

FIFA Training Centre

**FUTSAL
GOALKEEPING
COACHING
MANUAL**

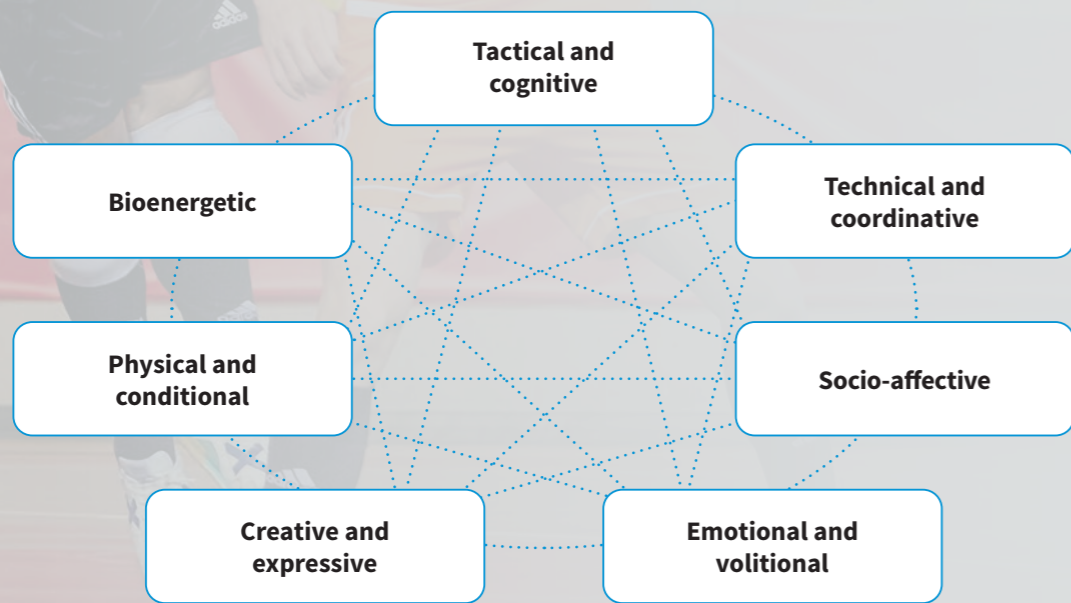
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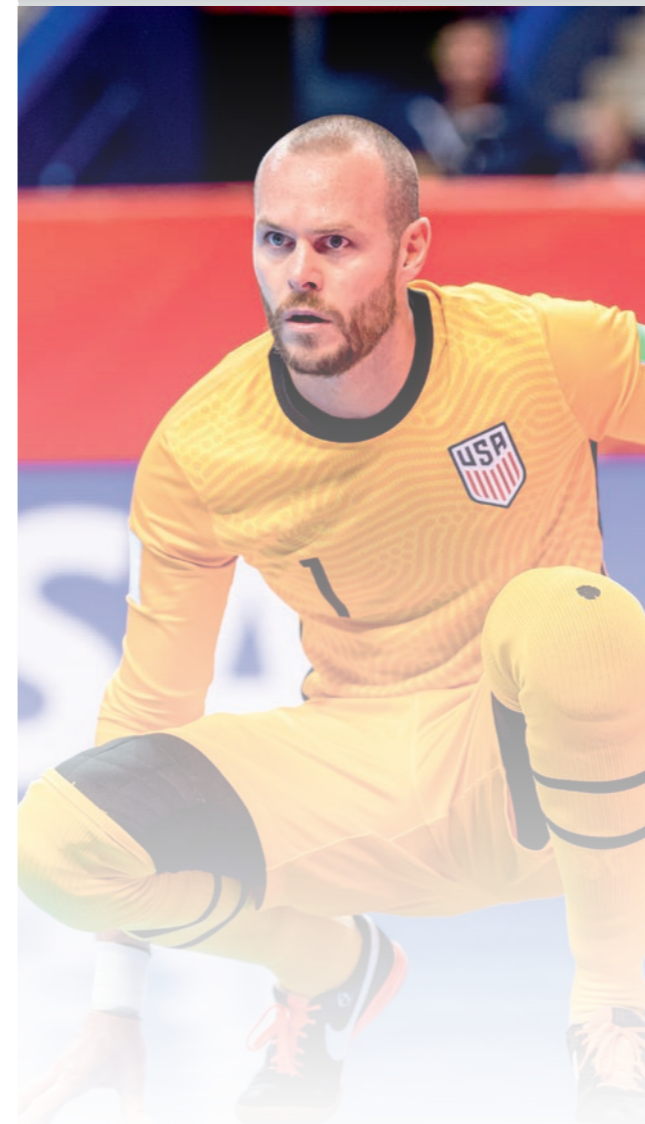
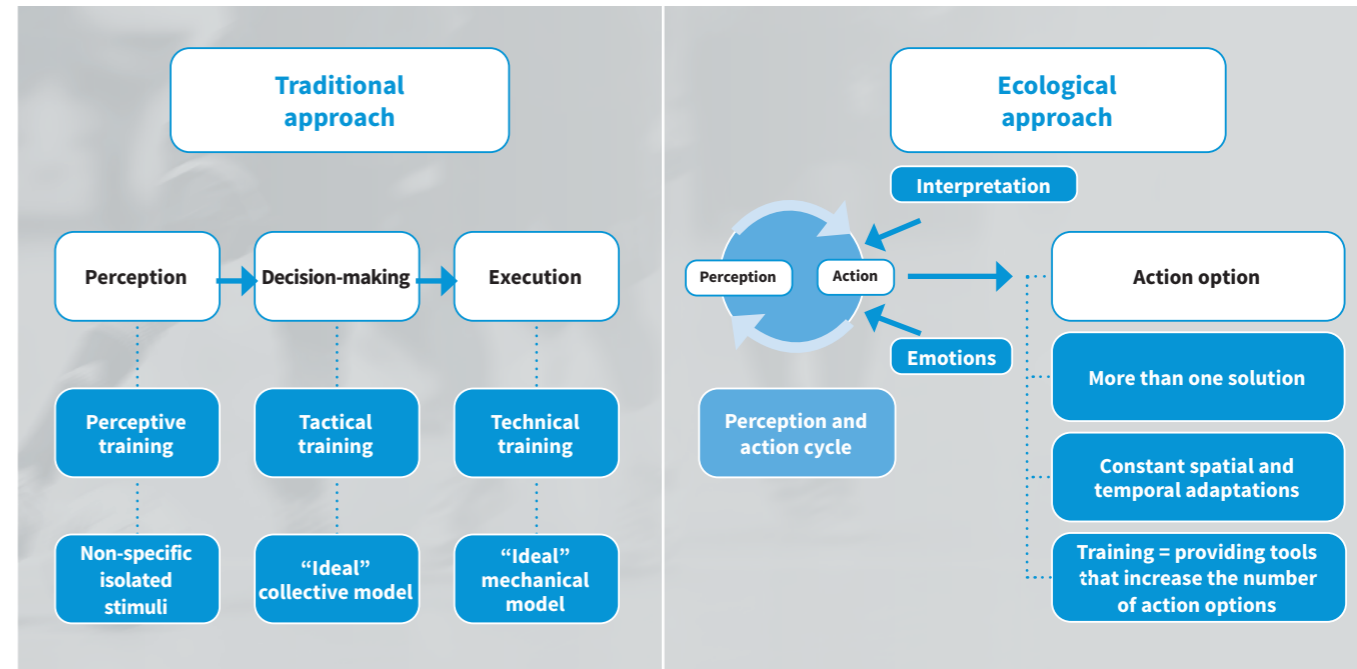


The futsal goalkeeper is an athlete whose development consists of various aspects that a coach must cater for in order to provide them with a training environment that enables them to fulfil their potential. These aspects come under the following categories: technical and coordinative, emotional and volitional, socio-affective, physical and conditional, tactical and cognitive, bioenergetic and creative and expressive. All of these areas are interconnected and expressed as a whole that is much greater than the sum of its parts (i.e. the game) and determines how a futsal goalkeeper performs during their participation in this form of the game. Although these elements are manifested holistically, as coaches, it is our duty to identify our goalkeepers' needs by focusing on those requiring attention and try to address them specifically so that all of them remain in a balanced state, thereby minimising any possible deficits. Our focus in this coaching manual is on tactical and technical aspects.

Aspects of goalkeeping



Futsal is an invasion team sport that requires not only technical skill, but also the tactical knowledge to make effective decisions. A smart goalkeeper must be able to identify various situations within the game, make appropriate decisions in each of them and apply technical skills effectively.



As a player operating in a specialist position, a futsal goalkeeper has to be aware of the Futsal Laws of the Game and adapt continuously to each tactical evolution brought about by any amendments to them. Recently, those changes have quite possibly had a greater impact on the goalkeeper than on outfield players. The changes have resulted in the goalkeeper playing a leading role during the in-possession phase.

The futsal goalkeeper is evolving into the team's most complete and versatile player because, in addition to the technical abilities demanded by the role, a modern futsal goalkeeper must also master skills traditionally attributed to outfield players.

The futsal goalkeeper has become particularly important, with each of their actions – either in or out of possession – having the greatest impact on the outcome of a match. This is demonstrated through the high level of responsibility entailed in the role of the futsal goalkeeper as they develop from grassroots to senior level, in which their influence on a tactical level affects the whole team.



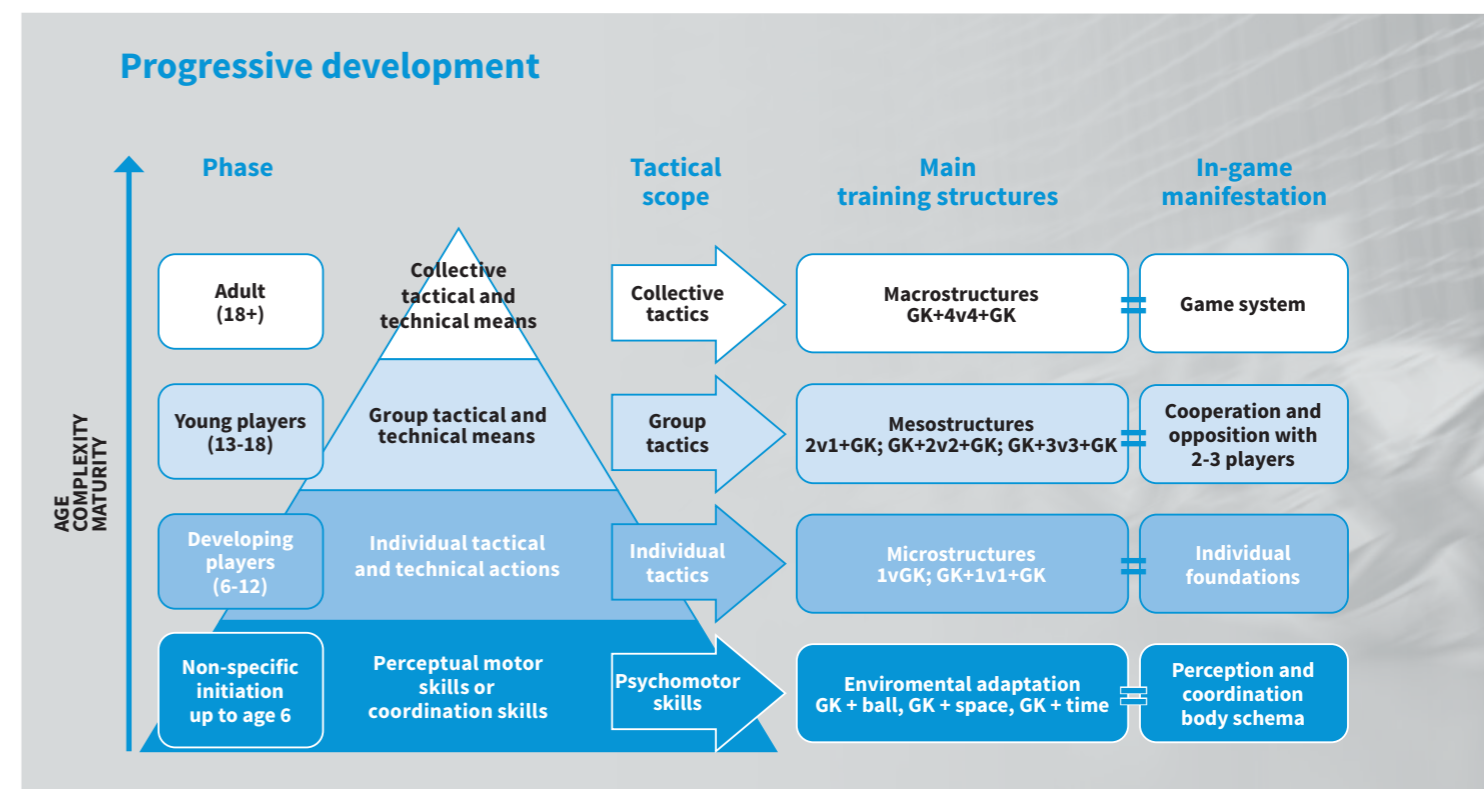
As is the case with outfield players, a futsal goalkeeper’s development journey involves several phases. Initially, we should not expect young players (or their coaches) to place too much emphasis on specific positions on the pitch. For example, a nine-year-old player does not possess sufficient game understanding or experience to assess which position is their best and to which position they are most suited, yet we do see them being influenced by role models, be it a famous player or an influential parent, impacting their choice of position. Young players who are experiencing futsal for the first time should be offered a wide range of experiences and opportunities that give them a taste of all positions, including that of the goalkeeper. By providing players with exposure to a wide range of experiential learning opportunities, the technical characteristics of the position and the ability to develop the skills and abilities required, they are offered a developing motor and skills foundation, without falling into the error of early specialisation, and instead benefit from the adequate investment in their future participation and role in the game.

In the developing player phase (6-12 years), the focus should be on the development of basic and specific technical skills, whilst ensuring that practice is connected and relevant to the game. This is the phase during which individual foundations must be developed.

In the young player phase (13-18 years), once the basic technique has been understood and developed, the futsal goalkeeper can be exposed to more complex tactical situations that involve greater variability and difficulty, demanding improved decision-making and the competence to deal with challenges with a view to ultimately providing positive outcomes.

In the adult phase (18+ years), as the futsal goalkeeper reaches full maturity, the early or late developers become evident, with some opting to play the game purely for participation purposes, whereas more proficient players often become part of an elite pathway. Through these development phases, it is vital that an aspiring futsal goalkeeper is exposed to all of the technical tools required to understand the game and the technical outcomes necessary to be able to play and enjoy futsal – either purely for recreation or for elite participation – albeit with different demands and levels of competitiveness.

In this development process, the phases, ages, training structures and tactical and technical elements should not be considered as isolated aspects, but flexible elements that can vary according to the futsal goalkeeper’s level of maturity. The passage from one phase to another is a gradual progression achieved through the combination of training content and the progress of each interrelated element.





Tactics and technique are both features of the game that coexist while being dependent and interdependent on one another. The tactical element is reflected in the intentions and behaviours that the futsal goalkeeper displays in each of their interventions, whereas the technical element is evident in the actions that the futsal goalkeeper performs. Tactics are related to the perception of the environment (scanning the scenario to anticipate what might happen) and to decision-making during the course of the game. Technique is the execution that influences the tactical intention. We could say that tactics and technique are “two sides of the same coin”. They are two perspectives of the same reality, an indivisible reality that we only separate for the purposes of understanding and study.



There are three dimensions to futsal goalkeeper tactics:

Individual tactics: actions and behaviours carried out by the futsal goalkeeper. The importance of understanding tactics on an individual level is key to the effectiveness of each intervention. Individual tactical awareness and technical abilities enable the futsal goalkeeper to adapt, often momentarily, to the changing circumstances of the game in order to play an effective role within the team.

Group tactics: when the futsal goalkeeper interacts with others – cooperating with an individual or groups of two or three team-mates and dealing with the threats of contextual interference posed by two or three opponents.

Collective tactics: when the focus is broadened, the futsal goalkeeper becomes a piece of their team’s game system/model and should not be considered in isolation.

The interface between individual tactical awareness and group tactical interaction is often seamless. Whilst they can be considered as separate skill sets, they are integrated in the flow of play without being separated other than through the identification of an individual action leading to a group outcome. When the objective is to analyse the individual actions or behaviours of a futsal goalkeeper, in order to provide direct feedback related to foundations, the intervention should focus solely on the futsal goalkeeper. In contrast, if feedback is intended to have a broader impact on the group by reviewing the actions of the futsal goalkeeper in the game as a whole, this requires a broader focus to observe how the interactions occur. The futsal goalkeeper does not play in isolation, and their own actions are dependent on those of the rest of the players. In this regard, the out-of-possession players make the decisions taken by the in-possession player, in the case of the futsal goalkeeper, much easier. In this sense, it is always worth remembering that the futsal goalkeeper is only part – albeit a significant part – of the outcome.



Technique can be described as the set of necessary tools and the execution and variance within a whole range of actions used by the futsal goalkeeper to ensure the execution of their tactical intentions. Technique leads into skill through the selection of the appropriate technique to address the perception of outcomes at any point after a player has read the game scenario. These tools are impacted by the variability and randomness of game play, with the differentiating characteristics established as follows:

Variable: When the futsal goalkeeper intervenes, the specific tactical intention that takes the opponent into account impacts on the futsal goalkeeper's technical response to each situation. In futsal, no two situations are completely alike. Conditions constantly change, which means that the technique that solves situational problems should also change.

Adaptive: A continuously changing game context requires the futsal goalkeeper to be flexible in execution and modify a previously acquired basic technique, adjusting it to the specific needs of the game situation. Another of the differentiating features of this type of technique is that there are likely to be various solutions for each situational problem, and this requires memory recall from prior experience to perform the solution.

Personal: Each futsal goalkeeper, depending on their physical, anthropometric and cognitive characteristics, seeks to solve the situation with their own style by using the technical tools that are best suited to their personal characteristics and strengths. Personal technique is not considered as standard for all goalkeepers, regardless of their individual characteristics.

Tactical and technical elements

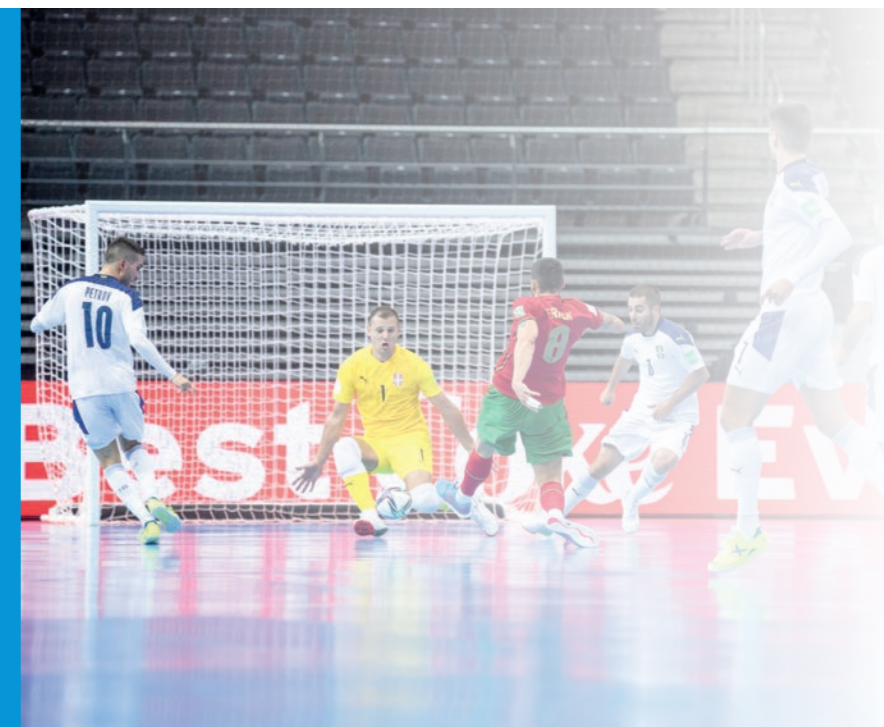
Individual
Tactical and technical
(Micro)

Group
Tactical and technical
(Meso)

Collective
Tactical and technical
(Macro)

Whichever technical tool is deployed – whilst the technique must be aimed at achieving the intended tactical objective – the choice should be focused on minimising physical and cognitive effort, as well as reducing the risk of injury. This is perhaps easier said than done when a reaction may be required within fractions of a second due to the speed of the game. Of course, this is relative to the level of play and ability of each futsal goalkeeper and is consequently developed throughout every player development phase.

Futsal is a fluid invasion game in which space is attacked and conceded, often in a balanced way but frequently in an imbalanced manner.



The dynamics of the game mean that any intervention by the goalkeeper – either in or out of possession – can consist of the following four phases:

- **Preventive phase:** The focus of play does not immediately threaten the futsal goalkeeper’s position, and the context does not indicate that they must intervene immediately. In futsal, the game changes in the blink of an eye, so the futsal goalkeeper must diligently follow the development of the game, being positioned relative to the phase of play and ready to intervene when the focus of play changes.
- **Alert phase:** The focus of play is approaching the futsal goalkeeper, meaning that physical and mental awareness must be heightened in comparison with the previous phase, as the probability of intervening increases considerably.
- **Direct intervention phase:** Play is approaching the futsal goalkeeper, who becomes the key focus within the game to engage directly with play – defending when out of possession or creating when in possession.
- **Consequence phase:** After intervening, a consequence is produced, such as a parry or save that may hand possession back to the opposition. This action outcome removes the focus away from the futsal goalkeeper or it may remain on them, forcing them to immediately intervene again. In possession, the futsal goalkeeper could also produce a consequence after playing a pass to a team-mate, for example.

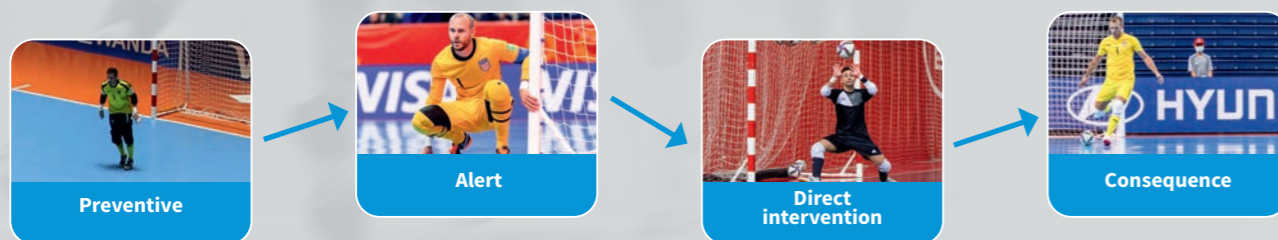
Taking these four phases into account when designing out-of-possession and in-possession practical training exercises, as well as when analysing any intervention of the futsal goalkeeper during the game, allows the coach to obtain a realistic and complete understanding of the intervention. Whilst practice can and should focus on one of these phases at any given time, more often than not, it should always be performed in the context of the whole game.

Within this coaching manual, we aim to offer an overview of the facets of the futsal goalkeeper that compiles and interrelates all of the technical and tactical actions that a futsal goalkeeper may perform during a game. This overview attempts to identify a futsal goalkeeper’s basic options, differentiating them according to the phase of the game in which they are involved, whether in possession or out of possession.

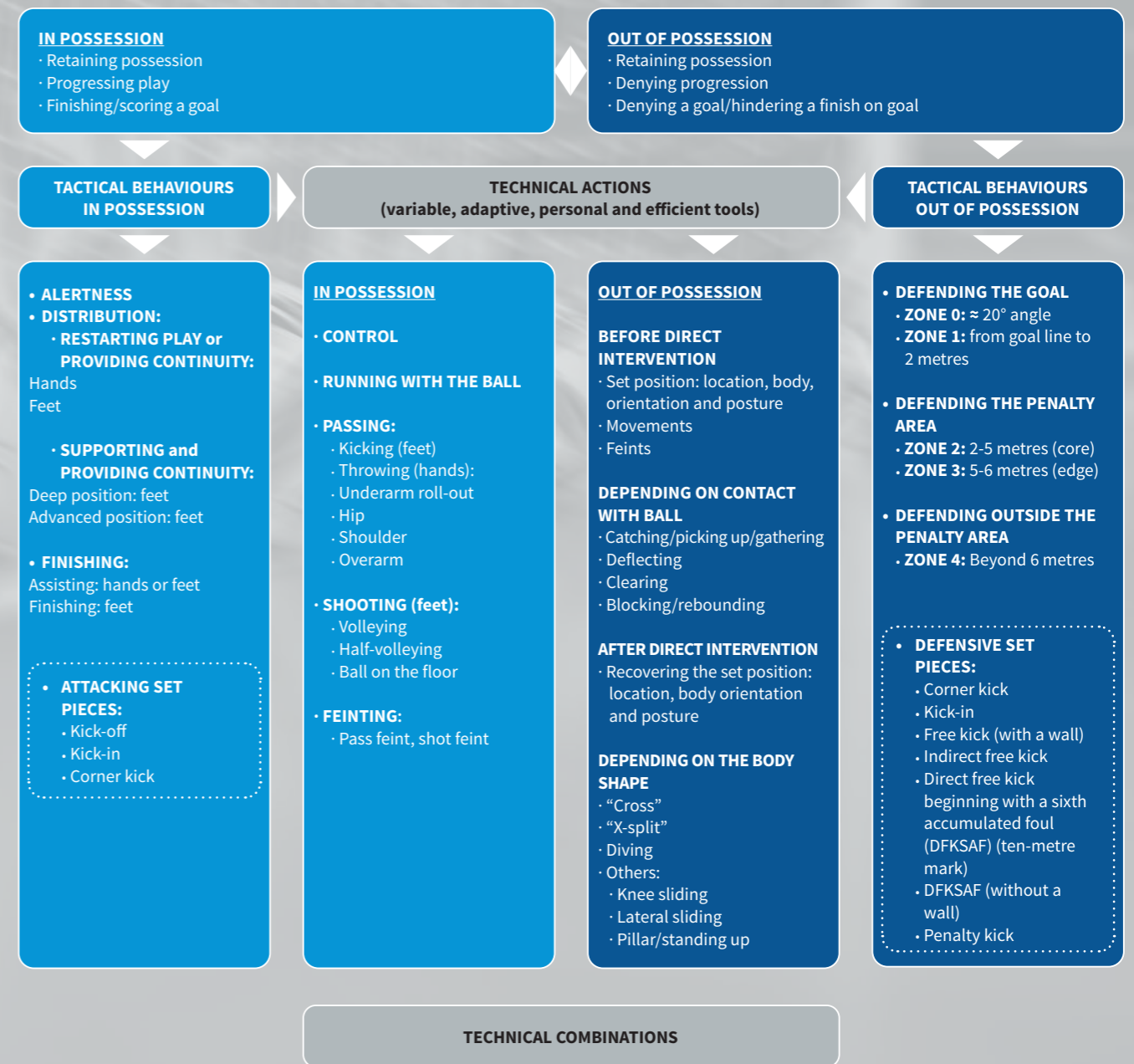
The general principles of the game, which are common to most collective sports with similar structural characteristics to futsal, act as the starting point of this classification, in which we can distinguish:

- the tactical behaviours that a futsal goalkeeper performs both in attack and defence, understood as the intentions that a futsal goalkeeper has every time they intervene by performing a game action; and
- the technical tools that allow these tactical intentions to be converted into reality, making it possible to implement them in the game.

Dynamic phases of play



General principles of the game



Importantly, these classifications (the game facets) are applicable to any age and level because they define the common elements that are present in the game, irrespective of the level. They encompass all of the possible actions, behaviours and situations that a futsal goalkeeper may face while participating in training or competing in game play. Consequently, every futsal goalkeeper, regardless of their physical characteristics, age, level of motor development and expertise, spatial and time awareness, etc. can use or rely on some or all of these elements to a greater or lesser extent, adapting

them to the context of play. This can be generalised and expressed as a futsal goalkeeper’s self-organisation.

Training content should be considered in the context of both macrocycles and mesocycles, including all aspects that make up an entire season. This is a joint process between the coach, player and the whole team to ensure that a process-based development objective is in place that follows a prescribed player development path, which may be tailored or tweaked to suit the player’s needs.



4.1 Alertness

The futsal goalkeeper is always “in play” and is often the only player who has a full view of the game due to their positioning behind the rest of the players and, even though they may not be directly involved, the game can change in an instant on account of the size of the pitch and the speed at which the ball moves. This requires constant mental application and preparedness to intervene and be responsive to the changes in the game.

One of the technical aspects of player development is the mental side of the game and importantly, the players’ mental aptitude and state of mind within a period of play. Both the mental and physical state that a futsal goalkeeper should display, both when in possession and out of possession, are vital to successful outcomes. This approach, i.e. alertness with a readiness to engage, enables the futsal goalkeeper to be ready to effectively participate, either in attack or defence. In futsal, as in most invasion games, transitions are constant and unpredictable, so the state of alertness is an essential facet to stay physically and mentally connected to the game, being ready to offer support in attack or in the transition from attack to defence, often in the blink of an eye.

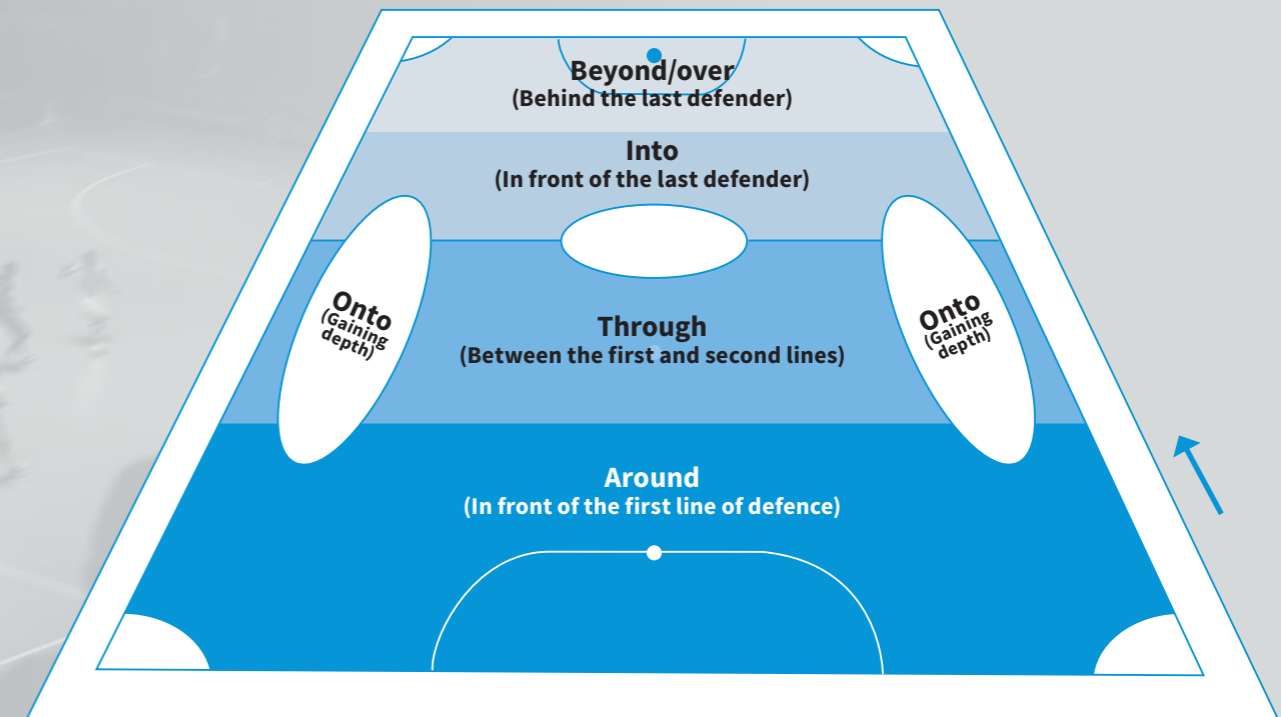
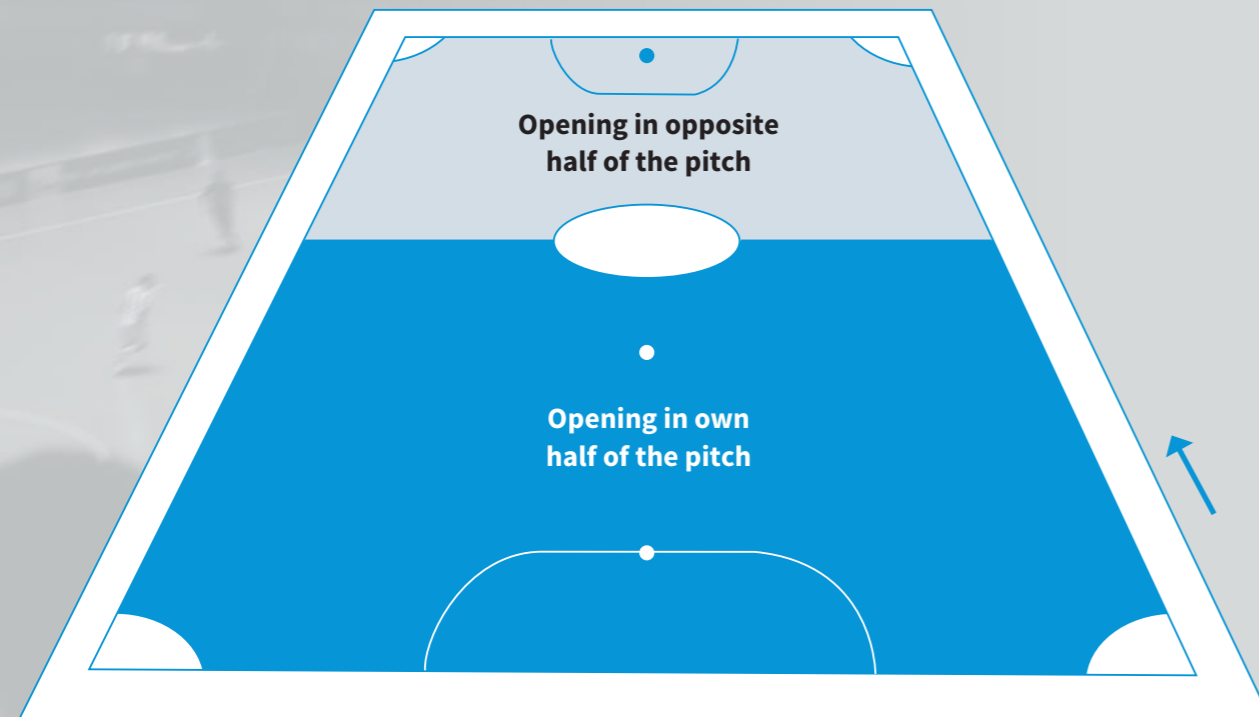
It is during these moments that futsal goalkeepers – as is the case with all players – grow to rely on knowledge **in** and knowledge **of** the game in order to be able to read the ebb and flow of the game, predict outcomes before they happen, prepare for multiple outcomes and react accordingly.



4.2 Distribution

A futsal goalkeeper’s ability to distribute the ball safely and effectively is an increasingly prevalent facet of game play. Statistically, it can be interpreted from match data that the futsal goalkeeper plays a key role in starting and restarting play, whilst being an active and a predicting component in the attacking build-up. The Futsal Laws of the Game distinguish between the following two main situations:

Restarting play or providing continuity: when the futsal goalkeeper gains possession of the ball after it has been played by an opposing player following an attempted finish on goal or after any other situation in which the last player to touch the ball was an opponent. When referencing a ‘goal clearance’, what is in essence a restart of play, the FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game establish that this is taken with the hand.



Supporting and providing continuity:

When the futsal goalkeeper receives the ball following a pass played by a team-mate and is asked to provide continuity by using their feet. This situation can be classified into two different categories, depending on where the futsal goalkeeper receives the ball from their team-mate, as well as their subsequent intention to provide continuity to the play once they gain possession:

- **Deep position:** The futsal goalkeeper receives the ball near their own goal and provides continuity by means of a pass.
- **Advanced position:** The futsal goalkeeper receives the ball further away from their goal and enters the attacking half of the pitch, essentially becoming another outfield player. The futsal goalkeeper participates in their team's attacking build-up.



4.3 Finishing

The attacking threat posed by the futsal goalkeeper should not be underestimated and is a facet that should be encouraged. When the futsal goalkeeper regains possession of the ball and the opposition's goal is unguarded, an opportunity may present itself for a direct shot on the unguarded goal. This may occur when the opposition choose to perform a power play and to attack with their goalkeeper playing the role of an outfield player. In this scenario, the opposing goalkeeper can decide whether to initiate a counter-attack through a team-mate by playing a pass or to attack the opposition's goal directly through a shot or a self-initiated counter-attack movement that leads to the goalkeeper taking a shot on goal.

4.4 Attacking set pieces

The Futsal Laws of the Game permit the goalkeeper to cross the halfway line to participate in open play, as well as in corner kicks, kick-ins or kick-offs. This involvement high up the pitch is often surprising, as whilst participation could be considered as giving continuity to the play by supporting the role of the outfield players, it also presents a risk. It is vital to establish a differentiation in play between the futsal goalkeeper's role in set-piece situations and in open play.



When out of possession, the futsal goalkeeper's tactical behaviours, actions and awareness are paramount and should be based on the principles of delay, deny and dictate. However, the overriding objective must always be to regain possession. Each of these behaviours are evident, but the appropriate actions of the futsal goalkeeper must be coordinated with team-mates in a way that requires reactive memory recall when visual or verbal communication is not possible, meaning that each player should know how to react individually to contribute towards a collective objective. This varies depending on the position on the pitch in which possession is lost and the structural positioning of all players. Importantly, the futsal goalkeeper may be the only player on the pitch who can see all of the other players and therefore plays the role of the “director” to implement the delay, deny or dictate approach in the defensive set-up. When a team are looking to recover possession, organisation is vital, as team-mates may be unbalanced and unsighted. The circumstances laid out below condition the futsal goalkeeper's behaviour in the two phases of play.



Futsal is played in a shared space with two teams interacting simultaneously with the ball. In this regard, as an invasion game, there are two specific team activities:

- **Defensive phase (out of possession)**
- **Attacking phase (in possession)**

Each phase of play is made up of three general principles:

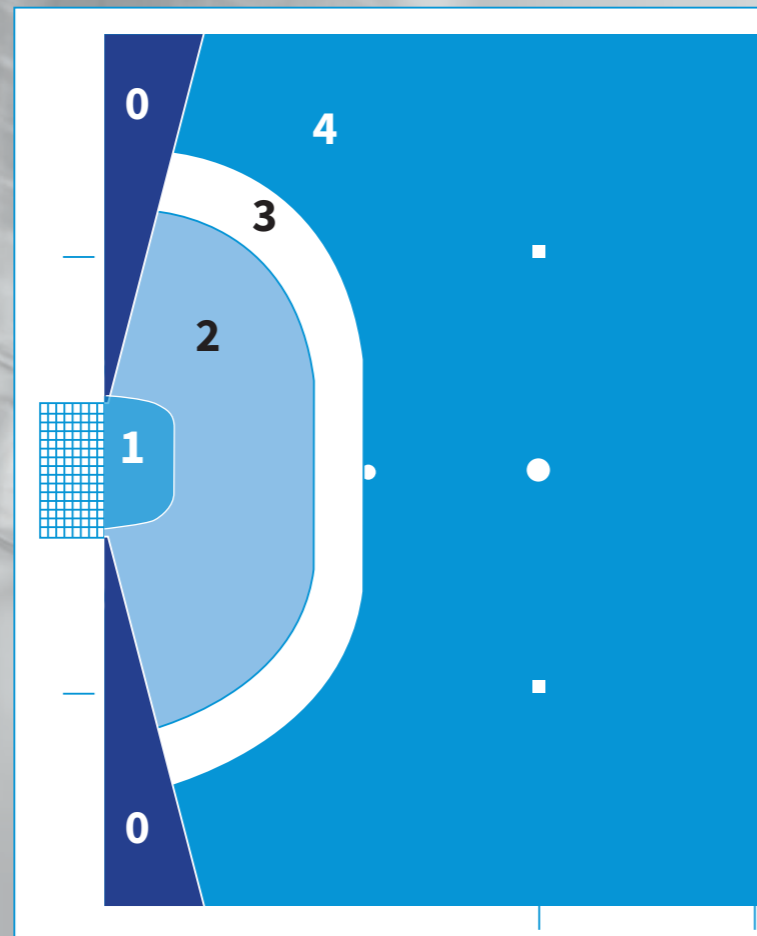
- **Defensive phase (out of possession):**
 - Regaining possession
 - Delaying the opposition's progress
 - Denying a goalscoring opportunity
- **Attacking phase (in possession):**
 - Retaining possession
 - Progressing towards the opposition's goal (ball and players)
 - Scoring a goal

During the out-of-possession phase, a futsal goalkeeper may encounter a host of situations. Depending on the circumstances within each scenario, the futsal goalkeeper prioritises one of the general principles of the game. The same applies when in possession, since the majority of moves start with a goalkeeper action. The futsal goalkeeper's role is therefore of utmost importance at all times in open play.

When it comes to classifying the futsal goalkeeper's most common and effective tactical behaviours and actions, reference is made to a stable element that does not vary during the course of the game: the pitch. The dimensions of the pitch are set out in the Futsal Laws of the Game. However, these can vary subject to the age and ability of players, from grassroots through to elite level. Nevertheless, the pitch size that is adopted relates to these varying factors, which means that it is easy for us to use them as a reference to organise the goalkeeper's different options during play.

Elsewhere in this coaching manual, the Futsal Laws of the Game are explained in detail and guidance is given on the adoption of smaller-sized pitches for developing players and youth players within the game.

Analysis of the most frequent situations that a futsal goalkeeper encounters during their participation in the game shows that specific situations occur more frequently in certain areas of the pitch than in others. To facilitate understanding (to answer the questions of where and why) of the specific situations that occur, the pitch is broken down into five areas, which are displayed in the figure on the right. This offers us a more focused insight into the options to consider in each area. Using these zones as a reference allows us to consider a futsal goalkeeper's positioning and specific defensive behaviours.



ZONE 0

AREA: widest areas of the penalty area, offering the attacker a narrow angle in which to finish ($\approx 20^\circ$)

PRIORITY: no encroaching to avoid leaving an open goal

ZONE 1

AREA: zone directly in front of goal

PRIORITY: defending the goal, avoid conceding a goal (medium- and long-distance shots)

ZONE 2

AREA: central zone of the penalty area

PRIORITY: reducing the time, distance and angle that attackers have to finish by moving towards the ball, including preventing finishing within this zone

ZONE 3

AREA: space on the edge of the penalty area

PRIORITY: balancing the numerical disadvantage, preventing the attacker from finishing in the air

ZONE 4

AREA: zone beyond the penalty area

PRIORITY: preventing the attacker from creating a goalscoring opportunity

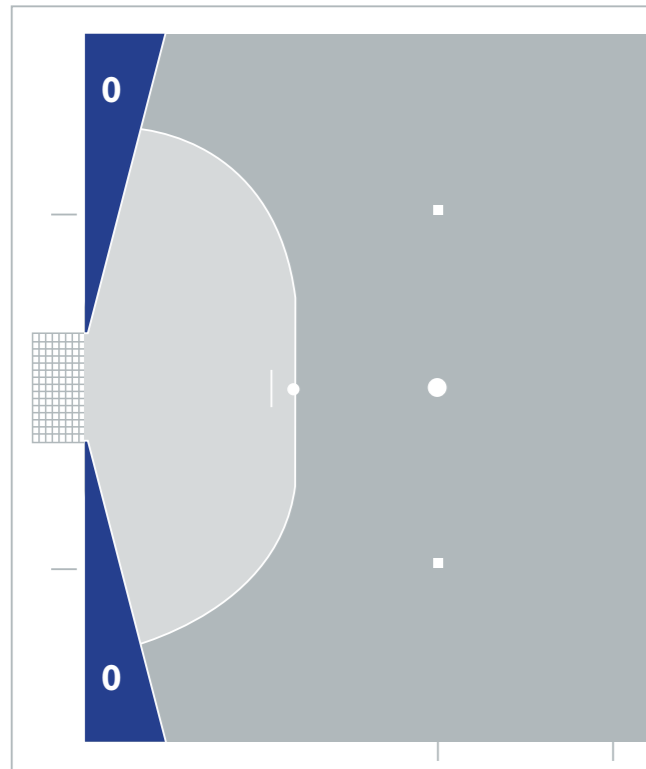


Defensive tactical behaviours

Whilst it is not impossible to predict an opponent's tactical or technical actions, the futsal goalkeeper's tactical behaviours can influence them. In what follows and based on the five identified areas, we consider the opponent's most frequent tactical behaviours.

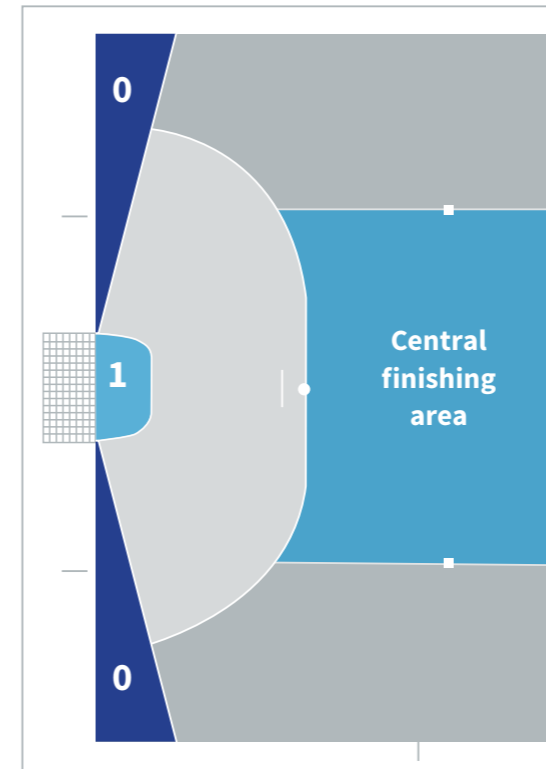


Common defensive behaviours: zone 0



When the ball is in zone 0, the goalkeeper may choose between remaining in zone 1 (defending the goal) or entering zone 0. The chances of the opposition scoring a goal from this position are low due to the reduced angle available to the attacker. For this reason, the goalkeeper must consider the risk of leaving the limits of the goal (zone 1) if they choose to enter zone 0. The recommended tactical behaviour to not enter zone 0 is based on the principle of avoiding facing an open shot into an empty goal, i.e. without the goalkeeper being between the ball and the goal line when the shot is taken. When the goalkeeper has the option of reaching a ball that is in zone 0 and could catch or clear it, it would be advisable for them to enter zone 0 to prevent a possible shot on goal. In this scenario, the goalkeeper should focus on the location of the ball whilst scanning the attacker's body orientation, which may indicate their intention, as well being aware of the location and possible advantages that other attackers who are not in possession of the ball at that time may have over opposing defenders.

Common defensive behaviours: zone 1



The goalkeeper's most common behaviours in zone 1 revolve around the general principles of denying the opposition a goalscoring opportunity and giving priority to defending the goal as a reactive response to situations in which the goalkeeper normally faces a shot from a medium or long distance. This scenario involves the ball approaching the goalkeeper's position and, acting as the last line of defence, them waiting for it before trying to make contact with the ball, with the intention of preventing a goal. The keys to effective behaviours in this type of situation are maintaining constant eye contact with the ball, adopting the correct position and constantly repositioning, implementing the correct body orientation in relation to the ball and goal, and adopting a balanced posture to increase the likelihood of success.

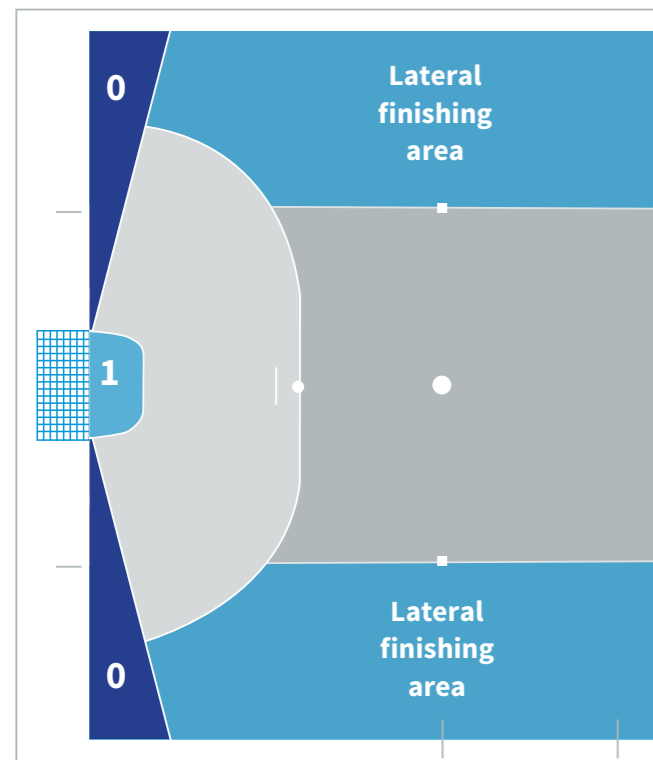
These behaviours arise from the various scenarios that a goalkeeper may face in zone 1, which include the following:

Two attackers v. the goalkeeper: This is perhaps the most challenging situation for the goalkeeper, who should aim to force the attacker to play when they are not ready to. Feinting or preventing a passing opportunity are just two examples of how the goalkeeper may achieve success in this scenario. In short, it involves any action that could force the ball carrier into an error. It is crucial that the goalkeeper use their body to provide a blocking line between the ball and the goal line when a finish on goal is attempted, as this could increase their chances of success. Opting to shut out one of the two attackers is a tactical behaviour that is not recommended, as it could present the other attacker with an empty goal in which to finish and forces the ball carrier to attack alone.

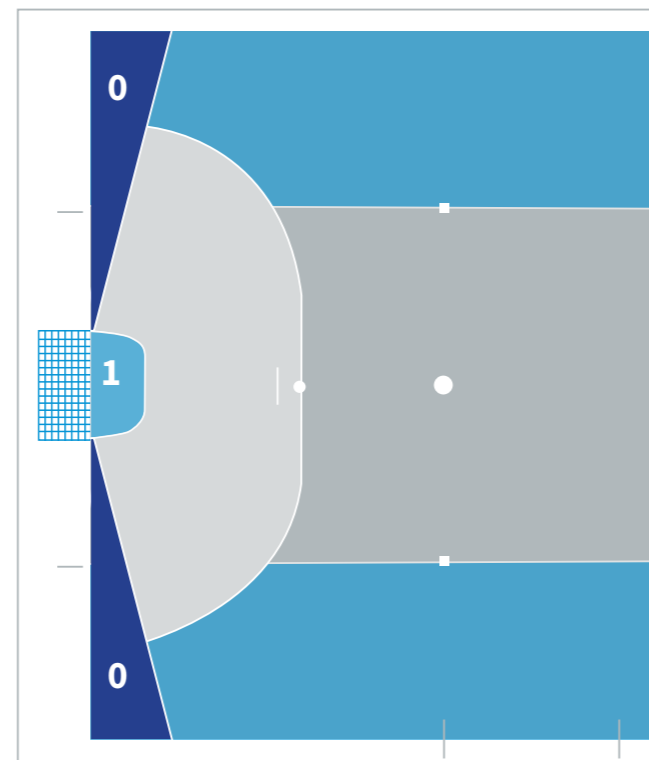
Intervention when facing a finish from a central area: In this situation, the attacker is presented with a better finishing angle (improved view of the goal and resulting placement opportunities), together with the possibility that the goalkeeper's field of vision is reduced by the presence of other attackers and defenders in motion who, in addition to obstructing or hindering the goalkeeper's visual contact with the ball, could even modify the trajectory of the shot via a deflection.



Intervention when facing a finish from a lateral area (shot directed towards the near or far post): The goalkeeper's positioning is the key success factor in this situation, and they must be agile enough to constantly adjust their position and reach the ball to deflect or catch it. Being as far away as possible from the near post, yet still being in a position to defensively cover this part of the goal is the most effective approach in this scenario.



Intervention when facing a far-post finish: The presence of an attacker at the far post increases the level of difficulty when it comes to the goalkeeper's decision-making. The goalkeeper is forced to focus their attention on the in-possession attacker while also scanning what is happening in the area opposite the ball to adopt the right position and make the relevant decisions in terms of tactical behaviour.



While the list of considerations on the right is not exhaustive, it aims to reflect some of the probabilities that require instant assessment to increase the likelihood of a successful defensive outcome.

The goalkeeper must:

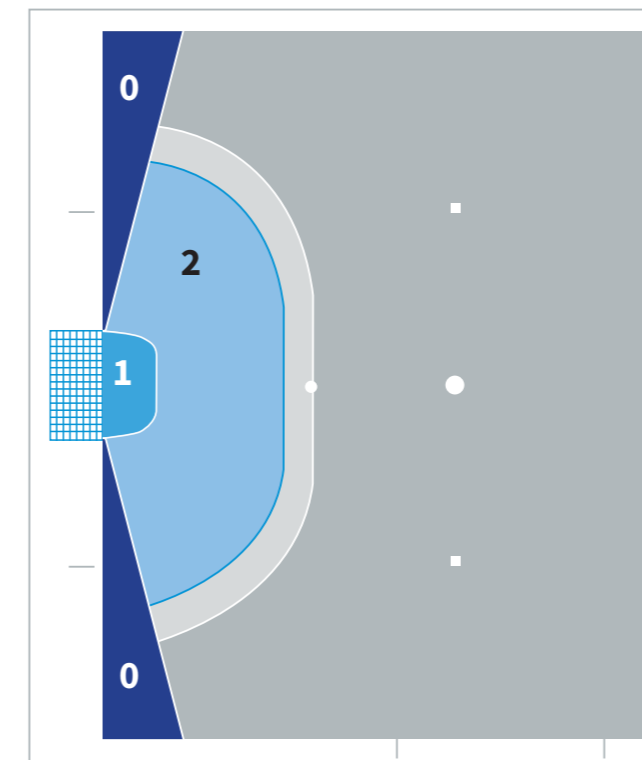
- a) read the in-possession opponent's body orientation (shot or pass);
- b) assess the in-possession opponent's intentions;
- c) determine whether there is another attacker at the far post;
- d) decide whether the additional player has an advantage over a direct opponent;
- e) evaluate the likely trajectory and speed of a pass to assess the likelihood of being able to intercept it; and
- f) determine the foot with which the attacker situated at the far post may receive the pass to adjust their movement and position when finishing on goal.

Common defensive behaviours: zone 2

The tactical behaviours most frequently adopted by the goalkeeper in zone 2 relate to the general principle of defending the penalty area. The most common game situation in this zone involves the goalkeeper reducing the distance to the ball by advancing quickly towards it along the path of the ball to the goal and not the other

lost and the opposition concluding the move. The most common scenario is when the defending team recover possession near to the opposition's goal. In this scenario, alertness is a particularly relevant facet.

Backpass and finishing: In this scenario, the attacking team manage to progress play to an area close to the goal line, and the goalkeeper is in position to receive a backpass played inside the area.



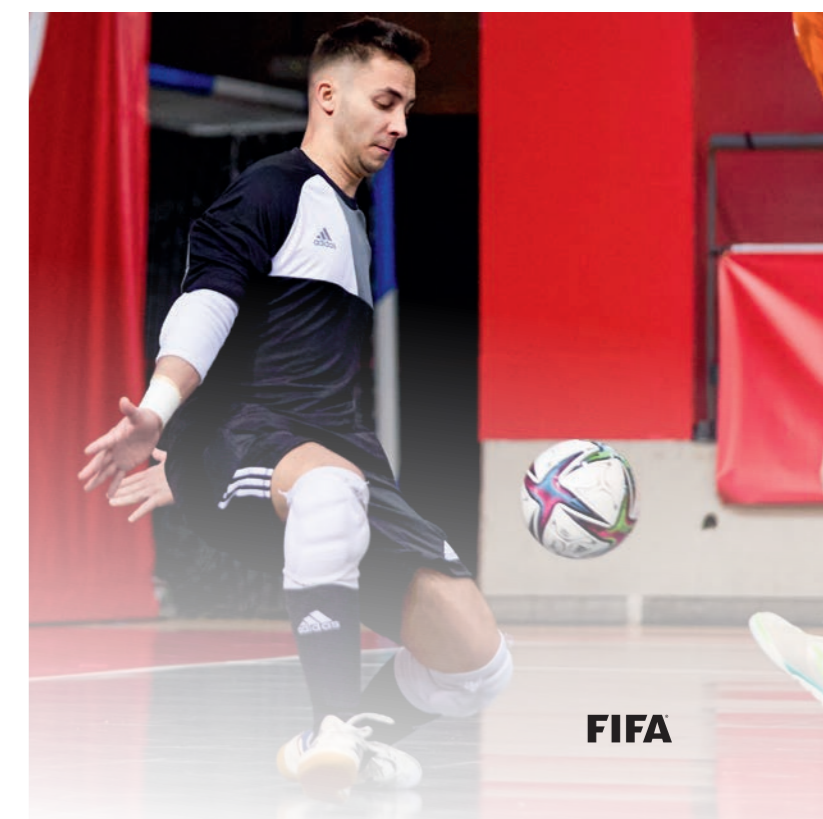
The common denominator across these situations is that the goalkeeper, who has very little time in which to react, reduces the distance between them and the ball, with the tactical intention of limiting the time and space that the attacker has in which to perform the technical action, thereby making it difficult for them to finish on goal successfully. An initial position not too far away from where the attacker performs the finish on goal, a forwards movement at the right moment, a wide body shape and a position on the bisector of the angle between the ball and the goal when contact is made with the ball are all tactical and technical behaviours that increase the effectiveness of the goalkeeper's intervention. These tactical behaviours could obviously also occur in zones other than zone 2, but if the traits that characterise these behaviours are present, these can be considered to be zone 2 behaviours.

way around (as was the case for the tactical behaviours in zone 1). The following are the game situations most frequently encountered by the goalkeeper in zone 2:

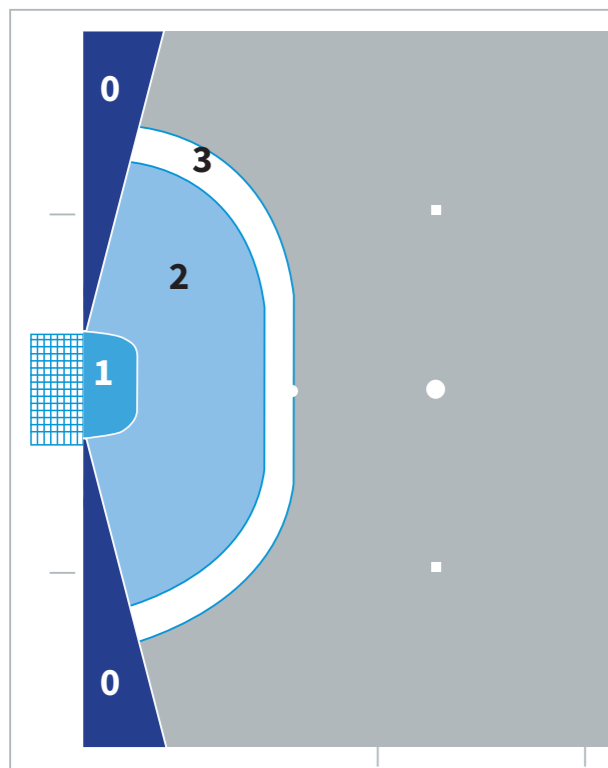
Pivot situations: The pivot receives the ball and turns to finish immediately on goal or when the pivot lays the ball off to a team-mate for them to finish on goal.

Second-time finishes: The goalkeeper fails to gather the ball in and presents the opposition with another chance to finish on goal. This category also includes situations in which the ball hits a player and runs loose inside the penalty area or very close to the edge of the penalty area.

Defensive transitions: This mainly relates to situations in which very little time elapses between possession being



Common defensive behaviours: zone 3



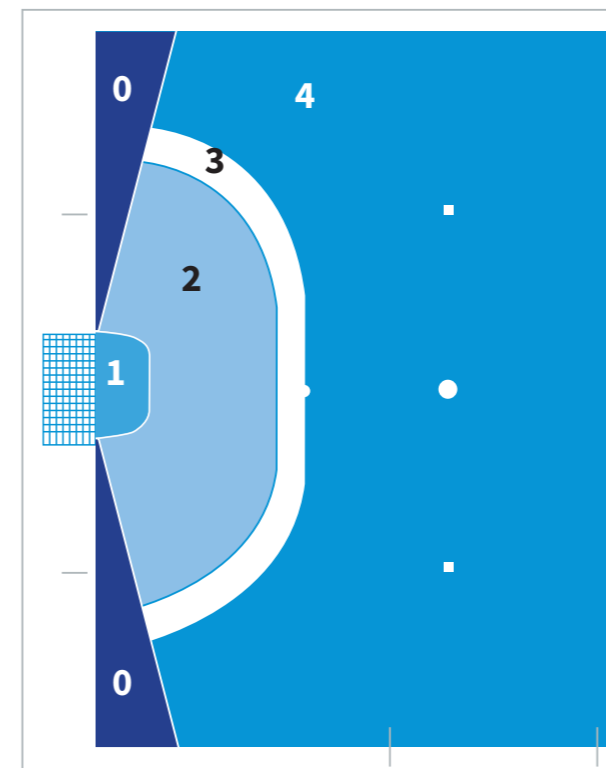
Unlike the example situations presented in zone 2, in zone 3, the goalkeeper has more time in which to intervene and therefore more time in which to consider their options. In zone 3, the goalkeeper is mainly presented with two types of situations:

Intervention against an aerial ball inside the penalty area:

An opponent sends a lofted pass towards the vicinity of the penalty area, where there would normally be opponents challenging for the ball around the goalkeeper, making it difficult for them to intervene. The main principle is to prevent an attacker from finishing on goal from within the penalty area, with the ideal outcome being for the goalkeeper to claim the ball. The goalkeeper is required to judge the ball's trajectory and speed while also displaying an awareness of the spatial adjustment required to safely gather the ball in their hands.

Intervention in situations of numerical inferiority: The goalkeeper is usually responsible for balancing a numerical and/or spatial disadvantage faced by their team when play reaches zone 3. These situations are varied and range from GKv1, GK+1v2 to GK+2v3. The coordination of tactical behaviours between the goalkeeper and their team-mates when out of possession is a key element when it comes to achieving effective interaction.

Common defensive behaviours: zone 4



Zone 4 relates to all spaces beyond the penalty area. The criterion used for this classification is based on the fact that the Futsal Laws of the Game prevent the goalkeeper from touching the ball with their hands outside the penalty area, which makes them an outfield player when outside of the penalty area. Proactive tactical intentions are required in zone 4. For example, taking actions that condition the opposition's tactical behaviour and defensive strategy – taking the initiative and not simply reacting and responding to the attacker's initiative(s). In zone 4, the goalkeeper applies, to a large extent, a defensive tactical approach in which the general principles are to regain possession and deny the opposition making progress.

The following are the two main types of situations that the goalkeeper may face in zone 4:

Intervention against a pass played in behind the last line of defence:

In this scenario, as the ball is played past the last defender at any given moment in time, the goalkeeper acts as the last defender (sweeper 'keeper) and tries to beat the attacker to the ball. Depending on the degree of their advantage, the goalkeeper's tactical behaviours range from the intention of clearing the ball away and recovering possession to immediately passing from the defensive phase to the attacking phase to start a transition. This principle is based on dissuading the opponent through their presence and forcing the ball to go out of play, thus regaining possession, or not even leaving the penalty area when they consider that they are not in a position, to reach the ball with the required advantage. The goalkeeper's presence is often enough to place mental pressure on their opponent, which may force an error, such as a misplaced pass or a miscontrol. This is a complex situation for the goalkeeper that requires adequate training to read the game appropriately, understand trajectories (of the ball, attackers and even team-mates), make effective decisions amongst all of the possible tactical behaviours and display appropriate spatial awareness and the ability to adjust.

Intervention against a lofted finish: Although the goalkeeper would normally make contact with the ball inside the penalty area in this situation, it is included in zone 4 because it presents the greatest risk to the goalkeeper on account of their advanced position from the goal line. As this type of finish is considered to be a technical action that is performed to score a goal, it should feature in goalkeeper training by including awareness as a core element of a session plan.





Set pieces can provide the in-possession team with a significant advantage in some situations and at the very least, offer the opportunity to maintain possession. This advantage is counterbalanced by an advantage for the out-of-possession team, who have an opportunity to organise a defensive structure that seeks to thwart the in-possession team. This defensive structure requires clearly defined defensive responsibilities, behaviours, actions and understanding. A defensive strategy involves both individual actions that are part of a wider collaborative effort in which triggers are understood that establish everybody's role, and collective actions that are a combination of every player's role.



In these set-piece situations, the futsal goalkeeper has a particularly significant role to play and a heightened responsibility in the defensive set-up. Each set piece has its own specific features, and no two similar situations can be considered to be identical. This is a mistake encountered in many defensive set-ups that seek to provide a one-size-fits-all approach. There are many set-piece situations within the defensive half of the pitch that pose an immediate threat on goal in which the goalkeeper must work together with team-mates with clear understanding and shared ownership (corner kicks, kick-ins and free kicks with a wall, both direct and indirect). There are other scenarios in which the goalkeeper is tasked with facing an opponent alone: ten-metre free kicks, often known as a ten-metre penalty, free kicks without a wall and penalty kicks. In addition, there are some set pieces that do not pose an immediate threat on goal, although a threat could materialise very quickly due to the size of the futsal pitch and the speed of the initial ball movement.

When considering set-piece outcomes, and specifically when analysing data and the contribution of set pieces to the overall number of goals scored, a goal must be scored within four touches (including the initial kick) of the ball in order to be considered as a goal scored from a set piece. When more than four touches are involved, a goal is considered to have been scored from open play.

Defending set pieces

Corner kicks: The futsal goalkeeper must consider the following aspects, which involve working in coordination with team-mates:

- **Initial positioning:** The goalkeeper's body orientation varies depending on whether they prioritise blocking inside passing lines or, if more forwards oriented, when defending a possible shot after the initial contact with the ball. Maintaining a position within the immediate proximity of the goal increases the likelihood of the goalkeeper responding successfully to finishes from both inside and outside of the penalty area.
- **Intervention against a finish from inside the penalty area:** It is important to delegate defensive responsibilities throughout the whole team.
- **Intervention against a finish from outside the penalty area:** When facing a shot taken from outside the penalty area, the goalkeeper must move and reposition themselves depending on where the shot is taken from. There are two main types of finishes: finishing after a short pass (usually a low finish) and finishing after a long pass (usually aerial, e.g. a volleyed shot). Each type of finish involves a different movement from the goalkeeper, as well as a different spatial relationship between the goal and their team-mates, particularly relating to the defender who is directly up against the attacker taking the shot. In both finishing contexts, the goalkeeper must maintain a balanced position that allows them to react effectively when the ball reaches them.

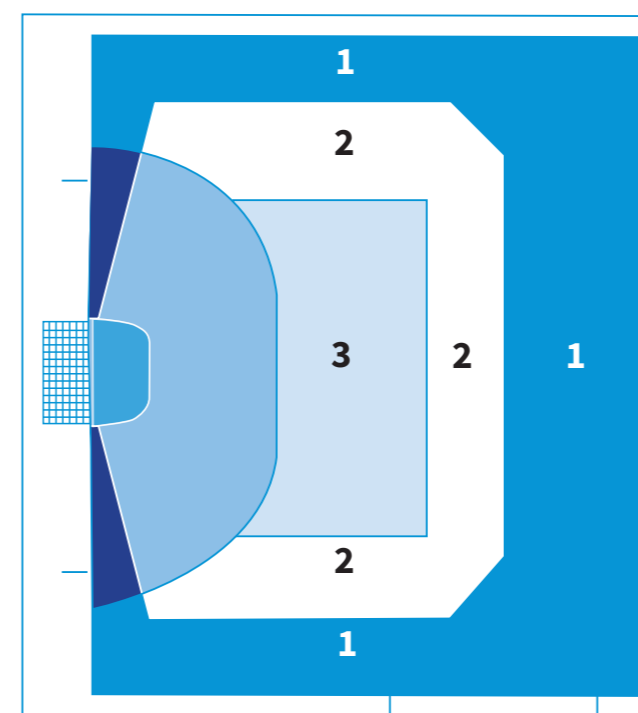


Kick-ins: The same aspects as those mentioned in relation to corner kicks are applicable but with some nuances.

- **Initial positioning:** A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick-in. Consequently, the goalkeeper is able to position themselves further away from the goal line to be able to cut off passing lines inside the penalty area.
- **Intervention against a finish from inside the penalty area:** The position of the first defender between the ball and the goal should be based on that of the goalkeeper. The first defender should not change position to close off new inside passing lines, and they should not move their inside leg to reduce the chances of deflecting the ball into their own goal.
- **Intervention against a finish from outside the penalty area:** In the context of open play, it is common for players, opponents and team-mates to be positioned between the ball and the goal line. This contextual interference can have a negative impact on the goalkeeper's field of vision, with a high probability of a shot being deflected, which impacts the trajectory of the ball.

Free kicks: The considerations relating to free kicks are impacted by the vertical and lateral position where they are taken from.

- **Setting up the wall:** The goalkeeper is responsible for organising the players that make up the wall. The goalkeeper determines the number of players (and which ones specifically) who form the wall. This is dependent on where the free kick is taken from, taking the distance from goal and angle into account. Whether the wall is straight or staggered and how each player should be positioned is a predetermined set-up. Additionally, the balance of players needs to be coordinated according to the wall set-up and the positioning of opponents. Given their status as the player most likely to have a clear view of the free kick, the goalkeeper should take the leading role. The purpose of the wall should be to defend one part of the goal, while the goalkeeper should be responsible for defending the other part of the goal. Before the kick is taken, the players in the wall should not change their position by separating from one other, turn their bodies, separate their legs or anything else that could increase the chances of their team conceding a goal.



Defending a free kick: The number of players in the wall is dependent on the position from where the free kick is taken.

- **Goalkeeper positioning and behaviour:** The position of the goalkeeper when facing a free kick is determined by the distance from the ball to the goal line and the bisection of the angle formed by the ball and the two goalposts. In pre-empting the moment when the kicker makes contact with the ball, the goalkeeper must follow similar guidelines to those previously mentioned for the wall set-up (i.e. standing with a wide frame facing the ball, without turning their body) that increase the probability of a deflection while ensuring that the wall is wide enough to create a barrier.



These same behaviours – with some nuances derived from the Futsal Laws of the Game – can also be applied to defending indirect free kicks. There are some minor differences between these two set pieces established by the Futsal Laws of the Game:

- **Direct free kick:** The kicker can score directly.
- **Indirect free kick:** The kicker cannot score directly – a player must touch the ball after the initial kick has been taken in order for the goal to be awarded.

Defending a direct free kick beginning with the sixth accumulated foul: In this situation, the goalkeeper must face the attacker taking the shot without the presence of a team-mate with whom to work. The goalkeeper may choose to adopt a series of tactical behaviours, including the following:

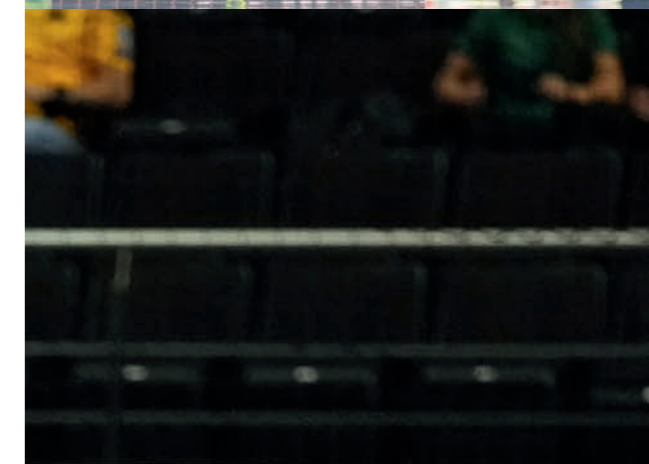
- **Starting position:** The goalkeeper chooses a position before the shot is taken. This can be deep (up to three metres from the goal line) or advanced (between three and five metres from the goal line).
- **Movements and feints:** This relates to all of the actions that the goalkeeper may carry out moments before the attacker kicks the ball to create doubt and cause them to make a mistake. There are two options in terms of movement: movement from back to front and movement from front to back.
- **Scanning the attacker's body language:** This relates to those stimuli concerning the body shape and positioning of the free-kick taker that the goalkeeper may predict and interpret in an attempt to anticipate their actions.

These same behaviours could also be applied when defending a free kick without a wall (specifically in a Direct Free Kick from The Sixth Accumulated Foul (DFKSAF) scenario) from a position other than the ten-metre mark. In this situation, the kicker may choose to take the DFKSAF either on the ten-metre mark or from where the foul was committed.

Penalty kick: In this instance, this considers a kick taken from the six-metre penalty mark. Given the distance from the goal line, the goalkeeper has less time to react, and the approach adopted in relation to the ball and the kicker's body language should therefore focus on other behaviours that occur before and during the attacker's run-up to the ball. The goalkeeper's behaviour should be determined by the following:

- **Reading of the kicker's body language on approach:** distance from the ball, speed of approach, angle of approach to the ball, etc.
- **Reading of the kicker's body language when the ball is struck:** similar behaviours to those in the ten-metre shot defence situation, but with less time to read the kicker's body language and react accordingly
- **Goalkeeper's motor behaviour (starting position and resulting action):** As a general guideline, adopting a body shape as large as possible with strong upright posture increases the likelihood of success for the goalkeeper, even if only mentally. In terms of motor behaviour, the goalkeeper can choose to stay on the goal line in the centre of the goal or they can move to the left or right. This lateral displacement results in the goalkeeper having to make a choice in terms of their shape. They could remain upright in the form of a column/pillar to cover all areas of the goal from the floor to the crossbar. Alternatively, they could perform an X-split or make a cross shape to cover more of the width (but less height), covering more of the lower and middle areas but leaving the high areas of the goal unprotected.

The defence of set-piece situations has become more significant to match results, and it is therefore important to ensure that the goalkeeper is capable of adapting effectively to these scenarios. The constant use of traditional futsal set pieces that are decades old in concept is still seen across the game, yet they continue to prove a key component in achieving successful results. This is the case because teams do not fully understand how to defend against them. A typical example is the lofted corner to the far post for a volleyed strike, but when the defending team shut off passing lines to intercept the initial lofted pass and put immediate pressure on the receiver as the ball travels it makes things more difficult for the in-possession team.





Technique is understood as the technical actions that the goalkeeper performs to deal with a specific in-game situation. The technique adopted is the tool applied by the goalkeeper to deploy the tactical intention that the game demands at that particular moment in time.

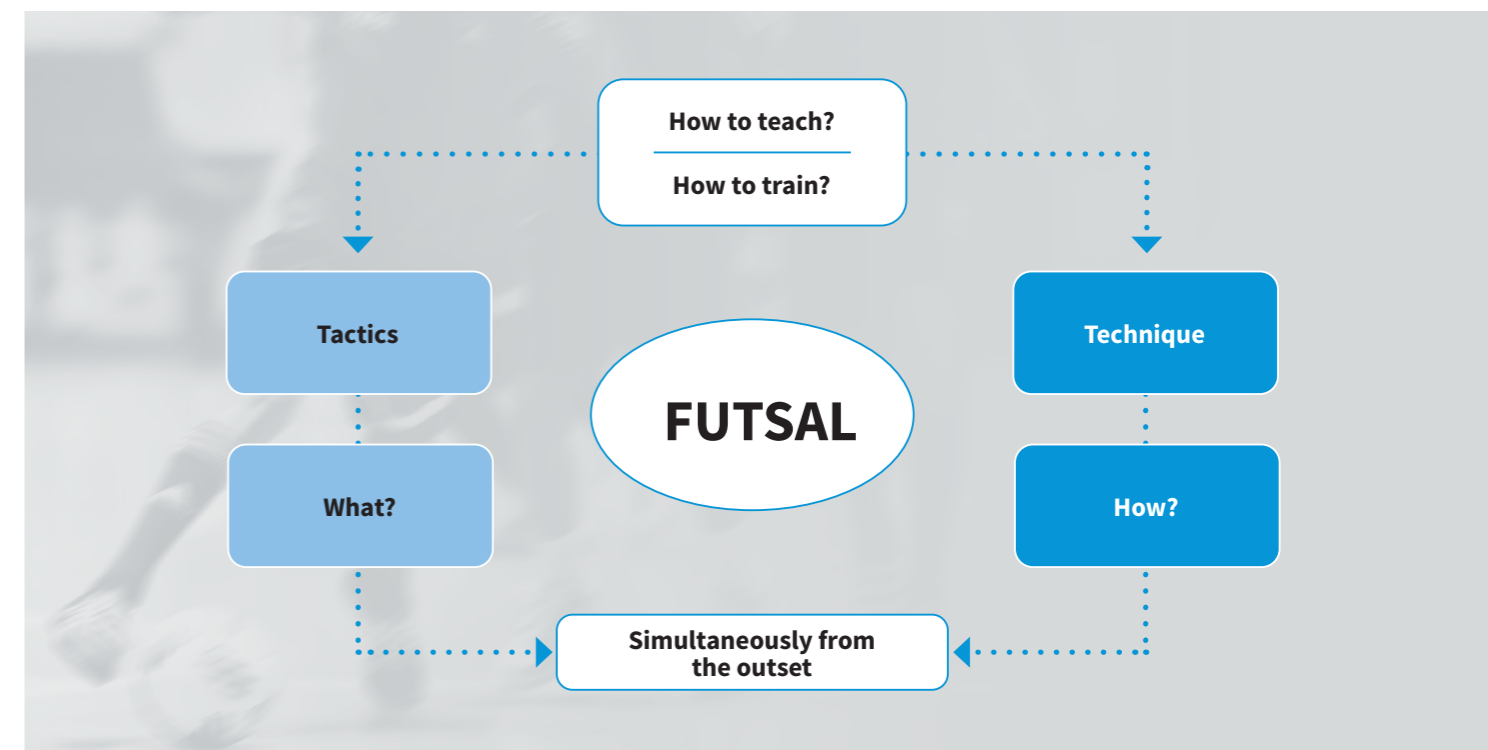
Technique in a sport that involves a dynamic environment must be easily adaptable to the ever-changing circumstances of the game, so it should not be considered as a standard technique that all goalkeepers should perform in the same way.

Two types of technique can be considered. Firstly, basic technique, which provides the goalkeeper with a foundation that allows them to participate and develop in the game. Then there is variable technique, which the goalkeeper uses in a changing game situation. This can be adjusted to the specific needs of each situation.

Basic technique: The goalkeeper should acquire technical foundations during the developing player phase.

Variable technique: The development of basic technique that the goalkeeper applies to changing game situations in which variability is high.

Basic technique should be acquired during the developing player phase (6-12 years), and it is important to ensure that this learning is game-related. It is worth highlighting that the goalkeeper learns best through training in game play, in which the performance of the technical action is linked to the tactical intent. It is essential that the goalkeeper learn from the outset that each technical action contributes to a tactical objective. The skill lies in selecting the appropriate technical action to suit the tactical intervention at any given time.



The goalkeeper is the only player who can touch the ball with their hands inside the penalty area. When in possession, the goalkeeper may use the same technical tools as the outfield players and may keep possession of the ball for a maximum of four seconds inside their own half of the pitch. There is no such time constraint when the goalkeeper is in possession inside the opposition's half.

It is important to understand all of these actions when it comes to designing goalkeeper training activities. The Futsal Laws of the Game act as an established set of rules that represent definitive limitations. However, within those limitations, coaching constraints should be applied to encourage players to devise ways to find various solutions to succeed.

A goalkeeper can perform the following attacking technical actions:

Control: A technical action that consists of dominating the ball and preparing for the next technical action. Control is a technical action that is performed when receiving a pass from a team-mate or intercepting a pass played by an opponent. In this case, the player acts as the passer and the goalkeeper occupies the role of the receiver.

Control can be classified based on various criteria. From the perspective of an opponent, it should consider this to simply be referred to as an interception, whether the pass was misplaced by the opponent or carefully anticipated by the goalkeeper.

The available space and time, the ball trajectory, their body shape and proximity to the passer determines the type of control performed by the goalkeeper. The stop involves the ball coming to a complete halt upon initial contact with the body, and good balance is required to perform the technical action. It is used in a variety of situations, generally those in which an opponent is far away and unable to apply pressure on the goalkeeper. However, a confident, competent goalkeeper may perform this action near to an opponent in an effort to draw them in, in readiness to receive and shift the ball. Choosing to perform this action is dependent on technical competence, the speed of the incoming pass, spatial constraints, the position and movement of the nearest opponent, and the goalkeeper's position at the point of initial contact.



TYPES OF CONTROL

Basic	Stop	The control serves to bring the ball to a complete halt.
	Semi-stop	The control does not serve to bring the ball to a complete halt.
	Cushioning	The control serves to slow the ball down without altering its trajectory.
Dynamic	Oriented	The control serves to prepare the next technical action.
Contact surface	Inside of the foot	The initial contact with the ball is made with the inside of the foot.
	Outside of the foot	The initial contact with the ball is made with the outside of the foot.
	Sole	The initial contact with the ball is made with the sole of the foot.
	Other body parts	The initial contact with the ball is made with the thigh, chest, head, etc.

The semi-stop describes when the ball is not brought to a complete halt but continues to roll after the initial control. This type of control is likely to be deployed when the trajectory or power of the ball reaching the goalkeeper makes it difficult for them to perform a safer type of control or when the ball is played to the goalkeeper's weak foot. This type of control is more likely to be deployed when the ball is off the floor or slightly away from the goalkeeper's position.


Cushioning involves a soft initial contact to slow the pace of the ball without altering its trajectory in readiness to play the next pass.

An oriented control is a type of control that is safe, pre-emptive and facilitates the goalkeeper's next action. Oriented control requires good reading of the game and understanding of the next pass to be played before the ball has been received – using forward-thinking and vision. The goalkeeper chooses where to direct the ball when controlling it, depending on the circumstances, i.e. the action to be carried out next and the position of the nearest opponent(s). When performing an oriented control, the initial contact with the ball may enable the goalkeeper to shift it away from an opponent when the goalkeeper has the advantage in terms of balance and reactivity compared to the pace and direction of an advancing opponent. Importantly, oriented control is the basis for the next passing action, which has already been pre-empted.

It is essential that the goalkeeper master the technical action of control to minimise errors in the form of the

loss of possession, particularly in the modern, evolving game, given the number of ball contacts recorded by the goalkeeper during a match. The significance of the goalkeeper in the context of team play should not be underestimated. This is particularly relevant during the developing player phase, when being asked to play as a goalkeeper is often seen as derogatory to young players' status, ability and physical attributes. The reality could not be any further removed from this misperception, with the goalkeeper playing a fundamental part in restarting play. Consequently, almost all of a team's attacking actions stem from the initial involvement of the goalkeeper. A team are unlikely to be successful unless their goalkeeper can control the ball to play a pass, distribute play using their hands or feet, read the game and understand how a team-mate is best positioned to receive the ball and at what pace, trajectory and position on the pitch relative to other team-mates and opponents. This is a vital concept when it comes to developing futsal players during the developing player phase, so much so that every player should experience the role of the goalkeeper. Every player must also experience each playing position from the earliest age possible. This is the only means to develop a well-rounded player who is accustomed to the challenges of every position and importantly, for a goalkeeper, to ensure that they do not simply end up in the position due to other forces influencing them at a young age. After all, a player under nine years of age has no comprehension of what their best position is or their capabilities, but adults and parents often seem to dictate which role a young person should play in a team.

Dribbling: A technical action that consists of moving the ball by means of consecutive touches without losing control of it when travelling at speed into open, unopposed space.

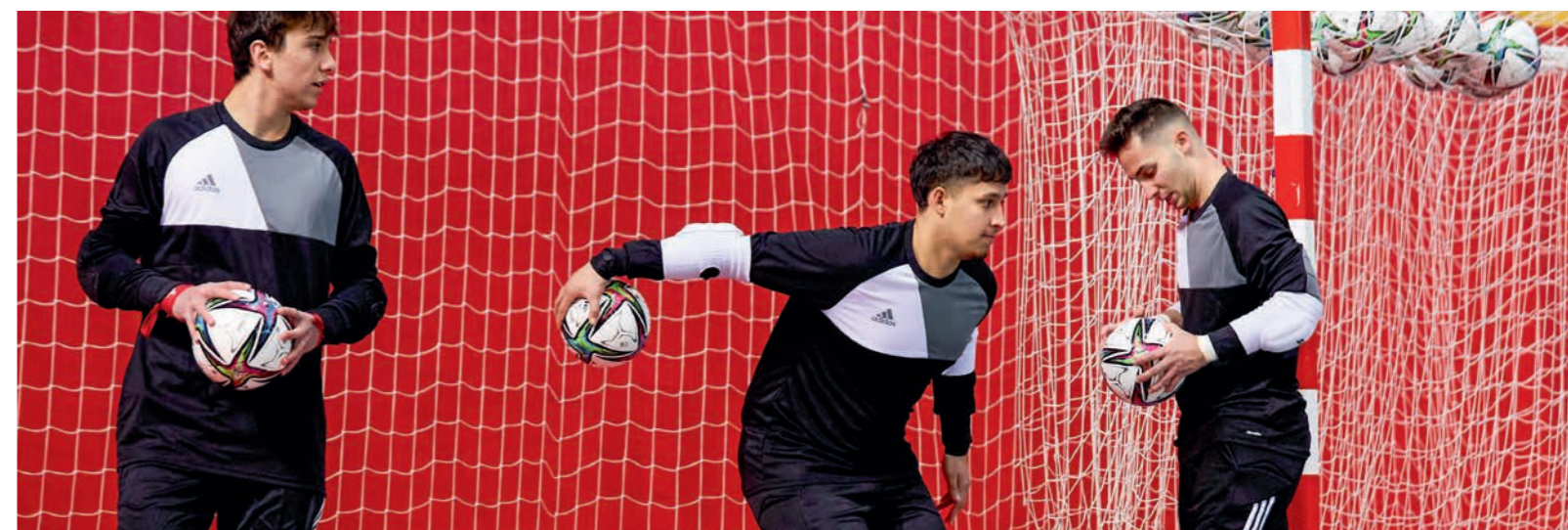


TYPES OF DRIBBLING		
Tactical intention	Possession	The intention is to retain possession of or to protect the ball.
	Progression	The intention is to progress the ball away from the ball carrier's goal.
	Finishing	The intention is to progress play towards the opposition's goal.
Contact surface	Inside of the foot	The ball is dribbled using the inside of the foot.
	Outside of the foot	The ball is dribbled using the outside of the foot.
	Sole	The ball is dribbled using the sole of the foot.

A goalkeeper adopts the principles of dribbling to move the ball from areas of the pitch closer to their goal line to those closer to the opposing team's goal when there is open space to do so. On some occasions, the tactical intention of dribbling may only be to progress a short distance before the goalkeeper passes the ball to a team-mate. In other cases in which this technical action is implemented, the goalkeeper may continue to progress with the ball into areas where a shot on the opposition's goal becomes a possibility. In this case, the goalkeeper combines the collaborative technical actions of dribbling, passing and/or shooting. A mistake whilst dribbling that leads to a loss of possession could pose a considerable threat, as the goalkeeper leaves their goal more exposed by performing this action. The training of this type of situation is becoming more necessary as evidence suggests that dribbling is one of the technical actions increasingly used by goalkeepers in modern-day futsal. Exposing the goalkeeper to these situations, in which opponents in close proximity put pressure on them and cut off passing lines, allows for the game scenario in which this technical action occurs to be reproduced.



Passing: A technical action that consists of circulating the ball between team-mates with the objective of providing continuity in the attacking phase of play. For the purposes of what follows, the goalkeeper is the passer and a team-mate is the receiver.



TYPES OF PASS		
Touch to control	No touch to control	The pass is played one-touch/first-time.
	With touch to control	The pass is played after at least one touch.
Body part	Hand	The pass is played using the hand(s).
	Foot	The pass is played using the foot.
	Other body part	The pass is played using a different body part (e.g. the head).
Foot surface	Inside of the foot	The pass is played using the inside of the foot.
	Outside of the foot	The pass is played using the outside of the foot.
	Instep	The pass is played using the inside of the instep.
Distance	Short	The passing distance is below ten metres.
	Medium	The passing distance is between ten and 25 metres.
	Long	The passing distance is above 25 metres.
Tactical intention	Possession	The intention is to retain possession/develop the attack.
	Progression	The intention is to progress play towards the opposition's goal.
	Finishing	The intention is for the move to be finished by a team-mate.
Technical action	Underarm bowl	The ball is thrown at a height below the goalkeeper's knees.
	Hip	The ball is thrown at a medium height (between the goalkeeper's knees and shoulders).
	Shoulder	The ball is thrown at a height around the goalkeeper's shoulders.
	Javelin/overarm throw	The ball is thrown at a height above the goalkeeper's shoulders.
	Others	Two-handed, throw-in, chest pass, spoon, etc.

The ball can be distributed:

- a) with the feet (passing); or
- b) with the hands (throwing).

On this basis, we can establish the following categories of pass:

The first-time pass does not involve any touch to control the ball. The goalkeeper is advised to play this pass when they come under immediate pressure from an opponent, which reduces the time and space in which to react, with a first-time pass serving to counter this immediate pressure. The technical action of passing without taking a touch to control the ball is quicker than the control-and-pass sequence, but it is more challenging to execute. Taking a touch to control the ball before playing a pass allows the subsequent pass to be played with greater accuracy. In addition, it provides the goalkeeper with the time to scan and consider their options, as well as allowing more time for possible receivers to position themselves appropriately to create safe passing lines to receive the ball in a better position.

A safe pass can be defined as one that is played over a short distance, along the floor and that does not go beyond defensive lines. It is usually associated with the tactical intention of retaining possession of the ball.

By playing a lofted pass, a goalkeeper can break through defensive lines towards the opposition's goal. As for a medium-distance pass, the goalkeeper can play both low and lofted passes when the tactical intention is to progress play towards the opposition's goal.

Conversely, a long pass, which usually takes the form of an aerial pass played by the goalkeeper to areas close to the opposition's goal, may involve the tactical intention of making a clearance but could be intended to set a team-mate up to finish on goal or to start an attacking phase.



Distribution using the hands

The additional option of using the hands that is available to the goalkeeper serves to enhance the flexibility of distribution, primarily when it comes to initiating an attacking phase of play.

In what follows, we consider the various throwing techniques and the situations in which each may be deployed in game play.

The underarm bowl is used as a safe passing option because of the ease of achieving good accuracy, although it does still require mastery through practice. It is usually associated with the tactical intention of retaining possession. This throwing technique is characterised by the low height at which the ball is released from the goalkeeper's hands, as well as their position – with the palm facing upwards when the ball is released. The goalkeeper adopts a low, crouched body position in readiness to release the ball. The trajectory of the ball is descending to make contact with the floor, ideally without bouncing so that it can be easily controlled by the receiver, who is positioned a short or medium distance from the goalkeeper. This distribution technique makes it easier for the receiver to control the ball and perform the next technical action, with the goalkeeper's intention being to make it as simple as possible for their team-mate to control the ball and play the next pass. In all throwing actions, the goalkeeper's skill set is therefore intrinsic to the success of the progression of play.

The hip throw is a more upright throw, with the goalkeeper's palm positioned perpendicular to the floor when the ball is released. The trajectory of the ball in this type of throw could initially be ascending or descending, although it is more common for it to follow a descending trajectory to make it easier for the receiver to control. This type of throw may be used when the goalkeeper aims to play the ball further without compromising on accuracy.

The shoulder throw is characterised by the fact that it is released around the height of the goalkeeper's shoulder. The palm of the hand faces downwards upon releasing the ball, and the ball trajectory is normally high and flat in its initial stages, although it could also be downwards. This type of pass is used when the objective is to break through defensive lines by playing an aerial pass to a team-mate who is progressing towards the opposition's goal or who already occupies a position deep in the opposition's half. This type of throw could feature in the context of an attacking transition and is linked to the intention of counter-attacking by taking advantage of the team having regained possession. The shoulder throw can catch the opposition by surprise, progress play quickly up the pitch, and it offers a direct initial pass, which are the key hallmarks of a counter-attack.



The overarm throw is characterised by the goalkeeper releasing the ball at a height above their shoulder, with their hand pointed diagonally upwards when releasing the ball. The initial trajectory of the ball is ascending. This type of throw is used to play a long aerial pass to a team-mate to overcome defensive lines and play the ball into deep areas.



Of course, there are other types of throws, although those included in this coaching manual are the most common and act as a starting point to develop technical competence, with variations derived from this core skill set. The modifications and adaptations that goalkeepers develop through exposure to practice and game play demonstrate that the technical possibilities are extensive but reliant on the mastery of key skills. Consequently, the coach's role is to facilitate this development by providing experiential learning opportunities. Practice should therefore not limit the developing player but enable creativity. A number of other possible variants can be used, such as two-handed throws or throw-ins (executed from behind the head), the chest throw, which is also performed using both hands and allows for quicker execution than if it were performed with one hand, or the spoon throw, which usually involves a bowling feint before the trajectory of the ball is raised to break through defensive lines by means of a lofted pass. All of these throws demand good grip, based on the correct adaptation of the hand to the ball to ensure the accuracy of the throw.

As noted in other sections of this coaching manual, passing is a key element of the game that enables two players to connect. Body orientation, movement, eye contact, positioning and offering a receiving side are other principles that serve to connect players. Passing is the first step in the shift from individual to collective play, requiring an interaction between the passer and receiver, with a series of aspects being key to its effectiveness. The whole team must then also consider (both individually and collectively) the receiver's body orientation, the distance between the receiver and the closest opponent(s), the area of the pitch where the pass is received, the defensive lines broken, spatial and numerical advantages, and the subsequent movement and positioning of the player who played the pass. It is therefore important to ensure that practice takes place in realistic contexts that allow players to explore and experiment without the fear of failure. Players should be allowed to gauge the trajectory and power of the throw or pass and not simply practise with static or moving objects. The randomness of game play must be recreated in practice to explore a range of learning and experimental opportunities.

Shooting: a technical action that involves directing the ball towards the opposition's goal with a view to scoring a goal.

When an attacker is deciding which shooting technique to use, certain circumstances, e.g. the distance from the opposition's goal, encourage them to opt for the most appropriate contact surface. The inside of the foot is used for shots when the attacker seeks to score from long range, while the inside of the instep is used for shots requiring accuracy that are taken close to the opposition's goal, and the toe is used when the aim is to prioritise power at the expense of accuracy. All of these options could be considered to be typical contact surfaces when shooting on goal.

TYPES OF SHOT		
Position of ball	Along the floor	The ball is on the floor when contact is made.
	Half-volley	The ball is on an upward trajectory immediately after it touches the floor.
	Volley	The ball is in the air after being released by the goalkeeper.
Contact surface	Inside of the foot	Contact is made with the inside of the foot.
	Toes	Contact is made with the toes.
	All of the instep	Contact is made with the whole of the instep of the foot.
	Inside of the instep	Contact is made with the inside of the instep.



Feinting: a technical action that involves deceiving an opponent with a single (or combination of) directional body actions or movements in an attempt to indicate that the player may move in one direction before going in another.

When in possession, any deceptive body movement/action performed by the goalkeeper to attempt to confuse an opponent and gain an advantage can be described as a feint. This could be a feint to make a pass or a feint to move, with the intention of the feint being to unbalance the opponent with a view to creating space or relieving pressure. The objective of the action, as is the case when performed by an outfield player, is to make the opponent believe that the goalkeeper will send the ball in a specific direction or at a certain moment, but to ultimately execute it in another direction or at another moment. The ball may or may not be involved in the feint – it could simply concern footwork, body movement or even a mere glance in one direction, but in all cases, the intention is to deceive the opponent.



9.1 Prior to direct intervention

The goalkeeper spends a considerable amount of time during each game or training session out of possession, either as an individual or as a member of a wider team. It is this lack of involvement that requires the application of vital psychological engagement in readiness for regaining possession or involvement in defensive actions.

The action performed by the goalkeeper, one of the out-of-possession players who is essential to the player in possession or as a core part of the collective defensive action, is key.

The set/ready position involves three components (position, orientation and posture):

Position: This relates to where the goalkeeper is located on the pitch. Their position has a direct relationship to the ball, the opponents and the goal being defended. The goalkeeper's position can be broken down into the following two categories:

Vertical (distance from the goal line): The goalkeeper must gauge the distance from the goal line to the ball and ensure that, in view of the small size of the pitch, they cannot be lobbed or chipped.

Horizontal: The bisector is an imaginary line between the ball and the goal that places the goalkeeper in a central position. By adopting this position, the goalkeeper places the decision-making firmly with the attacker, as attempts to both the near and far posts involve an equal level of risk. Taking up a position outside the bisector makes it more difficult for the goalkeeper to react when the ball reaches the goal.



Orientation: Adopting the correct body orientation allows the goalkeeper to better perceive what is happening by increasing their field of vision, which ultimately enables them to intervene more effectively. The references that should help the goalkeeper to orientate themselves are mainly the goal and the position of the ball. Avoiding body orientations that involve the player turning their back to the ball should be a priority both in training and competition scenarios. The goalkeeper is often the only player who has a clear view of everything that is going on (the ball and players), unless the ball is close to the goal and in wide positions.

Posture: Maintaining a balanced posture facilitates responsive reactions and increases the chances of effective intervention. The set position should include the following characteristics:

- **Head:** upright, steady and enables the game to be observed
- **Torso:** upright or slightly crouched relative to the vertical position of the ball, leaning slightly forwards
- **Arms:** semi-flexed and separated from the body
- **Hands:** at medium height, open and with palms facing the ball
- **Legs:** semi-flexed, weight transferred slightly forwards and apart from one another
- **Feet:** resting on their most distal part, i.e. the toe area

Adopting a good set position increases the goalkeeper's chances of success when they are called into action. The goalkeeper can adapt the set position to the circumstances of the game and their own technical characteristics. Each goalkeeper can adjust elements of the set position based on what they feel more comfortable with – position of the hands, higher or lower body posture, bigger or smaller gap between legs, etc. Coaches should be flexible in their approach so as to encourage variants of the set position (through trial and error, guided discovery or general experimentation), as it is through such experimentation that the goalkeeper discovers whether such actions may be detrimental to success. This is to be encouraged in training scenarios.

When defending their goal, the goalkeeper should maintain the set position until the moment of intervention, keeping their feet symmetrically positioned and in contact with the floor with good body balance in relation to posture. Prematurely executing a shape that disrupts the set position could reduce the effectiveness of the goalkeeper's response by meaning that they are not in a sufficiently balanced posture when making contact with the ball. In a situation in which they are defending space, whether inside or outside the penalty area, maintaining the set position until immediately before starting the movement to approach the ball may allow the goalkeeper to intervene more quickly with a better chance of reacting well to any change in the circumstances of the game.

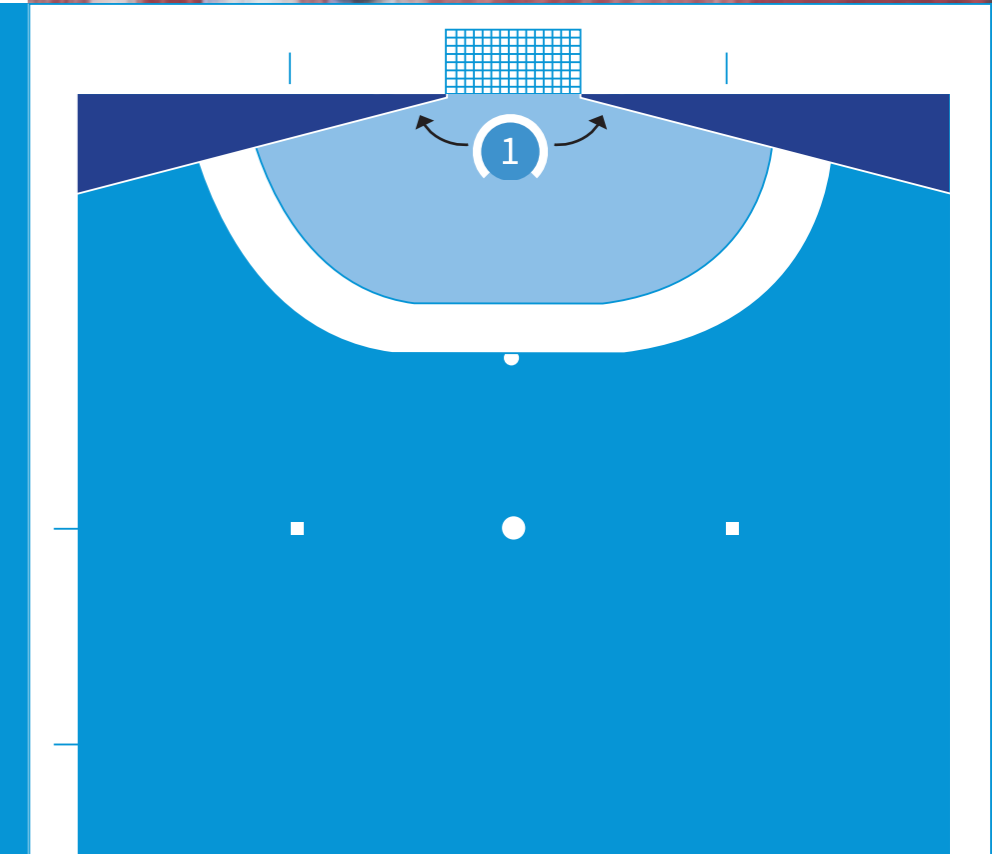


9.2 Set position

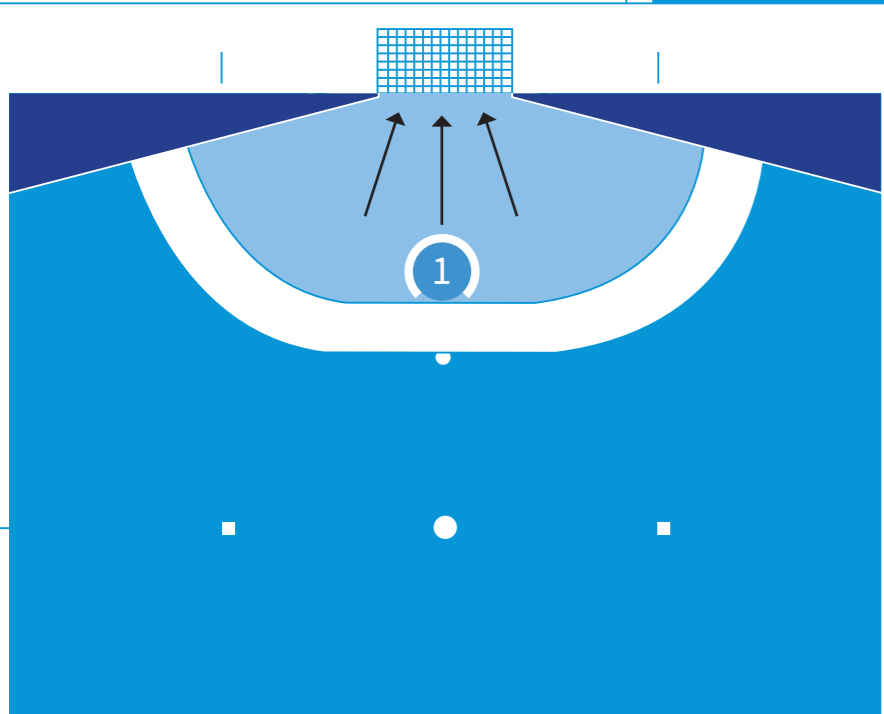
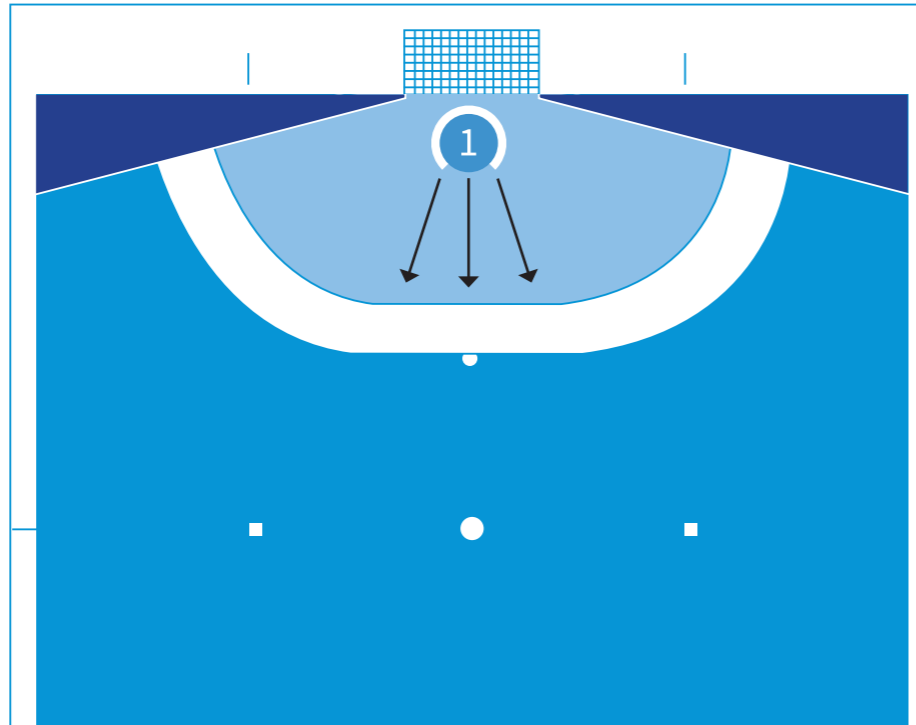
Movement: This involves the action of moving from one point to another in order to carry out any subsequent intervention in an efficient manner. Movement allows the goalkeeper to constantly reposition themselves in relation to the changing position of the ball and attacking players. There are several types of movement, which are laid out below.



Lateral: This is one of the most common movements in zone 1, which are performed between the goalposts and within an arc shape (see diagram to the right). In this type of movement, the goalkeeper does not cross their feet. To change the direction of the movement, the goalkeeper should lift their foot on the side of the direction in which they wish to move while pushing off with the other foot. The goalkeeper also performs lateral movements in areas further away from the goal line.



Forwards: This may be the fastest directional movement. The goalkeeper performs this movement to reduce the distance between themselves and the ball, which serves to reduce the finishing angle available to the attacker and the opponent's reaction time. There is also a chance that the goalkeeper may reach the ball before the attacker. Within a forwards movement, there is also a differentiation between frontward and diagonal movement that determines the angle of approach to the ball.



Backwards/retreat (“dropping back”): goalkeeper is initially positioned away from the goal line and then moves back towards it. An important technical element is that the goalkeeper should not lose visual contact with the ball at any time during the movement.

All of the actions that are performed prior to the goalkeeper coming into contact with the ball contribute towards the success of the subsequent action. An error in positioning or the set position reduces the chances of success of any subsequent actions, while correct positioning, efficient movement or an appropriate starting position benefit the intervention.

The actions performed prior to coming into contact with the ball can be considered to be basic goalkeeping foundations, which exemplifies their importance in the training provision across all of the development phases. Mastering these actions is an essential requirement in becoming an efficient goalkeeper, so they should be incorporated into the planning of every training session, regardless of the task being performed.

9.3 Contact with the ball

Catching (save and gather): “A technical action that involves catching and retaining possession of the ball. The goalkeeper stops the ball from entering the goal by gaining control of it.” [FIFA Training Centre](#)



TYPES OF CATCH		
Number of actions	One action	The goalkeeper catches the ball in a single action.
	Two actions: deflect and retain/deflect and catch	The goalkeeper catches the ball in more than one action.
Dive	No dive	The goalkeeper catches the ball in a standing, upright position.
	Dive	The goalkeeper smothers the ball on the floor.
Height	Rolling ball	The ball rolls along the floor towards the goalkeeper.
	Low height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper no higher than knee height.
	Medium height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper between knee and shoulder height.
	Overhead	The ball reaches the goalkeeper above shoulder height.

Defensive feints: these are defined as the actions performed that aim to confuse an opponent when the goalkeeper is in the defensive phase, regardless of the trajectory of the ball. Their effectiveness lies in their application in situations of numerical inferiority (mainly in 1vGK or 2vGK) and in defensive set-piece situations (defending penalty kicks, ten-metre shots or direct free kicks without a wall). The effectiveness of the feints can be assessed on the basis of whether the goalkeeper manages to buy some time against the opponent or delay or cause confusion around the decision-making process.

Catching may occur in combination with different body/posture shapes. When performed correctly, catching serves to secure possession of the ball. Catching the ball allows the goalkeeper to maintain possession or recover the ball, which provides game continuity by switching from the defensive phase to the attacking phase. The goalkeeper is responsible for initiating the attacking transition or attacking phase by linking this possession with the technical action of an opening pass by throwing the ball. It is important for the coach to consider this element of the game in the practical approach adopted when designing training sessions.

The correct decision between choosing to catch the ball or performing another technical action, such as a punch or push or clearance, is required for the goalkeeper to be effective in such a situation. An error either in the decision-making of the technical action to be performed or the technical execution itself will reduce the goalkeeper’s chances of success.

When catching the ball, placing the body behind the hands when blocking aids the defence of the goal in the event of a missed catch by creating an additional obstacle between the ball and the goal line.

The positioning of the arms, hands and fingers is also of specific relevance. It is a technical action in its own right used to receive the ball, cushioning its speed to make it easier to catch.

Catching a futsal ball is difficult because many shots are taken from close range, which means that the ball reaches the goalkeeper at high speed. This, along with the effect of a ball with minimal bounce, requires a specific technical approach and awareness.

Deflection (save and deflect): “A technical action that involves intercepting and modifying the trajectory of the ball without retaining possession. The goalkeeper attempts to stop the ball from entering the goal by deflecting it without retaining possession of the ball.”
[FIFA Training Centre](#)

As is the case with catching, deflection can involve various posture shapes. Deflecting the ball towards lateral areas of the pitch reduces the risk of having to deal with another shot. If the ball remains inside the penalty area and near to the goal line after being deflected by the goalkeeper, it significantly increases the chances of presenting the opponent with another opportunity to finish on goal. The goalkeeper must be alert and agile to remain prepared to respond to another possible intervention following the deflection.

A deflection is a defensive technical action commonly used by the goalkeeper in competitive scenarios. In this technical action, the goalkeeper reacts to a ball that reaches them. At most, they can move slightly forwards in an effort to reduce the angle that the attacker has to finish into and are able to choose which body part to make the deflection with. However, this depends on the time available in which to react, the trajectory of the shot and the pace of the ball. A well-executed deflection can sometimes be more effective than a poorly executed catch, although as a technical action, a deflection is always considered as the second-best option, behind a catch.

Clearance: When the goalkeeper strikes the ball away from the goal that they are defending. It is the goalkeeper who approaches the ball to clear it away from the goal line.

TYPES OF DEFLECTION		
Body part	Hand(s)	The goalkeeper uses their hand(s) to deflect the ball.
	Foot (or another body part)	The goalkeeper uses their foot (or another body part, such as leg, arm, head) to deflect the ball.
Dive	No dive	The goalkeeper deflects the ball while standing upright.
	Dive	The goalkeeper deflects the ball from a position on the floor.
Height	Rolling ball	The ball rolls along the floor towards the goalkeeper.
	Low height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper no higher than knee height.
	Medium height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper at between knee and shoulder height.
	Maximum height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper above shoulder height.



TYPES OF CLEARANCE		
Body part	Hand(s) (palm, finger or fist)	The goalkeeper uses their hand(s) to clear the ball.
	Foot	The goalkeeper uses their foot (or other body part, such as leg, arm, head) to clear the ball.
	Head	The goalkeeper uses their head to clear the ball.
	Another body part	The goalkeeper uses their thigh, knee, chest, head, etc. to clear the ball.
Area of pitch	Inside the penalty area	The goalkeeper makes contact with the ball inside the penalty area.
	Outside the penalty area	The goalkeeper makes contact with the ball outside the penalty area.
Height	Rolling ball	The ball rolls along the floor towards the goalkeeper.
	Low height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper no higher than knee height.
	Medium height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper at between knee and shoulder height.
	Maximum height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper above shoulder height.

A clearance may be made inside the penalty area, where the goalkeeper can use any part of their body, including their hands, or outside the penalty area, where the goalkeeper takes on the role of an outfield player and consequently can only use those parts of their body permitted by the Futsal Laws of the Game. The goalkeeper clears the ball in difficult situations in which they are not sure whether they can catch or control it. The goalkeeper frequently has choices, often between clearing for safety or other options, such as, but not limited to, catching the ball if it is inside the penalty area, controlling the ball before playing a pass (whether inside or outside the penalty area), and feinting contact with the ball, protecting it through their body shape and positioning, or allowing it to leave the pitch to regain possession or even dissuading the closest opponent to compete for the ball. The success of the intervention is dependent on the goalkeeper’s decision-making.

The direction or orientation that the goalkeeper applies to a clearance determines the effectiveness of the chosen technical action. A clearance with a trajectory towards an inside area of the pitch risks the ball reaching an opponent in error, which may present the opponent with another chance to finish on goal. This may also pose the added threat of the goal being exposed due to the absence of the goalkeeper from the goal line. Meanwhile, kicking the ball out of play to surrender possession whilst ensuring that the cleared ball does not contact the body of a team-mate or an opponent are aspects to consider when choosing a technical action.

The clearance is a technical tool that usually takes place in zones 3 and 4. This technical action enables the goalkeeper to intervene to prevent the ball from reaching the vicinity of the goal, provided that the circumstances of the game do not offer the opportunity to safely catch the ball (when inside the penalty area) or provide game continuity by controlling the ball and passing it to a team-mate if the initial contact is made outside the penalty area.

The characteristics of an efficient clearance are as follows:

- **Pace and direction:** Moving the ball away from the goal gives the goalkeeper the time to return to the penalty area.
- **Intelligence:** It is sometimes more effective to clear the ball to wide areas of the pitch, even when great distance is not achieved, than it is to make a clearance to central areas in an effort to prevent the cleared ball from hitting a player (team-mate or opponent) and providing an opponent with an opportunity to finish on goal.
- **Spatial and temporal adjustment:** It is key that the goalkeeper reach the ball before the opponent.
- **Safety:** The aim of this technical action is to prevent any goalscoring opportunities, both before and after the clearance.

Block/rebound: “The technical action of interposing the body so that the ball impacts on it to defend the goal.” “The goalkeeper positions their body in an attempt to use any part of it to block or prevent the ball from entering the goal.” “The goalkeeper attempts to use the frame of their body to disrupt an opposition player’s distribution action at source.”

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The goalkeeper does not have the time to perceive the trajectory of the shot due to the short distance between them and the ball, and is not able to choose the body part to use, nor are they able to determine the trajectory that the ball will take after it has hit their body.



TYPES OF BLOCK/REBOUND		
Shape	Cross	The goalkeeper uses their hand(s) to block the ball.
	X-split	The goalkeeper makes an x-split shape to block the ball.
	Column/pillar	The goalkeeper remains upright, making a pillar shape to block the ball.
	Dive	The goalkeeper performs a dive to block the ball.
Dive	No dive	The goalkeeper blocks the ball while standing upright.
	Dive	The goalkeeper blocks the ball by falling to the floor.
Height	Rolling ball	The ball rolls along the floor towards the goalkeeper.
	Low height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper no higher than knee height.
	Medium height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper between knee and shoulder height.
	Maximum height	The ball reaches the goalkeeper above shoulder height.

Whilst the technical action of the blocking/rebounding usually takes place inside the penalty area, it may also occur on the periphery of the penalty area when the ball is closed down quickly by an advancing goalkeeper. This technical action is primarily performed when the shot occurs at a short distance from the goalkeeper, leaving them with the only option to reduce this distance even further by attacking the ball (advancing down the ball’s flight path).

It is likely that the goalkeeper is left with insufficient time to react in this situation, when compared with a situation in which they can catch or deflect the ball. Attempting to reproduce this context is important when trying to effectively train this technical action, with the requirement for all training sessions to replicate game scenarios in open play.



An effective block/rebound should fulfil the following key outcomes:

- Reduce the distance to the ball by the goalkeeper attacking it without waiting for it and adopting the biggest possible body shape without turning their torso, while placing their arms wide in the air and keeping their eyes open prior to the shot to avoid being deceived by an opponent's feinted shot.
- Decision-making – acting with urgency to make the correct decision, displaying courage and commitment after having quickly and clearly assessed the situation.
- The high degree of uncertainty and unpredictability of the game means that the goalkeeper does not know where the rebounded ball will end up. In this regard, it is important that the goalkeeper stay upright or get up quickly if on the floor to reposition themselves effectively in relation to the ball and the goal, thereby increasing the chances of success in the event of having to face another shot.
- An effective block/rebound is one that initially prevents a goal and does not offer the opposition subsequent finishing opportunities after the block/rebound. This is not always possible, as it is a situation in which the goalkeeper faces a considerable temporal and spatial deficit. In such instances, the goalkeeper does not have the option of choosing the body part that comes into contact with the ball and is therefore unable to dictate the direction of its trajectory after the ball has hit their body.

9.4 After direct intervention

Recovering the set-up position: “A technical action that allows the goalkeeper to regain the right body position and on-pitch position in readiness to intervene efficiently in the next action.”

The constantly changing nature of the game forces the goalkeeper to constantly reposition in response to numerous movements and actions. In the intervention process, the goalkeeper may frequently be required to go to ground or lose their balance, depending on the chosen technical action. If the goalkeeper does not manage to control the ball, play continues. They must then rapidly recover to get back into position and may be called upon to make another save. It will often be imperative that the goalkeeper quickly and efficiently regain an upright position whilst maintaining eye contact with the ball. However, it may not always be the case that an immediate return to an upright standing position is the most appropriate outcome from this recovery action. The goalkeeper may be required to immediately perform another dive or a low save before returning to a completely balanced position or a full upright recovery. The recovery action may be varied, but it is important that it enables the goalkeeper to perform another intervention.

For goalkeepers to gain exposure to a variety of intervention types in a game context, training sessions should be game-related and provide exposure to variability and volume for the goalkeeper to develop their technical decision-making and, ultimately, their skill set. In considering the types of sessions to prepare and deliver, if you were to consider a shooting drill, it should contain lots of shooting/finishing opportunities and allow and encourage the goalkeeper to face a second-time finish from an opponent. Consequently, this type of session also provides an ideal setting for a goalkeeper to experience high volumes of shots with great variability. The key point here is that for every structured and deliberately constrained session, there may also be a by-product that can be harnessed.

9.5 Body shape

The cross

The cross is one of the most common body shapes adopted by the futsal goalkeeper. The main objective of this shape is to offer the widest possible body shape that obscures the target and increases the probability of the ball hitting the goalkeeper and being blocked in a close-contact situation, leaving the goalkeeper in a good position to intervene again immediately after a quick and efficient block or parry, as it does not involve falling directly to the floor.

Like outfield players, goalkeepers are likely to have a favoured side, which may be referred to as their strong side. This is the side towards which the goalkeeper chooses to make this shape in a specific situation. The weak side is the opposite side – the side on which the knee tends to be closer to the floor. The strong side protects a greater area of the goal space, while offering the attacker less space to aim at.

The main features of an effective cross shape are as follows:

- **Head:** upright and enables the game to be observed
- **Torso:** upright, not leaning too far forwards or backwards
- **Arms:** extended with sufficient muscular tension to block or repel the ball
- **Hands:** separated fingers, palms facing the ball and with enough tension to avoid giving way upon impact with the ball
- **Legs:** each leg bent at an angle of approximately 90°, one leg with the knee close to the floor and the other leg with the knee further away from the floor
- **Feet:** aligned with each other and the rest of the body



The goalkeeper chooses one of the sides to execute the cross, based on a previous scanning of the game situation and considering the following factors:

Movement of the goalkeeper prior to the execution of the cross: There are occasions when the goalkeeper performs this shape towards the side to which they are moving, as this feels more natural.

The attacker's body language: The attacker's body orientation with the ball and their body shape provides insight that could reveal their intentions.

Attacker's finishing leg: If the goalkeeper has enough time to stop and maintain a set position or if the attacker faces them head-on, the goalkeeper can choose the side depending on the attacker's striking leg. If the attacker is going to finish with their right leg, the goalkeeper should cross to their left side and vice versa. In short, it is a case of covering the long finishing angle with the strong side of the shape. However, if the attacker feints and changes their initial intention to finish on the other side of the goal, the goalkeeper could have more difficulty in linking the cross – which had already been performed to one side – with a subsequent technical action.

The goalkeeper's personal preference or tendency: Futsal is a free-flowing invasion game with an abundance of unpredictable options for effective and responsive technical adaptations to produce positive results. The goalkeeper should always aim to gain a positional advantage by quickly closing down the ball (and therefore the shooting angle). If the goalkeeper does not respond to the attacker's forwards movement quickly enough, the attacker gains the advantage.



Every technical action requires an adequate bodily adjustment to adapt effectively to the changing demands of the game in temporal and spatial terms. With regard to the execution of the cross, it is crucial that the goalkeeper's execution of the initial technical movement coincides with the exact moment in which the attacker contacts the ball – neither before nor after.

To ensure optimal effectiveness, the goalkeeper's body shape should be as wide as possible when coming into contact with the ball, maximising the body's blocking surface to increase the chances of success.

The goalkeeper's arms should move from back to front, decelerating to the point of being in line with the torso and remaining rigid in order to achieve sufficient muscular tension. This technique minimises the risk of injury due to hyperextension whilst also creating a solid surface that causes the ball to rebound away from the goalkeeper, thereby preventing the opposition from having another chance to finish on goal.

Every body shape should be evaluated to consider the risk and reward, with a view to minimising the level of risk as much as possible. The biggest obstacles that may hinder performance primarily concern biomechanical factors, which are developed as young players mature.

The following are areas of difficulty to consider when performing a cross shape:

Space between legs: The goalkeeper must be able to execute a sufficiently wide cross shape without opening their legs too much so as to prevent the ball from going through them. This space should be covered by the weak-side knee, which should be close enough to the heel of the strong-side foot.

Above each shoulder: The ball is most difficult to reach (from a biomechanical perspective) in the area immediately above the collarbone. The technical action to reach the ball in this area involves raising the outstretched arm together with the shoulder to try to deflect the ball off its trajectory.

Weak side: More specifically this relates to the area, above the calf of the leg that is horizontal to the floor. The weak-side hand could cover this space in the event of a low ball that reaches the goalkeeper immediately above the leg. For low shots, the weak-side leg should be placed in line with the rest of the body, increasing the body shape towards the ball. It is an important technical detail that the weak-side leg should not form an L-shape with the rest of the body but should be fully aligned with the rest of the body parts.

X-split

The x-split is a technical action commonly performed by the futsal goalkeeper. The main objective of this shape is to reach areas of the goal that the goalkeeper would not be able to reach by performing a cross shape or by standing upright. It also offers the widest possible body shape, which increases the chances of the ball hitting the goalkeeper in the form of a body block. When performing this technical action, the goalkeeper is on the floor, so it is most commonly deployed in finishing situations that occur close to the goal, particularly inside the penalty area and at the far post. It may also be used in other game scenarios, e.g. when deflecting a low, dipping shot.

It is likely that the goalkeeper would block and rebound the ball when using the x-split for shots taken from close range. When defending a medium- or long-distance shot, the goalkeeper generally chooses to deflect rather than catch the ball so as to minimise the risk of presenting the opponent with another goalscoring opportunity.

The strong side of the x-split is the side to which the goalkeeper extends their leg, while the weak side is the side on which the other supporting leg is slightly bent.

The main features of an effective x-split are as follows:

- **Head:** upright and positioning enables the game to be observed
- **Torso:** upright, perpendicular to the floor, not leaning too far forwards or backwards, facing forwards
- **Arms:** in the air, extended with sufficient muscular tension to block or repel the ball
- **Hands:** open, palms facing the ball with enough tension to avoid giving way upon impact with the ball
- **Legs:** one leg extended with the toe facing upwards and the heel sliding along the floor instead of dropping from top to bottom. The other leg is bent but is extended as much as possible



This is a shape that involves a range of hip movement, taking it practically to its limit in terms of both its muscular elasticity and joint mobility.

The goalkeeper's understanding of the game, spatial awareness and reactions through experience and exposure to different challenges during matches determine the choice about the side on which to execute the x-split. The factors below are considerations when it comes to the decision-making and execution of this technical action.

The goalkeeper's movement prior to the execution of the x-split: The goalkeeper typically performs the x-split towards the side to which they are moving as a consequence of the momentum caused by this displacement.

Attacker's body language: The attacker's body shape on the ball provides information that could reveal their intent, e.g. whether they will finish with a near- or far-post shot.

Attacker's finishing leg: If the attacker is going to finish with their right leg, the goalkeeper executes the x-split to their left side and vice versa. It is more effective to cover the far post with the strong side of the x-split.

The goalkeeper's personal preference or tendency:

Futsal is a free-flowing game featuring various outcomes and just as many solutions, with improvisation and control being key features of the game. The goalkeeper is likely to choose one side over the other, and it is also likely that there are effective technical adaptations that do not comply fully with the parameters mentioned here. Personal preference is to be encouraged so that the goalkeeper becomes comfortable with their abilities and decision-making, with player-led creativity and innovation coming to the fore. This is particularly relevant in both the developing player and youth player phases of development.

Every technical action requires an adequate bodily adjustment to adapt effectively to the changing spatial and temporal demands of the game. It is important that the technical action is effective, with the execution of the x-split coinciding with the exact time that the ball reaches the goalkeeper's exact position, neither earlier nor later. To ensure optimal effectiveness, the goalkeeper's body

shape should be as wide as possible when coming into contact with the ball, maximising the body's blocking surface to increase the chances of success.

The goalkeeper's arms should move from back to front, decelerating to the point of being in line with the torso and remaining rigid in order to achieve sufficient muscular tension. This technique minimises the risk of injury due to hyperextension whilst also creating a solid surface that causes the ball to rebound away from the goalkeeper, thereby preventing the opposition from having another chance to finish on goal. It is also not recommended that the goalkeeper rest their hands on the floor when executing the x-split to deal with a close-range shot. Every shape has certain weak points or areas of greater difficulty when it comes to ensuring an effective response from the goalkeeper. Consideration should be given to these elements in an effort to minimise them. These areas of greater difficulty are mainly due to biomechanical factors.

The following are areas of difficulty to consider when performing the x-split:

Underneath the strong-side leg: The goalkeeper must be able to execute an x-split shape without leaving excessive space between the back of the strong-side leg and the floor. Making a sliding movement with the leg through the heel and not a downward movement reduces the likelihood of a low ball getting past the goalkeeper.

Above the strong-side leg: Placing the arm immediately above the outstretched leg helps to cover that space and prevent a low ball from getting past the goalkeeper.

Above each shoulder: The ball is most difficult to reach (from a biomechanical perspective in the area immediately above the collarbone. The technical action to reach the ball in this area involves raising the outstretched arm together with the shoulder to try to deflect the ball off its trajectory.

Weak side: A good range of movement allows the goalkeeper to extend their leg as far as possible to cover more space and respond better to a low, weak-sided finish. For low trajectories off the floor, the arm should cover this space.

Dive

The dive is one of the most common technical actions performed by the futsal goalkeeper. The main objective of diving is for the goalkeeper to reach the ball at a distance that is beyond their normal reach. When performing a dive, the goalkeeper ends up on the floor, so any deflection should be made away from goal. This technical action is usually deployed when the goalkeeper faces a medium- or long-distance shot and in one-on-one situations when the attacker has overrun the goalkeeper laterally, forcing them to stretch and fall in an attempt to reach the ball.

The strong side of the dive is the side towards which the goalkeeper extends their body, with the opposite side being the weak side.

The main features of an effective dive are as follows:

- **Head:** positioning enables the game to be observed
- **Torso:** not rotated, extended and almost horizontal to the floor when executing the dive
- **Arms:** extended with sufficient muscular tension to block or repel the ball but stable enough to save the ball securely
- **Hands:** open, palms facing the ball with enough tension to avoid giving way upon impact with the ball but able to cushion, catch or deflect it
- **Legs:** both legs extended towards the opposite side to where the dive is executed

Every technical action requires an adequate bodily adjustment to adapt effectively to the changing spatial and temporal demands of the game. The goalkeeper adopts their set position (adjusted to the ball position and the attacker's immediate intention, including balance, stance, readiness to adjust or spring, hand position, etc.). Once the attacker shoots, the timing of the goalkeeper's dive is crucial in anticipating the optimal position to intercept the ball with a catch, parry or punch. The timing of the execution is a direct result of the appropriate set position and reaction.



Every shape has certain weak points or areas of greater difficulty when it comes to ensuring an effective response from the goalkeeper. These areas should be carefully considered in order to improve effectiveness and efficiency through the specific training of the shape. The areas of greatest difficulty generally owe to biomechanical limitations and vary between players due to a range of factors. Therefore, training should be tailored to each player rather than involving a standard approach.

The following are areas of difficulty to consider when performing a dive:

Below the torso: The goalkeeper must be able to execute a dive with a low centre of gravity that minimises the space between their torso and the floor.

Above the torso: When the goalkeeper goes to ground or dives low, they are susceptible to being chipped or lobbed by the attacker. This risk can be minimised by effective timing and reducing the distance between the ball and the goalkeeper, which limits the attacker's technical options.

To increase the chances of success and avoid errors related to decision-making regarding the shape to use when the goalkeeper faces a medium- or long-distance shot on the floor or with a low trajectory, it is important to have an automated technical response, which allows the goalkeeper to decide quickly and efficiently between deploying the x-split or diving.

Others: In addition to the most common futsal goalkeeper shapes analysed above, there are others that are used less frequently. These may also be effective in specific situations or based on a goalkeeper's preference. All of these technical tools can be applied depending on the circumstances of the game. These additional shapes are described below.

Knee slide

The knee slide is a gesture/shape that is becoming increasingly prevalent in advanced or elite goalkeepers in the modern game. The main objective of this gesture/shape is to prevent the opponent from scoring a goal by reducing the distance between the goalkeeper and the ball and, consequently, limiting the attacker's shooting angle. When executing a knee slide, the goalkeeper slides along the floor towards their opponent. Although it is effective, it still leaves the goalkeeper at a disadvantage if they need to immediately react to follow-ups. The knee slide is normally used when the goalkeeper is defending a close-range shot. This shape is intended to be symmetrical, so it is not appropriate to differentiate between a strong side and a weak side.

The main features of an effective knee slide are as follows:

- **Head:** steady, and positioning enables the game to be observed
- **Torso:** upright, not leaning too far forwards or backwards, facing the ball and the opponent
- **Arms:** in the air, extended with sufficient muscular tension to repel the ball
- **Hands:** open, fingers outstretched, palms facing the ball with enough tension to avoid giving way upon impact with the ball
- **Legs:** symmetrical, bent and with both knees in contact with the floor



The distance between the goalkeeper and the ball, the goalkeeper's ability and their personal preference determine the choice between whether they perform a knee slide or adopt a cross shape or another suitable shape. Importantly, the goalkeeper should have the ability to execute an array of shapes without becoming reliant upon a single shape, given that they are all effective in different situations.

When performing the knee slide, the goalkeeper must ensure that the moment it is executed coincides with when the ball reaches their position.

The goalkeeper's arms should move from back to front, decelerating to the point of being in line with the torso and remaining rigid in order to achieve sufficient muscular tension. This technique minimises the risk of injury due to hyperextension of the elbow joint. The arms should be solid enough to repel the ball so that it does not end up near to the goal, which would present the opponent with another goalscoring opportunity.

Every shape has certain weak points or areas of greater difficulty when it comes to ensuring an effective response from the goalkeeper. These areas should be carefully considered in order to improve effectiveness and efficiency through the specific training of the shape. The areas of greatest difficulty generally owe to biomechanical limitations.

The following are areas of difficulty to consider when performing a knee slide:

Above the head or shoulders: The ball is most difficult to reach (from a biomechanical perspective) in the area immediately above the collarbone. This applies mainly in one-on-one situations, when the attacker chips the ball up before the goalkeeper reaches them.

With both knees on the floor following a slide: The goalkeeper is hindered when reacting to another goalscoring opportunity after the attacker has performed a feinted shot.

In an attempt to minimise the chances of being beaten by the ball when executing the knee slide, the goalkeeper should try to execute it as close as possible to the in-possession attacker. Executing it too far away could reduce its effectiveness. The main advantages of this shape are its speed of execution, which allows the goalkeeper to act quickly and the wide body shape it presents in relation to the ball.

Lateral slide

A lateral slide could be considered to be a combination of the x-split and the knee slide. The main objective of this shape is to prevent the goalkeeper from conceding a goal between their legs at close range. When executing it, the goalkeeper slides along the floor, which hinders them in the event that they are required to react to a follow-up.

The main features of an effective lateral slide are as follows:

- **Head:** positioning enables the game to be observed
- **Torso:** upright, forwards-facing and inclined diagonally to the floor
- **Arms:** in the air, extended with sufficient muscular tension to block or repel the ball
- **Hands:** open, fingers outstretched, palms facing the ball with enough tension to avoid giving way upon impact with the ball
- **Legs:** one considerably bent to try to close the space between the legs and the other extended as much as possible to maximise width

When performing the lateral slide, the goalkeeper must ensure that the moment it is executed coincides with when the attacker is taking the shot.

The following are areas of greater difficulty to consider when performing a lateral slide:

Above the head or shoulders: The ball is most difficult to reach (from a biomechanical perspective) in the area immediately above the collarbone. This applies mainly in one-on-one situations, if the attacker chips the ball up before the goalkeeper reaches them.

When sliding on the floor, the goalkeeper could be overwhelmed and hindered when reacting to a subsequent goalscoring opportunity after the attacker performs a feinted shot. In an attempt to minimise the chances of being beaten by the ball when executing the lateral slide, the goalkeeper should try to execute it as close as possible to the in-possession attacker. Executing it too far away could reduce its effectiveness. The main advantage of the lateral slide is the wide body shape it presents in relation to the ball, which allows the goalkeeper to cover the space in the lower area of the goal.

Pillar/column posture

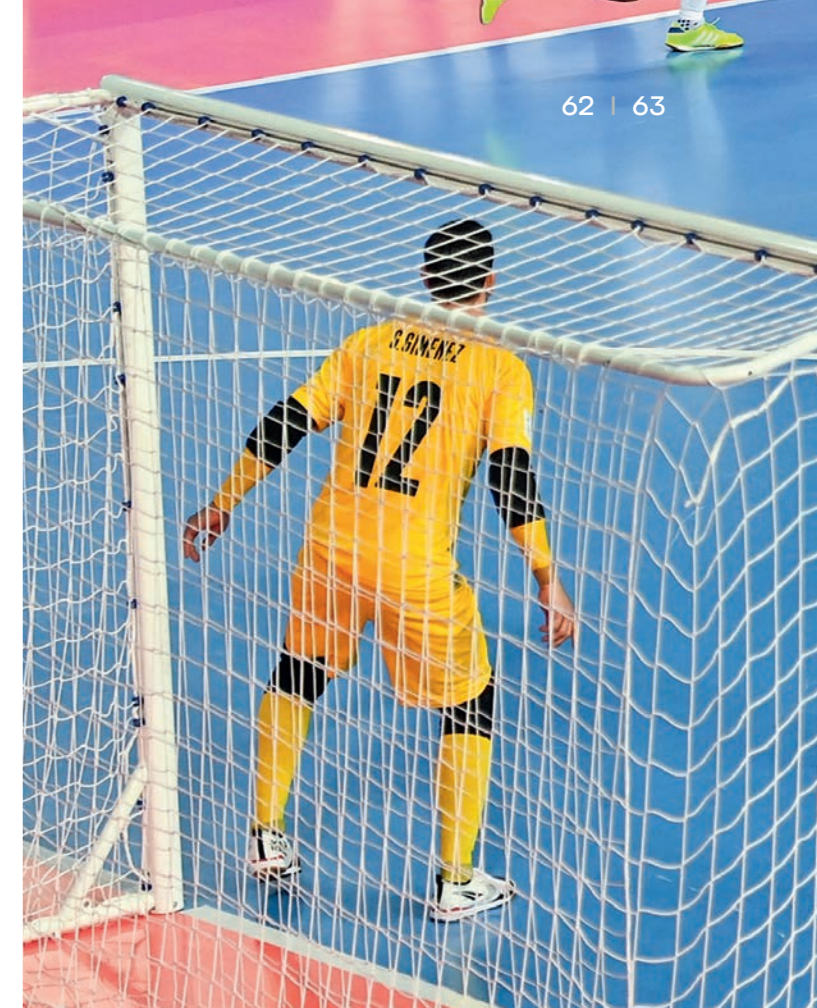
“The goalkeeper attempts a goal-denying intervention against a ball travelling at them whilst maintaining an upright posture.” [FIFA Training Centre](#)

The main objective of this shape is to prevent the opponent from scoring a goal by restricting their view of the goal, which serves to narrow the shooting angle. When executing this technical action, the goalkeeper remains in an upright position. This technique is often used in goal defence (zone 0) and penalty-kick situations.

The main features of an effective pillar/column are as follows:

- **Head:** positioning enables the game to be observed
- **Torso:** extended, forwards-facing and perpendicular to the floor
- **Arms:** extended along the body with sufficient muscular tension to block or repel the ball
- **Hands:** open, fingers outstretched, palms facing the ball with enough tension to avoid giving way upon impact with the ball
- **Legs:** extended and not too far apart

Every shape has certain weak points or areas of greater difficulty when it comes to ensuring an effective response from the goalkeeper. These areas should be carefully considered in order to improve effectiveness and efficiency through the specific training of the shape. The areas of greatest difficulty generally owe to biomechanical limitations.



The following are areas of greater difficulty when adopting a pillar/column posture:

The space between the legs: It should be ensured that they are not too far apart.

The space each side of the legs: It should be ensured that they are not too close together. Given that this shape involves standing still, the position of the legs is critical.

The space immediately above each collarbone (between the head and shoulders) when facing high shots.

In an attempt to minimise the chances of being beaten by the ball when executing this shape, the goalkeeper should execute it when the ball is at a narrow angle. Executing it when the ball is at a wide angle could greatly reduce its effectiveness. The main advantage of this shape is the body shape it presents in relation to the ball, allowing the goalkeeper to cover spaces from the top to the bottom of the goal. The goalkeeper's intention in this case is to cover vertical space in one part of the goal, whether on the left, the right or in the middle.



Technical combinations

When observing and analysing a futsal goalkeeper's actions during the course of a game, it becomes clear that they are rarely carried out in a totally orthodox way, mainly due to the changing nature of the game. Pure shapes hardly ever occur – they usually happen as part of a combination of two or more technical actions during the same intervention. The name given to this combination of actions or shapes is technical combinations.

Any intervention performed by a goalkeeper usually begins with them adopting a set position before another action is executed. This could be considered to be an initial technical combination. Although there is an abundance of technical action combinations, the most common technical combinations are as follows:



Cross	Cross (same or opposite side)
	X-split (same or opposite side)
	Dive (same or opposite side)
	Lateral slide
Movement	Forwards and clearance or control and pass
	Backwards, dive and clearance
Catching	Throw
	Shoot
Others	X-split and dive
	Knee slide and dive

Cross and cross combination: This technical combination occurs when the goalkeeper performs an initial cross, but the in-possession attacker continues to drive laterally or diagonally, which changes the bisector, forcing the goalkeeper to alter their position by adopting a new cross shape towards the same side as the previous one. This combination is executed towards the opposite side in response to a change of direction or a feinted shot performed by the attacker.

Cross and x-split combination: This technical combination occurs when the attacker tries to go past the goalkeeper laterally by pushing the ball further ahead of themselves than in the previous technical combination. This greater distance forces the goalkeeper to use the x-split since adopting a cross shape would not allow them to get their body between the ball and the goal line when the shot is taken.

Cross and dive combination: In this technical combination, the distance at which the attacker drives and moves the ball away from the goalkeeper is even greater than in the previous two cases. When the goalkeeper cannot get between the ball and the goal line by executing either a cross or an x-split as the shot is taken, they can perform a dive, as this shape would allow them to move further (and use their hands if inside the penalty area). This technical combination opens up the space between the goalkeeper's torso and the floor, which makes it difficult for the goalkeeper to execute. If the attacker dribbles with the ball close to their feet whilst running laterally, the goalkeeper faces a high risk of conceding. Another area of great difficulty is the space above their body while diving, which results in the goalkeeper being caught off guard and having limited ability to react. The hand on the weak side is should protect this particularly difficult space.

Cross and lateral slide combination: In an attempt to counteract the weak points identified above, some goalkeepers have developed a variant that is referred to as the cross and lateral slide combination. In this combination, the goalkeeper tries to avoid conceding a goal in which the ball goes underneath their body while diving by bending their leg above their body with their torso in a slightly more upright position than when diving.

Forwards movement and clearance or control and pass combination: This technical combination usually takes place outside the penalty area, as the goalkeeper normally moves forwards at considerable speed, with a requirement for this forwards movement to be adapted to the speed and trajectory of the ball and that of the opposing players in close proximity. When they come into contact with the ball, the goalkeeper must combine the forwards movement with the clearance, with one body part or another depending on the height and trajectory of the ball. Coordinating the movement and the clearance are fundamental to the success of the action. If the goalkeeper has a greater advantage over their opponent, the technical combination could involve movement and a control and pass. This combination allows for continuity of play and involves the recovery of possession, which is not the case in the previous combination.

Backwards movement and clearance combination: This technical combination is very common when the goalkeeper intervenes with a backwards movement

followed by a diving clearance – a technical element that could also be added to this combination.

Catching and throwing and catching and shooting combination: There are also some technical combinations that connect the out-of-possession phase with the in-possession phase. The most common of these is catching and throwing. In this combination, the goalkeeper initiates the attacking transition by means of a pass played with the hand(s), which is referred to as an opening pass. An alternative technical combination is catching and shooting. In both cases, the goalkeeper must execute the action within a maximum of four seconds to provide continuity to the play. Including these contextualised technical combinations in training activities helps to form motor habits in the goalkeeper that are in line with the context of the game.

Other combinations: Any of the shapes that involve sliding tend to be combined with diving, which offers the goalkeeper the final chance to touch the ball to catch or clear it. As futsal is an open game with a wide range of solutions and not an exact science, it is recognised that there are some effective technical adaptations that do not exactly match the methods laid out here.

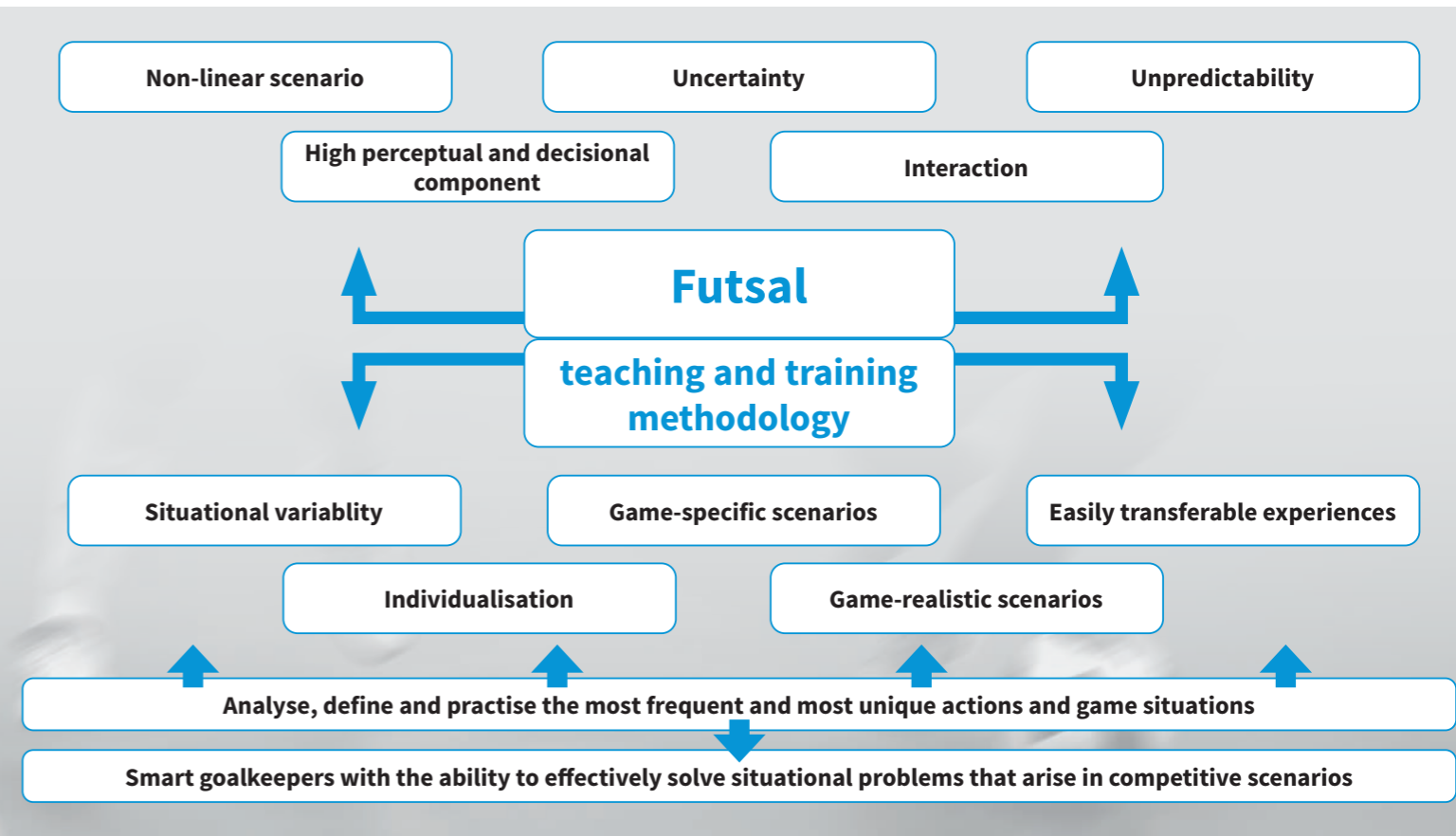
These technical combinations should be practised in all training sessions to provide goalkeepers with experiential learning opportunities. In this way, the goalkeeper becomes accustomed to executing them effectively during game scenarios. By respecting the logic of the game and the order of each technical combination, a wide range of technical combinations emerge.





METHODOLOGY

The teaching and training methodology used to train goalkeepers in futsal has traditionally been linear, simplistic and isolated from that of other members of the team. In part, this can be attributed to how the goalkeeper’s role has been considered purely as a specialist activity. However, as the role of the goalkeeper and the significance of their involvement in build-up play and a team’s tactical approach has become more widely understood, a different approach to goalkeeper training has been required.



To enable the goalkeeper to play an increasingly prominent role in team play and to engage them to a greater extent in tactical situations in which they are key instigators, they need to become a core component in every training session. The modern goalkeeper must be as comfortable with the ball at their feet as the outfield players, and this is an aspect that is to be encouraged. This modern approach to the role and the contribution of the goalkeeper has perhaps resulted in less reliance on the power play and the use of an additional outfield player in the five. It may also provide some evidence surrounding the reduced impact of the power play in recent years.

Our approach seeks to analyse the goalkeeper’s behaviour in the full context of game play, in which their interaction with the changing environment involves a series of requirements, forcing the goalkeeper to act by adapting to the context. This may not only depend on the players’ individual abilities, but also, to a great extent, on the uncertainty posed by the circumstances of the game.



The defining characteristics of futsal are as follows:

- **Unpredictability:** A game played in an environment featuring unpredictable and constantly changing situations, which means that it involves high cognitive demands and decision-making requirements.
- **A non-linear activity:** The actions do not follow each other in a predetermined order. The sequence of events is random and unpredictable.
- **Uncertainty:** The environment is constantly changing, so movements and skills must be continually adapted. These skills rely heavily on the perceptual system and are externally paced, meaning that the tempo is determined by what an individual player's team-mates and opponents do. Through the adaptations of the goalkeeper, the aim is to try to reduce uncertainty to make the game more predictable.
- **Interaction:** The goalkeeper does not perform in isolation – their actions and behaviours depend on those of their team-mates and opponents and vice versa.

Once the coach has established and understood the key characteristics of futsal, consideration can be given to a teaching and training methodology that supports them, with a view to increasing effectiveness. This methodology should be aligned with the whole team – not the goalkeeper in isolation. An exemplary methodology to develop and improve the potential of the futsal goalkeeper should ideally consider the following principles:

Optimisation: It implies effectiveness and efficiency in the performance of tasks and involves the search for and achievement of constantly improving outcomes. The coach's aspiration should be to help the goalkeeper raise their level of expertise and competence in a controlled, progressive and informed manner.

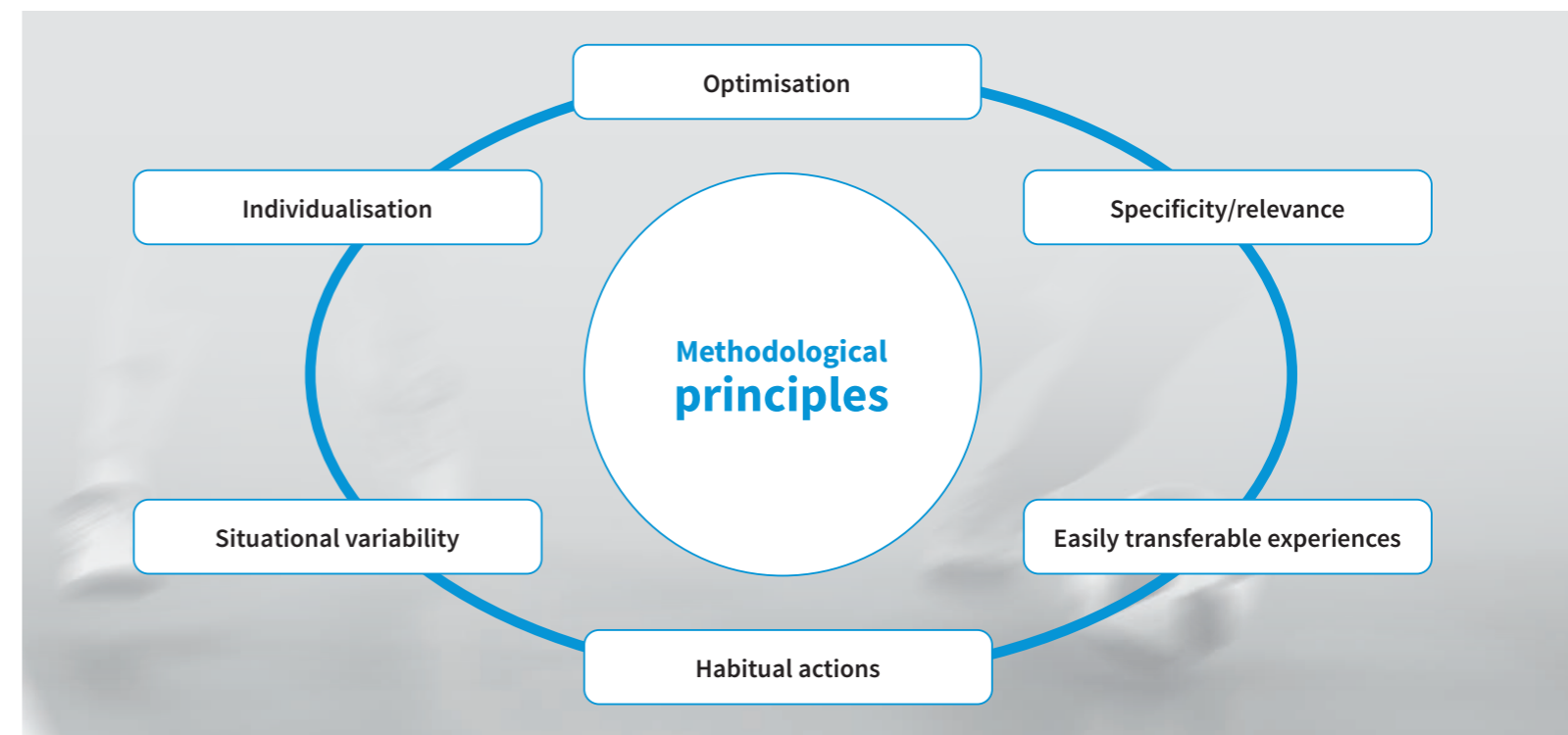
Specificity/relevance: It is imperative for long-term learning that the goalkeeper be presented with realistic and relevant training scenarios using game-related environments. This approach benefits their learning experience. This specificity can also be understood from a tactical perspective since technical and tactical actions produce movement patterns that are similar to those experienced in games. Irrespective of each competitive scenario, physiological demands – which are tested by the ebb and flow of game play – through exertion or movement serve to develop the aerobic/anaerobic and musculoskeletal structures involved in the respective response actions.

Easily transferable experiences: This is an outcome of the previous element and involves the goalkeeper learning from a variety of experiences that despite being unlikely to ever be encountered in a game environment, offer a broad variety of experiential learning opportunities. Storing information about the emotional and functional stimuli is necessary so that recall is available on demand to evaluate the best course of action for each scenario that arises during a game.

Habitual actions: Habits are formed by repeating similar experiences. Goalkeepers are frequently involved in specific training scenarios that encourage the repetition of effective behaviours to be applied in competition. Training activities that reproduce the desired situation as faithfully as possible should be designed, which, through the accumulation of a sufficient number of relevant experiences, lead to the formation of the habit or effective behaviour by the goalkeeper in game situations.

Situational variability: The goalkeeper acquires and consolidates stable motor relationship patterns with realistic game actions. Consequently, the training scenarios should be open scenarios. Given their nature, each training session and game poses many similar but not identical challenges that require an effective solution. This variation in situational nuances within the same context (“repetition without repetition”) enables the execution of experimental actions that support the emergence of stable and adaptable movement solutions, which allow the goalkeeper to develop a mental library of adaptable solutions and actions to be effective in the game.

Individualisation: This principle respects the personal characteristics of each goalkeeper. By avoiding standard training sessions that present fixed outcomes for every player (irrespective of their age, gender or ability), this approach challenges each goalkeeper to solve the tactical and situational problems that they encounter by using their own technical tools, often helping them to develop a personal style, which is dependent on the emotional, physical, technical and cognitive characteristics of each player. A coach should only intervene to modify or adapt a session if an evident recurring failure, which leads to ineffective solutions or certain actions involving a high risk of injury, occurs.



The adopted methodology consists of the following elements:

The goalkeeper: This player must be at the heart of the learning process. The objective must always be to improve and increase their ability to be effective.

The coach: This individual should act as a guide or a facilitator. This role involves designing meaningful learning contexts rather than simply being an instructor. In addition to providing game scenarios involving constraints that favour learning and the adaptation of the goalkeeper to the game, the coach should guide the goalkeeper by engaging in feedback to enhance their improvement through self-reflective learning.

Objectives: They describe a skill (tactical and technical, theoretical, etc.) to be acquired by the goalkeeper. They must be clearly defined, relative, relevant and allow for understanding to be evaluated.

Activities: These are the practices through which the objectives are learnt. By designing, implementing and managing the various activity variables through observation, the coach creates an environment that is adapted to the needs of the goalkeeper. The coach can and should modify the environmental conditions through constraints. These constraints are the factors or variables that can be manipulated to steer the activities towards a desired objective. Within the activities that can be put into practice, two areas of focus are identified: drills/exercises and activities/tasks. By comparing the two, we can establish the following differences:

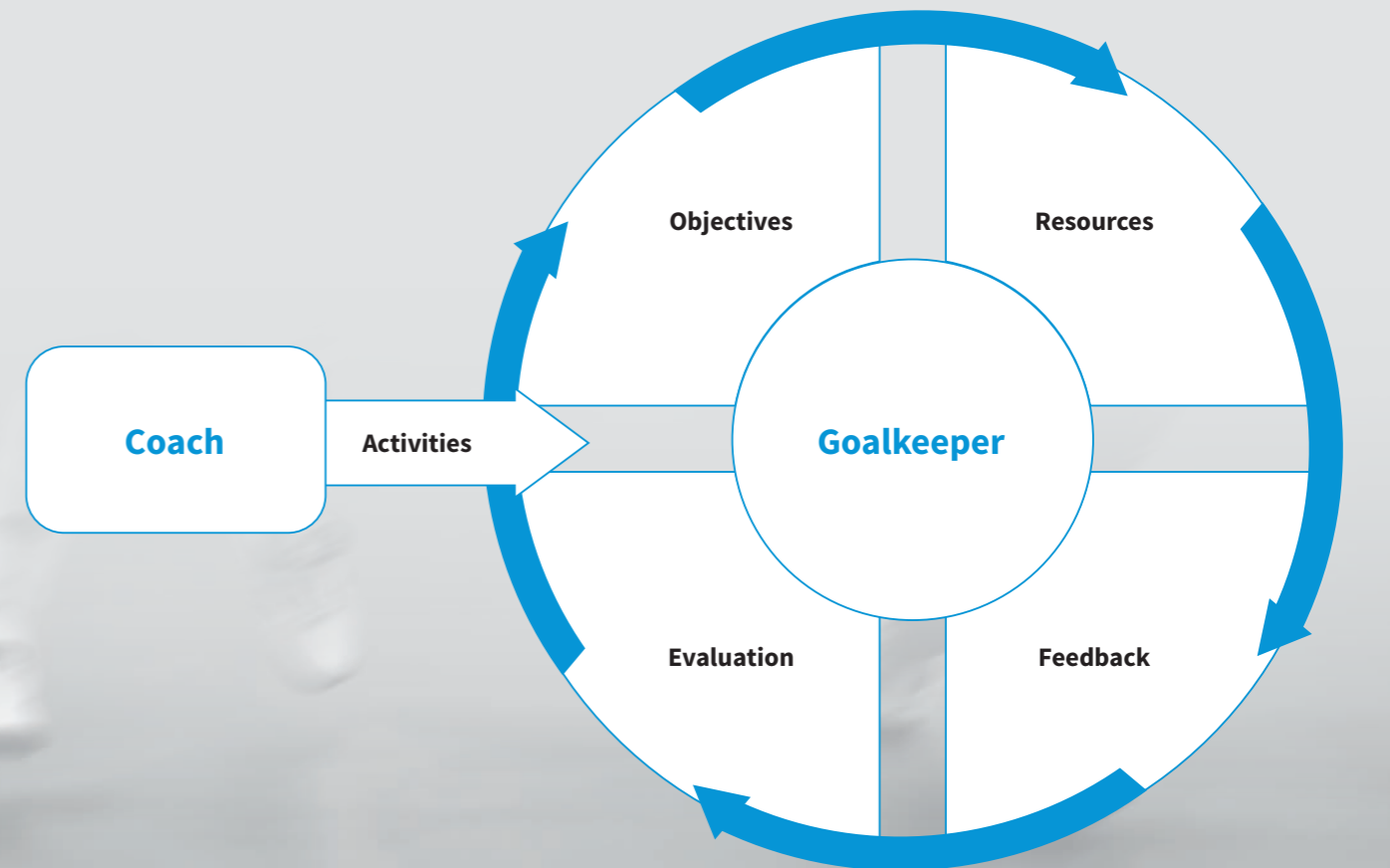


DRILL	ACTIVITY
Out-of-context action	Contextualised practice
Closed and predictable environment	Open and unknown environment
Mechanical execution	Adapted to the game context
Stereotyped repetition	Solution to tactical problem
Predetermined single solution	Choice from multiple solutions
Lower level of uncertainty	Higher level of uncertainty
Lower decisional degree	Higher decisional degree
Does not promote game knowledge	Promotes game knowledge

Feedback: This is a core component of the “plan, do, review” approach to player development, and player and coach relationships. It balances the external input from the coach with the experience or understanding response from the player, which can be achieved in various ways. Each session should offer two-way feedback. It is another means of intervention in the teaching and learning process for the coach and may take place during or after sessions, allowing the coach(es) and player(s) to discuss the session, the activities, challenges, learning and adaptations required to make such a session more relevant or more challenging. Self-evaluation and critique are an important element for coaches and players alike. The process should avoid unconstructive criticism but instead seek positives through discussion.

Resources: To ensure efficient practical development, it is not necessary to use sophisticated, elaborate or complex materials. The essential material resources could be futsal balls, a game-realistic training space (including pitch markings, a penalty area and goal) and the presence of players who act as finishers – the contextual interference within any given practice. The use of little or no specific material could excessively distort the training context. The material should be used to contribute to achieving an objective.

Evaluation: As coaches, it is important to establish various mechanisms to check how the goalkeeper and their teaching and learning process are evolving by comparing initial skill levels with current skill levels. Systematic observation and the recording of information through memory, written and/or audiovisual tools can help in this task, although not every coach or player has access to any or all of these material resources. Involving the goalkeeper in this process of being aware of the learning continuum and performance improvement is highly recommended.



10.1 Methodological recommendations

In considering the role of the futsal goalkeeping coach when planning, designing and developing training sessions, the following considerations are offered as guidance.

Reality-based training: The planning process should primarily reflect each player's needs and be developed on the basis of the analysis of training or game scenarios. A key objective of each training activity should be to recreate a game situation in which the objectives of the session are developed through challenges set by the application of constraints.

Specific stimuli/triggers: This relates to the specific stimuli that a goalkeeper must pay attention to during the practice or game (i.e. trajectories, speeds, angles, body orientation, positioning, advantages, intentions of the opponents). Promoting these stimuli in game-based practice leads to improved perception and selective attention. The excessive use of non-specific stimuli that do not correspond to game contexts (e.g. sound stimuli – a coach's clap, a light or a bib) may not lead to the specific improvements that the training activities seek to achieve.

Providing continuity in play situations: Making continuity possible, just as it would occur in the game itself, such as rebounds (second-time goalscoring opportunities after a deflection or block), combining catching with throws or shots, and using guided discovery constraints in training activities allows the goalkeeper to adapt to the changing circumstances of the game, which ensures variation, adaptation and progression.

The goalkeeper's space, actions and habitual behaviours: The use of real spatial references (e.g. lines that mark out the penalty area) benefits positioning, body orientation and actions that the goalkeeper performs in play and provides a more accurate reflection of the game. Coaches should avoid the frequent occurrence of other unspecific or even undesired actions that can lead to detraining and the formation of ineffective habits or behaviours. For example, applying a back-to-play orientation, e.g. forcing the goalkeeper to start exercises with their back to the game without being able to perceive what is happening on the pitch, as this rarely (if ever) happens in a game, introducing movements or actions that goalkeepers would never carry out in normal circumstances during play or carrying the activities out in spaces that are not common or that do not offer the usual reference points to enable relevant orientation and decision-making for goalkeepers.

Participation and involvement of all goalkeepers: Whenever possible, coaches should try to organise the activity so that all goalkeepers remain physically and mentally connected to the training session. It is a good idea to sometimes opt for consecutive participation, while at other times asking them to train simultaneously. Goalkeepers should be assigned different roles during an activity, including as outfield players to develop their footwork, body shape and ability to shield the ball when under pressure.

Interactions: The goalkeeper's actions and behaviours are not isolated but are influenced and dependent on the actions and behaviours of team-mates and opponents, which is why they should also feature as outfield players in goalkeeper training activities, either as an opponent or team-mate of the goalkeeper, because this promotes the emergence of interactions through motor, verbal and gestural communication.

Situations of reduced visibility, "imperfect" positioning and changing/unpredictable timing of involvement: Due to the presence of players in motion (whether they are opponents and/or team-mates) within the goalkeeper's field of vision who may obstruct sight of the ball's trajectory, a coach should also try to ensure that the goalkeeper's interventions take place in circumstances that are similar to game play. Giving opponents a head start in an exercise or activity, in addition to adding unpredictable elements, stimulates an improvement in attention and awareness from the goalkeeper during the training session.

10.2 Parameters of the task/activity

Number of repetitions with variability: Each exercise or activity requires a different number of repetitions. It should be recognised that exact repetition is impossible to achieve, but each repetition should offer some variability requiring a response adjustment. An appropriate number of repetitions is achieved when the number is enough to lead to improvements and adaptations in the goalkeeper, without exceeding this number so as to avoid fatigue.

Duration of the interventions: This is determined by the game itself. Not establishing a choreography with a series of combined actions previously established by the coach, or a predetermined duration of the goalkeeper's intervention, is representative of the unpredictable and uncertain dynamics of the game. Excessive duration can be counterproductive because long-lasting efforts could be detrimental to the intensity, speed or quality of execution. Moreover, the goalkeeper rarely intervenes more than one, two or, at most, three times in a row.

Work to rest ratio: Normally, a consecutive type of participation is established (the same goalkeeper does not carry out all of their repetitions consecutively – they will be spread out over time). A coach should avoid workloads that exceed the levels that the goalkeeper would normally encounter in competition. Another advantage of this type of participation is that it allows the goalkeeper to self-analyse after each intervention since they have enough time to think about their performance when they are not actively participating.

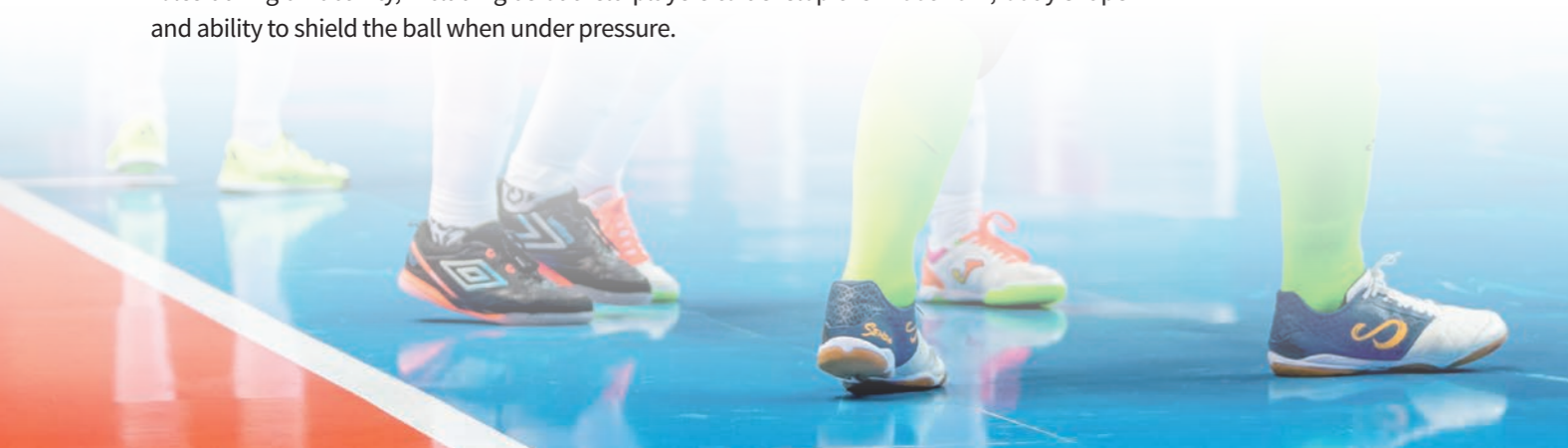
Complexity/difficulty: It is the coach's responsibility to manage these parameters by knowing when to make a task more difficult or complex.

Cognitive load: This load is determined by the mental effort required of the goalkeeper in a given training activity. The complexity of the task, the number of moments or phases of the game it contains, the number of decisions that the goalkeeper needs to make and the number of stimuli the goalkeeper experiences are some of the factors that increase cognitive demand. For example, when an activity offers several finishing options instead of just one, or if it allows the goalkeeper to initiate an attacking transition after recovering the ball, the cognitive load would be greater than if the activity was completed after the ball is recovered.

Right-left symmetry: The coach should for the number of experiences/repetitions to be balanced on both sides of the player to aid bilateral development. Any task should be performed on both the right and left sides of the pitch, and any exercise focused on technical improvement should also be performed using both sides of the body.

In summary, the aim of these training parameters is to prioritise quality over quantity.

Evaluation: The goalkeeper can be provided with an evaluation of their performance on the pitch during training sessions or games, after having carried out an intervention (recurrent feedback), or the process can also be evaluated (effectiveness of the tasks, possible variations, organisational improvements, etc.).



The coach's role is to help every futsal goalkeeper whom they work with to fulfil their potential. In the context of the developing player phase, the objective is to provide the goalkeeper with solid foundations that enable appropriate, complete and balanced development for the future. When it comes to high-level competition, the coach's task is more focused on obtaining results through the delivery of high performance levels. One important progression involves the coach aiding the development of effective and versatile goalkeepers with the ability to adapt to any playing style or system and overcome any challenge that futsal throws at them.

The methodological approach that prevailed for many years – until very recently – was a completely linear one in which the goalkeeper was rarely forced to think during training and training, and the emphasis was based on the execution of technique. Exposing the goalkeeper to a closed, previously established and familiar context removes unpredictability and uncertainty, which goes against the general principles of invasion games. Moreover, the training content was reduced to technical actions – sometimes specific, sometimes unspecific (and unrealistic) – in a defensive goalkeeping context.

The most up-to-date methodological approach to training aims to replicate the unpredictable characteristics of the game. By exposing each player to an open situation, they can interpret, decide and execute effectively according to the specific circumstances that each situation demands of each position. The optimum approach is to design training scenarios in which the goalkeeper must adapt with regard to the following four areas:

Where: game-related spatial factors such as distances, positioning and angles

When: temporal factors such as timing (temporal coordination and adjusting to team-mates, opponents, ball trajectory, speed of execution, etc.)

What: tactical factors that are conditioned by perception and constant decision-making in each phase of the goalkeeper's intervention

How: technical factors related to the execution of non-standard, adaptive techniques that are highly conditioned by the relationships that the goalkeeper establishes with team-mates and opponents through game interactions – the physical, motor and emotional characteristics and possibilities of each goalkeeper in a specific situation



Fostering these types of habit through training and both theoretical and practical preparation encourages the goalkeeper to acquire greater adaptability to changing situations, which are so characteristic of futsal. This moulds a smart goalkeeper profile capable of effectively and efficiently resolving the various situational problems that they are likely to face during play.



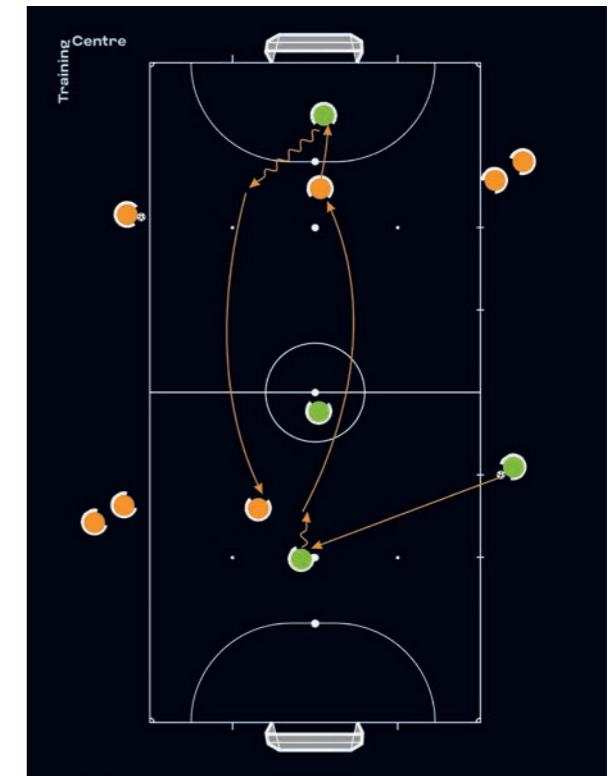
Restarts, keeping play going and aerial balls

Organisation

- Use a full court.
- Divide the court into three zones (as indicated in the graphic on the right).
- Place a blue cone approximately 15m from one of the goal lines.
- Place a goalkeeper in each goal, a goalkeeper on the halfway line and an off-court goalkeeper on the touchline with a ball.
- Position a pivot in each of the attacking zones.
- Place 2 attackers off the court and on opposite touchlines in each half, level with the 10m line.

Explanation

- The exercise starts with the off-court goalkeeper playing a pass to a goalkeeper defending one of the goals.
- The goalkeeper plays an aerial ball to the pivot positioned in the opposite attacking zone, who controls the ball and finishes on goal or finishes first-time by redirecting the goalkeeper's pass.
- The goalkeeper positioned on the halfway line tries to intercept the goalkeeper's aerial pass.
- If the goalkeeper defending the goal catches the ball, they can either shoot directly on the opposition's goal or play a pass to the pivot in the opposite attacking zone, who engages the goalkeeper in a 1v1 situation.
- To add an extra level of difficulty for the goalkeeper who played the original aerial pass when they drop back into goal, they must touch the blue cone before being able to defend their goal.
- If the goalkeeper is unable to claim the ball and diverts it out of play, one of the attackers positioned on the touchline dribbles a second ball into play to create a 2v1 scenario. This player can either shoot on goal or play a pass to the pivot, who takes up a position at the far post.



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Variation

- If the goalkeeper diverts the ball out of play, the pivot acts as a defender, creating a 2v1 overload in favour of the attacking team.

Coaching points

- To offer the goalkeeper exposure to a range of finishing actions, ask the attackers who enter from the touchline to stay wide.
- When the opposition restart play, the keeper should take the type of restart (if played with the hands or feet) into account in deciding how far to come off their line.

Close-range finishing and quick restarts

Organisation

- Use half of a court.
- Mark out a halfway line using cones.
- Place a goal at either end of the court.
- Position a goalkeeper in either goal (and a goalkeeper on each touchline – see variation 1 below).
- Set up a 2v2 scenario.

Explanation

- The exercise starts with one of the goalkeepers in possession.
- The goalkeeper plays the ball to a team-mate inside their own half.
- The team in possession have a maximum of 4 passes or 6 seconds in which to finish on goal.
- After each attack ends, the goalkeeper has the following two options to restart play:
 - Pass to a team-mate positioned beyond the halfway line
 - Drop the ball and dribble towards goal before shooting

Variations

Variation 1

- If the goalkeeper gets hold of the ball or restarts play quickly, they can play to either of the off-court goalkeepers before swapping positions with them.

Variation 2

- On-court players can play the ball to either of the off-court goalkeepers at any time during the sequence.

Coaching points

- If the goalkeeper catches the ball, the attackers must receive it in deep attacking areas.
- In 2v1 situations, the keeper should try to anticipate the play.
- The goalkeeper should read the play and identify where the unmarked player is.



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Using the goalkeeper to create overloads

Organisation

- Use half of a court.
- Position a goal at either end of the exercise area.
- Place a goalkeeper in each goal.
- Position a third goalkeeper on the touchline with a number of balls.
- Set up a 2v2 scenario (plus goalkeepers).

Explanation

- The exercise begins with the off-court goalkeeper playing a pass to either goalkeeper.
- The outfield players on the team in possession have a two-touch limit. There is no limit on the number of touches that the goalkeeper can take.
- Each time the ball goes out of play, the off-court goalkeeper restarts play by playing the ball to the in-possession team's goalkeeper.
- The team to score the most goals win.

Variations

Variation 1

- The goalkeeper occupies a starting position on the flank (instead of in a central area).

Variation 2

- Mark out a central zone, in which the goalkeepers are restricted to 2 touches and 4 seconds while they have complete freedom on the flanks.

Coaching points

- Encourage goalkeepers to actively participate in building attacks.
- Use the goalkeeper's skills to initiate attacking moves.
- Encourage goalkeepers to find solutions quickly by distributing the ball efficiently.



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Blocking and continuing play

Organisation

- Use the full court.
- Place a goal at either end of the court.
- Mark out a dotted line 9m from the goal line of one of the goals using cones.
- Set up with 3 goalkeepers: 1 in goal and the other 2 (goalkeepers 2 and 3) beside the goal.
- Give goalkeepers 2 and 3 a ball.
- Line 6 attackers up behind the 9m line.
- Place a cone 5m directly in front of each goalpost.

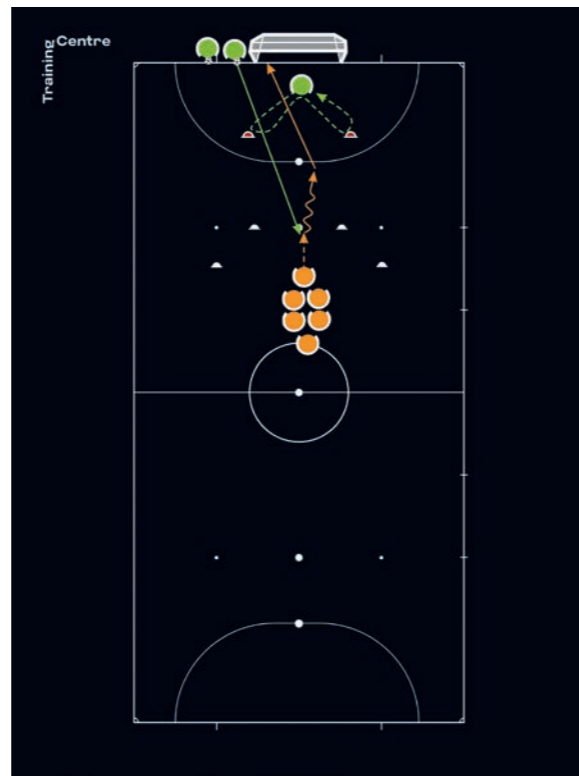
Explanation

- Goalkeeper 1 moves alternately between a point slightly in front of the midpoint of the goal line and the 2 cones.
- As goalkeeper 1 performs these movements, goalkeeper 2 rolls the ball to the first attacker in the queue, who has two options: either to take a first-time shot on goal from behind the 9m line or to take a touch to control the ball behind the 9m line that sees them advance into the zone between the 9m line and the edge of the penalty area before finishing on goal in 1v1 scenario within 3 seconds.
- If the goalkeeper parries the attacker's shot back out to them, they have a maximum of 2 touches in which to finish on goal.
- The sequence ends when the ball goes out of play, the goalkeeper gains possession or a goal is scored.
- Once the sequence is over, the goalkeepers rotate positions, with goalkeeper 3 rolling the ball from beside the goal to the second attacker in the queue, goalkeeper 2 taking up a position in goal and goalkeeper 1 occupying a position beside the goal.

Variations

Variation 1

- If the goalkeeper gains possession of the ball, they try to score directly in the opposing goal with a goal clearance. If the goalkeeper fails to score from the goal clearance, they face another attacking sequence.



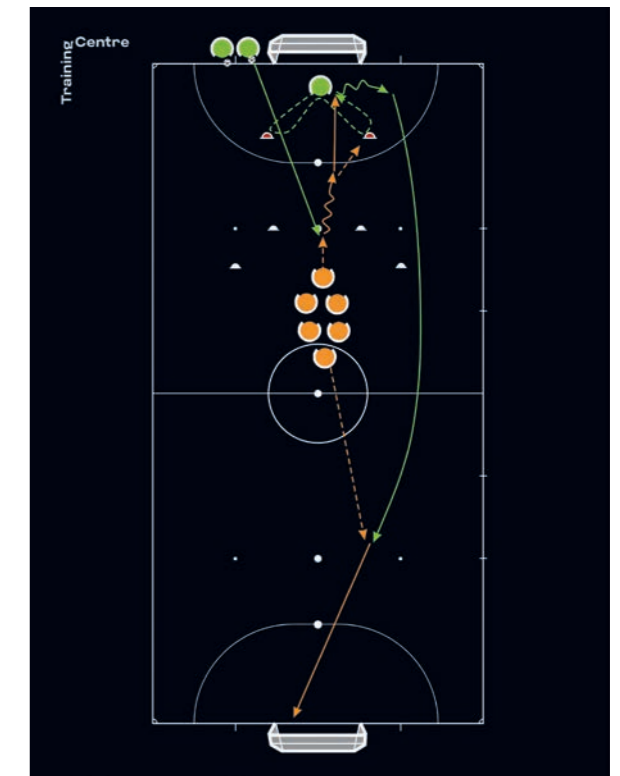
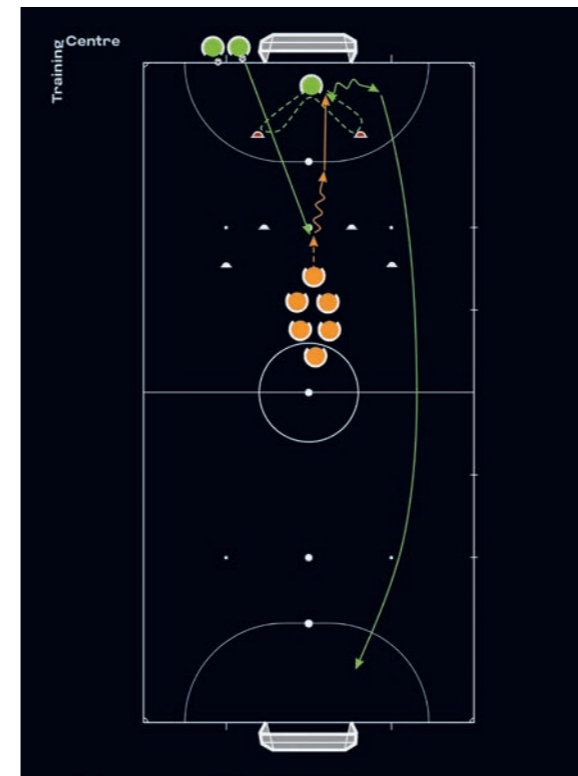
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Variation 2

- If the goalkeeper gains possession of the ball, they launch a quick counter-attack by playing an overarm throw towards the last attacker in the queue, who takes up a position in the opposing half and has to finish first-time and within 4 seconds of the goalkeeper gaining possession of the ball. The attacker can jockey the goalkeeper.

Variation 3

- After gaining possession of the ball, the goalkeeper can choose between shooting directly into the opposing goal with a goal clearance or combining with the last attacker in the queue.



Coaching points

- The goalkeeper should read the attacker's body language to decide whether to come off their line and close them down.
- If the attacker is preparing to take a shot on goal and the goalkeeper has already begun to close them down in anticipation of a 1v1 scenario, the goalkeeper should adopt a stationary position to avoid facing the attacker's shot on the move.

Central area shot-stopping

Organisation

- Set up a 15m x 20m playing area.
- Place a goal at one end of the playing area.
- Mark out a dotted line 9m from the goal line using cones.
- Set up with 3 goalkeepers: 1 in goal and the other 2 (goalkeepers 2 and 3) beside the goal.
- Give goalkeepers 2 and 3 a ball.
- Line 6 attackers up behind the 9m line.

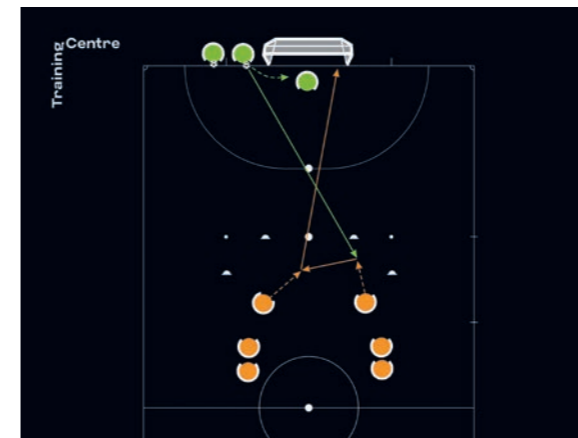
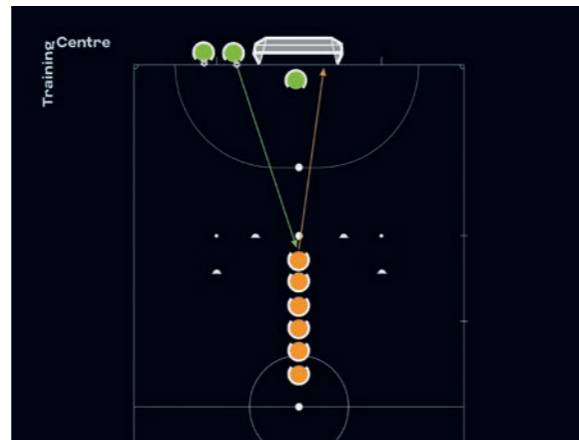
Explanation

- Goalkeeper 2 rolls the ball towards the first attacker in the queue, who takes a first-time shot on goal from behind the 9m line.
- The sequence ends when the ball goes out of play, the goalkeeper gains possession or a goal is scored.
- Once the sequence is over, the goalkeepers rotate positions, with goalkeeper 3 rolling the ball from beside the goal to the second attacker in the queue, goalkeeper 2 taking up a position in goal and goalkeeper 1 occupying a position beside the goal.
- If the goalkeeper parries the attacker's shot back out to them, they have a maximum of 2 touches in which to finish on goal.

Variations

Variation 1

- Introduce a second attacker to the sequence to increase the level of uncertainty for the goalkeeper.
- The goalkeeper performs lateral movements between the 2 goalposts (slightly in front of the goal line), touching each of them before becoming active once the attacker receives the ball.
- If the goalkeeper parries the attacker's shot back out to them, the second attacker becomes active to create a 2v1 scenario.



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Variation 2

- The attacker has the option to finish on goal or set their team-mate up for a shot on goal.

Variation 3

- The 2 attackers can play up to 3 passes before finishing on goal.

Coaching points

- The attacker should be alert to any rebounds following their initial shot on goal.
- The goalkeeper should parry shots into wide areas to avoid presenting the attacker with another shooting opportunity.
- The goalkeeper should be stationary and anchored to the floor when the attacker shoots at goal.



Defending shots from out wide

Organisation

- Set up a 15m x 20m playing area.
- Place a goal at 1 end of the playing area.
- Mark out a dotted line 9m from the goal line using cones and create two 5-metre-wide zones.
- Position a pair of attackers in each of the 2 central zones, approximately 1m behind the 9m line.
- Position a pair of attackers in each of the 2 wide zones, approximately 1m behind the 9m line.
- Set up with 4 goalkeepers: 1 in goal and the other 3 (goalkeepers 2, 3 and 4) beside the goal.
- Give goalkeepers 2,3 and 4 a ball.

Explanation

- Goalkeeper 2 rolls the ball towards one of the centrally positioned attackers, who takes a first-time shot on goal.
- The sequence ends when the ball goes out of play, the goalkeeper gains possession or a goal is scored.
- Once the sequence is over, the goalkeepers rotate positions, with goalkeeper 3 rolling the ball from beside the goal to the second attacker in the queue, goalkeeper 2 taking up a position in goal, goalkeeper 1 occupying a position beside the goal and goalkeeper 4 moving forward a position in the queue beside the goal.
- If the goalkeeper gains possession of the ball, they roll it out to one of the attackers positioned in one of the 2 wide zones. After rolling the ball out, the goalkeeper swaps positions with a goalkeeper positioned beside the goal, who faces an attacking action in which the wide attacker has 2 touches in which to shoot or play a pass to the team-mate on the opposite wide channel attacking the far post.
- The wide player receiving the goalkeeper's roll-out cannot enter the central zone or the penalty area.

Variation

- Place 2 cones (in the positions displayed in the graphics to the right) and 1 attacker near to the

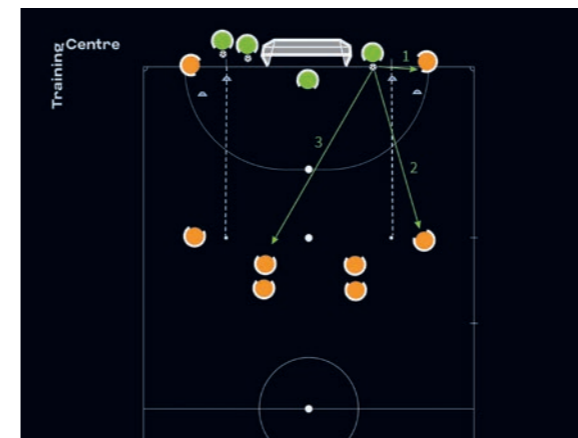


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- goal line on each side of the goal.
- The goalkeeper has 3 options to choose from in terms of the recipient of the roll-out that begins the sequence: a player positioned near to the goal line, in a wide zone or a central zone.
- Attackers choose whether to finish first-time or to pass to a team-mate, who has to finish first-time.
- If the goalkeeper rolls the ball out to a player positioned near to the goal line, this player's passing options involve 1 of the 2 players positioned centrally or a wide player on the opposite flank.

Coaching points

- The goalkeeper should not retract their arms when facing shots.
- The goalkeeper should maintain the basic defensive position for as long as possible.
- The goalkeeper should cover as much of the goal as possible to make it more difficult for the opposition to score.
- The goalkeeper should read the game and constantly adapt their position based on the attacker's intentions.



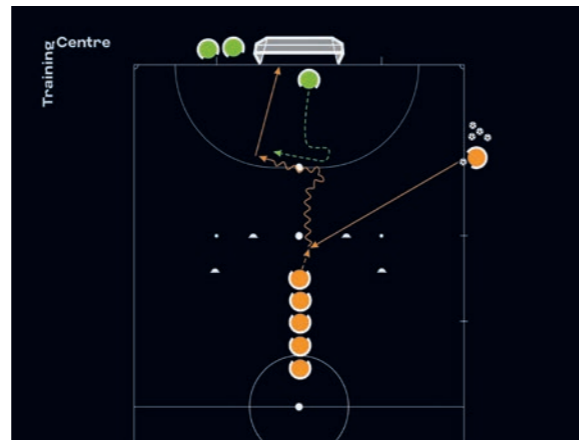
Defending the edge of the penalty area

Organisation

- Set up a 15m x 20m playing area.
- Place a goal at one end of the playing area.
- Mark out a dotted line 9m from the goal line using cones.
- Line 5 attackers up in a queue 1m behind the 9m line.
- Set up a ball station on one of the touchlines, placing a serving player at the station.
- Set up with 3 goalkeepers: 1 in goal and the other 2 (goalkeepers 2 and 3) beside the goal.

Explanation

- The serving player plays a kick-in between the 9m line and the edge of the penalty area to the first attacker in the queue.
- The first attacker has an unlimited number of touches and 3 seconds in which to finish on goal.
- If the goalkeeper parries the ball back out to the attacker, they have two 2 in which to finish on goal.
- The sequence ends when the ball goes out of play, the goalkeeper gains possession or a goal is scored.
- Once the sequence is over, the goalkeepers rotate positions, with goalkeeper 2 taking up a position beside the goal, goalkeeper 1 occupying a position beside the goal and goalkeeper 3 moving to the front of the queue beside the goal.
- If the goalkeeper gains possession of the ball, they roll it to the attacker at the front of the queue before swapping roles with the goalkeeper at the front of the queue beside the goal, who faces the attacker in a 1v1 scenario.



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Variations

Variation 1

- A ball station and server player are added on the opposite touchline, with the attacker choosing from which touchline they receive the kick-in.

Variation 2

- The attacker receives a kick-in from 1 touchline and then from the other.

Variation 3

- Two balls are placed centrally, between the 9m line and the edge of the penalty area. After repeating Variation 2, the attacker chooses 1 of the 2 balls with which to perform the 1v1 action against the goalkeeper.

Variation 4

- The attacker chooses 1 of the 4 balls with which to perform the action. They have 4 seconds in which to make their decision/perform feints between the options and 3 seconds in which to finish after making contact with the ball.

Coaching point

- The goalkeeper should only leave the penalty area if they are able to make a clearance or get a foot to the ball to divert it away from goal.



Defending from the goal line

Organisation

- Set up a 15m x 20m playing area.
- Place a goal at 1 end of the playing area.
- Mark out a dotted line 9m from the goal line using cones and create two 5-metre-wide zones.
- Place a pair of attackers in each wide zone, 1m behind the 9m line. Position 1 attacker inside the penalty area. Arrange the remaining 2 attackers, who take it in turns to occupy the role of the attacker inside the penalty area after each sequence, in a queue between the 2 central zones.
- Set up with 4 goalkeepers: 1 in goal and the other 3 (goalkeepers 2, 3 and 4) beside the goal.
- Give goalkeepers 2, 3 and 4 a ball.

Explanation

- Goalkeeper 2, who is positioned beside the goal, has 2 options to begin each sequence: either to play the ball to the attacker positioned inside the penalty area to finish on goal first-time or to pass to 1 of the 2 wide players, who control the ball before advancing and either finishing directly on goal or passing to the team-mate inside the penalty area, who takes up a position at the far post.
- The sequence ends when the ball goes out of play, the goalkeeper gains possession or a goal is scored.
- Once the sequence is over, the goalkeepers rotate positions, with goalkeeper 3 rolling the ball from beside the goal to the second attacker in the queue, goalkeeper 2 taking up a position in goal, goalkeeper 1 occupying a position beside the goal and goalkeeper 4 moving forward a position in the queue beside the goal.
- While the ball is in play, any player on the pitch (even those waiting in a queue) can finish on goal with a maximum of 2 touches.

Variation

- The attacker positioned in the penalty area has a

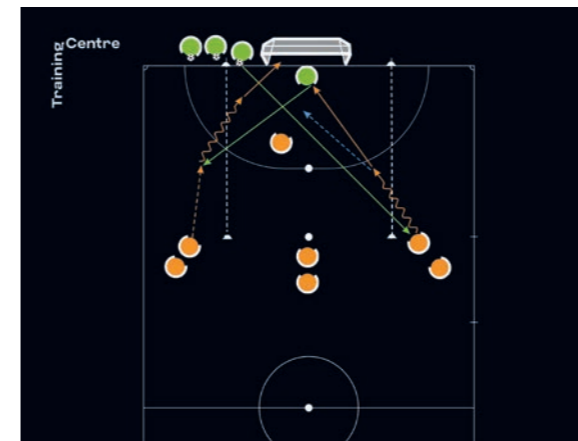
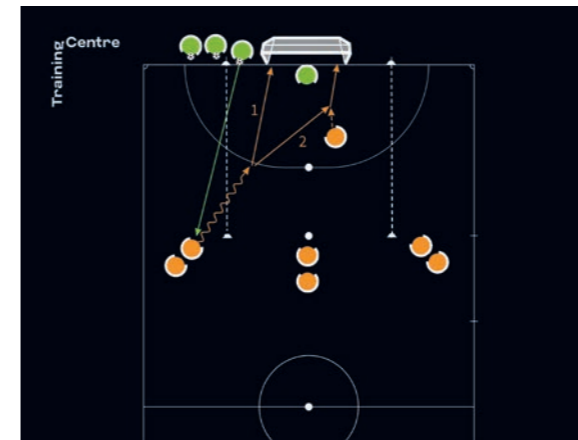


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- maximum of 3 touches in which to finish on goal.
- When the goalkeeper makes a save, the attacker whose shot was saved becomes a defender to create a 2v1 scenario (plus the goalkeeper). The goalkeeper rolls the ball out to either of the attackers and works with the defender to defend the attacking situation.

Coaching points

- The goalkeeper should focus on adopting the right position to be able to deal with various attacking scenarios.
- The goalkeeper should constantly adjust their position to ensure that they are between the ball and the goal line at all times.
- When performing the split save, the goalkeeper should slide their heel along the floor.



Defending mid-range shots

Organisation

- Use half of a court.
- Place a goal at each end of the exercise area.
- Position a goalkeeper in each goal.
- Mark out a 2m x 20m horizontal channel in the middle of the exercise area.
- Place a marker on the 5m line.
- Place an attacker in the horizontal channel.
- Arrange the remaining players in a queue on the touchline (level with the horizontal channel) and give each of them a ball.

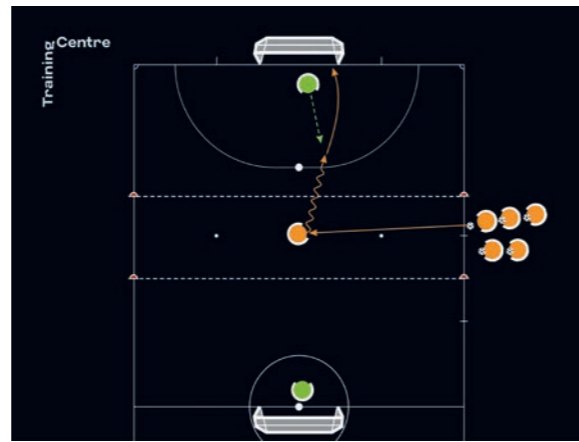
Explanation

- The exercise begins with the first player in the queue on the touchline playing a pass into the attacker positioned in the horizontal channel.
- The attacker can attack either goal and has the following two options:
 - Take a first-time shot
 - Take a directional control that takes the ball beyond the horizontal channel to engage the goalkeeper in a 1v1 scenario. In this scenario, the attacker has 3 seconds within which to finish on goal.
- If the goalkeeper claims the ball, they launch a counter-attack on the opposite goal by rolling the ball out of their penalty area and dribbling towards goal. The attacker who has just finished on goal becomes a defender and can drop back to defend the opposite goal but only once they have touched the marker positioned on the 5m line.
- If the attacker scores, they stay on and receive another pass from the same server player.
- If the attacker's shot goes out of play, they join the back of the queue of players on the touchline, and the next attacker takes up a position in the horizontal channel.

Variations

Variation 1

- Place 3 attackers in the horizontal channel and ask them to decide among themselves who will finish and if the finish is first-time or is preceded by a directional control.



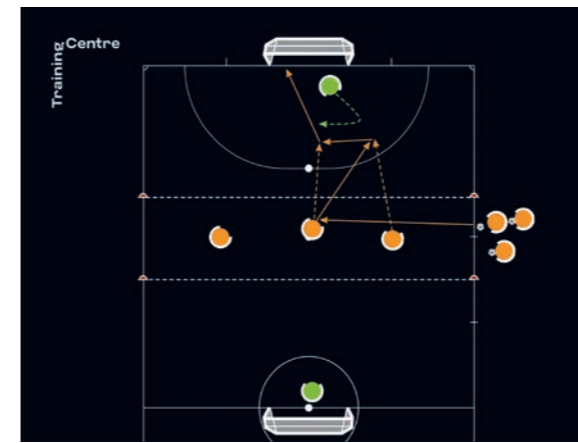
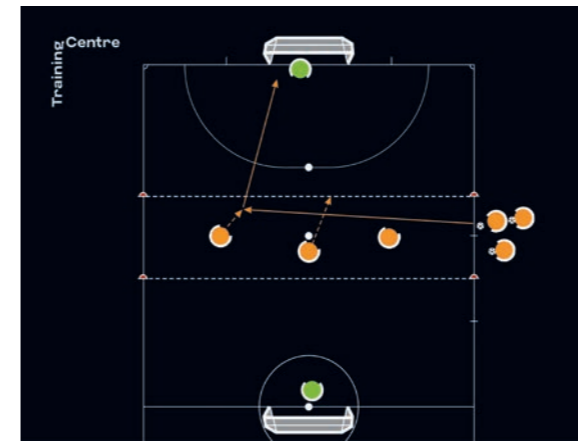
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Variation 2

- The attacker has the option of setting up a team-mate for them to finish first-time from inside the penalty area.
- If the goalkeeper catches the ball, they launch a counter-attack on the opposite goal. The last attacker to touch the ball drops back to defend, creating a counter-attack featuring a 2v1 overload.

Coaching point

- Ask the goalkeepers to come off their line as soon as they identify that the attacker has chosen to control the ball rather than to finish first-time.



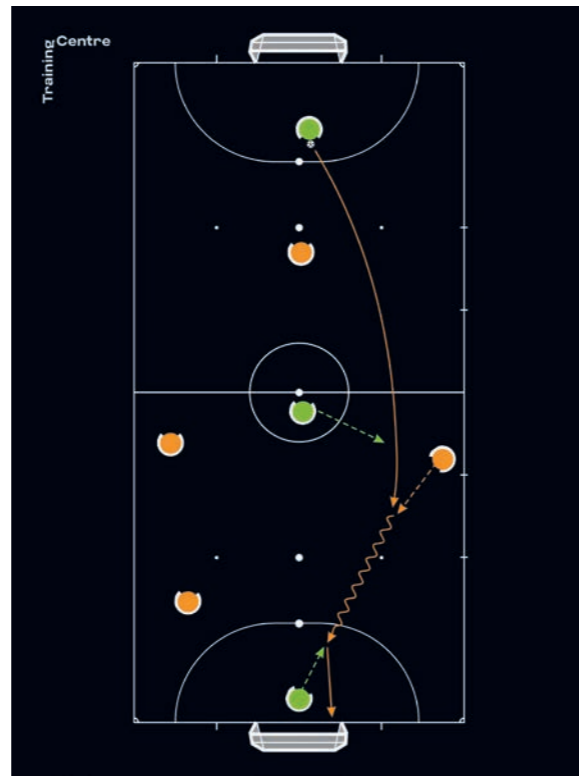
Throw-outs and 1v1s from out wide

Organisation

- Use a full court.
- Mark out an attacking zone at either end of the pitch between the goal line and the 10m line.
- Arrange 3 goalkeepers as follows: place a goalkeeper in each goal and a third goalkeeper on the halfway line.
- Position a pivot in the attacking zone at either end of the pitch.
- Place 2 wide attackers on the halfway line.

Explanation

- The exercise starts with one of the goalkeepers positioned in a goal in possession. They are tasked with throwing the ball out to the pivot or one of the 2 wide attackers, all of whom must receive the ball in the attacking zone.
- After throwing the ball out, the goalkeeper must run over to the touchline before being able to return to defend their goal.
- The goalkeeper positioned in the opposite goal tries to intercept the goalkeeper's throw-out or defends their goal in a 1v1 scenario against the attacker.
- If the goalkeeper claims the ball, they must combine with the pivot positioned in the attacking zone at the opposite end of the pitch, who engages the goalkeeper in a 1v1 scenario. After claiming the ball, the goalkeeper can throw the ball out to the pivot if they catch it inside the penalty area or play a pass using their feet if they claim it outside of the penalty area. The goalkeeper may also shoot directly on goal.
- The goalkeeper positioned on the halfway line acts as a defender and can intercept the throw-out (without using their hands). If the goalkeeper intercepts a throw-out, they play the ball to the pivot attacking the goal defended by the goalkeeper who has just thrown the ball out.



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Variations

Variation 1

- The forward has to attack the pass, controlling the ball before it hits the floor.

Variation 2

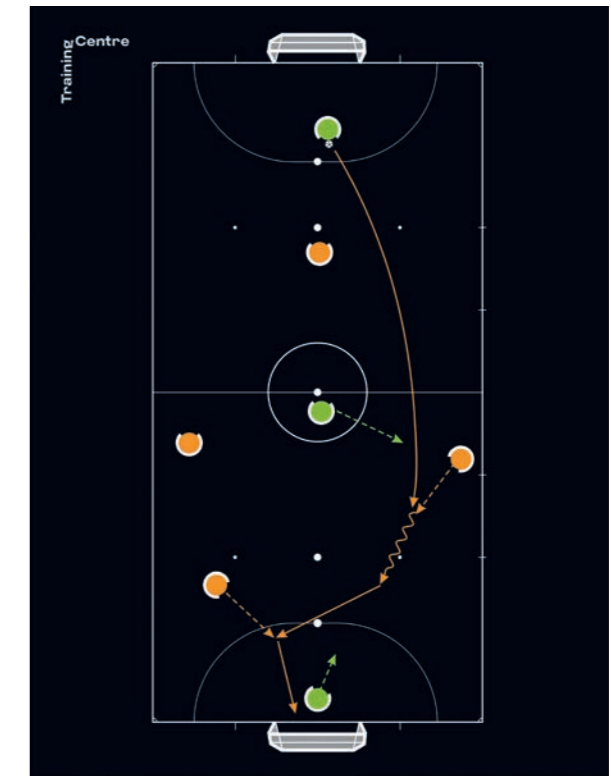
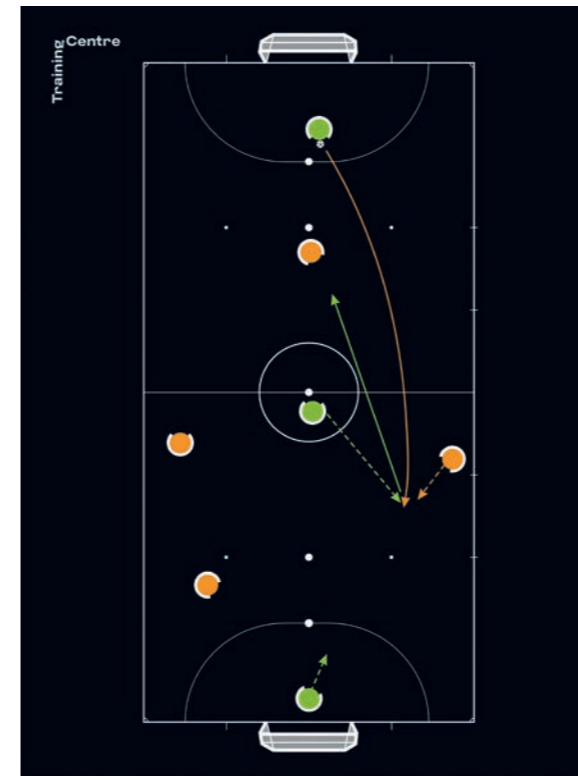
- If the goalkeeper catches the ball, they must play a low pass into the pivot.
- The goalkeeper positioned on the halfway line can use their hands to intercept aerial passes.

Variation 3

- The goalkeeper can use their feet to keep play going.

Variation 4

- The goalkeeper's passes must be played from no further than 9m from goal.



Variation 5

- Depending on the type of pass that the goalkeeper receives to restart play, they either throw an aerial ball or play a pass on the floor using their feet.

Variation 6

- The attacker can decide whether to engage the goalkeeper in a 1v1 scenario or set up a team-mate for them to finish.

Coaching point

- In 1v1 situations, the goalkeepers should try to position themselves centrally in relation to the ball and the posts.



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