

Drills and games that develop goalkeeping skills

[The triangle drill](#) - develops goalkeeper agility, positional sense and shot stopping ability. It is also good for practicing other players' shooting techniques.

Soft Catch

Play game in pairs throwing and catching a football. Try to make no sound as the ball hits the hands (almost impossible!)

The heading game 1v1

In 10x5 yard grid, players take it in turn to head ball over opponent's goal line by pulling ball back and using their own momentum to head the ball. The player who is attempting to stop the ball can use their hands or dive if necessary. They can also advance as far as they like so if they stop ball they are in a better position to score. Then make it competitive and play for 1 minute and then the winner moves up the ladder, the loser moves down. If tied use 'rock, paper, scissors' as a tiebreaker. Do 8-10 rotations to establish a championship!

The heading game 2v2

Players are paired up to play 2v2 in a 10x10 grid. One pair has ball and tries to advance down field heading to each other. Once they get near the other teams goal line then one of them can attempt to head it past their line to score. The other team stays on their goal line and attempt to save ball. Once the ball hits the ground or is saved, the two heading retreat to their goal line and the other 2 begin to try to keep the ball in the air and advance up the field to score. Can do as a competitive ladder as above.

American Football

Create a playing field of 15 x 30 yards, but make the last 5 yards of each end an end zone. A touch down is scored by keeping possession and creating an opportunity to dribble into the end zone. If this is done with the ball under control, then a touch down is scored.

Death on the Nile!

20 x 30 grid. 3 teams of 4 players, and 3 balls. Each team get one minute in the middle as goalkeepers (they are the crocodiles in river trying to intercept the ball!) Count the number of interceptions. Other 2 teams have to play the balls across the 'river' back and forth.

Introduce calling for the ball, then passing to a teammate on same side to open 'channels'. Goalkeeping techniques being used include – anticipation, setting position for shot, receiving balls, etc. If ball is intercepted have keeper distribute back to coach on sideline.

Keeper's Nest

One player (the keeper) guards, but cannot touch the ball. The keeper may stand over the ball. The objective is for the other three players to get to the ball away from the keeper (using hands, feet or either), without being tagged and frozen by the keeper. The keeper's goal is to freeze the other three players. Once a player is frozen, he can remain frozen until all players are frozen, or until the ball is snatched away by the other players, or until the player counts to 10.

Keeper's Nest 3v1

Place three cones in a triangle 10 yards apart. One player is inside the triangle as the keeper. The other three try to possess the ball and score goals by moving the keeper out of position and playing through the triangle. If the keeper intercepts the ball, the player who played the ball last becomes the new keeper.

3v3 or 4v4 'American Football!'

Play 4v4 but players use their hands to pass. Concentrate on proper hand position under pressure. If a player has the ball in his or her hands then they cannot move their feet. Players cannot grab the ball if it is in a player's hands! Instead of making goals for the teams to score in, create an end zone at either end of the small field. A team can score a 'touch-down' (6 points) if they pass the ball to a team-mate standing in the end zone. Think up any number of variations for an extra point! Then restrict a player waiting in the end zone to staying in there a maximum of three seconds and then has to get out similar to basketball.

Advance the game by not allowing any player to stand still in the end-zone, or then limit access to the zone to 3 seconds at a time for any player.

Numbers Up

Play with one goalkeeper in a goal. Add pressure - (i.e. 2v1, v2). Provide a target for the defender if they win the ball. Encourage the players to shoot as quickly as possible, having their body in the correct position. Make sure they show good 1st touch when receiving the ball. 1st touch should be away from pressure. Disguise your shots.

Quick Fire!

Pull one goal all the way up the field to the outer edge of the 18 yard box. Play 5v2 in an area 18x36 yards with two full size goals 18 yards apart. Play for 1 minute at a time, with the 5 having to make 5 passes before shooting. If the defenders steal the ball they go for goal also. You can add goalkeepers at any time.

Cone Ball!

Can play 4v4v4. Put large cone (or similar) in middle of the field. The three teams play against each other. To score a team simply has to hit the target (the cone). Add a 5 yard exclusion zone around the cone and introduce a goalkeeper to this area. Kids will play this game forever!

Triangular Goals

Create triangular goals (3 flags 2 yards apart in a triangle shape) in the middle of the penalty area. Play 4v4 in penalty box.

One team has 4 attackers, the other 3 keepers and 1 defender. If the ball goes out of the box, or the keepers/defender makes a save, switch. Let each team captain keep scores.

Then go to larger area - 6v6 or 8v8 in between halfway line and edge of 18 yard box. Open goals up to 6 yards wide.

Advance the activity appropriately by asking players to play 3 passes before shooting or chip over goals to teammate! Have to score with a volley or half volley, etc.

Finish with 2 fields of 4v4, with a different method of scoring on each field.

Group 1: Head to score.

Group 2: All 4 have to be in opponents half of field for their goal to count!

Option: Have to go around the back of goal and dribble/pass through cones the opposite way.