

WARM-UP AND SESSION'S STRUCTURE

Within all physical activity, sport, or physical education class, it always follows the same structure:

1. **Warm-up**
2. **Main Event/Activity**
3. **Cool Down**



The **warm-up** is the initial part, before any physical activity, training, or sports competition, which prepares the body for more demanding efforts afterward, favoring efficiency and avoiding possible injuries.

The **main event/activity** corresponds with the central core with which we perform the exercises or tasks that allow us to reach the objective of the activity. For example, in a continuous race, in which case we try to develop aerobic endurance, technical exercises, and team sports, games....

The **cool down** consists of performing a series of exercises of lesser intensity, like for example stretches, breathing, things that favor the recovery of the body after the effort.

It is not recommended to end an intense activity abruptly, the intensity will decrease progressively, in the same way that it occurs in the warm-up, but in the reverse.

No es recomendable dejar de realizar una actividad intensa de forma brusca, la intensidad irá decreciendo de forma progresiva, al igual que ocurre en el calentamiento pero de forma inversa.

This will help us to avoid injuries from overexertion, favoring recuperation over effort. It is also important to reflect and evaluate the completed practice.

Why is warming up important?

- To avoid injuries to the locomotor system like sprains, muscle cramps, etc.: it assists with the increase in muscular temperature, this allows for better muscular elasticity. It also avoids injuries thanks to an improvement in coordination, rhythm, and attention.
- It prepares the cardiovascular and respiratory system to increase the heart rate, breathing, and blood circulation, with which the body uses to prepare for the next bigger effort.
- It improves performance: the performance of effort, resistance, speed, flexibility, agility... all are improved with a good warm-up.
- It improves motivation and concentration: the first physical and psychological sensations are very focus.

Parts of a warm-up:

1st part - general part:

Use preparatory exercises exercises that focus on the most important muscular groups. There are three different phrases:

- 5 minutes articular movement exercises: we will do movements of all ranges, in the main joints of the body and the ones being used in the main activity.
- 5 minutes easy aerobic exercises: with exercises like walking, continuous long jogs, cycling or games that involve both running and articular movement.
- 5 minutes stretches: paying special attention to the muscles used in the following activity.

2nd- specific part:

This part consists of the performance of exercises related to the tyoe of sport being practiced (basketball, dance, swimming...). What we try to do is focus on the muscles and movements that are most likely to be used in the main activity. Also, it will work with simple technical exercises and movements: passes, throws, running, attack and defense activities...

What factors should be taken into consideration?

- **Age:** children and teens need less warm-up time, as we get older, our joints and muscles need more time to adapt to the effort.
- **Sport played:** warming up for an aerobic sport like a long run than for one more intense and anaerobic like running sprints.
- **The level of fitness:** a person who is less in shape will become tired easily and should warm up with less intensity than when they are in better shape. Also we should see to possible injuries or injured zones paying more attention to these regions.
- **The time of day and the temperature of the environment:** Normally in the morning the body needs more time to adapt to the effort than at other times of the day. Also, when it is cold it is necessary to spend more time warming up.

How should a warm-up be?

The warm-up should be progressive in intensity, adapted to the main activity, and if possible, individualized.

