

# **Dynamic Warm-up**

This is a new concept to warming up. The reason for this new concept is to warm up the muscles before beginning the traditional static stretches that we have been accustomed to. Research shows that using these techniques get the muscles ready for the workout or the game. The younger player may not require as much warm up time, but the concept of warming up as a team and getting into the habit will lead to less injuries and accomplish the task of team building. The following is a list of exercises to accomplish this goal. Please make yourself familiar with this warm up (you can also demonstrate or participate in the warm up with the team, this is fun as it also shows the team that you are getting ready for practice or a game, also). Use a distance of 45 ft to 90 ft depending upon the age of the player as the starting point for the movements.

**Dynamic Stretching**~ One set of each (Down and back is one set)

- 1.) **High Knees**~ in a jogging rhythm lift the knees too approximately about waist high.
- 2.) **Butt Kickers**: in a jogging rhythm try to kick your butt with the heels of our shoes.
- 3.) **Frankenstein's**: with legs extended in a walking motion raise your legs as if you are kicking (a football) trying to touch your hand that is equal in height to your chest.
- 4.) **Squats**: alternate the squatting movement in a left right, left right manner. Emphasize "tall posture" and knee above toes (not over toes).
- 5.) **Shuffles**: a simple exercise that will help warm up the hip flexors.
- 6.) **Grapevine**: also known as carioca, another hip flexor exercise as well as groin warm up
- 7.) **Spiderman**: in a crawling manner move from side to side
- 8.) **Barrels**: in an alternating manner raise legs high as over a barrel and then squat.
- 9.) **Run backwards**: another simple exercise. Excellent for warming up the hamstrings.
- 10.) **Jumping Jacks**: Little Jacks 15-20, Big Jacks 10-15. This exercise is a total upper and lower body warm up.
- 11.) **Sprints**: perform three levels of running, 50% or half speed, 75% three quarters speed, 100% full speed. (Have players visualize opposing player catching a fly ball and then kids are tagging up to advance to the next base.  
\* This is a fair amount of running for a warm up and kids may tend to become tired, however I would encourage following this to completion as running is such an important component to the game of baseball.

### Shoulder Stretches~

- 1.) **Small Arm Circles:** Begin With Arm Circles (little) forward and reverse
- 2.) **Large Arm Circles:** Progress to (large) arm circles, forward and reverse
- 3.) **Huggers:** Move your arms forward and then reverse, (forward in a hugging manner and reverse in a stretching manner).
- 4.) **Thumbs up/down shoulder exercise:** Arms are extended in front of body with thumbs pointing up. Smoothly raise arms so arms reach a 45° angle (about to top of head), then, keeping thumbs up, lower arms to a 45° angle downward (about hip level) 10 times. Repeat same action with thumbs pointing down.
- 5.) **Deltoid/triceps stretch:** Bring arm across body hold for 10 seconds. Then bend arm as if scratching your spine and hold elbow for 10 seconds.
- 6.) **Rotator Stretch:** Standing with legs shoulders' width apart, bend at the torso with arms hanging downward. In a circular motion move your arms in small circles 10-15 rotations then reverse. For added benefits have players have a baseball in their hand for added benefit

### Throwing~

- 1.) **Soft Toss:** Begin throwing with glove hand under elbow. The emphasis should be on ball rotation using a four-seam grip, also known as the "C" Grip. The receiver should always provide a direct target with emphasis on accuracy. (3 to 5 Minutes)
- 2.) **Proper Mechanics:** Have players stand 20 feet apart increasing to 50 feet just playing stationary catch. (3 to 5 Minutes)
- 3.) **Shuffle Step:** also known as the two step throw: Turning sideways to the target move back foot behind the front feet stepping forward then and releasing the ball to the glove target. (3 to 5 Minutes)
- 4.) **Catch Around:** This is a new type of catch that many are promoting. This type of catch game requires movement from the players. The player must move around the ball, catch the ball then set himself to throw the ball to his partner in a fluid movement. (The concept of this type of catch evolves from the concept of using authentic game situations when practicing. In a game, players' feet will rarely, if ever, be still therefore you will want your players moving to get a "Feel" for the throw.) (3 to 5 Minutes)
- 5.) **Long Toss:** Emphasis must be placed on long toss. This is where arm strength is developed, the distant players have between each other should be determined by ability. The stronger the arm of the player the equal ability of the partner they are playing catch with.

Note to Coaches: This list is long and will become a time management issue. You will have players that show up late due to circumstances. Do your best to be understanding. Explain to parents and players the importance of being on time. Players and parents should have a clear understanding that in order to begin on time they should try to arrive at least 10 minutes early. Once a dynamic warm-up routine has been practiced and learned together as a team, latecomers could be asked to do a shorter version of the routine on their own prior to joining the team's activity.

Warming up as a team sets the tone for each practice & game. Our motto should be "We Are Team".

For more information and some videos showing dynamic warm-up routines, you can look at these websites:

<http://blog.youth-athlete.org/post/2008/11/24/Dynamic-Stretching-for-Improved-Performance.aspx>

<http://www.softballperformance.com/products/dynamic-warmup-system.html>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkCZym9CT54&NR=1&feature=fvwp>

<http://www.5min.com/Video/How-to-do-a-Dynamic-Warm-Up-80011154>