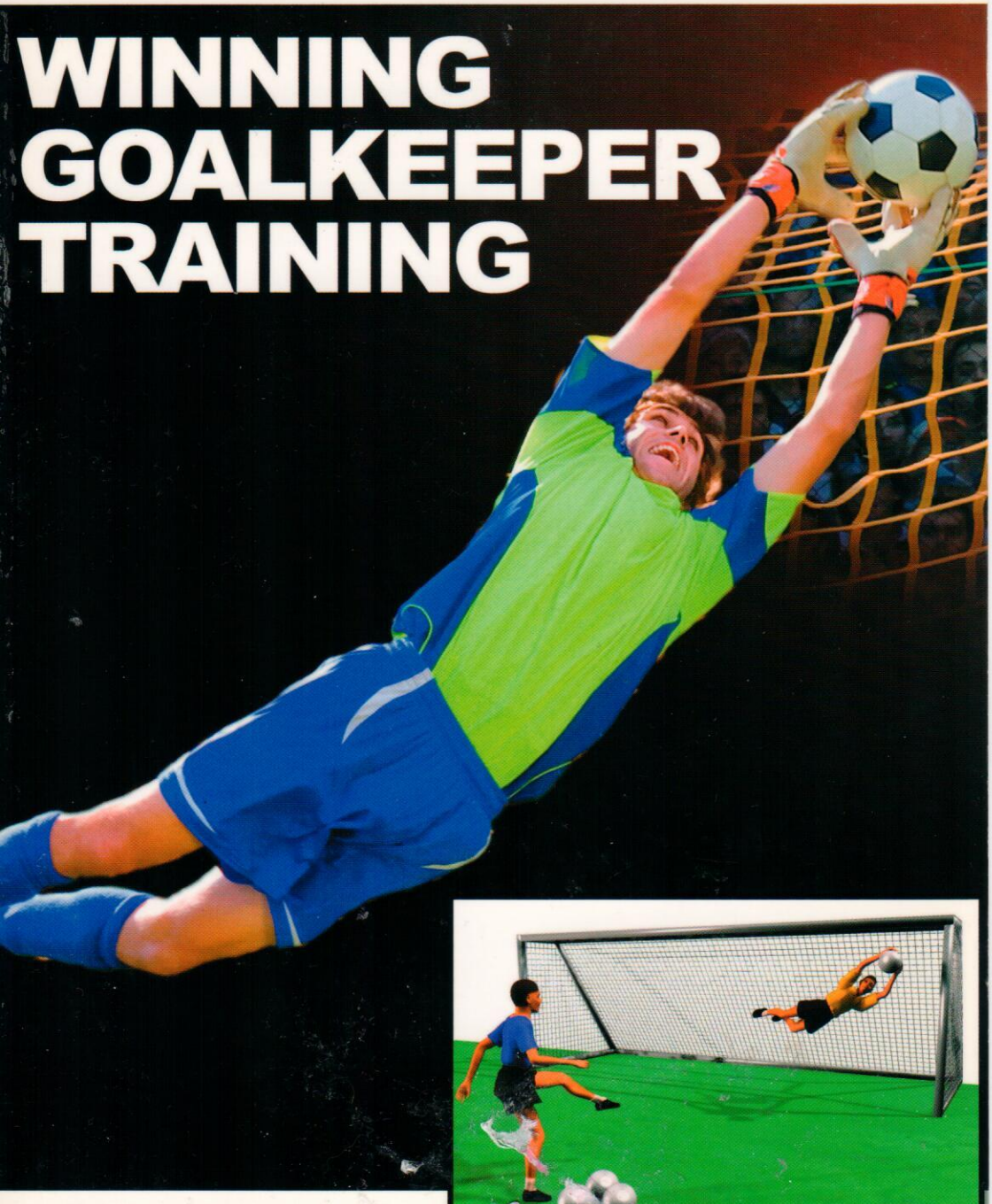
SoccerROM Coaching Series

WINNING GOALKEEPER TRAINING



Written by Bob Barry
Edited and Illustrated by Robert & Michelle Parr

SoccerROM Coaching Series:

Winning Goalkeeper Training

Written by Bob Barry

Edited and Illustrated
by Robert & Michelle Parr

Library of Congress
Cataloging - in - Publication Data

SoccerROM Coaching Series: Winning Goalkeeper Training
by Bob Barry

ISBN-13: 978-1-59164-114-8
ISNB-10: 1-59164-114-4
Library of Congress Control Number: 2008937568
© 2008

All rights reserved. Except for use in a review, the reproduction or utilization of this book in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying, and recording, and in any information storage and retrieval system, is forbidden without written permission of the publisher.

Edited and Illustrated by
Robert Parr and Michelle Parr

Printed by
Data Reproductions
Auburn, Michigan

Reedswain Publishing
562 Ridge Road
Spring City, PA 19475
www.reedswain.com
info@reedswain.com

About the Author

Bob Barry has extensive experience coaching soccer at the youth, high school, and collegiate levels. Currently, he is the Director of Coaching for the Riggers Soccer Club in Hawaii. He was Head Men's Soccer Coach at Chaminade University of Honolulu from 2006-2008, an Assistant Coach with the University of Hawaii women's soccer program in 2003, and Head Men's Soccer Coach at Willamette University in 2002.

Before moving into college soccer, he spent 26 years coaching at the high school level in Hawaii. He developed two high school programs in the state and won four league and five Hawaii state championships at Iolani School. Selected five times as High School Coach of the year (twice as Western Region High School Coach of the Year by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America), Bob was inducted into the National High School Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2004 for his work at the high school level.

In 1984, Bob served as an assistant coach at the University of Massachusetts while earning a Master's degree in Sport Management. He joined the University of Richmond coaching staff in 1996 before accepting the position as head coach for men's soccer at Brigham Young University-Hawaii in 1998. He coached there for two years before moving to the club level where he became Director of Coaching for the Mililani Soccer Club and the Windward Soccer Club.

Bob holds a United States Soccer Federation "A" Coaching License, an International Coaching License from the Football Association of England, an Advanced National Diploma from the NSCAA, and the Director of Coaching Diploma from the NSCAA. Bob has also successfully completed the first phase of the Football Association of England Goalkeeper's "B" Coaching License.

Bob has presented training sessions at two AYSO Conventions, the NSCAA New England Convention (1985) and two NSCAA

Annual Conventions (1993 and 2005). He was elected to the Board of Directors of the NSCAA for two years and has contributed soccer articles to *Soccer Journal*, *Soccer World*, *World Class Coaching*, and *Scholastic Coach*. He also has published articles in *The Complete Book of Drills for Winning Soccer*, *Coaching Soccer*, the Victoria (Australia) Soccer Club newsletter, and online at SoccerROM.com.

You can contact Bob via email at barryr003@hawaii.rr.com. To learn more about Bob and the Bob Barry Goalkeeper Clinics, please visit his web site at:

http://home.hawaii.rr.com/goalkeeperclinic/

About the Editors

Robert & Michelle Parr are the co-creators of SoccerROM, the world's first internet-based suite of applications designed exclusively for soccer coaches of all levels. SoccerROM has been helping coaches around the world make the most of their training sessions and simplifying team management since 1998, and can be found at www.SoccerROM.com.

Robert earned his USSF 'A' license in 1991 and a USSF National Youth Coaching license in 1999. In 2008, he became the Director of Coaching and WPSL Head Coach for the Puerto Rico Capitals FC, the first international franchise to compete in the Women's Premier Soccer League. He was the Head Women's Soccer Coach at Georgia College & State University from 2003-2007, and a member of the Georgia State Soccer Association Olympic Development Program Coaching Staff from 2003-2008. From 1995-2002, Robert was the Director of Training for the American Soccer Club "Eagles" youth program in Austin, Texas.

He also served as the South Texas Men's State Team Coach from 1996-1998, and a South Texas YSA State Staff Coach for both the Olympic Development Program (1991-1999) and the Coaching Education Program (1991-2002). From 1989 until 1995, Robert was the Head Coach of the University of Texas Men's Soccer Team, where he led the program to a National Collegiate Club Championship in 1990, three other National Tournament appearances, and an overall record of 80-25-16.

Michelle became the Assistant Director of Coaching for the Puerto Rico Capitals in 2008, and was the Assistant Coach for the Georgia College & State University Women's Soccer team from 2003-2007. She was also a member of the Georgia State Soccer Association Olympic Development Program Coaching Staff from 2003-2008. She holds a USSF 'B' license and an NSCAA Regional Goalkeeping Certification, and was awarded the April Heinrichs/Nike Coaching Education Scholarship in 2002 in recognition of her work with female players.

An original member of the American Soccer Club "Eagles" coaching staff in Austin, Texas, Michelle provided weekly instruction to all of the club's goalkeepers for 13 years (1990-2003), and also served as a South Texas YSA ODP State Staff Coach from 1993-2002. As a player, she was a member of the United States U-19 National Team Pool, played in goal for the inaugural NCAA Division I Women's Soccer Team at the University of Texas at Austin, and played in the W League for two years (1999-2000). In August of 1997, Michelle was selected to the South Region Team and played in the US Soccer Festival in Blaine, Minnesota.

Finally, both Robert and Michelle served as Technical Advisors for "The Big Green", the feature film about a small-town soccer team released by Disney in 1995.

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Goalkeeper Fitness 5
- Stretching 8
- Ball Gymnastics 16
- Footwork 20
- Pressure Training 25
- Functional Strength Training 30
- Training with a Wall 34

Goalkeeper Technique 37
- Catching 39
- Distribution 47
- Diving 54
- Boxing and Deflecting 66

Goalkeeping Tactics 75
- Angle Play 77
- 1v1 Breakaways 83
- Dealing with Flank Services 90
- Defending Restarts 95

Putting the Pieces Together 103
- Psychological Fitness 104
- Team Training with the Keeper 106
- Dealing with Back Passes 111
- Counterattacking From Corner Kicks 115
- Communication and Reading the Game 119

Supplemental Materials 123
- Self Assessment 124
- Individual Training Plans 126
- Goalkeeping and the Laws of the Game 130
- Goalkeeper Quiz 132

INTRODUCTION

The first question generally asked of me about training goalkeepers is always about stopping shots. Coaches new to the position might ask, "how do you teach a young keeper to dive?" Or, young keepers will come to camp wanting to know "which hand do you use when you dive to the right?"

Everybody seems to believe that this one technique of diving defines a keeper's strength and ability to play in the goal. Certainly, learning to dive for low, medium, and high shots is important, but there is much more to a keeper's repertoire. Safe ball handling, positioning in goal, communicating with teammates, initiating counter-attacks, and reading the game are all equally important.

Many high school and youth programs have only one or two coaches, and the goalkeeper often is not fortunate enough to have a position coach. This manual is designed to aid keepers of all ages who seek the specialized instruction required to excel at this position. Each keeper should be able to use this information to design his or her own training schedule for the season and post-season time periods.

The book begins by breaking down goalkeeper training into four parts:

- Physical Fitness
- Goalkeeping Technique
- Goalkeeping Tactics
- Psychological Fitness

The first section of the book covers topics related to the fitness demands of the position. Flexibility will be improved through a complete stretching regimen. Next, we'll explore how ball gymnastics can combine fitness work with basic ball handling, and then look at the need for clean, efficient footwork when playing in goal. This chapter will also discuss how pressure training and medicine ball training can be used to improve goalkeeper-specific fitness.

The second section will lay the foundation for goalkeeping technique. This chapter will provide an extensive collection of activities designed to improve the unique goalkeeping skills of catching, distribution, diving, boxing, and deflecting.

Once the keeper has become confident with these techniques, he needs to choose the correct technique for each situation that arises in the game itself. The third section of the book covers a variety of tactical considerations, including angle play, 1v1 breakaways, dealing with crosses, and defending restarts. Keepers will learn how to address corners, free kicks, and penalty kicks.

The fourth section incorporates topics covered in each of the first three chapters to provide an integrated approach to goalkeeper training. This section begins by discussing the psychological make-up of the goalkeeper, addressing the mental aspect of the position. Developing the mental edge is a topic often neglected in training keepers, yet this frequently will be the difference in reaching the next level of play. This section also addresses several specific topics that train the keeper within a full-team setting.

Systematically, the physical, technical, and tactical elements are addressed. Each element has several activities to this aspect of goalkeeping. The concluding activity of each section is a game or phase of play that will test the keeper in game-like situations with time restraints and the pressure of an opponent.

The final section deals with training programs. Included are daily, weekly, and off-season schedules plus a goalkeeper quiz. I have included a goalkeeper's match analysis manual that is designed to help each keeper take a closer look at his game performance and to address technical, tactical, and physical needs to become a better keeper.

To avoid repetition, I have used "his" (and not "his/her") in addressing the keeper. However, this manual is equally relevant for both male and female goalkeepers.

Players and coaches alike can use this manual in several different ways. One is to systematically go through the technical training followed by the tactical sessions. Following a linear approach will ensure that you give attention to every aspect of the position. However, the easiest (and perhaps most beneficial) method is to identify your specific needs, and then go directly to that section in the book to address these needs.

SoccerROM has provided all the illustrations to enhance the book and help keepers and coaches visualize the drills and activities. This manual is unique in that exercises are integrated with SoccerROM's online resources; each resource stands alone, but used together they add much more value. You can go to www.SoccerROM.com and use the site's online coaching applications to select and organize the drills from this manual (plus many more) into custom training sessions for all your players.

Many of my ideas originated from the coaching schools conducted by the English Football Association, the United States Soccer Federation, and the National Soccer Coaches Association of America. Most of all, I want to thank Joe Machnik, President of No. 1 Soccer Camps for giving me the opportunity to work with him for over 25 years. He is the finest goalkeeper coach I have ever been associated with and his methods have had much influence on my coaching philosophy.

Goalkeeper Fitness

Choosing a keeper to play in goal based on height, size, or lack of speed/quickness on the field is a serious mistake. The difficulty is that the very best player on your team will often be your most promising goalkeeper. Keepers have to develop a high level of fitness and training should be goalkeeper-specific.

Field players are recruited for specific positions on the field because of their technical, tactical, and physical strengths. A strong left-footed player will usually find himself playing on the left side of the field. A player who has a knack for scoring goals will often play up top. Finally, a player who can run all day will probably end up in midfield where he can take advantage of his fitness. Similarly, players should be recruited to play in goal based upon their natural abilities and their relative "fit" with the demands of the position.

In this section, we will address four primary aspects of physical fitness for goalkeepers: flexibility, agility, strength, and footwork.

Stretching on a daily basis will increase flexibility in addition to preventing injuries. To play at the highest level, keepers need to increase their flexibility. Watch a top-class save and look at the keeper's extension, the fluidity of the save, and the landing. This "skill" begins with stretching.

Agility and footwork are related to each other, as they both represent the keeper's ability to change direction in response to the ball or other game conditions. Ball gymnastics and fast footwork patterns will help the keeper improve both of these fitness components.

Finally, the keeper must develop a considerable degree of upper body strength to meet the demands of the game. Strong core muscles (those around the torso) provide a solid platform for explosive movements, which helps with agility and quickness to the ball. Strong arm and shoulder muscles will improve the keeper's distribution, catching, and deflecting abilities, and will help the keeper cushion his landings when diving.

We have to develop a training program that will incorporate all of the above areas because goalkeeper training often lacks in fitness. A normal practice will always have a high level of fitness training for field players (heavy work, then rest, then more heavy work, etc.). It is important that keepers develop and maintain a high level of fitness appropriate to the position.

STRETCHING

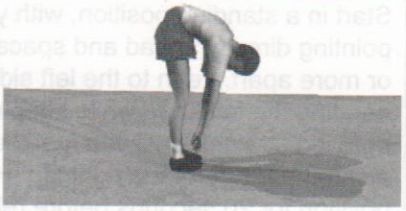
Every session should begin with an intensive stretching program incorporating both **ballistic** and **static** activities. Ballistic exercises incorporate continuous or functional motion, while static stretching has the player hold a stretch (without "bouncing") for a moderate period of time (20-30 seconds). During this time, the keeper will experience a relaxed feeling in the area being stretched. He must learn the difference between this stretching sensation and pain, as there should be no pain during the exercise. The objective is to ensure that when a muscle is stretched violently during a training session or game, the keeper will have already achieved that level of stretch during the warm-up period.

Before any static stretching session, players should be active for 3-5 minutes to increase blood flow into the muscles to be stretched. Ideally, these initial activities should be sport- (and position-) specific, using movements that are actually part of the game. Ballistic exercises (such as the ball gymnastics activities described in the next section) help to promote blood flow, and can be a good starting point to your stretching routine.

Static stretching will improve the keeper's flexibility while preparing him for serious training sessions. Players should stretch both before and after each workout. Warm-down stretches after training will help to minimize muscle soreness and improve long-term flexibility. Flexibility is also very important in a keeper's ability to develop his technique and move to a higher level of technical proficiency.

The following stretching exercises are excellent for the keeper:

522: Hamstrings Stretch (Legs Together)



From a standing position with your feet together, bend over and reach down with both hands as far as you can. Keep your knees straight, tuck your chin in to your chest, and hold for 20 seconds before relaxing.

Variants: 1. Twist your body to reach to the left side of your feet, hold, then twist to the right side and hold.
2. Turn your toes in toward each other, and repeat the stretch.

523: Hamstrings Stretch (Legs Crossed)



From a standing position with one foot crossed in front of the other, bend over and reach down with both hands until you feel a stretch on the outside of the back leg. Keep the knee of your back leg straight, tuck your chin in to your chest, and hold for 20 seconds before relaxing. Repeat the stretch with the other leg crossed in front.

Variants: 1. Repeat the stretch for both legs, but twist your body to reach toward the front foot.
2. Repeat the stretch for both legs, but twist your body to reach toward the back foot.

524: Hamstrings Stretch (Legs Apart)

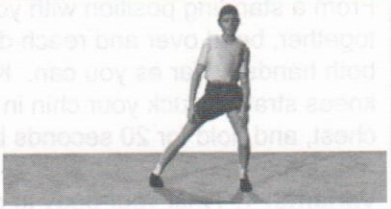


From a standing position with your legs spread apart and feet flat on the ground, bend over and reach down with both hands as far as you can. Keep your knees straight, tuck your chin in to your chest, and hold for 20 seconds before relaxing.

Variants: 1. Repeat the stretch, but twist your body to first reach for your right foot, and then for your left foot.
2. To increase the stretching for the lower back, repeat the series, but cross both hands behind your head and pull your chin farther down into your chest.

533: Groin Stretch (Leaning)

Start in a standing position, with your feet pointing directly ahead and spaced a yard or more apart. Lean to the left side (by bending the left knee while keeping the right leg straight) until you feel the stretch along the inside of the right leg. Hold this position for 20 seconds before relaxing, and then repeat the activity for the other leg.



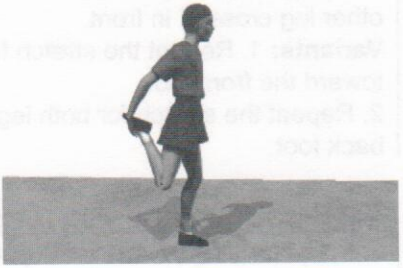
534: Groin Stretch (Butterfly)

From a sitting position, bring the soles of your feet together, and slide your feet in towards your torso. Lean forward slightly, and use your forearms to gently push your knees to the ground. Hold this position for 20 seconds before relaxing.



526: Quadriceps Stretch (Same Side)

From a standing position, reach down with your right hand to lift and hold your right foot behind your back. Pull the foot upward until you feel the stretch across the front of the thigh, rotate your pelvis forward slightly, and gradually increase your pull to extend the stretch. Continue for 20 seconds before relaxing, and then repeat the stretch using the left hand and left foot.



527: Quadriceps Stretch (Crossover)

From a standing position, reach down with your right hand to lift and hold your left foot behind your back. Pull the foot upward until you feel the stretch across the front of the thigh, and gradually increase your pull to extend the stretch. Continue for 20 seconds before relaxing, and then repeat the stretch using the left hand and right foot.



528: Calves Stretch (Push-up Position)



From a push-up position, lift the right foot in the air and place it across the heel of the left foot. Keeping the left knee straight, gently push the left heel down to the ground so you feel a stretch across the calf muscles of that leg. Hold this position for 20 seconds before relaxing, and then repeat the stretch for the other leg.

Variant: Repeat the stretch for each leg as before, but bend the knee of the stretching leg to shift the stretch lower in the muscles and towards the Achilles tendon.

535: Gluteal Stretch (Opposite Twist)



From a sitting position, extend your right leg straight out. Cross your left leg over the right one such that the sole of your left foot is flat on the ground, next to your right knee. Reach across your body with your right arm, and push against your left knee as your twist your body to the left until you feel a stretch across the buttocks and lower back. Hold this position for 20 seconds before relaxing, then repeat for the other side.

536: Gluteal Stretch (Elevated Knee)



From a sitting position, extend your right leg straight out, and cross your left leg over the right one so your left foot is above your right knee. Elevate the left leg by bending the right knee up towards your body until you feel a stretch across the buttocks and lateral hamstrings. Hold this position for 20 seconds before relaxing, then repeat for the other side.

531: Hip Flexor Stretch (Standing)



From a standing position, step forward with your left foot so that it is about a yard in front of the other foot. Bend your left knee, and gently push your pelvis forward until you feel the stretch across the front of the right hip. Hold the position for 20 seconds before relaxing, and then repeat for the other leg.

532: Hip Flexor Stretch (Kneeling)

From a kneeling position, step forward with your left foot so that it is about a yard in front of the right knee. Gently push your pelvis forward until you feel the stretch across the front of the right hip. Hold the position for 20 seconds before relaxing, and then repeat for the other leg.



635: Body Lean Stretch

From a standing position, clasp your hands above your head and slowly lean toward one side. Hold this position, then slowly return to the upright position before leaning to the other side.



636: Arm Adduction Stretch

From a standing position, grasp the elbow of your right arm with your left hand and pull the right arm across the front of your chest. Hold, then repeat the exercise for the opposite arm.



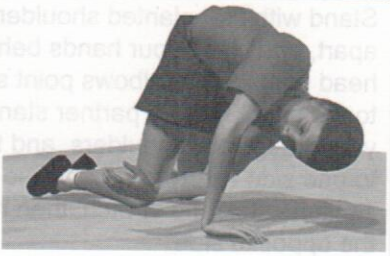
683: Shoulder Stretch

Place your right hand and arm over the back of your shoulder and grasp your left hand coming up the back. Hold the stretch for 20 seconds and then repeat the opposite direction.



684: Reach-Through Back Stretch

Get on your hands and knees on the ground. Reach your left hand through the space created by your right hand and right knee. Reach as far as possible along the floor or ground in an attempt to touch the back of your left shoulder to the ground. Hold the stretch for 20 seconds and then repeat to the opposite side.

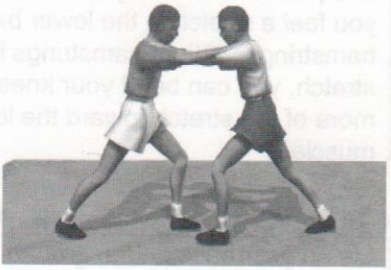


I have also found that partner stretches can be very beneficial. However, there are two potential issues with partner stretches that need to be addressed. One is the concentration factor. Young keepers seem to joke around and not take this type of stretching seriously. The other, more serious concern is the injury risk factor. Only you know your stretch limit, so the keeper being stretched must communicate with his partner to prevent any muscle tear.

The following activities take advantage of a partner to enhance a player's stretching routine:

530: Calves Stretch (Standing Pairs)

Stand up facing a partner, and place your hands on each other's shoulders. Step forward with your left foot, bend your left knee slightly, and gently push your right heel down to the ground so you feel a stretch across the calf muscles of that leg. Hold this position for 20 seconds before relaxing, and then repeat the stretch for the other leg.



525: Quadriceps Stretch (Standing Pairs)

From a standing position, face your partner and place your left hand on his right shoulder. Reach down with your right hand to lift and hold your right foot behind your back. Pull the foot upward until you feel the stretch across the front of the thigh, rotate your pelvis forward slightly, and gradually increase your pull to extend the stretch. Continue for 20 seconds before relaxing, and then repeat the stretch for the left side.



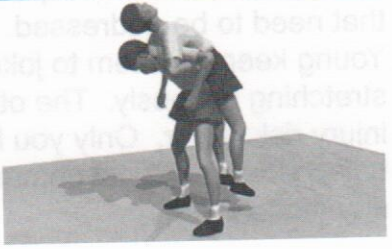
637: Torso Stretch (Standing Pairs)

Stand with feet planted shoulder-width apart, and clasp your hands behind your head so that your elbows point straight out to the side. Have a partner stand behind you, grasp your shoulders, and twist you to one side to stretch your torso and mid-section. Hold the stretch, then repeat to the opposite side.



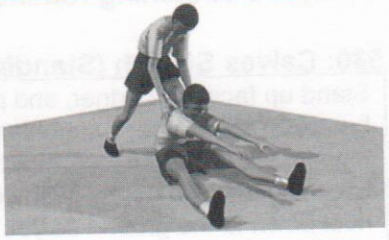
670: Back Stretch (in Pairs)

Two players stand back to back with their arms locked at the elbows. One partner slowly leans forward to lift the other off the ground. Hold the position for a few seconds, and then slowly stand back up and switch.



638: Back Stretch (Sitting Pairs)

Sit on the ground with your legs spread out in front. Have a partner stand behind you and push forward on your shoulders until you feel a stretch in the lower back and hamstrings. If tight hamstrings limit the stretch, you can bend your knees to shift more of the stretch toward the lower back muscles.

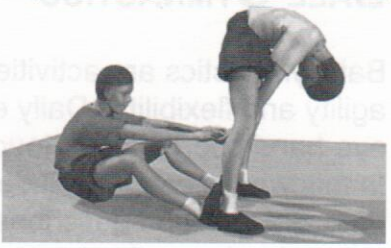


639: Hamstring Stretch (in Pairs)

Lie on your back on the ground with a partner standing at your feet, facing you. Have your partner bring your right leg up while you keep your right knee straight and your left leg on the ground. Hold this position, then repeat the stretch for the opposite leg.



704: Reach-Through Hamstring Stretch (in Pairs)

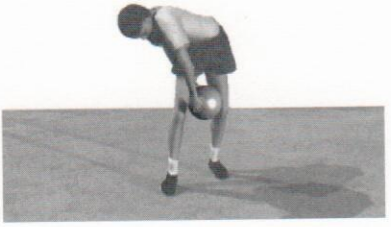


One player stands with his legs apart. A second player sits on the ground behind the first player with the soles of his feet placed against the standing partner's heels. The standing partner leans over and reaches his arms through his legs to grasp his partner's hands. The player sitting on the ground should slowly pull his partner's arms back as far as possible (without causing pain). Hold the stretch and then switch roles.

Ball Gymnastics

Ball gymnastics are activities designed to improve the keeper's agility and flexibility. Daily exercises will improve the keeper's eye-hand coordination, touch, flexibility, and overall hand speed. In this way, a keeper will develop a closer relationship with the ball. This section describes many exercises of this type, and determined, creative keepers will develop new ones on their own.

280: Figure 8 Handwork



Stand with feet quite a bit further than shoulder length apart. Make a figure 8 with the ball between your legs.

Variants: 1. Perform this exercise in a stationary position, not letting the ball touch the ground.

2. Perform this exercise in a stationary position, rolling the ball along the ground between and around your legs in a figure 8 position (always keeping at least one hand on the ball).

3. Perform this exercise while moving, not letting the ball touch the ground as you do figure 8s between your legs.

4. Perform this exercise while moving, rolling the ball along the ground between and around your legs in a figure 8 position as you move across the field.

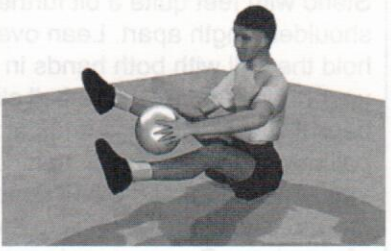
278: Catching Side-to-Side Between the Legs



Stand with your legs a bit further than shoulder length apart. Lean over and hold the ball between your legs, with one hand in front of your legs and the other behind them. Pop the ball up a bit, turn, and catch it (still between your legs), with your hands now switched. Thus, if you started with your right hand in front and left hand in back, now your left hand should be in front and your right behind your legs. Switch again, making sure the ball never touches the ground, and catch with your fingers (not your palms). Once you get used to the rhythm, you should be able to perform this at a relatively fast pace.

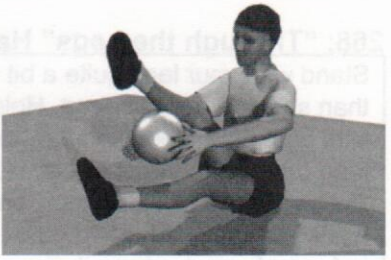
647: Crossover Catches from a Sitting Position

From a sitting position with legs extended, hold the ball between your legs with your left arm beneath your left leg and your right arm above your right leg. Toss the both gently up in the air a few inches, then reverse your hands (moving the right arm beneath the right leg and the left arm above the left leg) and quickly catch the ball before it hits the ground. Repeat the activity at a fast pace in both directions for a specified period of time.



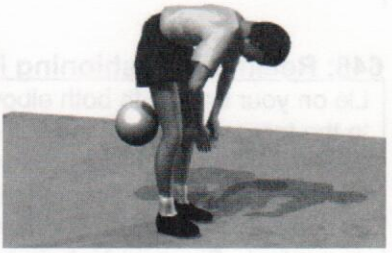
645: Scissors Handwork

In a sitting position, move the ball side to side in-between your legs as they are moving up and down in a scissors motion (pass the ball from one hand to the other).



644: Clap and Catch

In a standing position, hold the ball behind your legs at knee height. Quickly release the ball with a short toss up, clap your hands in front of your body, and return to catch the ball behind your legs before it bounces to the ground.

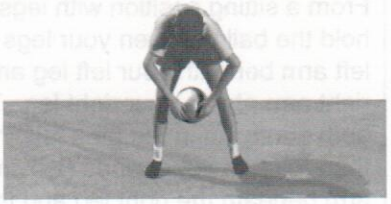


266: Catching the Ball Behind the Back

Stand with your legs shoulder length apart. Throw the ball above and slightly behind your head. Catch it with your hands behind your back, in the area of the small of your back. Next, from this position, throw the ball back up and in front of your body so you can catch it in front.



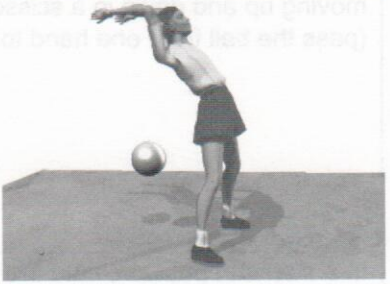
279: Catching Back and Forth Between the Legs



Stand with feet quite a bit further than shoulder length apart. Lean over and hold the ball with both hands in front of your open legs. Pitch the ball slightly back through your legs and catch the ball now with your hands behind your legs, ensuring that the ball doesn't hit the ground. Next, pitch it back to the front and catch it with your hands in front of your legs. Once you get a good rhythm, you should be able to perform this at a relatively fast pace.

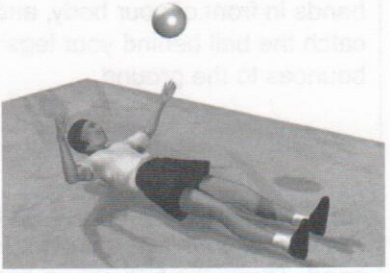
Variants: Perform this exercise in a stationary position and while moving (you will have to make small "jumps" with both feet while leaning over).

268: "Through the Legs" Handwork with a Ball



Stand with your legs quite a bit further than shoulder length apart. Hold the ball with both hands behind your head and lean back as far as possible. Now bounce the ball between your legs (from behind), quickly lean forward, and catch the ball in front of your body as it comes through your open legs. Repeat the activity.

646: Reclining Cushioning Practice



Lie on your back with both elbows in close to the torso and "push" the ball up into the air with one hand before catching with the other hand. Lift your torso off the ground as you catch each ball. Cushion the ball on contact. See how high you can throw it and still catch it cleanly.

277: "Roll-and-Run" Handwork

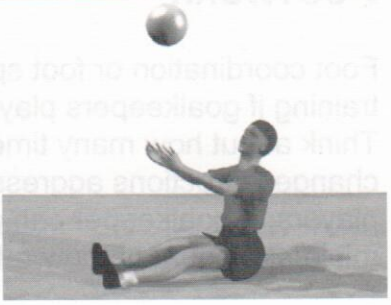


Staying low to the ground with your knees bent, roll the ball along the ground beside you while moving across the field. Be sure to continually switch which hand rolls the ball along next to you.

Variant: Use both hands (at the same time) to roll the ball.

355: Get Up and Catch Before the Bounce!

A player starts sitting on the ground with his legs positioned out in front of his body. From this position, he should throw the ball up as high as he can, get up without using his hands or his knee, jump up, and catch the ball as high as he can with his arms extended (not with his arms down in a basket-style catch).



Footwork

Foot coordination or foot speed would not be so important in training if goalkeepers played the entire practice on the field. Think about how many times a field player accelerates or changes directions aggressively during a practice. Unlike field players, a goalkeeper can go through an average practice with a minimal amount of footwork.

A keeper with slow feet will find it very difficult to reach the next level. All the great keepers have a common denominator--quick feet. Coaches must devise training activities to develop this aspect of the keeper's game. Beyond agility-focused footwork, keeper training should also include some degree of bounding and plyometric activities. As they improve, you will see greater height (vertical jump) and a minimum amount of time on the ground (agility and body balance).

When possible, exercises should be done in the area where the player is involved on the field. For the keeper, this is the goal area. Many footwork activities can be set up using 10-15 small cones arranged in a straight line along the top of the goal area, spaced approximately two feet apart.

357: Footwork Through Cones



Set up a row of cones along the top of the goal area. Have your goalkeeper face forward and zigzag through the cones, brushing the grass with side steps. He should keep his hands up in the ready position, and take as many short steps as possible. Initially, perform the exercise at a slow pace (with the keeper concentrating on the correct ready position and footwork), and then speed up later repetitions. To increase fitness demands, have the keeper perform 10 sit-ups or push-ups at the end of each pass through the cones.

Variants: 1. Next, have your keeper execute the same exercise but with his back to the cones.

2. Now have your keeper shuffle (slalom-style) through the cones while facing forward.

3. Last, have them weave through the cones while facing forward and running. Sprint back to the beginning.

358: Footwork Through Cones with a Held Ball



Set up a line of cones in the middle of the goal and coming off the goal line toward the penalty mark. A keeper weaves through the cones with a ball in his hands. When he gets to the last orange cone, he should toss the ball to the server who will serve it low to the outside of one of the two yellow cones. The keeper should get to it on his feet and make the save without diving for it.

403: Fast Footwork over Cones



Set up a row of cones along the top of the goal area. Line your keepers up on one side of the cones. Have them run over the cones, facing forward, with one foot landing between each cone. Have them look up, using their peripheral vision to see the placement of the cones. When they get to the end, they should jog back to the beginning.

Variants: 1. Next, they must take two steps between each cone before going to the next. Return to the beginning by jogging backwards.

2. Next, they must take three steps between each cone. Shuffle sideways back to the beginning.

3. Finally, have them take four steps between each cone. Shuffle sideways facing the other direction back to the beginning of the line.

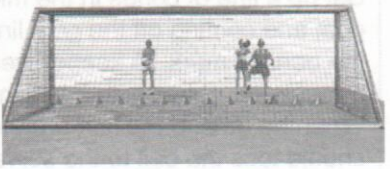
260: Fast Footwork without Balls



Place cones across the top of the goal area about a foot or two apart. Be sure to place a cone or two along the edges of the area as well. Starting at one end and facing outward between the cones, quickly side step over the cones. Look straight ahead, using only your peripheral vision to find the location of the cones. Don't look down! Concentration, footwork, balance, and speed are important to successfully master this exercise. When you get to one end, come back so you have gone both directions through the cones. Be sure not to "skip" the cones along the edges that require you to turn a corner. Repeat several times.

Variant: Next, face sideways (so your shoulders are lined up the same direction as the cones), and step forward and back to weave through the cones. (Or, facing to the right, move in front of and behind the line of cones.) When you get to one end, come back so you have gone both directions through the cones. Be sure not to "skip" the cones along the edges that require you to turn a corner. Repeat several times.

190: Fast Footwork Through Cones with Served Balls



Place cones across the 6 yard box about a foot or two apart. Be sure to place a cone or two along the edges of the box as well. Starting at one end and facing outward between the cones, quickly step over the cones. Look straight ahead, only using your peripheral vision to find the location of the cones. Don't look down! Two balls (one at a time) will be thrown at you while you step through the cones that you must catch and throw back without stopping your progress through the cones. Concentration, footwork, balance, and speed are important to successfully master this exercise. When you get to one end, come back so you have gone both directions through the cones. Be sure not to "skip" the cones along the edges that require you to turn a corner. Repeat several times.

Variant: Next, face sideways (so your shoulders are lined up the same direction as the cones), and step forward and back to weave through the cones. Two balls (one at a time) will be thrown at you while you are weaving forward and backward through the cones that you must catch and throw back without stopping your progress. When you get to one end, come back so you have gone both directions through the cones. Be sure not to "skip" the cones along the edges that require you to turn a corner. Repeat several times.

691: Jumping over Cones



Set up a row of cones along the top of the goal area. Have your keeper jump (two-footed) over the cones, raising his knees high between cones. He should "bounce" once between each cone before jumping over the next one, and his feet should be about shoulder length apart the entire time. This rep should be performed slowly.

Variants: 1. Next, have him jump (two-footed) as high as he can over each cone, with no bounce in between cones. His feet should still be about shoulder length apart.

2. Have him do two-footed jumps over the cones for speed, not height.

3. Have him do two-footed jumps over two cones, then hop back over one cone, and repeat until the end.

4. Have him jump sideways to a cone, jump over the next cone and twist in the air, jump sideways to the next cone, and repeat.

5. Standing to the side of one cone, have the keeper jump and twist in the air to the side of the next cone and continue that pattern all the way through.

6. Jump over each cone using only the right foot, with no bounce in between cones.

7. Jump over each cone using only the left foot, with no bounce in between cones.
8. Jump from side to side at a 45 degree angle moving down the line.
9. Standing next to one cone, have him side step to the next cone in the ready position, then execute a power step and leg thrust over the cone. The foot closest to the cone is the last to leave the ground and the first to land on the opposite side. Repeat to next cone, until the end. This sequence should be performed at a slow pace.

702: Running Long Jumps



Set up two cones 20-30 yards apart. Have your players begin behind the first cone, take a running start, and use one-footed jumps to reach the second cone with a minimum number of jumps. Players should alternate feet with each jump (and not use the same foot across the entire distance), and also use their arms to provide additional power for each jump.

247: Mirroring for Goalkeepers



Two goalkeepers should stand facing each other between two soccer balls. One person is designated as the "mirror". That person should do exactly what the other person does. The keepers should shuffle back and forth between the balls, reaching down to touch the ball whenever possible. The person who is not the mirror should try to fake out and "lose" his mirror. Be sure the keepers stay far enough apart that they don't hit each other's heads when leaning down to touch the balls.

Variant: Repeat the above exercise, but require the keepers to dive to each ball instead of reaching down to touch it.

338: Footwork and Saves over a String



Suspend a string about a foot above the ground between two flags, and place a ball on the ground several yards away to one side of the string. The keeper starts at the ball facing the coach, shuffles to the string, jumps over it with the inside leg first, lands on both feet at the same time, and saves a low volley driven directly to him by the coach. Be sure to repeat from both directions.

345: Shuffling to Flags and Cones with a Dive



Set up a row of four flags spaced three yards apart between two rows of cones three yards to either side of the flags. A keeper starts on one end behind the flags and cones and the coach should be positioned facing him with a ball (put a ball on every cone so you don't have to waste time chasing balls while the keeper is ready).

The keeper should shuffle to the first cone, touch it, shuffle towards the flag next to the cone, and save a rolling ball the coach serves in front of the flag. The keeper should get up quickly, run to touch the next cone, shuffle again towards the flag, and save another ball. The coach should be moving backwards as the keeper advances, grabbing new balls if the keeper misses any saves or returns poor services. Repeat this exercise to the end, and then return moving the other direction.

Variants: 1. Next, serve medium-high balls requiring a dive to save every time.

2. Last, serve balls requiring a high dive every time.

654: Keeper Wars Footwork Game



Set up a field 25 yards long by 20 yards wide with a center line (marked with cones) and two goals. Place a keeper and 5-10 balls in each goal.

The 1v1 game begins with a free kick from one keeper who shoots on the opposite goal. The defending keeper can only save the ball with his feet, and all goals have to be scored below waist-height. Balls struck above waist-height go to the defending keeper who begins with another free kick from his goal. Goalkeepers may play from the spot where the ball is controlled in their own half.

Pressure Training

Statistics show that a goalkeeper is only "active" (under pressure) for a short period of time during a 90 minute game. However, mental pressure and nervous energy can take its toll on a keeper and leave him totally exhausted after a game. Goalkeepers have to be physically prepared to play 90 minutes (and possibly 30 minutes of overtime plus penalty kicks). To be as fresh in the final minute of the game as in the first minute, keepers need a specific fitness training program.

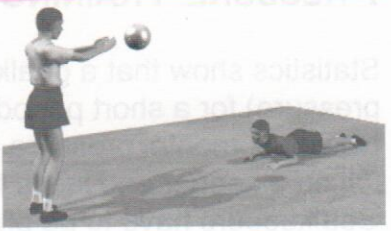
One method that can be used to develop this stamina is **pressure training**. Pressure training focuses on developing a specific skill by placing the player under pressure for a period of time, challenging him to successfully execute that technique the entire time. Each exercise should be geared to approximately 30 seconds of work with the same length (or slightly longer) rest period, which would equal a 1:1 (or 1:2) work-to-rest ratio. Alternately, you might perform each activity for a given number of repetitions (six to eight services would be a good number) and then rest.

During the pre-season, I recommend training for 45 minutes per session, 3 times per week. With two keepers, have one keeper work while the second keeper rests. If you have three keepers, a 1:2 ratio works well. All the activities should be done at 100% effort. The keepers must work hard, but try to be relaxed at the same time.

The amount of space required depends on the number of keepers. In a regular team environment, the penalty area will be enough room to put the keepers through a demanding fitness program. To keep things moving, you'll need to have a number of extra balls nearby.

Include the following exercises in your fitness program and be sure to work to both the left and right sides.

227: "Up Fast and Save" from Your Stomach



One goalkeeper should lie on his stomach on the ground. He must get up quickly to make a save when another keeper (or coach) serves a ball near him in any direction and at any height. Quickly return the ball to the server and complete 8-10 repetitions.

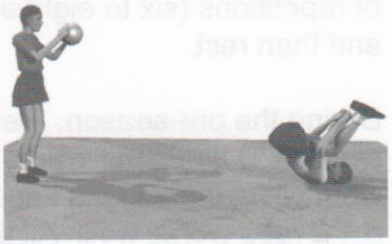
641: Catching Pressure Training



Have three keepers line up 10-15 yards apart from each other (forming a triangle). Two keepers have a supply of balls available, and alternate throwing balls to the third keeper (some at chest height or above, and some at waist height or below). The keeper under pressure must use the proper catching technique for each service.

Variant: Repeat the activity using volleys for the services.

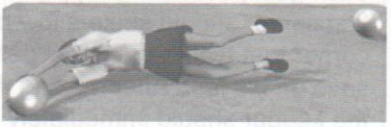
347: Somersault Saves



The goalkeeper should start the exercise by doing a forward somersault, quickly get up, and save a ball that the coach (or another keeper) serves just as the keeper is getting up on his feet. He should then throw it back, do a backwards somersault, pushing himself up with his arms into a hand stand before letting his feet fall to the ground, and save a ball that has just been served near him as he was looking up. He should toss it back, do a forward somersault, and continue the pattern. Repeat for a specified number of reps.

Variant: Repeat the activity, but have the keeper start in the middle of a full-size goal and attempt to save a shot taken after each somersault from 15-20 yards out.

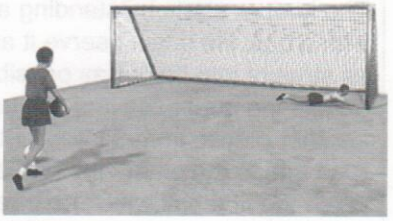
271: Goalkeeping Pressure Training for 1v1s



Set up two balls 15 yards apart, one to each side of the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper should pick a side, sprint to the ball while staying low, and slide into it as if making a 1v1 save. The keeper should keep his arms extended and top leg raised while making the save. The raised leg is a good habit to get into, for it will provide protection against oncoming players and makes the keeper's body "bigger" to block any deflections. After making the save, the player gets up and sprints to the other ball the same way. Continue the exercise for either a certain number of reps or to see "how many" saves a keeper can make in a specified period of time.

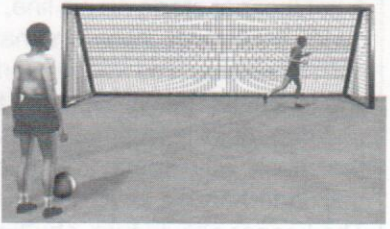
Variant: Add a third ball (making a triangle with the other two balls), and repeat the activity with two keepers working at the same time.

648: Recover and Save at the Far Post



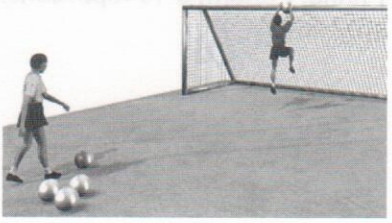
In goal, the keeper begins in a prone position (on his stomach) on the goal line facing and touching one of the posts. On the coach's command, the keeper should jump to his feet and then save a ball served to the opposite side of the goal. The server should volley the ball from his hands with power. Repeat in both directions for a total of 8-10 shots.

177: Low Ball Saves Pressure Training in Goal



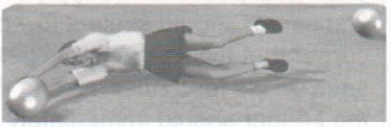
The keeper, starting from the center of the goal, runs to one goal post and touches it, then goes full length across the goal to save a low ball delivered by a player to the opposite post. Continue for 8-10 saves, rest, and then have the keeper repeat the exercise to make saves to his other side.

649: Dive and Dunk



The keeper starts in the center of the goal facing a server with a supply of balls 15-20 yards away. The keeper dives to save low shots to his right or left, then stands and dunks the ball over the crossbar before turning back to prepare for the next save. Repeat for 8-10 shots.

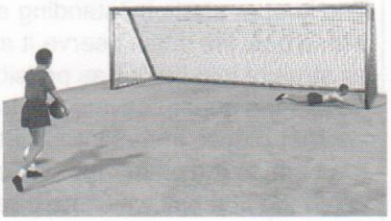
271: Goalkeeping Pressure Training for 1v1s



Set up two balls 15 yards apart, one to each side of the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper should pick a side, sprint to the ball while staying low, and slide into it as if making a 1v1 save. The keeper should keep his arms extended and top leg raised while making the save. The raised leg is a good habit to get into, for it will provide protection against oncoming players and makes the keeper's body "bigger" to block any deflections. After making the save, the player gets up and sprints to the other ball the same way. Continue the exercise for either a certain number of reps or to see "how many" saves a keeper can make in a specified period of time.

Variant: Add a third ball (making a triangle with the other two balls), and repeat the activity with two keepers working at the same time.

648: Recover and Save at the Far Post



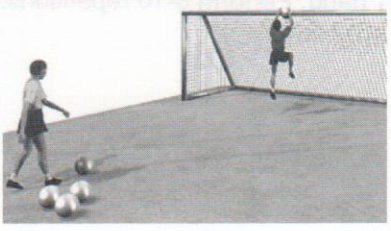
In goal, the keeper begins in a prone position (on his stomach) on the goal line facing and touching one of the posts. On the coach's command, the keeper should jump to his feet and then save a ball served to the opposite side of the goal. The server should volley the ball from his hands with power. Repeat in both directions for a total of 8-10 shots.

177: Low Ball Saves Pressure Training in Goal



The keeper, starting from the center of the goal, runs to one goal post and touches it, then goes full length across the goal to save a low ball delivered by a player to the opposite post. Continue for 8-10 saves, rest, and then have the keeper repeat the exercise to make saves to his other side.

649: Dive and Dunk



The keeper starts in the center of the goal facing a server with a supply of balls 15-20 yards away. The keeper dives to save low shots to his right or left, then stands and dunks the ball over the crossbar before turning back to prepare for the next save. Repeat for 8-10 shots.

29/02

342: Triangular Goal Diving



Set up three flags in a triangle measuring six yards across on each side. The keeper starts at the middle flag, shuffles out to the next flag and touches it, then shuffles forward towards a server and dives to save a low rolling ball. He immediately gets up, shuffles back around the middle flag to the next flag to touch it, and again shuffles forward towards a second server to make another save. Repeat for 8-10 saves at a fast pace.

Variants: 1. Serve medium-high balls every time for the keeper to dive to save.

2. Serve higher balls for the keeper to save with a strong dive each time.

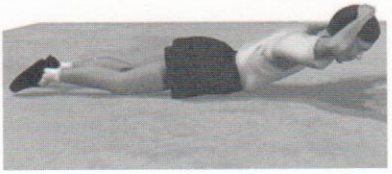
3. Have the servers take shots on the flag goals from 15-20 yards away so the keeper must make a more challenging save each time.

Functional Strength Training

Goalkeepers must have exceptional upper-body strength to meet the demands of the game. The position requires strong core muscles (including the chest, back, and abdominal muscles) that permit agility and explosive movement. In addition, keepers must have strong arm muscles that allow them to catch and deflect balls while fully extended, to throw the ball long distances when distributing, and to catch themselves when they dive.

Although you can certainly develop strength by lifting weights, there are many functional activities available that will also strengthen muscles. These activities have an additional benefit, as they can be incorporated easily into your regular team training sessions.

634: Back Risers



Lie down on your stomach with your fingers interlaced behind your head and your feet anchored on the ground. Rise up slowly so that your head and chest come off the ground. Hold in the "up" position for a second, then return slowly to the ground.

Variant: Repeat the activity, but lift your legs up as you lift your chest off the ground. Your knees should also come off the ground so you support your weight on your hips.

633: Competitive Ball Holds



Place three balls on the ground in a close group, and have three players start facing each other, on their knees, with their hands on top of a ball. On the coach's command, the players assume a "push-up" position (with backs straight), using only their toes and the soccer balls to hold them up off the ground. The players hold themselves in this position as long as they can, competing to see which player can stay up the longest.

29/01 → Torwarte Kraft.

164: Side-Rising Saves



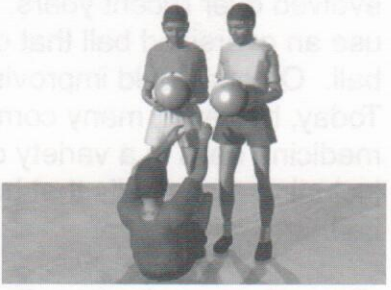
A goalkeeper should lay on his side on the ground with another player sitting on his feet. A third person should stand out in front of the keeper and serve balls so the keeper on the ground has to rise up, catch the ball, and throw it back. The keeper should then go back down on his side with his arms extended, and then back up for the next one. Be sure to have the keeper lay on both sides of his body to perform this exercise.

238: Abs and Arms Strengthening with a Ball in Pairs



Two goalkeepers lie on their sides on the ground facing each other. They should have both legs held in the air (i.e., knees and feet should be off the ground). While holding this position, they throw the ball back and forth above their heads. Switch sides and repeat the exercise.

329: Goalkeeper Sit-Ups in Threes with Two Balls



The keeper should sit on the ground in a sit-up position (with his knees bent) and feet hooked around the coach's ankles. The keeper should sit up to catch the ball that the coach tosses up for him, bring it down and touch it to the ground behind his head, sit back up and put it back in the coach's hands, go back down (without a ball this time), come back up, and push the ball that the player standing to the side is holding out for him as hard as he can, go back down, and repeat the rotation. The keeper should quickly be able to get into a rhythm. Perform 8-10 repetitions, then repeat the activity with the extra player standing on the other side of the coach so the keeper has to reach the opposite direction.

334: Harness Saves under a String

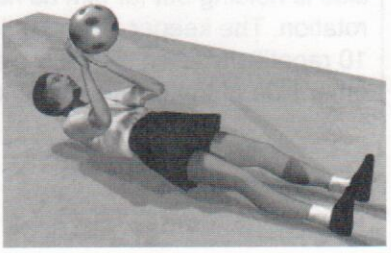


Position a flag in the ground about 4-6 yards out from one goalpost. Tie a string from the flag to the goalpost, about waist height. The keeper should wear a resistance belt that is attached to the bottom of the goal post as he stands to one side of the string (a harness of two bicycle tubes criss-crossed over the keeper's chest can be used in place of a resistance belt, if needed). Put a server on each side of the flag (each with a ball), facing the keeper.

The keeper should side step under the string, push foward as far as he can, and jump up to tap a ball back that one of the servers has tossed up to him. After making the save, the keeper should quickly side step back under the string and do the same for the other side. Be sure the keeper is side-stepping under the string with his head up and hands ready, and doesn't touch the string! As your keeper masters this exercise, lower the string for the second set to make it more challenging for him.

Medicine balls provide another way to incorporate functional strength training into your workouts. Medicine ball training has evolved over recent years. Originally, athletes would have to use an oversized ball that did not relate to the actual game ball. Others would improvise by filling a regular ball with water. Today, however, many companies offer commercially produced medicine balls in a variety of weights, sizes, and textures, including many balls that have both the size and feel of a game ball.

667: Individual Medicine Ball Cushioning Practice



While lying on his back, the keeper throws a medicine ball straight up in the air with two hands and catches it using the proper technique. To gradually increase the difficulty, the keeper should throw the ball higher in the air each time.

668: Medicine Ball Throwing (in Pairs)



Have two keepers stand about five yards apart, and throw a medicine ball to each other. The keepers should alternate using their right and left hands to throw the ball. The keepers should focus on using proper overhand technique when throwing, as well as using the proper cushioning technique to take the pace off the ball when catching.

Variants: 1. Repeat the activity using a two-handed chest pass.

2. Have the keepers increase the distance between them to 8-10 yards. Repeat the activity, but have one keeper bowl the ball using proper technique as the receiving keeper scoops it up to collect it.

669: Mixed Ball Keeper Pressure Training



Two servers line up about 15 yards apart. One server has a regulation ball and the other has a medicine ball. A keeper stands in between them and catches a ball thrown to him by one server. He quickly returns the ball to that server, turns, and catches the other ball as it is delivered by the other server. The keeper must adjust his catching and throwing technique based upon which ball is served.

The next activity helps develop reflex action and touch on the ball, while also introducing variety into the training sessions.

703: Three Mixed Ball Toss



Three keepers sit in a circle, approximately three yards apart from each other. One has a regulation ball, one has a medicine ball, and the third keeper has a mini-ball (or tennis ball). On cue, they toss each ball to the player on their left, and turn quickly to catch the ball coming to them from the right (use two hands to throw the larger balls, and one hand to toss the small ball). See how fast the keepers can move the balls around the circle without dropping them, and then reverse direction after several rotations.

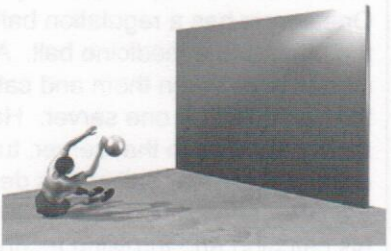
Variant: Repeat the activity with the keepers standing, using underhand throws to serve each ball.

Training with a Wall

Every club or school should have a kickback board or a wall that the keeper can use to improve his game. The most obvious wall would be one equal in size to a regular goal (24 feet wide by 8 feet high). Because balls rebound back to the keeper, they provide an easy way to maximize repetitions for a wide variety of activities.

Walls make for an excellent training tool if there is no backup keeper to work with, or if the keeper comes out early (before teammates) for practice. Of course, a kickback board is an excellent training aid for field players, too!

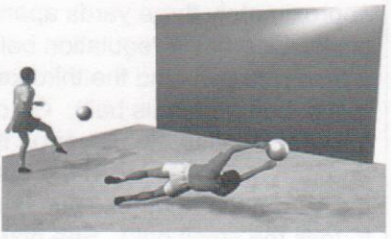
628: Reflex Catching off a Wall



A keeper sits five yards away from a wall, with his feet outstretched in front and a ball in his hands. The keeper throws the ball at an angle against the wall, then dives to the side to catch the ball and pin it to the ground. Repeat quickly to alternating sides.

Variant: Repeat the activity, but have the keeper lie down on one side, facing the wall with a ball in his hands. The keeper then throws the ball at an angle against the wall. Using the forward momentum of his arms and downward momentum of his top leg, the keeper then propels himself up onto his feet and dives to the opposite side to catch the rebound.

629: Kick and Catch with a Wall

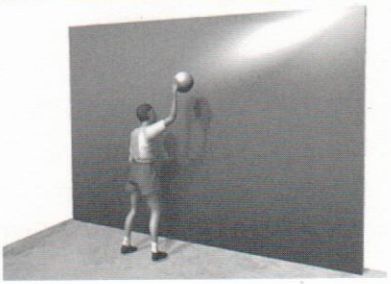


Have your keeper drop kick a ball against a wall from 5-10 yards away, and then react to the rebound to catch the ball as quickly as possible. Continue the activity at a quick pace for a specified period of time.

Variant: Repeat the exercise using volleys instead of drop kicks.

630: Fingertip Dribbling Against a Wall

From a standing position facing a wall, have your keeper dribble a ball (basketball-style) against the wall. Keep the ball going as long as possible, using only the fingertips and keeping the elbow pointed outward. Repeat the exercise using the other hand.



631: Reaction Saves in Pairs with a Wall

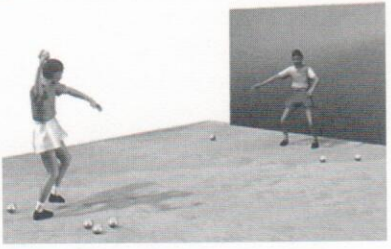
Position a goalkeeper several yards in front of a wall, facing a server who has a ready supply of balls. The server throws or volleys a ball against the wall, and the keeper then turns to save the ball as quickly as possible off the rebound. Repeat the exercise using a variety of services, at a quick pace, until all the balls have been used.



Variant: Repeat the activity, but have the keeper start facing the wall (and away from the server).

671: Goalkeeper Dodge Ball

A server lines up 12-15 yards away from the keeper (whose back is against a wall). The server throws a collection of tennis balls (one at a time) at the keeper. The keeper uses his quick reactions (and footwork) to avoid getting hit with the balls.



Variant: Repeat the activity, but have the keeper attempt to stop all the tennis balls from hitting the wall. The focus is now on improving hand/eye coordination.

GOALKEEPER TECHNIQUE

Technique is defined as the ability to perform the fundamental mechanics of goalkeeping. To become skillful in goal, keepers must improve their technique so that they can perform under pressure.

How much practice does a keeper need to develop a solid level of technique? Goalkeepers at the highest level practice and repeat technical skills on a daily basis. Keepers need to reach a level where technique is not just correct, but automatic. Remember, proper technique must be practiced again and again. **Practice does not make perfect; it makes permanent.** Bad habits are hard to break, so pay close attention to all the small details that come together with each skill.

I believe that it is important for young keepers to identify the many demands of the position. Have your keeper watch a high-level game (in person or on TV) and note what the keepers actually do during the game. He will eventually have a good list of necessary skills and will also learn to analyze goalkeepers in games.

This chapter explains the following techniques, and then presents a variety of exercises designed to improve each skill:

- Catching
- Fundamental Diving
- Power Diving
- Deflecting
- Forward Diving
- Secondary Diving/Reflex Action
- Near Body Saves
- Boxing
- Distribution

Catching

To learn the proper technique for catching, start by holding a ball in front of you so that your hands and fingers form the letter "W" with the thumbs and the index fingers. The fingers grasp the ball on the sides while the thumbs and index fingers are behind the ball. Move the ball around your body without changing the position of the hands. Younger keepers with small hands will have to make some adjustment when they move to a higher competition level where a (larger) size 5 ball is used.

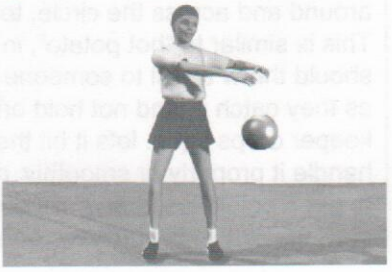
Again, to reinforce the functional nature of this training, you should perform the following exercises in the penalty area whenever possible. You should also have a few extra balls available to help keep the exercises going whenever the active ball gets knocked out of reach.

Catching Chest-High Balls

When catching balls at chest-height, use the "W" technique with fingers pointing up and palms facing outward. Elbows should be slightly bent and near the sides and wrists are firm. This allows you to use your arms and elbows as a spring.

284: Bounce the Ball Around Your Body

Stand with feet shoulder length apart. Bounce the ball to the ground and catch it using proper technique. Next, bounce the ball around your body with both hands together as you twist around your body as far as possible. Try to bounce the ball behind your opposite heel before going back the other direction. Relax your arms on contact to catch the ball softly, and bounce the ball harder as your technique improves.

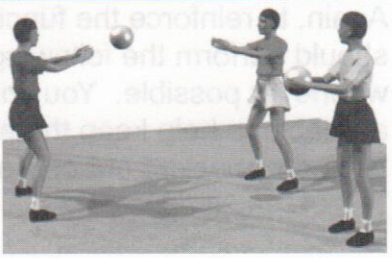


230: Catch and Shuffle



Two goalkeepers toss a ball back and forth to each other while shuffling across the penalty area. They should use clean catching technique, reaching out to meet the ball and relaxing on contact to take the pace off the ball. Make sure they throw the ball in front of the other person's path so he catches up to it instead of having to "wait" for it to get to him (or, worse, require him to take a step backwards to get it).

640: Catch and Shuffle in Threes



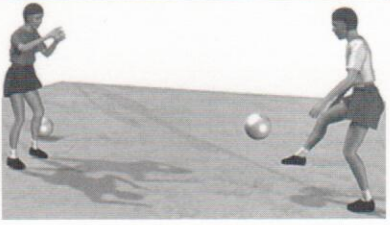
Working in threes, two servers alternate tossing balls to the keeper's left and right. The keeper must move laterally to get his body in position to catch the ball while on his feet. Both hands should be behind the ball and there should be no one-handed catches or diving. The keeper then tosses the ball back to the server, and reverses direction to catch the second ball. Continue the activity at a quick pace for a specified period of time, then rotate roles.

314: Goalkeeper Hot Potato



Have all your keepers sit in a circle on the ground with legs extended out in front of them. Have them quickly throw two balls around and across the circle, to anyone. This is similar to "hot potato", in that they should throw a ball to someone as soon as they catch it, and not hold onto it. If a keeper drops it (i.e. lets it hit the ground after it hits his hands) or does not handle it properly or smoothly, mark a point against him. The first keeper to get 5 points loses and sits out while the rest of the keepers continue playing. Play until you have one winner.

675: Volleys (in Pairs)



In pairs, two players take turns volleying a ball for the other player to catch at chest height. This demands accuracy from the server.

Variant: To reinforce balanced technique, require the players to alternate feet with each service.

Catching Waist-High Balls

For balls served at waist-height, the keeper now must change his catching technique by opening his hands with palms up. Reach out with both hands to gather the ball into the stomach area. You will hear two sounds as the ball touches your open palms first, and then your body. Remember to keep your elbows to your side.

231: Reflex Catching off Dropped Balls

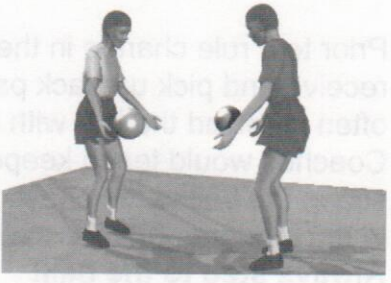


The coach (or a teammate) should stand with a ball held out in front of his body. When the coach drops it, the other keeper should take a step forward, get to the ball quickly, and catch it before it hits the ground. If the ball does hit the ground first, the keeper should dive and pin it to the ground so there is no bounce. Repeat many times.

Variants: 1. Next, have the keeper turn his back to the ball. The coach should shout "Go!" as he is dropping the ball and the keeper should turn to make the save when he hears this. Repeat many times.

2. Next, have the keeper line up facing the coach again, but this time, the coach should jog backwards and drop the ball. The keeper, jogging forward, must lean down and catch the ball before it hits the ground. Be sure to leave a little space between the keeper and coach to challenge the keeper. After the keeper makes a save, he should slow his jog down a bit to allow the coach time to back up.

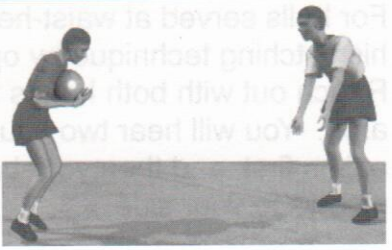
307: Keeper Two-Ball Juggling with a Partner



Two keepers (or a keeper and a coach) stand facing each other. Each has a ball held with one hand on opposite sides. They should then "juggle" the balls by softly pitching both balls back and forth to each other's open hands. The keepers should not stop with every catch, but merely cushion the ball and immediately "push" it back to the other person. Do not let the balls come back too far to your body. Instead, tap each ball back by hitting it out in front of your body. Make sure balls are being served wide to the side.

Variant: Next, serve balls even wider so the keepers must move their feet side-to-side to reach the balls.

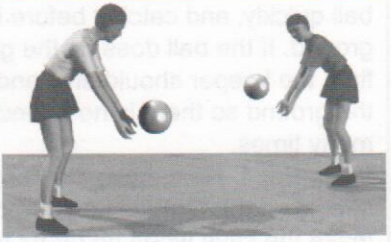
375: "Basket Saves" Practice in Pairs



One keeper (or a coach) throws the ball hard (from the side, underhand, with both arms) straight to another keeper at waist-height for him to catch with a basket save. The receiving keeper should clutch the ball to his chest for safety following each catch.

Variants: 1. Increase the distance between the two keepers to 10-15 yards. 2. Use a volley or drop kick to serve the ball (with power) to the opposite keeper.

376: Basket Catching in Pairs with Two Balls



Two keepers stand off-center from each other and facing forward. They should each have a ball, and throw it low and straight ahead of them at the same time. This requires them both to side step into the path of the ball and catch it with their arms forming a basket.

Catching Low Balls

The hand position for low shots is very similar to the technique used for waist-high balls. The palms are facing the ball, and the body is behind the ball with the knees slightly bent. Elbows should be in and the ball scooped to the chest.

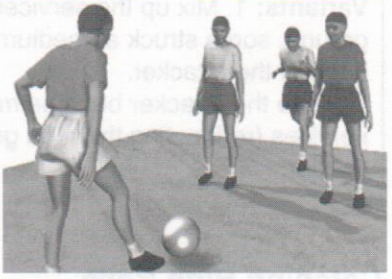
Prior to a rule change in the 1990s, keepers were allowed to receive and pick up back passes from teammates and they often received the ball with little pressure from an opponent. Coaches would teach keepers to bring their legs together and scoop the ball to the chest. This technique is not going to work in the modern game as keepers are often under pressure. **Always step to the ball!**

285: Bowling and Side-Stepping



Two keepers line up facing each other, one with a ball. The first keeper should bowl the ball to the left of the other keeper, who sidesteps into its path and scoops it up. He then bowls the ball back to the right of the first keeper, who meanwhile has moved directly into the path of the ball to scoop it up and continue the pattern. Repeat without pause.

149: Rolling Ball Saves Between Two Players



A coach should pass a ball between or around two stationary players positioned next to each other with space enough between them for another player to run through. The keeper starts behind the two stationary players, but once he sees the pass be made, he should come forward to the ball, attempting to pick it up on the run and coming in front of the middle players. He then serves the ball back to the coach, and shuffles back to his starting position, keeping his eye on the ball to be ready for the next service (i.e., don't let the keeper turn his back). Balls should be served at a fairly quick pace.

660: "Two-Sided Saves" in Threes



Use two cones (or flags) to make a goal. Put a keeper in the middle with a field player facing him (with a ball) a fair distance away from the goal and another field player the same distance away behind him. Both field players should have a supply of balls available.

One player with the ball takes a low shot on goal. The keeper saves it, rolls it back, and then turns and faces the other shooter. This field player always serves waist high balls. Again, the keeper makes the save, rolls it back, and turns back to face the first shooter for another low-ball save. The pattern continues, and the field players should allow the keeper to set before each shot is taken.

650: Saves with Obstructed Vision



Position a keeper in the goal with an opposing player a few yards in front of him. Have a third player start 10-15 yards away with a supply of balls. The server strikes low shots toward either side of the keeper as the attacker moves around in front of the keeper to block his vision of the ball (but doesn't touch the ball). The keeper must step past the attacker to each ball to catch it cleanly, and should also call "Keeper!" prior to each save.

Variants: 1. Mix up the services so that some balls are struck on the ground, some struck at medium height, and others are chipped over the head of the attacker.

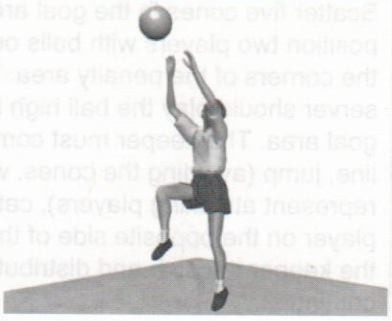
2. Have the attacker become more active by allowing him to deflect the services (redirecting them on goal) if he can get to the ball before the keeper.

Catching High Balls

The same hand technique is used for high balls as for catching chest-high balls, Again, keep your wrists firm with hands OVER the ball in a "W". You can practice this technique by holding a ball over your head and then dropping it to the ground. If your technique is correct, the ball will drop in front of your body. If your wrists are bent improperly, there is a chance that the ball will fall behind your body.

The keeper should jump up to collect the ball at the highest possible point, bringing one knee up to provide additional lift and protection against any oncoming opponents. Arms should be extended with elbows slightly bent when making the catch. The ball should be brought into the chest once it has been caught and all pressing opponents have moved away. Off-season training to increase your vertical jump will help to improve your ability to reach high balls. This is a very important skill because games are often won (or lost) above or at the height of the crossbar!

252: Individual High Ball Practice

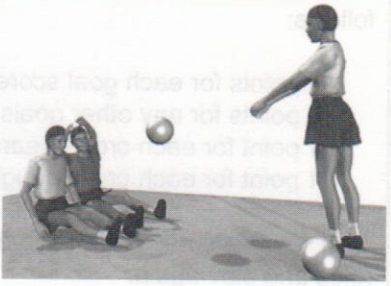


Throw the ball with both hands into the air in front of you, jog a few steps, jump, collect the ball smoothly and properly, and clutch it to your body safely. Catch the ball with your hands and fingers forming a "W" on the ball and with your arms extended above your head. Be sure to jump with a one-footed take-off, raising your leg up to provide more lift for your jump, as well as protection against oncoming players. You want to catch the ball at the highest possible point, so time your jump so that when you are at your highest point, the ball lands in your hands. Repeat many times.

Variants: 1. Repeat the activity, but start by bouncing the ball down hard into the ground.

2. Alternate jumping off both the right and left feet.

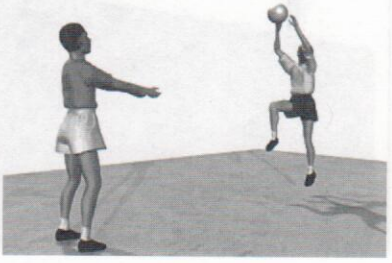
655: Developmental High Balls Practice



A coach (or goalkeeper) bounces the ball to two keepers sitting side-by-side. One keeper tries to catch the ball while the other acts as a field player and tries to head the ball away. Change roles after 1 minute.

Variant: Repeat the same activity, but the two keepers should be on their knees this time instead of sitting.

659: Pairs High Ball Practice

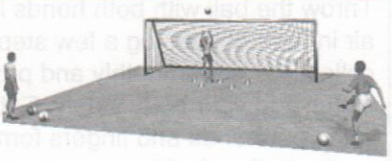


Two keepers face each other about 5-6 yards apart. One keeper tosses a ball high into the air for the other keeper to catch at its highest point. Change roles and repeat the exercise.

Variant: 1. This time, the keeper bounces the ball firmly on the ground for the other keeper to catch at its highest point.

2. Repeat the original activity (and then the first variant), but have the players move across the field together (with the server moving backwards and the keeper moving forward to attack the ball on each service).

286: High Ball Saves Among Obstacles



Scatter five cones in the goal area, and position two players with balls outside the corners of the penalty area. The first server should play the ball high into the goal area. The keeper must come off his line, jump (avoiding the cones, which represent attacking players), catch the ball, and distribute it to the other player on the opposite side of the box. This player returns the high serve for the keeper to catch and distribute to the first player again, and the process continues.

Variant: Replace the cones with several opposing field players, and repeat the activity.

421: The "High Ball Challenge"

Place two teams of four players in the penalty area. One team is the defense, and the other is the offense. Attackers may start anywhere in the penalty area, but defenders must start in the goal area. The service alternates from either end of the penalty area. Points are awarded as follows:

- 5 points for each goal scored from a header
- 2 points for any other goals scored
- 1 point for each cross cleared decisively via a header or volley
- 1 point for each cross caught or boxed by the keeper

After four balls have been served from each end, the two groups switch roles and play again.



Distribution

Distribution is a major part of a keeper's technical training. He needs to be able to make quick decisions without loss of technique. He will have to initiate counterattacks (often off of restarts) and be able to find open teammates. There will be moments where he will have to punt or volley balls deep into the opponent's half and other times where he will distribute wide to one of his outside flank players.

Basically, there are three distributions from the feet and three from the hands, as detailed below. The activities that follow will help the keeper improve each different distribution technique as well as refine the selection of technique to use in certain situations.

Goal Kicks

Goalkeepers need to develop their skill in taking goal kicks so the team doesn't have to use a field player for this task. Repetition of goal kicks in practice will help improve technique, but playing on the field is much more economical. Daily practice in the field will benefit the keeper and help develop this skill. Remember to drive under the ball to get a backward spin and also to get some air under the ball. This backward spin will make the ball easier to control as it appears to "die" when it hits the ground

Full Volley Kicks (Punting)

A punted ball will often give the goalkeeper maximum distance. However, much of the power of the kick can be wasted on height and accuracy can be difficult to maintain. Still, a 70 or 80 yard volley that lands in or near the opponent's penalty area can be very dangerous and will keep the opposing defenders from pushing up to shut down distribution on the flanks.

Half Volleys (Drop Kicks)

A drop kick differs from a punt in that contact is made just as the ball rebounds off the ground after being dropped by the keeper. There are several advantages to using a half volley distribution.

The trajectory tends to be lower and quicker than a punt, which makes it easier for field players to control. The range (distance) can be greater, which makes the drop kick preferable against the wind. The negative side is that if the field surface is poor, it is probably worse in front of the goal or in the goal area. Rocks, uneven ground, and standing water can cause the ball to be struck off-center and distributed unpredictably. Even so, the drop kick is a valuable type of distribution that is definitely worth the effort to master.

Underhand Service (Bowling)

Bowling is used to distribute the ball to a supporting defender who has to be able to play the ball immediately if under any pressure. Bend your body to lower your center of gravity and release the ball underhand near the ground to eliminate bouncing. This will make it easier for the receiving player to control the ball. Remember that a distribution or pass is only as good as the receiver's ability to play the ball!

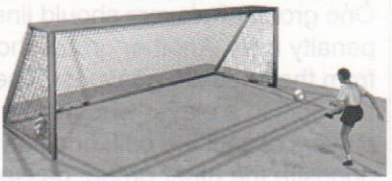
Side-Arm Throws

As the distance increases between the keeper and the recipient, the keeper must develop a service that will get to his teammate quickly but also be able to be played immediately. A side-arm throw may be the best choice in this instance. Again, lower your center of gravity and serve the ball, side-arm, with the elbow bent. The ball should bounce into the receiver so that it is easy to control.

Overhead Throw

This is the farthest service from the hand and basically is served with a straight arm. An overhead (or three-quarter) motion will enable the keeper to "sling" the ball to his teammates. The later the release, the lower the trajectory and greater the distance. This will be one of the most important types of distribution for the keeper as he can use it to accurately put the ball at a player's feet far down the field.

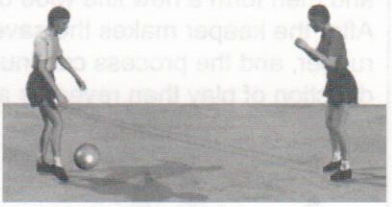
622: Kicks into the Net



Have your keeper stand at the top of the goal area facing into his own goal. Place a ball at the top of the goal area, and practice striking goal kicks into the net. Retrieve the ball after each kick and repeat.

Variant: Next, start with the ball in the keeper's hands, and practice punting (or taking drop kicks) into the net.

301: Drop-Kick Battle in Pairs



Two keepers should half-volley the ball to each other to try to score. Shots must be within reach to count, and catches must be clean with no dropped balls. Keep track of points, and play to a predetermined score.

610: Throwing in Pairs with Both Arms



Have two goalkeepers stand 10 yards apart, and throw a ball back and forth with accuracy and power. The keepers alternate using their right and left hands to throw the ball. Focus on using proper overhand technique when throwing, and catch each ball cleanly with both hands.

Variant: Repeat the activity, but increase the distance between the keepers.

341: High Ball Saves with a Distribution Gate



The coach serves high- and medium-height balls into the penalty area. The keeper should come out of his goal to catch the ball before it bounces, call for it, and save it. He should then immediately distribute the ball by bowling or throwing it through a gate 20 yards away (formed by two cones set up on the opposite side from the coach), or by punting or drop-kicking the ball through a gate 40 yards away. Be sure to serve balls from both sides and have the keeper distribute to both sides.

137: Bowling and Throwing Accuracy Practice

One group of players should line up to one side of the goal, just wide of the penalty area. Another group should line up outside the penalty area, across from the opposite goal post. The keeper starts with the ball and bowls or throws it to a player who makes a run up the field from the goal line. This player collects the ball, dribbles straight up the field until he is directly opposite the other group, passes it to the first player in that group, and stays where he is.

The next player receives the ball, takes a touch toward goal, and shoots (he should not dribble in for a 1v1 with the keeper). He should follow his shot and then form a new line wide of the goal, opposite from the first group. After the keeper makes the save, he serves another ball out to the next runner, and the process continues until there are no more runners. The direction of play then reverses and the keeper serves balls to his other side.



408: Diving/Bowling Keeper Competition

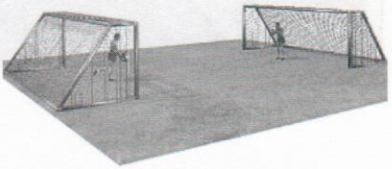


Using cones, set up a small field measuring 20 yards wide by 10 yards deep. Place two small cone goals near the ends of each goal line, and a single cone at the midpoint of each goal line. A keeper starts behind the middle cone on each line, facing into the field.

One keeper starts the game by bowling a ball along the ground toward either small goal across from him. The other keeper must dive forward from behind his middle cone and out in front of the cone goal to make the save. If the keeper saves it, he gets up, returns to his middle cone, and bowls it for his partner to make a save. If the keeper misses the save and the ball goes through the cones (or if the keeper does not dive forward, but saves the ball behind the cones once it has already traveled through them), the keeper who bowled it scores a point. Keep score, and ensure that the keepers are performing this exercise at a fast pace. They should get up quickly and return to their middle cone quickly after each save.

The following 1v1 game is an excellent motivational activity that combines technical and tactical elements of goalkeeping. It will also challenge the physical and mental aspects of the players involved. This game provides an excellent opportunity for the reserve keeper to make a statement to the coach, and the starting keeper, in turn, can show why he is #1!

185: Keeper Wars



Place two keepers in full-sized goals which have been moved in and are fairly close to one another (20-30 yards apart). Have a supply of spare balls available in the back of each net. The keepers attempt to score on each other by any means of distribution (throw, kick, or volley) and are allowed a maximum of three steps from the goal line or where they gained possession of the ball. Keep track of who is winning, and play to a specified score. Make the loser do a certain number of push-ups, sit-ups, or hops.

Variant: Impose a "one loss of possession" penalty for any keeper who has three services that are high or wide of the goal.

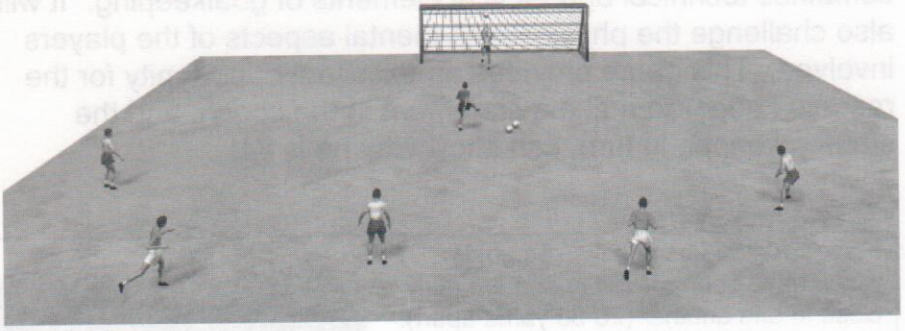
These final two activities integrate the keeper into team training, and open up the spaces required for each distribution by the keeper.

656: Team Training for Keeper Distribution

Using half a field, position a keeper in goal with three teammates (representing defenders or midfielders who are trying to work the ball out of the defensive third of the field) and two opposing players (representing pressing strikers) outside the penalty area. Have a server with a supply of balls standing just outside the penalty area.

Play begins when the server strikes a ball at the keeper with either a shot or volley. The two pressing strikers quickly run from neutral positions to mark two of the keeper's teammates. After making the save, the keeper must read the situation and distribute the ball to the one unmarked teammate, who then works with the other players to maintain possession while moving the ball outside the defensive half of the field.

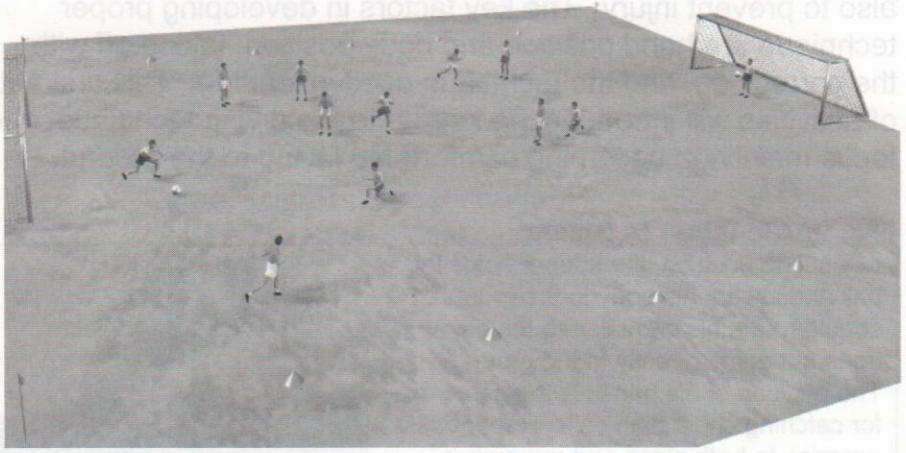
Variant: Progressively add an equal number of attackers and defenders to create a more realistic game situation. Again, each pressing attacker must mark a single defender or midfielder from the keeper's team, leaving one unmarked player available for a safe distribution.



672: 6v6 Distribution Game

Set up a game of 6v6 (with five field players and a goalkeeper on each team), and number each field player 1 through 5. Place goals on the goal line and at midfield, and use cones and flags to mark sidelines along the width of the penalty area.

The game begins with one keeper calling out two numbers corresponding to players on the opposite team. The two players drop to one knee, allowing the keeper to find an open teammate and then use the best distribution possible to put the ball in play. The two kneeling players can continue playing once any field player has touched the ball. Restart play with a keeper distribution whenever the ball goes out of play across an end line.



Diving

Diving is one of the most exciting techniques that a keeper must learn. Ironically, a keeper will need to dive less as his knowledge of the game improves and he develops faster feet and a better understanding of angles. However, a good keeper will make the "simple" saves and is always ready to come through and make the difficult ones.

Proper technical training is needed to develop this skill and also to prevent injury. The key factors in developing proper technique are hand position and body position, taking off with the correct leg, and the technique used in landing. This first set of activities will introduce the keeper to the diving technique, and focus mainly on becoming comfortable falling to the ground.

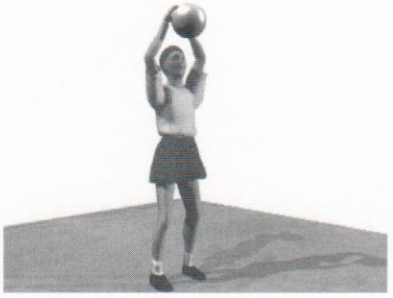
685: Introduction to Diving

In a sitting position, the keeper holds the ball and lowers his body to the ground. He should rotate his shoulder so the elbow does not come directly to the ground. The position of his hands is the same as for catching chest high balls. Repeat this exercise to both sides and remember to arch the body from the side to prevent a hard landing. Using this technique, the keeper should roll smoothly to the ground.



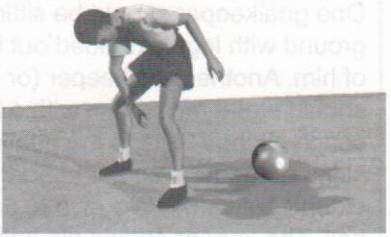
360: Collapse Dives with a Held Ball

The keeper should hold the ball over his head and bring it down onto the ground in a dive. Get back up and repeat. Have the keeper fall to both sides, and keep the ball in front of him as he completes each dive.



293: Collapsing on Rolling Balls

A goalkeeper should roll the ball swiftly between his legs (back and to the side), turn, take a few steps toward it, and collapse on top of it. The first step is very important, as the keeper should turn with his left shoulder and step first with his left foot when going to the left (and vice versa). Repeat the activity, serving balls behind both heels so the keeper must collapse on both sides.



350: Collapse Dive Warm-Up with a Tossed Ball

A keeper stands with a ball in his hands. He should throw the ball up about head height, let it fall, and collapse on top of it as it falls to the ground. His hands must pin the ball to the ground. Repeat the exercise to both sides.



Diving for Low Shots

The major difference in technical training is the position of the hips. Low balls require you to lower your center of gravity (your hips), while high shots require the opposite. Every keeper must learn to lower his center of gravity and reach with the hand closest to the ball. He must stay on his side and bring the trailing (upper) hand to the top of the ball. This way, the lower hand prevents the ball from going into the goal and the upper hand pins the ball to the ground. Remember to step out at an angle to the ball when you lower your center of gravity.

248: Developmental Diving



One goalkeeper should be sitting on the ground with legs extended out in front of him. Another goalkeeper (or a coach) should stand facing him with a ball. The coach pitches balls to the goalkeeper's sides far enough so the keeper must extend outward into a dive to save the ball. The keeper should pin balls to the ground (with the near hand behind and the far hand on top of the ball), and focus on diving forward rather than "falling" backwards. Be sure the coach (or thrower) mixes up the tosses so some roll along the ground while others are off the ground. Do not "lob" balls so the keeper has to wait for them to fall.

Variants: 1. Once the keeper has mastered this exercise from a sitting position and is used to the ground and ready to move on, progress to where the keeper is sitting "up" on his knees. Do not let him sit down on his heels.
2. Next, have the keeper perform the exercise from a squatting position. Here you can throw balls further out to his sides since he is on his feet and able to "jump" to make the save.
3. Finally, have the keeper stand in an upright position. Again, be sure to mix up the distribution of balls - some rolling on the ground, some in the air about knee-high, some waist-high, etc.

686: Individual Diving Practice



A keeper stands upright with a still ball on the ground to his right. The keeper lowers his center of gravity and dives to the ball. Repeat to the opposite side.

297: "Save it First" with Two Balls



Two goalkeepers line up one leg's length away from a middle person who is standing between two balls sitting on the ground. When the middle person points to a ball, both goalkeepers should immediately dive to that side and try to get to the ball first. There are no ties - if both keepers get their hands on it, they should wrestle it away from one another. Play until one keeper wins five matches. Make sure your keepers are on their toes with their feet moving while waiting for the direction to be indicated.

131: Fast Footwork Close-Range Reaction Saves



Place a cone about 6 - 8 yards out from each goal post, and about 2 yards toward the middle of the goal. Line up 4 - 6 balls parallel to the line made by the goal post and the cone, only back a yard or two. The keeper must start on his post and shuffle out to the cone, bend down and touch it, and move back towards his near post, at which time the coach shoots a ball toward goal that the keeper must react to and save with a deflection or smother. He gets back up, shuffles back out to the cone, and repeats until all balls on that side have been shot. Keeper and coach should then move to the other side of the goal and do the same until all balls have been shot there as well. Give the keeper some rest time while you collect the balls to repeat the exercise.

Diving for Medium-Height Shots

The same "W" technique described in the "Catching" section is used to deal with medium-height balls struck to the keeper's side. "Medium-height" generally means that the shot is about shoulder- or head-height. If the body is not behind the ball, a diving save is often required.

379: Diving to Held Balls in Pairs

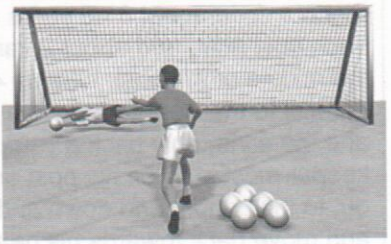


The coach (or another keeper) holds a ball in each hand out to his sides. The keeper, facing him, steps forward and dives to take the ball out of one of his hands and brings it down onto the ground (the ball should hit the ground first). He immediately gets back up, returns the ball to the coach's hand, and dives the other direction to take the other ball. Repeat for a specific number of reps.

Variant: Repeat the activity, but this time the coach will initiate action by dropping one of the balls out to his side. The keeper will have to react to step forward and dive to save the correct ball.

Bal met stuit naar hoek gooien.

687: Progressive Diving Practice



A server rolls a ball to the left and right of the keeper who makes diving saves using the proper technique. Alternate sides.

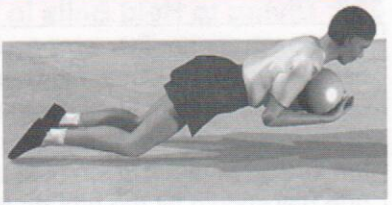
Variants: 1. A server tosses the ball at a medium height to the left and right of the keeper, alternating sides. Be sure that the keeper pins the ball to the ground to help break the fall.

2. Have the keeper work to both sides in rapid succession. Serve one ball to the right at medium height, and then a second to the left on the ground. This will force the keeper to lower his center of gravity when going down to one side and keeping a high center of gravity to the other side. Repeat, reversing directions each time.

Forward Diving

Every goalkeeper is going to be faced with the decision to dive forward to deal with shots falling to the ground in front of the keeper. This situation is often a secondary dive after a dropped or deflected ball. This technique must be taught properly to avoid injury.

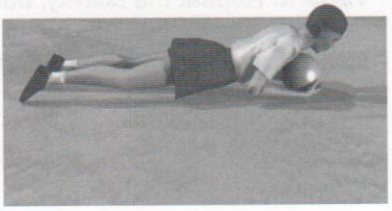
676: Smothering Practice from the Knees



From a kneeling position, have the keeper fall forward to the ground holding the ball to the chest. The impact of the dive should be absorbed with the forearms and not the chest.

Variant: Repeat the activity, but have the ball served by the coach. The keeper should reach out to collect the ball and use his forearms to break the fall.

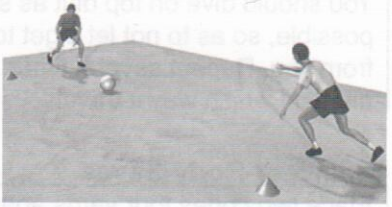
368: Smothering Practice



Have your keeper stand with a ball positioned out in front of him. When you say, "Go!", he should dive straight forward into it, sliding his arms underneath the ball and clutching it to his chest for security. If you have more than one keeper, line them all up next to each other (with their own balls) and have them all do it at the same time. Once they make the save, have them set the ball back up, get back behind it, and repeat several times.

Variant: Now have your keepers line up facing you without any balls. You should serve balls straight into the keepers, requiring them now to dive forward to smother balls coming straight at them. They should serve it back and get ready for the next one, because you can serve balls at a fast pace into any of them.

673: Scoop It Up



One keeper rolls the ball to another keeper, who moves forward to pick up the ball without breaking his stride. This technique requires a lowering of the center of gravity when moving to the ball. Change roles and repeat the activity.

Variants: 1. Repeat the activity, but have the server deliver a low, bouncing ball each time. The keeper now dives forward to smoother the ball after scooping it up, which keeps the ball from slipping underneath the keeper's body.

2. Repeat the first variant, but have the server run forward to put pressure on the keeper after serving the ball.

Near-Body (Reaction) Saves

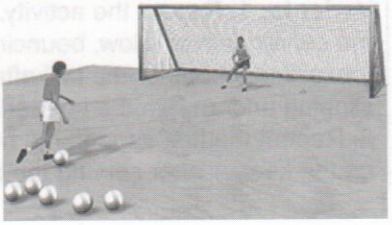
Near-body saves are needed when balls are struck close to the keeper's sides. Often, goalkeepers use their feet to save shots in this area. However, "kick saves" don't lead to control of the ball following the save and there is a chance that it will be directed to the feet of an opponent. Instead, the keeper must collapse his body and drive the near hand to get behind the ball. The upper hand will follow to pin the ball to the ground. There is no time to step and lower the center of gravity. The keeper's eyes must stay focused on the ball to help ensure a steady head position, and speed of reaction is critical.

254: Individual Training to Handle Deflections



Facing forward with one leg slightly extended in front of you and a ball between both hands, bounce the ball hard several times on the ground in front of you. Then bounce it again so it hits the extended foot and goes off sideways. You should dive on top of it as soon as possible, so as to not let it get too far away from you. Repeat several times and with the ball alternating which foot it hits and which way it travels.

688: Near-Body Saves



Place two cones four yards apart on the goal line between the goal posts. Have a shooter strike the ball low and between the cones from the penalty spot. Remember that balls are struck to train the keeper to deal with driven balls near to his left and right side.

Power Dives

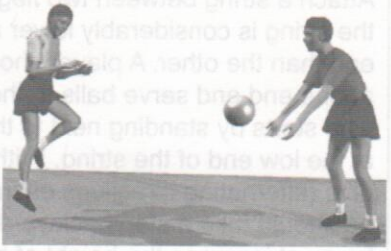
"Power diving" means diving for height and distance. As mentioned earlier, the technique used to get into the air is different from that of dealing with low balls. Low balls demand a lowering of the center of gravity while high balls require the keeper to raise his center of gravity. The training must be progressive and careful if the keeper is to be successful. He must be mentally and physically prepared for each of the activities.

382: "Power Hops" over a Still Ball



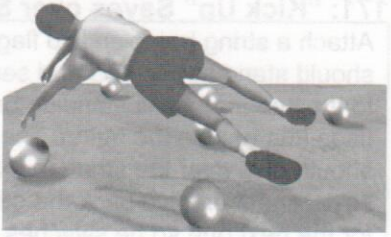
The keeper should stand behind and to the side of a ball sitting on the ground. He should shuffle to where he's a step away from it, step to it, and power hop over the ball, pushing off with the foot closest to the ball. He should cross over his feet while in the air, and land in front of and to the other side of the ball. Then he should take a few steps backward so he's positioned behind and to the side of the ball again (on the other side now), and repeat by going the other direction using the opposite foot.

381: "Power Hops" to a Served Ball



The keeper starts by hopping on one foot while facing the coach. The coach then serves a ball to that side (if he's hopping on his right foot, serve it to his right side) and the keeper must make a "power hop" there to make the save. He should not have to dive to get to the ball, but merely take a powerful hop to get his body behind the ball. Be sure to switch sides (and the foot the keeper is hopping on) with each service.

255: Zig-Zag Diving over Balls



Place six balls in a zig-zag pattern (as illustrated). Facing forward and standing to the side of the first ball, dive over the ball next to you and save the ball on the outside of the pattern. Get your feet up over the ball you're diving over, keep your hands close together, and put some power behind the jump. Next, dive over the middle ball and save the one on the other side the same way. Finally, dive over the last ball in the middle to save the final ball on the outer edge. Repeat from both directions.

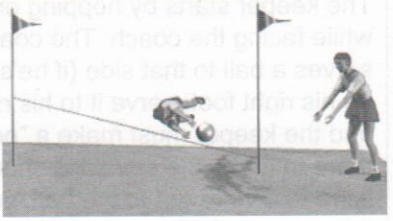
Be sure to face forward throughout this entire exercise (i.e., do not switch directions in mid-sequence). Drive the opposite leg high into the air to help provide the power required to clear the first ball on each dive. Note also that the last foot to leave the ground will be the first foot to land after the jump.

305: Power Diving over Bags



Position three soccer bags fairly close to one another in a triangular pattern, with the two bags on the sides facing perpendicular to the one at the point. The keeper should start behind the bag at the point of the triangle, take a few steps, jump over that bag, and then dive over either one of the other two bags directly from his landing position to save a ball the coach has thrown wide to his side. Be sure to alternate which direction the keeper must dive after every few saves.

170: Progressive Diving over String



Attach a string between two flags, so that the string is considerably lower at one end than the other. A player should stand at one end and serve balls to the keeper who starts by standing next to the string at the low end of the string. With each dive (alternating directions each time), he should take a step backwards so that he must increase the height of his dive each time. When the keeper gets toward the back, stress the importance of kicking his feet up as he dives in order to clear the string.

171: "Kick Up" Saves over String



Attach a string between two flags. A player should stand at one end and serve balls to the keeper who is standing between the flags and next to the string. The keeper should dive over the string to make the save, and then dive back the other way for the next one so he switches sides with each save.

165: Diving Over a Player



A goalkeeper should stand next to a player on his hands and knees with head down. A coach should serve a ball to the other side of the player on the ground and the keeper should take a power step, bring over his opposite (or top) knee, fly over the kneeling player, and make the save. Make sure the keeper starts facing the server and has his shoulders square as he leaves the ground. Be sure to serve balls to both sides so the keeper must make saves from both directions.

Secondary Diving

It may seem strange to speak of secondary dives, but whenever a keeper saves a shot on the field of play and does not hold on to the ball, a secondary dive may be necessary to keep the ball out of the net. The ball will dictate what type of dive is needed to make the save or turn the ball around the post or over the cross bar. Keepers have to learn to immediately react to any ball that is not held and stays on the field of play. This is

where fast footwork and reaction drills will benefit the keeper. Remember to train goalkeepers to attack all balls or shots not held which stay in the field of play.

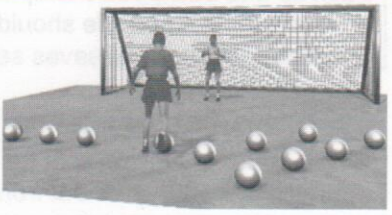
All secondary diving drills should be done in goal. The one exception is when the goal area is just not playable and quality training is not possible. Be sure to have extra balls available for the server to keep all the exercises moving along at a quick pace.

253: "Double Save" Individual Training with Two Balls



Place one ball on the ground a fair distance away from you and to your side so it is sitting still on the ground. With another ball, stand straight up, throw the ball high and straight up into the air, dive on top of the still ball that is sitting out to your side, quickly get up after you have made that save, and save the other ball that is falling back to the ground before it bounces or after only one bounce. Young or inexperienced keepers may let it bounce a second time. Repeat several times from both sides.

179: Corner-to-Corner Saves



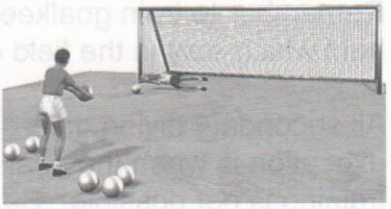
A player plays the ball to a previously announced corner for the keeper to catch. He then immediately plays another ball to the opposite corner for the keeper to deflect or save. Continue at a fast pace.

152: Lower-90 Saves



One player lines up with several balls at the edge of the penalty area. He should pass balls straight to his sides to one of two players lined up next to him. Shooters should take a one-touch shot to either the near or far corner. The keeper must react, make the save, and get up quickly for the next shot. Alternate sides after each shot.

674: "Second Save" Training in Goal



In goal, the keeper saves a low shot and must then save a ball dropped to the ground in front of the goal by the server. This creates a realistic situation where the keeper has to deal with a rebound in front of him.

Variants: 1. The keeper saves a shot struck low to one side, then immediately reacts to save a volley struck down the middle.

2. The keeper saves a volley struck to one side, then immediately reacts to save a low shot struck on the ground to the opposite side.

324: Multiple Save Fitness Series



Place a ball just out from each goal post. The coach should line up at the top of the penalty area, facing the keeper in the goal, with several balls available to him. The keeper starts by diving to his left to "save" the still ball on the post. He immediately gets up and returns to the middle of the goal to save a ball driven straight to him (waist-height) by the coach, side steps to his right to "save" the other still ball on his post, gets back up and to the middle of his goal to save another driven ball to his waist, and then takes a few steps forward to smother a ball the coach serves to him rolling on the ground. The keeper immediately gets back up and backpedals to tip a ball over the bar the coach has served over and behind his head. He should land by rolling over his shoulder. Repeat the same sequence of saves several times, and then let the keeper rest.

473: Give-and-Go Finishing with a Posting Player



Set up a line of players with the ball approximately 30 yards out from the center of the goal, and give a ball to each player. Have a posting player start at the top of the penalty area, facing the line, and put a goalkeeper in the goal. The first player with a ball initiates action by passing to the posting player who lays the ball off left or right for an overlap. The finishing player attempts to score with a one-touch shot. After each attack, the posting player retrieves the ball and returns to the line, and the attacker becomes the new posting player.

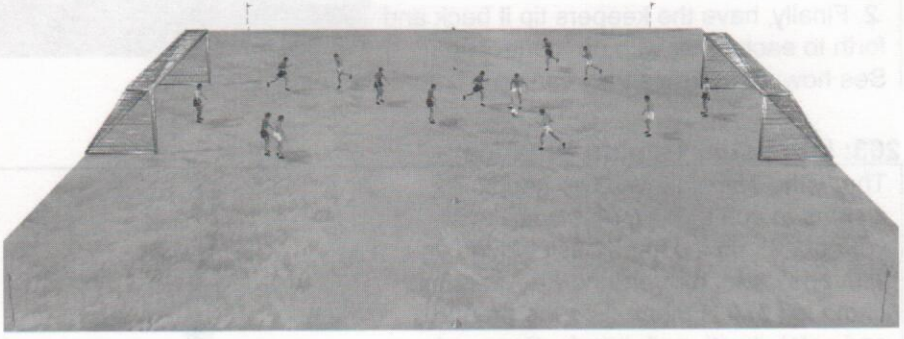
Variants: 1. After giving the pass, the posting player turns and runs toward goal so he can follow up on any rebounds or mishandled shots. The keeper must react quickly to prevent any goals off secondary shots.
2. After giving the pass, the posting player makes a bent run toward the far post. The attacker reads the keeper's positioning and either attempts to score with a one-touch shot or crosses the ball for his teammate to redirect into the goal.

The following activity encourages players to find shots through a crowded defense, and trains strikers to follow up. As a result, it requires keepers to deal with a variety of shots and deflections close to their goal, and emphasizes the importance of holding onto saves cleanly.

657: 7v7 Shooting Game

Set up a field measuring 36 yards deep x 44 yards wide (equivalent to two penalty areas placed next to each other) with goals at each end and the top of one penalty area serving as the midfield line. Place four flags at the corners to enclose the field, and place several balls in each of the goals.

Play 5v2 in each half of the field (each team has four defenders and a keeper playing against two attackers, positioned in separate halves). All shots must originate in the own defensive half, and defenders may not enter the attacking half of the field. The two teammates in the attacking half follow up shots and try to score off rebounds and deflections (they must stay in their attacking half and cannot receive passes from teammates).



Boxing and Deflecting

When faced with a shot on goal, the keeper has the option to catch the ball, box it away, or deflect it around the goal or over the crossbar. The position of the keeper in the goal and the flight of the ball will help make the decision to catch, box, or deflect.

Deflecting (Tipping)

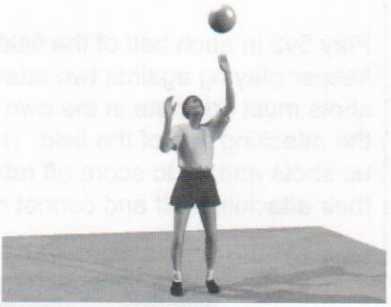
Deflecting (or "tipping") simply means pushing the ball around the post or over the crossbar with an open hand. Some coaches teach a semi-closed hand (fingers closed without making a fist) while others prefer an open hand. Know your own strength and the power of the shot in order to determine which technique to use. Remember that the palm should always be facing the ball.

370: Tipping Juggling Exercise

Have your keeper tip the ball up from hand to hand above his head. Keep track of how many tips the keeper does before dropping the ball.

Variant: 1. Next, have him tip it to another keeper facing him, who tips it up to his other hand to control it before tipping it back to the first keeper.

2. Finally, have the keepers tip it back and forth to each other with no "control tip". See how many times they can do it before dropping it.



263: Individual Tipping Practice

Throw the ball high with two hands. As it starts to come down (but is still over your head), tip it up and back behind you with one hand, turn around (the direction of the leg that is planted on the ground), and catch it with both hands. Be sure to alternate hands with every repetition.

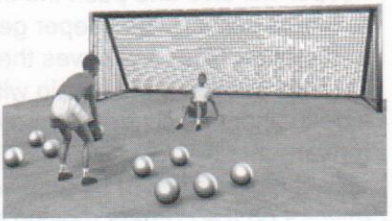


642: Individual Deflection Practice



Have a keeper start from a standing position near a stationary ball, and then dive to push the ball away with his lower hand. The keeper should then return quickly to his feet and repeat the activity to the other side. Focus on having the keeper lower his center of gravity as the dive is made.

323: Crab Tipping



The coach should be positioned about 10 yards out from the center of the goal with a number of balls available to him. The keeper should be in a "crab" position, using his hands and feet to keep from sitting on the ground. The coach should pitch a ball to the keeper's side and just over his head. The keeper throws his hips up and his opposite leg and arm across his body in order to tip the ball up over the crossbar. After the tip, the keeper should land by turning his body and rolling over the back of his shoulder. Repeat many times to both sides.

661: Deflection Practice in Threes



This exercise requires three players and a supply of balls. A server rolls the ball at a fast pace to the keeper's side. The keeper lowers his center of gravity, dives, and deflects the ball (with his lower hand) to a third player who returns the ball to the server. Repeat to the other side.

Variant: Next, balls should be served at medium height. The lower hand is still the closest to the ball and should be used for the deflection. The main difference is that the keeper does not drop his center of gravity before diving to save the shot. Repeat the exercise to both sides.

343: Box of Six



Six people are preferred to perform this exercise. They should line up in a rectangular pattern, with the first keeper to make saves and the server facing each other in the middle two positions. Players on the outside should each have a ball.

The coach will have a ball served to him from one of the players to his side. He will then roll it along the ground to the side in front of him at a fast pace after the keeper has taken two shuffles toward him and to the side. The keeper will dive and push the ball out with his lower hand to the person next to him to collect. The keeper gets back up, shuffles two steps forward and to the other side, and saves the next ball the coach serves that direction. He then pushes it out (again with his lower hand) to the person on the other side to shag. All six people move together at the same time, three moving forward and three backwards. The players moving forwards on the corners collect balls deflected by the keeper and return them straight across to the players on the corners moving backwards so they can feed them to the server.

Variants: 1. Next, have the server serve medium-high balls to the keeper, ranging anywhere from knee to chest height. The keeper should still push balls out with his bottom hand.

2. Finally, have the server serve high balls to the keeper's sides, ranging from chest to slightly above head height. Now, the keeper makes the saves with his top hand, and lets his body roll over the back of his shoulder as he lands.

132: Off the Line and Over the Top



One player should take a shot on goal from close range, forcing the keeper to come off his line to make the save. Immediately after this initial save, another player should chip a ball over the keeper for which he must turn, shuffle back, and (using his top arm) deflect the ball over the goal. Repeat 6-10 times from both sides.

168: Deflection Pressure Training



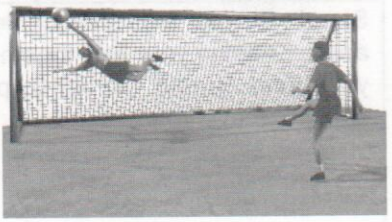
A coach (or another player) should throw a variety of differently served balls to the keeper's sides at a quick pace (some low, some medium, and some high). The keeper should get to the balls as quickly as possible and dive to deflect them away from the goal area.

Variants: 1. To deflect low balls, the keeper should use the hand that is closest to the ball (his "bottom" hand), curve his hand outwards, and deflect the ball out with his fingers.

2. To deflect medium balls, his closest hand to the ball (again his "lower" hand) should be curved outwards to deflect the ball out with his fingers. He should roll out of the dive (keeping his eyes on the ball the whole time) and recover quickly for the next save.

3. To deflect high balls, this time the keeper should use his hand that is the farthest from the ball (his "top" hand), curve it outwards, and deflect the ball out with his fingers. He should land in a push-up position, roll out of the dive, and get up quickly.

183: Upper-90 Saves



A player should throw or kick balls (whichever is more accurate) to both upper corners of the goal. The keeper should make the save by either punching, pushing, or tipping the ball over the crossbar with a power dive, landing on his stomach in a push-up position and rolling it off.

Boxing (Punching)

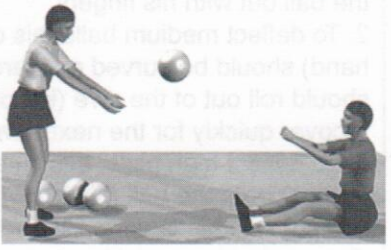
Not all shots can be caught and the keeper will have to decide what technique is needed to be able to deal with each shot on goal. The basic rule is to box or deflect if you cannot catch the ball. The type of shot (power, swerve, etc.) has a bearing on whether the keeper catches the ball or chooses to deflect or box it. An additional factor is the number of players in the goal area, as it can be difficult to catch a crossed ball or driven shot in a crowded box.

Balls should be boxed high, far, wide, and accurately. Make a tight fist with each hand and bring them together, keeping the wrists straight. The flat surface created by the two hands is the area where contact is made on the ball. Strike through the bottom half of the ball with a short but explosive motion that begins from the chest. Remember to box the ball forward when moving forward and box it backwards when moving backwards.

677: Basic Boxing

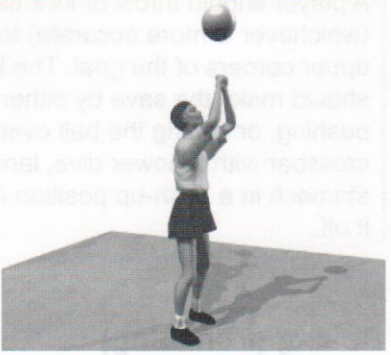
A server stands two yards in front of a keeper with a supply of balls nearby. The keeper boxes balls with two hands (as they are served) from a sitting position, focusing on boxing each ball high and accurately.

Variant: Repeat the exercise but alternate with left and right one-handed boxing. Concentrate on timing and technique.



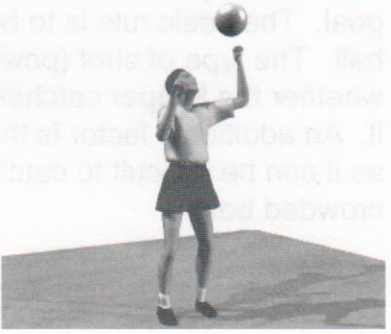
264: Two-Fisted Goalkeeper Juggling

Stand with your legs shoulder length apart. Keeping your fists together above your head, "juggle" the ball by punching it straight above you.



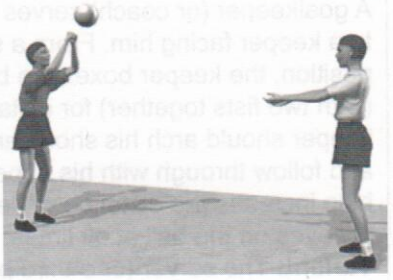
265: Alternate Hands Goalkeeper Juggling

Stand with your legs shoulder length apart. "Juggle" the ball above your head by punching it with the tops of your fists. You should alternate hands with every punch (left, right, left, right...).



701: Box or Catch

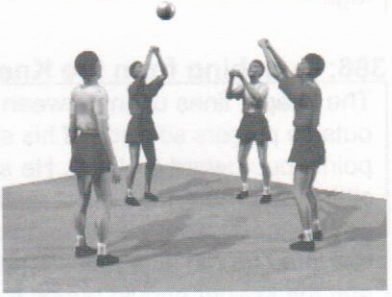
A coach (or another goalkeeper) tosses a ball to the keeper. Once the ball is in the air, the server says either "Box!" or "Catch!". The keeper must do the opposite. So, if the server says "Box!", the keeper must catch the ball. If the server says "Catch!", the keeper must box the ball back to the server.



369: Two-Handed Boxing Juggling Exercise

Four keepers keep the ball up in the air by boxing it (with two hands) straight up and to another keeper. The keeper about to punch it should call "Keeper!" so everyone knows whose ball it is.

Variant: Next, after a keeper boxes the ball up, he must collapse to the ground and get back up before he can punch it again. After every punch, a keeper should be collapsing to the ground.



387: Boxing over a Player from the Knees

A keeper should be positioned up on his knees on the ground (not resting back on his heels) behind a middle player. The coach should be facing the middle player, and serve a ball over the middle player's head to the keeper behind him. The keeper should box the ball (with two hands) back over the middle player and to the coach, catching himself in a push-up position if he needs to fall forward to get the desired power behind the punch. Repeat for 8-10 reps.



662: Boxing with Light Pressure



A goalkeeper (or coach) serves a high ball to a keeper facing him. From a standing position, the keeper boxes the ball away (with two fists together) for distance. The keeper should arch his shoulders back and follow through with his upper body to help increase the distance while keeping his eyes on the ball at all times.

Variant: The server (or a third player) follows the service to the standing keeper. The keeper should punch the ball with both fists at the highest point and remember to practice leaving the ground with both his right and left legs.

386: Punching from the Knees in Threes



The keeper lines up in between two outside players so each of his shoulders points out toward a player. He should be sitting up on his knees (not resting back on his heels). One player should serve a ball into him (so it travels above his head), and the keeper should punch it one-handed to the other player. He should punch it with the hand closest to the server and use his other hand to catch his fall if he needs to collapse to the ground. Now this server serves the ball back the other way, and the keeper must use his other hand to box it this time. Continue back and forth in this pattern.

Variants: 1. Repeat the activity from a standing position.

2. If you only have two players, or want to focus on fitness as well, have the server serve the ball to the keeper, then sprint around to the keeper's other side to save the punched ball. He should then serve it from that side and sprint back to the other side to save it again. Switch positions after the keeper has punched 10 balls with each hand.

241: Two-Handed Punching with a Forward Dive



Two goalkeepers line up facing each other. One should have a ball. That player throws the ball straight to the other person who dives forward and boxes it back. After the punch, the keeper should land in a push-up position. Repeat 8-10 times.

136: Punching-to-Numbers



Line four field players up in a rectangular pattern outside the penalty area. Number the players 1 through 4, starting with the player to the keeper's right. Player 1 serves a high ball to the keeper who punches it one-handed to player 3. He passes the ball to player 2, who serves another high ball back to the keeper. The keeper then punches this ball with his other hand to player 4, who passes it back to player 1 to continue the process.

Variant: Next, have the keeper punch with two hands. In this case, the rotation changes. When player 1 serves, the keeper punches the ball two-handed to player 4. When player 2 serves, he should punch it to player 3. The keeper should be able to get more power behind the ball to cover a greater distance when he punches with two hands.

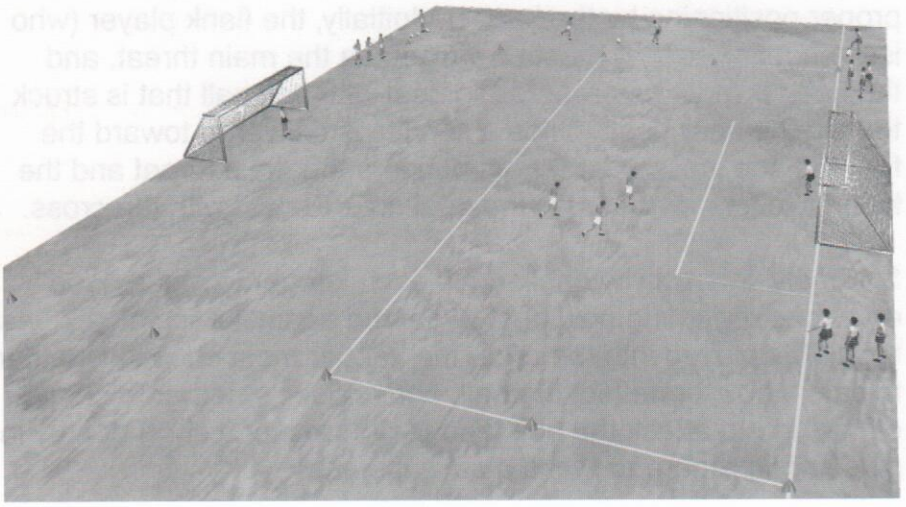
This next match-related activity will reinforce the importance of proper positioning by the keeper. Initially, the flank player (who is in shooting range) must be viewed as the main threat, and the keeper must be prepared to deal with any ball that is struck toward the near post. Once a service is delivered toward the far post, the incoming runners become the main threat and the keeper must move across the goal area to deal with the cross.

Secondly, this activity challenges each keeper to make good decisions regarding how best to defend against each attack. As the ball is played into the area, the keeper must choose whether to catch, box, or deflect the ball, and choose whether to come off the line to attack the ball (and try to prevent a shot) or stay in place and prepare to make a save instead.

713: Flank Services Attacking Activity

Using a third of a full field, set up two full-sized goals facing each other 36 yards apart (the distance of two penalty areas). Use cones to mark a channel on each flank (outside the penalty area). Position a flank player at each corner, three strikers at each edge of the penalty areas on the goal lines, and a goalkeeper in each goal. Place a supply of balls at each corner.

Starting on one wing, have a flank player (without a ball) initiate action by sprinting toward a second flank player opposite him. The second player serves a ball directly toward the posting player, and then follows his pass. The posting player settles the ball with a single touch, which the second player then serves into the goal area where three strikers attempt to finish with a first-touch volley or header on goal. The strikers should switch ends after each round. The activity continues with a service from the other wing, then reverses direction to attack the other goal with two rounds of services.
Variant: Add a defender to each end to create a 3v1 situation in each penalty area.



GOALKEEPING TACTICS

Tactical training teaches the keeper to anticipate and react to certain situations that happen during the course of a game and to make correct decisions. Goalkeepers are judged primarily on what they do in games—not on what they do in practice. Keepers who are technically solid in catching, distributing, diving, and deflecting still need to be able to make the correct decision regarding which technique to use in each circumstance.

There are too many goalkeepers today who have excellent technique but do not "show up" on game day! Part of the problem is a lack of game experience and decision-making in training. In a given situation, should I catch or box? Box or deflect? Stay in goal or come out? Act or react? Throw or punt? To develop this expertise in training, first expose the keeper to two options, then add a third, then a fourth, etc. Obviously, there is no substitute for game experience to teach keepers correct decision making!

This chapter analyzes the following tactical situations:

- Angle Play
- Breakaways
- Crossed Balls
- Corner Kicks
- Free Kicks
- Penalty Kicks

Angle Play

Angle play is the most important tactical element found in goalkeeping. While it is easy to understand the concept of angle play, the difficulty lies in maintaining awareness of angles throughout the game. It would be a conservative statement to say that over half of the goals scored are a result of poor angle play.

By definition, angle play is the process of narrowing the finishing angle available to the shooter and allowing very little space to beat the keeper. It is three-dimensional, covering:

- the near post (closest to the ball)
- the far post, and
- the angle over the top (to the crossbar)

When you train the keeper, you must deal with all three angles.

Near Post Shots

Shots struck to the near post are going to come quicker and harder because the near post is closer to the ball. Also, the keeper typically doesn't have any defenders covering him at the near post. Teach your keepers to cheat slightly to the near post and to be prepared to box driven balls away when necessary. No goals should be allowed at the near post!

Far Post Shots

Shots to the far post may not come as hard as those to the near post, but with the increase in distance, there is a chance that the shot can be bent into the far corner (such as when a right footer strikes the ball from the left side). Deal with this shot with an open hand and deflect the ball around the far post.

Shots Over the Top

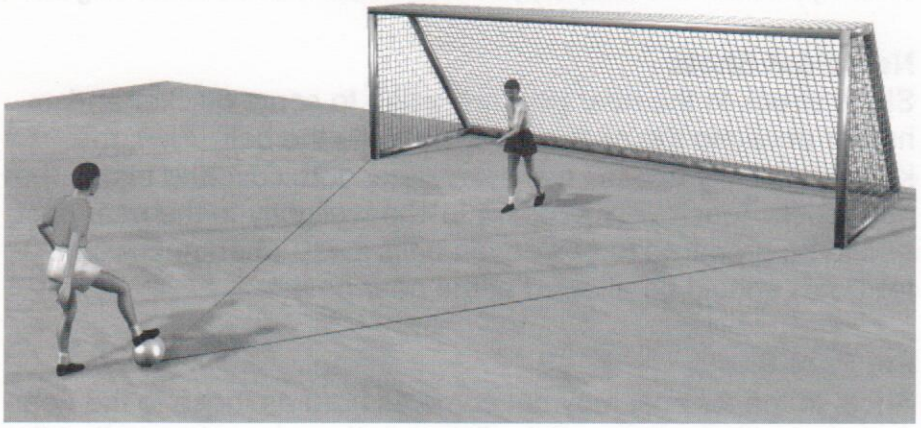
Shots over the top should be deflected with an open hand. The keeper does not need to box because he is close enough to the

crossbar to simply push the ball over the top. Always watch the ball when moving backwards and use the hand that is closest to the ball to deflect over the crossbar.

Training Angle Play

The goal can be an imposing area (24' wide x 8' high) and young keepers need to have a visual understanding of how to make the goal as small as possible for the striker.

To demonstrate this, attach a rope to both goal posts, and then stretch the middle of the rope out to a ball at the edge of the penalty area. Show the triangle that exists using the goal line between the posts and the rope. All angle play begins in the middle of the goal on the goal line. Starting at this point (middle of the goal), have the keeper bisect (split in half) the triangle and walk out from the goal along this imaginary line until he can reach both ropes (near post and far post) with a short dive.



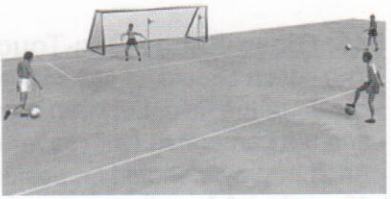
This is where the third angle becomes important. If the keeper comes out along the imaginary line it becomes easier to deal with shots to both the near and far posts. However, it now opens up the possibility of being scored on "over the top" (getting chipped over the keeper's head). You can illustrate this angle using another rope attached to the crossbar at one end and stretched out toward the ball at the other (keeping in mind that a well-chipped ball could "arc" over this angle and still enter the goal).

How far can the keeper go out? This will vary with the skill level of each keeper. He should play as far off his line as he can while still being able to get back to deny balls struck high. This means that every keeper will have a different range or position.

Finally, take the rope and move to another ball 5 yards to the left. He will realize how the angles change as the ball moves across the field.

To put this into your training, begin with an activity like the following exercise:

712: Shooting Angles Footwork in Goal



Place two flags 7' off the goal line, 10' apart, and centered in front of a full-sized goal. Each flag should be approximately 10' away from the nearest goal post, forming two small "goals" on an angle to each post and a third small goal between the two flags. Position three shooters with balls around the penalty area, approximately 14 yds away from each of the small goals.

One striker starts the activity by calling his own name and then shooting his ball in an attempt to score on the full-sized goal. One of the other strikers then calls out before taking the next shot, giving the keeper a minimal amount of time to prepare. The keeper must stay in front of each small goal, moving laterally on an arc in front of the posts and flags to get in position to make each save. Play continues in this way until the keeper has made 6 saves or the strikers have scored 6 goals.

Note that the movement from one small goal to the second and third goals in this activity will teach young keepers to move along an arc when facing shots from different angles. After the above exercise is understood, the keeper will be ready to practice this concept in a variety of functional exercises, as shown below:

133: Diving Saves for Shots from Multiple Shooters



Line several players up outside the penalty area, and have extra balls available to keep the exercise going. Have the players take low and medium-height shots on goal, one at a time. For each shot, require the keeper to cut off the shooter's angle by shuffling back and forth along an arc, make the save, and get ready for the next one. Make sure the shooters take their shots quickly after each save, so your keeper must work hard to recover and get in position to make the next save.

Variant: Have a player serve a ball into space across the penalty area for a teammate to strike on goal. The movement of the ball will force the keeper to adjust his angle. Be sure that the keeper's feet are set and he is leaning slightly forward, ready to react once the ball is struck.

348: Close-Range One-Touch Shots off a Low Cross



The coach should be lined up on the corner of the field, between a goal post and the corner flag (with several balls). Another player should be positioned about 12 yards out from the goal, across from the opposite goal post. The keeper starts in the middle of his goal, sprints to touch the post closest to the coach, and immediately gets back to the center of his goal to cut off the shooter's angle and save a ball that the coach has served to the shooter just as the keeper touched the front post. The coach's services should be firm and along the ground, and the shooter should take a one-touch shot on goal. The keeper must make the save and immediately get back up to sprint and touch the post again to start the next service.

It is important that the keeper be exposed to left- and right-footed shots from both sides. He will then be aware of the natural bend of each shot (some curling in toward goal, and others curling away). When dealing with near-post shots, the keeper should be off the line and close to the near post. This will prevent the keeper from knocking the ball into his own goal.

680: Finishing from Wide Angles

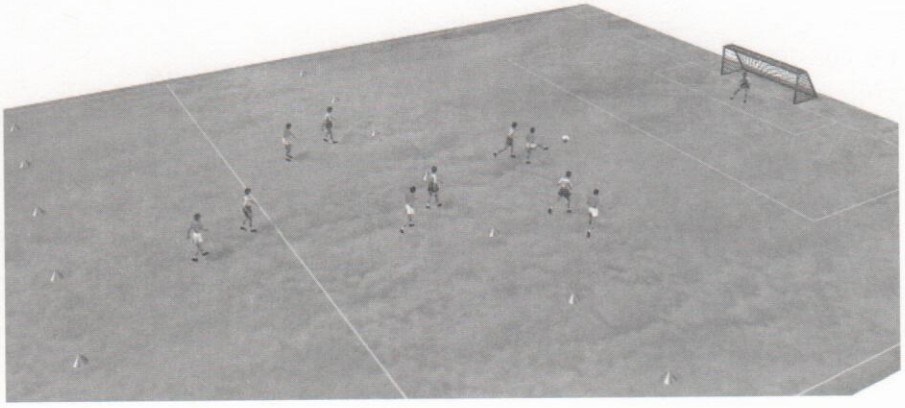
A server has a collection of balls 5 yards outside the center of the penalty area. He alternates passes to strikers who are lined up a few yards outside the corners of the penalty area. The strikers have one or two touches to shoot on goal, and should attempt to bend an inswinging ball into the far post (or finish at the high near post if the keeper is poorly positioned). The keeper must be quick to reach the correct angle at the near post and have his feet planted at the moment the ball is struck.



681: Full-Field Distance Finishing Game

Set up a 5v5 game in the middle third of a full-sized field, and have a keeper defending each goal. Place cones to mark an offside line 35 yards out from each goal line, and place extra balls in each goal.

To simulate an offside trap, defenders are not allowed to enter their defensive third of the field ahead of the ball. The attackers will look to beat the trap with through passes and dribbling. Once an attacker has penetrated the final third, allow the defenders to enter that zone to chase and put pressure on the attacker. The attacker must shoot from outside the penalty area to score, but is allowed to follow his shot into the penalty area to score on any deflected or dropped balls.



The objective of activities like these is to analyze the keeper's angle and to determine whether he is set on each shot as it develops during the run of play. If the keeper has a clear understanding of angle play and can keep it throughout the entire game, he will make it very difficult to be scored on. Good angle play will often eliminate the need to dive. While it is exciting to see keepers make spectacular saves, it also takes its toll on their bodies. A keeper who spends all his playing time diving around in the goal area will most likely have a short career!

1v1 Breakaways

Dealing with breakaways during a game can be a very exciting moment for the goalkeeper. Successfully defending a breakaway can have a positive influence on your teammates. Remember, when there is a 1v1 situation with only the keeper to beat, a goal is often on the minds of both the attackers and defenders.

Whenever we begin to analyze breakaways, we always imagine an attacker beating the last defender or receiving a through ball behind the last defender. However, a crossed ball to an unmarked attacker in front of the goal is also a breakaway situation. Therefore, when I refer to breakaways, I mean any situation during the game where there is a 1v1 (attacker vs. goalkeeper) with no second defender between the ball and the goal.

The question to ask is when a keeper should come out of the goal and when he should stay. Remember, a keeper must narrow the angle for the shooter without getting beat over the top. There are three key questions that have to be answered before coming out for the ball:

Can I get to the ball...

1. ...before the striker shoots on goal?
2. ...just as the striker shoots on goal?
3. ...or just after the striker shoots on goal?

If the keeper is reading the game well, he should be in a position to answer "yes" to one of the above questions. Only then should he leave his goal and make a long barrier to prevent the attacker space to strike on goal.

There are several clues to determine when the attacker is going to shoot on goal. Just before striking the ball, he often looks up at the goal, then drops his head to the ball and pushes it slightly ahead to prepare to strike on goal. It is during this momentary loss of possession that the keeper will possibly

be able to answer "yes" to one the three questions. There is no option number 4! If he cannot reach the ball in one of the three situations, he must stay on his feet, continue to narrow the angle, and keep looking for one of the three ball-winning opportunities.

How far the keeper can come out of goal depends on the position of the striker relative to the keeper. Can the striker put the ball over the keeper's head? Was the keeper playing too much on his line when the breakaway first developed?

Goalkeepers must be motivated to practice breakaways. If this means wearing long pants to protect your legs, then wear long pants! If this means practicing on a wet field, then practice on a wet field! I always spend time with a new keeper convincing him that the striker has a greater chance of injury than the keeper when dealing with breakaways.

When the keeper goes to ground he makes the longest barrier possible and keeps it for the longest period of time. Note that the upper leg is bent slightly to keep the body balanced and on the side. The ball is centered in the chest area with the upper hand in the air to protect the goal. This long barrier will be lost if the keeper slides feet first. The keeper must keep his body parallel to the goal line and not slide out perpendicular to the goal line. Similarly, if he rolls over on his stomach, he will not be able to use his hands to protect the goal or to reach the ball (rolling over also increases his risk of getting stepped on or otherwise injured).

When practicing breakaways to goal, the keeper must understand that his hands go to the near post. Most strikers will keep away from the legs and try to beat the keeper by going past his hands. Using the hands to cover the near post creates a more difficult scoring angle for the attacker and gives your defenders time to cover the far post area.

The following activities provide a good introduction to the correct technique for making 1v1 saves:

371: 1v1 Saves from the Knees



The keeper sits up on his knees (not resting back on his heels) with a ball on the ground in front of him. When the coach says, "Save!" (not "Go!"), the keeper should slide into the ball for the 1v1 save (from his knees). Be sure to have the keeper slide into it from both his left and right sides.

Variant: After the keeper has gotten used to the required technique to make this save, add another keeper to the exercise. They should be facing each other with the ball in the middle between them, and one saves, gets up, and then the other saves. They should be able to get into a rhythm.

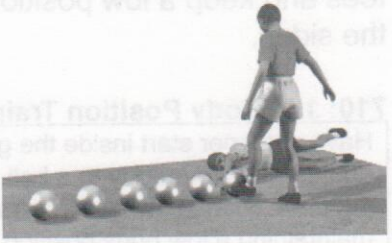
689: Introduction to Breakaway Saves



A keeper stands 10 yards from the coach in a ready position. The coach rolls the ball to one side for the keeper to slide into, pushing the ball back towards the coach with his chest. This will seem strange at first, but it will help teach the keeper to come with his chest first and not with his feet. Repeat to both sides.

Variant: Next, have the keeper slide with his hands to the ball. The keeper must make contact and hold on to the ball cleanly each time. If he loses possession, he must recover quickly to regain possession of the ball!

344: "Scooter"

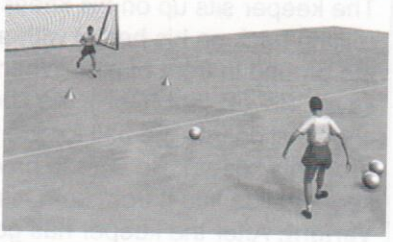


Set up a row of balls across the top of the goal area with about a foot of space between them. The keeper starts by laying on the ground with his hands extended out to reach the first ball. The coach should kick each ball, one after the other, as the keeper pushes himself along the ground with his legs and gets his hands on each ball as the coach hits them. At no time should the keeper get all the way up!

Variant: Repeat the activity with the balls moved further apart.

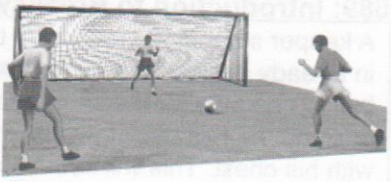
As indicated in the key factors discussed above, the keeper should look for a momentary loss of possession by the attacker when faced with a 1v1 situation. However, this loss of possession typically doesn't last long. If the keeper's first step is slow, he will be too late to reach the ball before it is struck. The following exercise emphasizes the importance of a quick first step:

711: Off the Line Breakaway Saves



Training in front of the goal, place two cones 5 yards from the keeper and 10 yards from a server. The server should have a supply of balls nearby, and initiates the action by passing a ball toward either cone. The keeper reacts to the service and sprints forward to reach the ball before it crosses the imaginary line between the cones. The keeper should slide hands-first to collect the ball, making a long barrier to cover as much of the cone gate as possible.

144: Goalkeeper Timing Against 1v1 Through Balls



A coach plays the ball into the penalty area. A player should run to the ball to try to score and the keeper should slide out at the ball with his hands to make the save before the player can get the shot off. Start the exercise with the attacking player working at half-speed, and gradually increase the speed of his attacks.

This next activity deals with situations where the striker has not lost possession of the ball. The keeper must now **stay on his feet** and narrow the angle. It is very important that he is steady and not moving when the ball is struck. He should be on his toes and keep a low position with his hands out slightly and to the sides.

710: 1v1 Body Position Training for Goalkeepers



Have a keeper start inside the goal area, and then move quickly to a ball placed 10 yards outside the goal area while maintaining a low body position. The keeper must touch the ball, then return to the starting position to repeat the exercise. **Variants:** 1. Next, have another player (or coach) step to place his foot on top of the ball while the keeper is moving forward. This will simulate a strike on goal and is the clue for the keeper to stop and be ready for the shot. Note that the keeper must be able to stop quickly with his body under control.

2. Finally, have the field player (or coach) strike the ball as the keeper is moving forward to narrow the shooting angle. If the keeper is moving when the ball is struck, he can easily be beaten low to either side. However, if he stops, plants his feet, and is balanced on his toes slightly leaning forward, he will be much more successful in stopping the shot.

130: "Go or Stay" 1v1 Decision-Making for Goalkeepers



The coach starts the exercise by tossing a ball so a shooter has to catch up with it, trap it, and go to goal for a shot or 1v1 with the keeper. Immediately after the shot, the coach should serve another ball to his other side for the next player to trap and shoot. Shooters should switch sides after each shot.

150: Alternating Diving and 1v1 Saves



A coach lines up several balls, and then passes one straight to his side for a player to take a shot on the keeper. Immediately after the shot, the coach plays the next ball to a second player on his other side, diagonally towards the goal. This player should catch up to the ball and go into the box for a 1v1 with the keeper. Shooters switch sides after each shot.

Once your keepers have become comfortable handling breakaways, address this topic within a variety of competitive activities. The following games are designed to create a large number of 1v1 breakaway situations that closely resemble the challenges found in the full-sided game:

690: Breakaways to Two Goals

Place two keepers in goals 40 yards apart with 4-5 players lined up to the right of each goal. The keepers distribute balls on the ground at the same time for the first attackers in each line, who then attack the opposite goal. The attackers can shoot at any time, or can attempt to dribble around the keeper before finishing. The keepers must make a decision to stay on their feet or go to ground, based upon the attacking play of each attacker.

Make sure the keepers vary the width and length of services to create different 1v1 situations, and remind them to go with hands toward the near post. After serving balls to the right for a specified period of time, move the attackers to the left side.



315: "Non-Stop 1v1s" Keeper Game



With close goals, put one keeper in each net. Two other keepers should play 1v1 in the middle of the field. The keeper with possession of the ball should have the ball at his feet and attempt to score just as a field player would. The keeper without the ball plays on the field as a goalkeeper to get the ball, sliding into his opponent's feet to gain control of the ball with a 1v1 save. As soon as he wrestles control of the ball, he must get up, put the ball down on the ground, and attempt to score. The other keeper now plays as a keeper and tries to regain possession of the ball. Keep score and switch the keepers on the field with the keepers in the goal after a certain score is reached.

682: Full-Field Breakaway Game

Set up a 5v5 game in the middle third of a full-sized field, and have a keeper defending each goal. Place cones to mark an offside line 35 yards out from each goal line, and place extra balls in each goal.

To simulate an offside trap, defenders are not allowed to enter their defensive third of the field ahead of the ball. The attackers will look to beat the trap with through passes and dribbling and create 1v1 breakaways to goal. Once an attacker has penetrated the final third, allow one defender to enter that zone to chase and put pressure on the breakaway attacker.



The best advice that I can give a young keeper in dealing with breakaways is to **stay on your feet as long as possible**! This way he is under control and forces the attacker to slow down and have to beat the keeper. The above drills are very demanding but ultimately put the keeper in all the situations needed to deal with breakaways. Finally, there are some outstanding keepers who dip their shoulders slightly to encourage the attacker to shoot early or to try to beat the keeper to the opposite side of the fake. This can be very effective and all keepers should be encouraged to try it.

Dealing with Flank Services

The ability to deal with crosses and corners probably is the standard for which keepers are judged. A major component in soccer is flank play that often results in services into the goal area. It is paramount for young keepers who aspire to reach the next level to deal successfully with crosses in the goal area.

When dealing with crosses, have the keeper try to visualize a box net (often used in international and professional matches) as if it had been moved in front of the goal. This space then defines a "restricted area". **No balls should be allowed to enter this area**, either through the top or from the sides. Think of this area as the "keeper's house"!

A simple way to address flank services and corners is to **remember W.A.D.A.**

W. **Wait** and don't rush out blindly.
A. **Assess** the situation. Where is the ball going? Near post area? Far post area?
D. **Decide** what you are going to do. Catch? Box?
A. **Act** and deal with the cross or corner. Come with power!

The following activities will improve the keeper's ability to deal with services from the flank and give the coach an opportunity to address the following coaching points with the keeper:

1. Reading the service (anticipate, but remember W.A.D.A.)
2. Movement to the ball
3. Taking the ball at the highest point (above the crossbar and in front of the near post, if possible, with elbows slightly bent)
4. Body position (shoulders open to the field)
5. Proper leg lift (bring up the knee nearest the opponent)
6. Securing the ball (turn the shoulders away from the closest attacker before bringing the ball down)
7. "Not in my house" mentality

The W.A.D.A. acronym also helps keepers to avoid the "forward steps of death" mistake. This refers to a keeper's desire to immediately move forward to the ball as soon as it is served instead of waiting a moment to see where the service is headed. Taking the "forward steps of death" almost always results in the ball going over the keeper's outstretched arms and landing in a dangerous position behind him where an attacker can finish on an open goal. Remember, it is always easier (and quicker) to move forward to catch or box a service in the air than it is to do so while backpedaling.

692: Near and Far Post High Ball Saves



A server is positioned near the goal line and the edge of the goal area with a supply of balls. A keeper lines up on the goal line near the center of the goal, with his body position open slightly to the field. The server serve balls from his hands above the crossbar, alternating randomly between near and far post services. The keeper must be prepared to move quickly to catch each service as high as possible, and should catch near post services just in front of the near post.

326: Backpedaling High Ball Saves



The coach should be lined up to the side of the goal (near the goal post). The keeper must start in the center of the goal, run forward and tap the near post, and then quickly backpedal to jump up and catch a ball thrown over and behind his head by the coach. After making the save, the keeper returns the ball to the coach, runs forward to touch the near post again, and repeats the sequence many times.

304: High Ball Competition



Position two field players (or coaches) near each corner flag facing the goal with several balls at their feet. Place all your keepers in the goal, and have the outside field players serve high crosses into the goal mouth. The three or so keepers in the net fight to catch the ball - it must be caught in the air before it hits the ground. Crosses should alternate sides each time, and go at a pretty fast pace. As soon as one save is made, the next cross should be on its way. Keep track of points for all the keepers, play to a pre-determined score, and make the losers do 20 push-ups.

Variant: Move the servers to the corners of the penalty area, so the services are angled more directly on goal.

153: Saving Crosses Against Near and Far Post Runners



A player on the wing crosses the ball to one of two players making runs - either to the attacker who has made a near post run (in which case the keeper must come out and intercept the ball first) or to the other attacker who has made a far post run (in which case the keeper must catch the lob, deflect it, or position himself for the shot by this player). Be sure to take many crosses from both sides.

Variant: Add a defender, and focus on communication and cover between the defender and the keeper.

511: Near Post Finishing with Services from the Corner



Place a server (with balls) at the edge of the penalty area, near the goal line. Set up a line of players 20 yards out from the goal line (at the near corner of the penalty area) and a second line of players outside the penalty area in the center of the field. The server initiates action by making a diagonal pass back from the goal line for the near player to run onto, prepare with a touch towards the goal, and either shoot directly or pass square for his teammate to finish. Repeat the exercise from both sides of the field.

Variants: 1. Continue as before, but only allow the near player one touch to either pass or shoot.

2. Have the server chip the ball to the near player so he can play the ball from the air with either a header or a volley.

Dealing with flank services can determine whether a keeper is going to be successful in goal, especially in the college game. You need to practice flank services with both defenders and attackers, as clear communication between the keeper and the marking back is important. A precise "Keeper!" or "Away!" call by the keeper is all that is needed. When this becomes more comfortable, add an additional striker and defender building up to a game related activity.

To summarize, the keeper's objectives in dealing with crosses are:

1. Control the penalty area.
2. Make the right decision. Catch? Box? Deflect?
3. Communicate with back defenders and teammates in the goal area.
4. Deny goal-scoring opportunities.

693: Flank Service Game

Set up two full-sized goals facing each other, 36 yards apart (the depth of two penalty areas). Using cones, mark off two wing channels 18 yards away from the goal posts (along the width of a penalty area). Put a keeper in each goal, a neutral player in each wing channel, and three field players for each team in the middle.

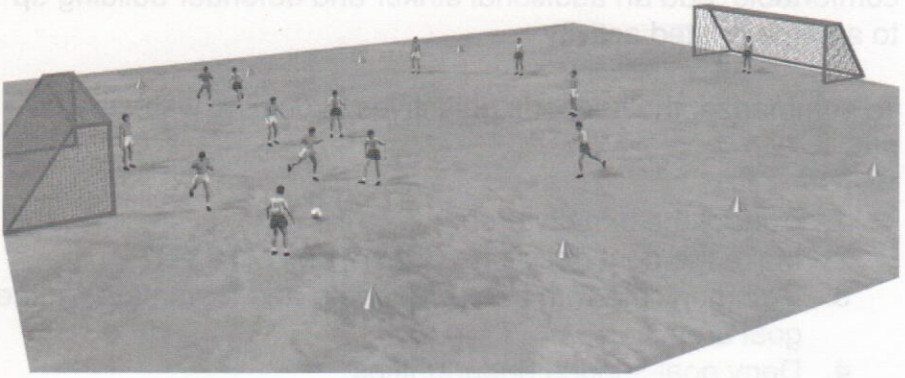
Play a small-sided game where all goals must be scored off a cross from either neutral wing player. The wing players have a maximum of two touches to deliver a service to the same team that played the ball to them.



205: Half Field Winger's Delight

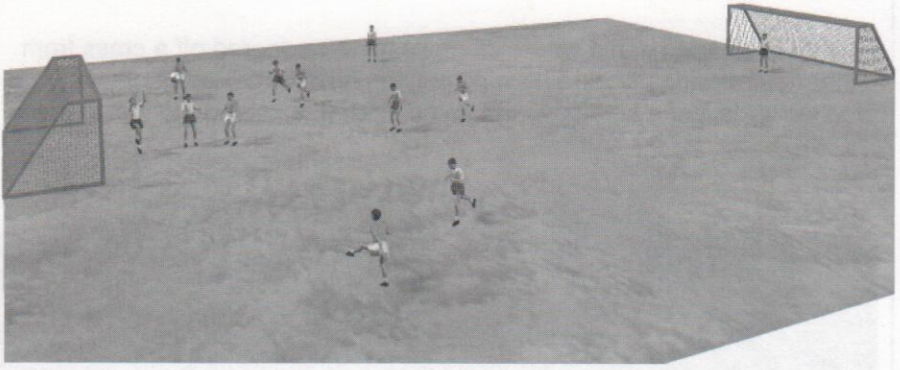
Set up half a field with two goals and a 10-yard-wide channel marked inside of each touchline using cones. Play 6v6, but don't allow any defending player to enter the wing channels (i.e., once an offensive players enters that zone, the reception and the cross are free).

Variant: Continue play as before, but now allow one defender at a time to enter the wing channel to increase pressure on the attacking wingers.



415: Half Field, 6v6 Crossing Scrimmage

Set up two full-sized goals in half a field. Divide your players into two teams of six, with a goalkeeper in goal. All goals must be scored by headers for which 5 points are awarded. Additional points can be scored (or lost) by the keepers: 1 point scored for each perfectly caught or boxed ball, and 1 point deducted for each dropped or mis-boxed ball.



Defending Restarts

Corner kicks, free kicks, and penalty kicks are all dangerous goal-scoring opportunities that must be addressed in a keeper's training. The keeper is in charge of his team's defensive organization, especially during corner kicks and free kicks. He must have a commanding presence and use clear and precise communication when organizing his players to effectively defend against restarts. He must also be confident and technically solid when dealing with flighted services into his goal area.

The keeper must also be prepared to deal with penalty kicks during the game or at the end of a game to break a tie. The following sections are designed to help the keeper develop his abilities when faced with corner kicks, free kicks, and penalty kick situations.

Corner Kicks

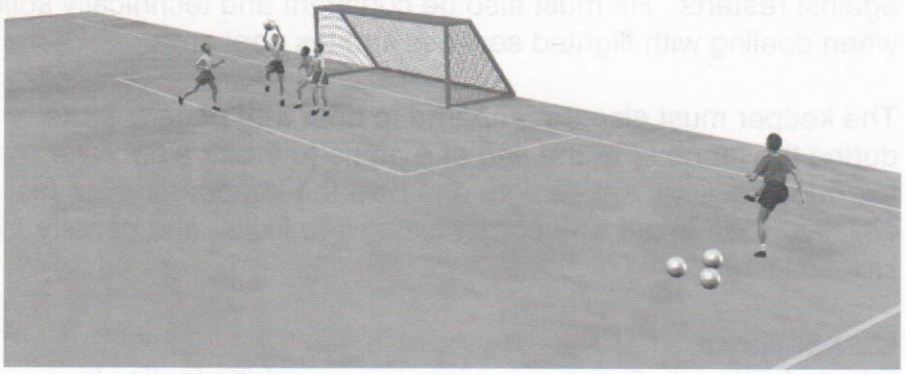
Corner kicks are always very dangerous and the tactics to defend this restart must be addressed. Once the coach has decided where players are to be placed, the keeper needs to be sure that this happens in games. Do you place a player on just the front post, or on both the back and front posts? Who deals with the short corner? Do defenders defend an area or mark an attacker? Every coach has his own tactical approach, and it should be based on the strengths and weaknesses of the defenders (and the attacking players). Regardless of the defensive setup, the goalkeeper **must** know everyone's position and role in the defensive alignment.

The keeper should stand near the middle of the goal, slightly closer to the far post. His shoulders are turned at a 45 degree angle so he can maximize his viewing angle of the field and be able to move quickly off his line. He must be prepared to box, deflect, or catch every ball that he is capable of reaching. Timing is important to be able to box or deflect the ball with power or to catch the crossed ball, and he must recognize whether the served ball will be an in-swinger (struck left footed from the right side) or an out-swinger (struck right footed from the right side).

The following exercises will give the keeper ample opportunities to practice defending corner kicks:

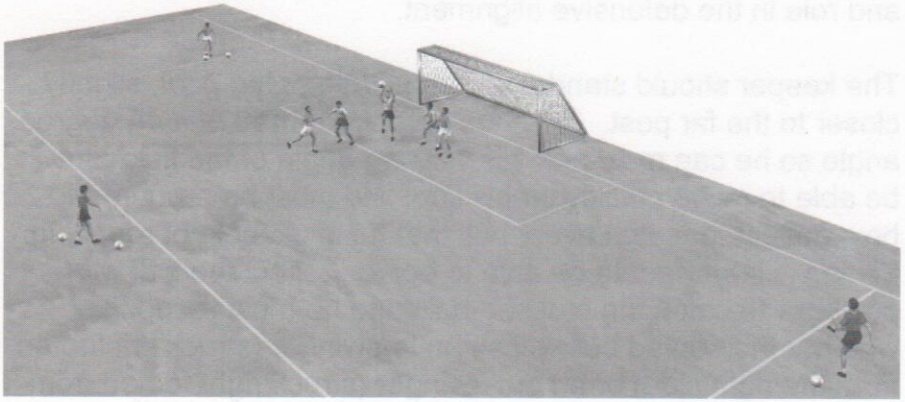
156: High Ball Saves in the Goal Under Pressure

A player on the wing should serve crosses into the goal mouth where a keeper is positioned with about 3 - 4 field players. The attacking players should try at about 50% intensity to put the ball in the net. The keeper should catch the balls or punch them out, as required. Be sure to take crosses from both sides.



157: Saves with Goal Area Traffic

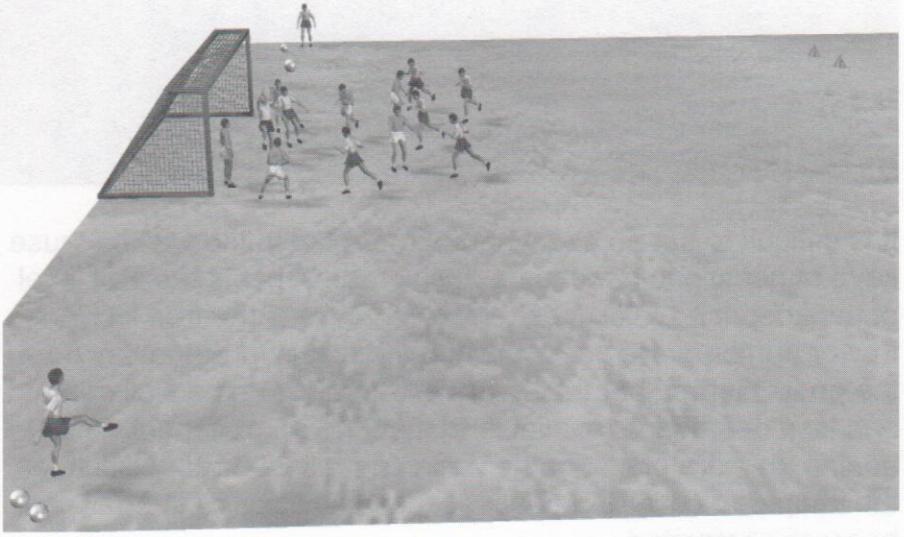
Position four attacking players and a goalkeeper in the goal area. Two players (one on each wing) alternate taking crosses into the goal area from each side. The keeper should catch or deflect, as required, and the attackers try 50% for the crosses. After a few crosses, a player lined up in the middle at the edge of the penalty area will yell "Shot!" and drive a shot to the goal. When this occurs, the pressure players stand still and in the way for the shot, only ducking or stepping over the ball if it comes straight to them. The keeper must adjust his position in order to see the ball and make the save in front of the players.



609: Offense vs. Defense Corner Kicks

Divide your players into two teams of six players, with each team wearing differently-colored vests, and have these players distribute themselves around the penalty area. One team is designated the defense, and the other team is the offense. Put a goalkeeper in goal, a server (and extra balls) at each corner flag, and two small counterattack goals along each wing near midfield.

The servers alternate striking corner kicks into the penalty area. The attacking team attempts to score on the large goal, while the defending team works to clear the ball and score on one of the counterattack goals. As soon as the ball goes out of play, the players must reorganize quickly so the servers can take the next corner kick. The team scoring the most goals in a designated period of time wins.

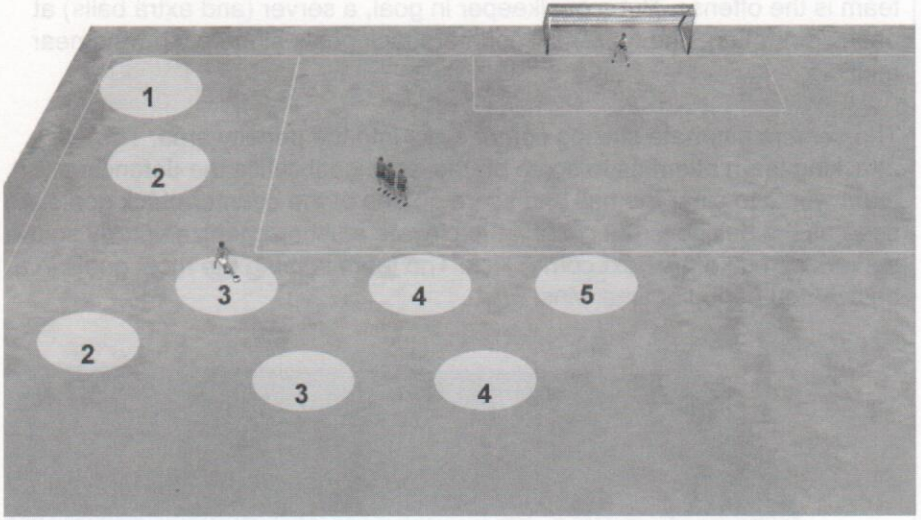


Free Kicks

Free kicks can also be dangerous goal-scoring opportunities and must be addressed in a keeper's training environment. Like corner kicks, many coaches prefer to have certain players in their defensive walls. Once the coach has decided which players are responsible for forming the wall, the keeper should help to set it up by telling his team the number of players needed.

As shown in the illustration below, the defensive wall will usually require 2-5 players, depending on the position of the ball. For

free kicks outside the penalty area near the corner of the field, a one- or two-man wall will suffice. As the shooter's angle improves, the number of players in the wall must increase.



It is difficult to set an exact number needed in the wall because several questions need to be answered. What is the skill level of the keeper? Quickness? How far away is the free kick? Fewer numbers are needed when the ball is further away from the goal. Remember that every extra player in the wall means one less defender is available to mark up an opponent. Also, adding an extra player in the wall can make it more difficult for the keeper to cover the goal because his vision of the ball can become obstructed.

The keeper has to be sure that the wall is properly aligned and that all opponents are marked up. He must also be prepared for the possibility that a quick shot will be taken by the opposition. Properly aligning a wall requires loud and precise communication. Instead of shouting out a number and having no-one react, use the names of the players he wants in the wall. Remember, players often "tune out" or otherwise have difficulty hearing general instructions during the heat of a game. Calling specific names will usually make it more likely that the keeper gets the attention of his teammates.

The keeper should position himself one to two steps off his line, and must be prepared for a hard shot to the open area or a bent or chipped ball over the wall. While the opponents may go through several decoy runs over and around the ball, only one player is capable of striking the ball at any time. He is the one with whom the keeper must be concerned. Only through hours of practice can a keeper develop this total concentration.

Finally, keepers must be aware of the space needed in front of them to be successful in dealing with balls served over the wall and into the goal area. To help ensure adequate space in front of the goal, the keeper must instruct all players on the field where to "hold their line".

The following activities will allow the keeper to practice communicating with his teammates to defend free kicks:

159: Positioning Defensive Walls



Place several balls around the edge of the penalty area (on both sides of the goal, and down the center), and have your players dispersed inside the penalty area. Call out one of the balls to indicate a free kick situation at that position. The keeper must now communicate the number of players needed in a wall. This is determined by how close the ball is to the goal and the shooter's angle to goal (more players are needed in the wall as the ability of the shooter to score directly off the kick improves). The keeper lines up one field player to cover the near post, and all others in the wall move to the inside of this player. The keeper should line up to cover the far post. This gives the keeper the ability to see the shot when it is taken (because his vision is not blocked by his own wall), and gives him the ability to come forward to save a ball that is chipped over the wall.
As soon as the team is positioned correctly, indicate a free kick at a different ball and have the keeper move the wall accordingly, adding players to (or removing them from) the wall as needed. See how quickly the team can set up the wall each time.
Variant: Repeat the activity, but now designate a player who will strike the free kicks on goal. Initially, have this player attempt to score with shots over the wall, then allow the shooter to decide where to strike the ball in later attempts.

456: Restarts Scrimmage

Play 9v9, 10v10, or 11v11 (including goalkeepers) full field, to large goals. The game proceeds as usual, but with one additional restriction -- if a player stops the ball with the sole of his foot (or with his knee, or any other designated part of his body), his team may set up to restart play with an indirect free kick from that point.

Variants: 1. Play the same game, but use a direct free kick for all restarts. 2. To increase the number of restarts, reduce the length of the field.



Penalty Kicks

Many games are effectively won or lost in regulation based on the result of a penalty kick awarded during the run-of-play. In addition, penalty kicks are the standard FIFA method for breaking ties in knock-out competitions. Games that are tied at the end of regulation frequently remain tied after overtime, making the penalty kick shootout a very important part of the game.

Because of the advantage given to the striker during a penalty kick, many coaches concede a goal and rarely place any responsibility on the keeper to make the save. Nothing could be worse than to ignore this important training of the keeper's game! Training the keeper to deal with penalty kicks is time consuming but must be done. Regular training to deal with this restart will impress upon the keeper just how important this type of save can be to the entire team. Most teams have already mentally given up a goal before the shot has been taken, and a save can lift up a team and change the entire game.

When training the keeper for penalty kicks, don't train the field players at the same time. The entire session must be designed to improve the keeper. He must have the opportunity to develop his technique and decision-making. Developing an ability to accurately "read the shot" and not just "pick a side by guessing" separates the great goalkeepers from the average ones.

One way a keeper can do this is to pay close attention to his opponent's playing ability and style throughout the game. When a penalty kick situation comes up, the keeper should be able to make a fairly accurate judgment as to whether the shooter is a "power" or "finesse" type of player.

Most "power" players strike every ball as hard as possible, and will generally shoot penalty kicks across their body with laces. This implies a shot to the keeper's right if the shooter is right-footed and vice versa.

Most "finesse" players are trickier and more likely to "place" balls accurately in the corners. These players will generally open their hips and shoot with the inside of their foot to the post closest to their shooting foot.

Of course, this method won't guarantee 100% accuracy, but it can give the keeper a little more confidence when facing a penalty kick and will often tip the scales in his favor, allowing him to make the save.

Regardless of where the shooter places the ball, the keeper should dive out at an angle to narrow the shooter's angle. In making the save, focus on boxing or deflecting the ball to clear it away from the danger zone in front of the goal. Unless the shot has been taken weakly, there is little reason to try to hold on to the ball!

Use the following activities to give your keeper confidence when faced with a penalty kick situation:

181: Training to Save Penalty Kicks



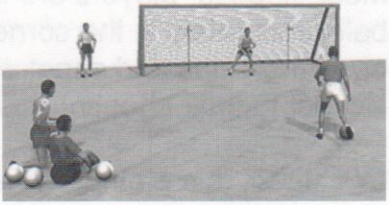
Have a player take several penalty kicks, lining up from different angles to take each shot and using a mixture of power and placement techniques. Illustrate to your keeper that depending on which way the shooter approaches the ball and which way his foot is turned, it is easier to predict where the shot is going.

Encourage your keeper to experiment with different strategies for saving penalty kicks (including lining up off-center to favor his better diving side, moving along the line, reacting to the shot as it is taken, or "guessing" a side before the shot is taken).

Variants: 1. Have the shooter take five shots to each side, and then hit five to either side. Require the keeper to wait to move until each shot has been struck, working to "read the shot" instead of guessing in advance.

2. Have the shooter take five shots with power, attempting to score straight down the center of the goal.

694: Penalty Kick Game



Place a flag 2 yards inside each goal post and 2 feet away from the goal line (just inside the goal). Play a game of field players versus goalkeepers, where field players earn one point for every successful penalty kick taken. The keepers earn one point for each missed shot or any save made between the flags, and two points for every save made on shots outside either flag. Play to 10 points, and you will see a spirited game where the keepers have a legitimate chance to win!

Putting the Pieces Together

Psychological Fitness

Training for all soccer players is commonly broken down into four parts: Physical Fitness, Technique, Tactics, and Psychology. Most coaches focus more on the first three and spend little or no time on the psychological aspect of the game. What is psychological fitness and why is it important in training goalkeepers?

Goalkeepers and field players have similar psychological needs, but the unique nature of the position of goalkeeper demands a closer look at his psychological fitness. Among the main ingredients of this element of goalkeeper training are **confidence**, **motivation**, **courage**, **attitude**, **concentration**, and **leadership**.

Keepers develop **confidence** in training when it is designed to train the keeper and not to focus entirely on the striker. A keeper should always be mentally and physically prepared before entering the goal, and shooting drills should have some opposition and/or pressure of time. If not, the result will be goals but little confidence on the part of the goalkeeper. Even the best keepers need to be able to work on their technique with a minimal amount of pressure.

As his confidence grows, the keeper will become more **motivated** to go to goal and train. He will have adequate time to be put under the pressure of a game situation. Coaches should progress carefully with each goalkeeper. Keepers need to be motivated, as playing fields are often hard and game injuries make it most uncomfortable to train and improve weaker aspects of their play. Injuries are part of the game and goalkeepers have to be motivated to come to practice and train hard, with or without minor injuries.

There is no doubt that coming out to deal with a breakaway and attacking air balls in a crowded goal mouth demands **courage** on the part of the keeper. He must learn the proper technique to minimize the chance of injury. Goalkeepers have to

overcome this "fear of injury" if they are going to be successful in goal. Similarly, keepers must have the mental courage to put themselves on the line, day in and out, knowing that they will be severely judged if unsuccessful. Remember--courage has been defined as being afraid to do something, but still doing it!

I remember seeing a training film with Peter Shilton, former England National Team goalkeeper, in goal. The narrator pointed out that in the total time that it took to make the film, Shilton only gave up a handful of goals. Even in this non-competitive atmosphere (filming a technical training film), he refused to allow strikers to score on him. When a young keeper develops a similar **attitude**, we have the making of a potentially outstanding goalkeeper. This professional attitude drives keepers to never be satisfied with goals scored on their goal (practice or games) and is instrumental in their development.

In a 90 minute game, the goalkeeper will actually be under pressure for only a few minutes and it is possible that a keeper will watch his team create one shooting opportunity after another without scoring. He has to stay in the game and **concentrate**, even if the game is played in the opposite half of the field. The opponents need only one opportunity to put the ball in the back of the net!

Goalkeepers can often get out of hand with their verbal abuse directed towards teammates but there is no doubt the keeper is in a position to see the entire field and direct his team. The days of a pure line keeper with a minimal amount of soccer skill are gone. Keepers must provide cover for their defense, and their **leadership** and direction is critical if the team is to succeed.

The next time you prepare your training sessions, try to incorporate the mental or psychological aspect of the game. You won't regret it!

Team Training with the Keeper

Karl-Heinz Heddergott, former USSF National Coach, was a proponent of activities that involve the whole team but concentrate mainly on the keeper. This is one way to have the entire team training together.

Remember that you are training the **keeper** and, as a coach, you can easily lose your focus if you spend too much time dealing with the field players. The advantage of involving the entire team in training is obvious and will allow you to economize your training methodology. I am very much in favor of incorporating the keeper into team practices as long as field players have an opponent and/or time restraints. There is always potential damage if your keeper becomes a target and spends the practice picking balls out of the net.

The following activities illustrate a number of ways to blend keepers and field players into your training, and you can easily expand this list with your own favorite activities.

300: Monkey in the Middle



Have your goalkeeper play "monkey in the middle" with four to five field players in a small circle around him. The outside players try to make 10 consecutive passes as the keeper in the middle tries to pick the ball off their feet or intercept passes.
Variant: Expand the size of the circle, and have the field players take low or medium-height shots at (or near) the keeper. He must deflect or attempt to save each shot. The circle should stay intact, moving all over the field.

151: Shots from Trio Passing



Three players pass the ball to each other in front of the goal (just inside the penalty area). The keeper should side step back and forth to follow the path of the ball. Unannounced, one player will suddenly take a shot and the keeper must be in position to stop it. After he makes the save, he should bowl the ball back out to one of the players to continue passing to the other players.

Variant: Have the field players line up at midfield in three lines, with about 10 yards between each line. The keeper punts a ball to the middle player, which he must control out of the air. The middle player passes to a teammate on the outside and then follows his pass to initiate a three-man weave. The three players move quickly toward goal in this way, using a maximum of four passes before finishing with a shot from outside the penalty area. The supporting attackers can follow the shot into the penalty area to put away any deflections or dropped balls.

134: The Triangle Game



The keeper starts with the ball and punt it as far as possible to space. Two teams fight for possession and dribble back towards the keeper to take a shot and attempt to score. A triangular "cone goal" forms three possible goals (one on each side). Players may shoot for any goal and it is the keeper's responsibility to defend all three. If a shot goes through the goal and out the other side, a player on the other side may immediately shoot it back through for another goal.

364: Goalkeeper and Field Player Possession Training in a Grid



Three field players and a goalkeeper jog around inside a grid with one ball. Players should pass the ball around while moving, and every so often serve it into the keeper. If the ball is in the air, the keeper should save it with his hands and distribute it back to a different player. If a player serves the ball to the keeper's feet, he should say, "Feet!", and the keeper should collect it with his feet and pass it to another player.

Variants: 1. Next, set up three red and three white players in the grid, and give each team a ball. Continue with the exercise, but this time, the keeper serves the ball back to the team who served it to him.
2. Finally, advance to a game of 3v3+1, where the keeper is the +1 and makes the team he is currently playing on numbers up. This is a simple game of possession (no goals to score on). If the ball is played to the keeper's feet, he must play it with his feet. If the ball is served in the air to his hands, he may use his hands to catch and distribute.

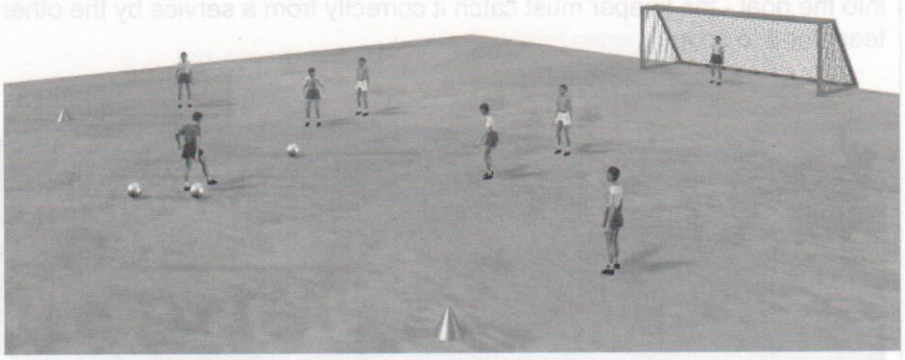
142: Developmental Shooting

Make two lines of players just outside the penalty area, with the players in one line all having their own ball. The first player in this line should dribble to the center and just inside the penalty area, where he stops the ball, steps over it (leaves it), and continues his run. The first player in the other line starts his run at the same time the dribbler does, and runs onto the ball that he leaves to take a one-touch shot directly to the keeper in the goal. It is very important for the field players to time their runs correctly! Field players switch lines so each person gets to dribble and shoot.
Variants: 1. After everyone has taken a shot directly to the keeper, next have them shoot to their right.
2. Next, have them shoot to their left.
3. Now have them shoot to either direction so the keeper must make the reaction save.
4. Finally, the coach should call a direction just as the shooter approaches the ball, requiring him to adjust his shot at the last minute.



509: 4v2 Breakaways to Goal

Position a server (with balls) approximately 40 yards out from the goal, and put a keeper in goal. Set up four attackers and two defenders 30 yards out from the goal, facing the server. The server initiates action by passing a ball to one of the four attackers. The attackers should use overlapping runs and wall passes to create a breakaway that results in a quick shot on goal. The offside rule is in effect.

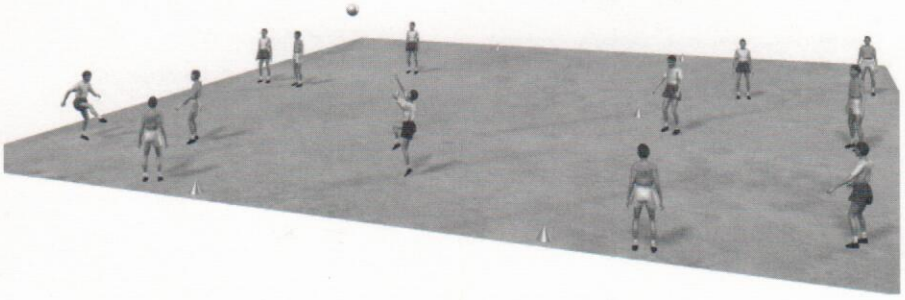


451: Keepaway and Chip

Two teams have six players each. Three players from each team are in each of two 30 x 30 yard grids. A goalkeeper stands in a 10-yard area between the grids. A coach with a supply of balls is located outside the middle area.

The coach passes to either grid. The two teams in that grid play 3v3, trying to accumulate consecutive passes before chipping the ball to a teammate in the other grid, where the keepaway continues. Five consecutive passes earns 1 point. A chip to the other grid that is controlled by a teammate counts as 2 points. If the goalkeeper catches a chip, a point is deducted from the team whose player attempted the chip. As soon as a ball goes out of the grid, the coach passes another ball to either grid so that play resumes quickly.

Variants: 1. Add players and increase the size of the area.
2. Impose a one, two, or three touch restriction.
3. Have one goalkeeper for each team play in the middle zone.



394: "Chip to the Opposite Keeper" Game

Position one keeper in a big goal, and the other in the center circle "D". Play a game of 4v4 (or 5v5 or more depending on your numbers). To score, field players must chip the ball into the other keeper's hands, so the keepers are on the opposite team than they would normally be. Therefore, it is in the interest of the defenders to head balls away from the keeper that are chipped into the him from the other team. No goals are scored by shooting into the goal - the keeper must catch it correctly from a service by the other team for it to count.



Dealing with Back Passes

Changes in the Laws of the Game have forced the goalkeeper to have more than just average technical skills (see the Laws section, later in this book). The back pass rule eliminates the keeper from handling a ball passed to him by his teammates. Thus, keepers will often be in situations where they have to clear balls out of the goal area with their feet.

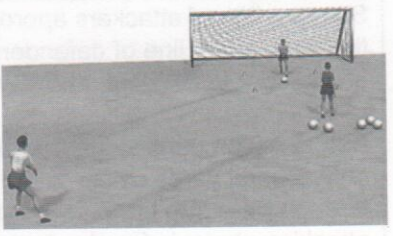
When faced with a back pass situation, the keeper should be mindful of the following points:

- Give clear visual and vocal commands requesting the pass
- Stay in goal until the pass is made, then move to meet the ball
- Decide where you want to distribute the ball before receiving the pass
- When distributing the ball with the first touch, change the angle away from the goal

I previously mentioned that playing in the field during practice is "more economical". While it can benefit goal kicks, it also make keepers more comfortable in receiving a back pass and definitely gives teammates more confidence in passing back to a keeper.

706: Fundamental Passback Practice

Place four cones in a square, five yards apart, in front of the goal. Have a server pass a ball back to the keeper, who starts the activity inside the grid. The keeper moves to the ball, takes a touch to move out of the grid with the ball (to one side), and then clears the ball back to the server (or to another target player further downfield). Repeat the activity, working to both sides.



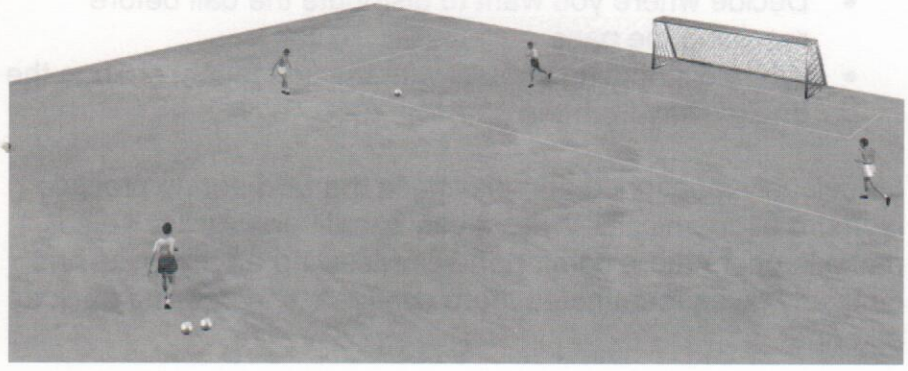
700: Defender/Keeper Passback Combinations

Position a player at midfield with a supply of balls, two wide defenders at the corners of the penalty area, and a keeper in goal. The midfield player starts the activity by serving a ball in the air to either defender, who must then pass the ball back to the keeper. The keeper should request the back pass each time.

Make sure the keeper is aware of all options available to him. He can clear the passback to a target player at midfield by playing it one-touch with his nearest foot, or he can open his hips to play the ball across the field to the opposite wing back who will then clear the ball out to the midfield target player. Limit the outside defenders to two touches initially, and progress to a one-touch restriction on the defenders. Be sure to work the activity to both sides.

Variants: 1. Add a striker to the activity, who must start outside the penalty area but can then press to win the ball from the keeper or either defender once the service has been given from midfield. If the striker wins the ball, he should attempt to score.

2. Add a second striker to the activity.



467: Sweeper/Keeper Combinations to Defend Breakaways

Set up a line of attackers approximately 30 yards out from the center of the goal, and a line of defenders appx. 25 yards out from the goal. Place a goalkeeper in the goal, and have a server (with balls) near the attackers.

Before action begins, the first defender steps out in front of the first attacker, only several yards closer to the goal. The server initiates action with a through pass into breakaway space for the first defender to run onto. The attacking player is free to challenge as soon as the ball leaves the server's foot. The defending player running onto the ball either turns with the ball to dribble back up the field, or plays it on the ground to the goalkeeper (just wide of the near post) for a quick clearance or wide outlet pass back to the defender. If the attacking player is able to win the ball, he should immediately attack the goal and finish with a shot.



708: End Zone Passback Game

Set up a 50x70 yard field with a full-sized goal at each end, and use cones to divide the field into thirds (defensive, midfield, and attacking zones). Divide your players into two teams, and position one goalkeeper, three defenders, two midfielders, and three forwards for each team in their corresponding zones.

Play a regular game of soccer with the following restrictions. Players must remain in their zones, and midfielders can only make passes to each other or to players in the zone that passed the ball to them. This will encourage defenders to play long services directly to the forwards in the attacking third, who can then combine with each other or the midfielders to create goal-scoring chances.

Variant: Allow one player from each zone to make a run off the ball into the next zone to support the attack after the ball has been played to the forwards.



707: Offense vs. Defense Passback Game

Set up a field measuring 80x70 yards with a full-sized goal at one end and small flag goals placed near each touchline, 10-20 yards beyond midfield. Place seven field players plus a keeper on the defensive team, and six field players on the attacking team.

The phase of play begins with a passback to the keeper. The keeper must demand the pass, and point left or right to indicate where the ball should be played. If the ball is received from the right, the keeper should look to release the ball to the left side of the field (and vice versa). The keeper should also look to play the ball long to a target player near midfield whenever possible.

The defensive team attempts to score at one of the two flag goals at midfield. The attacking team presses and attempts to win the ball back and then score on the large goal. Allow the game to go for several minutes before interrupting play to make any coaching points.



Counterattacking From Corner Kicks

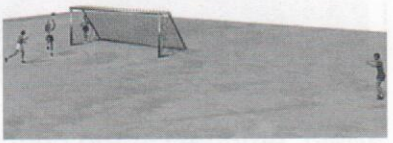
The goalkeeper can often turn defensive corner kicks into quick counterattacks that lead to goal-scoring opportunities. By transitioning quickly from defense to offense, you can use a series of quick passes and numerical superiority in the attacking half of the field to create dangerous chances on goal, and possibly swing momentum of the entire match in your favor.

The session focuses on both technical and tactical considerations. We want to train the keeper in all techniques needed to defend crosses from the corner while also teaching sound decision-making that allows the team to counter quickly. The primary coaching points for the goalkeeper include:

- Communicate your intentions by calling out "Keeper!" or "Away!"
- Bring the leg closest to the opponent up in the air.
- Time your approach to the ball so that you reach it at your highest point.
- Catch the ball cleanly, bending your elbows slightly to absorb shock.

Let's begin with the following activity:

614: Handling Crosses Under Pressure



Position a server with a stack of balls along the goal line, place a keeper in goal (lined up between the center of the goal and the far post), and have an attacker start near the top of the goal area.
The server alternates throwing balls toward the near and far post, and the attacker and goalkeeper work to win each ball. Award one point for each clean save made by the keeper, and 5 points for each goal scored by the attacker.

Use this activity to emphasize the coaching points listed above, making technical corrections as needed throughout the exercise. Note that near post services will require additional

focus on footwork, as these services will force your keepers to move quickly to reach the ball before it drops to the ground and before it crosses the plane of the near post.

As your goalkeeper becomes comfortable with the demands of the exercise, increase the difficulty by progressing to the next activity:

615: Save and Distribute from a Cross

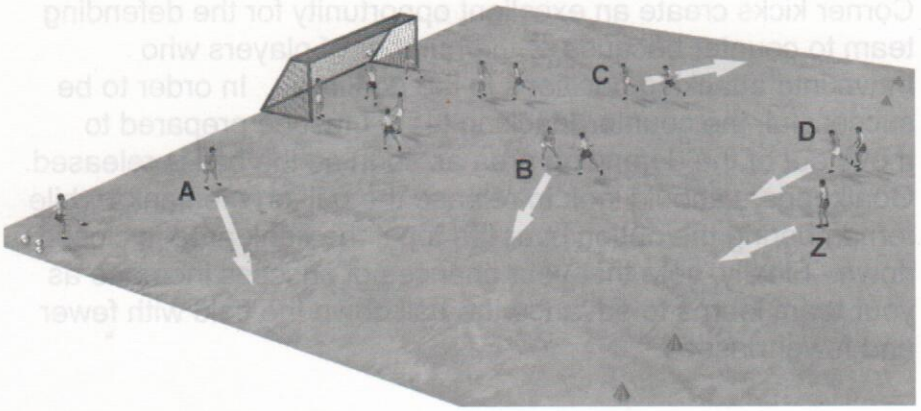
Position a server with a stack of balls along the goal line, and place a keeper in goal (lined up between the center of the goal and the far post). Have an attacker start near the top of the goal area, a defender marking the attacker, and a target player near the center circle.

The server alternates striking balls toward the near and far post, and the attacker, defender, and goalkeeper work to win each ball. As soon as your keeper pulls down a cross, he should attempt to immediately distribute the ball (with a throw) to the feet of the target player. The other defender should immediately run out of the penalty area, working to receive a pass from the target player as he provides support near the touchline. Continue the exercise with a new ball crossed by the server; when all balls have been played, repeat the exercise from the other side of the field.



Again, emphasize the coaching points listed above, and be sure to focus on your goalkeeper's distribution to the target player. Your keeper should deliver the ball with a quick release before the opponent can transition to a defensive posture.

Once these technical basics have been covered, place your players in a 7v9 "Phase of Play" situation to help them apply the concepts under more realistic conditions, as shown in the following illustration:



In this activity, play begins with a corner kick by the attacking team. Take your players through the following scenarios to demonstrate their counterattacking options as soon as the keeper has controlled the ball.

- **Option 1:** As soon as the ball is served into the penalty area, defender A releases wide to the flank area and looks for a ball to be delivered by the goalkeeper. Support should come from midfielder B and striker D. This creates a numerical advantage to attack the small counterattack goal on the near flank.
- **Option 2:** If there is no numerical advantage on the right flank, defender A should look to change the point of attack by serving the ball to midfielder C, who has previously moved into open space on the left wing.
- **Option 3:** If opposing defender Z moves into the flank area to cover defender A, striker D now has a 1v1 situation at the center circle area. The goalkeeper must recognize this, and serve the ball over the top for striker D to receive and counter to goal.

As Option 3 illustrates, your goalkeeper must look for both options (distributing wide or deep) every time he controls the ball, and make a good decision quickly. In addition, he must communicate clearly and loudly to his teammates that they need to rush out of the penalty area as soon as he releases the ball into play.

Corner kicks create an excellent opportunity for the defending team to counter because of the number of players who move into attacking positions in the goal area. In order to be successful, the counterattacking team must be prepared to move out of the defending area as soon as the ball is released. Goalkeepers should look to release the ball on the flanks while remembering the option over the top if the flank area is closed down. Finally, note that your chances of success increase as your team learns to advance the ball down the field with fewer and fewer passes.

Communication and Reading the Game

Goalkeepers are the only players on the field who have the game played in front of them 99% to 100% of the 90 minute contest. This may be one reason why more and more keepers are selected captains. As long as the keeper connects with his back line and doesn't spend the game on his goal line, he has the opportunity both to help defend the goal and attack the opponent's goal.

Field players are often turned because of a change in the point of attack and also their requirement to support teammates. Communication between the keeper and his back line is vital because players can lose their man or become confused when numbers are down in the defensive third of the field. This is where the keeper can keep his defenders in the game and help them mark up opponents or critical areas in and near the penalty box.

With this in mind, keepers need to read the game and then communicate with teammates, helping both to defend the goal as well as attack the opponents. To "read the game" is to anticipate the intentions of the opposing team and to regain possession of the ball.

Goalkeepers need to be able to recognize the opponent's attacking scheme or tactics. This can happen during the game and also in a scouting report. Some teams attack relentlessly from the flank, while others prefer to go over the top and attack down the middle. Dealing with crosses and breakaways are the obvious technical/tactical skills needed. To read a game effectively, the keeper must be in tune with his back defenders and function as an extension.

A functional training progression with field players in practice will give the keeper added opportunity to develop this skill. To begin, consider the following activity:

072: 1v1 to Goal with a Service from the Post



Line a group of players up on one goal post. Line another group of players at a cone placed about 25-30 yards away, in the center of the field and facing the goal. The first player on the post starts with the ball and serves it out to the first player at the edge of the penalty area. This player should control the ball, compete against the onrushing defender 1v1, and attempt to score on the goal. When the ball goes out of play or a goal is scored, the next player on the post serves the ball out to the next attacker. Players switch lines with each rotation.

Variants: 1. Allow the defender to become the attacker (and vice versa) if possession changes.

2. Add a small counterattacking goal for the defender to attack when he wins possession away from the attacker instead of turning and shooting on the large goal.

In this drill it is important that the keeper control the area between him and the sweeper (the last defender) and be able to deny penetration into this space. As the last defender moves to close down the space ahead of the striker, the keeper should move off his line to control the space behind the defender. If the striker moves to the right or left, the keeper can direct the positioning of the defender to limit the attacker's finishing angle. This would be like having a one-man wall covering the near post. If the striker exploits the space behind the defender, the keeper must read the breakaway and react accordingly. Smart positioning of the keeper will make his life easier and eliminate shots on goal.

699: 2v1 to Goal



Place a line of defenders on one goal post and two lines of attackers about 35 yards out from the goal. The first player on the pole starts the game with a flighted service to the first player in either attacking line. If the defender gains possession of the ball, he should either dribble out of the defensive end (past the lines of attackers) or play a passback to the keeper, who can clear the ball out to midfield.

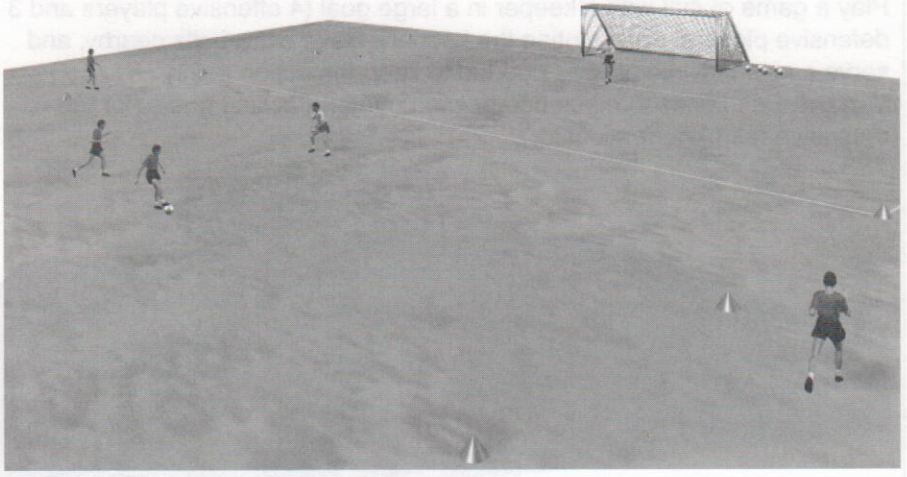
With this second activity, the keeper must anticipate a pass to the secondary striker (another breakaway situation) or runs from the secondary striker to create space for the primary striker. Remember that the player with the ball (in scoring range or angle) is the primary danger and the supporting player is the secondary danger. This is important to understand so the keeper is not scored on because he leaves the goal open anticipating a pass to the supporting player.

709: 2v1 to Goal with Flank Services

Using cones, mark off two wing channels in half a field along the width of the penalty area. Put a keeper in goal, two attackers and one defender in the central zone, and a flank player in each wing channel.

Have the defender initiate play with a pass to one of the attackers, and then play 2v1+2 to goal. The wing players have a maximum of two touches to deliver the ball back to the attackers, and are confined to their channels. The keeper must communicate with the defender to coordinate their defensive actions, and should call "Keeper!" or "Away!" whenever a cross is played into the goal area.

Variants: 1. Add a second defender, and play 2v2+2 to goal.
2. Add two small counterattack goals at midfield for the defenders to attack when they win possession of the ball.



The third activity in this progression introduces services from the flanks. Since the attackers now have the option to attack from the wings, the keeper must communicate with his defender to clear each cross or to leave it for the keeper to handle.

Finally, you can remove the wing channel restrictions and allow for more free-flowing play that will require the keeper to coordinate actions with multiple defensive teammates.

104: 3v2 to Goal with Counterattack Goals

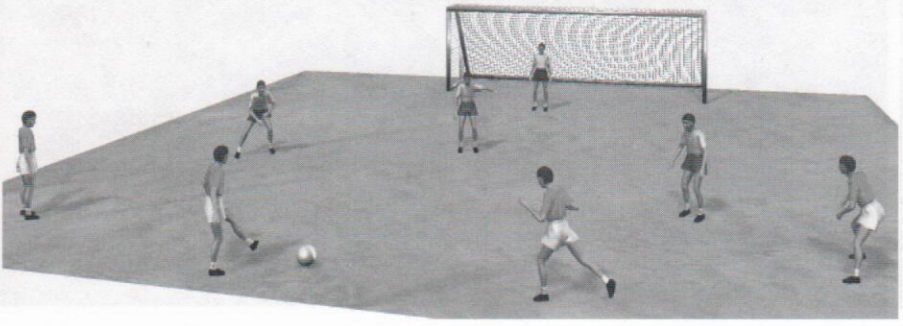
Play a game of 3v2 to a large goal (with a keeper in the net) and place two counterattack goals at midfield for the defensive players to score on. Whenever the defense gets the ball, they must try to score on one of the two cone goals while the three attacking players turn and chase to keep them from doing so.



140: 4v3 to Goal

Play a game of 4v3 with a keeper in a large goal (4 offensive players and 3 defensive players, not counting the keeper). Have extra balls nearby, and serve a new ball into play as needed to keep the action going.

Variant: Use cones to make one or two counterattacking goals (for the defensive team) near midfield.



Supplemental Materials

Self Assessment

When Enzo Bearzot, the national team coach of Italy, was asked prior to the 1982 World Cup why he was playing Dino Zoff in goal at the age of 40, he answered by saying that Dino had played long enough to have made every mistake possible and that he had told his coach he would never make the same mistake twice. I highly recommend that keepers of all ages begin to develop an ability to analyze their own game performances by keeping a game manual.

The purpose of this game review manual is to help better understand the positive and negative aspects of each game. The following outline is designed to help each keeper perform a self-analysis after each game. Ideally, consistent and thorough self-analysis will help the keeper avoid making the same mistakes twice!

Game Analysis Form

I Technical Dimension

A. Catching (Clean? Dropped balls?)
B. Diving (Needed? Why? Lack of Footwork?)
C. Distribution (Goal kicks, Pass backs, Volleys/Half Volleys, Hand; Did your team gain possession, or were your opponents locked into their defensive third of the field?)

II Tactical Dimension

A. Angle Play (All three angles covered at all times? Discuss?)
B. Breakaways (Decision to come or stay? Technique? Did you stay on your feet?)
C. Restarts (Discuss Free Kicks, Corners, Penalty Kicks; What decisions did you make?)

III Psychological Dimension

A. Leadership (Where? When? How was it shown?)
B. Communication (Clear? Where? When?)

IV Goals Allowed

A. Analyze & diagram each goal allowed
B. How could the goal have been denied?
C. Could you have prevented the shot? How?

V Overall Performance Rating

1 Outstanding
2 Good
3 Satisfactory
4 Below Average
5 Unsatisfactory

Individual Training Plans

Daily Plan

I **Warm-up (10 minutes)**
Keepers should do extra static and ballistic stretching to improve flexibility and minimize the chances of injury. Remember to follow the guidelines of stretching presented in this manual.

II **Agility (15 minutes)**
This period of training consists of ball gymnastics and foot coordination. Exercises can be done individually or in pairs. The wall drills are excellent agility exercises. In addition to physically preparing for the session, the keeper will show improvement in his quickness of feet.

III **Technique (45 minutes)**
Take one of the listed techniques and follow the progression. Reading the game and breakaways can also be part of this phase. Repeated technical training is paramount if a keeper wants to reach "the next level".

IV **Tactics (45 minutes)**
Any small-sided game (3v3, 4v4, etc.) will give the keeper the opportunity to practice technical skills under pressure of an opponent and in a game related situation. The 1v1 game is a part of this tactical phase.

Again, it is very important that the keeper be allowed to spend time in practice as a field player. As the laws of the game have evolved, it has become more important, if not imperative, that the keeper be able to play with his feet. This type of training will also help him to better understand the tactics of the field players.

Weekly Plan

The weekly plan during the season should be based on the schedule of games. Keepers should not go through a heavy fitness session the day before or the day after a game. This time (before and after game days) can be well spent going over restarts and other light activities. Coaches need to be prepared to adjust their plans given the week's other demands.

1. Train three times a week in goal. This period of time can be 90-120 minutes.
2. Pressure training should be done twice per week during the pre-season and 1-2 times during the season.
3. Extra daily stretching for the keeper is very important

Off-season Goalkeeping Plan

I've been asked on several occasions to put together a spring training program for college coaches to follow during the off-season period. Obviously, there are differences in a spring program and the regular pre-season training or coaches would keep the same training regime. You will find that during the spring you have more time (and patience) to work with keepers and concentrate on eliminating their weaknesses and developing strength for the next season. This is a great time to work on the psychological area of goalkeeping (motivation, confidence, etc.). For this simple reason, coaches might want to modify the following schedule to focus more on a certain aspect of goalkeeping. Spend less time on fitness because the spring should be used to improve both the technical and tactical aspects of the game. Technical and tactical training demands total concentration and this element will break down if fitness training is included in the program.

The following program is based on a seven week training schedule where the keeper trains three times per week for no more than 80 minutes per session.

Sample Spring Training Schedule

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Week #1		
* Plyometrics * Footwork * 1v1 Keeper Wars	* Reaction Drills * Catching (low, med, high)	* Diving (fundamental, power)
Week #2		
* Plyometrics * 1v1 Keeper Wars	* Deflecting (low, med, high)	* Boxing
Week #3		
* Plyometrics * Goalkeeper Dodge Ball	* Angle Play	* Flank Play
Week #4		
* Plyometrics * Footwork * 1v1 Keeper Wars	* Breakaways	* Reading the Game
Week #5		
* Plyometrics * Z Balls * 1v1 Keeper Wars	* Playing off the Goal Line	* Extended Goal Drills
Week #6		
* Plyometrics * Footwork * Z Balls	* Penalty Kicks	* Distribution
Week #7		
* Plyometrics * Medicine Ball * 1v1 Keeper Wars	* Wall Reaction Drills	* Pressure Training

Please note that the Monday schedule never changes in format, only in the specific plyometric exercises. The final activity of the spring is a fitness session where the keeper works 100% (1x40 seconds at 100% + 1x40 seconds rest period = 1 set). Each of the Wednesday and Friday technical/tactical training sessions should end with a game activity.

Most of the activities referenced in the sample schedule have been described in previous sections of this book. However, some other activities that are particularly well-suited for off-season training are explained below.

Z Ball

A "Z Ball" is a reaction ball that will train quick reflexes. It is irregularly shaped and bounces in all directions. This is an excellent training tool to help develop quick feet, as keepers can use it individually or in pairs (trying to catch the ball as it rebounds off the ground or a wall).

Extended Goal Drills

Modify any activity that requires the keeper to make saves in goal by extending the width of the goal (using flags on either side, or by placing two goals side-by-side). This use of the overload principle will improve footwork and make dealing with one goal easier. A complete video program demonstrating this method can be purchased through the *No. 1 Camps*, directed by Joe Machnik (1-800 MACHNIK).

Finally, note that NCAA, high school, or other league rules regarding spring (or offseason) practice dates may require coaches to modify this sample training schedule.

Goalkeeping and the Laws of the Game

As a former goalkeeper, I was fortunate not to have to go through all the changes in the laws that were directly related to the keeper in the 1990s. As the attempt to streamline the game continues, we have to be aware of any changes that focus on the keeper and how we can turn them into an advantage rather than a disadvantage. Below, I've highlighted some of the laws that should be addressed in training.

The Ball

This law gives the dimension and weight of the ball. However, there are many different balls which all meet the minimum standard. Some are smooth and slippery while others are easily gripped. Keepers should always ask the referee if they may see the game ball during pre-game so that they know its texture and what to expect during the game.

In and Out of Play

Remember that the entire ball must be over the goal line between the posts to be counted as a goal. Throughout the history of the game there have been instances where balls have crossed the goal line but have not been counted because no one really had a good view of the play. Treat every ball as if it's still on the field of play until the referee indicates otherwise.

Pass Back and Possession

Remember that you must play all back passes from your teammates with your feet. However, a ball brought down by a teammate with his chest or head can be picked up with your hands. There is no longer a "4 step rule"; keepers now are restricted to a 6 second time limit to return the ball to play. Learn to move quickly to the edge of the penalty area to give yourself extra distance from your own goal before releasing the ball.

Direct and Indirect Kicks
Watch the referee, as his raised hand will indicate an indirect kick. Also, remember that any kick inside the penalty area has to be indirect unless it's a penalty kick. Indirect kicks require that the ball need only be touched to be in play (a 27-28 inch rotation of the ball is no longer required). Finally, a ball struck from the kickoff in the center circle (to begin the game or after a goal) can score if it goes directly in to the goal. Be ready!!

Penalty Kicks
A penalty kick is a special type of direct kick and the same rules apply. Remember that a penalty kick during regulation time can be struck a second time from the shooter if the ball touches another player. Therefore, a ball that is deflected by the keeper and rebounds off the crossbar is playable by anyone, including the original shooter. This does not apply in a penalty kick tiebreaker where the rebound cannot be touched by the shooter.

Handling the Ball
Any ball handled outside of the penalty area by the keeper will likely result in an immediate expulsion from the game. Learn to master your slide tackle and stay away from using your hands except under extreme situations (for instance, if it is near the end of the game and you are protecting a one-goal lead).

GOALKEEPER QUIZ

1. What is the definition of GOALKEEPING?

   a. The team's eleventh man
   b. The stopping of shots
   c. The elimination of goal scoring opportunities
   d. The addition of color to the team

2. When can a goalkeeper receive the ball with his hands?

   a. Shot on goal
   b. Throw in from a teammate
   c. Deflection from his defender
   d. a and c

3. Where is the goalkeeper allowed to play on the field during the game?

   a. In the goal area
   b. Anywhere on the field
   c. In the penalty area
   d. In his half of the field

4. What does angle play mean?

   a. Making the goal as small as possible for the attacker
   b. Positioning for corners
   c. Body position for goal kicks
   d. Getting to the correct spot during corners

5. 9. How many angles must a goalkeeper cover?

   a. 1
   b. 2
   c. 3
   d. 4

6. Which of the following statements best fits the description of the goalkeeper's role?

   a. Stop shots
   b. Deal with corners
   c. Last in defense
   d. All of the above

7. What should the keeper do before a penalty kick is taken?

   a. Argue with the referee
   b. Be in position and ready for the shot
   c. Try to distract the shooter
   d. Blame teammates for the foul

8. Is the goalkeeper allowed to take his team's penalty kicks?

   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Yes, if he changes jerseys
   d. Yes, if he stays in the game as a field player

9. What is the objective of a boxed ball?

   a. Height
   b. Distance
   c. Accuracy
   d. All of the above

10. Why would a goalkeeper select to box a ball?

    a. Lack of opposition in the goal area
    b. Difficult weather conditions
    c. Size of the ball
    d. Quick counter attack

11. What does a keeper do with shots on goal?

    a. Catches the ball
    b. Deflects the ball
    c. Boxes the ball
    d. All of the above

12. Where should a goalkeeper stand for a corner kick?

    a. Near the front of the goal (near post)
    b. Near the back of the goal (far post)
    c. Just on the far side of the middle of the goal
    d. Near the edge of the goal area

13. Why should the goalkeeper take his own goal kicks?

    a. He is more relaxed than his teammates
    b. It adds one more field player
    c. He is usually the strongest player on the team
    d. It impresses his teammates

14. What is the goalkeeper's role in directing the defense?

    a. Inform players of potential danger
    b. Blame players when they make mistakes
    c. Direct offside trap
    d. Constant chatter to keep teammates on their toes

15. When should a goalkeeper deflect a ball?

    a. When he is outside of the penalty area
    b. Only on high shots
    c. Near the goal when catching is difficult
    d. Only on corner kicks

Answers to the Goalkeeper Quiz:

1. c
2. d
3. b
4. a
5. c
6. d
7. b
8. a
9. d
10. b
11. d
12. c
13. b
14. a
15. c

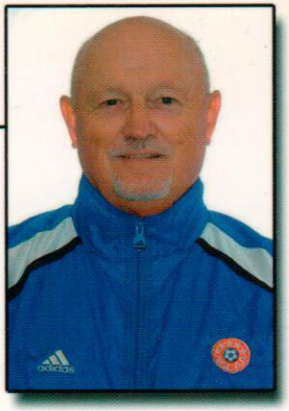
Looking for more?

All the exercises featured in this manual (plus many more not shown here) are also available as part of SoccerROM's online Exercises Database and Practice Planning application. To learn more about how you can use these tools to organize your training, be sure to visit:

www.SoccerROM.com

SoccerROM Coaching Series:

Winning Goalkeeper Training



Bob Barry has spent over three decades coaching goalkeepers at the youth, high school, and collegiate levels. In this book, he has compiled a comprehensive guide to understanding all aspects of goalkeeping, including keeper-specific fitness, goalkeeper technique, goalkeeping tactics, and other functional training methods that integrate the keeper into full-team training.

This book goes far beyond theory, though, as each chapter includes dozens of training activities that progress from basic requirements to more complex game-related situations. With nearly 200 training exercises total, this book serves as a practical training manual that will guide players and coaches of all levels through years of practices on the field.

Beyond the Book — Online Integration at SoccerROM.com

This manual is unique in that all the exercises are integrated with SoccerROM's online tools. Each resource stands alone, but used together they add much more value! All of the training activities featured in this book (plus many more not shown here) are also available as part of SoccerROM's Exercises Database and Practice Planning application. To learn more about how you can use these tools to organize the drills from this book into custom training sessions for all your players, be sure to visit www.SoccerROM.com.





REEDSWAIN PUBLISHING

ISBN 1591641114-4

9 781591 641148

$12.95 US