

PICKLEBALL DYNAMIC WARMUP

A dynamic warm-up prepares your mind and body for action. It connects the mind to the joints, connective tissues, and muscles and prepares them for dynamic movement (racing to drops or chasing lobs). A dynamic warm-up elevates your heart rate and core temperature in order to direct oxygen-rich blood to your muscles so you are able to perform explosive movements. It also stimulates your nervous system for mind-muscle connection so you can anticipate and move to where the ball will be going. A dynamic warm-up increases your mobility thus decreasing your risk for injuries like muscle, ligament or tendon strains.

The Benefits:

Injury Prevention, Better Pickleball Performance, Less Soreness after Playing

Here are some warmups, from head to toe, to help you get going

*** Remember: do gentle repetitions of each activity outlined in a pain-free range ***

HEAD ROTATIONS

Stand with your legs straight, place your feet at shoulder-width, keep your hands loosely at your sides. Rotate your head clockwise and counter clockwise (chin moves shoulder to shoulder).

SHOULDER SHRUGS

Place your feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart, and arms at your sides. Turn your palms towards one another. Your toes should line up with your knees. Straighten your neck and keep your chin up. Slowly inhale while raising your shoulders toward your ears. As you exhale, lower your shoulders back down.

ARM CIRCLES

Hold your arms out to the side and move them forward in small circles. Slowly increase the size of the circles until you are moving them in as large of circles as your flexibility permits. Switch to moving them backward, again increasing circle size as flexibility permits.

ARM SWINGS

Start by holding your arms out to the side and pulling them back as far as possible, opening your chest. From here, swing them forward, hugging yourself. Repeat this motion several times, going as far as you can in both directions.

WRIST CIRCLES

Rotate wrists in clockwise and counter-clockwise directions.

CORE/TORSO TWISTS

Standing straight with knees shoulder width apart, rotate your torso as far as it will go, keeping your arms in front. Swing back and forth between the left and right sides. Squat like a sumo wrestler and twist as you stretch for a slight variation.

OVERHEAD STRETCH

Take your arms above your head and stretch as far as you can (like you're trying to make your body as long as possible). Swing them back down just behind your hips, then take them back up. This should stretch your arms and lower back.



SIDE-BEND STRETCH

Keep your hips, shoulders, and ears in a straight up-and-down line. Raise your right arm overhead and bend your upper body to the left in a reaching motion. Keep your upper body facing straight ahead—don't twist it to the side as you bend. Make sure you feel the muscles gently stretch all along your side from your lower back up to your shoulder. Switch sides and do the stretch in the opposite direction.

HIGH KNEE MARCHES

March across the court (or parking lot on your way to the courts!) bringing your knees as high as you can towards your chest.

BUTT KICKS

Increase knee flexibility by trying to touch your heels to your butt while standing in place or walking slowly (from the car to the courts!).

FORWARD LUNGES

Stand with your feet together. Step forward with one foot and go as low as you're comfortable. Don't place weight over your front knee. Hold for a moment, then step back to alternate legs.

Lunges are a great exercise for warming up, increasing strength, and gaining flexibility. Add a torso twist to the lunge to make this an even better stretch. Lunges and squats are among the best ways to gain leg strength.

SIDE LUNGES

Side lunges target the glute medius (side butt) much more effectively. Simply move side to side rather than front to back. Your inner hamstrings will also be trained more as a result.

SIDE SHUFFLES

Shuffle sideways across the court, staying as low as possible. Then, shuffle back facing the same direction. You can side shuffle fast or slow to get a lower, deeper stretches.

HAMSTRING KICKS

Kick one straight leg up at a time trying to touch your toes. If you can't reach, just go as far as possible without forcing anything.

ANKLE ROTATIONS

Rotate ankles in clockwise and counter-clockwise directions.

LEG SWINGS

Find a wall to put your hand on if you have trouble balancing. Face perpendicular to the wall with your feet together. Lift one leg and kick it forwards, similar to the motion of kicking a soccer ball. Instead of putting your foot back on the ground, swing it back and up, like a pendulum. Continue to swing your leg back and forth for the desired number of reps. Switch legs and repeat.

DISCLAIMER: The dynamic stretches outlined here are for educational purposes and should not be interpreted as a recommendation for a specific warmup routine. Athletes should choose dynamic stretches that feel good – don't move into painful ranges – and are safe. If something feels off, check with a medical professional.