



SAYHA GOALIE JUNCTION 10,000 TENNIS BALL CHALLENGE

While the main season may be done, training for the next season never ends. Whatever you end up doing during the off-season, may you continue to never give up on getting better. This challenge is for the goalie who wants to grow in hand-eye coordination, muscle endurance, and joy for being a hockey goalie.

This challenge is for all goalies in the SAYHA Goalie Junction (Mites through Bantams). It will start March 15th and end on September 30th of each year. Working on this challenge about 5 days each week will help the goalie achieve the goal of 10,000 tennis balls.

Find specific areas (like an approved brick wall, a cement wall, the boards of the rink) that can help you accomplish this challenge. For the catching part, you could even use a net with an approved backdrop behind it. You might need an older sibling, a friend, or a parent/guardian to help you with this challenge.

1) GUIDELINES:

- Be honest with yourself.
- Track your progress on the 10,000 Tennis Ball Challenge Tracking Google Form.
- Always track the ball with your whole face when catching with your hand(s) and glove(s).
- Catch each tennis ball at various challenging speeds with your bare hands and with your catch glove.
- Use your helmet, both gloves, and goalie stick when someone is shooting tennis balls at you.
- Goalies that want a bigger challenge: Incorporate 10 minutes of juggling per day (with or without wall sits), side lunges and 90 degree squats when catching or blocking tennis balls.
- Aim to have good posture all the time.
- If you choose to incorporate 10 minutes of juggling, go at your own speed and start with two tennis balls if you need to.

2) EQUIPMENT:

- At least two tennis balls (or two racquet balls) (three balls if you choose to juggle three)
- A parent/guardian approved wall (to bounce tennis balls off of if you're throwing them off the wall by yourself)
- An accountability friend (could be another goalie)
- Catch glove & blocker glove
- Goalie helmet (when the tennis balls are being shot at you)
- Goalie stick and net/backdrop (if someone is shooting on you with tennis balls)

3) CATCHING DISTANCE:

- **Catching distances will vary between each goalie. Some factors of the catching distance for the goalie will include: a) goalie's height & speed, b) speed of the goalie helpers' throw/shot, and c) hand-eye coordination experience of the goalie.**
- The general suggested space between the goalie and the wall when the goalie is throwing the tennis ball at themselves: (To help hand-eye coordination at the goalie's own pace)
 - For Mites: 8-10 feet and let it bounce 1 time
 - For Squirts: 9-11 feet and let it bounce 1 time
 - For Peewees and Bantams: 10-12 feet and let it bounce 1 time
- The general suggested space between the goalie and the wall when the goalie has a helper and when the goalie is facing the wall: (To help gauge various types of speed and angles)
 - For Mites: 8-10 feet and let it bounce 1 time
 - For Squirts: 8-10 feet and let it bounce 1 time
 - For Peewees and Bantams: 6-8 feet and try not to let it bounce
- You can always change the distance between the goalie and the wall or between the goalie and the shooter and even the speed of the throw/shot to help catch each tennis ball more consistently. Remember, the goal isn't just to block the tennis ball, but to follow the ball into your hand/glove consistently.

4) HAND-EYE COORDINATION RESOURCES:

Besides this document, here are a few resources from Youtube:

- Pro Hockey Europe: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zs1m1tfN1sc>
- Goalie Training Pro TV: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZQjTjDwn7o>
- Darby Halonen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDZCqB7g4mw>

5) TENNIS BALL CATCHING/BLOCKING TIPS:

- Have a regular schedule for how long you work on this challenge.
- Write down how many tennis balls you catch, juggle, and/or block so you don't forget.
- Challenge yourself with someone else.
- Aim for 100 catches a day: 50 to yourself and 50 from someone else at various speeds, etc.
- OR, aim for 50 catches a day and 50 blocks a day.
- Focus more on your weak hand (with or without your glove) a bit more.
- When getting shot at, bend your knees as if you were wearing your goalie leg pads.
- Look at the tennis ball as it enters your hand.
- "Quality over quantity" mindset when practicing your hand-eye coordination.
- Trying different scenarios (up a hill or down a hill, slow balls or faster balls, and objects between you and the tennis ball— aka: screens) will help your goalie hand-eye coordination.
- Know that a successful catch is when you catch the ball in your hand or your catch glove without it dropping or bouncing.
- Hand blocks DON'T count.

BONUS POINTS:

- **50 bonus catches will be given to each goalie every time they:** choose to work on their forehand and backhand passing technique with their goalie helmet, goalie stick, catch and blocker gloves.
- **To reach 50 bonus catches:** a goalie must pass the tennis ball forward to someone else or off of adult-approved boards/walls 25 times with both of their goalie gloves on and then pass the tennis ball to someone else or off of adult-approved boards/walls 25 times with their backhand.
- Here is a helpful link to follow:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXtPXRTc5DU>

6) ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS:

- For every 1,000 catches/blocks, you will be entered to win a custom hockey goalie stick.
- Every goalie who completes the 10,000 tennis ball challenge will be invited to a pizza party and skate with the Northwest Express Junior Team.
- Every goalie who completes the 10,000 tennis ball challenge will also be awarded a t-shirt and be recognized in the SAYHA newsletter.

7) REMEMBER . . .

- Be honest.
- Stay consistent in your training.
- Have accountability.
- Grow your confidence in your skills.
- Have fun!