



# HOCKEY CANADA

## NCCP Instructional Stream Goaltending 1: Reference Material

Version 1.0, 2020



Goalie Development / Développement de gardiens



National  
Coaching  
Certification  
Program

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Goalie Development / Développement de gardiens

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# Goaltending Curriculum

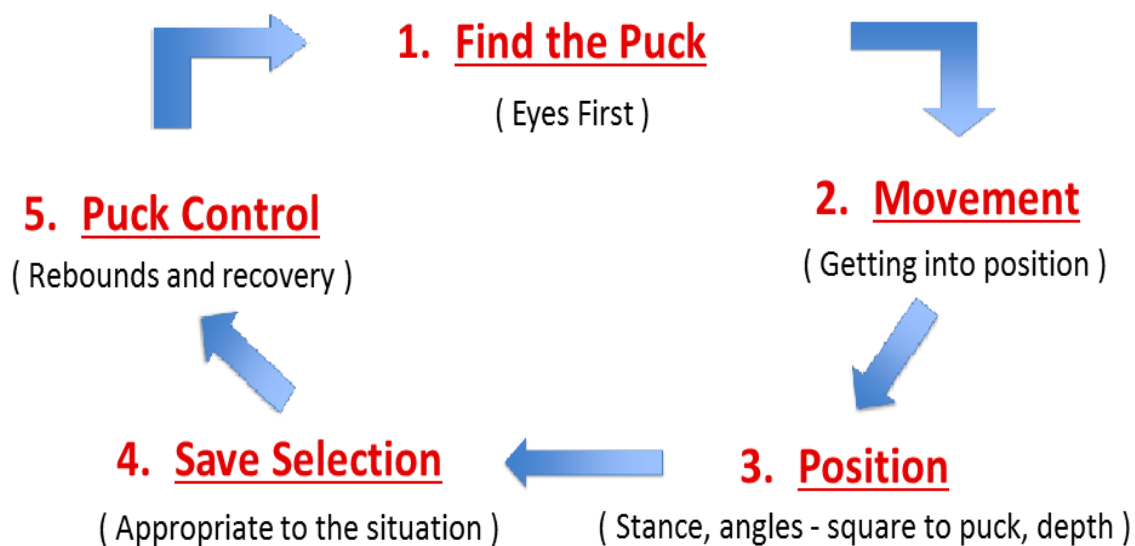
Level 1

## Introduction

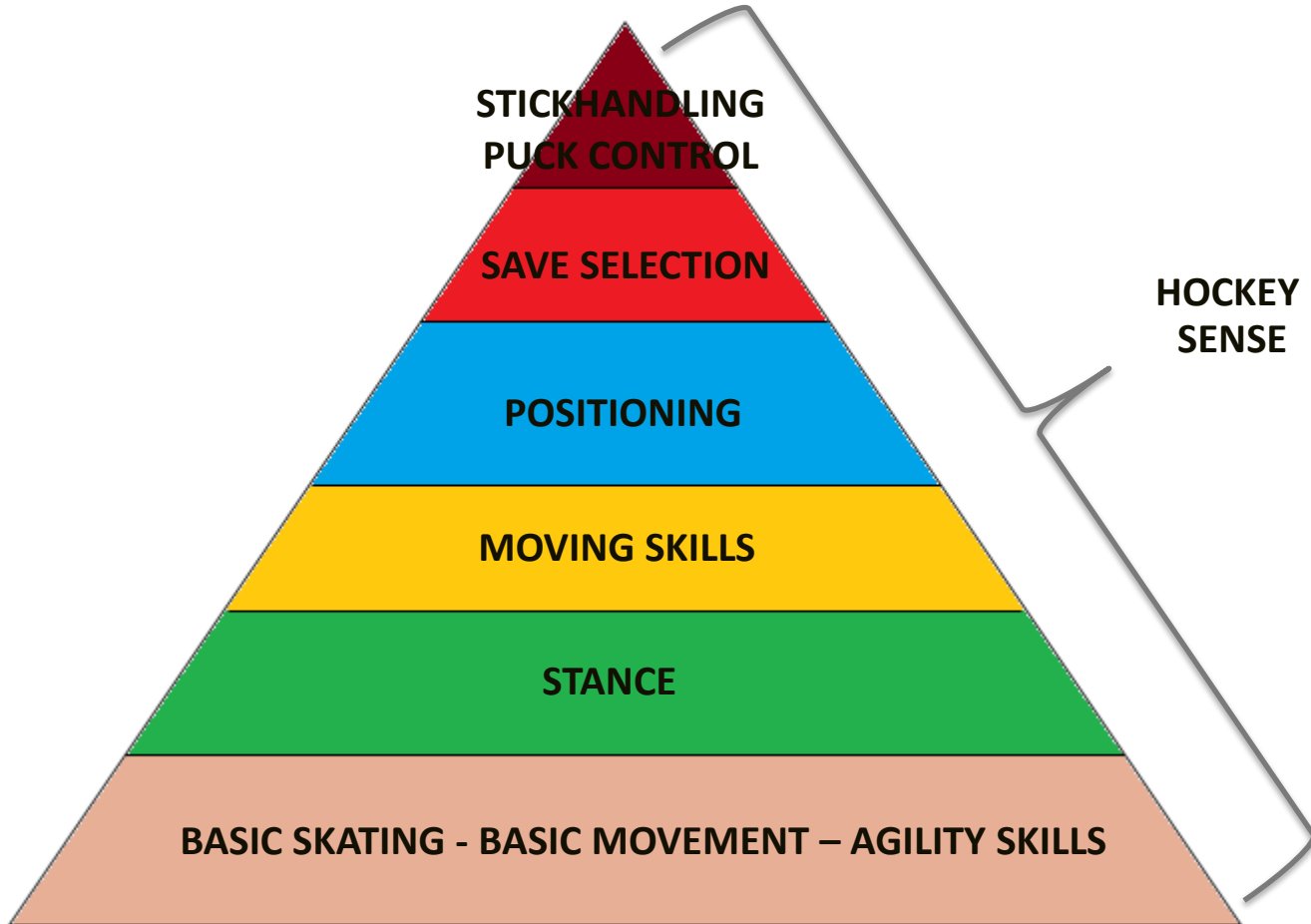
- ❖ *Goaltending is a critical aspect of team play and requires direct & consistent unique coaching skills*
- ❖ *As forwards and defenders get specific coaching for their respective positions, goalies require the same attention and guided skill development*

## Five Key Concepts for Goaltending

### PRE-SAVE / SAVE / POST-SAVE



## Hockey Canada's Approach



### Level 1 Curriculum – Technical

1. Skating
2. Stance (Athletic position, balance)
3. Moving Skills (C-Cut, T-Push, Shuffle & Pivot)
4. Positioning (Angles, Square, Depth)
5. Save Selection (Basic Saves)
6. Basic Puck Control (Rebound and Recovery)
7. Puckhandling

***FUN & ATHLETICISM***





# 1. Goaltender Skating

Goaltenders should be encouraged to be good skaters. To be a good goaltender they must be efficient skaters: control and mobility. They must learn to push with strength and stop hard. In addition to “Team Skating”, goalies should also be doing goaltender specific skating drills:

- ❖ C-Cuts
- ❖ T-Pushes
- ❖ Shuffles
- ❖ Pivot

## 2. The Goalie Stance (Athletic Position)

General Positioning Stance  
Each goalie has a different style of stance



- ❖ Athletic Position: feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width
- ❖ Weight balanced on balls of feet and on inside edges of skates
- ❖ Knees, shoulders and toes should be aligned
- ❖ Stance should feel comfortable

- ❖ Knees and waist positioning slightly bent to **match shin and spine angle** (see picture on right)
- ❖ Hand positioning: gloves should be parallel at the same level, forward (in front of body) in peripheral view and relaxed
- ❖ Catching glove should be open and out in front
- ❖ Chin down and eyes on puck



## Rear & Front View:



## Stick Grip

- ❖ Stick blade at a slight angle with the toe of the stick ahead of the heel; covering the 5 hole (stick falls naturally in place with your hands and in front of skates)
- ❖ Blocker rotated outwards slightly
- ❖ Stick Grip: For optimal control and strength, stick is held at the shoulders of the stick (top of the paddle) with index finger gripping side of the paddle and supported behind with the thumb. This allows the goalie to steer on ice shots away to corners.



### 3. Skating Movement

- ❖ Goaltender specific skating drills should focus on developing **inside edge work**
- ❖ The key is to advance the goaltenders' ability to move in a **quick, efficient and balanced manner**

Specific-goaltending skating skills:

- ❖ **C-Cut (Forward & Backward)**
- ❖ **T-Push (Long or Short)**
- ❖ **Shuffle (Long or Short)**
- ❖ **Pivot**

#### C-Cuts



- ❖ Start in athletic stance
- ❖ Forward C-cut: Weight is on heel of skates to push forwards staying on the inside edges of skates
- ❖ Backward C-cut: Weight is on toes of skates to push backwards staying on the inside edges of skates
- ❖ Whole skate blades stay on the ice
- ❖ Stay in stance at all times during motion

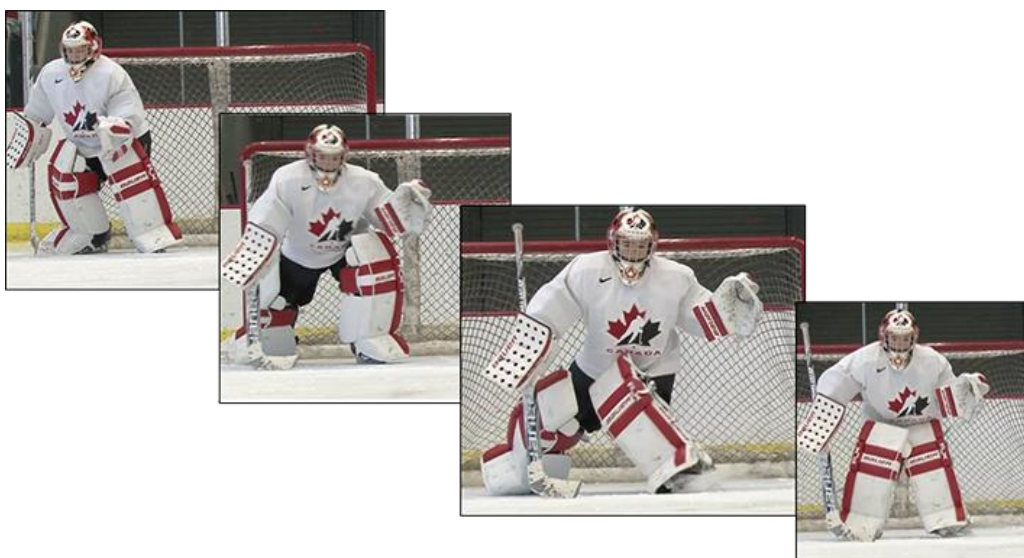






**When to use it:** To control angle and depth in the crease and combined with other skating movements (t-push, shuffle and slide). **I.E.** Coming out of the crease or backwards movement for a breakaway.

## T-Pushes



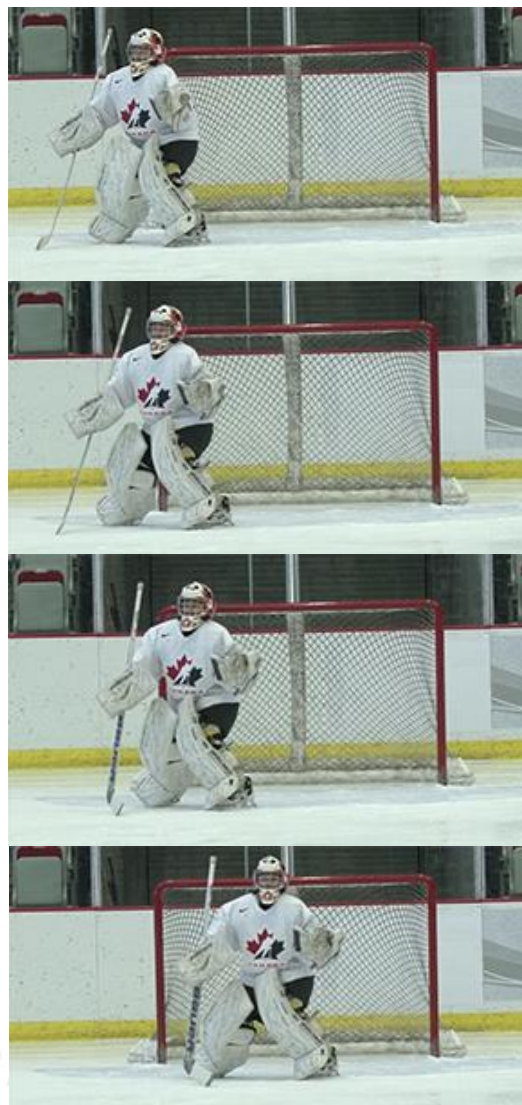
- ❖ Start in athletic stance
- ❖ Eyes first towards target (turn head), leading your body the whole way through
- ❖ Lead foot rotates and points towards destination (lead toe pointed to destination)
- ❖ Back leg loads and pushes, transferring weight from back foot to lead foot
- ❖ Stop on lead foot
- ❖ Return to athletic stance





**When to use it:** To travel longer distances when there is time for goaltender to get set (angle, square, depth). **I.E.** Puck goes from D to D along the blue line.

## Shuffles



- ❖ Start in athletic stance
- ❖ Weight on inside edge of push leg
- ❖ Take weight off of inside edge of glide leg
- ❖ Toes remain pointed forward
- ❖ Push leg loads and extends with weight transfer and returns to complete athletic stance
- ❖ Always remain in stance during motion

**When to use it:** To travel shorter distances when there is less time for goaltender to get set (staying on angle and square to the puck), tracking the puck behind the goal line. **I.E.** Player is carrying the puck in the zone and goalie must follow to stay square.

## Pivots

- ❖ Start in athletic stance
- ❖ Pivots are a combination of C-cut and t-push/shuffle so the goalie's body can stay square to the puck
- ❖ Lead leg performs backward C-cut so the goalie's body can rotate for shoulders to stay pointed towards the puck
- ❖ Lead leg then performs T-push or shuffle
- ❖ Back leg loads to push or shuffle
- ❖ Return to athletic stance

**When to use it:** Travel longer distances to adjust angle and depth to stay square to the puck. **I.E.** Puck is passed diagonally East to West and goaltender must move and change angle & depth





## Butterfly Basics (Stance)



- ❖ Knees together to close 5 hole
- ❖ Toes out for maximum lateral coverage
- ❖ Butt up to stay off heels and extend chest for maximum height coverage
- ❖ Hands out in front and stick on the ice
- ❖ Shoulders square and relaxed upper body
- ❖ Weight on knees to stay forward

- ❖ Usage depends on size of goalie & distance/angle of puck from the crease
- ❖ Upper body is the same as in athletic stance
- ❖ Knees in, Toes out, Butt up
- ❖ Pads loose enough to be able to rotate and seal the ice – staying flat on the ice
- ❖ Stick on the ice slightly angled (deflecting pucks)



## Basic Slides Butterfly & Power Slides

**Butterfly slide:** Start standing in athletic stance, load push leg and lead leg seals the ice

**Power slide:** Start in butterfly stance, load push leg and lead leg seals the ice





## Power slide:

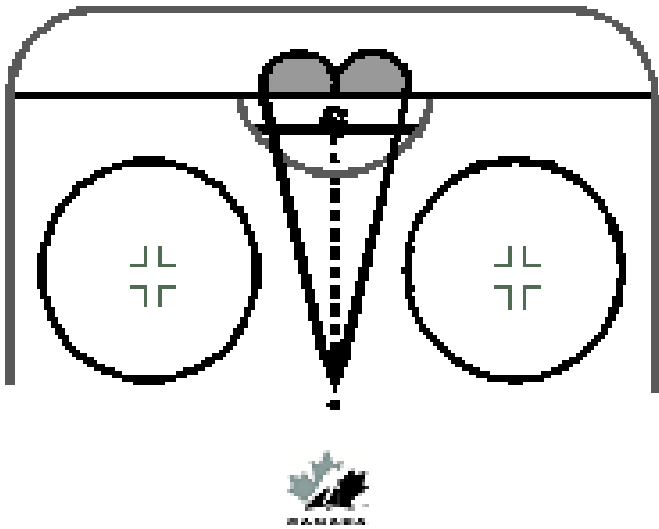


- ❖ Start in athletic stance (standing or butterfly)
- ❖ Lead leg seals the ice
- ❖ Bring push leg to the ice and complete the seal by bringing knees together
- ❖ Maintain quiet upper body (stay in stance) while in butterfly and gliding along the ice
- ❖ Recover to the glide foot side using the front 1/3 of the skate to gain traction on the ice to stop the glide and recover back to butterfly or standing stance
- ❖ Gloves must stay forward, parallel and leading the way angled towards target (puck)
- ❖ Always protect 5 hole with stick blade on the ice and approximately 1 or 1.5 stick blade length in front of pads

**When to use it:** Needed to seal the ice while moving laterally or diagonally. **I.E.** Back door passes with the receiving player in tight, quick lateral passes in front of the net, reactions to rebounds and recovery.



## 4. Positioning

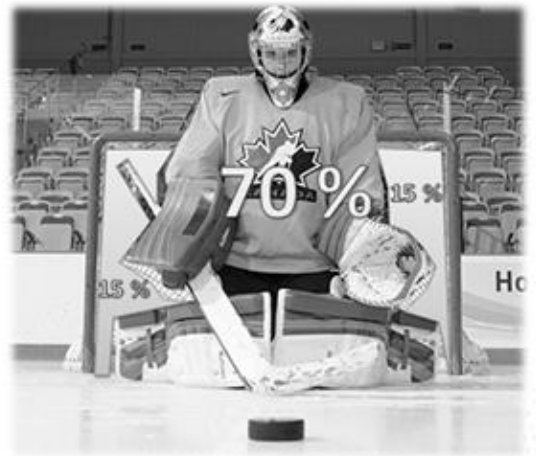


- ❖ Centre of the net – Centre of the body – Centre of the puck
- ❖ **Angle:** Centre of the net from the puck's point of view
- ❖ **Square:** Shoulders and toes pointed at the puck (centre of the body)
- ❖ **Depth:** Distance from the goal line to the goalie's stance
- ❖ While on angle and square, good starting depth is toes of skates on the crease line

Depending on goaltender's size and skills, younger goalies should get a custom to play at the top of the crease. On a mental side, shooters visually cannot see as much of the net to shoot on. Also, in closing the distance (gap) between the shooter and the goaltender the puck is more likely to hit the goaltender which creates less chances of deflections and the puck changing directions at the last minute.



(Knees deep in the **BLUE** paint)



(Knees out in the **WHITE** paint)

A butterfly goalie that plays on the goal line covers roughly only 33% of the net. By challenging more (knees outside the crease) the same size goalie covers roughly 70% of the net. The downside of aggressive depth is backdoor plays as side openings are then available for open net goals. Goalie must then manage their depth consider the shooter and options.

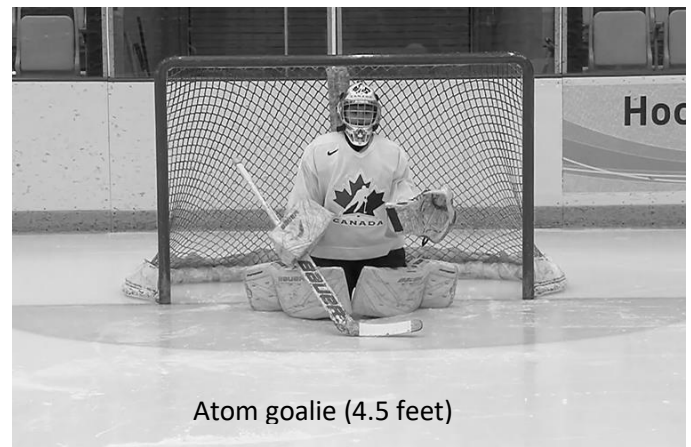


## Depth: Sizes Makes a Difference



Midget goalie (6 feet)

Photo 1



Atom goalie (4.5 feet)

Photo 2

- ❖ In terms of net coverage, the size of the goalie matters. A smaller size goalie needs to maximize their positioning on the puck (on shot) by challenging out of the crease.
- ❖ The drawback to challenging a shot is being vulnerable to passing plays, conversely the drawback to playing deep is being vulnerable to high shots
- ❖ Goaltenders need to read the situation then select the appropriate depth according to one's size, flexibility & power to move to the next most dangerous player. On a partial side breakaway, a goalie is expected to be overly aggressive in terms of depth so he can retreat as the puck carrier is nearing the crease.
- ❖ On a 5 on 3 penalty kill, the goalie must maintain a deeper position in order to not get beat on quick passing plays.



DEEP

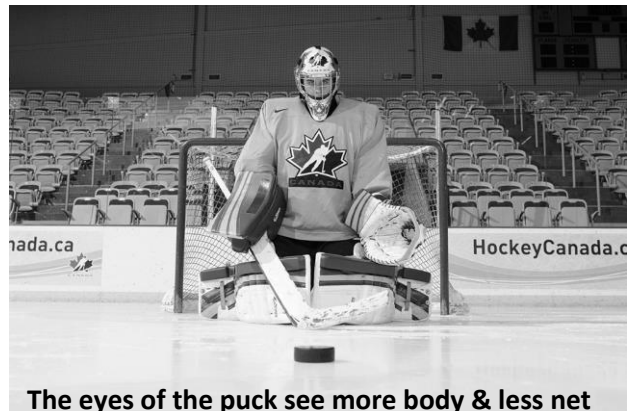
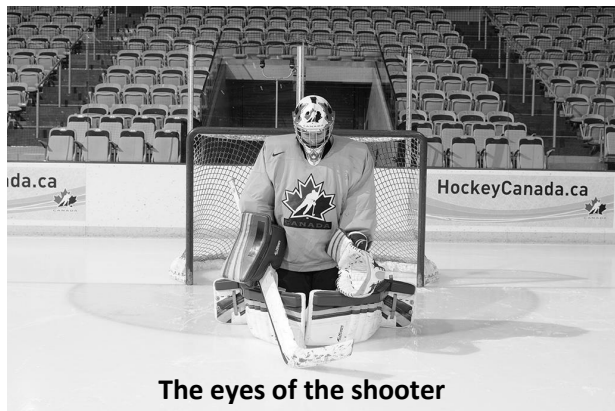
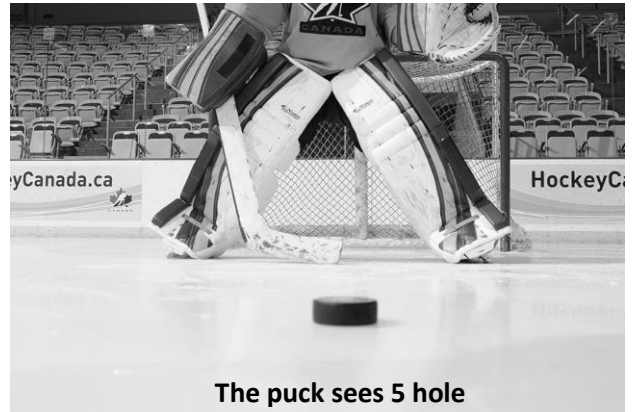
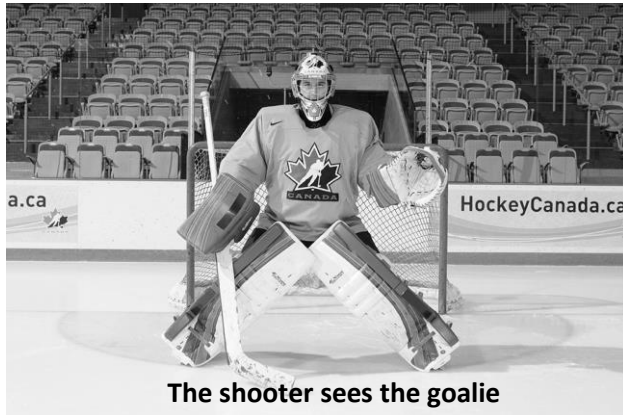


AGGRESSIVE





## Optics: Puck's Point of View in Tight



- ❖ A goalie must decide on a save selection (stand up save or butterfly save) according to the distance of the puck from the crease.
- ❖ For a shot taken from 5 feet out of crease, goalies of all sizes should drop in the butterfly position (with elbows tight to ribs) to get hit by puck. This blocking style (with low gloves) is very effective at making the save from that distance due to the fact that the puck cannot see upper portion of the net. Furthermore, a goalie has less time to react to a shot from in tight.
- ❖ The farther the shot (i.e. blue line shot), the longer a shot takes to cross the goal line. Goalies should show patience (standing up longer) as they have more time to react to the height & direction of the shot. Incoming far shots also have a potential to be tipped or redirected on the way towards the net.





## Squareness: Alignment on the Puck

- ❖ The angle alignment is centered to the puck not the shooter's body or stick shaft
- ❖ Young goalies have a tendency to align themselves with the shooters body and forget about the puck alignment
- ❖ Puck should be square in the middle of the chest at all times (shoulders and toes pointed towards the puck)



- ❖ **COMMON MISTAKE:** Centered on body



- ❖ **COMMON MISTAKES:** Alignment on body instead of the puck position can create up to a 5 foot difference (puck's point of view)



- ❖ **SQUARE:** Centered on the puck for a right handed shooter



## Behind the Goal Line



- ❖ Puck Outside of Posts: Maintain post seal until losing sight of puck
- ❖ Skate on Post, pads sealing post, gloves free and loose to react but still covering seal



- ❖ Puck Between Posts (behind the net): Rotate head when losing sight, look through the net to find the puck, follow puck



- ❖ Keep knob of stick outside of goal
- ❖ Rotate head and shoulders only
- ❖ Maintain skates on goal line while shuffling back and forth with puck



## 5. Save Selection (Basic Saves)

### Stick Saves

- ❖ Start in athletic stance
- ❖ Stick starts on the ice in front of the goalie, usually about a glove's length away from skates and pads
- ❖ This placement safeguards against rebounds, helps to cushion pucks and ensures the stick will not get stuck under the pads if goalie drops in a butterfly. It also allows goalie to move the stick freely around body in a semi-circle to steer and deflect pucks
- ❖ As puck approaches, deflect puck into corner following the arc of crease
- ❖ Let the stick do the work, use wrist to angle stick flatter angle on the ice this should facilitate the puck being deflected into the desired corner



Toe of the stick is ahead of the heel



Angle is flatter to control deflections





## Stick Saves in Butterfly Stance



- ❖ Eyes on the puck
- ❖ Stick on flatter angle
- ❖ Semi-circle motion

- ❖ Contact puck with heel of stick

- ❖ Steer puck to appropriate corner



- ❖ Follow rebound

- ❖ Recover

Once the goalie has assessed the height of the shot (low along the ice), shots are saved by activating stick in a semi-circle motion while keeping a visual attachment on the puck. When possible, pads should be behind the stick for a double protection. Steering the puck starts with a slight wrist action. The recovery process includes in order: **Locate** puck with eyes (tracking), **Rotate** shoulders & **Activate** backside load leg to initiate repositioning towards new target.

## LOCATE - ROTATE - ACTIVATE





## Glove Saves

- ❖ Start in athletic stance
- ❖ Glove starts out in a position between 2 and 3 o'clock
- ❖ Glove should be out in front of body and not tight to chest – relaxed
- ❖ Prepare to receive the puck, don't chase it. Catch it in front of you.
- ❖ The principles used to catch a baseball and softball can also be applied



- ❖ Track puck with eyes the whole trajectory



- ❖ Align glove to puck trajectory, lean shoulders towards puck
- ❖ Adjust hand to catch puck in the pocket of the glove



- ❖ Close glove when it's in the pocket



## Blocker Saves



- ❖ Track puck with eyes
- ❖ Align blocker to puck trajectory, lean shoulders towards puck
- ❖ Puck contact should be mid to upper blocker
- ❖ Rotate wrist to redirect puck to corners
- ❖ Follow rebound

## Butterfly Reactive Glove Saves

The decision to stay in a standing stance or down in a butterfly stance during a high shot is based on the **distance of the shot, strength of the shot, goalie's reaction time and size of goalie**. Smaller goalie's should stay on their feet and stay aggressive. Same teaching points apply.

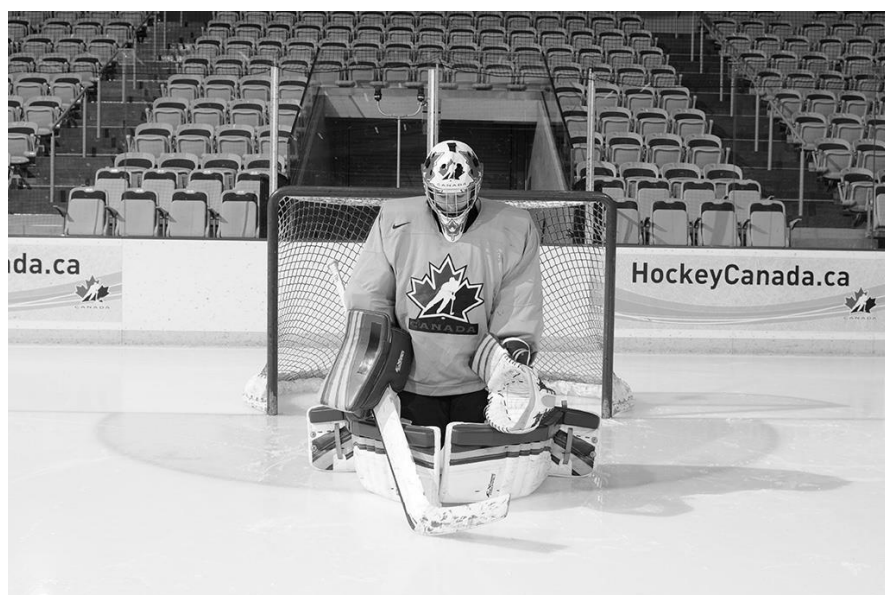
- ❖ Usage depends on size of goalie, level of play, strength of shots, reaction and movement time of goalie and distance of the puck from the crease.
- ❖ Allows goalie to catch and control rebounds
- ❖ Stick should be on the ice at an angle (falling in place with position of hands)
- ❖ Elbows bent with gloves in front of body in peripheral view
- ❖ Catching glove always angled towards the puck
- ❖ Tracking puck at all times
- ❖ Redirecting or closing glove when puck reaches blocker or glove







**Note:** Butterfly with Blocking Gloves (tight on body and no holes) is for tight plays when there is no time for the goalie to react to shots in or close to the crease. This way the puck is close to the body and lower parts of the net and the ice are sealed.



## 6. Basic Puck Control (Rebound and Recovery)

### Rebound Control: Freezing Pucks into Body



- ❖ Start in athletic stance
- ❖ Goalie must decide to stay in standing stance or drop to butterfly stance
- ❖ Catching glove can then fold over chest to trap and cradle puck
- ❖ Blocker should maintain forward position and stick preferably stays on the ice in case of rebound

As puck approaches the mid-section bring elbows in tight to ribs. Shoulders should rotate forward and chest angle adjusts to point down to ice. This will help the goalie absorb the shot and minimize the rebound.

### Rebound Control: Freezing Pucks on the Ice

**Receiving the Puck:** Down in butterfly stance, paddle of the stick on the ice at an angle, let the puck hit the paddle and slide down towards the blocker and then cover the blocker and puck with the glove hand.





**Puck Retrieval:** Start in butterfly stance, stick retrieves puck and pull towards body, glove covers the puck, blocker and stick protects puck from pressure. Knees should be on the ice and tight together to close 5 hole. The belly should stay off the ice when possible to protect the goalie's neck and back. Also a good way to prevent the puck from squeezing through 5 hole is to bring your heels together.



## Breakaways

At younger age groups (atom and below), many scoring chances come from breakaway situations. Goalies must have a routine to face this situation.



- ❖ Goalie should always watch the play from DEEP and centered in their crease
- ❖ Touch post when breakaway occurs to get positioning in crease
- ❖ Using c-cuts, telescope out 4 feet from crease to appear big, close the gap against the shooter and to have space for backward momentum





- ❖ Retreat backwards matching player's speed
- ❖ If player changes angle, maintain alignment and squareness on the puck (not the shooter's body) – using short shuffles side to side
- ❖ If player shoots, react with proper save (standing or butterfly)
- ❖ If player dekes, slide diagonally backwards in the direction of the new puck position (maintain balance while extending)
- ❖ **PATIENCE**
- ❖ On dekes, skate should end up slightly outside of post and glove/blocker should reach out to puck for the save

**Depth Control:** To measure your depth, keep your heels at the top of the crease line until player reaches hash mark closest to the crease – then proceed back at a matching speed



**Note:** Goalie can poke check the puck if it comes close to the crease and player's head is down. Also goalie can fake poke checks to mix up the player's plan.

### Common Mistakes:

- ❖ Goalie plays too deep allowing player to shoot in corners
- ❖ Backwards momentum is too slow and player dekes easily around goalie
- ❖ Goalie makes the first move and moves to one side allowing player to score on the other side easily
- ❖ Goalie stays standing in tight and gets scored on 5 hole or low





## 7. Basic Puck Handling



- ❖ Goaltender is in the athletic stance with one adjustment, the blocker is positioned at the butt end of the stick and the glove hand is positioned in an “inverted grip” at the upper shaft of the stick above the paddle
- ❖ The glove hand is used to apply pressure to the ice and preparing to pass the puck
- ❖ Legs are bent and always in a position to pivot forward or backward and use skating movements (c-cuts, t-push)
- ❖ Head up to read options and make the pass





## Theory: Incorporating Goalies into Practices

Your goalie will improve doing team drills, but if you make time for one drill per practice, you will be able to give them the attention they deserve. It will make them feel as though they are an important part of the team, not to mention the fact that they will improve dramatically.

- ❖ Have your assistant coaches take them aside to do skating drills at the start of practice while you are working with the team at the other end
- ❖ Make your warm-up drill a goalie specific drill
- ❖ First ten or last ten minutes of practice set aside for coach controlled goaltending drills (emphasize the words coach controlled)
- ❖ Have them coach each other through skating drills and mirror drills when they are idle in practice.

## Communication

Communication with your team's goaltenders is a key aspect in their confidence and development. Goaltenders need to know the day before **who is starting** the next game so they can mentally prepare.

Coaches must also communicate **what is expected of them** in game situations. For example, when to play the puck, when to pull the goalie for an extra attacker, when to freeze the puck, etc.

Continuous **feedback** will only help in the growth of the goaltenders – look to set **short and long term goals**.

Follow through on any promises made (try not to promise playing time).

Set aside practice time and ask goaltenders what they would like to work on, you will be surprised how accurately they can assess their areas of development.



# The Importance of a Goalie Coach

Few head coaches have the extensive knowledge of the position that is needed to effectively facilitate goaltender development. Those that do have a goaltending background, don't have the time to focus solely on their goaltenders and so the necessity for a goalie specific coach is apparent. It is important to know if your goalie coach is qualified and current. Also consider your own Goaltending Professional Development with Level 2 and 3 of this certification stream.

## The Role of a Goalie Coach

**Goalie coaches will be most effective when encouraged to do the following:**

- ❖ Design and implement drills
- ❖ Act as a liaison between the goaltenders and the head coach
- ❖ Help goaltenders with mental preparation and routine
- ❖ Assess game and practice performance to identify strengths and areas of development
- ❖ Use video as an effective coaching tool
- ❖ Help the goaltenders deal with pressure and poor performances

## Practice Tips

**Set aside 10 minutes for your goalies per practice:** This amounts to one drill, and this is all they need. When you are part of a team you need to work on all aspects of the team and goaltenders are a part of it. If you have a 1 hour practice, 10 minutes is not much to ask as 50 minutes can be devoted to your players. This is a fair and ample amount of time to devote to your goaltenders.

**Goaltenders priorities should be goalie-specific skating, when not doing so they should join in team skating drills for conditioning:** It cannot be emphasized enough that your goaltenders need to continuously improve on goaltender-specific skating movements. The second priority should be participating in team skating drills for conditioning. It is important for them to be strong skaters. You can also opt to take them aside when doing skating drills with players at the beginning of practice and do crease work drills.

**Goaltenders should focus on goalie-specific passing drills when the team is working on passing:** In this day and age you cannot be a complete goaltender if you cannot play the puck, if your team is practicing a passing drill you should try to incorporate your goaltenders in all passing drills with pairing the goaltenders together and focusing on short and long passes, breakouts and rims.



**Space out your shooters:** When devoting a drill to a goaltender such as warm-up or working on a goalie-specific skill, shooters should be spaced out so the goalie has time to get set on every shot – which imitates the most game-like situations. The more drills you can do with your goalie that are game like, the better they will become. Goaltending is about patience and control. They need time to learn to recover and get set for the next shot.

**Communication with players and goalies:** Always let your players know when a drill is for the goalies and not for them. It works the same way in the opposite direction as to let your goalie know when a drill is for the players (keep open lines of communication).

**Game type situation drills:** Goalies improve the most with game type situation drills. Goalies should practice so they will be better in a game.

**Try to always have 3-4 coaches at practice:** Whenever your goalies have some idle time, a second coach can be a great deal of help. Even if they just shoot stationary on the goalies for 5 minutes it is better than having them stand around. Do breakaways with them, anything just keep them active. If a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> coach is not present, and you have 2 goalies, designate one goalie to lead the other goalie in skating drills or ups and downs, or mirror drills. Get them to coach each other. Finally, do not lose sight in the fact it is important for your team to score. This may be a contradictory statement to some earlier tips, but remember, not all drills are for goalies, and vice versa.

When doing T-push or shuffle drills it is suggested that everything is done in sequence.

Example: A coach should be calling out for the goalie to PUSH----STOP----PUSH----STOP-----

PUSH----STOP etc. giving one second in between pushes. This will give the goaltender time to recover and will keep him from developing bad habits by doing the drill too fast.

## Summary

Being aware of your goaltenders needs is an important part to their development. Ten minutes of attention and practice time is a good start.







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