

TRYOUT GUIDE

THE GOALIE'S GUIDE TO MAKING THE TEAM





ABOUT ME



HEY GOALIES!

My name is **Connor LaCouvee** — a professional goalie with experience in the **NCAA, ECHL, AHL & Europe**.

Tryouts are the thing I get asked about most. This guide is everything I tell my own goalies before tryout season — so you can walk in calm, confident, and ready to show exactly what you've got.

[NCAA](#)[ECHL](#)[AHL](#)[EUROPE](#)



PLEASE READ ME

Quick but important — please read this before you dive in.

THIS IS ADVICE, NOT A GUARANTEE

- ▶ Everything here comes from my own experience as a player and a coach. It'll stack the odds in your favour — but no guide can promise you make any team.

EVERY SITUATION IS DIFFERENT

- ▶ Organizations, levels and tryout formats vary. Use this as a framework and adapt it to your own situation.

I'M NOT A MEDICAL PRO

- ▶ I'm a goalie and a coach, not a licensed physician or mental-performance practitioner. Nothing here is medical advice.

KEEP IT IN PERSPECTIVE

- ▶ One tryout doesn't define you. Compete hard, control what you can, and keep showing up.



THE 2 WEEKS BEFORE

The work that makes a tryout feel easy happens long before you step on the ice. Here's how to show up sharp.

GET YOUR REPS IN

- ▶ Don't show up cold. Get on the ice in the weeks before — skate, take shots, and dial in your tracking and timing.

SLEEP IS A WEAPON

- ▶ Bank good sleep all week, not just the night before. A rested goalie sees the puck earlier and reacts quicker.

FUEL SMART

- ▶ Eat real food and hydrate well. Never try something new on tryout day — stick to what your body already knows.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- ▶ Only two goalies make a team, so do your homework: how many spots are open, are goalies returning (and what age), is it a starter, back-up or split role, and how many goalies are attending?

SEE IT FIRST

- ▶ Visualize clean reps the night before, and walk in expecting to make the team — not just hoping to.



WHAT COACHES WATCH

I've been on both sides of this — trying out, and watching goalies try out. Here's what actually catches a coach's eye.



THE FIRST 10 MINUTES

- ▶ First impressions stick. Coaches form opinions fast, so be sharp and dialled in from the very first warm-up.

COMPETE LEVEL

- ▶ Battle for every puck like it matters — even in a no-pressure drill — and look the same on rep 1 as you do on rep 40.

HOW YOU HANDLE A GOAL

- ▶ Everyone gets scored on. What separates you is the next save — no pouting, no stick-smashing. Reset and go.

COACHABILITY

- ▶ Listen, apply feedback fast, and ask smart questions: where did you see me play, what should I improve, and where do I fit in?

DAY-OF ROUTINE

Tryout day runs smoother when nothing is left to chance. Lock in a routine and repeat it every time.



ARRIVE EARLY

First one on the ice, last one off. Give yourself time so you're never rushed or flustered.

WARM UP WITH PURPOSE

Run the same warm-up order every time — track pucks, feel your edges, and get your eyes going before the whistle.

BETWEEN DRILLS

Stay engaged. Watch the play, reset your feet, and keep your focus sharp instead of drifting.

BODY LANGUAGE

Stand tall and look relaxed in the net. Confident posture tells a coach you belong before you make a single save.



THE MENTAL SIDE

A tryout is an opportunity to showcase your greatness — not a test of whether you'll make it. Your job never changes: stop the puck.

"WE GO IN TO MAKE THE TEAM — NOT JUST TO TRY OUT."

CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES

- ▶ You can't control the other goalie, which coach shows up, or who they know. You CAN control your attitude, effort and preparation — pour everything there.

KILL THE NARRATIVES

- ▶ "Who's making the team? How did the other goalie look?" Those thoughts pull your focus off your job. Notice them, drop them, get back to the puck.

RESET & PLAY FREE

- ▶ Let a goal go in two seconds — breathe, reset your feet, lock back in. Don't grip the stick; trust your training and let the game come to you.

▶ [WATCH: MY FULL TRYOUT TALK](#)



STANDING OUT

Two goalies can stop the same pucks — the one who stands out is the one doing the little things. Confidence, never arrogance.

COMMUNICATE

- ▶ Talk to your defence. A loud, clear goalie makes the whole team better — and coaches notice it instantly.

BATTLE FOR EVERYTHING

- ▶ Compete for every puck and every scramble. Effort is impossible to miss and impossible to fake.

LIFT YOUR TEAMMATES

- ▶ Praise good plays, tap pads, stay positive. Coaches love a goalie who makes the room better.

LET YOUR GAME TALK

- ▶ Confidence, never arrogance. You don't need to show off — your attitude and your saves say plenty.



SUPPORTING YOUR GOALIE

Parents — your support makes a huge difference during tryout season. The most powerful thing you can do is protect the mindset.

FRAME IT RIGHT

Remind them it's an opportunity to show what they've got — not a pass/fail test.

KEEP THE CAR RIDE POSITIVE

Let them lead the conversation after. Listen more than you coach.

DON'T COMPARE

Never measure your goalie against the others trying out — it only feeds the false narratives.

POINT TO THE CONTROLLABLES

Help them focus on attitude, effort and preparation — the things that are actually theirs.

VET IT TOGETHER

Help them ask the right questions before committing to a tryout — spots, returning goalies, and the role.

STAY CALM

Your calm is contagious. Let them own their routine — your job is to support, not to add pressure.



GO GET IT

You've got everything you need to walk into that tryout ready. Tag me @lacouveegoaltending and let me know how it goes — and check out what else I've got:

SUMMER CAMPS



PEAK PERFORMANCE



GOALTENDING ACADEMY



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