Stretching and Warm Up Drills

Organization

Have students form a large circle around you. While you lead the stretching exercises, it is also a great opportunity to build team leaders. After a couple of weeks, you can have the students lead the stretching. This will allow you the freedom to observe if runners are stretching correctly and provide instruction and encouragement as necessary. It is a good time to review the workout or plan for the next meet. Encourage the students to count as they do the stretch. Each stretch should be held for 20 to 30 seconds.

Arm Scissors

Stand with the feet shoulder-width apart. Hold the arms straight out to the sides and parallel to the ground. Swing the arms in front of and behind the body in a wide crisscrossing, or scissoring, motion. With every swing, alternate the top arm. [Watch the video](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/arm-scissors): [Arm Scissors](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/arm-scissors)

Dynamic Calf Stretch

Starting on all fours, raise your hips up in the air so the body forms an upside- down “V.” The knees and elbows should be straight. Lift one foot off the ground and rest it on the opposite ankle. Very gently, lower the heel of the planted foot as close to the ground as possible. Pointing your grounded foot straight ahead, keep the leg straight. Lift your heel, rising back up onto the ball of your foot at a fluid, controlled pace. Lower your heel as close to the ground as possible without over-stretching, and repeat. [Watch the video](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/dynamic-calf-stretch): [Calf Stretch](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/dynamic-calf-stretch)

Heel Walks

Stand tall with good posture, keeping your shoulders back. Raise your toes off the ground. Step forward with your left leg and push your body-weight into your heel, pointing your toes to the sky. This movement will activate the anterior tibialis (the muscle that runs down the front of your leg from your knee to the ankle area). Step forward with your right leg and repeat the process. Continue alternating legs.

Hamstring Stretch

Cross one foot over the other and reach up toward the sky with both arms. Counting down from 10, slowly bend forward at the hips until your upper body is as low as it can comfortably go, with your arms reaching toward your toes. Breathe fluidly and try reaching a little farther on each exhale. Slowly return to an upright stance. Repeat on the other leg.

Quadriceps Stretch

Stand tall with good posture, keeping your shoulders back. Bend your left knee and grab your left foot behind you with your left hand. At the same time, rise up onto the toes of your right foot. Hold this position for approximately two seconds. Release your left foot, let the left leg step back, and repeat the process with your right leg. Continue alternating legs. [Watch the video](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/quad-stretch): [Quad Stretch](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/quad-stretch)

Glute Stretch

Start by lying flat on your back with your knees bent and your feet on the floor. Rest one ankle on top of the opposite knee. Reaching through the legs, gently pull the bottom thigh toward your chest, raising the bottom foot off the ground. Hold the stretch and then repeat on the other side. [Watch the video](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/glute-stretch): [Glute](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/glute-stretch)

Seated Trunk Twist

While seated and with your legs straight out in front, bend your right leg and cross it over your left. Place your right foot flat on the ground next to your left knee. Place your left elbow on the outside of your bent knee, gently pushing your leg inward. Put your right hand on the ground behind your body for stability and gently twist your torso to the right. [Watch the video](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/seated-trunk-twist): [Trunk Twist](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/seated-trunk-twist)

Neck and Shoulder Warmup

For the **Neck Warmup**, stand tall and relaxed, drop the chin toward the chest, and gently roll your head toward one shoulder in a semicircular motion. Roll it back to the front and around to the other shoulder. Don’t let your head fall too far backward, as this can strain the neck and spinal cord. For the **Shoulder Warmup**, stand tall and relaxed, then rotate the shoulders in a big, smooth, circular motion. Bring the shoulders back, then up toward the ears, and then forward and down. [Watch the video:](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/neck-shoulder-warm-up) [Neck/Shoulder](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/stretches-strength/neck-shoulder-warm-up)

DRILLS

High Knees

Keeping your arms at your sides, slowly lift your knees so the thighs are parallel to the ground. Add arm swing while maintaining a slow pace. Pick up the pace and lift your knees as quickly as possible while maintaining good overall form. Focus on lifting your knees up and down rapidly. [Watch the video](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/form/high-knees): [Knees](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/form/high-knees)

Butt Kicks

Keeping your arms at your sides, slowly kick one foot and then the other toward your buttocks. While still kicking at a slow pace, add arm swings to the leg movements. Pick up the pace, moving as quickly as possible while remaining in the same place. Add forward motion and do Butt Kicks quickly down a straightaway. [Watch the video](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/form/butt-kicks): [Butt Kicks](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/form/butt-kicks)

High Skips

Jump powerfully off one leg while lifting the opposite thigh to a position parallel to the ground. Drive your arms up powerfully in opposition to the legs. Alternating arms and legs, continue the exaggerated skipping motion down a straightaway. [Watch the video](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/form/high-skips):  [High Skips](http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools/running-start/coaching-videos/middle-school/form/high-skips)

All of the information and videos used in this booklet can be found at the New York Road Runners website: <http://www.nyrr.org/youth-and-schools>

There is far more information, including videos, that can be accessed in the site.