

Tremendous Saves: Vision Training and Hockey Goalies

As simple as it sounds, hockey goalies should keep their eyes on the puck. Researchers at the University of Calgary have found that the best goaltenders keep their gaze directly on the puck and the shooter's stick for almost a full second before the shot is released. This results in making the save over 75% of the time.

While this sounds obvious, keeping the eyes fixed on the target is much more difficult with all the other distractions going on the ice such as: player movement, sticks, skates, and not to mention a puck traveling at upwards of 150 kph.

Imagine a shot at 140 kph from the blue line. Based on the speed of the shot and distance traveled, this result in a time for the puck to travel to the net of just under 0.5 seconds. Now imagine the same shot much closer to the net: this significantly gets the shot quicker to the net which also means a much faster goalie reaction time is needed.

Furthermore research also shows that anxiety induced eye movements diminish a person's focus. In other words, success under pressure is dependant on an athlete's ability to control their mind, especially their visual attention.

Elite goaltenders often have this natural reaction and ability. Repetition can enhance it as well. But more recent advances in Vision Training can significantly improve a goalie's ability to be ready.

Vision training allows a goalie to enhance:

- Reaction time
- Focuses from far to near as the punch approaches
- Cognitive decision making
- Hand eye coordination
- Visual concentration under distracting situations

***Invest in a goalie's visual fitness and not just their physical fitness
and equipment needs***

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