

Warm-up Guidelines

A warm-up is very important for achieving your fitness goals, and every workout should incorporate one. There are three main functions of a good warm-up:

1. Raises the temperature of the body and increases blood flow through muscles to help prevent injury and allow muscles to work optimally
2. Primes the muscles, joints, ligaments, and tendons for the forces and ranges of motion encountered in the workout
3. Stimulates the nervous system, preparing the body for competition-specific activities



General Warm-up

A general warm-up should be done before any weight training or cardio workout and should take no more than 15 minutes. Some examples include jumping jacks, lateral jumps, lunges, jogging, and brisk walking.

- Try warming up with a sweatshirt on to help raise your body temperature. (Remember, you should break into a light sweat while warming up.)
- Do your general warm-up without sneakers to help strengthen the muscles of the foot and ankle.
- Always consider this part of your workout, and you will never forget to do it!

Specific Warm-up

The specific warm-up will vary depending on the particular exercise you are doing. Warming up with lower weights helps groove the correct movement patterns into muscle memory, and it helps prepare the central nervous system and muscles for a maximal effort lift.

- **Lower body specific moves:** quadruped hip circles, body squats, light sets of lower body lifts like deadlifts and squats, short sprints
- **Upper body specific moves:** pushups, arm circles, “No Moneys,” band pull aparts, light bench pressing or military pressing



Tips: Focus on proper technique while executing the lift with as much force as you can. Don't forget a specific warm-up also pertains to running and sports. A warm-up is a good way to judge how your body will handle a specific workout on any given day; if the warm-up is poor, then tone down the intensity during the workout to prevent injury.