

**GOALKEEPING
COACH**

**Seamus
McDonagh**
**Goalkeepers:
Direct
Distribution**

Overview:

I like to use this session because distribution from goalkeepers - using both feet - is now a vital part of the game. The latest statistics show that goalkeepers at the highest level use their feet five times as often as their hands when in control of the ball. Distribution has always been crucial for a keeper, and with the way the game is developing, they are increasingly being seen as an outfield player or quarterback in terms of their ability to start forward moves.

Goalkeepers are tested on the accuracy and value of their distribution every time they release the ball in a match. This session helps distribution to real targets become second nature, and prevents them kicking aimlessly.

“Goalkeepers at the highest level use their feet five times as often as their hands when in control of the ball.”

GOALKEEPERS: DIRECT DISTRIBUTION: MAIN SESSION

SETUP

AREA

Half pitch

EQUIPMENT

Cones, balls

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 5

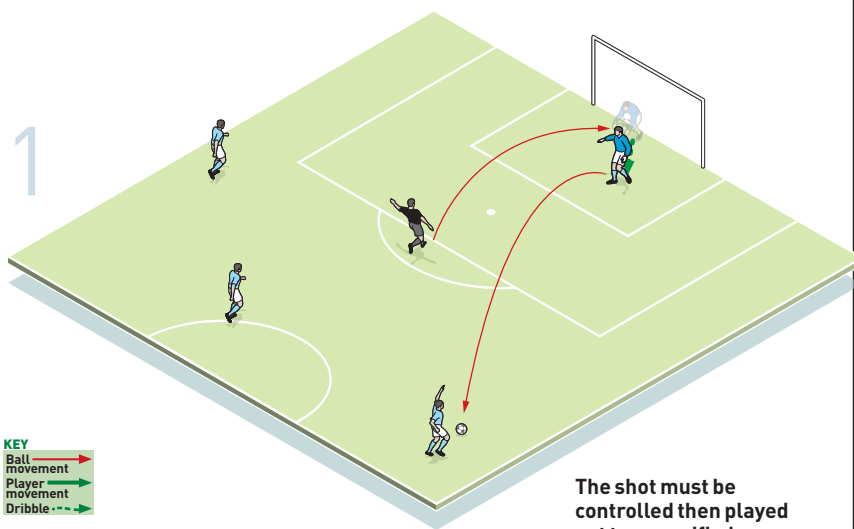
1 goalkeeper
1 defender
3 targets

What do I get the players to do?

Position three targets near to the halfway line. Use a striker in various places around the penalty box to fire balls at the goalkeeper, varying the type and intensity of each shot. The goalkeeper must then deliver the ball accurately to each target. Vary between first-time passes and allowing the keeper to take a touch. The primary intention is that he uses his feet, not his hands. If you don't have players as targets, used coned areas for the keeper to aim at.

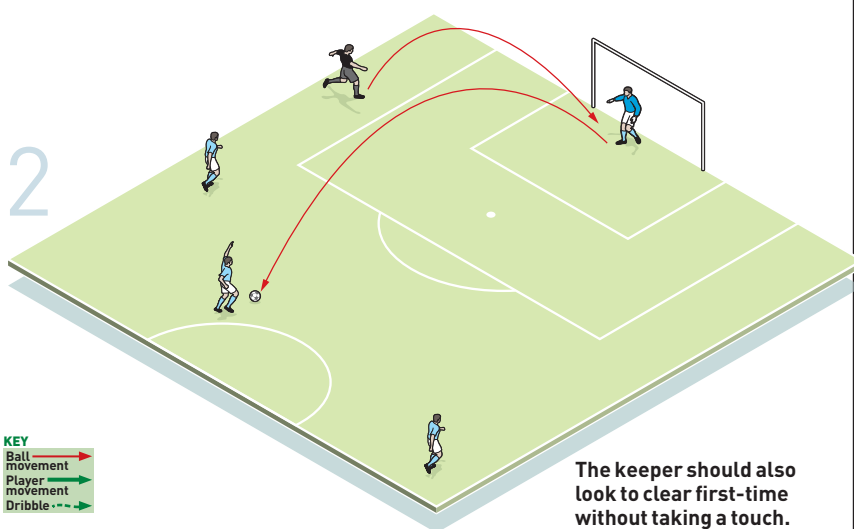
What are the key things to look out for technically/tactically?

We're looking for passing accuracy over varied distances, and the use of both feet in doing so, plus the fundamental skills of receiving and controlling the ball in the first place. The session is demanding but good fun, and keepers will see marked improvements if they keep practicing.



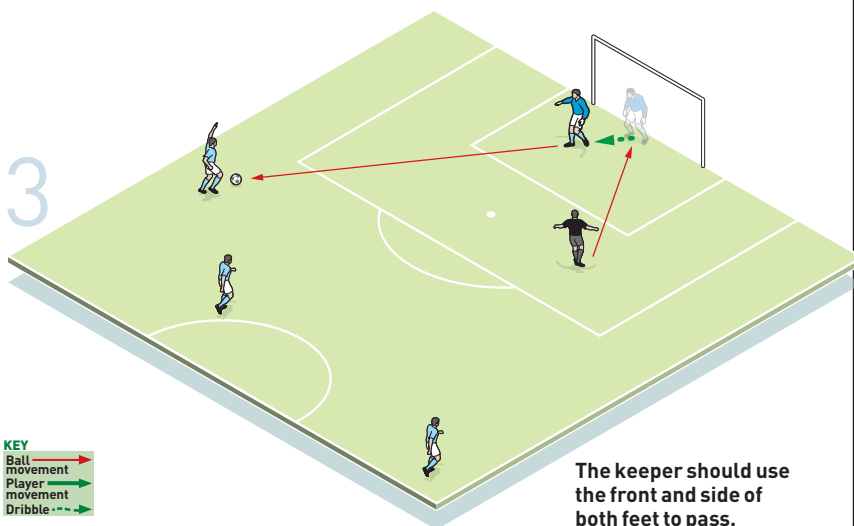
KEY
Ball movement →
Player movement →
Dribble - - - →

The shot must be controlled then played out to a specified target.



KEY
Ball movement →
Player movement →
Dribble - - - →

The keeper should also look to clear first-time without taking a touch.



KEY
Ball movement →
Player movement →
Dribble - - - →

The keeper should use the front and side of both feet to pass.



**Seamus McDonagh
GOALKEEPING
COACH**

Seamus McDonagh was, until recently, first-team goalkeeping coach at Aston Villa. He left the club following the departure of manager Martin O'Neill.

In terms of playing career, he starred between the posts for a host of clubs, including Bolton Wanderers (for whom he scored in a match against Burnley in 1983), Everton, Notts County and Charlton Athletic.

After a spell managing Galway United, he went on to coach at Nottingham Forest, Leicester City and Coventry City, before joining Aston Villa in 2006.

As Villa's first-team goalkeeping coach, he worked on a daily basis with American goalkeepers Brad Friedel and Brad Guzan.

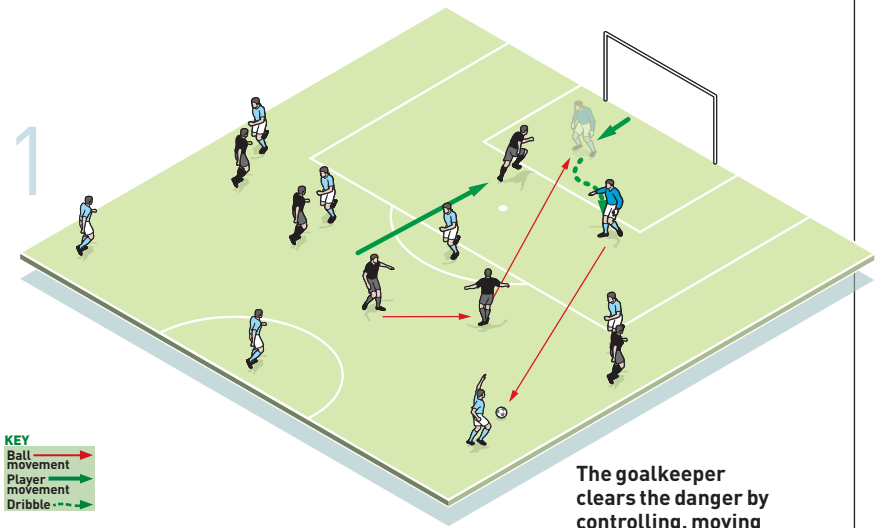
GOALKEEPERS: DIRECT DISTRIBUTION: PROGRESSION

How do I progress the session?

Bringing in more players helps goalkeepers visualise the drill more clearly, and helps them better define specific areas.

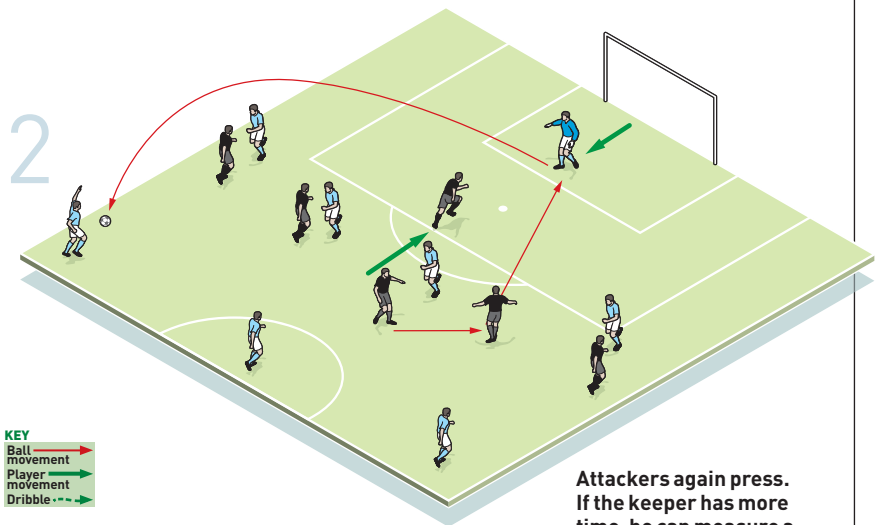
Another way to progress is to play six attackers against the back four. Get those defenders to hold a high line while the attackers play balls in behind them and chase. Look for the keeper to know how to react to the situation, knowing that in this session he can only use his feet, not his hands.

And we wouldn't be afraid to have a competition between goalkeepers, with forfeits for losers (e.g. press-ups, sprints).



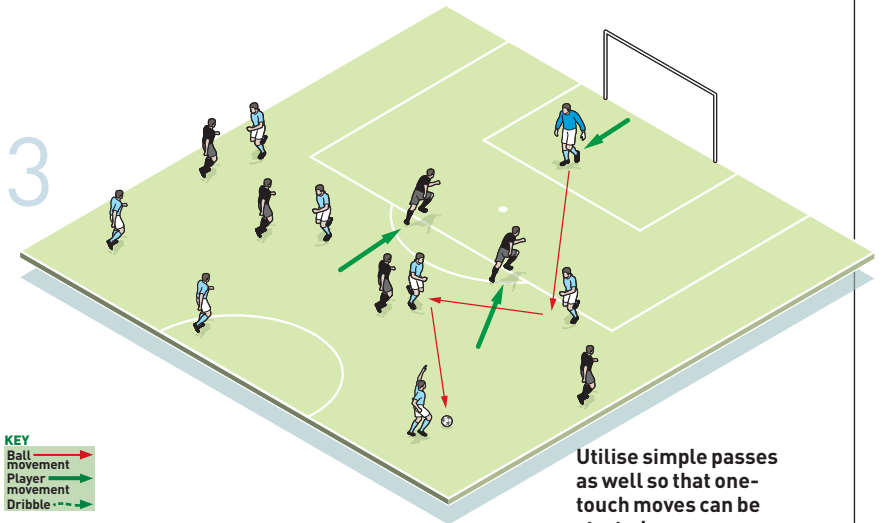
KEY
Ball movement
Player movement
Dribble

The goalkeeper clears the danger by controlling, moving with the ball, and passing to his defender.



KEY
Ball movement
Player movement
Dribble

Attackers again press. If the keeper has more time, he can measure a pass to his target.



KEY
Ball movement
Player movement
Dribble

Utilise simple passes as well so that one-touch moves can be started.

“Look for the keeper to know how to react to the situation.”