



Goalkeeping (body position, footwork, catching)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To help goalkeepers work on and improve the technical aspects of proper footwork, body position and handling the ball, through team training.

1) Dribbling / Hands Warm-Up (15 to 20 minutes):

One ball per player. All players, including goalkeepers, freely dribble with inside and outside of their feet. Change speed & direction, and perform moves. *Version 2:* The GK's in the group get rid of their soccer balls. The field players call out their names and pass the ball towards them so that the goalkeepers can begin to field the soccer balls with their hands (on the ground first, then change to service in air).

Coaching Points:

- Make sure when catching ball, the hands always lead, not the knees.
- Prior to catching the ball, get into a "Gorilla" shape...shoulders rounded, knees bent, feet square to body, arms out to sides and slightly forward with elbows slightly bent, palms facing forward.
- Always be on balls of the feet, moving while ball is moving, ready to come out to meet the ball or cut down the angle.
- Getting set when shooter plants non-kicking foot to shoot.
- "W" hand position for chest high and overhead balls. The "W" is formed by the thumbs and index fingers.
- Both palms of the hands must always be turned outwards to the ball. This means the body position will have to be adjusted to ensure that both palms get behind the ball. The object is to present the maximum amount of palm and fingers to the ball.
- Hands leading (bent elbows, giving a strong, shock-absorbing effect), shoulders square to the ball.
- Hands together, fingers pointed towards ground for low balls...shovel ball into body (scooping low and into body).

2) Shooting Warm – Up (15 to 20 minutes):

Set up two goals about 40 yards apart and the width of the penalty area, with GK's in each and have players partner up with a ball. Partners dribble and pass together around the area, call out the GK's name and then shoot on net (to warm them up). *Version 2:* Player with ball can play ball outside the area (into the flanks) to their partner to get a cross off. If GK makes save, can quickly throw ball out to player who crossed it. *Version 3:* Partners now try and dribble at GK with partner and try to score.

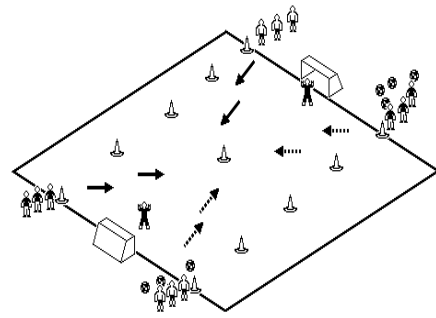
Coaching Points:

- Coach should be behind goalkeeper (if there is an assistant coach, he can coach another goalkeeper in the other goal) reinforcing coaching points listed in Activity #1

2) **Shooting Stars (15-20 minutes):**

Two goals set about 2 penalty boxes apart with cones separating field into two. Split team into two teams, yellow and blue. Blue has half of their team, with soccer balls, at one side of one goal, and the other half of their team at the other goal (on the opposite side), without soccer balls. Yellow will set up the same way. A blue player in the group with the soccer balls passes across to a blue player opposite them. The blue player receiving the pass tries to run onto it, receive it before the half way mark, and then has 1-2 touches to get a shot off by the halfway mark. Yellow is doing the same task at the same time. Have them switch sides; choose which foot they pass it to and which foot shooter shoots with. *Version 2:*

Make it competitive and first team to 10 goals win.

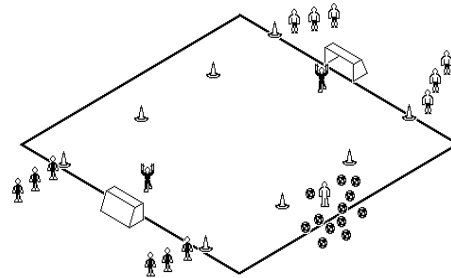


Coaching Points:

- Coach should be behind goalkeeper (if there is an assistant coach to help, he can work with the goalkeeper in the other goal) reinforcing coaching points listed in Activity #1.

3) **GK / Team Challenge (15 to 20 minutes):**

Split teams into two (blue and yellow). Blue group is at one goal (on both sides of goal) and yellow is at the opposite goal (on both sides of goal). Have a server on the side with all of the soccer balls. Server calls out number of players they want from each team and plays ball into area (number can vary-2/3/4). Players try to score and must keep track of their goals. First team to 10 goals wins. Server can take a shot on a goalkeeper as well to keep them on their toes.



Coaching Points:

- Coach should again position themselves behind goalkeeper and reinforce coaching points listed in Activity #1

5) **6v6 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):**

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers may change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive technical goalkeeping points (on balls of their feet, hands out in front, attack the ball, "W" hand position, etc.).

5) **Cool-down (10 minutes):**

Individual juggling; have them compete to see who gets the most in a 2 minute period.