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Warm-up is a key and essential part of preparing for great athletic performances. In the gym or on the field, a good warm-up can ensure you, as an athlete, are prepared to perform at your very best either to achieve your desired training effect or competitive performance. The key is to understand what you should be doing for your warm-up to achieve your training and competition objectives.

Potential Benefits of Warming Up

Increased circulation resulting in:

- Increased blood flow to your muscles
- Increase oxygen delivery and uptake to your muscles
- Decreased vascular resistance
- Increased metabolic rate
- Increased cardiovascular response to sudden strenuous exercise

Increased body and muscle temperature:

- Increased speed of nerve transmission = faster reaction time and faster muscle contractions
- Reduced muscle viscosity = smoother muscle contractions and increased mechanical efficiency
- Increased resistance to strain; a warm muscle can handle greater tension at the musculo-tendon junction
- Increased sensitivity of nerve receptor = you have greater awareness of where your body is in space.

Basic Rules

1. Workouts that are high in intensity and are technically demanding require more detailed specific warm-ups than low volume, easier workouts. Your warm-up should reflect the activity you are about to do and your sport.
2. Increase body temperature and circulation first (this is often called GENERAL WARM-UP).
3. Following this with dynamic range of motion (ROM) work which can also include exercises which activate your muscles for movements that are elements important to your performance.
4. Integrate a few exercises that address your functional weaknesses and prevent sport specific injuries. This reminds these muscles to work and ensures you are working on improving these areas.
5. After your ROM work perform movements and exercises that reflect the quality and intensity (SPECIFIC WARM-UP) of what your training session will entail. Add a few exercises that address your technical or physiological weaknesses (For example: if you are weak on quickness and agility do some foot work).
6. Pay attention to how your body is moving and what it is telling you — be diligent with technique, it prepares your focus mentally and physically.
7. Develop (and practice!!!) warm-up routines that are effective for your performance mentally and physically (especially for pre-competition).
8. Complete your warm-up with some mental imagery or rehearsal to further remind your mind and body that you are totally prepared for a great training session or work-out.
9. The effects of your warm-up last about 30 minutes.

Warm-Up TIPS

- ✓ If yours is a sport that requires quickness, agility, reaction and unstable conditions be sure to make static and dynamic balance work part of your warm-up.
- ✓ If your sport has a high incidence of knee injuries, work in some backward running and jumping into your warm-up to activate your hamstrings.
- ✓ If your sport has a high incidence of shoulder injuries, work in shoulder stability exercises along with some proprioceptive, dynamic throwing exercises.



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