

# Warm-up drills to try today!

The beauty of running is that all you need are your trainers and off you go. Sometimes, though, you can feel quite tired right from the off, often due to starting too quickly from 'cold'. A few short warm-up drills prior to your run can make a world of difference to how you feel, as well as positively affecting your running technique and your times. Try these moves from Jo Pavey at the beginning of your next training session and you'll notice a positive effect as you get into your running.

## SHOULD YOU STRETCH BEFORE A RUN?

Personal trainer Jeff Archer says: 'I usually stretch before I run and, while it's not essential, I believe that the more stretching one can fit into the routine, the less likely you are to risk injury. Stretching has definitely helped me stay on the road and recover faster as I've upped the volume of my training recently.'



### HIP STRETCH

Stretch your hip flexors by taking up a deep lunge position, then tilt your pelvis underneath your body. Hip flexors can sometimes be tight if you spend a lot of time sitting at a desk, so move gently into this stretch. Improving your flexibility in this area helps to keep your pelvis and spine in good alignment during and following your training.



### QUADS STRETCH

Stretch the fronts of your thighs to help prevent tightness building up in this area. Keep your supporting knee slightly bent and your knees together. Then alter the tilt of your pelvis until you feel the maximum stretch along the front of your bent leg. There is no need to lean forwards with this stretch, it's effectiveness is all in the tilt of the pelvis, so adjust your hips until the stretch hits the spot.



### CALF STRETCH

Take a big step forwards, put your weight onto your front leg and push the heel of your back foot into the ground. This will enable you to get a good stretch of the calf muscle in the back leg. You can lean forwards onto a nearby tree or wall if it helps you take the weight off your back leg. This will ensure you can relax into the stretch. To target all areas of the lower leg, try stretching with the toes of your back leg turned inwards and then outwards, as well as with your toes pointing straight forwards.

### MINI JUMPS

To really get the blood flowing in your lower legs, keep your knees flexed just a little and then, using your feet and ankles, jump off the ground. Keep your shoulders relaxed and focus on good balance as you create a regular rhythm of jumping for 15 to 20 repetitions.



### KNEE LIFTS

High knee stepping will really warm up your legs and will also prepare your arms for running, to increase the efficiency of your technique. This is really just a slow-motion exaggerated version of running, where you step slowly through each pace with big arm and leg movements. Be sure to keep your body upright and stay light on your feet.



### INNER THIGH STRETCH

Take a big step to one side, bend one leg and transfer your weight across to the side of the bent leg. Keep the other leg straight and tilt your pelvis away from the straight leg, to feel a stretch that will run right along the inside of this leg.

### SKIPPING

A few short bursts of skipping will prepare your body and warm you up for running. Keep your body upright and focus on maintaining a gentle tension in your abs and glutes, to stabilise the movement. Then keep your shoulders relaxed and your legs light as you skip from step to step.

