

How to Warm Up

Sample warm-up videos are on the last page of this lesson on the web page. You must watch the videos.

The Purpose of a Warm-Up

The main reason for including a warm-up at the beginning of a class is to increase body temperature, raise the heart rate and prevent injury. Beginning a pole fitness class without warming and preparing the muscles can lead to pulled or strained muscles and dangerous changes in blood pressure.

Stimulates Synovial Fluid

Mobility warm-up exercises stimulate synovial fluid. This helps joints move more freely. Synovial fluid is absorbed by the cartilage, which increases shock-absorbing qualities in the joints.

Warming the Muscles

Muscles need to achieve a good flow of blood, oxygen and nutrients in order to perform well during hard exercise. The warm-up will improve circulation and prepare the muscles to perform well.

Increase Heart Rate Slowly

Starting a workout without a gradual warm-up can lead to sudden changes in blood pressure, contribute to an abnormal heart rate and an inadequate flow of blood to the heart and other vital organs. All of these will stress the cardiac system and are very dangerous. To avoid a sudden surge, an individual should start exercising at an easy-to-moderate pace and increase their exertion slowly and gently.

The Two Types of Warm-Up

General

A general warm-up is most common and involves performing an activity using movements unrelated to those used during the main exercise session. An example of this can be found in the pole fitness class where students warm-up off the pole prior to starting the moves on the pole.

Specific

A specific warm-up includes movements related to those used during the main workout. An example of a specific warm-up is using the pole to warm up. Starting with less strenuous exercises that are repeated numerous times, before increasing intensity or difficulty and moving onto the main pole session.

Stretching

Having a good range of movement is an important factor in achieving the more advanced pole moves. Increased flexibility helps your muscles to perform better even when doing regular, everyday activities.

Stretching improves the range of motion in your joints which can help prevent injuries. Stretching helps to increase body awareness in preparation for or following a pole fitness class.

If you have just done a difficult pole fitness class, stretching the muscles you have just used may help reduce soreness.

Stretching is relaxing and it feels good. Taking the time to stretch after a pole class helps lower your heart rate, loosen your muscles and reduce stress.

The two main types of stretching used during the class are dynamic stretching, in the warm-up and static stretching, in the cool-down.

Dynamic Stretching

If performed correctly with controlled movements, dynamic stretches improve flexibility. Dynamic stretching increases core and muscle temperature, strengthens and elongates the muscles but most importantly, this type of stretching keeps the muscles and tendons firm and responsive which means decreased risk of injury. Entries into and exits out of pole moves, as well as many pole moves, require flexibility. This is why dynamic stretches are so useful for a pole fitness class.

Static Stretching

Static stretching loosens the muscles. At the end of a pole fitness class, the muscles are warm and supple, which means static stretching is perfect for the cool down as they will be more responsive to this type of stretching. Because static stretching is performed with no movement, the body naturally cools down.

The Pole Studio Warm-Up

1. Mobility exercises - not on the pole
2. Dynamic stretches & first pulse raiser - not on the pole
3. Pole specific warm-up - on the pole

Mobility exercises target specific joints and consist of gentle, rhythmic movements to prepare them for exercise.

Dynamic stretches should involve the whole body, increasing the range of motion at each joint.

The first pulse raiser is a full-body movement performed repeatedly to raise the heart rate, increase respiration levels and warm the muscles.

The first pulse raiser should be of a slightly increased intensity compared with the mobility exercises, for example, step touch, dynamic squats and lunges. The pulse raiser must only have low impact exercises. This means no jumping, no high-intensity jogging/running or other similar high impact movements.

Why should the first pulse raiser be low impact?

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The Pole Warm-Up

The pole warm-up takes place after the general warm-up. The moves that are used in the pole warm-up are specific to pole fitness, so it can be referred to as the 'pole specific warm-up'. The pole specific warm-up prepares the neuromuscular pathways for the specific type of moves in the class.

The pole specific warm-up can contain high-impact cardiovascular moves. The pole specific warm-up moves should be simple and easy to follow. The instructor's focus is on getting the class moving around the pole, warmed up and ready for the conditioning and repertoire sections later. Teaching points in the pole specific warm-up should relate to good posture and body alignment and to promote the health and safety of the students.

What CAN be included in the pole specific warm-up?	What CANNOT be included in the pole specific warm-up?
Energetic, continuously flowing moves. Do not stop to breakdown moves.	Pauses for move breakdowns.
The pole warm-up continues for 5-6 minutes. This pole warm-up should make the students really warm and slightly out of breath!	Low energy movements that would not effectively raise the heart rate, body temperature and respiration rate.
Simple and easy to follow moves.	Difficult, potentially dangerous or technical moves.
Floor based (transitional style) low-high impact moves.	Any moves that climb, spin around or lift up on the pole.
All pole specific warm-up moves should be delivered with energy and enthusiasm by the instructor. Teaching points are given while the movements are taking place. Instructors can also count the repetitions out loud.	An unenthusiastic instructor who does not give verbal encouragement, teaching points or counts.
<p>Acceptable pole warm-up moves.</p> <p>Dynamic movements. Hip swivels, Tango Turns, Hip Circles, Walks, Bodywaves, Calf Raises, Leg Raises, Leg Raise Circles, Squats, Lunges, Leg Kicks, Step Touch, Jumping/High Impact variations of Squats and Lunges. Instructors have the freedom to create pole warm-up moves, as long as the moves meet the criteria required for pole warm-up moves.</p>	<p>Unacceptable pole warm-up moves.</p> <p>Static (isometric) movements. Any moves from the conditioning, spins or tricks contained within this course. Any lifting or climbing moves. Any other spins or pole tricks.</p> <p>These moves are too technical and potentially risky for the pole warm-up and would need to be thoroughly broken down during a later section of the class such as during conditioning or when teaching the syllabus moves.</p>

Please read this sample warm-up. This is how a warm-up is written, as part of a written class plan.

While watching the warm-up sample demonstration video (on the web page for this lesson), make notes on:

1. The order in which the warm-up is delivered.
2. How the warm-up is delivered, in terms of teaching points and cueing.
3. The type of movements used to warm-up various parts of the body.
4. How you might do certain things differently while applying the same formula. What would your personal touch be?

Class Segment	Content/Moves
Gradual Dynamic Warm-up (General Warm-Up) +/- 6 Minutes	Mobility exercises Start with easier, more gentle mobility exercises for the whole body. EG. Spinal roll down and up, reach arms up and down as you go, rise and lower on balls of feet! Dynamic Stretches For Dynamic Stretches include the following areas; Neck- (head roll), Shoulders (shrugs and arm swings), Elbows (roll), Wrists (squeeze fists and flex/extend), Torso (twist and side reach), Hips (hip or leg circles), Legs (front and side lunges), Ankles (calf raises). Pulse Raiser Squat and arm reach for pulse raisers.
Pole Specific Warm-up +/- 5 minutes	Play a 5-minute upbeat piece of music and continue for the duration of the piece of music. Hip circles, walking around pole whilst holding the pole, squats and lunges.

Remember to watch the videos on this lesson's web page.

You will need to complete this lesson on the online platform by answering the quiz.