



Field Hockey BC Goalkeeping Fundamentals

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GOALKEEPING FUNDAMENTALS

This document provides instruction on basic goalkeeping technique and includes a few basic drills that can be done with or without field players. I am grateful to Michael Mahood and Jon Mackinnon (current and former National Team goalkeepers) for providing their feedback on the instruction. All photographs in this document are of Michael Mahood.

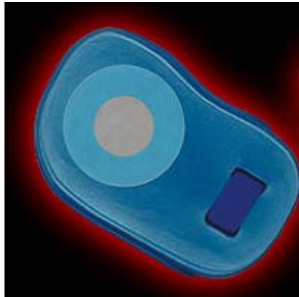




The goalkeeper is probably the single most important player on the field and should be trained as such. The training of goalkeepers on a team cannot be an afterthought. It is a very specialized position requiring special attention and training. It is your job as a coach to engineer a safe, productive, and positive learning environment for the keeper. To help do this:

- Make sure the athlete has the right equipment and make sure that it fits
- Place importance on the position, convey the importance and prestige of the position to the athletes/ team
- Train athletes that actually want to and have fun playing the position
- Do not simply pick the teams and have the last athlete standing play in net
- Do not put your worst athlete in net
- Make sure the keeper is warm, stretched and progressed through slower paced shots before receiving full paced shots
- Make time for specific training as often as possible
- Be conscious of integrating the keeper into drills and small games work as often as possible

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality helmet 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mouth guard 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throat collar (or helmet with extended chin – wear Velcro throat collar if this is the case) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body Armor (chest, arm and shoulder protection) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pelvic / abdominal protector 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elbow pads 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Padded shorts with hip and thigh protection 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knee pads • High density foam pads 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High density foam kickers 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High density foam glove/blocker	 
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High density foam gauntlet	 
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Light stick – goalie or indoor stick	

- **BASIC STANCE**

- Body relaxed
- Weight evenly distributed on both feet
- Weight on the balls of feet not the heels
- Fingers of glove hand pointed up at 45 degrees to the body allowing for quick response especially on high shots
- Toe of stick higher than handle with stick face slightly open

Movement

- Use small steps to allow for quick changes in direction
- Remain balanced when moving
- Always face the ball, even when recovering to position or getting up after a diving save
- Be conscious the goalkeeping movements at all times should be natural, there should be a “feel” and “flow” to the movements



BLOCK SAVES - basic

Fundamental save using the kicker to block the ball without effort made to aggressively clear or redirect the ball on contact/impact.

- Track the line of the ball with the head/eyes and watch it right onto the kicker
- The head will turn the shoulders
- Turn lead foot sideways (toe out) so you can attack the ball with the instep of the kicker – use the largest stopping surface possible to make the save
- Open the hips to the path of the ball to allow:
 - Instep of lead foot to meet the ball
 - Turn the back foot/ trailing foot into the save (toe of back foot points in direction of rebound)
- Head always stays over the ball at the point of impact to help keep balance and help keep the ball down on the rebound
- For balls hit into the corner requiring more of a reach to save the ball execute as above but be conscious that after impact on lead leg/kicker, the trailing leg should join the lead leg as quickly as possible to prepare for rebound



BLOCK SAVES – with clear

When space and time permits the keeper can meet the ball more aggressively and generate enough force to clear the ball instead of just simply blocking it.

As with the simple block:

- Use small steps to move
- Lead with the head to track the line of the ball
- Turn the shoulders
- Turn the hips
- Attack the ball with the instep of the lead foot with the head over the ball at point of impact
- Stay balanced – do not let hands or head lag behind body as keeper moves toward the ball
- Avoid dropping knee of trailing foot to the ground
- Try and keep toe of trailing foot on the ground to help generate power and momentum into save



BASIC MOVEMENT ACROSS THE CIRCLE

Movement across the D should be natural for the goalie. Break the footwork down only if the keeper is having trouble moving smoothly across the circle.

Options to initiate movement:

- a) Drop the outside foot, pivot on it and run to the next spot
- b) Drop the inside foot, pivot on it and run to the next spot
- Train basic movements with and without pads to reinforce the patterns
- Use small steps and take the quickest line to your destination (if time allows, moving across the net in a slight arc will allow you to cut down the potential angles of the shot)
- Train the keeper to use basic landmarks to orient themselves in the net and in the circle (penalty stroke spot, corner flags, opposite net)

Positioning at the posts

- Outside leg flush with the post
- Feet at 45 degrees to the end line
- Stick down in anticipation of cutting off a cross into the circle with a dive if necessary

LOW STRAIGHT SHOTS

Medium pace/ off pace/ bouncing balls

- a) Block save
- b) Cross over clear
 - Support/ safety foot turned sideways to provide safety if you miss the ball on the cross over clear
 - Lead leg comes across the support leg to clear the ball sideways

Hard or close hit balls

- a) Block save
- b) Feet snapped together presenting the biggest possible barrier to shot

LOW RAISED SHOTS

- Attack the ball by exploding to get in its path
- Get front face of pad square behind the ball (biggest stopping surface behind ball)
- Bend the knee of the lead leg and get it above the line of the ball. This creates an angle that will redirect the ball back down into the turf
- If shot is hard, simply snap pads together and bend knees to redirect ball back down into turf
- Use stick to contain and control rebound and step forward and clear the ball

HIGH SHOTS

- Pick up the line of the ball right away and use good footwork to get into position early
- Track the ball right on to the glove or stick to make the save
- Moderate pace shots– angle downward with pad or blocker, if possible control the rebound with the stick and then clear
- High pace shots– redirect over or wide of net with blocker or stick

Use of the glove/blocker

- To save high shots on the left side of the body
- If time permits the glove should be used to save shots on the right side of the body (close to the torso) as well
- Think simply about catching the ball in the left hand
- depending on the location and speed of the ball the blocker is used to redirect the ball wide of/over the net or back down onto the turf

Use of the stick/Gauntlet

- wide saves on the stick side should be made as if catching the ball with your right hand
- the stick should be seen as an extension of the right hand
- stick face should be slightly open to allow for redirection wide of or over the net



DIVING

Diving should only be used as a last resort as it leaves the keeper out of position for a second attempt at net.

- As always pick up the ball early and track it right to the point of contact
- If movement is necessary prior to the lunge take quick small steps
- The outside leg generates most of the momentum necessary for the save
- Always preload the muscle by bending the knees (to load the quads) and explode into the path of the ball – “load and explode”
- The ball side hand always leads the motion with the weak side hand coming across the body to provide more of a barrier, this will allow the keeper to land on his/her side rather than the stomach - leading with the weak side hand (non ball side) will result in over rotating and rolling over on to the belly. Leading with the ball side hand will:
 - increase safety as the less protected sides of the keeper are not exposed
 - keep the goalie in position to make a quick low save
 - allow the keeper to recover to a standing position quicker and more safely
- hands move under the helmet to avoid restricting vision
- avoid finishing on your front (belly)– finish on your side
- always face the play when recovering from a dive

Learning Progressions:

- on the knees
- from a crouch position

GETTING UP AFTER A DIVE

- roll off the hip
- push up with fist or forearm
- bottom leg folds under top leg
- top leg plants and goalie rises unto upright position



SLIDING

The decision to slide in order to dispossess an attacking forward is made based on the control the forward has over the ball. If the ball is under control and the forward has their head up, the goalie should play the 1v1 and try to channel. If the ball is not under control and the forward has their head down then the goalkeeper may attempt to dispossess using the slide.

- quickly close the distance to the attacker
- execute a controlled drop in front of the attacker
 - Slide is executed on the outside of the leg and hip not on the knee or bum
 - line up the belly button or the knees with the ball
 - “fold” the hips into the turf
 - Stack the pads one on top of the other
 - Left hand up to stop a raised shot, right arm close to the body
 - Stick angled at 45 degrees to keep the ball within a playable zone
 - Upper body presented square to the ball to provide the biggest possible stopping surface

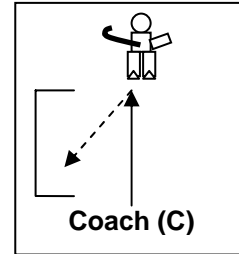


BASIC GOALKEEPING DRILLS

BLOCK SAVES

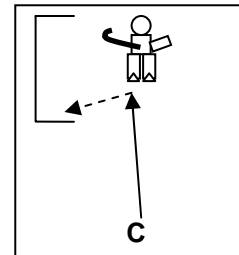
Drill 1 – Simple block saves

- Coach rolls balls from approx 10 yards away to the goalies right kicker
- Goalie executes a simple block save and directs rebound into the goal as shown
- Coach then serves from opposite side to work the left leg
- **Can be used to train the crossover clear for low/med pace bouncing balls**



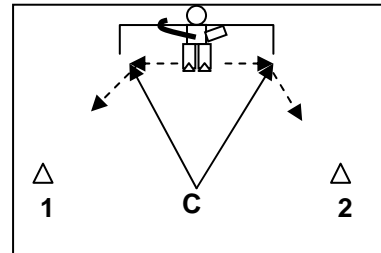
Progressions:

- Increase ball speed
- Increase the frequency of serving to test quick footwork (10-20 balls per set)
- Have the goalie run up and attack the ball to clear with more force
- Bring the goalie further down field and execute the same drill, forcing them to direct the rebound at a wider angle



Drill 2 – Block saves – wide

- Goalie starts in the middle of the net and balls are served further and further wide of the goalie forcing them to extend and block/clear the ball (players at cones 1 and 2 are only in play for the progression)
- **Can be use to train low raised shots, high shots, and diving**



Progressions:

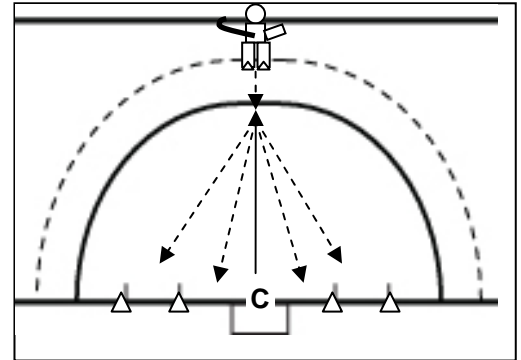
- Increase ball speed
- Vary the ball speed forcing the keeper to either work harder to get across or move off their line to meet the ball and make the save
- Add players or additional goalies at the cones to play/kick the rebound back in and force the goalie to make additional saves
- Players at wide cones can have additional balls and force the goalie to play two separate shots eg. If coach serves to the keepers left foot forcing a clear to player 2, the keeper stays to play a rebound from player 2 and has to immediately get to the other post to play an additional shot from player 1

Drill 3 - Run and clear

- Coach rolls ball toward the keeper who runs aggressively toward the ball and clears hard over the end line into one of the wide zones designated by the cones beside the net

Progressions:

- Increase ball speed
- Alternate left and right leg clears
- Allow clears into wide zones only
- Introduce a second ball shortly after the first so the goalie has to continue toward the net and make a second clear

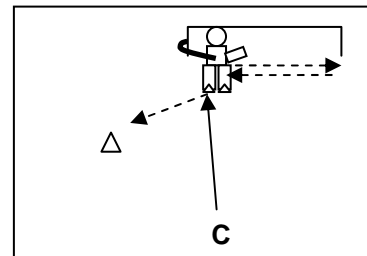


Drill 4 – Lateral movement and clear

- Keeper starts off in the middle of the net and has to move to the left post and back to the middle to save a ball with their feet
- **Can be used to train low raised shots, high shots, and diving**

Progressions:

- Increase the distance the keeper has to cover gradually (work up to having them on one post and going all the way across the net to the other post and back)
- Increase ball speed
- Increase ball speed and decrease reaction time to the point of forcing a lunge save with the lead leg or a low dive across to save the ball
- Add player or additional goalie at the cone to play/kick the rebound back in and force the goalie to make additional saves
- Add another serving position so that the goalie has to make two saves, one at the left post and one at the right

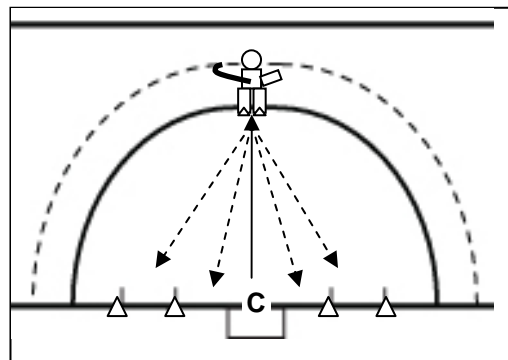


Drill 5 – Quick feet

- Coach rolls balls toward the keeper who clears hard over the end line into one of the wide zones designated by the cones beside the net
- Frequency of rolls should be high to work on quick footwork

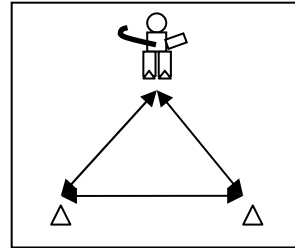
Progressions:

- Increase number of balls per set
- Increase ball speed
- Alternate left and right leg clears
- Gradually bring the goalie closer to the server to further decrease reaction time



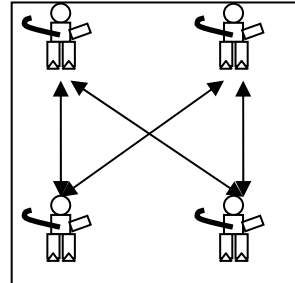
Drill 6 – Passing and receiving (pairs or threes)

- Any combinations of goalies and players can pass/kick the ball back and forth to test footwork and accuracy



Drill 7 – Passing and receiving (fours)

- Any combinations of goalies and players can pass/kick the ball back and forth to test footwork and accuracy



Goalkeeper training options for mini-games:

- 1 keeper defending two goals – keeper has to shuttle between goals depending on the run of play – works footwork, game awareness and anticipation, and fitness
- Have the keepers switch nets at regular intervals within a mini game (without stopping the game)- provides an additional fitness component and forces teams to play either safely or aggressively to take advantage of the transition time

PENALTY CORNERS

SAVING THE DIRECT HIT



DOWN FOR A POSSIBLE HIT AND RECOVERING FOR A FLICK

