

Warming Up

There has been some controversy in recent years about stretching before your warm up. Will you get injured if you stretch without specifically warming up first? No, if you stretch comfortably and not strenuously. It is suggested to do several minutes of general movement to warm up the muscles before you stretch. (Such as walking, swinging your arms, etc.) This gets your blood moving. You still need to stretch correctly whether you are warmed up or not.

Some runners have reported they are more likely to get injured if they don't warm up before stretching. However, injury from stretching can occur if:

- You are in too much of a hurry and not relaxed
- You push too far, too soon
- You are paying attention to the feeling of the stretch

You will not get hurt if you stretch correctly. You should hold the stretch until a mild tension develops.

Advice:

If you are going to engage in activity such as running or cycling, etc., warm up the body by doing the activity you are about to do, but at a lower intensity. If you are about to run, walk or jog 2-5 minutes, or until you break a light sweat. Walking or jogging provides a good basic warm up for many activities. It will increase muscle and blood temperature, and raise total body temperature to provide an effective warm up.

Cooling Down

You should cool down after exercise by doing a lesser intensity version of the main workout. Try to get your heart rate down toward your resting heart rate of pre-exercise state, then stretch to prevent muscle soreness and stiffness.