



U.S. Soccer Development Academy

U-18 Goalkeeping

Training Guidelines

1. The keeper needs a minimum of 30-40 minutes of specialized training per session. There needs to be high level of demand placed on the keepers.
2. The exercises need a balance between the technical and tactical requirements of the position. All exercises should be functional/ match related not camp related.
3. The number of repetitions should never exceed 8-10. This then becomes more fitness than technical work.
4. Use of video to show proper technique and decision making is suggested. These can be their own matches or a high level match.
5. There should be a professional tune and pace to all sessions.

Technical

Footwork: Quick, effective, fluid movement through the goal. Refining technique from U-16 level. Trained in all sessions.

Handling/Catching: Clean catching of balls hit with pace at all heights and distances.

Rebounds: Putting balls in “save areas”. Selection of proper hand surface to parry balls to safety.

Angle Play: The keeper, at this level, needs to establish high or aggressive angles to challenge the shooter. This again is done in most training exercises.

Low/Midrange balls: Proper body shape – direct path to ball. Proper choice of either catching or parrying these balls to safety.

Breakaways: Emphasis should continue to be proper technique; however correct starting spot in relation to the ball is paramount. Also the reading and anticipation of through balls.

Crosses: The goalkeeper needs to have an extended range of 10-12 yards. He needs to handle cleanly and correctly (catch/punch) crosses in traffic, from different angles, and inswinger/outswinger service.

Kicking/Back pass/Distribution: The keeper must have significant range on all kicks. He has to be able to initiate a counter attack with both his kicking and throwing. He needs to play with all surfaces of both his feet effectively.

Tactical

Stay/Come Decisions: The keeper must be able to read through balls and react accordingly. The keeper must now be able to control 2/3rds of the space behind the backs. This will all be achieved with proper starting spots. The keeper must make proper decisions on what crosses he should claim or to hold his line to make a save.

Organization of Team: Clear, composed, and concise direction should be given to the entire team when necessary.

Organization of Set Pieces: Correct number of players in walls, correct match-ups on corners, as well as zonal responsibilities on all set pieces.

Organization Against the Counter Attack: The keeper needs to recognize potential counter opportunities for the opponent while his team is in possession and organize players to prevent this.

Physical

SPARQ Training

Weight Training: The emphasis should be on developing the following:

- Explosiveness
- Power
- Overall Strength
- Core Strength

Agility/Foot Speed:

- Foot Speed over 25 meters
- Clean/Effective lateral movement (speed ladder)-SPARQ
- Agility (jump rope, speed ladder)
- Quickness (lateral/forward)

General Aerobic Conditioning

Psychological:

Courage
Confidence
Composure
Coach ability
Will to win/Strong competitive drive

** All of these components have to be developed under pressure.*