

Tactics is decision-making. A goalkeeper's decisions must be made quickly, on the fly, taking rapidly changing conditions into account. A goalkeeper's decisions are also final, since there is usually no one behind them to back them up if they make a mistake.

Never Give Up!

A keeper should always remember to never give up on a shot. This is especially true on deflections or breakaways - the goalkeeper who is ready to spring to their feet and try again just might get a chance to make another save. Remember that the shooter is just as likely to flub as the goalkeeper, and the goalkeeper should always be ready to take advantage of the opponent's mistakes.

Don't Act, React

Strangely, the first decision a keeper should make when facing a shot is to not make a decision at all! Instead, the keeper should react to a situation as it develops, rather than acting right away. They should stay patient until the right moment comes.

Rules of thumb for keepers:

1. Force the shooter to decide. Put the pressure on the attacker - make them decide what they should do. If the keeper is already in good position and prepared, they shouldn't need to act too soon.
2. Be ready to pounce on a mistake. As soon as an attacker makes a mistake - a poor touch or pass, a weak shot - that's the goalkeeper's moment to charge in. Look for that opportunity.
3. Be ready to react the moment the ball is shot. It is easy to time the shooter and see exactly when the shot will come. Just before the shot is taken the keeper should get into the ready position, able to spring whatever way the shot goes.
4. Don't Guess! Guessing what an attacker will do should be reserved for penalty kicks, and even then it is not sheer guesswork.

When to Dive

The answer is, "almost never". A good goalkeeper minimizes the need to dive by being in good position, aggressively sweeping up loose balls, and challenging shooters. A dive should only be used as a last resort, and always after the shot has been taken.

Classroom (15 mins)

Bring all GKs together

Have dry erase clipboard, pen and tall cones ready

Where do I distribute the ball after a save?

Once the goalkeeper has the soccer ball, he or she becomes an attacking player. Just like any attacking player, the keeper wants to move the ball towards the other goal in possession if possible.

If a keeper wants to learn how to throw or punt or dropkick the ball better or more accurately, high repetition is required. If the keeper wants to understand who to distribute to and whether to punt or throw, then they have to be put into game situations.

Here are some rules:

1. If the ball comes in from one side, distribute to the other side
2. If your team is under heavy pressure, punt long to relieve pressure
3. If your team needs possession, then throw the ball out to the outside areas of your final third unless players are not open
4. If your teammate is close to you, bowl or roll the ball out underhand
5. If your teammate is farther from you, then sling throw overhand the ball to get it there quickly and to cover more distance
6. If your teammate is standing, then throw to their feet, don't lead them into space
7. If your teammate is running, then lead them into the space they are moving to

Classroom (15 mins)

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What should I say to my teammates?

Goalkeeping is something that takes a lot of experience to be really successful. This is exactly why you see top-level goalkeepers playing into their 40s. The prime age for a goalkeeper is actually about 30 years old.

Why? It is all about experience and how well you are able to direct and command your penalty area and goal. The more situations you experience, the better you will be to thwart out opportunities before they actually happen. A big way to do this is by communication. Knowing what, when and how to say it is critical for the goalkeeper.

Most young goalkeepers do not talk because they do not know what to say. It is unrealistic to think they will just start talking on the field. They need lots of experience and practice.

Turn-- telling a teammate when they have time and can turn the ball without pressure from a defender

Man-on -- telling a teammate when they are under pressure

Push-up -- telling their defenders to squeeze up the field and push our shape forward

Away -- tell teammates that they need to clear the ball away because you are holding your ground in goal

Goalside -- tell teammates that they need to get between an opponent and the goal to play defense

Keeper -- telling your teammates that you are coming for the ball. This is the most important word in your vocabulary

Always communicate with purpose. Keep it short - 2 or 3 words.

Who should I talk to most often?

Your defenders during the game.

All your teammates that are involved in a set play at your end. Be sure to command the positioning of your team on corner kicks, direct and indirect kicks, and penalty shots.

Classroom (15 mins)

Bring all GKs together

4 balls.

What save do I use? And when?

There are 4 types of saves:

Catch - Using both hands in a “W” shape to cushion the ball. From the waist up. Use when a ball is within reach by power diving, collapse diving, over the head saves, stationary position saves and ground saves.

Basket - Scooping up the ball from your waist down. Or when a shot is too strong to catch. Good for a low, slower shot or when the ball is bobbling around just outside a group in your area. Meant for making a quick save with quick distribution. It’s ultimate goal is to capture the ball so noone else can touch it.

Punch - Using one or two hands to force the ball away from the goal area. When the goal front is crowded and you can’t make a catch or basket save. Typically used during set plays: corners, direct kicks, etc. close to the goal.

Parry - Using your palm to direct the ball around the goal. Typically used when you have to back pedal or are on your weak side/weak foot. Also when you are uncertain if a ball is out of reach and may be on target with the goal.

Demonstrate each type of save.

Show proper hand positioning, body placement, and technique.

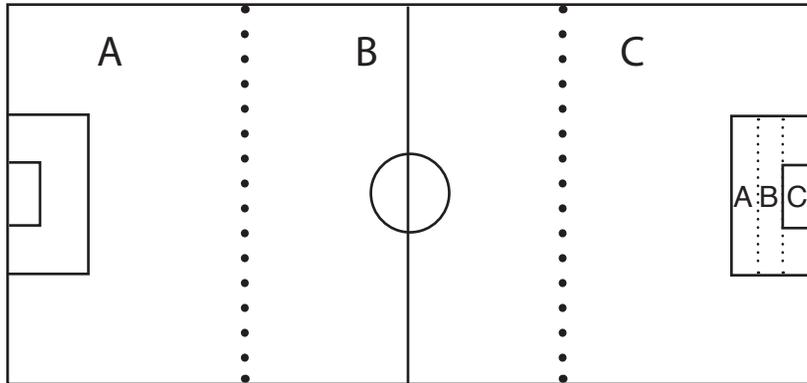
Classroom (20 mins)

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Where do I stand? Why?

Think of the field in 3 sections (A = top 1/3, B = middle 1/3, C = back 1/3). The 18 yd box is also split into thirds. You are positioned in the 18 yd third that equals where the ball is in the field third.



By positioning yourself in “A” you can become the last defender if the ball is quickly sent from the opposite end over your defenders. You have a much better chance at getting to the ball first if you are at the top of the 18.

Where do I distribute the ball after a save?

Once you make the save do one thing... relax and protect the ball. Then survey the field. Where is your team? Where is the other team? Get into a comfortable position to distribute the ball. WAIT! Is anyone behind you?

If you intend to **punt or drop-kick** the ball, make sure you have teammates where you intend to send the ball to. You always want to keep possession. Good choice if the opponent is still in your third.

If opponent is in middle third by the time you are ready to distribute you can play it out of the back field with a **throw or roll**. This is also a good choice if the opponent’s team is weighted on one side or the other of the field. If so, send to the opposite side as the opponent.