

*Dynamic Flexibility (DFLX) – Drills Sequence (DR)

Over the years most of us have heard coaches tell us to hold your stretch for 30 seconds. Recently research has indicated that long – hold static stretching may inhibit the muscles stretch receptors. With this being said using a Dynamic Flexibility routine will produce a more productive warm-up. We also couple this with drills that help with your foot strike leg drive and general running mechanics. The following sequence should be preformed pre-practice and meet. Be patient it will take some time to learn these new movements – proper execution is preferred over speed. Working into this slowly over time will deliver a productive warm up. This sequence includes 10 – DFLX, 9 – DR and 900-1800 meters of running.

1. Jog .25 - .5 mile
2. Active Hamstring Stretch (DFLX)
3. stride 50-100m
4. Cat Camel (DFLX)
5. stride 50-100m
6. Eagles (DFLX)
7. stride 50-100m
8. Hurdle Seat Exchange (DFLX)
9. stride 50-100m
10. Fire Hydrant / Hip Circles (DFLX)
11. stride 50-100m
12. Skip Squats (DFLX)
13. Scissors (DFLX)
14. stride 50-100m
15. Fast Leg (DR)
16. A – Walk (DR)
17. A – Skip (DR)
18. stride 50-100m
19. Ankle Circles (DFLX)
20. B- Skip (DR)
21. stride 50-100m
22. Calf Stretch (DFLEX)
23. stride 50-100m
24. Short Pulls (DR)
25. Retro (DR)
26. stride 50-100m
27. Regular Karaoke – one direction (DR)
28. High Knee Karaoke – 2 directions (DR)
29. Butt Kicks (DR)
30. Leg Swings (DFLX)

*Knoxville Youth Athletics- This sequence is thoroughly explained in a video on our website under the coaches page.

Simple Dynamic Stretch Routine (to be done after a 5 minutes warm up jog)

-Skipping Arm Circles- Have athletes line up, place cone about 25m away. Have them skip while swing their arms in a full circle. This opens up their chest and primes the neuromuscular pathways through skipping. Swing forward on the way out, backward on the way back.

-Side Skip with Arm Swing – Same set as before, but runners will stand sideways to skip while swinging the arm across the chest and out to the sides, utilizing the full range of motion of the arms.

-Walking leg pulls – while walking that 25m path you have set up, have athletes pull their knee up to their chest and then immediately pull the leg behind them stretching the quads. Switch to next leg with next step.

-Walking Ninjas- Walking forward, one leg extends straight out in front (like a toy soldier) while the opposite arm reaches out to touch it. As they get more coordinated, they can add a skip in there.

-Walking Lunges with Twists- Have athletes preform walking lunges to the cone, making sure the knee doesn't extend past the toe on the leg that is out and also encouraging proper running form: opposite arm, opposite leg, chest upright with a strong core. Add a twist of the upper body (to the opposite side of the leg that is in front) on the way back.

-Leg Swings- While holding on for balance (tree, fence, wall) swing one leg to its full range of motion. You will do 2 sets of these, one while facing the wall with the leg swinging in front and another with your side to the wall and leg swinging up and back. Gradually work into that full range of motion, keep chest up and core engaged.

-Ankle Circles- works on balance and working the full range of motion in the ankle, which can be needed on the XC course. Some kids find this difficult at first, but encourage them to try for that full circle, or even write their name with their toe!

Static Stretching (for after workouts AND races)

The key here is to try and hit all the major muscle groups. It is ideal to hold each stretch for 30 seconds but it's hard to get the kids to sit in them that long. ;)

-Quads- Pull foot up to touch the backside while keeping the knee pointed straight down to the ground.

-Hamstrings- Bend at the waist resting the chest on the thighs, slowly begin to straighten the legs to stretch the hamstrings. The chest should remain on the thighs the whole time. Most won't be able to straighten their legs.

-Calves- Hands and feet both on the ground with the body in a V shape. Rest one foot on the heel of the other and pull down the heel to touch the ground feeling a stretch in the calf.

-Hips- From the calf stretch position, bring one leg forward to rest between the hands. This leg will be bent and the other should remain straight behind.

-Inner Thighs- Butterflies, in a seated position, place sole of feet together and let legs drop out to the sides.

-Glutes- From a seated position, pull one leg up and across the body until you feel a stretch in the glutes. Alternative: lay on back with legs in the air but bent, cross one leg over the other so that the ankle (right leg for example) is resting on the left knee. Pull the left thigh toward the body initiating the stretch in the glutes.

-Arms/Chest /Back- Pull arms across the chest and up and over the head.

-Achilles- These can be done on a wall or a stair. If on a step, drop heel below the step and hold with a straight leg, then bend the knee and hold. On the wall, put the toes of one leg close to the wall, other leg is behind, make sure both feet are pointing straight forward. Lean into the wall until you feel a stretch in the calf/Achilles, first with a straight back leg, then bend at the knee. This position can be mimicked without the wall if you're in the field. Just make sure you are feeling the stretch in your Achilles. Another good stretch for this that also works the upper back and shoulders in the yoga pose downward dog. Once in position, you can bend and straighten knees as needed