

Lesson Plans For Goalkeeper Training

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K-Stop:



A K-Stop is used to stop a hard driven ball that is on the ground or slightly raised. The purpose of this technique is to create a wall behind the goalie's hands with their legs, just in case the goalie mishandles the ball with their hands. This way the ball will not go directly into the goal if it is missed. A goalkeeper should never bend over and pick up a ball for this reason.

How:

Goalkeeper turns body to face the sideline, but does not turn head (so they can keep eyes on the ball). As the ball arrives, the goalkeeper kneels with one knee on the ground, parallel to the goal line. This knee is making slight contact with the back of the opposite foot. It is important that the foot and knee are not spread too far apart as this will create a gap large enough for the ball to go through. When the ball arrives, scoop up the ball with hands and curl it up into the arms.

Basket Catch:



For a ball coming in below the chest, but still high off the ground use the Basket Catch.

How:

Arms are placed together with palms facing up. The impact of the ball should be absorbed by the inside of the forearms and hands, not the stomach. After the ball is caught, cradle it into the chest for protection.

**Remember: The GK may need to bend knees to get low enough for balance. Driving elbows up as the ball is caught will ensure protection of the ball.

Regular Catch Above the Chest:



For balls that are coming toward the goalie above the chest either heading straight toward the body or close enough to the side that the ball is catchable.

How:

Use the “Goalkeeper’s W.” This is where the hands are out and in front of the body with the palms facing the ball. Fingers need to be spread out to cover the most surface area around the ball.

****Remember:** Bring the ball into chest after catching to ensure that it’s secure.

Diving:



This technique is used to save a ball that is too far out of reach to catch. A small dive can be used to get a ball that is relatively close (called a collapse dive) and a big explosive dive (an extension dive) is used to save a ball going into the corner of the goal.

How:

- Step 1 - Good footwork is important for getting into the optimal position to be able to make a dive. Use a small shuffle to arrive in this position.
- Step 2 - Power Step. The first step taken in a good dive should be made forward at approximately a 45 degree angle toward the ball. A big problem goalkeepers have is diving backwards because when a goalkeeper dives backward, they will often accidentally deflect the ball right into the goal.
- Step 3 - Get low and angle body toward the ball then dive starting from this crouched position. This should be a natural movement after the power step where both the step and dive are made going in a forward direction.
- Step 4 - Catch the ball with hands first. Always catch the ball with hands first! Then worry about the landing. Use the same catching technique as described above. If the ball is uncatchable and must be deflected, try to deflect the ball out and far away toward the sideline. This way the other team will not have the opportunity to shoot a free ball right in front of the goal.
- Step 5 - Stay square to the ball during the dive and after landing on the ground. Even in the air and while landing, the GK must stay facing the ball. By angling their body in this manner, the GK will be in the best catching position because there is a larger amount of body behind the ball. This will also force them to land on their hips and side, which is the safest landing position. GKs should not turn to face the ground while making the save and land on their stomach. If this happens, not only can the ball slip under the body and into the goal, but landing on the ball can also cause injury.

Corner Kicks:

During a corner kick, the goalie is the one in charge and is responsible for taking control of the situation and making sure every one of their players are in the correct spot. This means being vocal and directing teammates on where to go. Each team defends corners differently, but keepers should always make sure to know how their coach wants the team to defend. The most typical defense would be to put one player on each post (I use outside mids for the post so the defenders are able to defend) and everyone else is man marking a player from the other team.

How:

Start off the corner about $\frac{3}{4}$ to the back of the goal facing the ball and kicker. I would not recommend standing in the very middle of the goal. If the kick is taken and is going high into the back of the goal, it is easier to get the ball if the goalkeeper is farther back in the goal because it is easier to move forward than backward.

Anything that comes into the 6 yard box is the GKs ball. It is okay to come off the goal line to attack a ball, however catching the ball is the best thing to do if possible. If the ball is not catchable, the GK can punch it out of the box. To punch the ball make fists with both hands and put knuckles together. Do not swing at the ball but just meet and make contact with it. It's the momentum that will take it away from the goal.

Ready Position / Getting “Set”:



Goalies should always be on their toes when the ball is near. By standing on their toes, the goalkeeper will be able to move more quickly and in any direction they might need to.

How:

Stand with weight of the body on the toes. Bend knees and squat slightly. Put hands out in front of body, ready to catch the ball.

1 v 1:



When it comes to a situation where the goalkeeper is facing an attacking player alone, the key is confidence with no hesitation.

How:

Use the ready position referenced earlier, but get even lower to the floor. Bend knees more and place hands down by the ground instead of out in front of the chest. Then take very small, shuffling steps side to side mirroring the dribbling player. This allows the goalkeeper to change directions rapidly in response to the opposing player's movements. If there is an opportunity or an opening, dive onto the ball so the opposing player does not have the opportunity to shoot. If the player does shoot the ball, being in the ready position will give a GK the greatest opportunity to make the save.

Drop Step:

Use a Drop Step when the ball is going over head into the goal. It can be helpful to remember the phrase "nose up tail back." This means when a goal keeper's nose goes up (looking up at a ball going over head), they must immediately drop back and retreat to the goal line.

How:

When the ball is going over head, open up hips by stepping with back foot toward the goal line. Then use the front foot to cross over the front of the back foot. Continue this motion until in position to catch or tip the incoming ball. This method is better than shuffling back as it is faster and once a keeper gets the hang of it (it can be awkward at first), they will be less likely to trip or stumble.

Tipping:

Tip the ball over the goal when it is too high, or too difficult to catch.

How:

Use the drop step described above. When the ball is in reach, use the hand closest to the ball to push the ball over the goal. It is beneficial to use one hand instead of two because one hand will reach farther. Test it out; raise both hands above head as high as possible. Now put one hand down and reach the one hand as high as possible. The one hand should reach a few inches higher, and those inches could be the difference between a goal and a save.

Catching a High Ball:



When a ball is coming high in the air above head, but is catchable.

How:

It is best to catch the ball at the highest point possible. Do this by extending arms and jumping in the air. When jumping, shoot up one knee up to the chest. Not only will this give momentum to jump higher, it will protect the goalie's body from any opposing player coming in hard. They will run into the goalie's knee and not their body. Once the ball is in the keeper's hands, they should bring the ball into chest for protection.

Throwing:

When it is time to distribute the ball, and there is an open player close enough to throw the ball to.

How:

For right handed throwers, place ball in palm of right hand and get into a stance with the left foot in front of the body and the right foot in the back. If possible, pin the ball between the fingers and forearm of the right hand (this could be difficult if the keeper is wearing gloves that end past the wrist, wearing a long sleeved jersey, or if their hands are too small. If this is difficult, just balance the ball on the palm of the hand.). With a side shuffle to gain more power, the keeper can pretend that their body is a slingshot. While side shuffling, draw right hand back behind body toward right foot. Pretending their body is like a slingshot, keep right arm straight through the entire process. Swing arm all the way around the body and release in front of the head. While throwing the ball, naturally swing left arm to build momentum and follow through with the entire body. The back foot may come off the ground during the throw and end up in line or in front of the front foot. (reverse all commands for left handed throwers)

Back Passes:

Likely occurring because a defender has heavy pressure on them. This is an outlet pass from a defender to the keeper. The goal of the keeper is to pass the ball to an open teammate or clear the ball far up the field.

How:

It should be the goal of the field player to pass the ball to the keeper at a controllable pace, and as smooth as possible. In this situation the keeper should know they need to open themselves up to receive the ball by running to the side of the goal and toward their teammate with the ball. The defender should know that they need to deliver the ball to the keeper preferably outside the frame of the goal (where the keeper will be checking too). This is important because it is very easy for the keeper to mishandle the ball. If they are outside the frame of the goal and the ball is mishandled, it will be less likely to accidentally go into the goal. This step cannot always be achieved, but should be as much as possible. Once the ball is delivered to the keeper by their teammate, the keeper CANNOT pick the ball up with their hands. If this happens it will result in an indirect free kick for the other team inside of the penalty box. (the only instance the keeper can pick up a ball passed back by a teammate is if the teammate headered the ball to them). The keeper must choose how to distribute the ball. If there is a player open wide, that would be a successfully simple outlet pass. If the keeper finds it more advantageous to send the ball down the field, they must decide to take either one or two touches. I find it is always better to take two touches, unless being heavily pressured by an offender, then get the ball away as soon as possible (even if it is up the field and out of bounds).

Drop Kicks:

When the keeper has possession of the ball and wishes to distribute far up the field.

How:

The keeper should walk or run close to the top of the penalty box. Many people say that the proper way for a keeper to drop the ball from their hands to be kicked is by the opposite hand of the kicking foot (left hand for right foot). This is to ensure that the arm does not get in the way of the kicking leg. However I would always release from holding the ball with both hands, in the tips of my fingers. I found it gave me more control over the ball. This will vary among goalkeepers and is decided by personal preference. Keeper will execute what is called a “three step kick”. With arms extended toward the ground and ball resting in the fingertips of both hands, or fingers of one hand, for a right footed kicker, the keeper begins a stance with the left foot behind the right foot. The left foot is the first step taken, then right, then left. The next movement will be the right foot swinging to connect with the ball that was just dropped. Keep ankle locked, and point toes during the kick. The kicking foot should follow through as far as possible.

Setting Up A Wall:

A wall is used when the opposing team earns a free kick in a threatening area of the field.

How:

A wall can be a very effective aid for a team when defending a free kick, but it is completely contingent upon the entire team doing EVERYTHING the keeper tells them to do. The rest of the team must know to listen to everything the keeper tells them, whether it is where and how to mark a player, stand in space, or join the wall. The keeper must do a lot of things very quickly in a situation like this, must work quickly, and does not have the time for a player to not be listening to them or adhering to their requests. The purpose of the wall is to cover one side of the goal so the keeper does not have as much of the goal to defend by themselves. When the free kick is to the left or right side of the field, line up the wall with the corresponding post of the goal. The keeper must stand at the post and is communicating with one teammate in the wall. The keeper should line up the player closest to the sideline with the post. Then, the other players in the wall should be covering the front post of the goal. The easiest way to communicate with this player is to yell “left” or “right” while using one hand to point. After the wall is in place, the keeper should be close to the goal line and farther back toward back post. If the free kick is in the middle of the field, then both the wall and keeper line up in the middle.

PK's:

When a direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team because of a foul inside of the penalty box

How:

As the rules demand, stand on the goal line, and in the center of the goal. It may sound silly, but the keeper must make themselves look as big as possible. To achieve this jump around in the goal a little, shuffle side to side, and wave hands in the air. This truly works and a lot of the time it will distract the kicker or intimidate them. When the whistle blows for the kick to be taken, the keeper must be sure they are back in the center of the goal and in ready position. Attempt to read the kicker and anticipate where they will be kicking the ball. A lot of the time, it is very clear where they are going to kick the ball, but especially older and more advanced players can be deceptive with their body language and eye movements. If it comes down to it, just pick a side to dive to and commit to it 100%. Although the keeper can not move off the goal line until the ball is kicked, as soon as the ball is kicked, take a very big power step in the direction of the dive to get as far off the line as possible and get in the best position to stop the ball. During a game, remember the ball is still alive, even after the keeper makes an incredible save, but gives up a rebound. Always be ready to get up as quickly as possible to be able to make the second save. Also remember that the shooter should score the goal. A penalty kick is awarded because a foul was committed by the keeper's team, and likely denied a goal scoring opportunity in the referee's eyes. This is not a 50/50 situation and is very difficult for the keeper.

Practice Drills for Goalies:

Diving:

- 1: have the goalie stand between two balls
- 2: the balls should be slightly in front of the goal line where the goalie is standing
- 3: have the goalie stand in the "ready position"
- 4: when the coach says "left" or "right" the goalie will dive into the ball, known as tracking the ball
- 6: the goalie needs to use proper diving technique as described above
- 7: after dive is made GK must get up quickly and return to the center of the balls to await the next command from the coach

1 V 1

- 1: the striker has 7 balls to go 1 V 1 with the goalie. The ball is in play as soon as the striker enters the penalty area
- 2: the goalie will come off their line and attempt to smother the ball before the striker can take a shot
- 3: once the ball has been played the goalie must run back to the goal line and then defend another ball
- 4: the striker will race to the next ball, quickly initiating it into play to attempt to beat the goalie

High Catches:

- 1: goalie stands on the goal line
- 2: the coach throws high balls which descends around the 6 yard box
- 3: goalie must come out and catch the ball at the highest point
- 4: after catching the ball, the goalie rolls the ball to the coach who has changed position
- 5: goalie goes back to goal line and the coach throws the ball from a new angle

Rapid Fire:

- 1: team of shooters line up on 18 yard box
- 2: go down the line for every shooter to shoot the ball at the goalie
- 3: after one shooter has gone the next one should go quickly, but give enough time for the goalie to be capable of making the next save
- 4: switch up the drill by switching which side the first player shoots from, alternating sides between shots, or having the shooters exclusively hit drives or chips

Jumping:

- 1: the goalie stands one step off the goal line in a crouched position
- 2: the coach throws a high ball over the goalies head
- 3: the goalie jumps up and either blocks the ball over the crossbar or catches it

Reflex Dives:

- 1: goalie stands on the goal line, facing the back of the goal
- 2: the goalie has their legs spread and rolls the ball through their legs to their coach
- 3: coach quickly takes a shot
- 4: the goalie turns and gets set after they roll the ball away and saves the shot made by the coach