

Drill # 51 General Glove work - Fatigue

Key Factors

- Point the fingers at the ground, sky or sideways, NEVER at the ball
- Cupped gloves rise with the ball
- Extend the arms, then give with the ball
- Catch the ball in the palms at the base of the fingers, so that the fingers close around the ball



Skill Description

Glove work refers to the force absorption component of the wicketkeeper's art, covering the receipt of a dot ball, catch, return from a fielder, a run out or a successful stumping. The keeper's hands are their livelihood, so it is essential that injury risk is minimized by good glove work. Effective glove work is also the key to consistent catching, stumping and run out success. Reflex nick catching and spectacular diving catches can also be developed by hard work and thoughtful, meticulous, quality training.

A key term in describing glove work is **length of catch**. This refers to the distance used by the wicketkeeper to absorb the force of the ball's impact. Good, extended length of catch without cramping overall technique should be a major aim of all developing keepers.

Skill Execution

The keeper's gloves should act as a unit, forming a cushion. I keep my gloves slightly out in front of my eyes so they can be seen in the lowest section of my visual field (low periphery).

Forming a comfortable cup with the hands will assist force absorption. I aim to take the ball in the palms at the base of the fingers so that my fingers automatically close around the ball. This results in a clean take and reduces the risk of finger injuries.

Having soft hands with room to give with the ball is another key to effective glove work. A good extension of the arms is crucial to allow the force to be absorbed by bending the elbows. The force is passed from the hands through the elbows to the body (effective force absorption). For maximum efficiency, the cushioning should be along the line of the ball's incoming direction.

The keeper's fingers should always point away from the oncoming ball - **NEVER** point directly **AT** the ball. For low takes, the fingers point to the ground. For side takes, the fingers point out parallel to the ground, while for above the shoulder takes, they should point upwards. When the ball is very wide, one hand only may be used for maximum extension. For side on takes, I rotate my shoulders to give with the ball, increasing my length of catch. For catches at chest level, I either crouch down and take the ball with my gloves pointing up, or I move to the side and turn my shoulders to provide a cushioning effect, with the gloves pointing out away from the body .

I try to keep my hands in a comfortable, relaxed position. In preparing to receive the ball, I flare out my hands to maximize the surface area covered by my gloves. In keeping to spinners, this increases my coverage when the ball is nicked, and improves my chances of securing the wider edges.

Drill Description

Two markers are placed 5 metres apart. The keeper stands between the markers, facing a thrower who underarms the ball straight to the keeper who catches and returns to the thrower. The keeper moves sideways to touch one marker with one glove, then receives another catch in the middle before moving across to touch the marker on the other side, and so on. The throw can be varied so that it is not always to the centre.

Drill Coaching Points

The glove work key points will be tested when the keeper becomes fatigued. Ensure the key points are in order throughout, even when tired. Performing skills whilst under physical stress will make the normal conditions feel "easy". Targets of a set number of repetitions or a time limit can be used to motivate and extend the keeper as well as work on fitness.