



THE GOALIE

The Goalie is the heart and soul of any team. He is the captain of the defense. He should be a strong leader and a good athlete. The goalie must be mentally and physically prepared and ready at all times.

The Goalies main Job is to **STOP THE BALL.**

STANCE – Knees slightly bent feet approx shoulder width apart. Some goalies intentional stand with toes pointed in or out to give a little more chance to get hit by a low shot in the foot. Elbows and hands out away from the body . The goalie must extend his hands to make a save so it follows if his hands are tight to his chest he will need time to extend them instead of already having them ready to make a save.

HOLDING STICK – Place strong hand on upper part of shaft so it almost touches the plastic. Bottom hand need to be in a comfortable position so goalie can make save and pass ball. The farther away from the goal the shooter is the lower the stick head of the goalie can be. Most goalies have gone to shorter shafts these days. Make sure the shaft is not too long as to get in the way.

POSITIONING – When goalie is standing with heels on the goal line he should take his stick(the butt end) and reach his arms out and draw an arc from post to post. He should then make a mark where he thinks the center of that arc is in front of the goal. The goalie should be in his stance with his toes touching touching the ARC. This is what will guide his positioning for shots. From this ARC the goalie will take the shortest **ANGLE** to the ball

Once a Goalie understands **THE ARC** he needs to learn how to make saves.

The Goalies eyes should be focused on the ball. In other words the head of the stick where the ball is. He plays position on the arc according to where the ball is not the shooters body. This is a very common mistake you will see. Simply mention 'Play the ball not the body' when you see your goalie do that (and he will).

MAKING A SAVE – Once a player takes a shot the goalie should be doing the following

1. Stepping towards the flight of the ball
2. Hands extended will punch at the ball
3. Catch the ball in flight or deaden the ball on a low bounce shot
4. Yell ' CLEAR ' once he has secured the ball

HIGH SHOTS – The best way to play this type of shot is to pretend you are playing catch with the shooter. Concentration on the ball is very important here because you must see the ball clearly. The hands will play an important role on the high shot as you will almost always be stopping with the stick not the body. Lead with the hands and the feet/body will follow.

LOW SHOTS- These shots demand a lot more technique and focus. Once the ball is obviously coming low the goalie steps to the ball but has the head of his stick on the ground past a 90 degree angle. The object is to simply deaden the ball not scoop the low shot. Some goalies will get good at scooping but there is more room for error here. In either case the goalie must assume he will miss the ball and his body will make the save. If he does that he will smother low shots. Once the ball is deadened the goalie rakes it into his stick and runs the clear.

SHOTS FROM IN TIGHT – The key to playing these shots is to keep your stick head at the same level as the stick head of the shooter. **COVER THE STICK** is the call from a coach. Anticipation also plays a huge roll in tight shots. If player is coming from behind the goalie must stay tight to the post until he need to step to the ball. The longer he stays at the post the less room he gives the shooter.

SHOTS FROM A FEED – This is the toughest save for a goalie. He must pivot, refocus on shooters stick and then make a save quickly. Footwork is important. Some goalie stay on the arc facing opposite and some stay tight to the goal line. It is a feel thing for goalies. See what feels comfortable for the player. The quicker he is able to **COVER THE STICK** of the shooter the better chance he has at making a save.

SCREENED SHOTS – This is where it is so important to try to follow the ball in the players stick. You may lose sight of it for a split second but the goalies will be able to anticipate and make the save is he knows where the ball is coming from. Try to get your defenders to move offensive players opposite shooter. Otherwise maintain position and move head to look around the screen. It isn't always the offense doing the screening. **TALK TO THE DEFENSE.**

MOVIN TO THE BALL – make sure the goalie no only move towards the ball (out) but moves across as well so he doesn't go past the shooters stick he is right at it when he shoots.

COMMUNICATION – The goalie is the QB of the defense. He must be constantly telling his defense where the ball is and how to play it. **TOP LEFT, SIDE RIGHT, ETC...** are the calls.

The goalie must tell defense how close they are to the goal as well.. **'GET ON HIM, TOO CLOSE, SHoOTING RANGE, ETC..**

When ball is loose in front of cage goalie yells **'CHECK STICKS'**.

As ball approaches the GLE(Goal Line Extended) from behind goalie yells **'HOLD'** indicating to defender he need to stop players progress towards top side.

Once players get more advanced and know what slides they are responsible for the goalie may yell something like **'WHO'S HOT or YOU'RE NOW HOT, etc..**

GOALIE WARMUP

1. Every goalie should get a proper warmup at every practice.
2. Person warming goalie need to remember this warmup is for the goalie
3. You will be working your way up to harder shots. **START SLOWLY**
 - A. Begin with softer shots stick side high (make sure goalie is attacking the ball).
 - B. Center high
 - C. Offside high
 - D. Offside hip
 - E. Stick side hip
 - F. Work on low shot technique with slower shots
 - G. Progress to harder low shots
 - H. Work you way back up high and shoot harder at all spots
 - I. Extra work to offside hip. This is the toughest save
 - J. Make sure keeper is making good passes back to coach
 - K. Work on trouble spots, ask goalie how he feels make sure he is attacking the ball
 - L. If you feel keeper is confident and moving well shoot to score just before he joins team mates for next drill
 - M. Always, Always try to build up the keepers confidence. If he is struggling take shots he can save and boost his confidence until he gets better.
 - N. Put 5-10 balls around crease and stand up field a bit, have goalie call **'CHECK STICKS'** and rake ball and hit coach with a pass.
 - O. **REMEMBER HIS JOB IS TO STOP THE BALL.**
 - P. Try feeder drill on next page

DRILLS

WALL BALL FOR GOALIES – Have goalie face the wall standing about 15 feet away. Coach stands behind goalie and throws ball at wall without letting goalie know where it is coming from. Goalie then reacts to ball coming off wall and makes save. Once he gets used to it you can move him closer to the wall or shoot harder to make him react quicker as you go along. This is one of the best drills you can do.

TWO PERSON NO STICK CATCH – Have coach or 2 goalies stand about 3 or 4 yards apart with equipment on but no stick. Player 1 then lobs ball in same fashion as the shooting warmup. Player 2 then uses fundamentals to extend hands and catch the ball. Make sure the lead foot comes and the trail follows. This can be done with goalies as soon as they get to the field. Use tennis balls or real balls. Make sure when they catch the ball they look the same way every time . GOOD STANCE ELBOWS OUT. BALL SHOULD BE AT CHEST LEVEL WHEN THEY FINISH(catch). Player 2 then lobs to player 1. Try to do 10 each and stretch and resume with 3 or 4 reps.

FOOTWORK – Place players stick on the ground so they form a t. One player at a time hops with 2 feet up/across/back/up across/back, etc.. try to do about 30 seconds and then rotate players. You can do any number of different hop steps without any aids but the stick or a line on the field. When they rotate have other player stretch and encourage team mate.

TENNIS BALL WARMUP – use tennis balls. Have goalie in all equipment without stick. Have him hold his hands behind his back and stand on his ARC. Proceed to shoot tennis balls so goalie has to step to ball and have ball hit his body or head. Increase the pace of shots as he starts to move better. Emphasis that it is his movement you are concerned with not whether the ball goes in the goal. Lots of goalie really get into trying to head the ball back to the coach.

TENNIS BALL SHAFT WARMUP – use tennis balls. Same drill as above but goalie has shaft in his hand. We use a wooden stick for the weight. Now you are progressing to punching the hands at the ball with the lead and trail leg advancing to the goal. Have players try to punch the ball as far as they can. Some will get good at it and punch it back to the coach. Make sure their hands are positioned on the stick correctly and they are advancing their hands to the ball.

SIDE TO SIDE – Have 2 players stand approx 12 –15 yards from the cage. One is set for right handed shot the other for a left handed shot. Those players simply move the ball back and forth stepping in each time they catch then stepping back. They are trying to get the goalie moving side to side. When they feel it they shoot to score and keeper makes save and quickly passes ball to player and you continue. Watch the keepers feet as they move. Make sure steps aren't too big or too small. Have balls on top with shooters. Have shooters run with ball to shoot sometimes. Goalie should take 1/2 step for approx every 2 steps the shooter takes.

FEEDERS – Coach should take ball behind cage. Have a player in the crease. Carry ball so keeper has to move from pipe to pipe and play feeder. Now do the same but throw feed to player(who shoots to score) and work on keepers pivot and save technique.

STICK SKILLS – Goalies can go to the wall and work on their stick work like any other position player. Try to get them in line drills whenever possible. ESPECIALLY OVER THE SHOULDER. This is a pass the goalie really needs to be proficient at. Emphasis how important it is to throw the ball over the shoulder to where the player will be not where he is when he throws pass. If he misses it he can still be going up field and get possession of the ground ball. Otherwise if player misses pass the keeper is now facing a fastbreak. Most goalies will only use their strong hand. It is important to teach the face dodge as they will use it in a crunch.

