



# MIND THE NET GOALTENDING

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## Fundamentals: The Basics of a Goalie's Life

***The goaltender's value to team success can be sixty percent or higher!***

To have consistent success in any sport, the key is to have strong fundamentals. Learn the fundamentals and you will become a better athlete. Greg Maddox, Future Hall of Famer in baseball, once stated "Ten percent of the time no matter what happens an athlete will experience success. Ten percent of the time no matter what happens an athlete will experience failure. The other eighty percent of the time, success or failure will be determined by the athlete's strength of fundamentals."

Watching young goaltenders, it doesn't take long to see who has worked on their fundamentals and those who haven't. The key to getting to the next level is to continue to work to improve every time you work out, on and off the ice. There are no short cuts. The goaltender must put in the work.

Unless introducing a new drill or skill style, practice should reflect the level of play encountered in actual games. Be aware of the goaltender's skill level before making demands. Higher tempo will increase the demands on the goaltender's reaction time, decision-making and overall play.

Self-confidence has a major impact on the goaltender's play and success. The goaltender needs a level of self-assuredness to overcome assaults on their ego. When setting up drills to work on the goaltender's weak areas, remember that the goaltender may become discouraged. Exposing their weaknesses may make them vulnerable. In order for the goaltender to improve, patience is a necessity. Practicing proper motions and/or developing other skills can overcome their weaknesses, so that these weaknesses are not exposed as often.

Techniques and skills can be learned and practiced. In order to stifle opponents, the real test is being able to use the right technique or skill at the right moment. This requires confidence. Mastery occurs when the mind fires clear, precise messages for reacting in a difficult situation. There is no fear, no hesitation – just confidence that the goaltender is doing the right thing.

### Skating

Stopping, starting, pushing from side to side, skating forward and backward are all things the goaltender must improve. The stronger the skater, the better the balance, the better the balance, the more patience the goaltender can have. The more patience the goaltender has, the more likely the goaltender will be able to read and anticipate the play. The better the awareness the better the chance the goaltender will be in the right position for the save. Everything starts with the goaltender's ability to skate.

Balance and leg strength go hand in hand. The stronger the legs the longer the goaltender will be able to hold their ready position. The stronger the legs the more powerful the initial burst will be. Minimizing the goaltender's movements thus minimizing the time the goaltender opens holes.

## Drills

Sculls and shuffles: these two skating techniques are the most used skating skills by goaltenders. Focus on maintaining the integrity of the basic stance when moving. Head and hands still and facing the puck, shoulders square, stick on the ice and any holes are kept to a minimum.

Pay attention to correct and powerful movement control over speed. Work on leg strength. The goaltender must be equally as good on each foot, going forward as backward, to their left as to their right.

## Movement

- Select a starting point and a finishing point.
- Starting from the basic stance, scull forward using the right foot only. Scull and come to a complete stop, scull again and stop, repeat to the finishing point
- Repeat going backwards. The goaltender should be able to get back to the starting point in the same number of sculls.
- Repeat using opposite foot
- Repeat having the goaltender doing shuffles.
- Integrate, sculls with shuffles (right foot scull, stop, left foot shuffle, stop, etc.)

*\*\*Practice power of scull and shuffle over speed, speed will come as power increases.\*\**

## Shooting

Most practices involve too much routine shooting. A goaltender's weak points are seldom tested in team drills and when it is, the situation is so fleeting that the goaltender learns nothing. Therefore because of the goaltender's short recovery time during team drills the goaltender should not try to stop every puck fired their way. The goaltender must realize that the game is played with only one puck and that the attention in practice should reflect a game like situation. In any drill that incorporates rapid fire or multiple pucks the goaltender should focus on one puck. Regardless of how many other pucks are shot into the net, the goaltender must be able to fulfill all aspects of the save response before turning their attention to another puck.

- 1: Read the release of shot.
- 2: Tracking the shot to the body
- 3: Follow/react to the result of save (rebound, puck placement, etc.).

*\*\*Explain to the shooters and goaltenders the reason and situation for each drill.\*\**

### **When setting up drills try to think about:**

- 1) Scoring chances that reflect game situations.
- 2) Save skill focus.
- 3) Timing

### **Base drills on skill level and use a step-by-step process:**

- 1) Still puck.
- 2) Moving puck
- 3) Moving player
- 4) Moving puck and player
- 5) Moving puck. Player and goaltender



*From left: Still puck, moving puck, moving puck, player and goaltender.*

**Great work ethic and strong self-confidence will bring the goaltender to the top level: recognition goes to the goaltender who can determine the outcome of the game!**