

Release the goalkeeper

Look to improve your goalkeeper's confidence by enhancing their ability to receive and pass the ball.

This in turn will improve the trust between your goalkeeper and outfield players, who will feel more confident in passing back when placed under pressure.



What you tell your players the session is about

1. Improving the goalkeeper's confidence when passing and receiving.
2. Increasing the goalkeeper's involvement in the game.
3. Trusting the goalkeeper to restart or build attacks.

Session planner

Warm up 10 mins	Session 10 mins	Developments 20 mins	Game 15 mins	Warm down 5 mins
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Activity	Kit	Outcome
Warm up	Balls and cones	Accurate passing on the run. From <i>The Ultimate Football Warm-Ups Manual</i> , exercise 49
The session	Balls, cones, goal and bibs	The players use the goalkeeper to play out of defence.
Development	Balls, cones, 4 mini goals/poles and bibs	The goalkeeper is used more frequently as a "sweeper". He confidently communicates and moves to receive the ball
Game	Balls cones and bibs	The players are now showing confidence in their goalkeeper, who is able to pass and receive the ball well
Warm down	n/a	Gentle jogging and stretching exercises



Where it fits

Individual skills: Passing and receiving, movements to receive the ball, trusting your team mates

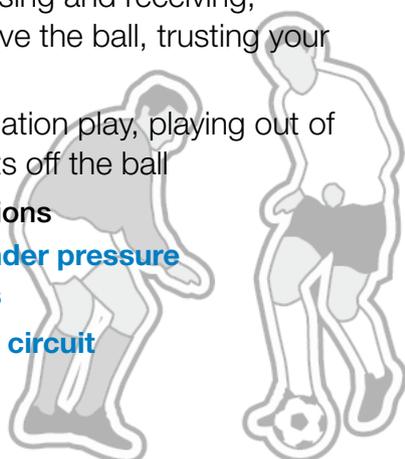
Team skills: Combination play, playing out of defence, movements off the ball

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What to think about

- Defenders often clear the ball out of play and give away needless throw ins and corners. Improving the goalkeeper's passing and receiving skills will improve all your players' confidence.
- In matches, goalkeepers touch the ball on average five times more with their feet than with their hands.
- In these practices the goalkeeper should always play with a maximum of two touches. The first touch needs to be away from pressure and in the direction of the next pass.





Set-up

Create a 40 yards by 30 yards playing area with a goal at one end.



What you get your players to do

The first midfielder dribbles and passes to the goalkeeper from one end, then runs to join the practice. The forwards are allowed to pressure the defenders as soon as the goalkeeper has taken his first touch.

Now the goalkeeper, two defenders and midfielder combine to pass out to the second, waiting midfielder. The player who passes to the midfielder follows the pass and rests.



What to call out

- “Concentrate on the first touch.”
- “Move to create space and receive the ball.”
- “‘Go home’ to the goalkeeper and move off the ball.”



Development

Now play a small-sided game using four mini goals and divide the playing area into three zones, as in the middle picture.

Goalkeepers work outside the main pitch and play as a sweeper for their team. Their job is to communicate with the outfield players and constantly adjust their position in relation to the ball. This will allow the goalkeeper to be in a position to receive and keep possession.



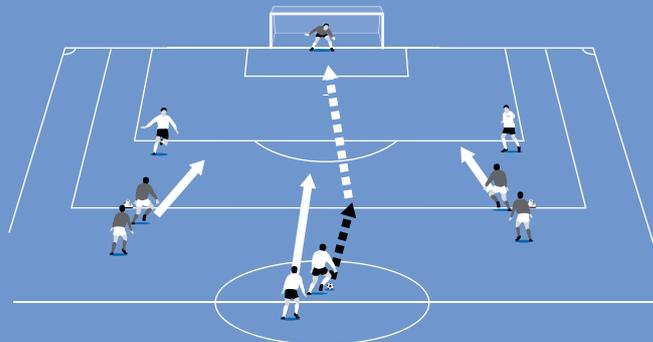
Game situation

Place each goalkeeper in a 10 yards by 10 yards area. The goalkeepers play for the team in possession and no player is allowed in their area until the ball enters it.

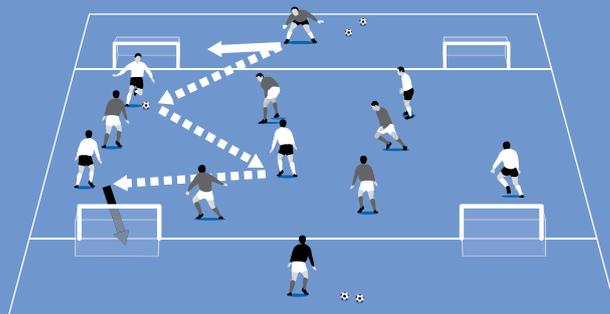
Once the ball is at the goalkeeper's feet, a defender can enter the area to tackle. The aim of this game is to pass the ball from one goalkeeper to the other in order to score a goal.

Release the goalkeeper

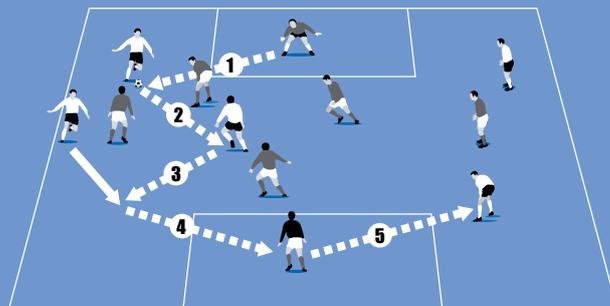
player movement \Rightarrow pass/serve $\square\square\square\Rightarrow$
 run with ball \dashrightarrow shot \blackrightarrow



The two defenders and midfielder combine with the goalkeeper to play out of defence to the waiting midfielder in a 4v2.



Goalkeepers play as “sweepers” and are constantly adjusting their position while communicating with team mates.



The teams must pass the ball from one goalkeeper to the other in order to score a goal.

