

New Trends for Warming Up and Cooling Down

Most coaches for years have changed with the times in regards to stretching players in training. For years, players would do a series of static stretches first and then go into their training regime. Then the idea of getting the players muscles warm first, stop and perform a series of static stretches, get the players back to running again only to stop and stretch another muscle group.

For the youngest ages, stretching is not important. For the older age groups coaches should incorporate some dynamic stretching along with setting a tone or a "sneak preview" for what the session is going to be about.

Dynamic or Functional Stretching is warming up the muscles specifically for the movements that will be used in the activities of the training session. It is the type of stretching that runners will often use before a race.

Each Functional exercise should be performed over a 15-20 yard area with a walking or jogging recovery.


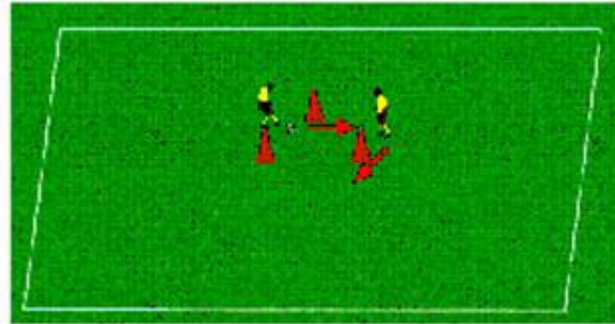
Here are just some of the Functional Stretching exercises you can incorporate into your warm-up:

- Lunge Walk-Loosens up the hips. Lunge walk is when you take large steps keeping the chest up, looking straight ahead and moving the arms and legs together.
- High Knees-For hip flexor and ankle strength. Extend up to the toes and lift each thigh to a parallel position with the ground as you move forward.
- Calf Walk-For lower limb strength and Achilles flexibility. Extend the ankle on each step will warm up the calf muscles and Achilles ten don s.
- Sideways running-For lower limb strength, agility and flexibility.
- Backwards skipping-Same as above and works on strengthening quads and calf muscles.

Static Stretching should be done AFTER the training session in order to help speed up the recovery process. This is the cooling down stage. Cooling down are easy movements, light running, and more stretching. The cooling down stage of training is something that all coaches need to include as part of their training session.

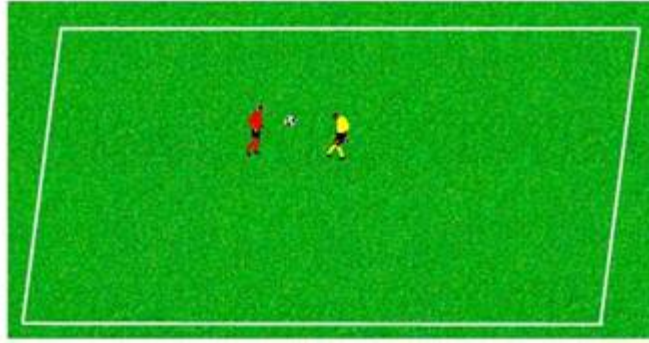
This session will show a variety of activities to utilize in both the warm-up and cool down stages of the training session.

Examples:

Individual Activities	
Dynamic Stretching- Players partner up. While one player is dribbling around the area, their partner is performing a functional stretching exercise like some mentioned above. Players switch after thirty seconds.	
Partner Activities	
Milan Triangle- Two players take 3 cones and spread them about a yard apart into a triangle shape. One player passes the ball through a pair of cones and the other player will then receive the ball and has one touch to take the ball around a cone and then back through for the other player to repeat. Every time they can do this successfully it is a point. Anytime they hit a cone or the pass isn't completed, it is not a point.	

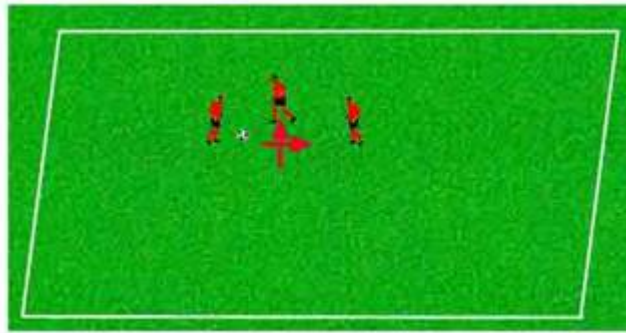
Juggling Activities- Juggling with a partner is always a good way to improve a player's first touch. Try these variations with partner juggling:

- Two players get back-back. One player starts by knocking the ball over their head to their partner. The partner will then collect the ball either in the air or on the bounce;
- Players knock ball in air and collect ball after it bounces;
- One player calls out a number between 2-5 and the receiving player has to knock the ball back to their partner with the last touch being the number that was called.



Groups of 3

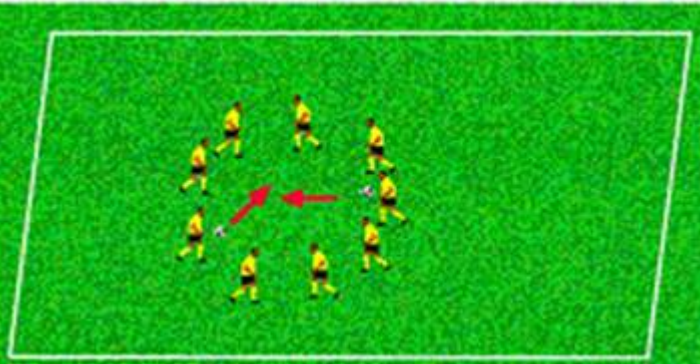
Weave- (Not the basketball one). Three players get in a line. One player is in the middle. One of the two end players has a ball. The activity is started out by one of the end players passing a ball at the middle player's feet. The middle player jumps over the ball and the runs in the direction they are facing. The end player who passed the ball then goes to the middle and the process continues as the opposite end player now passes the ball to the new middle player's feet who jumps over it. The challenge is to see how many in a row they can collectively get.



Larger Groups

Sunderland Warm-up- In a circle (groups of about 8 players each)

Everyone is moving! A) Toss to another player who catches ball; B) Toss to another player who holds ball high for tossing player to jump up and head the ball; C) Toss to another player and then spin out; D) Toss to another player and then sprint; E) Toss to another player who receives with their chest and then catches ball; F) Toss to another player who receives with their thigh and then catches ball; G) Toss to another player who then receives the ball with the inside of their foot (hacky sack style) and then catches ball; H) Toss to another player who then receives ball with outside of foot and then catches ball; I) Toss to another player who takes two touches with any part of their body and then catches ball; J) Toss to another player's head who then catches ball; K) Balls on ground, two touch passing; L) Pass to another player who receives with the inside then moves the ball to the outside of



the foot (very creative); M) Pass to another player who must receive across body "Open Out"; N) Passing is now 1 touch; O) Pass to another player who then receives the ball and then does something special to get out!

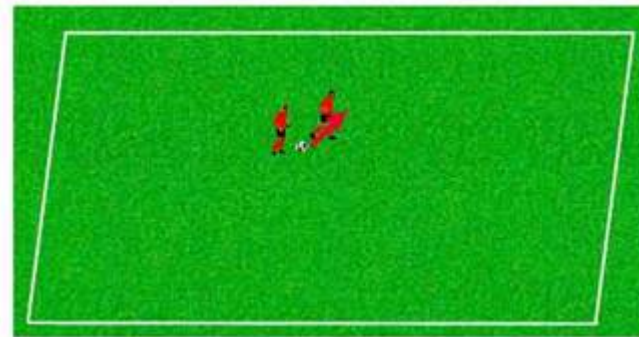
"Numbers"

Everyone has a ball. At first they all start to dribble. After a bit, they leave their balls in the area. For every number you call, they have to perform a pre-determined task. Example: If call #1, they run to a ball and perform 5 touch-ups. #2, they run to a ball and make a move without touching the ball. Go all the way up to about 7 numbers. In between numbers, they are jogging or performing functional stretching exercises. Make it interesting by saying that if you call a shape, then they have to get the number that the shape represents. Example: If call "Diamond" players would get into groups of four quickly.



Cool Downs

Brazilian Walk- This activity is more of a relaxed one, but it can also be a way to incorporate some Functional Stretching. Two players share one ball. One player gets behind their partner. The partner who is ahead walks and the player behind pushes the ball between their partner's legs as they walk. Go a certain distance, then switch. To incorporate dynamic training have the person ahead perform a lunge walk while the player behind pushes the ball between their legs. The players will enjoy the challenge of trying to push the ball between their partner's legs while they are walking.



Juggling Activities- Juggling with a partner is always a good way to improve a player's first touch. Try these variations with partner juggling: a) Two players get back-back. One player starts by knocking the ball over their head to their partner. The partner will then collect the ball either in the air or on the bounce; b) Players knock ball in air and collect ball after it bounces; c) One player calls out a number between 2-5 and the receiving player has to knock the ball back to their partner with the last touch being the number that was called.

