

WARM-UP/FLEXIBILITY/COOL DOWN

General Warm-up: 5-10 minutes

Why?	Increases tissue temperatures within the body. Increases blood flow to muscles preparing for activity and exertion. Muscles become more flexible when muscles are warm. Prevents injury by allowing a gradual entrance into activity. Reduces Exercise-Induced Bronchospasm (EIB)		
What?	Slow jog Jumping jacks Ankle/hip rotations	Side stepping Cariochas Back Pedaling	Lunge walks Other light aerobic exercise Jumping rope (last)
How?	Use warm-ups to build teamwork. Keep motions slow and unidirectional. Utilize available space.		

Flexibility Exercises:

When?	Before, during and after every practice session and competition...ATLEAST!!!
How?	Stretching should follow a proper warm-up. Hold a constant (static), <i>gentle</i> stretch for 20 to 45 seconds, repeat (no bouncing) Use good posture during all stretches. Concentrate on stretch rather than talking with friends. Start focusing/visualizing practice/competition. Concentrate on stretching one muscle group at a time.
Why?	Stretching warms up deep muscle fibers. Lubricates and warms up synovial fluid (like WD-40 for your joints). Increases respiratory rate (breathing) and heart rate. Prevents acute injuries. Decreases post-career pain by maintaining range of motion in all joints. Develops body awareness in developing athletes.

Sport Specific Warm-up: 8-12 minutes (prepares muscles which are specific to figure skating)

Off Ice	Double leg, single leg jumping, slide board, etc. (1/4 turns, 1/2 turns, full turns) *CW/CC Pair skaters need to place greater emphasis on upper body warm-up than singles skaters.
On Ice	Cross-overs, moves in the field, gradually increase difficulty, intensity and speed.

Cool Down:

Why?	Decreases delayed onset muscle soreness. Gradually slows heart rate and respiration. Sense of closure to practice.
How?	Cross-overs performed at lower intensity or a light aerobic activity off-ice (all directions). Slow static stretching of all major muscle groups (off ice).