**Warming Up**

Whether you are running for 2 minutes or 2 miles, you need to put time aside for warming up and cooling down, or you will suffer the consequences. Start with a simple fast walk or slow jog before getting started at your normal pace.

A warmup can take as little as a few minutes. Even when you’re strapped for time, going through a quick list of specific motions will help prime you physically and mentally. Here are three warmup options in addition to your initially warm up walk or jog;

**Complete five to ten reps of each movement.**

**Knee to Chest:** Stand straight, bring your right knee to your chest while keeping your left leg straight, and rise up on your left tiptoes as you clasp your hands in front of your right knee. Take a step forward and alternate legs, hugging your left knee to your chest while rising up on your right toes. Keep your core engaged and strong.

**Shoulder Rolls**: Roll your shoulders backward several times, then forward.

**Full Arm Circles**: Keeping your arms straight and out to the side, circle your arms forward and then backward.

**Washing Machine**: Stand straight and twist your upper body from side to side. Most of the rotation should come from your hips.

**Hip Rotation:** Standing straight up, make exaggerated hula-hooping-style circles with your hips, rotating in one direction, then the other.

**Knee Circles**: In a slight crouch with your feet and ankles touching, place your hands on your knees. Bend your knees and make little circles with them, rotating in one direction five to ten times, and then switch.

**Ankle Circles:** Pointing your toe into the ground, roll your ankle in circles in one direction, then switch directions. Repeat with the other foot.

Don't forget to enter our [Great Athletics Giveaway](https://2222785-246bdc.sibpages.com/) for your chance to win some amazing prizes to help get you up and running.

**Foam Rolling:** Foam rolling is as important to do as a warm up as it is for your warm-down. A foam Roller is a small piece of equipment that helps you massage out your muscles to help get rid of any tightness or tension you may have. You simply roll it against any part of the body that you have tension or tightness in, common areas would be the calves, hamstrings, quads, glutes, back and arms. Using a foam roller is a habit anyone should get into, you don’t have to go to the gym just to use a foam roller! Here are some ways you can use a foam roller:

**Calves:**

* Sit on the floor with your legs straight, ankles crossed left over right, and a foam roller under your right ankle.
* Place your hands on either side of your butt and lift it off the floor, rolling your right calf muscle over the roller—from ankle to knee—a few times with your toes pointed up.
* Repeat with your leg rotated inward (so you’re rolling the inside portion of your calf), and then again with your leg rotated outward.
* Switch legs and repeat.

**Hamstrings:**

* Sit on the floor with your legs straight and a foam roller under your thighs. Place your hands on the floor on either side of your butt.
* Lift your butt and use your hands to roll the entire length of your hamstrings—from just below your butt to your knees—over the roller.

**Quads:**

* Lie facedown on the floor with your legs straight and a foam roller under your quads. Prop yourself up on your forearms.
* Slowly roll your quad muscles from the tops of your legs to the tops of your knees.

**Glutes:**

* Sit on a foam roller with your left foot flat on the floor and your right leg crossed over your left thigh. Place either both of your hands or only your right hand on the floor behind you for support.
* Tilt your body to your right so that your right glute presses against the roller.
* Roll forward and backward several times, and then repeat on your left side.

**Arms:**

* Lie on your right side with your legs straight, your right arm extended above your head, and a foam roller under your armpit.
* Place your left hand on the floor in front of you for support, and place your left foot on the floor behind your right leg.
* Use your left hand and foot to slowly roll your right side from your armpit to below your ribcage several times.
* Switch sides and repeat.

You can buy one here: <https://www.elverys.ie/elverys/en/Elverys/Fitness/Accessories/Accessories/USF-Foam-Roller-5%22x13%22-Black/p/000000000001041983>

**Back Baller:** The BackBaller get’s teeth for an even greater self Myofacial release, you can take foam rolling to the next level with the BackBaller, by putting you in total control over the force applied in an unprecedented secure and comfortable manner. The BackBaller is specifically designed to self-treat muscles in your upper & lower back. Due to the stability & control offered it goes beyond & is now the foremost product to knead out all muscle groups.

**What is Myofascial Release Therapy?**
Myofascial release is a form of soft tissue massage intended to support pain relief, increase range of motion, and balancing of the body. Techniques can include manual and self-massage.

To stretch out using the BackBaller, simply lie on it and move back and forth.

You can buy it here: <https://www.elverys.ie/elverys/en/Elverys/Fitness/Accessories/Foam-Rollers/BackBaller-Rigid-Foam-Roller%2C-Green/p/000000000001090278>

**Stretch/Resistance Bands:** Stretch bands are great for stretching out your muscles in preparation for a run or workout. They work most muscle groups in the body depending on the exercise performed, and because of the resistance the stretch bands hold they are a great alternative to use instead of weights.

Warm up exercises using resistance bands:

* **Lunges**Place your foot on the mid part of the band and pull it up to your shoulders. Now step your other leg backward and bend down until the front knee comes to 90-degree position. Once done, come back to standing position. 10 repetitions per leg.
* **Monster walk**Place both feet in the resistance band just around your ankles and walk sideways, keeping tension in the band. 10 steps/3 sets per side.
* **Front raise**Step on the resistance band with your legs at a width equal to your shoulders. Now hold the band with your hands at a width equal to your shoulders, and pull upwards up to your shoulders. Repeat 10 to 15 times.

**You can get them here:** <https://www.elverys.ie/elverys/en/Elverys/Fitness/Accessories/Accessories/Lets-Bands-Max-Powerband-Set/p/000000000001057892>