

# GOALKEEPER WARM-UPS

[WWW.FOOTY4KIDS.CO.UK/](http://WWW.FOOTY4KIDS.CO.UK/)

After the foot skill and pass/receive drills that the entire team does have the goal keepers warm up with drills like these:

## **BOUNCE AND CATCH**

- Have them hold a ball in their hands high over their heads, bounce it down to the ground and then catch it waist high. The catch should emphasize the classic 'W' shape, thumbs together, other four fingers angled out at 45 degrees.
- Keepers should be moving around and changing directions during this drill.
- Don't let them just drop the ball and catch it. Emphasize the over the head throw down towards the ground.

A progression of this drill is to have them walk around, bounce the ball, lift their leg over the ball and re-catch it always emphasizing the 'W' catch. Do it ten times with the right leg, then ten times with the left, then alternate legs. A second progression of this warm-up is to have them hammer the ball out of their left hand with their right hand and then re-catch it with the 'W'. This is tougher because the keeper must quickly position their hands after releasing the ball.

## **BALL BETWEEN THE LEGS**

Keepers stand with legs shoulder width apart. Bend over at the waist and pass a ball back and forth between their legs. Initially start out with the hands stationary, i.e. right hand in back, left in front. Ball moves quickly, through the legs, from hand to hand, first rolling on the ground, then off the ground.

After they have the hang of this they pass the ball between their legs in a figure 8. In this case the hands are switching positions from front to rear. Again start this drill with the ball remaining in contact with the ground and then progress to the ball in the air between the legs.

This exercise improves hand eye coordination and stretches the back and leg muscles.

A third and more difficult component of this exercise is to have the player lie on their back and scissor their legs up and down while threading the ball through their legs.

This works the leg and stomach muscles while improving their hand eye coordination.

### **BALL BOUNCE BETWEEN LEGS**

Have the players bounce the ball from the front through their legs and then recatch it behind their backs. Both hands are used to serve the ball and catch the ball. Return the ball between the legs from the back to the front.

### **BALL ROLL DOWN THE BACK**

Have the keepers place the ball on the back of their necks. Let the ball roll down their back. They then catch it at the small of their back with two hands. Return the ball to the front and start again. Once players get the hang of it they can begin walking around rolling the ball and catching it.

The above two warm ups are good for letting the keepers get the feel of the ball in their hands even when it is not directly in their sight. The more they catch the ball in practice, the more comfortable they will be in a game.

### **FRONT TO BACK SWITCHING HANDS**

I couldn't think of a better name for this drill. Basically the player bends at the waist with the ball between their legs. The right hand covers the ball from the front, the left hand from the back. Player releases the ball and switches hands not letting the ball fall and touch the ground. This drill is good for quickness and touch. Have the players count how many times that they can do this in a timed period and then challenge them to do one more, and then one more, and then one more, etc., etc...

### **SIT UPS**

Keeper lies on her back with arms extended over the head, a ball in her hands. Keeper executes a sit-up keeping the ball in her hands and extending her arms out in front of her. A player strikes the ball in her hands with their instep. This drill builds hand strength, abdominal strength and anaerobic condition.

A variation on this drill is to have the player throw the ball to you as they sit up and for you to chest pass it back to them at the top of the motion. This also builds hand strength, hand-eye coordination and quickness.

### **SHUFFLE AND ROLL**

This is a drill to increase side to side quickness. Have the player bounce the ball hard on the ground. They then side to side shuffle under the path of the ball. If the ball goes high enough they might get two side to side shuffles in before the balls momentum is lost. If not, then the second movement should be a side roll under the falling ball.

### **ONE HAND CATCH**

This next warm up involves two people, either both keepers or a keeper and a coach.

Simply have the players stand 5 to 8 yards apart and toss the ball to each other. The catch is to be made one handed and returned the same way.

Progress by having the weaker hand use. Then run a pattern where first the left is used then the right. Finally if you have three or more in the drill add a second ball to increase the difficulty.

This teaches the player to soften the blow of the ball against the hands. It also works finger strength and hand-eye coordination.

### **KNEELING CATCH (RAILROAD TRACKS)**

This is a drill to teach the keepers proper arm position when gathering in a low ball (scoop) or a shot below their waist.

Proper arm position can be described as both arms forming 'railroad tracks' That is the arms are parallel, the elbows are tucked in, the hands are palm up with the little finger and sides touching. The hands form a slight cupping position.

Have the player kneel in front of you with the arms and hands as described above. Start the drill by softly throwing the ball into her hands. Emphasize form! Gradually increase the speed of the throw. Make sure that you hit the arms, and not their head! The player should follow the ball into their arms with their eyes. The elbows must stay together or the ball will force its way through and be dropped. There must be a slight cushioning motion or the ball will hit and pop out.

## **HIGH BALL WARM-UP**

This warm up also involves two people, preferably both keepers. One player bounces the ball so it will go over the head of his partner. Partner jumps for the ball and yells 'Keeper', catching the ball over head in a 'W'.

Make sure that the catcher brings their knee up to protect their midsection. After the catch the catcher becomes the server for his partner. If a coach is warming up the only keeper have the player roll the ball back to the coach just the way they would serve it to a full back in a game situation.

Add a third player to create a distraction for the catcher. This player can lightly tap or push the catcher while he is in the act of catching the ball. This simulates some of the contact the keeper will get in the goal area.

## **ROLLING DRILLS**

This first drill starts with the keeper in a sitting position. The keeper has a partner who will serve the ball. The keeper rolls to the right as their partner serves the ball on the ground.

The keeper traps the ball on the ground using both hands. Keeper returns ball to server and rolls to a sitting position again in one motion. Server then rolls ball to the left and the drill is repeated.

After 5 rolls right and 5 rolls left switch keeper and server. This can be an exhausting drill when done at high tempo.

## **COACHING POINTS**

- Hands still form the 'W'.
- Top leg bends toward the stomach to protect this area and to provide the impetus, when re-extended, to come back to the original position
- Keepers body should be slightly curved away from the goal so that the ball cannot simply glance off them and go in

## **PROGRESSION**

The next progression is to serve the ball in the air as the keeper rolls right and left. The catch is therefore made in the air and the keeper must cushion the ball as they hit the ground.

The next progression is to have the keeper move slightly forward each time they make a roll. The server backs up an appropriate amount with each roll so that they maintain the distance between keeper and server.

The next progression is to start this drill from the knees and repeat as above and the final progression is to do this drill from a standing position.

### **DRIBBLE AND SCOOP**

Have the team dribble in an enclosed area. On a signal from the coach, every player leaves their ball and gets another. The keeper has to scoop the ball and clutch it to their chest.

Make sure no one kicks the keeper. Have the players just place their foot on top of the ball to claim it.

Do not allow diving for the ball.

Make sure the keeper is keeping on his toes, knees flexed.

A common mistake that you should look for in a keeper is slowing down to scoop the ball. The keeper should explode through the ball and after scooping veer to a side, just like they would do in a game situation with an attacker bearing down on them.

### **EXPLOSIVE SCOOP QUICK ROLL RETURN**

Have a player shoot a ground ball in to the keeper. Keeper explodes towards the ball and scoops it to his chest. He continues on and returns a roll pass to either the same player who shot it or to a third player who has gone wide.

This simulates both the explosive step towards the ball we want the keepers to employ and the quick, on the ground counter - attack which is more conducive to possession play than just punting the ball away.

It is also a good conditioning drill.