

Working with your goaltenders...

As a goalie coach, Derrick Henderson, EYHA Goalie Instructor, believes you should make time to work with your goalies. Also, understanding that as a coach, you have more to worry about with your team than just the goalies, that is why Derrick is here.

Working with goaltenders is not hard. It really isn't. Like most things with coaching, you just need a plan. Also, every coach should have a few basic ideas about the position of goaltender. Hopefully with my help, you will feel more comfortable working with your goaltenders.

There are 3 areas a coach needs to focus on when it comes to goaltenders: Understanding, Communication, and Preparation.

As a coach, you need to **understand** goaltending on some level, even if it is the very basics. Coaches should understand:

- The difference between a good goal against versus a bad goal against.
- How a goalie moves/skates around the net/crease.
- Basic goalie movements.
- That goalies play various styles and not all styles work for every goalie.

Once you understand these things, it's easier to help your goalies. Plus it leads us to a very important aspect: Communication

Communicate with your goalie(s). They need more direction and guidance than "Stop the puck!" A coach should be able to tell a goalie exactly what he (the coach) is looking for, whether in practice or in games.

Some coaches have very basic ideas about what they expect from their goalie. A few good examples are:

- Make the first save.
- No goals through the body (5-hole, or between the arms).
- No goals allowed on the short side.
- No more than 3 goals allowed per game.

Whatever you expect from your goalies, make sure you make it known, and that you stick with it. It gives the goalie something to focus on.

The last part of the trio is **preparation**. Every practice, you know the drills you want to introduce and use. Why not include your goalie more? Whether it's allotting the first 5 minutes of the practice to warming up the goalies or running goalie specific drills, make sure that you aren't neglecting your goalies.

If you are running certain drills, see if there is a way to utilize your goaltenders. It may be something as simple as adding one or two extra steps. Even a skating drill can have shots involved. Whenever possible, don't neglect your goaltenders.

General tips for working with a goalie...

When working with a goaltender, there are a few basics that every coach should be able to teach and correct.

1 - Proper Stance

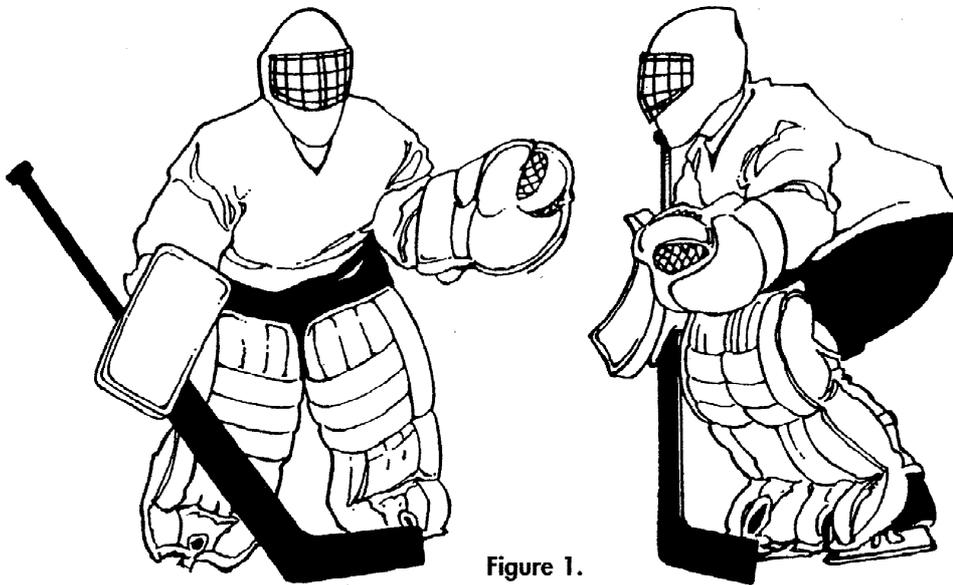


Figure 1.

Key elements to a goaltender's stance are:

- Feet shoulder width apart, knees bent
- Skates parallel
- Weight slightly forward
- Shoulders and knees aligned over the toe
- Hands in front of the body, just outside of each knee
- Catch glove is open and facing shooter
- Stick blade flat on the ice, a few inches in front of the skates (5-hole)

One common mistake young goalies make is standing upright, not getting enough bend at the knees. You can see this if the stick comes off the ice when the goalie skates or sets for a shot.

2 – Butterfly saves



Most young goalies use “Butterfly” saves for shots that go low. This is what they see NHL goalies (and most goalies for that matter) do, so that is what they think they should do. However, these goalies don’t understand the proper use of this save.

When performing this save, a goalie must keep his stick a few inches out from his goal pads. The goalie must drop his knees straight down to the ice, keeping the stick blade on the ice as well.

The stick covers the 5-hole and the pads back up the stick.

Key Elements to the Butterfly save are:

- The goalie’s pads must be flush to the ice, knees together.
- The stick must move to the puck side, covering any opening between the pads
- The upper body should remain upright with the catch glove just above the pads
- The goal stick should cushion any shot going 5-hole
- The goal stick should be used to steer pucks towards the corners whenever possible

Common mistakes you’ll see are:

- Goalies “jumping” in the air before landing on their knees
- The goal stick coming off the ice when making the save
- Goalies sitting back on their legs instead of staying high on their knees
- Goalies “attacking” the puck with their goal stick