

## Tip # 4: Always Warm-Up & Cool-Down

When muscles are cold they are stiff and difficult to move. To perform well you need to be *warmed up* before training or competition, and *cooled down* afterwards.

**Build your own routines** and learn **event-specific warm-up exercises**.

Try to be systematic ... develop and stick to your own system.

### Before Activity

- Perform a general body warm-up.
- Stretch.
- Incorporate active-dynamic movements where appropriate.
- Practice event-specific movements.

### After Activity

- Keep your muscles active for 10-15 minutes using similar, but a less intensive version of your warm-up.

- Stretch, using a similar sequence of exercises to that used in the warm-up.

### General Stretching Guidelines (for the advanced junior athlete)

- Warm-up prior to stretching; a minimum of 5 minutes light aerobic activity.
- Allow a minimum of 15 minutes for stretching. A more thorough stretching session may require 30-60 minutes.
- Stretch before and after training.
- Focus and concentrate on the muscle to be stretched with each stretch.
- Use static stretching first, i.e. move slowly into the stretch to avoid engaging the stretch reflex. Ballistic or dynamic stretching (done with progression and caution) may be used towards the end of the stretching session to prepare you for the specific demands of training or competition.
- Perform each stretch with the correct body position. Remember, changing the position of your body may change the effectiveness of the stretch.
- Breathe in a relaxed and free manner. Try exhaling slowly as you move further into the stretched position.
- Hold each static stretch for a minimum of 15 seconds. Greater results may be achieved, however, when the stretched position is held for longer, i.e. 30 seconds - 2 mins.
- Repeat each stretch a minimum of 3 times.
- At no time should pain accompany any of the stretches.

**Stretching routines are highly individual.**

Athletes should ensure they have an appropriate and thorough warm-up and cool-down strategy; one that they implement with meticulous care and consistency.

2-4 General / Event Specific Stretches per Session (develop skills, but vary your routine). Offer something new ... young athletes love to learn and apply skills unfamiliar to their "mates".

Coaching  
is not  
Rocket Science  
  
Often (always)  
it is the  
application  
of  
common sense

Stretching  
IS  
Important

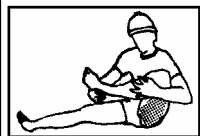
BUT

Don't smother  
the  
enthusiasm  
of  
a  
junior  
athlete  
by  
over-  
emphasis  
on  
stretching

Train  
Smart

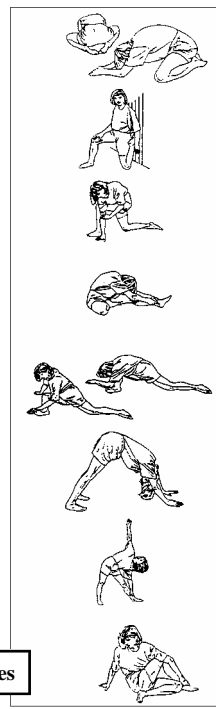
Get  
their  
attention  
with  
variety

Keep  
the  
fun  
and  
unexpected  
element  
in  
training



Build your  
own routines  
and  
learn  
event-specific  
warm-up  
exercises

Separate sheets  
available  
More detail  
More examples



A few examples

Stretching  
may be  
Dynamic or Static  
Generic, or Specific  
  
Every athlete is  
an experiment of one

