

Goalkeeping

7 ready made coaching sessions



Goalkeeping angles

What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Reducing the target area an attacker has to aim at.
- 2 How to move when expecting a shot.

What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Constantly adjust your position in relation to the lateral or forward movement of the ball.
- 2 When moving left or right, move feet with a quick, sideways skipping action.
- 3 Once in line, move towards the attacker when the ball is outside the playing distance of the attacker.
- 4 Be balanced before the shot is taken.
- 5 Gather the shot if possible; if not tip it out of play or at least push it out of the danger area.
- 6 Get on feet quickly again.



what to shout

- “Move into line”, “Narrow the angle”.
- “Stay focused”, “Up on your feet quickly”.



what to look for

- Good basic body position – knees slightly bent, hands relaxed and by the side but ready for action, and a steady head.
- No crossing of legs or jumping when moving sideways.
- Correct position in line between the ball and the goal.
- Advancing as quickly as possible.



what to think about

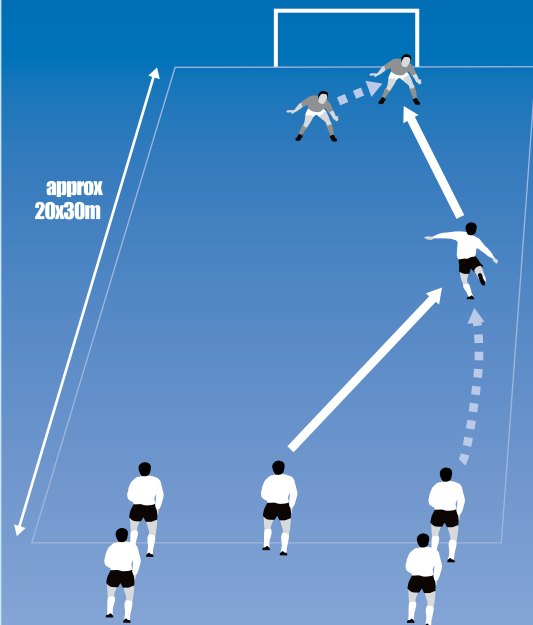
Observe the goalkeeper’s positioning from behind the goal. When the ball is shifted right or left, they should be positioned to the nearpost side of an imaginary line that bisects the ball and the goal because that area is most vulnerable. Also, check that they’re not so far off their line they can be chipped. Use ballboys to keep the session running smoothly.

What you get your players to do:

Stage 1: In an area approx 20 x 30m, the middle attacker plays the ball to themselves, at any angle left or right, and gives chase. They shoot with their second touch. The goalkeeper starts centrally and adjusts his position accordingly to make the save.

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

Goalkeeping angles



Development

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

How would I put this into a game situation?

To encourage lots of shots, condition a small-sided game. For example, in a 3 v 3, tell the outfield players that either team has to shoot after two or three passes from whatever part of the pitch they find themselves in.

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Goalkeeper throws

What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Distributing the ball accurately over long distances.
- 2 Setting up counter-attacks using the overarm throw.

What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Use one hand to throw the ball.
- 2 Aim for the target areas.



what to shout

- “Feet wide apart.”
- “Get side on.”



what to look for

- Holding the ball with the fingers, palm and wrist.
- Non-throwing arm in line with the target.
- Bringing the non-throwing arm down and the throwing arm through in an arc over the top – like a bowler’s action in cricket.
- Weight transferring from the back foot forward.
- Straight throwing arm as the ball is released
- Releasing the ball near the vertical position.
- For more speed get the keeper to power the throwing arm downwards.



what to think about

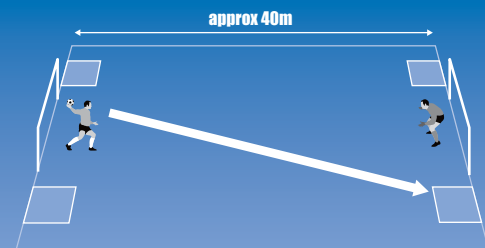
If the goalkeeper wants more height on the ball, get them to release the ball earlier.

What you get your players to do:

Stage 1: In an area approx 40 metres long the goalkeeper starts from a central position and alternates throwing the ball into the two target areas.

Stage 2: The goalkeeper at the opposite end repeats the exercise.

Goalkeeper throws



direction of throw → target area 

Development

The goalkeepers can defend the two target areas nearest them by intercepting the ball before it bounces. The keepers are awarded points for successfully bouncing the ball in either of the opposition’s target areas, and for intercepting a ball before it bounces in the target areas nearest them.

How would I put this into a game situation?

Condition a small-sided game so that when the keeper receives the ball they must throw it to a teammate.

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Diving basics

What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Correct diving technique.
- 2 Developing confidence.

What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Each goalkeeper has a ball placed a few yards (2 yards maximum) either side of him.
- 2 On the coaches call, the goalkeeper dives to “LEFT” or “RIGHT” using the correct diving technique.



what to shout

- “Move your feet – don’t just dive – get as close to the shot as possible”
- “Ankle, knee, hip, side, shoulders”
- “Attack the ball with the dive”
- “Quality of handling”



what to look for

- Correct collapsing dive – body should fit floor in following order when diving – ankle, outside of knee, hip, side of upper torso, shoulder.
- Encourage the goalkeeper to dive slightly diagonally forward to dive into the path of the ball away from the goal.
- The last stride before the dive needs to be positive and “into line of the ball”.
- Correct handling technique with the ball.



what to think about

This practice improves your goalkeeper’s understanding of the correct technique for diving saves. This will increase the number of saves made. Concentrate on perfect technique. If the correct technique is used the goalkeeper’s confidence will grow both in terms of their general skill levels and in not hurting themselves when they dive.

What you get your players to do:

The goalkeeper stands between 2 balls.

Each ball should be slightly in front of the line of the goalkeeper’s feet.

Get your goalkeeper to stand in the “ready” position.

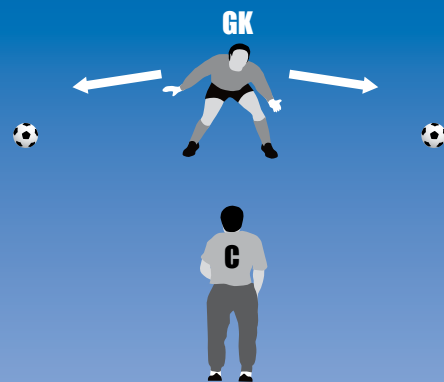
On your command of LEFT or RIGHT, the goalkeeper dives into the ball.

Encourage him to dive diagonally forward into the line of ball – ATTACK THE BALL!

Encourage the goalkeeper to use both hands to scoop the ball into the body.

Get him to pull the knees around in front of the body to complete the save.

Diving basics



direction of dive → C = coach GK = goalkeeper

Development

The coach or goalkeeper partner can roll the ball to the side of the goalkeeper and he repeats the above practice with the moving ball. The key points are the same.

How would I put this into a game situation?

With ANY small sided games or shooting practices encourage the goalkeeper to use this technique. Repetition is the key to acquiring any new skill. You should also encourage the use of this technique within the goalkeeper’s pre-match warm-ups.

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Footwork speed/ shot stopping

What you tell your players the session is about:

Practising quick feet, good body position, shot stopping and reactions.

What you tell your players to do:

Get your attackers to fire in shots at a high tempo and encourage your goalkeeper to be ready to make a save in any goal.



what to shout

- “Fast feet”
- “Get into position”
- “On toes”
- “Stay big for as long as possible”
- “Quality of service – make the goalkeeper work for every save”
- “Recovery saves on any rebounds”



what to look for

- Move quickly – forward sprint.
- Side step footwork into goal.
- Get set – on toes.
- Into line/down line of shot.
- Recovery saves – reclaim any rebounds.



what to think about

- Encourage your strikers to hit the target at all times.
- Examine your goalkeepers’ footwork – make sure he has fast feet.
- Make sure plenty of balls are available.
- Work at a high tempo.

What you get your players to do:

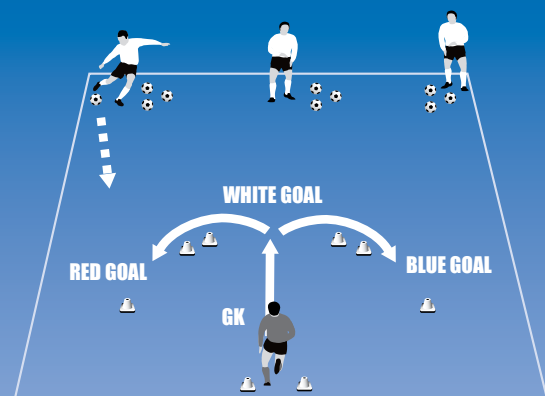
Arrange three attackers to fire in shots on your command.

Make three goals using cones or markers as shown in the diagram.

Call out a colour to denote a goal for an attacker to shoot at.

On your call the keeper sprints through the white goal and moves into the relevant goal to try to save the shot.

Footwork speed / shot stopping



direction of run → direction of shot - - →

Development

Introduce a speed ladder on the sprint to really work the keeper’s foot speed.

How would I put this into a game situation?

Allow the forwards to run at the keeper in one on one situations.

Award a point for each goal or save, play for 5 minutes and the winner is the player with most points.

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Goal work

What you tell your players the session is about:

Positioning, shot stopping, dealing with “cut backs”, recovery saves.

What you tell your players to do:

Have two goals and plenty of balls. Player one dribbles to the cone then shoots into either goal. Goalkeeper must defend both goals. Play from both sides.



what to shout

- “On toes”
- “Stay big for as long as possible”
- “Quality of service – make the goalkeeper work for every save”
- “Recovery saves on any rebounds”



what to look for

- Cover near post/goal first.
- But be in a position to save shot/cross into far goal.
- Footwork.
- Saving techniques.
- Recovery saves.



what to think about

- Encourage strikers to hit the target at all times.
- Goalkeeper’s positioning – cover near post first.
- For this drill it makes sense for the coach to stand behind the goalkeeper in the goal, so you can get the full picture of angles etc.

What you get your players to do:

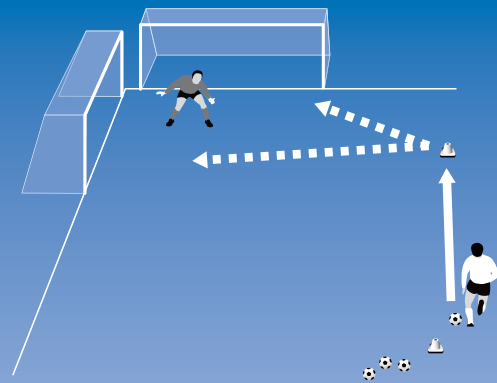
Get your wide players to dribble towards the goal then fire a shot across the goalkeeper.

Encourage the goalkeeper to defend both goals by cutting off the near post.

The goalkeeper’s position should not be too close to the near post as they need to be able to cover the far post “cross shot” also.

The goalkeeper must react to any rebounds and spilled shots.

2 goal work



direction of run → direction of shot - ->

Development

At a high tempo this is a great drill for the improving fitness of your goalkeeper as well as his reaction times.

This session also works well as a team shooting practice.

How would I put this into a game situation?

These skills will be tested in any situation with cut backs and cross shots from wide areas.

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Goal game

What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Footwork.
- 2 Shot-stopping.
- 3 Communication.

What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Play at match tempo.
- 2 Be aware of your surroundings.
- 3 Focus on using correct technique at all times.
- 4 Maintain concentration.



what to shout

- “On your toes” – keep goalkeepers prepared for shots.
- “Into line” – get in line with the shot.



what to look for

- Goalkeeper moves quickly into appropriate goal.
- Communication with defenders.
- Shot-stopping techniques.
- Distribution – pass, roll or throw.



what to think about

This practice improves your goalkeeper’s overall understanding of their correct position within a game-related environment. This will allow you to assess your goalkeepers in several aspects of the game, enabling you to identify areas of weakness. Goalkeepers have to be aware of their surroundings. They are responsible for communicating with and organising their outfield players. You must also reinforce the fact that goalkeepers must make recovery saves from any rebounds or shots that are spilled.

What you get your players to do:

Arrange your players into two equal teams.

Each team has its own goalkeeper.

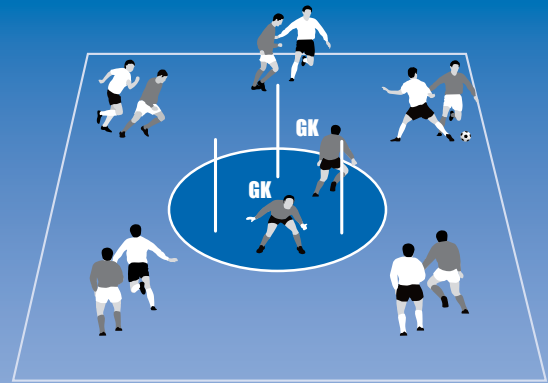
Both teams try to score through any of the goals.

Only goalkeepers are allowed inside the circle around the goals.

The defending goalkeeper moves to whichever goal needs to be defended.

When the goalkeeper makes a save he plays to his team mates who attempt to score.

3 goal game



Development

Introduce a second ball for increased tempo.

How would I put this into a game situation?

This is a hi-tempo game related exercise that allows both outfield players and goalkeepers to practise their skills in a competitive game scenario.

Award “goals” to the goalkeepers for every save they make.

[Click here to download the index](#)

Goalkeeper wars 1 v 1

What you tell your players the session is about:

Footwork, shot stopping, recovery saves, distribution.

What you tell your players to do:

Goalkeepers try to score against each other using various techniques – throw, kick, punt, drop kick. As soon as they save – they shoot back.



what to shout

- “On toes”
- “Quality of service – make the keeper work for every save”



what to look for

Saving

- On toes – be ready.
- Into line/down line.
- Cut down angles where appropriate – wide angle shots.
- Correct diving/saving techniques.



what to think about

- Quality of service – kicks, throws.
- Encourage goalkeepers to use a variety of techniques.
- Encourage goalkeepers to use both feet.

What you get your players to do:

Pitch size: 30 x 20 yards (minimum) up to 40 x 25 yards (maximum).

Two goals, two goalkeepers, plenty of balls.

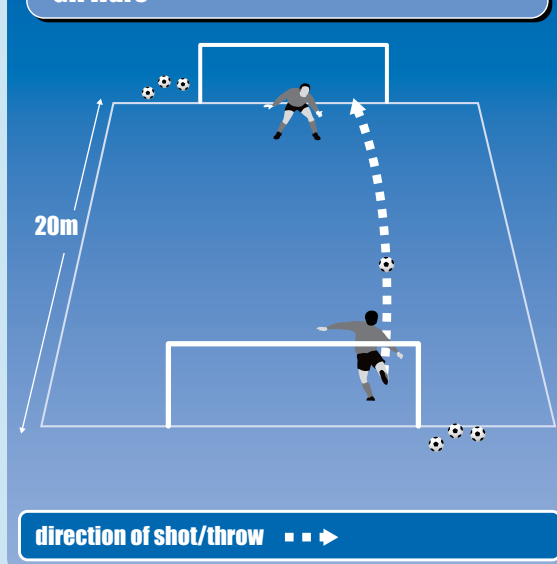
Goalkeepers start in their own goal.

The aim of this game is for each goalkeeper to score more goals than their opponent.

Encourage your goalkeepers to serve the ball as quickly as they can – do not let them wait for the other goalkeeper to get ready (they have to be ready at all times just like in a game situation).

Encourage your goalkeepers to vary the type of service they use.

GK wars



direction of shot/throw →

Development

Making the area used smaller makes reaction time shorter. Also, you can add a free central player (this can be the coach). This player can set up the goalkeepers for a free shot and also slightly obstruct the view of the saving goalkeeper.

How would I put this into a game situation?

This drill encourages goalkeepers to serve the ball early, and be prepared instantly for any shots coming back at them, so this is very game related.

[Click here to download the index](#)

Where does it fit? Individual skills: Correct diving technique, footwork, handling, distribution

Team skills: Improvement of shot stopping and confidence in distribution

How to use these sessions

Print off the session and take it to training. It should take you less than five minutes to read the instructions, set up the session, and then you are ready to communicate what happens to your players.

Number of players

You only need six players to complete a session, though it can easily be expanded to meet your needs. With lots more players you could have a number of grids working at the same time.

Timings

The timings are for a twenty minute session, but it can be expanded or reduced to meet your needs. It's your call.

As a rule of thumb 10 minutes would be enough time for a well executed first drill, development and feedback. Any shorter and you have not explored the full skill range or asked enough questions of the players. Longer is fine as long as you feel the session is developing. The game related element adds another 10 minutes.

Equipment

The equipment used is simple. A set of cones (or trainers or tops) as markers and a couple of balls.

You can add in other equipment where you feel you need them – we just assume that you don't have them because sometimes the shed is locked or another coach is using them.

Training area

The size of the training area is left for you to decide. Smaller players need a smaller area, but the session will never need more than a 20m x 20m grid for initial drills. The smaller the area the more intense the training.

The standard and age groups

These sessions are based on the core skills of soccer. They will challenge any standard because a player can always perform the core better.

The "development" ideas can be used to differentiate between the different standards of your players; the "think about" section can challenge the more advanced; the "game related situations" can change the contact situations the teams face.

Players should wear shin pads in all coaching sessions. They should be suitable to the player's physique and worn correctly with socks pulled up.

Elements of the session

What to tell your players the session is about:

This is your introduction and outlines the objectives of the session. Just read this out. The players then have an objective. Return to this at the end of the session to see if you have achieved your objectives.

What you tell your players to do:

This is how you want your players to achieve the objectives. You can tell the players straight away how to achieve the objectives, or you can tease it out of them as the session goes on.

What you get your players to do:

This shows you how the session is going to work. Depending on what is going to be achieved, it sets out what actions the players are going to take. There are no exact measurements, or complicated patterns – the approach is "simple, stupid, successful". Slow motion the first few patterns – get the drill right and the skill right first before speeding up. Use the "What to shout" prompts to keep the players focused. Use the "What to look for" to keep your eye on why the players might be failing.

Development

No session is worth doing unless there is some form of progression. Normally there will be an increase in pressure, say by adding more defenders, or by restricting the time available. Other areas for you to think about are: Where do I stand as coach? Do I throw the ball into the grid?

How would I put this into a game situation?

All the elements of the session are geared to the game, but this section puts the session one step away from a full game, with attack, defence and a goal line.

What to shout

Have the words handy, because apart from the usual words of encouragement, it is good to shout the key factors to players. Of course you can hold some of these "shouts" back and ask the players to identify how they can improve.

What to look for

You need to keep your eyes open for "best practice". This section helps you identify quickly where players might go wrong so you can quickly put them right.

Think about

Here you have the chance to challenge the players and situation, either by using feedback or just asking yourself the questions. It is a little more advanced and might not be appropriate for your players.

Where does it fit:

To help you file and order our coaching we have given you the core areas of individual and team skills that the session covers.