



→ Warm ups are not only great for getting ready for a practice or game, they also help bring a team together as a cohesive group.



## The Benefits Of Dynamic Warm Ups And Cool Downs

→ By Kevin Margarucci

**B**ringing the team together for a dynamic dryland warm up allows the game focus to begin. This team stretch, which should start 40 minutes prior to players hitting the ice, is designed to get the body in game/practice ready mode. Cool-downs, which aid in the recovery process, should take place as soon as possible after a practice or game.

**1** Warm ups and cool downs generally involve doing your activity at a slower pace and reduced intensity. A gradual warm up revs up the cardiovascular system by raising

the body temperature and increasing blood flow to various muscles. It may also help reduce muscle soreness and lessen the risk of injury.

**2** Make sure warm ups are completed with enough time for the team to get back to the locker room and get dressed and on the ice (or back in the locker room for the team meeting).

**3** Be mindful of the fatigue factor of the team. If your team has a number of practices or games in a short period of time, modify the

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length (and/or quantity) of the team stretch and warm up.

For example, you may decrease the length of each activity and decrease the number of reps vs. eliminating an activity. If time (or fatigue) is a specific concern, use your best judgment.

**4** Cooling down after a workout helps with the recovery process by gradually lowering the heart rate. A proper cool down may also help reduce muscle stiffness and soreness.

**5** One final thought about stretching. Stretching can improve range of motion of a joint and flexibility. It's important that your players stretch after the warm-up or cool-down phase, when their muscles are already warm. ☆

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