

SMARTSESSIONS

SOCCER COACH WEEKLY

CORE SKILLS #195

Get down to the ground

They don't look as spectacular or nearly as much fun as flying through the air to tip a powerful effort over the bar, but for goalkeepers being able to save shots that skim along the ground is just as important.

WHAT YOU TELL YOUR PLAYERS THE SESSION IS ABOUT

1. Scoop and diving saves.
2. Footwork.
3. Handling.

WHAT TO THINK ABOUT

Your goalkeepers need to know how to:

- Scoop save: Get in line with the ball. Bend the knees to form a "K" shape with legs while leaning towards ball - the K shape is formed by bending one knee in to prevent the ball going between the legs. Scoop the ball with the hands in to the chest. Drop on the ball so it cannot spill out to an attacker.
- Dive save: Push off from the leg nearest the ball. Dive slightly diagonally forward and across the goal. Remember the order of hitting the ground - ankle, outside of knee, hip, side of upper torso, shoulder.

SESSION PLANNER

Warm up	Session	Developments	Game	Warm down
10 mins	10 mins	10 mins	15 mins	15 mins

Activity	Outcome
Warm-up	Players warm up with a heading game, from The Ultimate Football Warm-Ups Manual, exercise 52
The Session	Players learn the basics of the scoop and diving saves
Development	Players can incorporate saving basics with foot movement
Game Situation	Keepers use the skills learned in a game situation
Warm-down	Players warm down with a low-intensity game, from The Ultimate Football Warm-Ups Manual, exercise 124

NOTES

SESSION - 10 MINUTES

Split your squad into pairs. Players stand four yards apart: One player is the server, the other is the keeper. The server passes the ball gently straight to the keeper's feet for the keeper to scoop save. Increase the shot force gradually.

Next, the goalkeeper lies on one side, putting his weight on the side of the knee, thigh and hip. When the server passes the ball, the keeper rocks down on to the side of his torso to make the diving save, catches the ball then throws back to the server before rocking back up.

Players switch roles, then repeat the drill with the players lying down in the opposite direction.

To progress, use a goal. The server stands seven yards from the goal and to one side of it, towards the keeper's left-hand post.

The keeper kneels on his right knee on the goal line, far enough away from the post so that when he dives and is fully stretched, he is able to touch the post.

The server passes the ball at pace along the ground, for the keeper to dive, save, return the ball, and then get back into position.

DEVELOPMENT - 10 MINUTES

Place a keeper in a goal. He starts at one post and, while on his toes, moves laterally from post to post.

When the keeper is in the centre of the goal, the server strikes the ball firmly for the keeper to make either of the two saves practised above, i.e. a scoop or dive.

To progress, keepers play a competitive game, attempting to score against each other by shooting along the ground. Each one takes five 5 shots. The keeper who concedes the fewest goals is the winner.

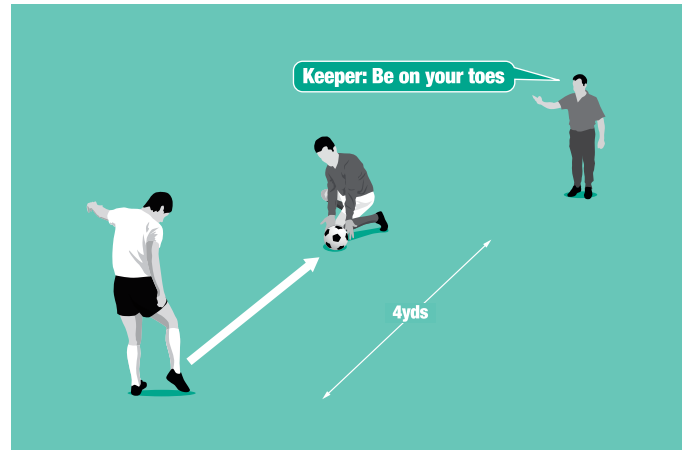
GAME SITUATION - 15 MINUTES

Play a five-a-side game with no offsides. Place the goals on the longer touchlines, making the pitch wide, to encourage more shots. Both teams take a maximum of four touches before shooting.

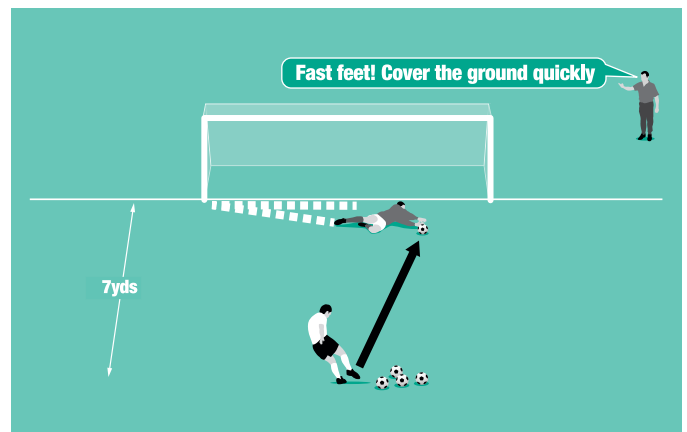
If the goalkeeper makes a save and the ball leaves the pitch, you or an assistant immediately serve another ball to an attacking player so he can shoot straight at goal rather than take a corner.

Goals scored from shots along the ground count treble.

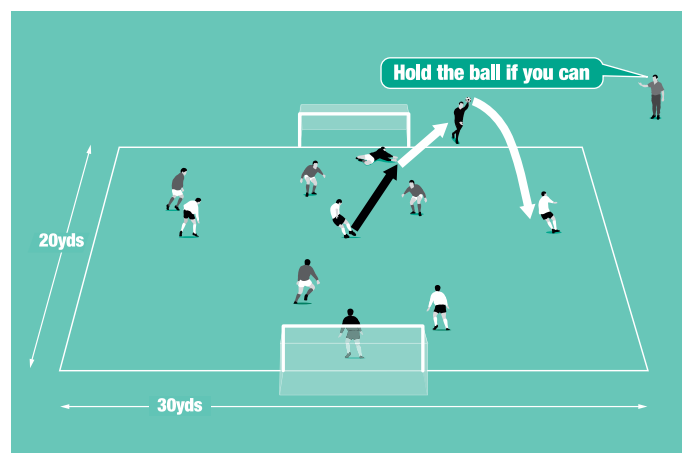
Player movement  Pass/Save 
Shot 



In pairs, one passes a ball gently to a keeper who bends correctly to scoop save the ball.



A keeper moves from post to post and when in the centre, his partner strikes the ball firmly. The keeper tries to dive and save the shot.



In a small-sided game, encourage lots of shooting and give quick returns to attackers rather than corners.