The ‘Set Position’

- The **feet** should be approximately shoulder width apart.
- The **weight** should be on the front half of the feet ensuring a balanced position.
- The **body weight** needs to be slightly forward.
- The **knees** need to be slightly flexed with the hips square to the ball.
- Keep the **head** still and keep ‘the nose in front of the toes’.
- The **elbows** need to be narrow with the chest facing the ball.
- The **hands** need to be front of the bodyline and approximately ball width apart.
- ‘Prepare the hands early’.

These are general guidelines. Q’s will be posed as to what is the correct hand position. The goalkeeper will naturally use a position that feels comfortable and therefore they will vary. As a general statement:

"If the goalkeeper feels comfortable and has a good and consistent handling of the ball then it is not a problem. However, if handling techniques are inconsistent then hand position may need changing."

The ‘Set position’ will obviously alter slightly due to the physiological make-up of the goalkeeper but generally the principles remain the same.

**Common Problems**

- The goalkeeper’s starting position in relation to the ball.
- Movement into line of the ball.
- The Set Position as the ball is struck.
- The assessment as to which technique will be most appropriate.
20 Goalkeeping Practices

The ‘Scoop’ Technique

- Collapse at the knees to the ‘K’ position.
- Open the palms up to face the ball with the fingers spread.
- Lead with the hands which brings the bodyweight forward.
- Keep the head still and the eyes focused on the ball.
- Bring the shoulders forward over the hands.
- The elbows should be slightly flexed to cushion the impact of the ball.
- ‘Soft hands-strong wrists’
- As the palms make contact with the ball, scoop the ball into the chest whilst bringing the bodyweight forward and ‘complete the save’.
- ‘Recovery saves’ - to gather the ball if the ball comes off the goalkeeper.
- ‘Recover lines’ - to defend the goal if that is the better option.
20 Goalkeeping Practices

The ‘Cup’ Technique

- Once the ball has been struck avoid as little body movement as possible.
- Whilst in a balanced ‘set position’, the footwork may need to be adjusted slightly laterally as the ball travels towards the goalkeeper.
- Keeping the chest square to the ball the hands need to be brought forward in front of the bodyline.
- ‘Prepare the lines early’.
- The elbows need to be tucked in with the palms facing up and the fingers spread.
- ‘Soft hands-Strong wrists’.
- The feet now need to be planted solidly in preparation for the catch.
- On impact the ball is taken into the midriff with the palms securing the ball.

Common problems
- The goalkeeper jumping up as the catch is made, or the goalkeeper’s bodyweight going backwards therefore he/she is unbalanced as the catch is made.
20 Goalkeeping Practices

The ‘W’ Technique

• The **hands** need to be brought from being in front of the line of the ball into the line of trajectory of the ball with chest square.

• The hands are prepared with the palms facing the ball with the **fingers** spread and the thumbs forming the ‘W’ shape.

• The **elbows** need to be slightly flexed to act as ‘shock absorbers’ when the contact of the hands is made with the ball.

• The contact with the ball needs to be made approximately ‘15-18 inches’ in front of the body.

• ‘**Soft hands- Strong Wrists**’.

• ‘**Keep the eyes on the back of the ball**’.

**Common problems**

• The goalkeepers’ head is not still and the head retracts as the catch is made, thus making the goalkeeper unbalanced.

• The goalkeepers’ elbows are not flexed enough, which ‘flattens’ the hand shape which often leads to the ball catching the end of the goalkeepers’ fingers.
20 Goalkeeping Practices

The ‘Collapsing’ Save

This technique is used when the ball is played down the side of the body but close to the feet. It is also appropriate if the goalkeeper does not have time to move into line and use the ‘scoop’ technique.

- The goalkeeper needs to collapse at the knees whilst ensuring that the nearest or leading hand goes behind the line of the ball.
- The other hand would follow the leading hand ensuring that the bodyweight comes forward in preparation for contact with the ball.
- Therefore, the leading hand goes behind the ball with the other hand securing it on top- ‘Soft hands- strong wrists’.
- The bodyweight now follows naturally in behind the ball to make a second barrier.
- In the ideal situation the contact with the ball would be made in front of the body with the elbows slightly flexed and tucked in.
- The head is the placed in behind the ball with the eyes focused to ensure the ball is secured.
- In the event of the ball coming off the goalkeeper there is a ‘recovery save’ or the goalkeeper should make a ‘recovery line’ to defend the goal.
20 Goalkeeping Practices

The ‘Low Diving’ Save

Once it is determined that the ball has been struck wide of the goalkeeper the decision has to be made as to whether the goalkeeper has the opportunity to move his/her feet to get into the line of the ball. If this is not possible the this technique needs to be implemented.

- The goalkeeper needs to ‘step’ towards the line of the ball with the nearest foot. For illustration this will be referred to as the left foot.
- By making this initial step it brings the bodyweight slightly forward in preparation to make the save.
- With the left leg being slightly flexed and the bodyweight transferred onto it, the goalkeeper will now have the power to dive to his left side whilst bringing the bodyweight forward.
- As the weight is transferred to the left leg the hands and bodyweight follow.
- The hands should approximately be ball width apart (‘handcuffs’) with the fingers spread. The hands should move together towards the line of the ball with the fingers spread in the ‘W’ formation.
- If the ball arrives along the ground, the leading hand needs to go behind the ball with the other securing it on top.
- The elbows needs to be tucked in to ensure that the ball is secured safely and to avoid injury.
- All impact is taken on the side of the body and the shoulders.
- The head then follows in behind the hands.
- Reflecting to safe areas- ‘Strong wrists/Big palm’.
- Recovery saves to gather the loose ball/ recovery lines to defend the goal.
20 Goalkeeping Practices

The ‘High Diving’ Save

- ‘W’ technique for **hand** position.
- **Elbows** flexed.
- **Eyes** focused on the ball between the flexed **elbows**.
- Securing the ball on impact as the **body** hits the floor
- Technique of ‘deflecting’ to safe areas- ‘**Strong wrists-big palm**’
- The techniques of ‘parrying’ to safe areas,
- Recovery saves to gather the ball.
- Recovery lines to defend the goal.
20 Goalkeeping Practices

Dealing with Crosses

- Stance and body language of the goalkeeper needs to be ‘positive’.
- **Assessment** of the flight of the ball.
- **Decision** of whether to come for the ball or let the defenders deal with it.
- **Communication** of the goalkeeper decision- ‘Loud, clear, calm and concise’.
- ‘**AWAY!**’-  
  - Goalkeeper **recovers** to defend the goal.
  - **Communication** to defenders- pushing out/ marking positions.
- ‘**KEEPER!**’-  
  - **Angle and speed** of the goalkeepers‘ approach should be the quickest and shortest route.
  - **Timing and angle** of the goalkeepers take off- take off inside leg if possible
  - Technique of **catching** at the highest and safest point- ‘elbows slightly flexed see the ball into the hands’.
  - If the keeper needs to **punch** the ball- ‘**height, distance, and width**’.
  - Two fist ed or one fist ed- ‘through the bottom and the middle of the ball’.
  - Recovery lines to defend the goal- appropriate **footwork**.
  - The roles of the defenders:
    ‘**Communication, Protection and Covering the goal**’.
20 Goalkeeping Practices

Exercise 1 - Warm Up

Jogging / Movement
- Forward, lateral, backward, varied

Stretching, flexibility and mobility
- Shoulders, trunk, lower back
- Groins, quads, hamstrings, calf’s

Ball in Hands - W Shape

Exercise 2 - Footwork

Key Factors
- Balance
- Co-ordination
- Rhythm
- Tempo
- Shape

Part 1
- Forward, lateral, backward

Part 2
- Forward, backward, reverse turn (inside shooters)

Ball in Hands

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20 Goalkeeping Practices

**Exercise 3 - Footwork**

**Double Ball Exercises / Footwork**

- Cup Technique
- ‘W’ shaped

**Exercise 4 - General Handling & Footwork**

- **Server 1** volleys ball to **GK** in start position
- **GK** takes quick side steps to set and save from server 2
- 6 repetitions

**Key Factors**

- Balance, Co-ordination, Rhythm, Tempo, Shape
- Moving into line
- Set position
- Decision
- Techniques

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**Exercise 5 - General Handling & Footwork**

- GK side steps quickly to the right and gets into position to save from server 1.
- GK moves back to start position and performs same movement but to the left to save from server 2.
- 6 repetitions.

**Exercise 6 - General Handling & Footwork**

- GK steps forward and then to the right to save from server 1.
- GK performs same exercise but move to server 2.
- 6 repetitions.
20 Goalkeeping Practices

Exercise 7 - General Handling & Footwork

- GK moves through yellow gate and back to central starting position to make save
- Same movement through orange gate to save centrally
- 6 repetitions

Exercise 8 - General Handling & Footwork

- Alternative leapfrog and through leg movements
- 6 repetitions
20 Goalkeeping Practices

Exercise 9 - Reaction Practice

• GK completes a 90 degree turn
• Set position
• Save
• 6 repetitions

Exercise 10 - Reaction Practice

• 180 degree turn into the goal on call
• Set position
• Save
• 6 repetitions
20 Goalkeeping Practices

Exercise 11 - Reaction Practice

- Server 1 passes ball through GK legs
- GK turns 180 degrees to deal with the shot
- 6 repetitions

Exercise 12 - Reaction Practices

- Server 1 serves the ball to server 2 who volleys at either goal
- GK’s change goals
- 6 repetitions
20 Goalkeeping Practices

Exercise 13 - Reaction Practices

- Server 1 throws to server 2 who volleys at either goal
- GK’s to swap goals
- 6 repetitions

Exercise 14 - Abdominal work with the Ball

1. GK sitting down with legs straight, side to side
2. GK sitting down with legs straight, over the shoulder
3. GK sitting down with legs straight, over head
4. GK sitting down with legs straight, into the hole
5. GK sitting down with legs straight, rowing
20 Goalkeeping Practices

**Exercise 15 - Abdominal work with the Ball**

- GK’s sitting down with legs straight
- Diagonals/down the side
- Set position to collapsing save
- 8-10 repetitions

**Exercise 16 - Dealing with Crosses**

- Attacking near post
- Server kicks ball in the air to near post
- 6 repetitions

**Key Factors**

- Starting position in relation to ball, stance and presence
- Assessment decision
- Communication
- Angle and speed of approach
- Timing of take off
- Technique - catch/punch
- Re-adjustment
20 Goalkeeping Practices

**Exercise 17 - Dealing with Crosses**

- Retreating - Far post
- Server kicks ball in the air to the furthest post
- 6 repetitions

**Exercise 18 - Dealing with Crosses**

- Server kicks ball into the air for the GK to run and catch
Exercise 19 - Dealing with Crosses

- GK passes the ball to the server
- Server kicks ball in the air passed the blue cone
- GK runs to blue cone and retreats to deal with the cross

Exercise 20 - Dealing with Crosses

- The server crosses the ball into the space
- Green goalkeepers run in front of the ball but do not touch the ball
- Yellow goalkeepers jump and deal with the cross