

WARM-UPS

Athletes should be encouraged to Warm-up before all athletic activities. This includes practice sessions as well as competitions.

A properly conducted Warm-up should increase an athlete's competitive performance and reduce the chance of injury.

If an athlete competes more than once on a given day, he/she must warm-up for each event. Subsequent warm-ups may not need to be as vigorous or extensive as the first, but this depends on the length of time between events. The athlete should maintain flexibility and body temperature.

Athletes must keep warm during warm-ups by wearing track suits or, in hot weather, track suit pants and t-shirt and replace them at the completion of the event or between parts of a field event.

The warm-up should be an enjoyable experience rather than a boring run around a track followed by exercises.

The normal parts of a warm-up are:-

1. The initial steady jog for 5 to 10 minutes, depending on the age of the athletes, to raise the body temperature to prepare the muscles for further movement.

- ❖ No racing ahead.
- ❖ The jog is gentle enough so that you and the athletes can hold a conversation.

- ❖ Even on a hot day you should warm-up. Your skin may be warm but your muscles may not be. Only this introduction to gentle exercise will increase their temperature.
- ❖ The run may be varied by different activities while jogging around the track or surrounding areas (e.g. side-skipping, dodging in and out of trees, zig-zagging and backwards running).

2. Stretching and Mobility Exercises to prepare the joints and muscles.

- ❖ Start with easy loosening up exercises. Try the “Head to Toe” approach, gradually loosening up from the top to the bottom of the body. This ensures that the whole body is prepared for more difficult stretching exercises.
- ❖ Do not use jerky movements.
- ❖ Stretch the muscle to a comfortable range and hold the stretch for 10 to 15 seconds, depending on the age before relaxing it.
- ❖ Exercises creating strain on the lower back should be avoided.

3. Run throughs. This involves 3 or 4 repetitions of faster running over distances ranging from 30 to 100 metres depending on age. Start with about half pace run throughs. Maintain correct running form.

- 4. Event Specific Exercise or Drills** will give the athlete the feel of the event that he/she is about to attempt. Examples of these are to be found in the events section of this booklet.

In Little Athletics, the time spent on such a warm-up may range from only 10 to 20 minutes, depending on age.

Younger athletes may be better suited to warming-up with running and Skill Game Activities.

After such a warm-up, the athlete should be allowed at least a 5 minute rest break before going on with competition or further activity.

WARM-DOWNS

This section is very often neglected. It is just as important as a warm-up before a training/competitive session.

During a strenuous training/competitive session, certain waste products build up in the muscles and some general soreness and fatigue may occur. Athletes must be encouraged to once again gently jog and stretch at the end of the session to assist the body in returning to normal.

The warm-down is often the warm-up repeated. Sometimes group games are used in Little Athletics for this purpose.

STRETCHING EXERCISES



1. Forward and back



***** Don't do this *****
360o Neck Rotation
 avoid this exercise -
 the Vertebral Artery
 (supplies part of the brain)
 is stretched when neck is
 extended and rotated.



2. Side to side



3. link hands,
 push elbows
 together



4. Push elbow down

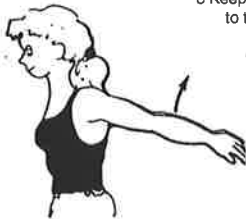


5. Using towel



6. Push shoulder blades
 together

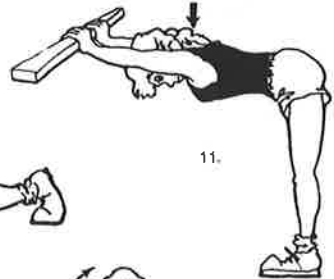
8 Keep elbow parallel
 to the ground



7. Hands apart



9.



11.

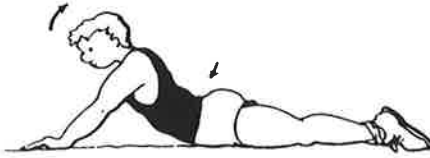


10. Wrist Extensor Stretch

STRETCHING EXERCISES



12. Side to side only



13. Do **NOT** force into pain if sore in back



14. Do **NOT** force into pain if sore in back



15. Keep shoulders down



16.



17. Commence with knee slightly bent, then push knee straight as tension allows.



*** Don't do this ***
too much weight on open knee joint



*** Don't do this ***
Seated Toe Touch
(too much pressure on spine)



18. Look forwards not down - lean towards one leg, repeat to other side then lean forward between legs



19. Push down with elbows on knees very gently

STRETCHING EXERCISES

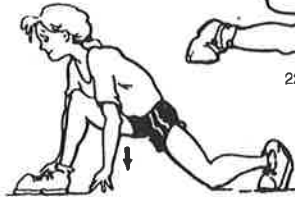
20. Knee up to opposite hip.
Wrap arms around knee, hug
knee to chest.



21.



23

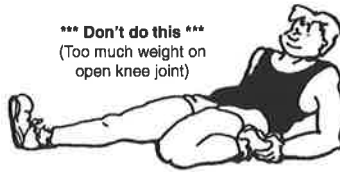


24.

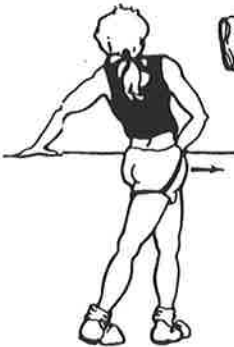


22. Keep heel in line with leg

*** Don't do this ***
(Too much weight on
open knee joint)



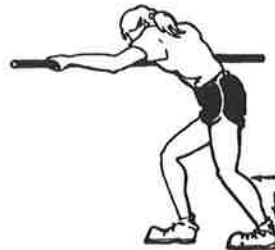
25.



26. Heels on ground, toes
pointing forward



27. Keep knee straight and heel down



28. Knee bent over rear foot