AGES 10-13

DRYLAND SHOOTING

Sixty-five shots, every one of them aimed. A stick, a ball and a target.

Open it on your phone

ABOUT 20 MINUTES	A STICK, A BALL AND A TARGET	TWO OR THREE TIMES A WEEK

First the target: plywood, a fence or a net — never the garage door, never a window, and never with a car or a little brother behind it. No plywood? Chalk a door-sized square on a concrete wall you are allowed to hit. Stand about ten feet back and mark the spot with tape, so you can actually tell whether you are getting better, and count the ones that hit rather than the ones you take. Use a street-hockey ball on concrete rather than a puck, which will not slide and wrecks the blade — the balls are sold by temperature, so get the cold-weather one for winter. Old stick if you have one, tape the bottom of the blade, and put five or six balls down to save walking — but never into the road after one. Where a cue says puck, read ball.

WARM UP

One time through.

1. **Arm circles and band pull-apart** — *15 each way*
   Big slow circles both directions, then pull a light band apart at chest height. Skip the band pull-apart if you don't have a band.
2. **World's greatest stretch** — *4 each side*
   Step into a long lunge, back knee off the floor, both hands inside the front foot. Drop the inside elbow toward the front ankle, then rotate and reach that arm to the ceiling.
3. **Quick narrow dribble** — *2 × 20 sec*
   Hands a little closer. Tiny, fast touches only a few inches wide. Soft hands: let the ball sit on the blade instead of batting it. Hands first — a good shot starts with a settled ball.

THE SHOTS

Aim every single one.

4. **Wrist shots** — *30 shots*
   Puck in the middle of the blade, weight moving from your back leg to your front leg. Follow through at the target, rolling the blade closed. First ten of the thirty in slow motion, feeling the weight move to the front foot. Follow through low for a low shot and high for a high one — that is the whole of aiming.
5. **Backhand shots** — *15 shots*
   Puck toward the heel of the blade. Pull it across and lift with a sweeping follow-through. Aim high, since that's where goalies struggle with backhands. Second, while the hands are fresh. Nobody practises this enough, which is exactly why it works.
6. **Snap shots off the dribble** — *20 shots*
   Two quick stickhandles, then release without a big wind-up. Change where you shoot from: in front, beside, even behind your feet. Last, because it puts the hands and the shot together.

PASSING

No partner? A wall does the job.

7. **Passing off a rebounder or wall** — *2 × 15 passes*
   Pass hard and flat at the rebounder, or a wall if you don't have one. Cushion the pass as it comes back: let the blade give a little as it arrives. Shoot the last five back instead of catching them.

FINISH

8. **Wrist and forearm stretch** — *30 sec each*
   Arm straight out, fingers up, gently pull the hand back. Then fingers down and repeat.
9. **Doorway chest stretch** — *30 sec each*
   Forearm on the door frame at shoulder height, step through and turn away.

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