

### Lesson Description

In today's game, the goaltender spends just as much time, sometimes more, down as they do on their feet. Therefore, goaltenders must strive to have equal mobility on their feet as they do on their knees. In this lesson plan we are going to cover one of the two methods used to travel laterally while down; backside pushes.

A backside push while down is shown in Figure 1.

In most cases, down movement is used to transport a goaltender to new position on a puck that has remained in close proximity to the net off an initial save. In these situations, time is limited for the goaltender to re-establish new position on the puck, since it has the potential to be quickly released back on net. Therefore, in a limited-time response, the goalie's only priority may be angle and time is not present to get up. Therefore, down movement is used to drive the goaltenders body unit towards angle.

The most common form of down movement is pushing with the backside skate. Defined, the backside skate is the one used to drive the goaltender to their new position. For instance, on a rebound that goes to the left side of the goaltenders body, it is the right skate that will drive the goaltender across to new position.

Another method of lateral movement while down is knee shuffles. However, they are only used if a very small distance needs to be traveled. To get a detailed breakdown of this skill, view it's lesson plan under the Movement - Later category.

### EXECUTION SEQUENCE

Prior to pushing while down using the backside skate, the goaltender must first aim their body properly to ensure they drive directly to new angle. For this to occur, the goaltender must have strong visual attachment on the puck. With continued vision on the puck after the initial save, the goaltender can properly rotate their body to ensure a path is traveled that allows new angle to be achieved first.



A backside push while down allows the goaltender to drive their body unit towards new angle



Continued vision on the puck after the initial save, the goaltender can properly rotate their body

Strong visual attachment and proper rotation are shown in Figure 2.

With vision established, the goaltender now knows where the new angle lies. Next, the goaltender must rotate their body. The rotation sequence follows this progression: eyes, shoulders and hips.

If an extended save-side leg is present (i.e. half butterfly, pad extension), it will simultaneously be brought back toward the body unit with the knee being dropped to the ice. This also aids the rotation of the body. However, if an extended save-side leg is not present, the goaltender will proceed to lift the backside knee following the rotation.

With the goaltender now aimed in the correct direction they wish to travel, the backside skate can be activated as shown in Figure 3.

It is important to point out that the goalie requires a greater hold when driving while down. If the backside skate blows out due to a loss of edge grip the goalie will come up short. To avoid this, the goaltender must ensure they bring the backside skate in tight to the body. This will allow for a full extension in the push to occur. In order to be able to plant the backside skate in tight to the body, the goaltender must possess high thighs in their down position. If high thighs are not present, meaning the goaltender is sitting back on their legs, the backside skate cannot be brought in tight to the body. This means the extension required for an explosive push with the backside skate cannot be obtained.

It is also important to make sure the backside skate is planted, and aimed in the correct direction. A properly aimed skate will move out to the side of the goaltenders body as the push is being made. This will ensure the goaltender travels in the direction they have aimed their body via their rotation.

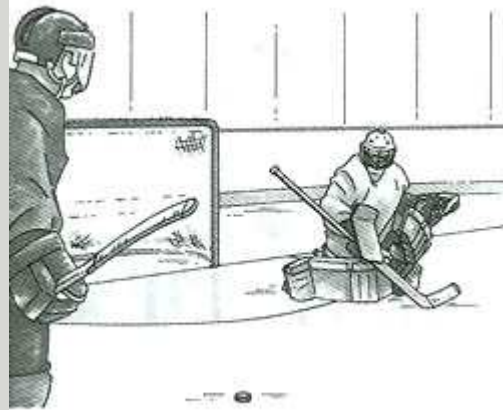
Once the backside skate is anchored correctly into the ice, the goaltender is ready to push. However, before the push is made, the goaltender must ensure they have a flared lead-leg, also shown in Figure 3. This will initiate early coverage as the goaltender drives across and minimize resistance.

Here, the goaltenders objective is to have the lead pad positioned on the inside ridge and flared away from the body. For instance, if the goaltender is driving to their glove side using their blocker side skate, the glove side skate will be pointed out to the side of the goaltenders body as opposed to directly in behind it. Similar to the way the lead pad is positioned when executing a butterfly slide.

Finally, as the drive is made the body must come back together. The drive across allows the lead pad to build low, middle coverage rapidly. It is the body coming through which helps to build the coverage up. The goalie that re-compacts the body after the drive that begins to rebuild maximal net coverage.

This is shown in Figure 4.

On a closing note, backside pushes while down is an important skill for all goaltenders and should be implemented as quickly as possible. However, with younger and beginner level goaltenders, driving to a new position while remaining down should not be attempted due to a lack of strength. Since there is more resistance when pushing a down body on the ice, power is a prerequisite to its success.



Following proper rotation, the backside skate is activated and the lead pad is flared



Following the push, the body must come back together to build on the initial low, middle coverage

