

Goaltending Equipment

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The Fit

Goaltending has always been described as the most difficult position to play in hockey. To be successful, a goalie must possess a wide range of skills and more mental toughness than any other position in sports.

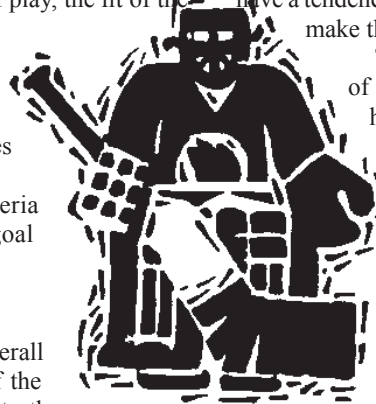
Equipment is also a very important component of a goalie's success. Aside from selecting the right equipment for the level of play, the fit of the equipment is critical.

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Below are some key criteria to follow when fitting your goal equipment:

Goal Pads

The key factor here is overall length. The bottom section of the goal pad should attach snugly to the skate so the pad does not shift on the leg. The next key area is the knee. The knee of the goalie should rest just above the center roll in the knee roll section of the pad. The only expectation to this is an all-foam goal pad. Unlike conventional deerhair stuffed pads, foam will not exhibit the tendency for the stuffing to settle to the bottom of the pad and effectively reduce the length of the pad. Therefore, the knee can be positioned just below the center of the knee roll as no allowance need be made for settling. Although foam and deerhair stuffed pads age differently, the end goal is to have the knee end up in the middle of the center knee roll.



Catch Glove

Although the trend at all levels is to oversized gloves, the goalie's fingers should extend out to the end of the finger stalls, then the fingers should reach out to the outside edges of the palm. Goalies who use gloves that are too big for them will encounter problems opening and closing the glove properly. Aside from the lack of control the glove will also have a tendency to "break back" or fold, which will make the glove difficult to use.

The second key factor is that the heel of your hand should line up with the heel and cuff of the catcher. If not, the proper balance between the cuff and catching portion of the glove will be disturbed and protection will be sacrificed.

Stick Glove

The stick glove or "blocker" should be fit based on hand size. The goalie's fingers should extend to the end of the finger stalls and lightly brush the end of the stalls.

Body Pads

The key fitting criteria for body pads are overall length, and fit at the elbow and shoulder.

The belly portion of the body pad should extend to the belt line of the goalie. This will ensure overlap with the pant. The belly pad can be tucked into the pant or it can rest out of the pant, depending on the goalie's preference.