



Taking the perfect penalty

- *This is a psychological game. The goalie will try to put you off in any way she can, but don't take any notice of her, even if she's pointing behind you and shouting, "Wow, look at that!" or sticking her tongue out at you. If you're really on form, you could even give her a dose of her own medicine.*



- *The goalie will use other methods to try to second guess you: she'll look at the angle of your hips, your shoulders, your eyes and your run up, as these might tell her where the ball is going and help her to block your shot. Use this to your advantage!*
- *Aim carefully, because a firmly placed, accurate kick can be difficult for a goalie to block, even if she has already guessed where it's headed.*
- *Practice makes perfect. It's an old one, but it's true. The more practice you have, shooting in as many different ways as you can, will give you the best chance of firing it past the goalie.*
- *Try to stay calm. It's scary stuff, but take a deep breath, focus and shoot. If you miss, don't worry! No one's perfect – and there's always next time.*



How to be a gobsmacking goalkeeper

- Being a goalie is tough. You have balls thrown at you, you have to throw yourself at balls, you get bruised, shouted at, hugged, kicked ... being able to stay positive even when things go wrong will really help you.
- Learn the whole game inside out. The more you know, the more you'll be able to guess when the ball's going to fly at you – and from where. Practise your ball control skills, too.
- Once you've made a decision on which way to dive, stick with it. To your opposition, you must look like an impenetrable, intimidating wall. Even if you feel like a squishy little mouse.
- Be prepared to dive high and low, even if it hurts. And if the ball escapes back into the field, be sure to get up again quickly to ward off any second attempt. Practise your diving technique on your bed for a softer landing.
- Draw the ball into your chest when you make a save, or at least get your body between the ball and the goal.
- Try to avoid punching the ball, but if it's too high to catch, make sure your thumb isn't tucked into your fist so that you don't risk breaking it.
- When making penalty saves, watch your opponent: where are her eyes, hips, feet and shoulders pointing? Search for clips on YouTube to see what sort of body language the professionals use.
- If you miss, don't let it rock your confidence. Just learn from your mistakes – if you even made any – and concentrate on your next save.



Dribble, turn and pass

You'll need

Four or six players, in teams of two

One ball per team

The game

Each team has two markers (anything will do), placed about ten steps away from one another. One of them is your "starting marker" and the other one is your "turning marker".

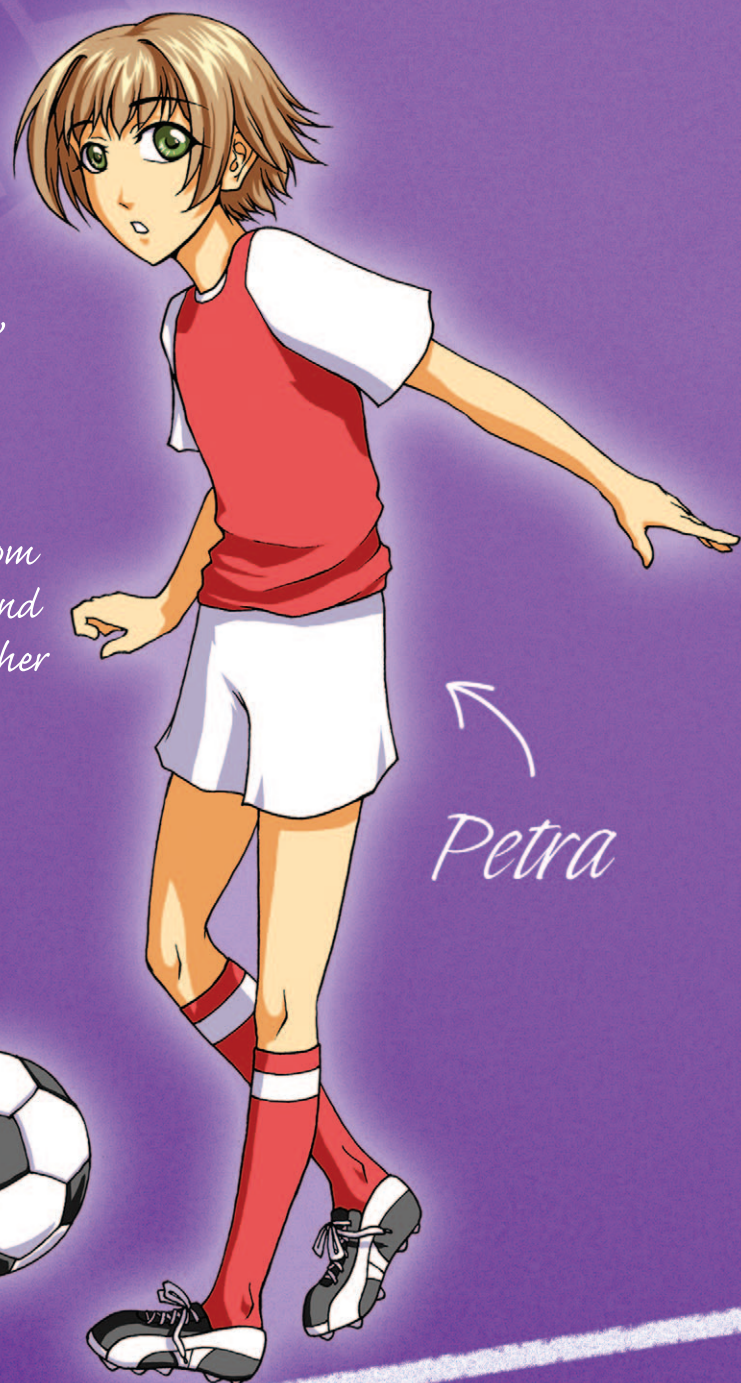
From each team, one person dribbles the ball from her starting marker to the turning marker, round the turning marker and then passes the ball to her teammate at the start point.

Whilst the second teammate dribbles the ball round the cone, the first teammate runs back to the start, receives the ball and repeats the exercise.

Each successful pass earns a point.

If a pass is bad, the team cannot score a point until the receiver has retrieved the ball and dribbled it back to the starting point.

The first team to ten points wins.



Square dance

This is a great game for learning not only how to dribble the ball, but also how to shield it from those who want to take it from you. It's also a good way to learn how to tackle other players! All essential skills if you want to become a football hero!

You'll need

Four or more players, each with a ball

Four markers

The game

Position your markers in a square with ten steps between its corners (or more, if there are a lot of people) and a marker at each corner. Players should line up in equal numbers on each side of the square.

Start the game by shouting "Go!" or blowing a whistle. Then, everyone dribbles their ball into the square. The aim of the game is to try to tackle the other players, and kick their ball out of the square. But be careful, because they'll be after your ball too! If your ball is kicked out, you're out of the game.

The game ends when there's only one person left in the square.

Tips

Use your body as a shield. Don't leave your ball on its own unless you're sure no-one will be able to get to it. This game is all about knowing how to protect the ball using your body.

