



Pride
Honor
Respect

GOALKEEPERS CURRICULUM



VYSA ODP GOALKEEPER CURRICULUM

10-12 Year-Old Players

At this age players test their skill level through the games. Training is the root of development, but game-like training will develop game awareness and game situations for the players. Results are important as they give the players a competitive focus in the match.

Coaches are encouraged to promote soccer that:

- ◆ Is free flowing
- ◆ Is coach-guided (not coach-directed)
- ◆ Demands that all players on the field, regardless of their specified position, participate in defending and attacking.
- ◆ In this handbook we focus on Goalkeepers (aka “GK”).
- ◆ “Last line of defense, first line of attack.”
- ◆ It is very important at this age to focus on several key points of GK.
- ◆ GK requirements:
- ◆ Sheer bravery
- ◆ Hand and eye coordination
- ◆ Foot skills
- ◆ Reflexes
- ◆ Field and player management.

This age group focus should be mostly on:

- ◆ Technical. The mechanical breakdown of skill sets required are:
- ◆ Hand and eye coordination
- ◆ Foot work
- ◆ Receiving
- ◆ Agility
- ◆ Reaction reflexes

GKs in the past were always the slowest or the heaviest players that could not make it as a field player. Times have changed, and today's GK are well-tuned athletes with not only good hand and eye coordination but also good foot skills and man management as well.



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Distribution

Hand and eye coordination. (Single hand or two hands)

Simple example of bouncing balls and receiving - at this point the correct technique on how to shape their hand and body posture could be demonstrated. Pressure can be increased by using two balls and working on bouncing or tossing the balls to create and sharpen the senses.

Combination of two GK and two balls to develop senses and increase the speed and sharpen reaction time. Coaches can monitor and demonstrate correct skill sets on foot skills and the hand and eye coordination required to receive the ball. As the GK develops more confidence at this level, different angles and different speeds of service can be implemented. At this age the distribution by hand for the GK is weak due to the size and inability to completely control the ball with one hand. To increase the level of development on this particular skill, games such as handball, dodge ball and drop ball are good ways to keep players' interest and motivation. Remember, at this age, players are not fully coordinated and still have physical deficiencies. Patience is a must as a GK coach. Positive reinforcement is key to winning players' trust and to have them focus on coaches' instructions.

At this age the training sessions should consist of:

Warm-up for 15 minutes of dynamic and static stretching with the ball due to the nature of the beast. At this point 1/3 of the coaching points regarding the skill set should be given to the GK.

In this 15- minute segment, I use match- related rather than small-sided activity due to importance of pattern play in training GK. Pattern play will help the GK to develop their discipline required to complete the correct skill and it will help the coaches to monitor and make proper adjustment to them. In this segment the majority of your coaching points are given. As players' confidence rises, add different game-like activities to increase their awareness. Foot skills, agility, and different methods of diving could be part of this session. It is important to point out that these skills need to be first introduced in pattern-like training sessions before placed into dynamic play. Use high repetition with low pressure.

A dynamic game such as 4v4+4 in three boxes will develop GK foot skills. 1v1, shot stopping, agility, and distribution with hand and foot are also helpful. The third 15-minute activity needs to be inside the 18-yard box and be as close as possible to a game- like situation. This is the time that GK needs to understand and to see where they stand and to develop the feeling for the area that they are responsible for. This segment needs to be as competitive as possible. Multiple shots, stopping, and accuracy distribution are difficult tasks to achieve with a younger age group. They have to be able to start learning to multitask. The training sessions need to touch on all the GK requirements. A game such as 4v4 +4target + 1 goal not only helps to develop technical aspects of the game but also tactical awareness as well. Shoot stopping and box management, communication, footwork, agility, back pass situations and distribution to restart counter attacking will be brought together in this session. One very important note: Due to the nature of this specific position you need to make sure there is enough rest time for players between activities. The final part of the training session should be based on free play. On the older age groups to develop their senses and where about, Shadow play that includes defenders and attackers is a valuable tool to help a young GK understand different situations. Set plays and restarts are part of the game and should be part of the GK session as well. At this stage it is necessary to teach the basics of how to set your wall, GK placement and man on the post requirement.

Low number of reps but with highest speed possible.

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12-14 Year-Old Players

Between the ages of 12 to 14, children often experience a physical growth spurt that affects their balance and coordination. Oftentimes, they gain physical strength and power, but temporarily lose agility and control. As soccer players, this means potentially losing some control over the ball. If the technical foundation is not strong, soccer is no longer fluid and fun for the players. At this point these players may move toward sports where it is easier for them to achieve some level of success. Practices should be around one hour of training on specifics of GK and then with the rest of the team for the duration of the training session. It is very important that GK participate with the entire team activities as much as possible. They play a massive role in wins and losses of the game. Statistics show that during this stage of physical development the majority of physical injuries appear due to the core muscle development ratio to the player's growth.

Training session for the GK in this age should consist of:

Technical

1. Hand and eye coordination
2. Receiving - mechanics involved with each skill set
3. Foot skills with the ball - ladder movement, coordination and balancing movement with the ball
4. Speed and reflexes, hand and eye reflexes
5. Agility and core development
6. Distribution with hand and foot

Tactical: Defensive and Offensive

Defensively:

1. Communication
2. Box management
3. Man management -roles and responsibilities
4. Distribution
5. Start and restart, counter attack

Offensively:

1. Accurate delivery
2. Reduce space with the defender when in possession of the ball
3. Serve as a linking player
4. Provide pressure release; back pass situation
5. Time management type of service; driven sidewinder, drop, or long punts.
6. Training sessions for this age group still include mainly technical and individual skill sets required for completing the tasks.



Low number of reps but with highest speed possible.

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- ⇒ Practice should consist of a 15 -20 minute warm up. This part of the session at this age is important, as the players' speed and agility has increased and so has the percentage of game-related injuries. Hot or cold weather and wet or hard surfaces should be taken into consideration as to how long to continue the warm-up. 1/3 of your coaching points on the mechanics are being made at this level. Warm-up should be with the ball and ladder, footwork, agility, and working on reflexes. More emphasis should be placed on reflexes and quickness at this age than before.
- ⇒ 1st match- related or small-sided games for this age group can be a mixture of dynamic or pattern sessions to bring out necessary coaching points for the coaches to correct. On the dynamic session we recommend using a real game situation such as 4v4 + 2 GK. This way we can teach the organization of the defenders in defense and box management plus, on the other side, the GK role on the attack. This segment can be 20 minutes long.
- ⇒ 2nd expanded small-sided or match- related game needs to be directional and tactical-based. A game of 7v7 toward one goal with multiple targets for GK restarts is an opportunity for creating counter attack or simulating such a thing. We need to start paying attention at this stage to restarts and set plays as statistics show the number of goals being scored from these dead ball situations.
- ⇒ Final part of the training session should be based on free play. On the older age groups to develop their senses and positioning, Shadow play that includes defenders and attackers is a valuable tool to help a young GK understand different situations. Set plays and restarts are all part of the game and should be part of the GK session as well. At this stage it is necessary to teach the basics of gamesmanship on time and man management, dealing with goal up and goal down situations in an ethical matter, and GK placements and man on the post requirements. Certain tasks, such as studying the opponents' patterns or movement inside and outside of the box by watching different games and providing feedback, are necessary for player development and awareness.

Low number of reps but with highest speed possible.

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14-18 Year-Old Players

At this point, most of the exercises and games that the players play in practice should be competitive, with a winning and a losing team. Their focus should be on how their decisions and their ball skills help or waste their team's ability to win at whatever game or exercise they are playing.

At this stage players should be comfortable dealing with the ball in a variety of situations. With that in mind, the coach should look into several issues:

How technical issues such as back passes, long throwing, playing from the back, the Gk foot skills, quality of delivery of the ball, punts, throwing, goal kicks, and drop kicks can influence the game. Keepers should be aware of the reasoning behind these skills required to complete the tactical maneuverings.

Training sessions should contain warm-ups with the ball for approximately 20 minutes or more. Included will be ladder, agility, and flexibility work. It is important to spend time on stretching due to the requirements of this position. Whether static stretching is required as well on the side depends on the session's topic.

Final Thought. GK have to have a strong character to deal with many physical and mental obstacles. The GK psychological development takes shape during the training sessions due to the competitive nature of this position. It is necessary to spend time with each GK prior to the training session to create the psychological trigger moment and for proper warm-ups before the whole team session. But it is absolutely essential for the keepers to participate with the rest of the team training session as well to feel the unity and belonging.

Low number of reps but with highest speed possible.