

Saving the Ball

The basic stance and hand positioning will help any beginner goalie make more simple saves. Remember to keep the body 'square' to the ball. This means the chest and shoulders facing the play. Always try to get the hands and the body behind the ball when possible. Never turn away from the field of play. Move by sprinting forward, backpedaling and shuffling to either side. Whenever the ball is in your end be in a position ready to pounce on the ball. Keep the eyes on the ball at all times, be aggressive and always ATTACK!

1. The 'READY POSITION'

A goalie always wants to be on the balls of his/her feet and bent slightly forward at the knees and waist. The elbows should also be bent and back slightly imitating an old western cowboy ready to draw from a holster. This coiled position allows for jumping and quick movements with power while always attacking the ball at a forward angle.

2. Low Balls.

When receiving low balls the object is to get the body and hands behind the ball. Sometimes only one foot can get there but the hand position is the same. Reach both hands down with thumbs out to the sides. Scoop up the ball while bringing the head and chest down over the ball. Try to follow up by lifting a knee. Now the ball is 'trapped' in your body and the knee provides protection for body and ball as well.

3. Medium Flighted Balls.

When receiving balls that are below the chest or bouncing the technique is similar to catching the low ball. Get the chest over the ball and the arms outstretched with fingers to the ground and palms open. As soon as the ball contacts any part of the hands or forearms close the 'trap' and cover the ball with the head and knee.

4. The High Ball.

For balls that are above the chest we now use a different technique. The hands are now above the head and the thumbs face inward creating a 'W' (inset) shape with the forefingers behind the ball for support. The arms and fingers should be angled slightly forward to keep the ball in front of the body at all times. Notice the head stays between the arms or 'window'. This allows for a clear line of site on the ball. Maintaining this position helps keep the goalie off of the stomach when diving to the side.

