waist level.

Double-Leg block- For new keepers best to use the biggest target - both legs pads together weight forward slightly bent knees to control the rebound follows the ball and clear.

Lunge Pad Saves – Keep the foot forward toe down expose wider pad area for as long as possible. (this then progresses to split-save)

Instep Jab kick – Line the ball up with the centre of your instep, open your hips and present a flat kicker the first-time, after jabbing at the ball follow through in the direction of the target.

Crossover Kick – Move body step to the side of the ball eyes & head over knees over toes step towards the ball, angle the body slightly to direct clearances to the sidelines.

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Hands – Gloves up @ 45 it is easier to drop hands. Form V with arms to play ball out in front and follow to clear.

Stick-side – Use the shoulder not the wrist don't swing, track (eyes) the ball to the stick

Glove & Stick – Tracking ball use both stick & glove by using the thumb of the left hand to locate stick

Over-Saves – Track ball move body back (if time allows) angle glove back for over saves use leg power to jump up so ball goes over net

To help with balance (so you don't fall backwards) you need to attempt to make a save with weight going forward.

In order of stopping shots at goal

1. Feet and legs
2. Hands and body
3. Stick

Sliding, dropping and diving, are all advance skills and depend on type of surface you play on. You need to generate speed as you move to the ball on sand you need to execute higher-quality slide to have the same effect as sliding on water. Core stability is important to assist with balance so keeper does not roll forward onto their stomach.

Player needs to run at speed keeping your body facing front on as you approach the ball, bottom leg crosses under arm extend (stick-side) out line up the centre of your pads to the ball, pads together and as a rule feet to the back-line, keep top arm lifted above body. You can use a beanbag to practise your approach when first learning to slide progress by using a tarp and a bucket of water to first learn sliding on the turf.

To practice footwork a soccer ball is a very useful tool, have keepers warm up with a soccer ball in & out of gear also if two keepers are present kicking ball back and forth is good practise. Have the keepers line the ball up with the foot the ball is coming to many young keepers will want to use their preferred foot to make the save, they need to be confident using both.

Practise Drills 1.

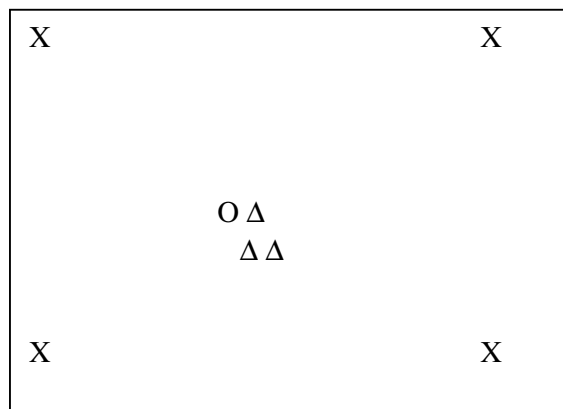
X 4 players
O 1 Keeper
Δ 3 cones

The players pass the ball between themselves and try to have a shot at the cones, Keeper moves around defending the cones. Players get a point if they hit the Cones. Keeper can't tread on the cones

Keepers need agile, quick footwork and awareness of cones.

Use the arc, quick shuffles regain balance to move or block a shot.

For Players this is a good passing and trapping, thinking to move keepers out of position



Drill 2.

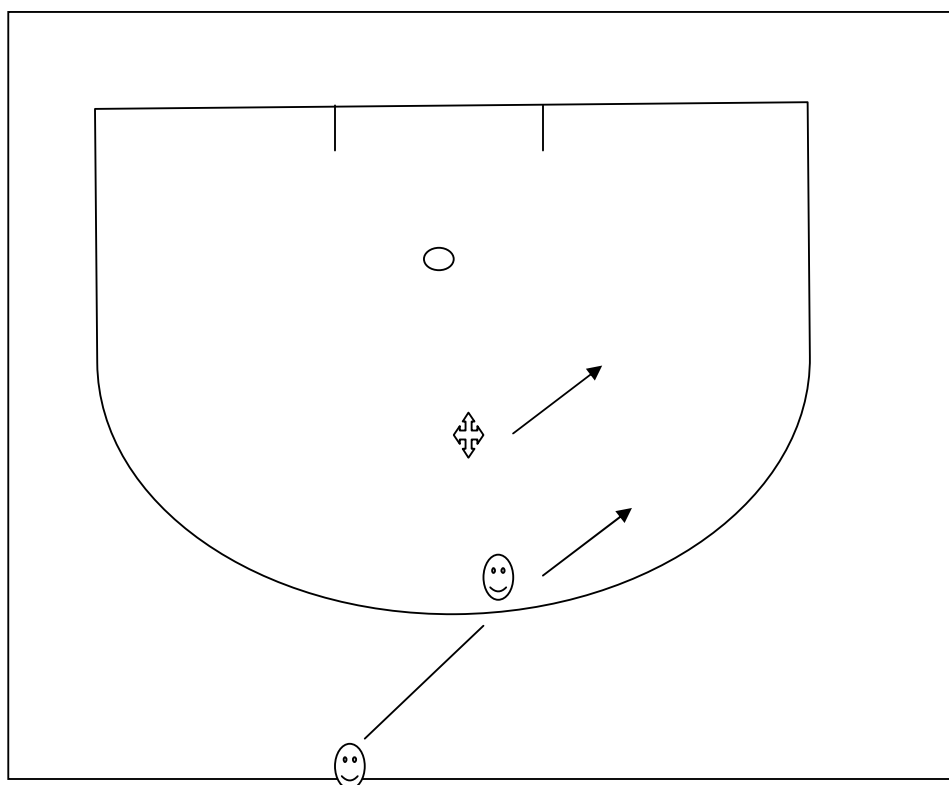
1 v 1

Striker to dribble in for 1 v 1 on the keeper.

Add 2 v 1 as the keeper becomes more confident and proficient.

Points of coaching

- Stay on your feet as long as possible
- Move to the ball not the player
- If the player drags keeper retreat on the diagonal back towards the goal, maintain the line between goal and player
- The dive is a last resort
- As in channelling influence the player in the early stages to move wider in the circle out of the best goal zone, slowing the attack may be enough to have support arrive



Drill 3.

Save and Clear

Set cones around the circle leaving the top free. Have striker working on shots keeper to save make the clearance by hitting a cone.

Progress this skill when working in half court games to clearing the ball in play to own player.

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Drill 4.

Line players around the circle, have quick succession of shots on goal.

Additional, these lines can be at the top middle & around the spot – strikers will need to use a variety of shots, hit from top, push or sweep from middle and around the spot area flick, jink or lift.

To progress this skill and work on reflex saves have the keeper face the goal give players a number coach call number keeper turns quickly to identify who is taking shot make the save.

Drill 5.

Rebound work is important for keepers to work on 2nd & 3rd saves.

Have 4 strikers moving around in the circle, make rule of 3 passes before a shot at goal can be take, strikers need to be ready for rebound shot.