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Warm-Up Directions

A warm-up should be the first physical activity in every training session or competition. A good warm-up helps you to reach a state of physical and mental readiness.

A proper warm-up should include:
- Aerobic activity
- Dynamic stretching

The aerobic activity in a warm-down should increase your heart rate. Some aerobic activities are high knees, jumping jacks and a jog around the playing field.

After you complete the aerobic activity, you will want to dynamic stretch the different muscles you'll be using.

**HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE**
- Try to do about 15-20 repetitions of each exercise.
- Many of these stretches can be done in place or across the playing area.
- Select a few exercises that focus on different muscles.
Sample Warm-Up

AEROBIC ACTIVITIES
Aerobic activities are whole body movements should last about 5 minutes and increase the heart rate. Select a few exercises from the list below:

- Jog in Place
- Jumping Jacks
- Power Skips

DYNAMIC STRETCHES
Dynamic stretches consist of active, controlled movements that take body parts through a full range of motion. If you don’t have enough time, select a few that focus on the different muscles used in your sport:

- Arm Circles
- Arm Swings
- Torso Twists
- Walking Quadriceps Stretch
- Windmill Toe Touches
- Wrist Rotations
Jog in Place

DIRECTIONS

• Jog in place.
• Make sure you are also swinging your arms the whole time.
Jumping Jacks

DIRECTIONS

• Jump up and spread your legs apart as you swing your arms over your head.
• Jump again and bring your arms back to your sides and your legs together.
Power Skips

DIRECTIONS

- Stand with your feet hip width apart.
- Lift your right knee and spring up off your left foot, hopping into the air.
- Switch sides. Lift your left knee and spring up off your right foot, hopping into the air.
- Continue in a “skipping” motion and swing arms back to front.
Arm Circles

DIRECTIONS

- Stand tall with your arms straight down. Slowly make large circles with your arms in the forward direction.
- Repeat exercises in the backward direction.

Featuring Special Olympics athlete, Jayla Neal
Arm Swings

DIRECTIONS

- Start in a standing position with your feet apart and stretch your arms out to the sides making a “T” shape.
- Cross your arms in the front of the body and reach as far back as possible to touch your shoulders or back.
- Uncross your arms and return to your starting position.
Torso Twists

DIRECTIONS

- Start in a standing position with your feet apart.
- Stretch your arms out to the sides making a “T” shape.
- While keeping your arms out straight and your hips facing forward, turn your upper body and head slowly to one side, return to center, then turn to the other side.

Featuring Special Olympics athlete, Jayna Neal.
Walking Quadriceps Stretch

DIRECTIONS

- Step forward onto your right foot and raise your left foot up behind you.
- Reach your left hand back, grab your ankle, and make sure your knee points down.
- Let go of your ankle, step forward with your left foot, and repeat on the right side.
- Keep walking and alternating sides.
Windmill Toe Touches

DIRECTIONS

• Start in a standing position with your feet apart and stretch your arms out to the sides making a “T” shape.
• Reach one hand across your body and tap the outside of the opposite foot. Keep your arms and legs as straight as possible.
• Return to the upright starting position with arms out to sides. Reach your other hand across and tap the outside of the opposite foot.
Wrist Rotations

DIRECTIONS

- Put your arms out straight to your sides or in front of you.
- Make circles with your wrists in one direction and then the opposite direction.
Benefits of a Warm-Up

A warm-up should be the first physical activity in every training session or competition. A good warm-up helps you to reach a state of physical and mental readiness.

Physical and Mental Benefits

- Increase heart rate
- Increase breathing rate
- Increase body and muscle temperature
- Greater blood flow to the active muscles
- Shift focus from life to sport
- Connects the mind and the body