



# 1. Introduction

Football is a sport that has been immensely enjoyed by players and spectators of all ages for many years. The sport evolved naturally from early ball games with improvements being gradually introduced. There were few rules in the earliest forms of the sport which resulted in spontaneity and brute force prevailing. The first signs of organisation began to appear in the games of football being played in English schools at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Gradually the game was taken up outside the school environment and clubs were formed. The cornerstone of football as we know it today was the foundation of the first football federation, the "Football Association", in London on 26 October 1863. The development of football then gathered pace; rules were drawn up and progressively refined.

On **8 December 1863**, rules were introduced to prohibit players handling the ball. One player was exempt: the goalkeeper. This can be considered the **"date of birth of the goalkeeper"**. Initially the position of goalkeeper was allocated to a team member haphazardly. The sole criterion was the player's height. The first reflections on the role of the goalkeeper appeared in 1871. But by the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, goalkeepers were still not differentiated from other players in terms of appearance or the way in which they played the game. Spectators also did not view goalkeepers in a different light. Innovations gradually appeared: in 1878, a cord was strung between the posts to serve as the forerunner to the crossbar, although it was not until 1893 that goal nets were used.

It was in this era that one goalkeeper stood out from the crowd. His innovative style made him an unforgettable figure for spectators and led to a decisive change in the behaviour of goalkeepers. This man was John Robinson, who introduced the concept of diving to save the ball.

The development of the goalkeeper's role was influenced by the development of the rules: the introduction of dead-ball situations (corner kicks, penalty kicks, etc.) as well as offside, throw-ins and restricting goalkeepers to handling the ball in their own penalty areas. The goalkeeper carries out not only a basic defensive role, but is also involved in the team's attacking moves by rapidly returning the ball to play by long, accurate throws or kicks. The goalkeeper's scope of action has increased as football has developed. Clearances by a high ball have become a natural part of the goalkeeper's game. Goalkeepers are also much more likely to sprint outside their penalty areas to block attacks. There are now even goalkeepers who take penalties. And if a

team is losing towards the end of a match, the goalkeeper will often come up to challenge in the opponent's penalty area. Some goalkeepers have even managed to score an equaliser. One of the goalkeeper's fundamental roles is also to organise team-mates by shouting during defensive phases of play.

The most recent significant change of the regulations was the introduction of the "back pass" rule. This change imposed a new requirement on goalkeepers: it obliged them to develop their skill of controlling the ball with their feet. Many goalkeepers now have skills similar to outfield players in this respect.

The goalkeeper's importance in the development of football is evident from times gone by as well as the more recent past. Some goalkeepers have contributed to the development of the game through their amazing accomplishments: the names of Yashin, Banks, Maier, Fillol, Zoff, N'Kono, Schmeichel, Barthez, Kahn, Buffon and Casillas are deeply etched in the memories of football fans. Despite the achievements of these excellent goalkeepers from the recent and more distant past, it is still relevant to ask:

### **"What are the expectations and demands that modern football places on the goalkeepers of today and tomorrow?"**

Matches in recent European competitions and World Cups have caused the goalkeeper's position to be reappraised. This can be clearly seen by the approach to the following factors:

#### **Training**

- the creation of the position of goalkeeping coach has been positive,
- the systematic development of all the goalkeeper's qualities,
- an individual preparation plan for each goalkeeper is recommended and indeed even required,
- tests allow training to be highly personalised,
- training is adapted to the player's age and performance level.

#### **Technical aspects**

- goalkeeping techniques have not changed over the last 20 years,

- the major change concerns playing the ball with feet, relating to:
  - the “back pass” rule,
  - playing as part of the defensive line with the goalkeeper taking the role of a libero.

### Physical aspects

- clubs seek out very tall goalkeepers,
- the modern game means that all a player’s physical attributes have to be developed in individual coaching sessions,
- the excellent physical qualities of outfield players make the goalkeeper’s task more difficult, particularly when dealing with a high ball.

### Psychological aspects

- handling the heavy training loads,
- coping with the enormous pressure due to the specific nature of the position (competition for places),
- accepting responsibility for results,
- coping with day-to-day pressure from the media and the management as well as due to the club’s financial situation.

### Tactical preparation

- the goalkeeper takes an active part in attacking play and assumes the role previously occupied by a libero in defensive play,
- blocking opponents outside the penalty area has become more common.

### Laws of the Game

- the “back pass” rule,
- releasing the ball after six seconds.

### Equipment improvements

- *gloves*
  - adapted to the surface coatings of footballs and the weather conditions,
  - finger protection.
- *clothing*
  - lightweight clothing that keeps goalkeepers warm and protects them from rough pitches.
- *boots*
  - adapted to different pitch surfaces and weather conditions.

- *footballs*
  - the use of new materials makes life more difficult for goalkeepers,
  - the speed of the ball has doubled over the last 30 years while the goalkeeper’s reaction time has remained the same.
- *the pitch*
  - increasing use of artificial pitches (synthetic turf).

Taking into account all of the developments in football that have made the goalkeeper’s role much more difficult, it is very useful to offer methods and ideas that can assist goalkeepers in their daily training and help them cope with all eventualities.

When describing the progress a goalkeeper makes, from an inexperienced youngster to a proficient, confident goalkeeper, we use certain key words, words that will be developed in this book:

If a six-year-old **beginner goalkeeper** is to become a goalkeeper who can offer excellent **sporting performances**, then he or she must pass through various stages of **general preparation**. These stages are characterised by the player’s personal development (physical, psychological, social) as well as by an appropriate training load. The **coaching process** must be systematically **planned** and must take into consideration the specific requirements of the **age category** and **performance level**. The goalkeeper acquires new **skills** and improves existing skills through regular training. There must be appropriate **physical preparation** if the coaching process is to be effective. We can test the player’s physical capacities and systematically develop these during training. If a goalkeeper is to demonstrate in a match what has been learned during training, he or she must also benefit from **psychological preparation**. The progressive development of a goalkeeper’s performance also depends on their health. It is important to avoid injury. With this in mind, it is desirable for a goalkeeper to have a very healthy lifestyle.

This book targets a broad audience: both amateur and professional footballers, as well as coaches and instructors. We hope that there is something to help everyone improve and work towards excellent match performances, while offering options to improve training programmes and make

them more interesting. The text is accompanied by photos that greatly assist comprehension. Clubs often do not have the financial resources to hire a goalkeeping coach. For this reason it is important to provide all the knowledge and advice necessary to help goalkeepers and highlight the relevance of individually targeted work.

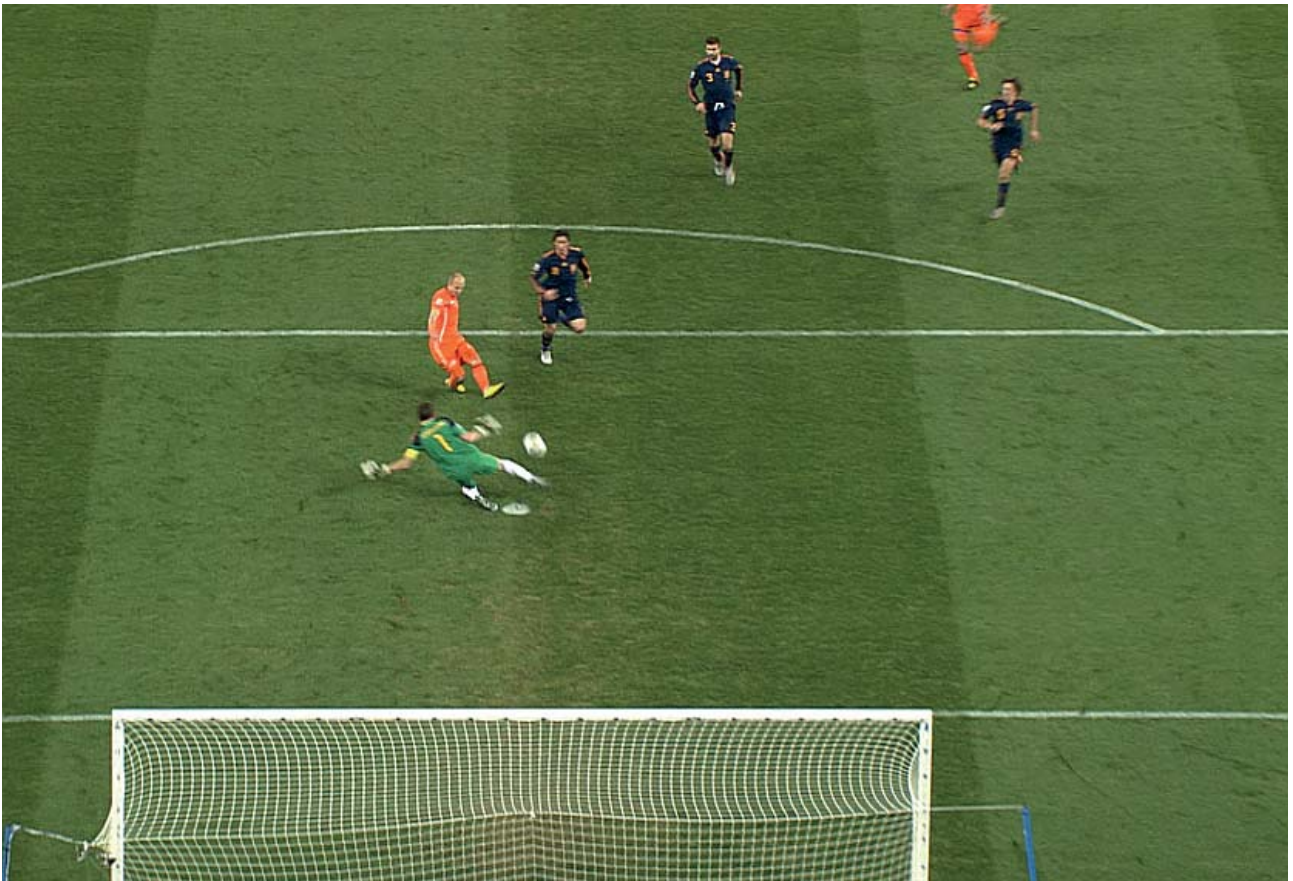
How do the book and DVDs work together?

The three DVDs demonstrate relatively “traditional” approaches to developing goalkeepers’ technical qualities and physical capacities. There is a wide choice of training

exercises, even for the youngest players, that present tasks ranging from the simple to the complex. These exercises can be combined and modified.

The book serves as a guide and user’s manual to allow optimal use of the materials provided. At the start of each chapter (physical preparation) there is a brief explanation of the issues dealt with, including definitions, explanatory notes and general application for the players. The concepts have been analysed from the goalkeeper’s point of view such that they are of practical assistance to the goalkeeper’s training.

Thus it is essential to work using both the DVDs and the book.











## 2. General preparation

For a goalkeeper to be successful during a match, not just on one occasion but as often as possible, and for him to be the one who brings the maximum number of points to his team during the season, he must go through a number of stages linked to his development.

This is a long-term process which begins in childhood and ends the day he hangs up his goalkeeping gloves for the last time.

This period may include many stages:

- starting out in goal,
- learning goalkeeping technique,
- developing sufficient physical fitness,
- acquiring mental strength to resist outside influences.

A goalkeeper's performance depends on **3 fundamental factors**, the sum of which represents the goalkeeper's sporting performance:

- **Technique, tactics and theory,**
- **The physical factor,**
- **The psychological factor.**

**A goalkeeper's sporting performance** is his ability to deal with situations which arise during a match or training, using all the skills learnt.



Fig. 1

**Goalkeeping (technique, tactics and theory)** is the goalkeeper's practical activity on the pitch. Defensive tasks can be distinguished in his play, as well as offensive ones. A goalkeeper's play is determined by his technical qualities, linked to his tactical behaviour (individual and group) and theoretical knowledge.

**Physical fitness (physical factor)** is the physical condition at a given moment, which is designed to help the goalkeeper master the training process effectively and contribute to rapid recovery after the workload. The amount of work carried out during the week is not at all relevant during a match itself. Its importance is connected to quality at certain decisive moments:

- where the goalkeeper is able to jump highest and furthest,
- winning the ball before the opponent,
- standing up to challenges.

**Psychological condition (psychological factor)** is reflected in the goalkeeper's positive reaction to the daily training load. During matches, it helps the goalkeeper cope with the pressure of the environment and handle responsibility for the result. It also refers to the goalkeeper's ability to perform successfully at any point in the match, even after he has been inactive for several minutes.

Goalkeeping is an invariable factor. The goalkeeper never forgets the skills learnt in training. Physical fitness and psychological condition are variable factors. They change often (influence of outside factors) and affect the goalkeeper's play (choices made).

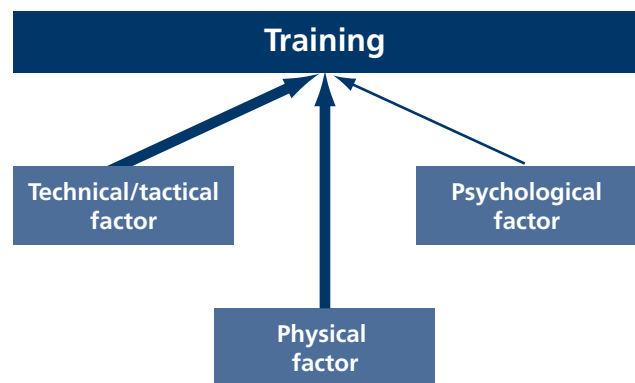


Fig. 2

The level of goalkeeping has the most important role because it determines performance both in training and in a match. Physical fitness, paradoxically, influences training. Psychological pressure, meanwhile, is greater during a match (Figures 2 and 3).



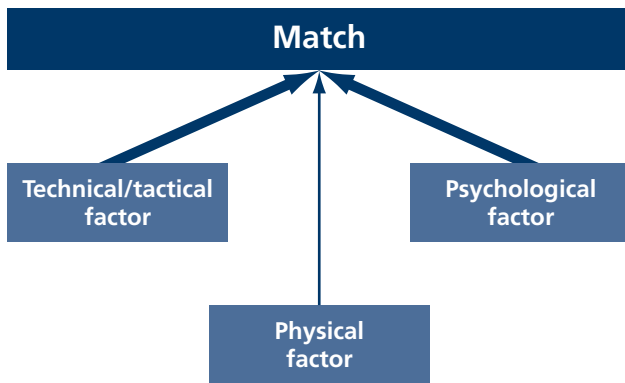


Fig. 3

These figures clearly show the importance of mastering goalkeeping play, with the result being seen in performance during a match. The goalkeeper may be able to run 100m in 10 seconds or lift 100kg weights in the gym, but this is useless if he is unable to catch the ball or read its trajectory correctly. If he masters the technical/tactical factor, the influence of the other two factors will be made easier and may have a decisive impact on his action on the pitch. The better the harmony between the factors, the more

competent the goalkeeper. This is what makes the difference between good, excellent and world-class goalkeepers.

A goalkeeper's good performance in a match is a reflection of his day-to-day work, which can be planned and organised. This is why we talk about the preparation of the goalkeeper.

The goalkeeper's **general preparation** is a long-term process, the aim of which is to get the goalkeeper's sporting performance to an appropriate level.

It comprises:

- **preparation in technique, tactics and theory** ... development of goalkeeping play,
- **physical preparation** ... development of the physical abilities,
- **psychological preparation** ... development of, amongst other things, mental strength.

The better prepared the goalkeeper is, the more his performance improves. Our objective is to help him to make that improvement continuous or maintain it at the highest level (for older goalkeepers).



## 2.1 General preparation for goalkeepers based on age and performance level

For a goalkeeper's general preparation to be effective and to lead to high-level sporting performance, it must be systematic, regular and ongoing. It is organised in several stages in accordance with the global development of the goalkeeper in biological, mental and social terms.

The goalkeeper's general preparation can be analysed from the point of view of:

- age (age category),
- the number of training units according to performance level.

### 2.1.1 General preparation of goalkeepers based on age

Each goalkeeper preparation period is characterised by certain determining factors.

#### 6- to 18-year old category

##### Football school 6-10 years old

- Preparation in technique, tactics and theory
  - first contact with the ball, first steps "in goal",
  - progressive learning of goalkeeping technique,
  - initiation in playing with the ball at feet,
  - learning the rules of the game.
- Physical preparation
  - physical qualities (endurance, speed and coordination) are developed through a variety of games.
- Psychological preparation
  - children at this age always aim to win and finish first,
  - learning to accept defeat,
  - respecting the coach, other team members, the opponents and the referee,
  - introduction to the specific nature of the goalkeeper's position and responsibilities (it must not be forgotten

that, at that age, the result is not the most important thing).

##### Pre-training 11-14 years old

- Preparation in technique, tactics and theory
  - ongoing improvement of the goalkeeping techniques learnt during the previous period,
  - the move onto the big pitch sees the start of regular work on aerial balls (orientation in the penalty area with the help of the lines),
  - improving play with the ball at feet,
  - increasing the difficulty of specific exercises,
  - learning the goalkeeper's role in different formations.
- Physical preparation
  - development of endurance, speed, suppleness and reflexes,
  - coordination with and without the ball.
- Psychological preparation
  - listening to the coach and making own decisions,
  - earning the respect of peers,
  - understanding, recognising and getting to grips with emotions,
  - accepting criticism and comments (start of puberty).

##### Training 15-18 years old

- Preparation in technique, tactics and theory
  - continuing to improve goalkeeping technique,
  - the ability to work on more complicated exercises in goal.
- Physical preparation
  - beginning to develop strength,
  - development of speed, endurance, etc.
- Psychological preparation
  - being able to take decisions and be responsible,
  - learning to assess oneself (self-criticism),
  - becoming aware of a healthy lifestyle,
  - being ambitious, "being hungry for the game" (requesting extra training sessions).



## Senior category

### Transition period 19-22 years old

- Preparation in technique, tactics and theory
  - moving up to the senior category,
  - daily work on goalkeeping technique,
  - adaptation of play to the adult level:
    - the speed of the game increases and the goalkeeper has less time to analyse situations,
    - opponents are more experienced and crafty,
    - the impact in challenges with an opponent is more physical (aerial balls).
  - observing and learning from the experience of older players with whom the player trains every day,
  - taking all opportunities to play matches (reserve team).
- Physical preparation
  - adaptation to changes in the training content, the quantity of work carried out and its intensity,
  - the ability to perform all the exercises with or without the ball.
- Psychological preparation
  - moving up to the senior category:
    - it is rare to be first-choice straight away; the goalkeeper must show patience and continue to work in order to progress,
  - in amateur football, the player must find a balance between the different aspects of life: family, work and football,
  - for professionals:
    - football as a hobby becomes football as a job, with all its advantages and disadvantages,
    - learning to manage fame,
    - resisting pressure from the media,
    - managing personal wealth (surrounding himself with people he can trust).
  - the main objective: becoming the first-choice goalkeeper.

### Period of maturity

- Preparation in technique, tactics and theory
  - complete mastery of all goalkeeping technique,
  - continuing to accumulate experience and, at the same time, knowing how to use it,
  - through good performances, a goalkeeper can earn the chance to make progress at the most prestigious clubs,
  - ambition to be selected for the national team.

- Physical preparation
  - the period of maximum development of physical abilities,
  - the ability to withstand heavy workloads, together with good recovery.
- Psychological preparation
  - self-criticism and acknowledgment of mistakes are necessary for progress,
  - maximum resistance to outside pressures (media, public, pressure of results),
  - knowing how to assimilate poor performances, developing powers of adaptation to cope with change of club, coach, etc.,
  - a stable family situation is an asset for good performances.

### Goalkeepers after the age of 35

- Preparation in technique, tactics and theory
  - with daily work, a high level of performance is maintained,
  - using experience (reading the game, anticipation) to compensate for the reduction of certain physical qualities (speed, capacity to jump).
- Physical preparation
  - reduction in certain physical qualities (speed, capacity to jump),
  - learning to self-manage: the goalkeeper and his coach draw up a programme adapted to the emergence of certain physical limitations,
  - more than ever, listening to one's body and how it feels,
  - the difficulty of returning after a serious injury, which can have consequences for performance.
- Psychological preparation
  - savouring every moment spent on the pitch,
  - playing a leadership role in the group,
  - preparing for forthcoming retirement from the game (a retraining plan, life planning).

### 2.1.2 General preparation based on the number of training sessions

The model described in the previous section is generally recognised for all goalkeepers and concerns their general preparation from the point of view of age. What also has to be taken into account is the following model based on the number of training sessions, allowing theory to be adapted to day-to-day reality. The relationship between the different factors must be taken into consideration when drawing up a model of general preparation (Figure 4).

The more training sessions there are during the week, the easier it is to coherently address technical, physical and psychological preparation in daily work. Conversely, fewer training sessions mean we have to carefully select the content which will help the goalkeeper to progress.



Fig. 4



## 2.2 Planning

The quest for good performances implies a long-term vision. This requires work to be organised according to certain simple, yet fundamental, principles.

The aim of planning in training is to facilitate the conditions which will allow the goalkeeper's performance to improve.

The effectiveness of planning depends on the coach's ability to integrate parameters to improve performance into the construction of the training sessions in terms of composition and content. This makes it necessary to organise preparation in the form of longer and shorter cycles, entailing the organisation of training over different periods:

- **Career plan** (e.g. projection of the goalkeeper's sporting future at the training centre)
- **Annual plan**

At the start of the season, the coach must define the general and individual objectives, linked to the goalkeeper's status and age, which will be worked on in the annual plan (programme). This plan must include the club's objectives and calendar (training courses, matches) and must be consistent with the team's general plan.

The annual plan comprises:

- technical plan,
- tactical plan (the goalkeeper's role in different formations),
- theoretical plan,
- physical plan,
- mental plan.

The plan (programme) must be regularly monitored and adjusted depending on the results obtained and observations made during matches and training.

- **Macrocycles** (long cycles which may last up to several months)

We define macrocycles for:

- preparation (development of performance factors).  
Depending on the country, the preparation may be:
  - summer and winter,
  - just summer (or just winter).

- competition (period of maximum performance),
  - 1 single competition period,
  - 2 periods of competition, autumn/spring or vice versa.
- transition, recovery (recovery period and transition to the next preparation macrocycle).
- **Mesocycles** (3-5 weeks with more specific objectives) – monthly plan.
- **Microcycles** (2-10 days around a very specific objective) – weekly plan.
- **Training unit or minicycle** (2 training sessions)
  - all the programming and planning is realised within a training session,
  - each training session has its own structure, which allows technical, tactical and physical objectives to be achieved.

### 2.2.1 The goalkeeper and planning

Planning the goalkeeper's general preparation is a complicated process.

Drawing up the preparation plan depends on certain factors, namely:

- the specific nature of the position of goalkeeper,
- adapting to team training,
- the limited time available,
- a lack of qualified goalkeeping coaches.

There is no problem in developing training macrocycles or mesocycles because we apply general objectivity in conjunction with the individual needs of each goalkeeper (information from tests and observations). The problem arises with the specific application of the plan in microcycles and training units. It is not enough just to correct the goalkeeper's faults; he must continue to develop the qualities already mastered and be available for the team at all times. In professional football, there are sufficient training sessions during a week with which the goalkeeping

coach can work. But if the team is amateur and only trains once or twice a week, you can imagine the difficulties in implementing a coherent programme to enable a goalkeeper to progress.

*Planning training for goalkeepers clearly involves constant adaptation.*

This is why we need to analyse the issue in greater depth and take into consideration external factors which exist at each level of the hierarchy. Methods, tools and advice can be put forward to improve goalkeepers' day-to-day work.

We need to ask ourselves the questions:

"WHO? WHEN? and WHAT?" is done with goalkeepers in training?

## Young players

### Amateur clubs

#### WHO?

- coach,
- another person (former goalkeeper at the club, current goalkeeper, volunteer),
- agreement with neighbouring clubs to implement specific goalkeeper training sessions.

If the person involved is a former goalkeeper, he will have knowledge of the position. Otherwise documentation or videos will have to be used rather than the person's imagination.

#### WHEN?

- one extra training session,
- before or after group training.

#### WHAT?

1 training session a week is not enough for a detailed general plan.

This is because:

- specific training must be limited to the technical aspect,
- the specific features of each age group must be taken into account,
- physical preparation is carried out as part of group training,
- we introduce the elements of speed and coordination into specific exercises,
- care must be taken in meting out efforts.

### (Well-structured) amateur clubs, professional clubs and training centres

These benefit from better structures than basic amateur clubs, which allows:

- work with the goalkeepers in good conditions,
- sports and school schedules to be harmonised,
- medical support programmes,
- the best players to be discovered and recruited and progress made on a regional and then national level,
- preparation courses to be offered,
- participation in prestigious national and international tournaments,
- the door to be opened to the various national teams.

#### WHO?

- the goalkeeping coach.

#### WHEN?

- use the time when the goalkeeper is not involved in group work,
- additional training,
- before or after group training.

#### WHAT?

- *6-12 years old*
  - the specific nature of the general preparation of young goalkeepers in this age category must be taken into account,
  - it is essential to learn, repeat and perfect basic goalkeeping techniques,
  - this is the age when a young goalkeeper can acquire specific motor skills,
  - a lot of work on coordination, stability, movement, and suppleness with and without the ball.
- *13-18 years old*
  - the players must adapt to eleven-a-side football on a full-sized pitch (technical aspects: aerial balls, tactical aspects: goalkeeper's place in the formation),
  - the goalkeeper's potential must be carefully assessed, noting qualities and faults, to better focus individual work,
  - respecting the rules for each age category, we can work progressively on the four general preparation programmes (technical, physical, tactical and mental).

It may be a good idea to work in short cycles (2 weeks) where technical qualities can be associated with physical qualities (complementary elements):

- aerial balls, returning the ball to play + jumping,
- 1-on-1 challenges, reflex saves + speed,
- standing saves and diving + coordination.

This allows the coach to carry out more in-depth work on the same theme and gather a lot of information. The apprentice goalkeeper can fully concentrate on a chosen aspect of technique. This does not prevent us from continuing to build strength and develop other physical qualities.

## Senior players

### Amateur clubs (1 or 2 training sessions a week)

The factors which may restrict the planning of a goalkeeper's training are:

- age and performance level,
- knowledge and experience,
- the club's facilities,
- the goalkeeper's desire to make progress,
- the player's job (free time and possible fatigue).

#### WHO?

- the goalkeeping coach,
- the goalkeeper working in collaboration with another person (another goalkeeper, player),
- the team coach.

#### WHEN?

- additional training,
- before or after group training.

#### WHAT?

- during the preparation period, the player can carry out physical preparation with the team or during individual training by including physical exercises with the ball,
- during the competition period, time needs to be devoted to technical preparation and work on weak points; this can lead to improved performances on match day,
- in training, work on speed and coordination while respecting work and recovery times (exercises with the ball).

### Amateur clubs (more than 2 training sessions a week)

#### WHO?

- the goalkeeping coach or team coach.

#### WHEN?

- additional training,
- before or after group training.

#### WHAT?

- during the preparation period, the player can carry out physical preparation with the team or during individual training by including physical exercises with the ball,
- during the competition period:
  - physical preparation,
    - development of physical qualities specific to the position at the start of the week (goalkeeper not required for team exercises),
    - gentle strength workout during the rest between two team exercises and after training,
    - work on speed and coordination at the end of the week.
  - technical, tactical and theoretical preparation,
    - work on improving individual technique by practising keeping the ball with the team,
    - participation in tactical work with the team (with the defenders),
    - regular work on aerial balls after training.

### Professional clubs

The goalkeeper works under conditions which allow him to progress. He has enough time for specific training with his coach. The squad includes goalkeepers of different ages, performance levels and status (source of motivation, passing on experience, etc.). This needs to be taken into account in the planning.

#### WHO?

- the goalkeeping coach.

#### WHEN?

- a full specific training session at the same time as group training if the team coach does not need goalkeepers,
- during the time allocated to a group session, before or after training with the players,
- using the time when one of the goalkeepers is not "involved" in an exercise (e.g. game with 2 goals – work with the third goalkeeper),
- individual training during free time.

#### WHAT?

The following components of a professional club's general programme can be developed: technical, tactical, theoretical, physical and psychological preparation.

## Technical preparation

**1. The annual programme** is developed taking into account each goalkeeper's personality, status and age. It is important to target faults properly to allow progressive improvement, without neglecting ongoing work on the strong points.

### 2. Macrocycles:

- *the preparation period*

The objective of this period is to quickly recover "the goalkeeper's instinct" that is partially lost during the holidays:

- handling the ball,
- reading the ball's trajectory,
- sense of orientation on the pitch.

This period is given over to the development of physical skills. Technical qualities are systematically developed during the competition period. The goalkeeper should be at 100% of current abilities by the time of the first league match.

- *the competition period*

The coach has enough time to work on the goalkeeper's progress in the technical domain. All of this is achieved through daily training.

### 3. The monthly programme (mesocycle)

Monthly planning of technical aspects is of no interest as the team's detailed programme is not known. Unlike an apprentice goalkeeper in training with whom we can only work on one particular aspect of technique (aerial balls, etc.) over a longer period (2 to 3 weeks), with a professional goalkeeper we can work on "all aspects of technique simultaneously" on a daily basis. This is why the planning of microcycles (weekly programme) and the establishment of training are much more important.

### 4. Weekly programme (microcycle) and the training unit

The time allocated to individual work in the group session can be used to make progress in different technical areas. The choice of exercises and the number of repetitions depends on our objective but also on the content of the training with the group.

#### Example:

If, during the session, we have 20 minutes of individual training before moving on to 1-on-1 challenges with the players, it is not a good idea

to work on aerial balls. A good preparation for challenges means the goalkeeper can make the most of the session with the team. If we really must work on aerial balls, it is preferable to associate this with a 1-on-1 challenge (e.g. centre, ball punched out, 1-on-1 challenge in the penalty area) or carry out a short additional session on crosses after training with the rest of the team.

Daily training with the group naturally enhances the goalkeeper's technical qualities:

- shooting session – making saves with and without diving,
- small-sided games – reflex saves, 1-on-1 challenges,
- keeping the ball – playing the ball with feet.

We do not experience enough aerial balls when working with the team. This is why we need to incorporate an aerial ball session at least once a week.

## Physical preparation

### 1. The annual programme

In the two periods (preparation period and competition period), the various aspects of physical preparation must be developed taking into account each goalkeeper's profile, the results of respective tests, the calendar of matches, dates of training courses, etc. We must not overlook the transition period (holidays) in this development, as it gives the goalkeeper time to recover and prepare for the start of the new season.

### 2. Macrocycles – planning the 3 periods:

- *the transition period*

Goalkeepers are set an individual programme for their holidays which forms the basis of their work when they return. The programme contains some jogging, strength building (sit-ups, press-ups, core muscle work) and other sports (tennis, cycling, swimming, etc.).

- *the preparation period*

This period begins with tests, the results of which allow us to customise work during the training course and afterwards. A certain hierarchy must be respected when developing different physical abilities: endurance, strength exercises, speed and coordination.

There are more training sessions during the preparation period than the competition period, so we can devote more time to specific work with the goalkeepers.

If using split training sessions, the work focuses on

physical attributes in the morning and purely technical



work in the afternoon. The use of less traditional methods in the preparation period can greatly contribute to bonding and team spirit:

- orienteering,
- hiking in the mountains,
- mountain biking, canoeing, triathlon, etc.
- *competition period*  
Each country organises this period in its own way. There is no break in the competition period in England, while in France the period is divided by a mini-winter break (one week). In other countries (Germany, Slovakia, etc.) there are two periods of competition divided by a transition period (holidays) and a preparation period of varying length. The competition period is also influenced by other parallel competitions (national and international cups) and also by the weather conditions. If we summarise the features of the calendar and add in each individual's needs, we can determine a general outline of physical preparation.

### 3. The monthly programme (mesocycle)

There are a number of approaches to monthly work:

- some coaches have a standard week, with certain days that focus on physical qualities, and they may follow this pattern for several months,
- other coaches have a specific objective for the development of a physical quality for each monthly programme.

Even if there is an overriding objective for a mesocycle, this does not prevent indirect work on other physical abilities at the same time. In the regular cycle of four matches a month, coaches work on the basis of three weeks of development and one week of recovery (work on technique alone). If, for one reason or another, there are more matches per month (TV match brought forward, Cup match), then the programme has to be changed or adapted.

### 4. The weekly plan and the training unit

This is the specific application of the monthly plan.

- classic weekly plan: application of a typical week,
- cyclical weekly plan: the exercises in 2 or 3 training sessions target the development of the physical abilities chosen in the monthly plan. Other abilities are developed indirectly. In general, the training session the day before a match concentrates on improving sharpness. All the exercises are carried out in goal with a ball.

### Tactical preparation

A goalkeeper's tactical preparation takes two forms:

- group training with the team,
- individual:
  - preparation linked to the player's own game on the pitch,
  - adaptation to the next opponent's strengths.

Any problems arising during the match must be discussed the following week. These can even be watched on video and then rectified on the training pitch.

The weekly plan with 7 days (i.e. games on Saturdays )

- Physical work: Tuesday and Wednesday

The weekly plan with 3 days (i.e. games on Saturdays and Wednesdays)

- Physical work: Adapted for each goalkeeper

### Theoretical preparation

Goalkeepers at this level are fully versed in theory, so preparation is only required if there are changes to the rules.

### Psychological preparation

Psychological work is carried out in two complementary dimensions:

- professional work with a sports psychologist (if the club has one),
- practical work with the goalkeeping coach, consisting of observations, discussions and reactions to different subjects and everyday problems.

Weekly programme							Example of a professional club							
Week XX	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
MORNING	Free	Meet 9.30 Training 10.00 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>specific training related to planning</li> <li>the duration is set by the general coach according to the team's needs</li> </ul>	Meet 9.30 Training 10.00 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>specific training</li> <li>the duration is set by the general coach according to the team's needs</li> </ul>	Meet 9.30 Training 10.00 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>warm-up before joining group training</li> </ul>	Free	Preparation for the match	Free							
AFTERNOON	Meet 16.00 Training 16.30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>specific training related to planning</li> <li>the duration is set by the general coach according to the team's needs</li> </ul>	Meet 16.00 Training 16.30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>warm-up before joining group training</li> </ul>	Meet 16.30 Training 17.00 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>additional specific training for individual goalkeepers if required</li> </ul>	Meet 16.00 Training 16.30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free</li> </ul>	Meet 16.00 Training 16.30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>hotel stay to avoid distractions before match</li> <li>specific training (sharpness)</li> <li>the duration is set by the general coach according to the team's needs</li> </ul>	19.25 Warm-up 20.00 MATCH	Free							Free "B" team match (3rd goalkeeper)

The items in blue refer to the team as a whole; those in black refer specifically to the goalkeeper.



## 2.2.2 The training session

Sports training always affects the level of sports performance.

To fulfil training objectives, we need to propose and organise exercises which respond to these objectives.

When preparing a training session for goalkeepers, certain parameters need to be taken into account:

- the objectives need to be defined in reference to the previously-established preparation programme (technical preparation, physical preparation, etc.),
- if necessary, the content is adapted to the team training programme,
- it must be decided where the session will fit in the weekly programme:
  - after the match,
  - the day before the match, etc.
- we have to take into account:
  - the number of goalkeepers,
  - the duration of the training,
  - the choice of exercises,
  - the intensity of the work and the recovery time,
  - the equipment available (pitch, balls, cones, etc.)

Bearing in mind the number of training sessions, the performance level and the players' ages, we can implement different types of session:

- **Split sessions** (technical/tactical session or physical preparation),
- **Mixed sessions** (specific work and physical preparation in the same session),
  - alternated in phase (alternate periods of specific work and physical preparation),
  - alternated in a circuit (a series of specific and physical exercises as part of a course or circuit),
  - integrated (work on a specific situation bringing in physical parameters).

A session is always formed of three parts:

### 1. Goalkeeper's warm-up

- the warm-up must:
  - prepare the goalkeeper physically, technically and mentally,
  - avoid injuries to muscles or joints,
  - be adapted to the practice conditions, the goalkeeper concerned and the main theme of the session,

- gradually increase intensity.
- the warm-up may be:
  - individual, group or mixed,
- a mixed warm-up comprises three parts:
  - individual preparation of 2-3 minutes, where each goalkeeper does what he feels is right,
  - basic exercises such as catching the ball, exercises on the ground (dives),
  - specific exercises which allow a proper adaptation and transition towards the main physical and technical parts of the training.
- the warm-up can be performed:
  - without a ball (running, jumping, limbering up, sprints, etc.),
  - with a ball (running with the ball, juggling, catching, simple goalkeeping moves and saves, etc.),
  - in the form of a small-sided game.

### 2. The main part of the session

- gathers together all the exercises designed to develop the chosen objective.
- the following parameters must be defined:
  - adaptation of the exercises to the goalkeeper's abilities,
  - progressive increases of the level of complexity of the exercises,
  - the chosen intensity determines the duration, the number of repetitions, the number of sets, the recovery time and the nature of the recovery (passive/active).
- we can finish the main part with a game which remains within the theme of the session (game of clearances, shots on goal, etc.). This fosters a good atmosphere and friendly relations between the goalkeepers.

### 3. Cool-down

- this is the part of the session where the goalkeeper calms down using stretching or relaxation exercises. During this calm period we can go over the session and talk about the next scheduled training.

It is important to keep a note of training session statistics. This allows us to monitor the way in which the programme is being carried out, draw conclusions for the future and avoid repetition of exercises. All coaches should compile their own statistics in a manner suited to the way in which they work.





1. Goalkeeper's warm-up



2.1. The main part of the session



2.2. The main part of the session



3. Cool-down



### 2.2.3 Monitoring the work

Monitoring gathers together the most important information on the goalkeeper's general preparation conditions and content. It also records the methods used during the training sessions, the characteristics, volume and intensity of the work, information on the goalkeeper's impressions during the preparation and any other information about the training.

The coach highlights the information which is important to his work. Using this information, he organises the monitoring:

- in a traditional manner:
  - using (general) documents (widely used in football)
 

*Comments:*

    - making notes is quick and easy,
    - storage is complicated and requires a lot of space as the years go by.
- using information technology:
  - there are programmes specially designed for this purpose,
  - the coach can create his own tables and graphs, which requires computer skills. It takes time to set up the tool, but once finished it is easy to use,
  - the coach can record a whole year's information on a CD which is easy to consult when needed.

The coach can conduct monitoring and compile statistics on:

- **The goalkeepers**, through:
  - personal information,
  - test results,
  - medical results, etc.
- **Attendance**
- **The training unit:**
  - content, exercises, number of repetitions, equipment used, etc.
- **The different cycles:**
  - microcycles, weekly programme,
  - mesocycles, monthly programme, etc.,
  - macrocycles, preparation programme, etc.
- **The matches**

The monitoring fulfils the following functions:

- **Checking** (monitoring the programme),

- **Comparison** (comparing different data),
- **Planning** (source of information for future programming),
- **Information** (reflects the methods and means employed; variability of the exercises).

The text, diagrams and tables can be complemented by a commonly-used key in the form of arrows, symbols, etc. To make it easier to organise the work, the coach can give the exercises whatever name he wishes, create short cuts, etc.

- diving for a ball struck along the ground: "dive on ground" or "ball on ground",
- consecutive dives to the right and left: "right-left",
- strengthening the abdominal muscles: "sit-ups", "obliques".













There follows an example of annual statistics for a professional club.

# ATTENDANCE

	Goalkeeper 1	Goalkeeper 2	Goalkeeper 3
Number of training sessions	<b>Total 260 (222-32-6)</b>	<b>Total 259 (214-33-12)</b>	<b>Total 245 (202-35-8) + 39 B</b>
Specific training	4	5	20
Absence or injury	10	9	6
Ligue 1 Match	38	36	2
First choice Ligue 1	38		
Substitute Ligue 1		36	2
Playing time	3070	50'	
Number of goals conceded	47	3	
Cup match	2 (substitute)	4	2 (substitute)
Friendly match	7 + 2 (substitute A)	8	4 + 6 (B)
B-team match (Ligue 4)		1	25 + 3 (substitute)
P.R. activities	8	7	6

	Training with the group
	Specific to the goalkeeper - same timetable but separate from the group
	Specific to the goalkeeper in free time
	Individual training - injury
	Absence
	Ligue 1 Match
	Cup match
	Friendly match

Month	Goalkeeper 1		Goalkeeper 2		Goalkeeper 3	
	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon
1		90'		Substitute	B Team Training	
2						90' B
3						
4						
5						
6						
7		Substitute + 1		90'	B Team Training	
8						90' B
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15		90'		Substitute	B Team Training	
16						90' B
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22		90'		Substitute + 1	B Team Training	
23				90' B		Substitute B
24						
25						
26		Substitute		90'		Entr. B
27						
28						
29					B Team Training	
30						90' B

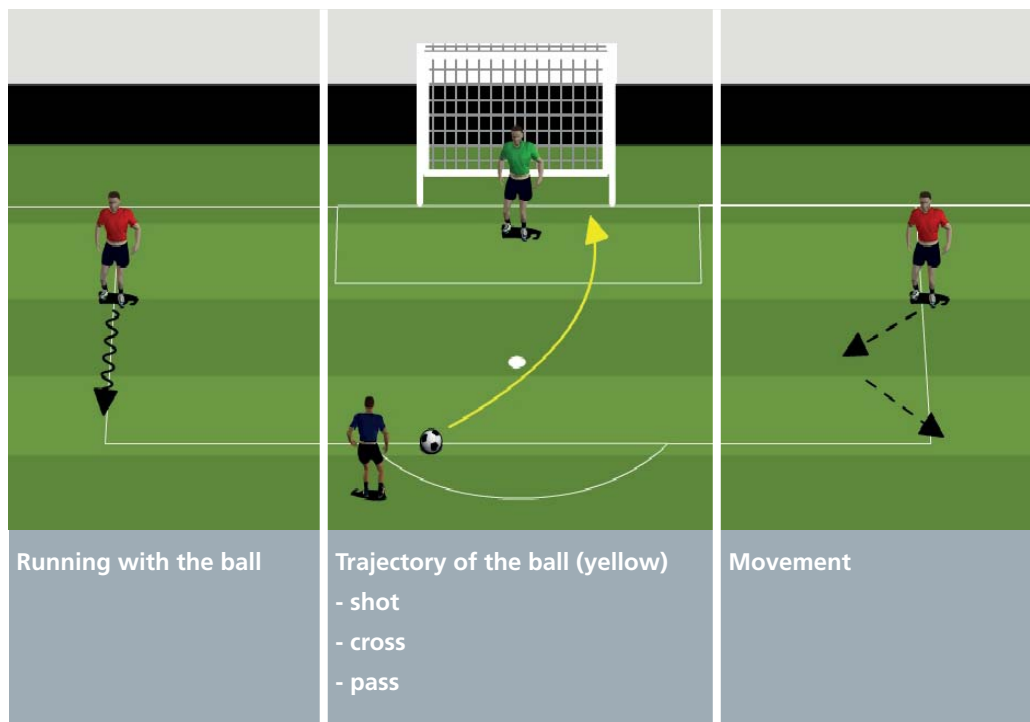
Number of training sessions	<b>Total 22 (18 - 3 - 1)</b>	<b>Total 22 (20 - 2)</b>	<b>Total 16 (15 - 1) + 6 B</b>
Specific training	1	2	2
Absence or injury			3
Ligue 1 Match	3	3	
First choice Ligue 1	3		
Substitute Ligue 1		3	
Playing Time	270'		
Number of goals conceded	2		
Cup match	1 (Substitute)	1	
Friendly match	1 (Substitute)	1	
B-team match (CFA-L4)		1	4+1 (Substitute)





### 3. Technical preparation

Key:



**Goalkeeping play** is the goalkeeper’s activity on the pitch. The main components of goalkeeping are the defensive and offensive aspects. A goalkeeper’s play is determined by his technical qualities linked to his tactical behaviour (individual and group). In this section, we put tactical considerations to one side and concentrate on technique.

Examining this more closely, we can define **four basic techniques** that can be developed using components specific to the goalkeeper.

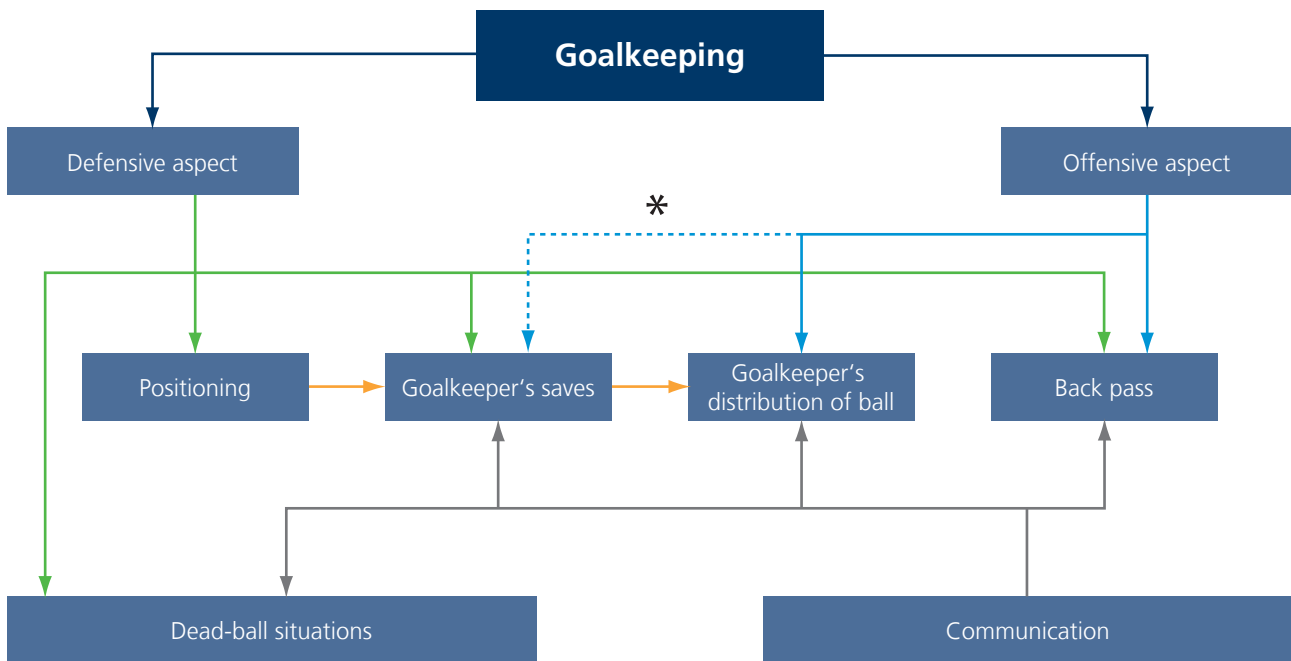
The four basic techniques are:

- **Positioning**
- **Saves**
- **Distributing the ball**
- **The back pass** – This last technique became relevant with the introduction of the rule that prohibits the goalkeeper from handling the ball in certain situations.

Discussing distributing the ball and the back pass separately seems a sensible approach and makes explanations easier rather than generally talking about playing the ball with feet.

A “special component” can be added to goalkeeping play. This relates to the basics described above (positioning, saves and distributing the ball) and concerns **defending dead-ball situations**.

All the goalkeeper’s actions on the pitch must be accompanied by communication with team-mates **verbally and through body language**.



\* The goalkeeper’s saves are always defensive. However, in some cases they may go on to become offensive.

**Example:**

A crossed ball is punched away to an unmarked team-mate.



## 3.1 Positioning

Before making a save during play, the goalkeeper has to position and reposition himself several times. Two keywords can be defined here:

- **Movement**
  - this is the goalkeeper's movement in space and time that allows positioning before making a save.
- **Positioning**
  - this is the position from which the goalkeeper can make a save,
  - how good the positioning is depends on how appropriate the previous movement has been.

The goalkeeper can make a save if poorly positioned, but the save is easier and more effective when he is well positioned.

To assist with movement, the goalkeeper can orientate himself using the pitch markings, the penalty spot, his peripheral vision of his own goal as well as his vision of the opponents' goal.



### 3.1.1 Movement

As is the case for all other players, the goalkeeper moves considerably during a match. However, only a few of his movements serve to fulfil defensive and offensive duties. *According to research conducted during a French Ligue 1 match, goalkeeper Stéphane Cassard covered a distance of 5,193 m (walking and running); 2,606 m in the first half and 2,587 m in the second half.*

The goalkeeper moves in three different ways:

- **Passive movement**
  - this is the movement of the goalkeeper during a match and training when he is not directly involved in the action,
  - this movement usually consists of walking or jogging.

**Example:**

  - when the goalkeeper's team is attacking from a corner, the goalkeeper moves up the pitch with the defensive unit,
  - this movement is anticipatory to respond to any counterattacks by the opponents.

- **Active movement**

- this is the goalkeeper’s movement on the pitch to ensure good positioning before making a save,
- the goalkeeper uses all types of movement in all directions.

- **Specific movement to make a save**

- 1. Movement before the save**

- this serves to slightly reduce the attacking player’s angle of shooting when he lowers his head just before striking the ball,
- it takes the form of a slight jump forward (see photos).



- 2. Movement that is part of the save**

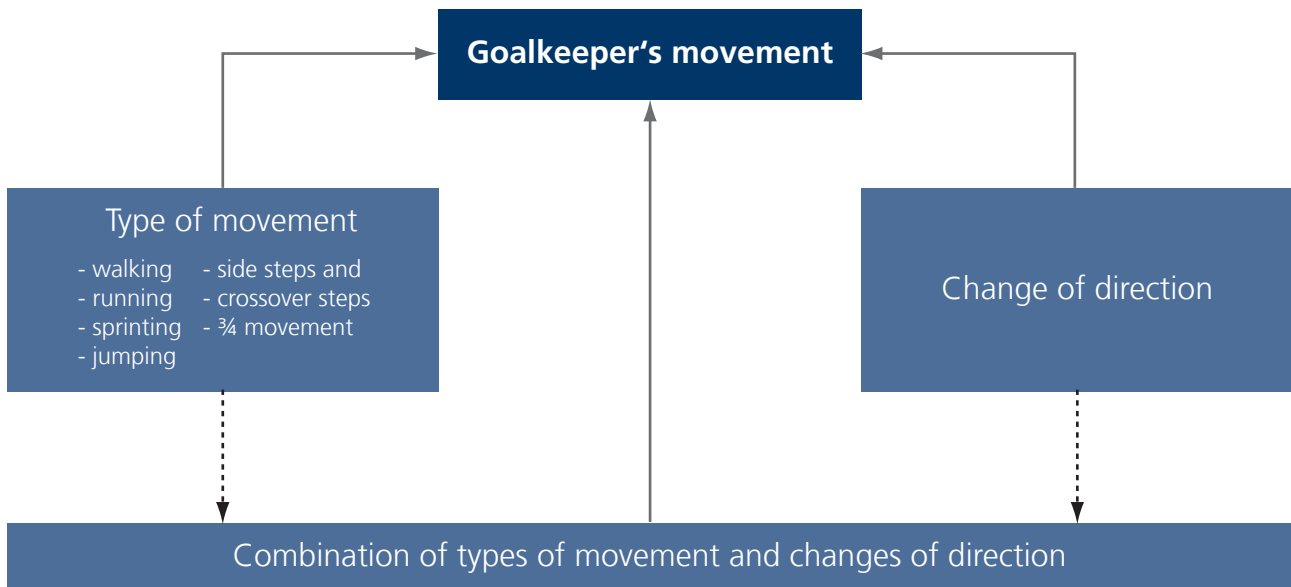
- when a shot is out of the goalkeeper’s reach, he has to take one or two steps before diving.



- 3. Movement after the save to regain stability**

- if the goalkeeper does not manage to control the ball, play continues. He must then rapidly recover to get back into position and make a further save.



**Goalkeeper's movement:****Type of movement (description of some features):**1. *Walking*2. *Running*3. *Sprinting*

- the majority of the goalkeeper's sprints are over a short distance,
- long sprints are used for an intervention outside the penalty area,
- reaction speed and starting speed are essential components of the goalkeeper's play.

4. *Movement using side steps and crossover steps*

- side steps are used for a short movement and crossover steps for a longer movement,
- these movements should be mastered from as young an age as possible.

5.  *$\frac{3}{4}$  movement*

"The goalkeeper should never turn his back on the ball"

In the following situations, the goalkeeper uses a  $\frac{3}{4}$  movement (moves into the third quadrant of an imaginary circle - see image):

- cross over the goalkeeper's head,
- lob,
- return to goal after an intervention.



A  $\frac{3}{4}$  movement is characterised by the goalkeeper's travel in the direction of the ball. However, the upper body and shoulders face the other direction and the goalkeeper does not take his eyes off the ball. A  $\frac{3}{4}$  movement is conducted using crossover steps or side steps:

- crossover steps - movement over a longer distance at top speed,
- side steps movement over a short distance.



$\frac{3}{4}$  movement using crossover steps



The legs move in the direction of the ball. The upper body, shoulders and head face in the opposite direction to the movement.

$\frac{3}{4}$  movement using side steps



6. *Jump*: to assist in analysis, this movement can be divided into different components:

- support
  - jump from one foot,
  - jump from both feet.
- type of jump
  - direct take-off,
  - take-off after a run up.
- direction of jump
  - jump forward,
  - jump back,
  - jump to the side.

**Change of direction** – this requires:

- a change of the centre of gravity,
- shortening of strides,
- keeping eyes fixed on the ball.

### Combination of types of movement and changes of direction

As the situation on the pitch is always changing, the goalkeeper does not use linear movements but instead combines different types of movements.

#### Remember!

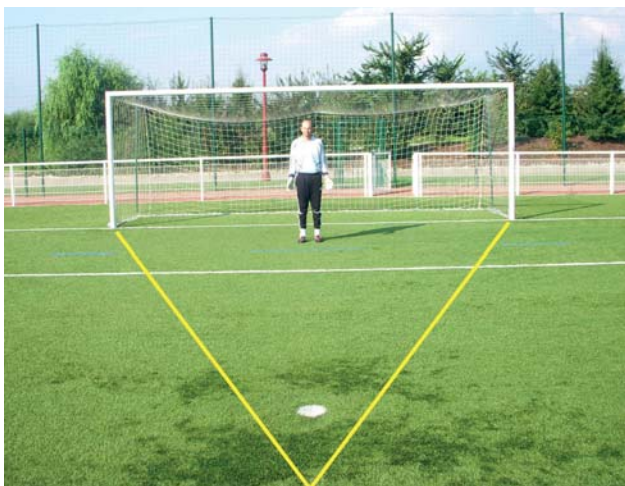
- Mobility, coordination and skill are all important for good movement. The goalkeeper's movement can be tested and analysed to allow the customisation of work in training.
- Care must be taken with young goalkeepers going through puberty as their coordination skills are often reduced (rapid growth).
- Movement must be adapted to the pitch conditions (pitches may be dry, slippery or frozen).
- When returning to goal, the goalkeeper must never turn his back on play.

### 3.1.2 Positioning

The goalkeeper adopts specific positioning before each save. The question is whether the positioning is good or not. The goalkeeper can make a good save even with poor positioning, but clearly the task is easier if the positioning is appropriate. Every save requires specific positioning, whatever the situation on the pitch (this topic is also covered in other chapters). Here we will concentrate on the goalkeeper's positioning for saves, with or without diving.



Too far back



Goalkeeper well positioned



Too far to one side



The goalkeeper's positioning varies depending on the distance and angle to the attacking player (see images 1, 2a, 2b).



Goalkeeper well positioned



Too far to one side

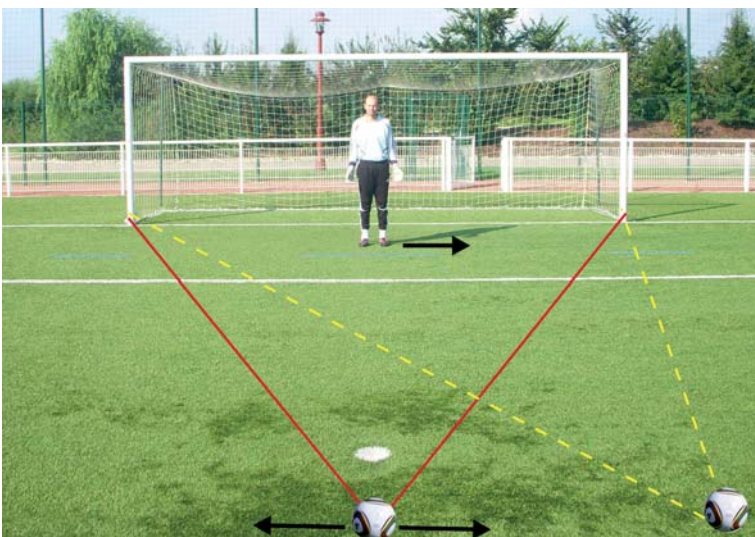


Goalkeeper well positioned



Too far forward

The goalkeeper must cover both sides of the goal and not give the opponent the opportunity to lob the ball over him.



For beginner goalkeepers, two tapes can be stretched between the posts and the ball to instruct on positioning. The goalkeeper's ideal positioning becomes apparent as the coach moves the tapes.



### 3.1.3 Set/ready position

As the game has developed over the years, speed of movement has become a key component. Players' actions are quicker and so is the football. As a consequence of this development, one of the key guiding principles of goalkeeping which has emerged and become of the utmost importance is, that the goalkeeper should be in a good set/ready position to either move or intercept the ball as quickly and efficiently as possible at any given moment during match play.

The goalkeeper's set/ready position will change depending on the position and situation of the ball on the pitch. However, there are key components which remain common in almost all situations: the head, hands and feet.

Many young goalkeepers struggle with balance; they fall back onto their heels and their head sways from side to side, backwards and forwards, restricting their ability to move or dive effectively and efficiently as the ball is being played.

The goalkeeper should always be on the balls of his feet (body weight forward) with both feet in contact with the ground a shoulder width apart to give stability. If the feet are too far apart movement is restricted and if they are too close balance is affected.





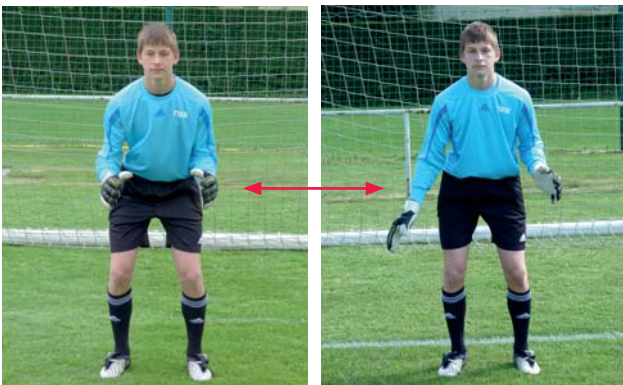
- The head is relatively heavy and should always be as steady as possible, in the middle of the body and slightly forward and with eyes fixed on the ball when possible



The following are key guidelines for other components of the set position and all goalkeepers will make adjustments depending on the situation, his height etc.

### Hands

For shots within shooting range, the hands should be in the optimal position to make contact with the ball as quickly as possible, to either catch or deflect. By positioning the hands in the middle of the body, in an open relaxed manner, with arms bent at the elbow, the goalkeeper can quickly adjust to deal with all types of shots, low or high.



Adjustments to this are made when the ball is inside the penalty box and the distance between the ball and goalkeeper is reduced or a 1v1 situation is created between the goalkeeper and an attacker. As the distance between the goalkeeper and the ball reduces, the goalkeeper will drop and widen his hands to cover the area closer to the ground.



### Knees

To intercept shots, the knees should be slightly bent (holding the body in an upright shape to fill as much of the goal as possible from an attacker's view point) but allowing the main leg muscles to operate effectively.

To make adjustments as the distance between the goalkeeper and the ball reduces or in a 1v1 situation the knees must bend further to allow the body and hands to drop appropriately.



The 'set/ready position' is adjusted when the ball is in different positions on the pitch.





The most important elements of the set/ready position for crosses from distance, are the body shape and the feet. The body shape should be upright and in an open position to allow the goalkeeper to see both the ball and the maximum area of the pitch. The feet should also be in an opened position with one slightly in front of the other to allow natural movement forward and backwards.

When the ball is in the opponent's area of the pitch and there is space between the goalkeeper and the rest of the players, the goalkeeper's role changes, to deal with the threat of through balls. Positioning within the penalty area will adjust according to the position of the ball and the changing situations. To create the maximum opportunity to intercept the ball as quickly as possible the goalkeeper has to remain alert, on the balls of his feet and continuously adjust his feet to be in a natural sprinting position.



## The exercises

### Exercise 1

1. Movement.
  2. Catch the ball (volley).  
Change goalkeeper.
- 3 repetitions on each side**



### Exercise 2

1. Movement.
  2. Catch the ball (half-volley).  
Change goalkeeper.
- 3 repetitions on each side**



### Exercise 3

1. Lateral slalom.
  2. Dive on the ground.  
Change goalkeeper.
- 2 repetitions on each side**
- Same with forward and back slalom.



### Exercise 4

1. Catch the ball.
  2. Movement.
  3. Catch the ball after correct positioning (focus on quality not on speed of execution).
  4. Movement.
- 3 circuits**
- Change goalkeeper.



## 3.2 The goalkeeper's saves

The goalkeeper's saves reflect his defensive work. This is what the supporters in the stands see. Can he stop the ball? The goalkeeper's saves are fundamental components of his play. They can be categorised into five types:

- **Standing save (catching on your feet)**
- **Diving save (catching on diving)**
- **Dealing with crosses (aerial ball)**
- **1-on-1 challenge**
- **Reflex save**

Standing and diving saves form the basis of the other saves described above. Young goalkeepers must learn these from the earliest age and improve upon them through daily repetition. Positioning is identical for the two types of save. Dealing with a cross (aerial ball), 1-on-1 challenges and reflex saves are developed from standing and diving saves and relate to the presence of external factors (see figure 1). They also require specific positioning.

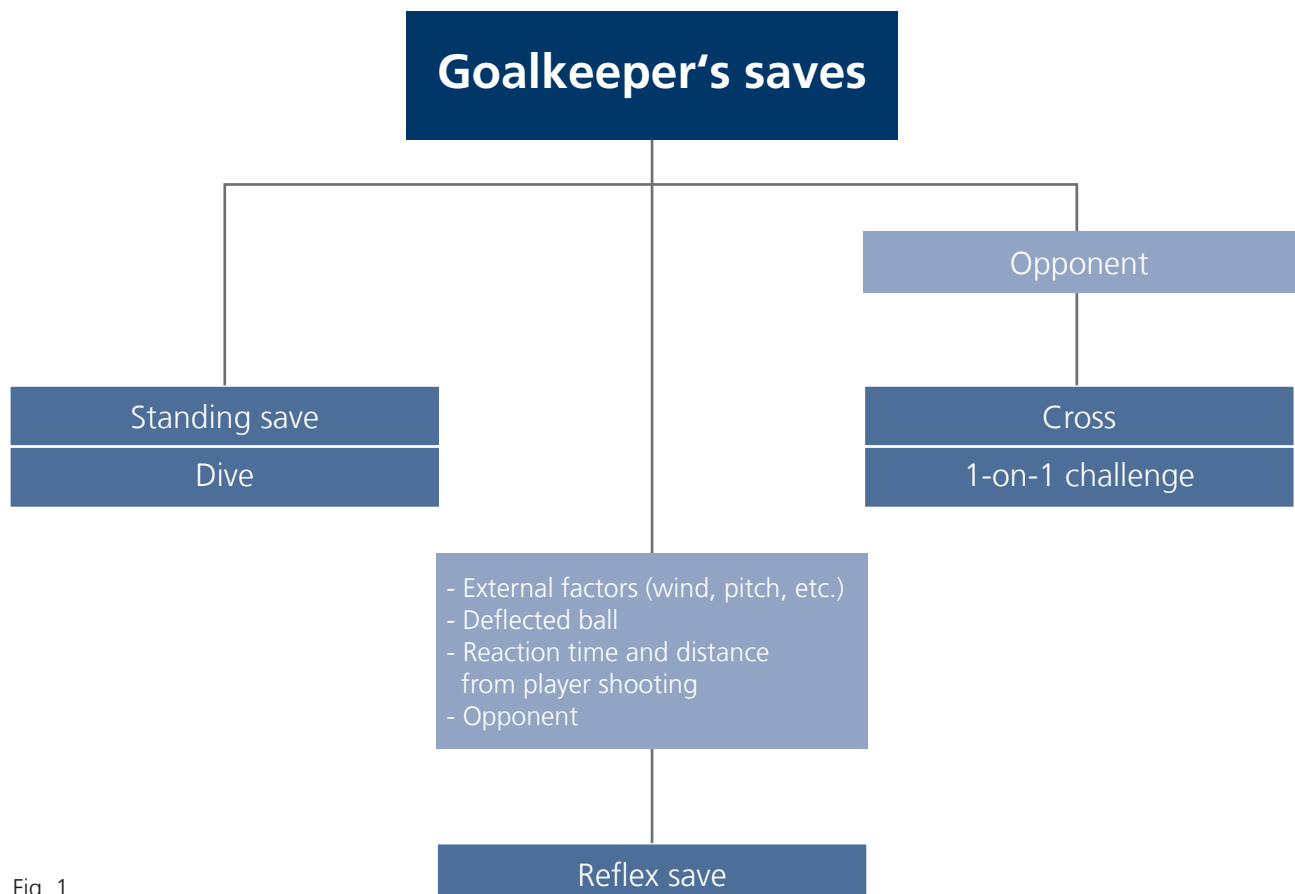


Fig. 1



### 3.2.1 Standing saves (Catching on your feet)

When the goalkeeper catches the ball, whether with or without movement, this is called a standing save. In this case the goalkeeper does not dive laterally.

The goalkeeper's save is determined by the trajectory of the ball:

- **Ball at medium height**
  - catching the ball in front of the head,
  - catching the ball at the midriff,

- **Ball on the ground**
  - catching the ball with “bent legs”,
- **Bouncing ball**
  - catching the ball after a bounce,
- **Aerial ball**
  - catching the ball with a vertical jump.

Catching the ball is the first thing that a goalkeeper learns. Once this manoeuvre has been mastered, goalkeepers can go on to develop other important techniques. The evolution of the modern football means that goalkeepers more often have to push the ball away than catch it.



Catching the ball  
in front of head



Catching the ball at  
the midriff



Catching the ball with “bent legs”



Catching the ball after a bounce



Catching the ball  
with a vertical jump



## Catching the ball at medium height

### 1. Catching the ball in front of the head



- the goalkeeper should have his arms apart (shoulder width) and have his weight slightly on his toes,
- he takes the ball with arms stretched, elbows in, at head height (if the ball passes through the goalkeeper's hands, his head will stop the ball going into the goal),
- the position of the hands and fingers is very important (see photo).



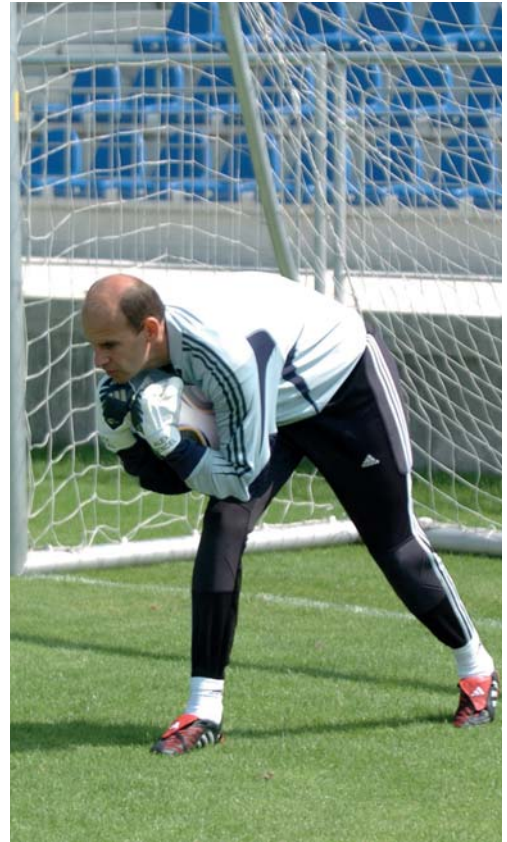
#### Remember!

The bad habit of some goalkeepers of catching the ball with "rounded arms" (elbows too wide during a dive or when catching an aerial ball) can have serious consequences:

- dive: the ball can pass between the goalkeeper's hands and head,
- aerial ball: the goalkeeper does not gather the ball at the "highest point".



## 2. Catching the ball at the midriff



- arms stretched out towards the ball,
- without touching the ball with hands, the goalkeeper clutches the ball between the forearms and the chest,
- the movement is completed by the ball being secured in place by the hands and chin.

This technique offers triple protection:

**hands + arms ↔ chest ↔ chin**

### Remember!

- The goalkeeper's torso should not be straight during this save.
- If the ball is slightly to one side, the goalkeeper should not try to catch the ball laterally but instead take a small step to the side.





## Catching the ball on the ground

### Catching the ball with “bent legs”

#### Preparation for the save

- the goalkeeper bends his legs with the left leg diagonal to his body (the save cannot be made if the leg is forward),
- the right leg forms a right angle,
- the position of the legs provides extra protection,
- the shoulders are slightly forward,
- the goalkeeper can do the same on the other side by reversing the roles of his legs.

#### Gathering the ball

- the goalkeeper’s arms stretch out towards the ball,
- the goalkeeper lifts the ball, brings his hands in and gathers the ball to his chest,
- the chin offers further protection.



#### Contact with the ground (not always necessary)

- the goalkeeper pushes forward slightly and lands on his elbows while grasping the ball,
- this movement must be conducted carefully to make sure the ball is not spilled.

#### Remember!

The arms should be inside the knees (5a, 5b).





## Catching the ball after a bounce

For the goalkeeper to catch the ball after a bounce, he needs to:

- analyse and react to the opponent's shot,
- analyse the situation after the bounce,
- choose an appropriate save.

The goalkeeper's save depends on the bounce:

- high bounce:
  - catch the ball in front of the head,
  - catch an aerial ball,



- bounce at medium height:
  - catch the ball in front of the head,
  - catch the ball at the midriff,
- very low bounce:
  - catch the ball with "bent legs",
- if the ball has an erratic bounce, the goalkeeper has to make a reflex save.

For example, the goalkeeper may **catch the ball at his midriff, with a dive forward**.



- the goalkeeper attacks the ball,
- he lifts the ball and gathers it between his hands, forearms and chest,
- the save is completed by diving forwards.



### Remember!

- The elbows must be sufficiently tucked in to prevent the ball passing under the goalkeeper's chest and into the goal.
- If the goalkeeper does not have a sufficient grasp on the ball, it can spill forward as he dives.

The goalkeeper is advised to catch the ball as soon as possible after the bounce if he cannot intervene before the bounce. The goalkeeper must take into account the state of the pitch and the weather conditions. A ball will bounce higher on a dry pitch. On a damp pitch it will bounce lower and gather speed.

## Catching an aerial ball

In some situations close to the goal, the goalkeeper has to catch an aerial ball.

- the save can be made by springing off one or both legs,
- the goalkeeper catches the ball with arms stretched out as high as possible:
  - *“at the highest point”*
- the position of the hands is very important when catching the ball.



«The highest point» means catching the ball with the arms stretched out by using an appropriate jump.



## The exercises

### Exercise 1

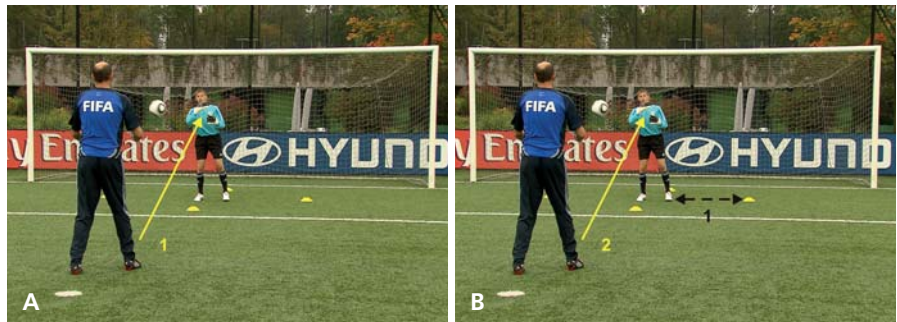
Catch the ball.

1. Catch the ball (volley).
  2. Catch the ball (half-volley).
- 10-14 catches for each goalkeeper**



### Exercise 2

1. Catch the ball (10 balls).
  1. Movement:
    - directed,
    - goalkeeper decides.
  2. Catch the ball.
- 4-6 repetitions**



### Exercise 3

1. Move forward.
  2. Catch the ball (in front of head, at midriff, after a bounce, aerial, etc.).
  3. Move back, change to second goalkeeper (then third, etc.).
- 8 repetitions for each goalkeeper**



### Exercise 4

1. Catch the ball in front of head.
  2. Short movement.
  3. Catch the ball with "bent legs".
  4. Short movement.
- 4-5 repetitions on each side**





### 3.2.2 Diving saves (Catching on diving)

*If the goalkeeper cannot catch the ball while standing (reach too short) or by moving a short distance, he dives for the ball.*

The dive is the most attractive aspect of goalkeeping technique and is the skill which gives most pleasure when performed correctly. We can teach goalkeepers the technique from a very young age. There are some universal rules, but everyone's diving style is unique. It is linked to:

- the goalkeeper's body type,
- good and bad habits.

Every goalkeeper differs slightly from one side of the body to the other (and has a preference for one side).

The coach's role is to harmonise "diving theory" with each goalkeeper's particular features to achieve maximum efficiency. This working method is valid for all a goalkeeper's skills, but particularly for diving.

We can analyse a goalkeeper's dive using three criteria:

- **The trajectory of the ball**

- ball on the ground,
- ball at medium height,
- bouncing ball,
- ball over goalkeeper - lob.

- **The goalkeeper's jump**

- does not take off (the goalkeeper dives to the floor to make sure the ball is safely gathered, even if this is not strictly necessary),
- goalkeeper takes off,
  - direct jump (lack of time, see also reflex save),
  - jump after moving a short distance (ball rolling at a distance from the goalkeeper).

- **Completing the movement**

The goalkeeper makes a decision depending on the difficulty of the ball, the weather conditions, his state of mind, usual behaviour, and so on:

- to catch the ball,
- to deflect the ball.

To simplify, we can classify dives into four categories:

- **Balls caught or deflected on the ground,**
- **Balls caught or deflected at medium height,**
- **Balls caught or deflected after a bounce,**
- **Balls caught or deflected after a lob.**

In all cases, the movement and jump form an integral part of the goalkeeper's action. The goalkeeper's positioning and analysis of the ball's trajectory is discussed in other documents.

#### The different trajectories of the ball



## Balls caught or deflected on the ground

### 1. Catching the ball

#### Preparing to dive

- the goalkeeper bends his legs, with the left leg beginning the movement,
- the body weight shifts to the right leg, which the goalkeeper uses to drive to the side.

#### Drive to the side

- the goalkeeper drives slightly forward,
- by simultaneously moving his arms towards the ball, the goalkeeper pulls his body in that direction and can go to ground as quickly as possible,
- it is important that he lands on his side rather than on his stomach.

#### Holding onto the ball

- the goalkeeper grasps the ball with his arms outstretched, using the ground as “a third hand”,
- the right hand is used as an opposing force to prevent the ball from passing,
- the left hand presses the ball against the ground,
- on completing the move, the goalkeeper’s body is between the goal and the ball, which provides extra assurance.



#### Remember!

The goalkeeper must:

- Dive to the ground quickly, with no interfering movements (which waste time).
- Dive forwards, not backwards (if the ball slips from his grasp, it will end up to the side of the goal rather than in the goal).





## 2. Deflecting the ball

The goalkeeper deflects the ball if he is not sure he can keep hold of it or if it is too far away from him.

### Deflection with both hands

- the technique is identical to catching the ball, but the goalkeeper deflects it to the side with open hands.

### Deflection with one hand

- the goalkeeper uses this technique for balls just inside the posts or crossbar, where a slight touch is enough to deflect the ball outside the goal.

### Remember!

- When deflecting a ball with one hand, the goalkeeper must take care that it does not pass over his hand.
- A slight deflection with the fingertips may be sufficient.
- If possible the ball must be deflected to the side of the goal.



With this technique, the hand must be open but “strong”.





## Balls caught or deflected at medium height

### 1. Catching the ball

#### Movement

The goalkeeper often has to move slightly before diving:

- using sidesteps for balls close to him,
- using crossover steps for balls further away.

If the goalkeeper springs directly, he does not move first.

#### Preparing to dive

- the goalkeeper adjusts his steps,
- the right leg is slightly forward of the left leg,
- body weight is transferred onto the right leg.

#### Jump

- the goalkeeper drives using his right leg,
- the left leg bends, complements and assists the drive,
- the hands move towards the ball.







**Holding onto the ball**

- after a horizontal dive (with body and legs extended), the goalkeeper grasps the ball with outstretched arms.
- the positioning of the fingers is of vital importance.

**Landing**

- the ball grasped in the hands is the first to touch the ground (the ground acts as the 3<sup>rd</sup> hand),
- the elbow bends behind the ball, ahead of the rest of the body,
- after landing, the body must regain its position.



**Remember!**

- The arms must always be outstretched at the moment the ball is stopped.
- If the arms are bent at the elbows, there is a risk of the ball passing between the hands and the head.
- On frozen ground, the goalkeeper must take care when “pinning” the ball to the ground because it may slip away.





## 2. Deflecting the ball

The technical description is similar to that for catching the ball (see previous pages). The differences are in the position and role of the hands in the landing of the dive.



The goalkeeper can deflect the ball:

- with both hands (open hands or fists),
- with one hand,
  - the hand on the same side as the dive (dive to the right, right hand),
  - the hand on the opposite side to the dive (dive to the right, left hand).

From experience, we know that in the part of the goal indicated in the picture, the use of the opposite hand is more effective. By using this technique, the goalkeeper can reach around 20 cm further than if he uses his hand on the same side as the dive.

### Deflection using the hand on the same side (dive to the right – right hand)



- the goalkeeper deflects the ball with his hand open and held firm,
- the same hand helps to cushion his fall when landing,
- the opposite hand plays no part in the manoeuvre.



**Deflection with the opposite hand  
(dive to the right – left hand)**

These are the most attractive saves made by a goalkeeper from both the spectators' and his own point of view, because the goalkeeper has plenty of time to savour the manoeuvre.

- the goalkeeper uses his outstretched arm to turn the ball behind the goal,
- the other hand cushions his fall on landing.





## Catching or deflecting the ball after a bounce

Analysis of the situation and anticipation of the bounce are vitally important for this save.

The bounce determines the type of save the goalkeeper will use:

- normal bounce: "dive at medium height",
- no bounce (ball skids along the ground): "dive on the ground",
- surprise bounce: reflex save.

The decision whether to catch or push away the ball is up to the goalkeeper.

A special situation is when the ball is not far from the goalkeeper. He catches **the ball in his midriff while falling to his side.**

- the goalkeeper's outstretched arms move towards the ball,
- his hands envelop the ball and clutch it to his chest,
- the goalkeeper falls lengthways on his side (leg to shoulder in contact with the ground),
- after landing, the goalkeeper's body must be between the ball and the goal.

### Remember!

The goalkeeper must keep his elbows tucked into his body to prevent the ball from passing between his arms and body.



Certain balls can be caught with a “diagonal” dive

(angle of 45°)

- the goalkeeper catches the ball immediately after the bounce,
- he clasps the ball between his chest, forearms, hands and chin,
- holding the ball, he falls onto his elbows diagonally from his starting position.



**Remember!**

The goalkeeper must remain alert because his body is not providing protection between ball and goal.



## Catching or deflecting the ball after a lob

Before beginning to describe this save, it is important to note that catching the ball in this situation entails certain risks:

- if the ball is released, it can end up in the goal,
- on landing, the goalkeeper may find himself in the goal.

### 1. Deflecting the ball

The goalkeeper can deflect the ball with the “same” or “opposite” hand.

#### Deflection with the opposite hand

(dive to the right – left hand)

### Return towards the goal (movement)

- the goalkeeper uses a  $\frac{3}{4}$  movement with side steps (for short distances) and/or crossover steps (longer and faster movement),
- he moves in the direction of the ball but his torso and shoulders are facing in the opposite direction,
- he does not take his eyes off the ball,
- he adjusts his last step to optimise his jump.

### Jump

- the goalkeeper drives with his right leg (or left leg if diving to the left),
- he pushes at the same time, upwards and lengthways,
- the left leg and the hands help with the drive.







#### Deflection of the ball

- with his left arm outstretched, he pushes the ball over the crossbar,
- contact should be "at the highest point" possible.

#### Landing

- the outstretched right arm moves towards the ground,
- the goalkeeper bends his right elbow to cushion his fall,
- his bent right leg assists landing.





### Deflection with the hand on the same side

(dive to the right – right hand)

The objective of this save is to prevent the ball entering the goal (last resort) if the goalkeeper is too late to make the save with the opposite hand.

- the goalkeeper deflects the ball to the side of the goal with his right hand,
- he cushions his fall with the same hand.



### Comparison

With repetition in training, the goalkeeper can master the three possible saves after a lob. It is very interesting to

compare “the highest point” (where the goalkeeper touches the ball) in the three situations.



Opposite hand



Same hand



Catching the ball



## 2. Catching the ball



### Catching the ball

- the goalkeeper attempts to catch the ball at the “highest point”,
- if the goalkeeper makes the save as the ball is dropping, he will find it more difficult to hold onto.

### Landing

The ball is clasped in the hands and touches the ground first (the ground acts as the 3<sup>rd</sup> hand).

### Remember!

Care must be taken when landing on a slippery or frozen surface.





## The exercises

### Exercise 1

1. Dive for a ball on the ground, left side.
2. Dive for a ball on the ground, right side.

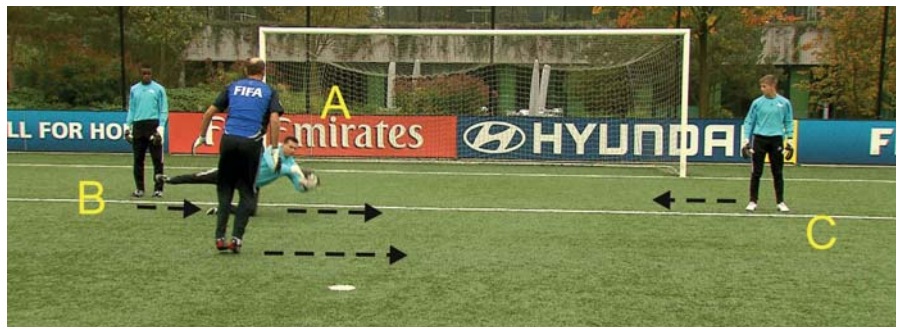
#### 6 dives

The same at medium height or with a bouncing ball.



### Exercise 2

A series of dives for three goalkeepers in the form of a relay. Each goalkeeper completes three quick dives on each side.



### Exercise 3

1. Jump.
  2. Dive under the hurdle to save ball on the ground.
- Change to next goalkeeper.

#### 8 balls each side



### Exercise 4

1. Dive in front of the obstacle (goalkeeper).

#### 4 balls each side

The same but without knowing which side the dive will be.

#### 4 balls





### 3.2.3 Crosses

Crosses are balls that arrive in the penalty area at different heights. How well the goalkeeper responds may be influenced by how many players there are around him. The goalkeeper must quickly read the ball's trajectory and make a decision to come out or remain on his goal line.

Three types of cross can be defined:

- **aerial ball dropping into the penalty area,**
- **cross cut back in front of goal,**
- **cross hit hard and low or at medium height between the goalkeeper and his defence.**

The goalkeeper's response to a cross comprises two phases, namely:

- movement towards the ball,
- save (ball caught or punched).

Before analysing these two phases, we should devote a few lines to the goalkeeper's positioning for a cross.

#### The goalkeeper's positioning

The position of the attacker with the ball determines the goalkeeper's positioning. The parameters which the goalkeeper must take into account are:

- how far away the attacker is,
- what part of the pitch the attacker is on,
- the direction of the ball (moving towards or away from the goal).

#### 1. The attacker's movement across the width of the pitch

To follow the movement of the attacker, the goalkeeper moves in parallel to the goal line (at an outstretched arm's distance away: see photo).



The goalkeeper moves according to the attacker's movement:

- the closer the crosser is to the goal, the closer the goalkeeper moves towards the near post,

- in contrast, the further away the crosser moves, the further the goalkeeper moves towards a point 2/3 back from the near post.



### 2. The attacker's movement up and down the pitch

The further away the crosser moves from the goal, the

further forward the goalkeeper must move, without giving the player a chance to lob him.



### 3. The attacker's movement across and up and down the pitch

The goalkeeper adapts his position using the explanations given above.



Not all wing play results in a cross. The goalkeeper must take up a number of positions before making a move for the ball. With an outswinging cross, the goalkeeper can anticipate the ball's trajectory and gain a little time before making a successful intervention.



## The goalkeeper's movement towards the ball

The goalkeeper analyses the ball's trajectory and reacts by moving accordingly to make a save at the right time and in the right place. The goalkeeper uses the following

movements depending on the height and direction of the ball:



### 1. sprint

Ball crossed to the near post.

### 2. side steps and crossover steps

### 3. $\frac{3}{4}$ movement (in the form of side steps and/or crossover steps)

Ball crossed to the far post.

The choice of movement between side steps and crossover steps depends on the speed of the ball and the distance the goalkeeper has to cover (very short movement – side steps, otherwise crossover steps).

While moving, the goalkeeper decides whether to catch or punch the ball. This decision may be influenced by:

- the ball's trajectory,
- the presence of other players,
- the weather conditions,
- the goalkeeper's mental state (if he has dropped the previous two balls, he will probably choose to punch or even stay on his goal-line for the next ball).

### Remember!

- It is very important for the goalkeeper never to take his eyes off the ball.
- If the trajectory changes (wind, deflected ball, etc.), the goalkeeper must quickly adjust his movement.



### Preparing to jump

This is the goalkeeper's action between the movement and the save. To take off correctly, he must adjust his weight

according to the driving leg. The photos below demonstrate this.

#### 1. $\frac{3}{4}$ movement using side steps (left-hand side)



#### Take-off from the left foot

- the drive is an extension of the movement,
- the vertical jump is not as high and the goalkeeper cannot protect himself with his knee,
- the goalkeeper can dive in this situation.



#### Take-off from the right foot

- the final step must be a crossover step,
- the drive with the right leg allows the goalkeeper to climb very high, protecting himself with his knee,
- it is difficult to dive in this situation.





## 2. ¾ movement using crossover steps (left-hand side)



### Jumping from the left foot

- on the last step, the goalkeeper does not cross his legs,
- he does not jump as high but he can dive.



### Jumping from the right foot

- the take-off is an extension of the movement,
- he can catch the ball at its highest point,
- he cannot dive.



## Catching the ball



Every goalkeeper has a dominant foot, from which his spring is better. Training can reduce the difference between the feet, allowing the goalkeeper to feel more comfortable in the many situations that arise in the penalty area.

We will now analyse a situation involving a cross coming in from the goalkeeper's right (the situation is identical for the left-hand side, just the supporting leg changes)

- the goalkeeper moves into a position where he can intercept the ball,
- he pushes off from his right leg,
- he moves his arms and left leg to complement his leap, enabling him to jump higher,
- his left knee also provides protection against a possible onrushing attacker,
- with outstretched arms, he catches the ball at its highest point,
- good positioning of the hands is vitally important,
- he lands on his supporting leg (right leg).

The goalkeeper can catch the ball coming in from the same side (right) by pushing off from his left leg, but in this case he cannot protect himself.

As the goalkeeper comes out, he shouts:

- "LEAVE IT!"
- "MINE!"

Conversely, a team-mate can warn the goalkeeper if opponents are near as he makes his intervention:

- "TIME!"
- "MAN ON!"

### Remember!

- If the goalkeeper drops the ball, he must react quickly to the new situation.
- He must never stop halfway; if he decides to come out, he must follow it through.
- He must take external factors into account (wind, sun, floodlights, slippery ball, etc.).
- When the ball is falling behind the goalkeeper, he can catch it behind his head with his fingertips. There is always a risk of the ball slipping from his grasp (see photo), so it is preferable to catch or deflect the ball with a backwards dive.





## Clearing the ball

The goalkeeper clears the ball in difficult situations when he is not sure he can catch it.

The choice of clearance to be made depends on where the goalkeeper intervenes and the direction of the ball..



1. Two-fisted clearance



2. One-fisted clearance



3. Ball turned away with one hand



4. Ball tipped over the crossbar



### 1. Two-fisted clearance

The two-fisted clearance is used for crosses to the near post and straight-on and high balls into the penalty area.

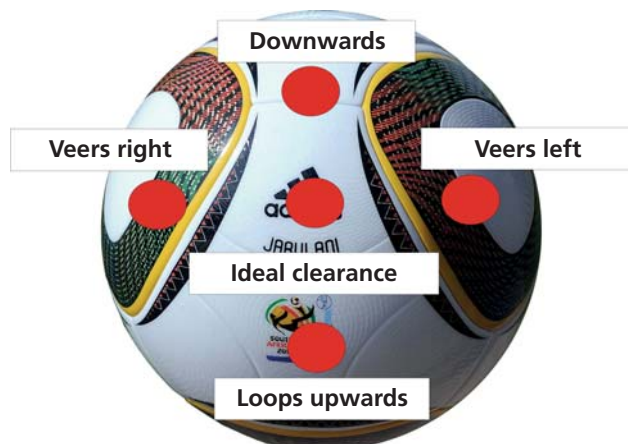
Ball from the goalkeeper's right:

- the goalkeeper pushes off from his right leg,
- he can protect himself by raising his left leg,
- with arms outstretched, he clears the ball with two clenched fists in front of his face.



### Remember!

- After making the clearance, the goalkeeper must reposition himself face on to the game.
- He shouts to team-mates to warn them he is coming out.



The direction of the clearance depends on where the goalkeeper makes contact with the ball.



## 2. One-fisted clearance

The example of a right-handed goalkeeper is used in the following description.

### One-fisted clearance with the ball arriving from the goalkeeper's right

- the goalkeeper pushes off from his left leg,
- his torso is facing the ball,
- he can use his left hand for protection and stability in the air,
- he moves his bent right arm sideways towards the ball; his shoulders and torso complement the movement,
- the goalkeeper punches the ball with his fist clenched in front of him,
- he extends his arm to direct the ball,
- he lands on his supporting leg,
- on completion of the movement, his whole body is facing the direction of the ball.

### Remember!

- With this type of clearance, it is important to use the speed of the ball and not force the action.
- The ball should preferably be cleared to the wing.
- After making the clearance, the goalkeeper needs to reposition himself face on to the game.

The goalkeeper can clear the ball easily with his "good" hand (right-handed goalkeeper punches a cross from his right, left-handed from the left). However, it is much more difficult with the "bad" hand (right-handed goalkeeper punching a cross with the left hand – cross from the left). With training we can address this awkwardness. The goalkeeper can learn to punch the ball away just as well with either right or left fist, which can be very useful in a match.

If the goalkeeper cannot use this technique, he can use the solution shown on the next page.



### Punched clearance of a ball coming from the goalkeeper's left

The goalkeeper's action is identical to when catching the ball, except that at the end of the movement, he clears the

ball with his right fist while extending his arm. The situation is the same for a left-handed goalkeeper with a cross from the right.



### 3. Ball turned away with one hand

The goalkeeper dives and turns the ball away with one hand in the following situations:

- when the ball is hit to the far post,
- when he is lobbed.

In these cases, it is usually sufficient for the goalkeeper to deflect the ball away from his opponent with his fingertips. We can consider this action a "last resort" save.





#### 4. Ball tipped over the crossbar

When a ball is crossed near the goal, if the goalkeeper is not sure of his positioning or if an opponent is near, he can tip the ball over the crossbar. Why do this?

- because, in his attempt to hold onto the ball, the goalkeeper could fall over the goal line or touch the crossbar and drop the ball,
- because turning the ball away in front of goal in the presence of opponents could be risky.



If, after moving, the goalkeeper finds himself facing the goal, he tips the ball over the crossbar with the opposite hand.

If, during his movement, the goalkeeper finds himself with his back to goal:

- he can change his direction of movement by changing his supporting leg,
- he can twist in the air as he takes off (see photos 4, 5, 6, 7).

In both cases he is able to tip the ball over the crossbar with the opposite hand.



## The cut-back cross

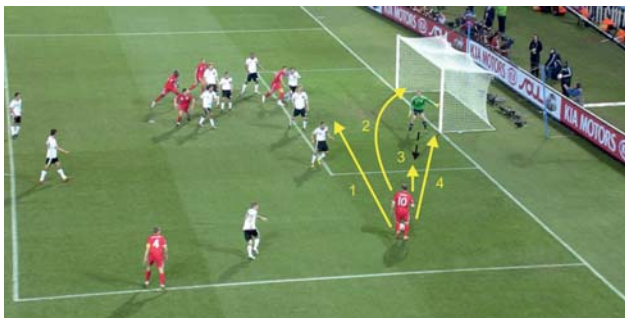
A cut-back cross is one possible outcome when an attacker is heading towards goal at a tight angle.

Certain factors may influence the decision of the player with the ball:

- whether a defender is coming back to challenge him,
- whether he looks up at the position of the goalkeeper and other players in the penalty area,
- the foot he is using to control the ball.

What situations might the goalkeeper be faced with?

(Presuming a right-footed player cutting in from the right).



- The cut-back cross: on the ground, at medium height, with a bounce (1),
- Other possible situations:
  - A curled ball to the far post (open side) (2),
  - If the player pushes the ball too far ahead of him, the goalkeeper can dive at his feet (3),
  - A power shot to the near post (closed side) (4).

The goalkeeper must find a compromise between his own positioning, an analysis of how the opponent is running with the ball and the positioning of other players (opponents and team-mates).

The goalkeeper positions himself according to the opponent's movement and reacts to a cut-back cross.

The ideal way to deal with a cut-back cross is to hold onto the ball, because a deflected ball may end up at an opponent's feet. This is a paradoxical situation because even a technically well-performed deflection can result in a goal whereas an unremarkable save may be effective. After making a save, the goalkeeper must reposition himself quickly.

If the goalkeeper cannot deal with the cross, he must react quickly to a new situation in which he is unaware of the position of opponents behind him. This means that he has to react more instinctively.

The goalkeeper can:

- dive at the opponent's feet,
- dive early to cover as much space in the goal as possible,
- make a reflex save if he is caught on the wrong foot.

Communication with the defence is difficult. At the beginning of the move, the goalkeeper can warn his team-mates of the opponent's presence in the penalty area. After that, he must concentrate on making a save, or perhaps give instructions to defenders who are in his field of vision..





### A power cross on the ground or at medium height between the goalkeeper and his defence

This is often the conclusion of a quick attack. It is a cross into the space between the goalkeeper and defenders running back towards goal.

The goalkeeper intercepts the ball's trajectory before intervening, with or without a dive. The goalkeeper must

read the trajectory perfectly if he is not to be beaten to the ball by an opponent. He must shout to his defenders that he is coming out to avoid any misunderstanding.





## The exercises

### Exercise 1

1. Ball thrown out.
  2. Forward movement.
  3. Backward movement.
  4. Aerial ball.  
Change of goalkeeper.
- 5 repetitions each side



### Exercise 2

1. Aerial ball thrown in.
  2. Two-fisted clearance.
- Change of goalkeeper.  
8-10 repetitions per goalkeeper each side



### Exercise 3

- Crosses (with opposition) from different positions.
- 10 balls from each side, with variation



### Exercise 4

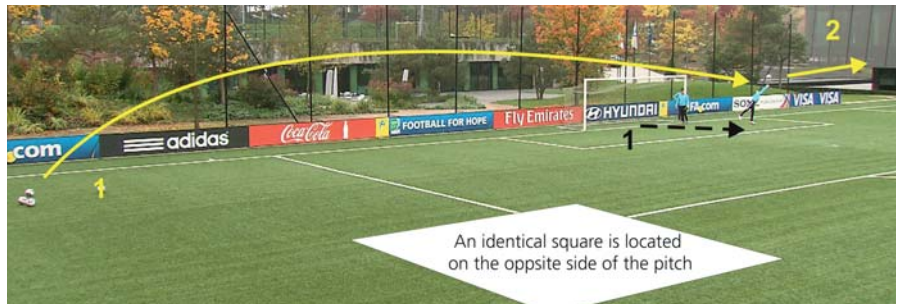
1. Movement of coach with the ball – goalkeeper takes up position.
  2. Cross.
  3. High ball.
- 4 repetitions one after the other on each side





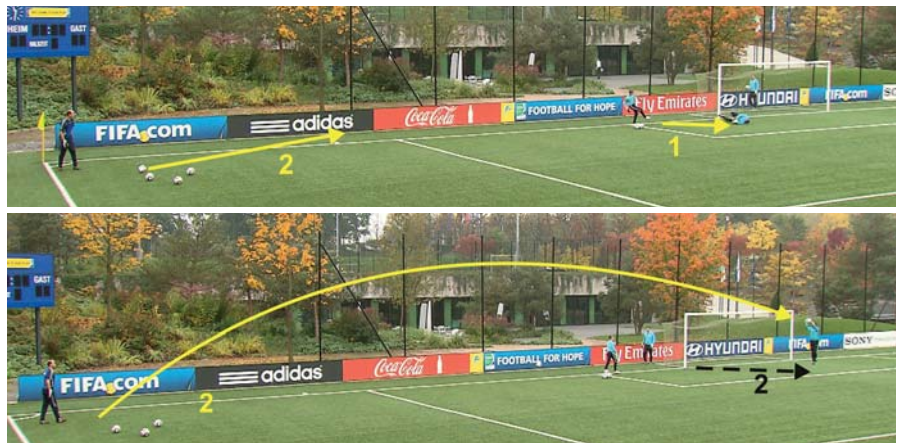
**Exercise 5**

1. Cross.
  2. Punched ball (1 or 2 fists) to the side, aiming at one of the highlighted squares.
- 6 balls from each side, with variation**



**Exercise 6**

1. Cut back pass.
  2. Cross.
- Change of goalkeeper  
**4 repetitions each side**



**Exercise 7**

1. Cross.
  2. Movement.
  3. Shot.
- 2 sequences**  
Change of goalkeeper  
**2 repetitions from each side**



**Exercise 8**

1. Cross.
  2. Clearance.
- 10 balls from each side, with variation**



### 3.2.4 1-on-1 situations

1-on-1 situations are analysed depending on where they take place.

The goalkeeper may face a 1-on-1 situation:

- inside the penalty area,
- outside the penalty area.

#### 1-on-1 situation in the penalty area

##### 1. The goalkeeper is faced by a 1-on-1 situation after a pass into the penalty area

- there is little time to analyse the situation, the goalkeeper must get to the right place at the right time,
- after a sprint, he attempts to gather the ball without diving or dives in at the opponent's feet.

He can dive in at the opponent's feet in two different ways:

- **by sliding in (the example shown is for a dive to the right)**

The goalkeeper utilises the speed of his sprint. At the appropriate moment, he bends his right leg under him and slides in to gather the ball.



sliding in at the opponent's feet



- **by jumping towards the ball**

The goalkeeper uses his speed. At the appropriate moment he pushes off from his right leg and “flies” horizontally to intercept the ball.

**Remember!**

The goalkeeper must dive quickly to the ground rather than upwards because this wastes time and can have serious consequences if contact is made with an opponent (penalty, red card).



Jumping towards the ball

## 2. An opponent enters the penalty area with the ball at feet

The goalkeeper's positioning depends on the opponent's trajectory. The goalkeeper reduces the shooting angle by coming out to the opponent while watching his position and analysing his intention (dribbling or shooting). If the opponent pushes the ball too far ahead, the goalkeeper dives in at his feet.

### Dribbling in the penalty area

The goalkeeper slows his movement before intervening. He is on his toes with knees bent and shoulders forward (see photo). At the right moment, he tries to win the ball from the opponent.

### Remember!

- At the time of the confrontation, the goalkeeper should not be moving.
- If the opponent dribbles the ball close to the goalkeeper, he can intervene with his feet.
- The goalkeeper can use his movement to try to unsettle his opponent and direct him to where he wants.
- The goalkeeper can slow down his opponent's progress to allow the defenders to get back.
- He must pay special care to fouls in the penalty area as these are sanctioned by a penalty and a yellow or red card.





### Shot on goal

A few tips:

- because the opponent is so close, the goalkeeper has to make a reflex save,
- at the time of the shot, the goalkeeper should not be moving,
- some attackers will feint to try to put the goalkeeper off balance,



- the goalkeeper can also feint,
- watch out for a lob (don't go to ground too early),
- strikers may opt to hit the ball between the goalkeeper's legs as he cannot keep his feet together,
- if the attacker is not looking at the goalkeeper, the goalkeeper can commit himself to diving in against the shot, closing down as much space as possible.



### 1-on-1 situation outside the penalty area

Modern football requires goalkeepers to participate more actively in the game and fulfil the role of a libero. The goalkeeper moves up the field with his defence and is often obliged to intercept a ball played between the defence and his goal. He has a few fractions of a second to decide whether to come out or not. If he is not sure, it is better to stay in the penalty area and attempt to intercept the ball using his hands. If the goalkeeper rushes out of the penalty area indiscriminately, the attacker's task may be made easier or the goalkeeper may be sent off for a foul. A good outcome when the goalkeeper comes out is a long clearance, a clearance to touch (if necessary), a header or a sliding tackle to recover the ball (without fouling the opponent). If the goalkeeper has enough time, he can find a team-mate with a short pass. Trying to resolve the situation by dribbling is too risky. The goalkeeper should shout to his team-mates when he is coming out of the area. After intervening, he must get back to position in goal as soon as possible as play may continue. He should take into account

the weather and other conditions that may have a bearing on how successful his intervention is likely to be (wind, puddles, bumpy pitch, etc.).



## The exercises

### Exercise 1

The goalkeeper follows the coach's movement and then blocks the ball.

4-6 repetitions



### Exercise 2

1. Pass along the ground.
2. Dive at feet.

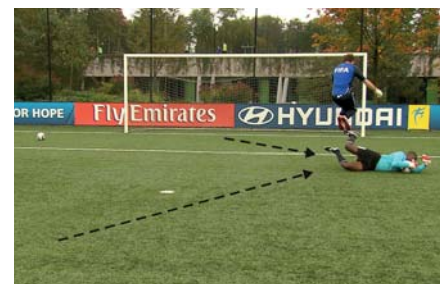
4 repetitions on each side



### Exercise 3

1. Shot with a bounce.
2. Ball along ground.
3. 1-on-1

4 repetitions



### Exercise 4

1. The coach intentionally pushes the ball too far ahead.
2. The goalkeeper dives at feet.

4 repetitions for each goalkeeper





### 3.2.5 Reflex saves

The reflex saves that a goalkeeper makes are characterised by the lack of time he has to analyse and resolve the situation. The goalkeeper may not always be well positioned. These are atypical saves where any method of stopping the ball is valid (with the feet, body, head, etc.). Reflex saves stick in the memory of the goalkeeper as well as the supporters.

There are two categories of reflex save: when there is little time to react and when the goalkeeper has to change positioning.

#### 1. Goalkeeper reacts even though positioning not ideal

##### Examples:

deflected ball; multiple saves; recovery after poor judgement; misunderstanding with a team-mate; goalmouth scramble; goalkeeper blocked or slips; ball takes a bad bounce and other external factors (ball hanging in the air, floodlights, sun, wind, etc.).

Every reflex save is different. The success of a save often depends on the goalkeeper's instant response. Practising these situations in training can assist the goalkeeper during matches and reduce the element of surprise.

#### 2. Goalkeeper well placed

There are situations in a match or training when the goalkeeper is well placed but has to make a save very quickly because the attacker is so close (a close shot or header). This differentiates the reflex save from other saves.

### Save with the hands

The goalkeeper's position is as follows (see photo 1):

- weight on the balls of the feet,
- knees slightly bent,
- shoulders forward,
- arms bent and forward.

From this position, the goalkeeper can make a save from a shot at medium height or along the ground.

If the goalkeeper's weight is on his heels (see photo 2), he can react to a ball at medium height, intercepting it by diving backwards. He can't dive for a ball along the ground from this position but he can make a save using his feet.

#### Remember!

If the goalkeeper's knees are too bent before the save, he will find it difficult to react to a shot at head height.



If the ball comes in near the goalkeeper's feet then he will not be able to react by a standard dive.

### Diving by "throwing" the foot technique

Diving to the right:

- transfer body weight from the right leg (which is usually the leg to push off from) onto the left leg,
- the goalkeeper "throws" his right leg over to the left side,
- the left leg follows the movement of the right leg,
- the rest of the body very quickly falls to the ground at the starting point.

### Remember!

The movement must be performed quickly and laterally rather than vertically (wastes time).



In some exceptional cases, the goalkeeper can clear the ball using a "strong hand".



### Save with the feet

Saves with the feet are similar to those made by goalkeepers in handball and ice hockey. Not all goalkeepers have the skill and ability to make a save with their feet. This situation is accentuated by some coaches who do not like the manoeuvre. This is a shame because in some situations the goalkeeper can move more quickly when saving with the feet than by performing a dive.

- in order to carry out a save with the feet, the body weight must be on the opposite leg to that blocking the ball,

- the goalkeeper is slightly back on his heels with shoulders back (to compensate for the outstretched leg),
- the goalkeeper blocks the ball with his leg,
- the goalkeeper falls backwards, landing on his buttocks or back; he uses his hands to break his fall.

**Remember!**

The goalkeeper has to be ready before making a save with feet (the leg has to be tensed) as there is a risk of injury.





## The exercises

### Exercise 1

Ball thrown at the goalkeeper's back. Reaction and dive on the ball.

**10 balls per goalkeeper**



### Exercise 2

1. Shot along the ground against a board.
2. Dive (reflex).

**4-5 balls on each side**



### Exercise 3

1. Coach delivers any one of 3 balls.
2. Reflex save.

**6 balls**



### Exercise 4

1. Thrown pass.
2. Hard shot.

**6-8 balls**



### Exercise 5

1. Shot with a bounce among other balls.
2. Reflex save.

**10 balls with varied delivery**





## 3.3 Distributing the ball (Build-ups)

The goalkeeper's distribution of the ball represents his contribution to offensive play. In this way the goalkeeper becomes the team's first attacker. He can influence the team's rhythm of play and tactical choices. Goalkeepers become involved in attacking play in two ways:

### 1. The dead ball

- goal kick,
- free kick near the goal.

The ball can be played short or otherwise the team can move back up the pitch and an attacking move launched by a long kick.

### 2. Ball in play

- launch a quick attack:
  - seeking out a player or open space,

- launch a gradual attack:
  - short ball out,
  - long ball looking for a good second ball,
  - slowing things down (while respecting the 6 seconds rule) before distributing the ball to relieve the opponents' pressure.

The goalkeeper has two choices when distributing the ball:

- a kicked clearance,
- a throw-out.

### Remember!

- The defence must remain alert in case the goalkeeper slips.
- Seek out a good header of the ball (launch the ball directly to the player or into space).



Goal kick



### 3.3.1 The kicked clearance

The objective of a kicked clearance is:

- a rapid change of play, targeting either a player or an open space where a player can run on to the ball,
- switching the play to the opponent's half and looking for a good second ball.

The different techniques are:

- **Clearances along the ground,**
- **Volleys,**
- **Half-volleys.**

The change of the rules allows the goalkeeper to move freely inside his penalty area providing the ball is released within 6 seconds. The choice between the different clearance techniques depends on:

- how much time is left in the match or the score,
- whether an opponent is close by,
- the desired tactics,
- the positioning of the opposition team (whether the team is compact and in position or has lost its shape),
- the goalkeeper's preferences,
- the weather conditions:
  - a half-volley or clearance along the ground is preferable when kicking into the wind,
  - a volleyed clearance is recommended for a slippery pitch.

#### Clearance along the ground

Clearances along the ground have become increasingly frequent in modern football. If a goalkeeper is not being pressed, he can move the ball out of the penalty area with his feet before dispatching it far into the opponent's half.

The advantages of this manoeuvre are:

- the goalkeeper gets around the 6 second rule,
- the defence can get back up the pitch,
- the goalkeeper gains ground and, in particular, improves accuracy.

The low trajectory of the kick makes it easier for an attacker to control the ball or flick it on accurately.





## Volleyed clearance

### 1. "Classic" volley

Technical description of the manoeuvre:

- 3-4 run-up steps,
- toss the ball up with one or both hands (usually the hand opposite to the kicking foot),

- open the shoulders,
- stretch one arm ahead and one behind to increase stability and range of movement, quickly bringing the striking foot through,
- upon impact (through the axis of the ball) hold the striking foot firm and bring it upwards,
- complete the manoeuvre by forward follow-through.



## 2. Front volley

- the goalkeeper faces the direction of the clearance and tosses the ball forward after a short run-up,
- the kick is straight, with the shoulders facing forward and the body leaning well back,
- the trajectory of the ball is often very high.



## 3. The side volley

This style of clearance is often used in South America. The goalkeeper may even use it over a short distance instead of a throw-out. It is quite a difficult manoeuvre to carry out.

Technical description of the manoeuvre:

- the goalkeeper tosses the ball up from one hand without a run-up,

- the starting position is very open,
- the goalkeeper opens the hips by tilting the body laterally,
- the ball is kicked from underneath,
- the kicking leg does not follow the direction of the ball but tilts to the side.

The trajectory of the ball is a lot lower than a classic volley.





## Half-volley clearance

When distributing the ball, it is essential not to rush the manoeuvre. It is preferable to have quality, rather than speed, of execution.

It is important to:

- keep the body balanced and maintain good positioning of the supporting leg,
- aim for good coordination when synchronising tossing and kicking the ball,
- never take your eyes off the ball,
- pay particular attention to the moment of impact (ball/foot) after the bounce,

- do not use this type of clearance on a pitch that is greasy, bumpy or frozen.

### 1. The front half-volley

Technical description of the manoeuvre:

- shoulders facing forward in starting position,
- ball dropped from both hands,
- make contact with the centre of the ball to avoid spin,
- follow through with the kicking foot in the direction of the ball.

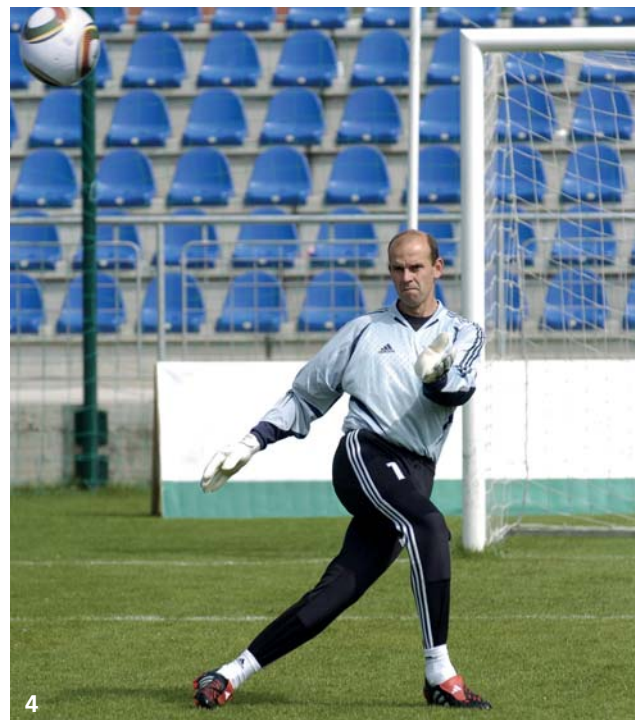




## 2. The side half-volley: medium to long distance (directly to a team-mate)

Technical description of the manoeuvre:

- not a large range of movement,
- drop the ball laterally,
- for a short kick (small bounce) hold the ankle firm,
- no follow-through with the leg,
- low trajectory of 30-40 metres.





### 3. The side half-volley: long (for a team-mate to run on to)

Technical description of the manoeuvre:

- attack the ball with a longer run-up and preparation, leading to a more expansive manoeuvre,
- toss the ball from one or both hands,
- the foot is held firm while kicking through the ball,
- follow through.



### 3.3.2 The throw-out

A throw-out keeps the game flowing and encourages the development of a move. A throw is accurate over short and long distances. The goalkeeper can throw the ball:

- directly to a team-mate,
- into the path of a player who is running.

The goalkeeper can decide whether to launch a quick or gradual attack.

There are three types of throw-out:

- **Rolling the ball out,**
- **Overarm throw,**
- **Other forms of short throw.**



#### 1. Rolling the ball out

The advantage of this type of throw is that it allows the outfield player to run with the ball or pass without having to control the ball first.

##### Run-up

- this throw can be carried out with or without a run-up.

##### Bend the legs and throw

- the right arm reaches back while holding the ball like a pendulum,
- the knees are bent (see photo),
- the goalkeeper's arm moves through at the required speed to roll the ball out along the ground.





## 2. Overarm throw

The advantage of this movement is that its great accuracy can eliminate several opponents.



### Assess the situation and required run-up

- consider the distance to the team-mate,
- determine how hard to throw the ball,
- use a few run-up steps for a longer throw.

### Preparing to throw

- keep a good hold of the ball,
- tilt the body backwards in a lateral position,
- transfer body weight onto the right leg when throwing with the right hand,
- use the left hand to maintain balance.

### Throw

- keep the right arm well extended and move in a circular motion above the head,
- at the same time, transfer the body weight on to the left leg,
- throw the ball:
  - from the highest point – long throw,
  - from just before this point – high ball,
  - beyond this point – strong throw towards the ground,
- follow through in the direction of the ball.



### 3. Other forms of short throw

These types of throw are used when the goalkeeper wants to distribute the ball quickly or to avoid an opponent immediately in front of him.



1  
Quick throw from hip



2  
Throw-in style



Bent arm throw



Throw-in style

#### Remember!

- For rapid distribution, the goalkeeper must observe and anticipate the positioning of his team-mates.
- Before considering distribution, the goalkeeper must, above all, concentrate on stopping the ball (carry out the actions one after another).
- After a cross from the wing, it is generally advisable to distribute to the opposite wing.
- The team-mate receiving the ball should not have any problem in controlling it.



## The exercises

### Exercise 1

Improving individual technique.

1. Pass.
2. Kicked return, inside of foot.

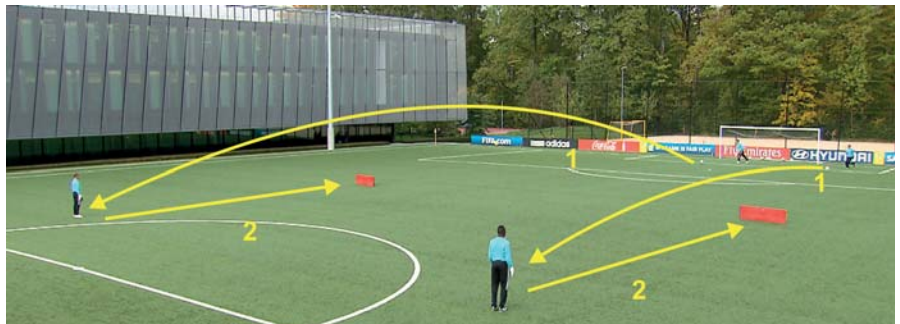
**20 repetitions**



### Exercise 2

1. Clearances (goal kicks).
2. Control, accurate pass.

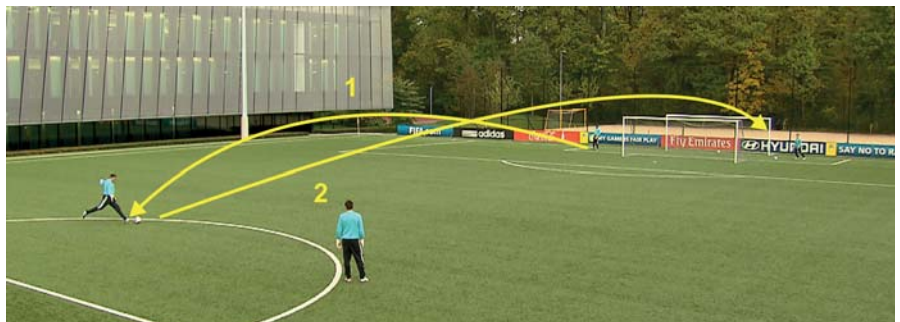
**4 balls per goalkeeper**



### Exercise 3

1. Clearance from goal area.
2. Directed control and kick over the goal placed 11 m in front of the standard goal.

**4 balls on each side**



### Exercise 4

Series of distributed balls

- Throws.
- Volleys.
- Half-volleys.
- Along ground.

**12 balls per goalkeeper**



## 3.4 Back passes

The major change to the “back pass” rule revolutionised how goalkeepers play the game with their feet. Football is now faster and more fluid and the goalkeeper’s individual technique must be on a par with that of the outfield players. The goalkeeper is frequently involved in play using his feet which leads to situations that previously would have easily been resolved by picking the ball up.

The back pass is a match situation when a team-mate under pressure opts to pass the ball back to the goalkeeper who is facing play. (An exception is a back pass made to use up time).

There are five different possibilities depending on the goalkeeper’s situation:

- goalkeeper under pressure from an opponent
  1. clearance to touch,
  2. control and pass (short or long),
  3. dribble,
- goalkeeper not under pressure
  4. control and distribution,
- in both cases, the following possibility must be considered:
  5. handle the ball (as far as the rules allow, e.g. from a defender’s header).

All back passes made with the foot (including the ankle) that are handled by the goalkeeper are penalised by an indirect free kick at the place of the infringement.

If the goalkeeper does not actively attempt to start an attacking move by his distribution of the ball, his action is considered to be part of his defensive duties.

### Examples:

Clearance to touch, long clearance forward, clearance by tackling the opponent (if the back pass is too weak).

The goalkeeper’s success in dealing with a back pass depends on certain factors that must be taken into account:

- reading of the game and anticipation,
- the quality of the back pass,
- the proximity of opponents,
- the state of the pitch and the weather conditions,
- communication with team-mates.

Regular training can improve the goalkeeper’s individual technique with feet. This can be conducted as an individual or group session. Care must be taken to ensure work on both feet.

There are a few general rules that the goalkeeper and team-mate making the back pass should observe:

- as far as possible, the ball should be played to the goalkeeper’s preferred foot,
- the back pass should always be played to one side of the goal (otherwise a slip by the goalkeeper or unexpected bounce of the ball could be dangerous),
- the team-mate decides the direction and strength of the back pass; the goalkeeper reacts and intervenes as appropriate,
- after the back pass, the goalkeeper’s team-mates must take up useful positions to give the goalkeeper options.



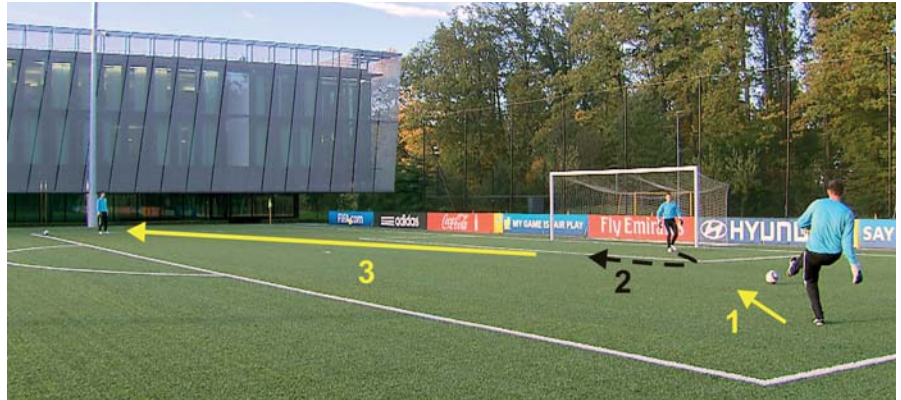
## The exercises

### Exercise 1

1. Pass.
2. Directed control.
3. Pass.
4. Same on the other side.

**3 repetitions**

(using both feet)



### Exercise 2

1. Pass back.
2. Movement.
3. Clearance after 1 or 2 touches.

**4-5 repetitions on each side**



### Exercise 3

1. Pass back.
2. Pressure on the goalkeeper.
3. Clearance after 1 or 2 touches.

Change goalkeeper.

**3 repetitions on each side**



### Exercise 4

1. Pass back - along the ground, with a bounce, in the air. Goalkeeper moves towards ball.
2. Clearance after 1 or 2 touches.

**10 balls on each side**

Variation: same exercise with opponent pressuring the goalkeeper.









