



## Warm Up & Cool Down for Practices

Players of all ages should warm up before EVERY practice and cool down after. The number one reason revolves around reducing the likelihood of a related injury. Although warming up is often overlooked by coaches of younger players, a good warm up and cool down should become part of a teams routine.

Basically when a player warms up, it does two things. Helps players avoid injury as well as improving the players performance. We call it warming up because it actually increases temperature of the player's muscles. It also increases the flow of oxygen to muscles, speeds nerve impulses and helps increase range of motion.

Good warm ups typically consists of light jogs, stretching, along with light related warm up such as light dribbling, skill work, or passing at short distances. Each warm up should be between 15 and 30 minutes and should be followed almost immediately with more intense practice drills.

The benefits of a good cool down after training also revolves around reducing injury and boosting performance. The cool down does this by gradually lowering the heart rate, helping oxygen levels in the muscles return to the condition they were in before the practice began, while removing waste such as lactic acid. A good cool down also helps reduce muscle soreness after an intense training session.

A good cool down typically consists of a light jog followed by light stretching.

There are great benefits to getting your team into a good routine while warming up as well as cooling down before and after training sessions. I recommend introducing a good warm up and cool down with under 6 players to build the routine now so they don't think twice about a good warm up or cool down when they get older.

**"CREATING SMILES FOR TODAY, ATHLETES FOR TOMORROW AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE GAME FOR A LIFETIME."**

