

Dynamic Warm-Up Exercises

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A good dynamic warm-up helps to gently transition your body into exercise mode.

Start with 5-10 minutes of brisk walking, or a slow, easy run.

Then do each dynamic stretch 5-10 repetitions, just enough to feel loose.

Arm circles: Stand tall. Make big circles with your arms, forwards then backwards.

Arm huggers: Stand tall, arms straight out to your sides. Cross your arms in front of your body then open them out again.

Helicopters: Stand tall, arms out to your sides, feet shoulder width apart. Rotate your head, arms, and upper body to look behind you to one side, then the other. Don't keep your feet planted solid; allow them to rotate a bit as well.

Rag doll: Stand tall with your feet together. Reach up with your hands as high as you can, going up on your toes. Keeping your legs straight, bend over forwards and hang. Then squat down with your head tucked. Straighten your legs again while still hanging forwards, and then roll up one vertebra at a time back to standing.

Hip Circles: Stand tall, hands on your hips. Make a big circle with your hips in one direction, then the other.

Marching: March in place, lifting one knee then the other, being mindful that your hands travel from "cheek" (face) to "cheek" (hip) and don't cross the middle of your body.

Ankle circles: Make circles with your feet in both directions.

Another really good time to do dynamic stretches is during long runs. As we start to fatigue our muscles stiffen. Loosening them up can help reduce that feeling of fatigue and help us run farther. Even compressing the routine to 2 to 3 repetitions of each and doing them every few miles can help significantly.