

But first, please warm up!

We couldn't tell you how commonly Physiotherapists hear an injury story that starts with 'I didn't have time to warm up' or 'I didn't know what to do to warm up properly'. Adequately warming up our body is highly important for basic injury prevention, but it is also key to playing at your best. When our muscle systems are warmer, they also are better prepared to perform specific skills like a lay-up, changing direction quickly and jumping up for a rebound.

Below is an easy list of warm up and muscle activation exercises specific to basketballers playing a tournament!



1 rep, 1 set, 1 s hold

1. Gastrocnemius stretch on step

Stand on a step and rest the ball of the foot to be stretch on the edge. Keeping the knee straight, drop this heel down until you feel a stretch in your calf. Hold this position.



1 rep, 1 set, 1 s hold

2. Glute stretch - supine

Start position is lying on the back with the legs bent and the feet on the floor. Lift one leg and cross that ankle over the opposite knee. Reach between the legs grasping the back of the knee of the lower leg and then pull both legs in towards the chest. The non-stretch leg should exert a slight pressure that assists in pushing the crossed leg upwards toward the chest. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat for the other side.



1 rep, 1 set, 1 s hold

3. Hamstring stretch - with rotation

Start position is standing with one foot ahead of the other, the body bent forward at the waist, the head raised and eyes level and looking forward. Keep the trunk as straight as possible, reach towards the forward foot using the hand on the opposite side of the body. Flex the front knee slightly. A gentle stretch should be felt in the hamstring of the forward leg. Stop as soon as the stretch is felt.



1 rep, 1 set, 1 s hold

4. Chest stretch

Lock your hands together behind your back and push your hands backwards, whilst pushing your chest forwards. Roll your shoulders back and down as you feel the stretch over the front of your chest and shoulders.



1 rep, 1 set, 1 s hold

5. Adductor standing stretch

Stand with your feet a large stride apart and toes pointing forwards. Lean to one side and bend this knee, resting your hands on your knee for stability. Keep your heels flat on the floor and the other leg straight as you feel this stretch through the inner thigh.



1 rep, 1 set

6. Squats [09060]

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Engage your core muscles and gently squat down. As you squat, bend from your hips. Keep your back straight as you push your hips back and counterbalance by leaning your torso forwards. Do not allow your knees to travel too far forwards. Your weight should be on your heels, not your toes. It might help to imagine you are trying to sit down in a chair that is too far away from you. Tense your bottom muscles at the bottom of the squat and keep them tense as you straighten back up to the start position.



1 rep, 1 set

7. Jump forwards and backwards

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and your knees slightly bent. Jump forwards, landing with your legs in a slight squat. Spring back, landing on the spot you started on. Make sure you land lightly on the balls of your feet, controlling the landing between jumps.



1 rep, 1 set

8. Jump sideways

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and your knees slightly bent. Jump to one side, landing with your legs in a slight squat. Spring back, landing on the spot you started on. Make sure you land lightly on the balls of your feet, controlling the landing between jumps.



5 reps, 3 sets

9. Balance and reach

Start position is standing with one leg just behind the other at shoulder width apart. The forward leg is the stance leg and the rear leg is one large pace behind the body with the heel raised and toes lightly touching the floor. Stretch the rear leg backwards whilst counter-balancing with a forward lean of the trunk, and at the same time reach forward with the arm on the same side as the rearward leg and try to touch the floor. The stance knee should remain centred over the ball of the foot, do not let the knee waiver from side-to-side. Switch legs and perform the same movements for the other side, if the right leg is stretched back then the right arm is reaching forward.



1 rep, 1 set, 10 sec duration

10. Standing balance, rolling a ball

Stand up straight and Place a ball under one foot. Keeping your balance, roll the ball forwards and backwards, then try rolling it from side to side. Your stance leg will be the leg getting exercised.