

TRAINING RESOURCES



Player Practice Sessions No 1 (Goalkeepers)

September 2009

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Player Practice Sessions - No 1

Goalkeeping:

1. How to keep keepers keen.
2. Coach your goalkeeper to defend the high cross.
3. Should goalkeepers punch or catch?
4. Coach your goalkeeper how to read penalties.
5. How goalkeepers are crucial for good passing moves.
6. What to do with three players.
7. The art of shot stopping is a secret you need to teach your goalkeeper.
8. Position your goalkeeper.
9. Successful distribution from the goalkeeper is the hallmark of a good side.
10. Get your goalkeeper to throw accurately over long distances.
11. Warm your goalkeeper up - don't wait until the first shot wakes him up.
12. How well can your strikers control, dribble and shoot?
13. Hands-on advice for young goalkeepers.
14. Playing in windy weather.

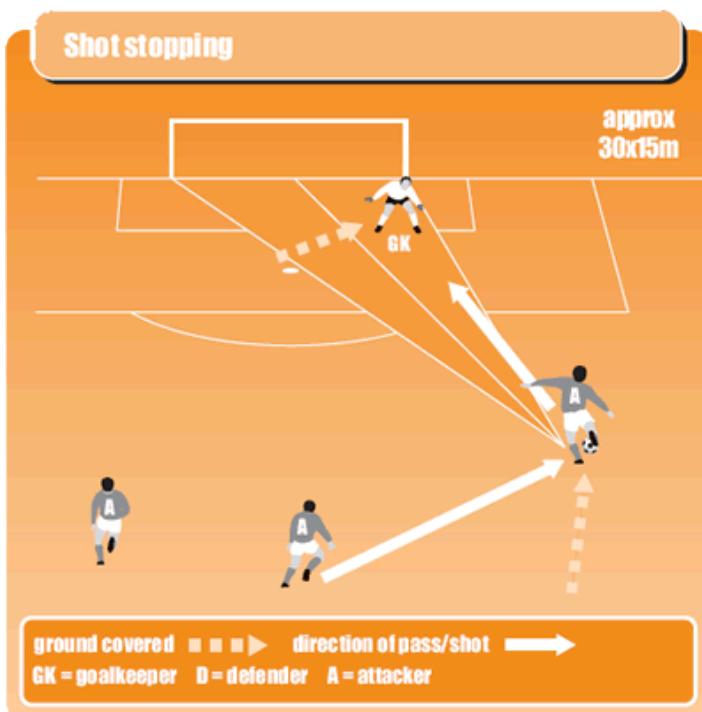


HOW TO KEEP KEEPERS KEEN

It can make a young goalkeeper's life a lot easier if they're always in the right position to make the save.

Always on the go

Before a goalkeeper even uses any part to touch the ball, they should be making constant adjustments to their position in relation to where the ball is on the field of play – even when it's at the other end of the pitch! Below, we look at where keepers should be positioned in general play and when facing a shot.



Phase 1: The middle attacker plays the ball to themselves, at any angle left or right, and gives chase. They shoot with their second touch.

Phase 2: The middle attacker plays the ball left or right to either of the two supporting attackers. The supporting attackers can either shoot first time or take a touch before shooting.

Phase 3: The middle attacker can either take a touch left or right and take a shot, or pass. If they pass, the supporting attackers can now shoot on their third touch if they choose to.

THE COACH SHOULD OBSERVE THE KEEPER'S MOVEMENT FROM BEHIND THE GOAL.

As easy as 1-2-3

1. If the ball is in the attacking third of the pitch, the keeper should be in the front third of their penalty area.
2. If the ball's in the middle third, they should stand in the middle third of their penalty area.
3. If the ball's in the defending third, they should position themselves a little distance from their goal-line.

Sweep it up

Why is all that important? Because as well as making saves, a goalkeeper's job is to provide support for their defence. The space between the keeper and defenders should be small enough to make it tricky for opponents to play a ball into it without either the keeper or defenders getting there first. A good position also means the goalkeeper is available to receive a back pass from an under pressure teammate.

Stop that shot – part 1

To prepare for a save, goalkeepers should:

- Constantly adjust their position in relation to the sideways or backward/forward movement of the ball.
- Be towards the midline of a triangle formed by lines joining the position of the ball and the two goal-posts (see diagram).
- Once in line, plant their feet and be balanced when the attacker is in possession and in a position to shoot.
- Get on their feet quickly again after saving the shot and be ready for the next one!

Shop that shot – part 2

When an attacker's through on goal in a 1v1, the goalkeeper should also:

- Move along the line to the ball if it's outside the playing distance of the attacker, and as fast as possible.
- Once the keeper has closed down the attacker, they should slow to a couple of arms' lengths away and force the shooter to make a decision. Slowing down makes it easier to react, and makes it harder for the attacker to dribble around the goalkeeper.

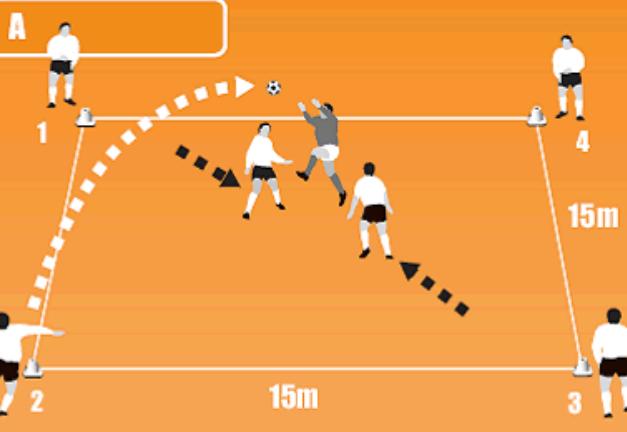
Remember: The goalkeeper is a specialist position so it deserves special attention.



COACH YOUR GOALKEEPER TO DEFEND THE HIGH CROSS

Corners, free-kicks and crosses can cause chaos if your goalkeeper doesn't jump high and catch the ball. International goalkeeper David James says practice, practice, practice.

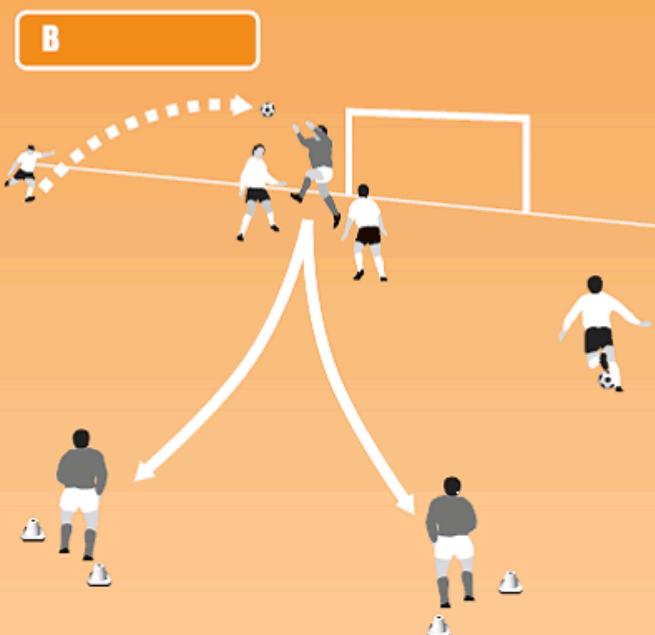
Defending the high cross



A. Defending the High Cross

Use a 15m x 15m square. Put your goalkeeper and two attackers in the square. Put a player at each corner with a ball.

The coach calls out a number (1 to 4) and that player kicks a high ball to the keeper. The keeper has to attack the ball and win it in the air under pressure from two attackers in the box. Keep repeating, practice is important.



B. Defending the High Cross and Clearing

Put your goalkeeper in the goal against two attackers. Two players with multiple balls stand on the wings to cross high balls into the box.

Two other players are 25m down field in a marked off target area (cones will do). The goalkeeper attacks the high ball, wins it in the air and immediately turns and throws it downfield in the opposite direction from which the cross came.

This switches the field and catches the attackers still charging at the goal.

direction of run ➤➤➤ cross ➤➤➤ throwout ➤➤➤

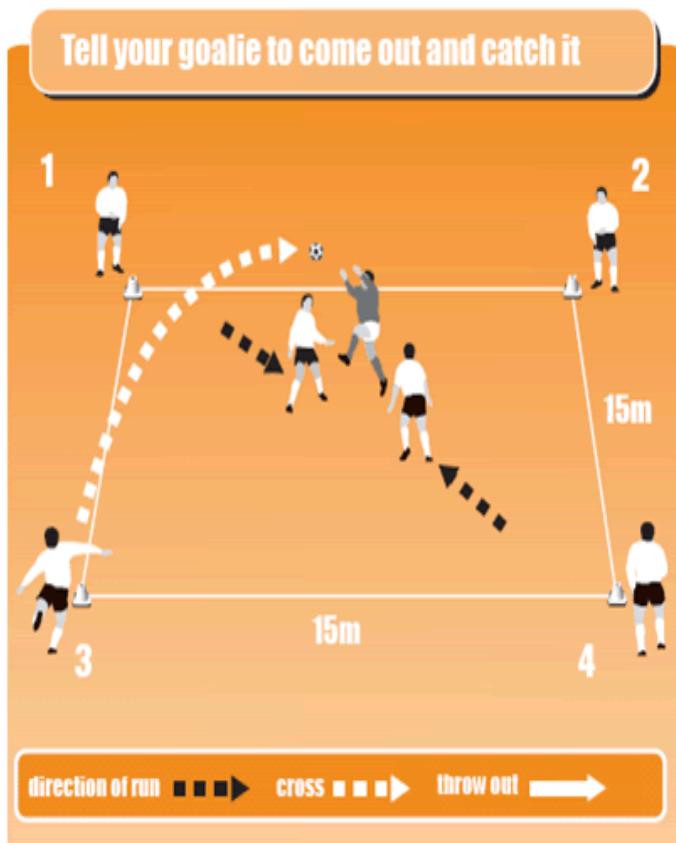


SHOULD GOALKEEPERS PUNCH OR CATCH?

The position of goalkeeper is always the hardest to fill. When I first started out as a coach one parent asked me not to play her son in goal because SHE couldn't stand the pressure. Things need to change.

When goalkeepers are in the news it's usually for the wrong reasons - for fumbles or mistakes. No wonder kids don't want to be goalie. But once you have found a good one make sure you keep him happy with good training sessions.

Should goalkeepers punch or catch?



Use a 15m x 15m square. Put your goalkeeper and two attackers in the square. Put a player at each corner with a ball. The coach calls out a number (1 to 4) and that player kicks a high ball to the keeper. The keeper has to attack the ball and win it in the air under pressure from two attackers in the box.

In my experience goalkeepers were always taught to catch the ball, it was the fancy ones that punched it. If you can get your goalkeeper to catch the ball he will relieve the pressure on a hard working defence.

The last position kids want to fill

Young players are always asking if they can play in goal during training. They love putting on the gloves and diving around. But ask them if they want to play in goal during matches and it's a different story. It is still the last position kids want to fill, and the last position parents want their kids to play. We need kids diving around at home with goalkeepers as their heroes, but to create that environment requires goalkeepers to be treated like strikers.

Make the art of goalkeeping more desirable

David James, the stand-in England goalkeeper, has suggested that goalkeepers should be praised more on the TV by having a 'save of the month' competition much like the 'goal of the month' competition. I agree with him. What you can do to get the message across is praise your goalkeeper first every match and pick out one good thing they have done in each half, so you praise them at half time as well. If you have a man of the match trophy DON'T NEGLECT YOUR GOALKEEPER WHEN IT COMES TO AWARDING IT.



COACH YOUR GOALKEEPER HOW TO READ PENALTIES

Seventy per cent of the penalty kicks at the last World Cup went to the opposite side of the foot the kicker took the penalty with. If the professionals make that choice then how much more likely is it that young soccer players will do the same? Make sure your goalkeeper is ready to face a penalty, says David Clarke.

Cut out the guesswork in penalty saves



direction of shot →

Key coaching tip: right-footed kickers shoot to their left, the keeper's right, and vice versa.

Key coaching tip: don't react too soon. Use the clues to predict where the ball might go but wait a split second to be sure it really is going there.

1. Get your goalkeeper to read the shot

Tell your players to watch the penalty taker's eyes and body shape. Before young players shoot they often look at the corner they are going to hit the ball.

They must also watch the player's approach. A very wide approach often indicates the shooter is going towards the opposite corner. A straight-on approach gives fewer clues.

Get your players to watch the plant foot. The ball often goes where the plant foot points.

And then the hips. The ball goes where the hips point. A "push pass" shot will require the hips to open up in the direction the ball is going.

Even the head. If junior penalty takers often drop their heads low and have a big pull-back of the leg — expect a cross-body shot. If the head stays up he's going for the opposite corner.

2. Junior penalties are often poorly hit

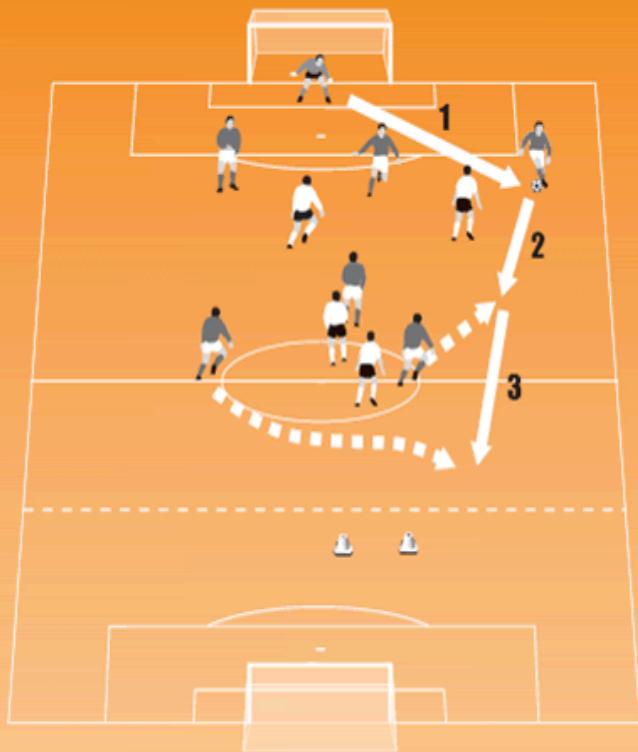
Many penalties, especially at the youth level, are poorly taken, either weakly hit or right down the middle. Often the goalkeeper can easily make the save if they just wait and simply react to the shot.



HOW GOALKEEPERS ARE CRUCIAL FOR GOOD PASSING MOVES

Successful distribution from the keeper is a hallmark of a good side. This means that building up from the back is better than launching the ball up field hoping one of your players can get it.

Give and go to play out from the back



direction of run → → pass →

Goalkeepers are key to passing

Statistically one form of passing is surprisingly high in terms of overall success – passing by the goalkeeper. So use him. You can coach your players to move the ball from the goalkeeper through to the midfielders and into your opponents half.

The objective is to move the ball using only three passes and get it between the two cones.

Once the keeper distributes the ball to the outside back, the midfielder times a run and receives the ball. Emphasis is placed on the full back delivering a ball to the midfielder's feet. The three passes must take your team across the dotted line in the diagram and score between the cones. Remember to tell your supporting players to hold their positions and move with the play.

Movement is key to retaining the ball

Your defending midfielders must make it difficult for the team in possession to move the ball. The grey team's three man midfield are playing with two up and one back so the emphasis is on movement up front to keep possession of the ball. Restart with the goalkeeper and switch players around.

Key coaching tip: You can make the game more of a challenge by squeezing the width of the pitch.

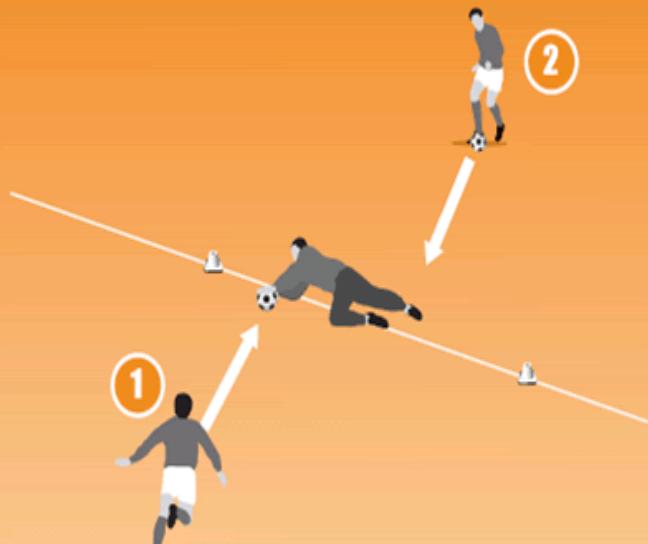


WHAT TO DO WITH THREE PLAYERS

Strikers and goalkeepers work well together in threes. Quick shooting keeps your goalkeeper on his toes and tunes your strikers into the best place to put their shots to beat the opposition keeper, says David Clarke.

Setting this one up is easy

Get your goalkeeper shot stopping



shot →

Use a small area with two cones for goal posts. You can vary the width of the goal to test shooters and goalkeeper. You need lots of balls and someone to retrieve the wayward ones!

1. The first player takes a shot at the goalkeeper.
2. The goalkeeper tries to save, immediately gets up and turns around ready for the other player to shoot.

You can do lots of things with 3 players

Make it more difficult for your goalkeeper by making him stand next to a post before each shot.

Reduce or increase the size of the goal. Add a player to follow shots in and put pressure on keeper.

Key coaching tips

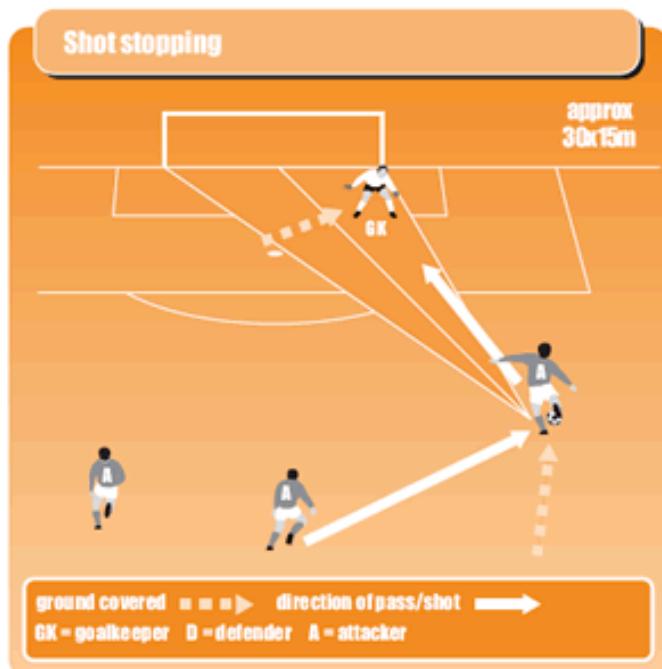
Tell your attackers to shoot often and shoot quickly so that they really make the keeper work hard. Get them to shoot hard and low near the goalkeeper's body and into the corners to force him to adapt. Tell your goalkeeper to be on his toes. It is down to you, the coach, to make sure his shot stopping technique is good.



Goalkeeping No 7

THE ART OF SHOT STOPPING IS A SECRET YOU NEED TO TEACH YOUR GOALKEEPER

Key coaching tip: Good positioning by a goalkeeper makes it harder for the attackers



Putting it into practice in three ways

Phase 1: The middle attacker plays the ball to himself, at any angle left or right, and gives chase. He has to shoot with his second touch.

Phase 2: The middle attacker plays the ball left or right to either of the two supporting attackers. The supporting attackers can either shoot first time or take a touch before shooting.

Phase 3: The middle attacker can either take a touch left or right and take a shot, or pass. If they pass, the supporting attackers can now shoot on their third touch if they choose to.

Key coaching tip: The coach should observe the keepers movement FROM BEHIND THE GOAL



POSITION YOUR GOALKEEPER

Getting a goalkeeper for your team is bad enough, but getting one who can change positions in relation to the game is very difficult. So you have to coach him.

The thing you must get across to your goalkeeper and remind him constantly during the game is to focus on the position of the ball in relation to the goal, even when it is at the other end of the pitch

You must also think about the team you are playing and talk about his positions at half time. Young attackers will often try to get the ball as close to goal as possible so your goalkeeper needs to be off his line more.

If the team has a big kicker your goalkeeper must watch out for high shots over his head.

Here's my positional tips:

As easy as 1-2-3

If the ball is in the attacking third of the pitch, the keeper should be in the front third of their penalty area

If the ball's in the middle third, they should stand in the middle third of their penalty area

If the ball's in the defending third, they should position themselves a little distance from their goal-line.

Sweep it up

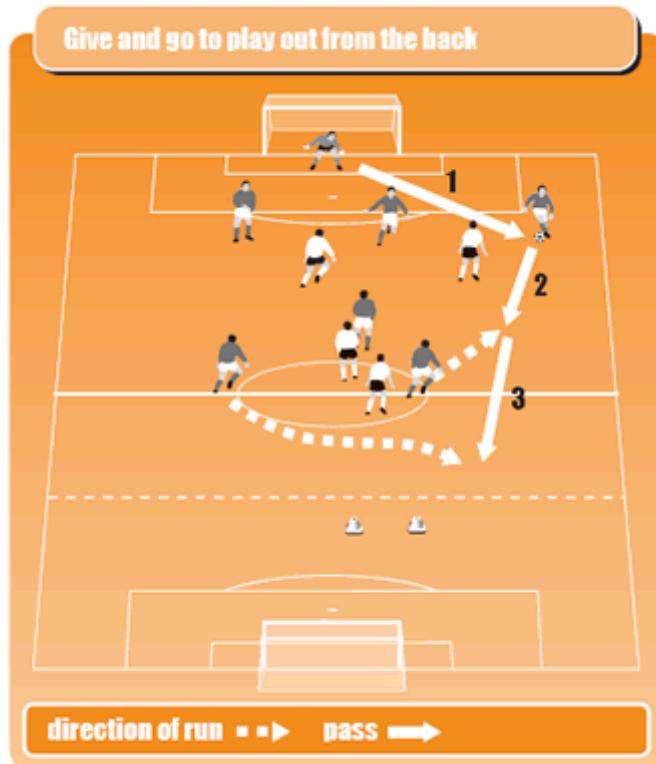
Why is all that important? Because as well as making saves, a goalkeeper's job is to provide support for their defence. The space between the keeper and defenders should be small enough to make it tricky for opponents to play a ball into it without either the keeper or defenders getting there first.

A good position also means the goalkeeper is available to receive a back pass from an under pressure teammate.



SUCCESSFUL DISTRIBUTION FROM THE GOALKEEPER IS THE HALLMARK OF A GOOD SIDE

One of the most surprising statistics I have seen is that passes-by-the-goalkeeper falls in the highest bracket of overall pass rate success. So use him.



The great thing about a goalkeeper is that he can pass using his feet or his hands. If you practice with your goalkeeper and defenders you can get your team passing out from the back and successfully launch an attack through midfield or down the wing.

The great thing about a goalkeeper is that he can pass using his feet or his hands. If you practice with your goalkeeper and defenders you can get your team passing out from the back and successfully launch an attack through midfield or down the wing.

When you practice set up like the diagram below and have a 7v4 game to get my 7-a-side teams used to playing the ball under pressure into the opponents half of the pitch.

The objective is to move the ball using only three passes and get it between the two cones.

Once the keeper distributes the ball to the full back, the midfielder times a run and receives the ball. Emphasis is placed on the full back delivering a ball to the midfielder's feet.

The attacking team is allowed three passes before they cross the dotted line in the diagram and then score between the cones. Remember to tell your supporting players to hold their positions and move with the play.

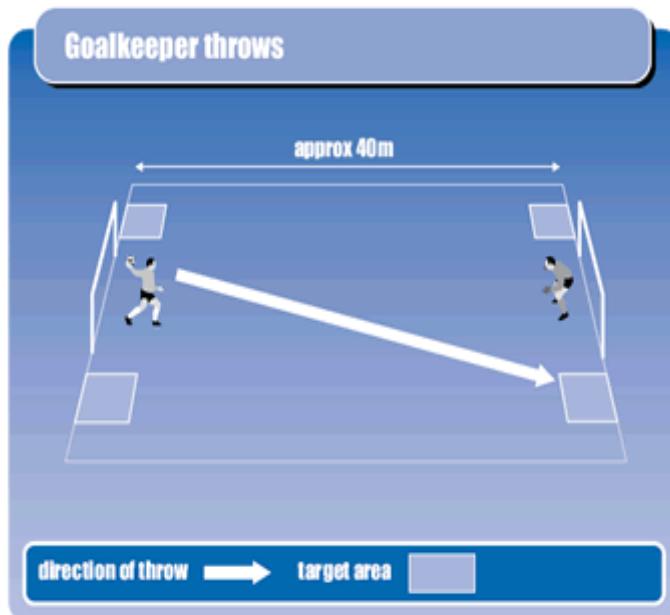
Movement is key to retaining the ball. Your defending midfielders must make it difficult for the team in possession to move the ball. The grey team's three attackers are playing with two up and one back so the emphasis is on movement up front to keep possession of the ball.

Restart with the goalkeeper and switch players around.



GET YOUR GOALKEEPER TO THROW ACCURATELY OVER LONG DISTANCES

Long throws from your goalkeeper are great ways to set up counter-attacks - you only need to watch professional goalkeepers to see how one-arm long throws can get the ball quickly into target areas.



This is something you can try yourself before you get your goalkeeper doing it, but remember he's half your size and in many cases is still developing the strength to throw.

Tell your goalkeeper to throw as though he was bowling a ball with a straight elbow overarm, transferring the weight from the back foot forward to the front foot.

In an area around 10 meters long (the distance can easily be adjusted in relation to your goalkeeper's throwing ability) the goalkeeper starts from a central position and alternates throwing the ball into the two target areas marked out either side of the goals.

The goalkeeper at the opposite end repeats the exercise.

For more advanced players

You can develop this by telling the goalkeepers to defend the two target areas nearest them by intercepting the ball before it bounces.

The keepers are awarded points for successfully bouncing the ball in either of the opposition's target areas, and for intercepting a ball before it bounces in the target areas nearest them.



WARM YOUR GOALKEEPER UP – DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE FIRST SHOT WAKES HIM UP

There are various ways to warm up your goalkeeper. What you don't want to do is to get him stretching, diving or being whacked by a hard shot before the game kicks off.

What I like to do with my goalkeeper is to set up a couple of different coloured cones on the two corners of the six yard area.

Shout out a colour for him to run to, and he must touch the cone then back to his goal line.

Every two calls, you chip a shot just as he reaches the cone and he has to scramble back to clear it off the line.

You can do this from the edge of your penalty area - make sure it is just a chip or gentle shot so he has a decent chance to scramble back quickly to get it.



HOW WELL CAN YOUR STRIKERS CONTROL, DRIBBLE AND SHOOT?

Boosting your young strikers' skills in controlling the ball, dribbling and shooting is a good way to ensure you get more shots on goal than before. You are developing their instincts in front of goal.

What your players have to do

A fun way to coach young strikers



direction of run → direction of pass/shot ••►
dribble ➔

- Set up like the diagram.
- Use six players and a goalkeeper.
- You stand on the corner of the penalty area and encourage your strikers to move quickly into the area in a twisting run and shoot into the corner.

Use this exercise, which gives strikers a solid work out. It's also a good way for your goalkeeper to practise saving 1v1s.

- Players line up beside the goal and at the corner of the penalty area.
- First player beside the goal serves the ball diagonally to the player in line who must dribble towards the goal and shoot.
- The server then runs around behind the striker to join the queue.
- The goalkeeper must be on their toes and try to save the 1v1.
- The striker runs to the back of the server queue by the goal.

How to advance it

Advance the session by getting the server to follow their pass and become a defender to try and stop the striker shooting, instead of running behind the attacker to join the queue. Once they have defended, then they go and join the back of the striker queue.

If the player who receives the ball is fast, they can get into the penalty area and shoot before the defender has reached them.

What to look for

Accurate passing, good ball control, quick defensive covering, dribbling, accurate shooting. And you can get your goalie to practice one on ones.

Tell your strikers to keep shots low, concentrate on accuracy before power and follow in for rebounds.



HANDS-ON ADVICE FOR YOUNG GOALKEEPERS

Techniques to get your young goalkeeper saving goals using their hands, not their feet, from Tony Carr, Academy Director, West Ham United, English Premier League.

Any shot that is travelling towards a goalkeeper's legs at pace is difficult to deal with. Young goalkeepers, in particular, have problems with these and often opt for kicking the ball away, or end up with the ball hitting, or even worse, going through their legs into the goal.

direction of shot ➡

1



Front view – this is the stance your GK should adopt.

2



Make sure they adjust their feet to move into line with the ball.

3



Make sure they fall on top of the ball to prevent rebounds.

What you give your players in this session

1. Providing goalkeepers with a reliable alternative for saving difficult shots that are driven straight at the legs.
2. To minimise mistakes and rebound opportunities for opposition strikers.

Goalkeepers need to be on their toes for the whole of this session.

Set up a 15 yard square. You need a goal and two goalkeepers. One goalkeeper works and the other serves.

- The server must initially just pass the ball straight to the goalkeeper's feet. As the goalkeeper warms up, the server begins to shoot at the goalkeeper's legs with force.
- Encourage goalkeeper to step "into line / down the line" of the shot.
- Bend knees to form a "k" shape with legs, leaning into the direction of ball.
- Scoop ball with both hands into chest.
- Drop on top of ball to cover the ball and prevent it spilling from the hands and creating rebounds.
- After each save, the goalkeeper becomes the server for the goalkeeper at the opposite end.



PLAYING IN WINDY WEATHER

Advice to keep your players' shots, passes and goal kicks accurate when they're playing in windy weather.

Playing into the wind checklist

- Tell your players to keep it tight — short passing into the wind. Any long balls will be held up by the wind and you will soon find you're up against a fast breakaway attack.
- In training practise holding the ball up — get your players to play balls into the attacker with his back to goal, creating opportunities for your midfielders to run with the ball.
- At goalkicks, tell your goalkeeper to play out to the sides — a long kick down the middle would be suicide.

Playing with the wind checklist

- Tell your players to resist the temptation to blast long balls into the opposition half — your forwards will soon get tired of the ball going straight out of play.
- But do let your goalkeeper unleash some long balls — get your forwards to cause chaos with the bouncing goalkicks by heading them towards goal.
- Tell your forwards to test your opponents' goalkeeper with high accurate shots.