



Performance Warm-Ups

The average non-professional athlete rarely warms up properly.

"I've got limited time which I would rather devote to more effective training," would be a typical response or, said half jokingly, "Proper triathletes NEVER warm up."

Why Bother?

1. Reduced chance of injury – that obviously won't happen to you so I know I still haven't convinced you.

Well then

2. Without warming up; if you perform 10 minute, tempo-level intervals in a controlled environment (like on a stationary trainer) with 5 minute recoveries then you will find that your performance (HR vs. Power/Pace/Speed) will probably peak on the second or third interval before fatigue sets in. So there you go; you've 'proved' that warming up makes you better. Why do track cyclist 'spin' in between races? Why do Tour de France cyclists 'spin' before racing? Go figure.
3. After a few years of training you will plateau. You will then come to the conclusion that one of the areas that you can improve on will be your technique. It will then take you a long time to ingrain new technique – MONTHS and you may also get injured trying. If your 'warm up' comprises drills then you work on technique from day 1.
4. It will take you quite some time to improve your performance by 1% through training; more obviously so when you are approaching a plateau. Relatively inexperienced athletes could improve their performance by 1% within a week, or so, by better technique alone. That's 20 seconds off your 5k PB or thereabouts. WITH NO ADDITIONAL HARD TRAINING.

So the title of this document is 'PERFORMANCE WARM-UPS'. The following are the minimum that you should do before ANY workout and they will make you:

- a) perform that workout better;
- b) cumulatively improve your technique; and
- c) reduce the chance of injury.

Maybe see them as a test? Try to improve the results; whatever works best for you.

Cycling

- ONE_LEG_TEST in race position: >5per leg x 30 second intervals at approx 70 rpm or +/-10rpm, as comfortable, no rest as such but try to keep your chosen cadence CONSTANT. **One legged cycling.** Alternate legs with NO SPEED/POWER GOAL – take it easy this is all about TECHNIQUE. Goal: 3x1minute @80rpm on each leg (6 minutes in total)
- BOUNCE_TEST in race position: EASIEST GEAR: Start pedalling normally (2 legs!) at 80 rpm. Increase by 5rpms each 30 seconds and try to achieve the max cadence you can without bouncing on the seat. Goal 140rpm++. (4-6 minutes in total)
- 5x 90 seconds @ 80% of race pace, 2 min RI (just do 2-3 of these if you have done the bounce test rather than 5, 7 minutes)
- 17-19 minutes in total...that's too much for you isn't it! Well maybe alternate the two tests from one session to the next.



Running

1. Easy 5 minute jog.
2. Then 4-6 strides where you increase speed to almost maximum sprint hold for a few seconds and decelerate evenly to a stop covering no more than 100m. That's about 3 minutes.
3. Then some drills like these:



Courtesy: Jay Johnson (YouTube)



Courtesy: ImproveRunningForm.com

So what about race day?

Race Day – 5k, Duathlon & Triathlon

The warm-up preps your body to work hard. It helps your muscles contract faster, and you can then sustain a higher HR. Your blood will be improved, delivering fuel better and removing waste from muscles faster.

You probably won't have a turbo with you. The 'bit of a prat' that has brought his turbo will probably beat you! And, yes, he beats me too - I don't take mine! But I have thought about it.

Leave 10 minutes rest immediately prior to the race to focus your thoughts and check your laces, number belt, trisuit/wetsuit and hydration. Don't do too much warm-up! Maybe do a tad more on a cold day and tad less on a hot day. The longer the event the SHORTER the required warm-up.

Cycling Race: 10 minutes easy then, as above, 5x 90 seconds @ 80% of race pace, 2 min RI

Running Race: Easy 5 minute jog then 4-6 strides, as above. I would also do some of the stretches from above paying close attention to any particular weak muscle group where an injury might surface under strain.

Duathlon Race:

- 10 minutes easy bike if you can access transition. Do the 5x90 optionally
- Run race warm-up

Triathlon Race:

- 10 minutes easy bike if you can access transition. Do the 5x90 optionally
- Run race warm-up
- Upper body stretching and warm-up. If you are going to sweat then put your suit on first.
- Acclimatise to cold water - take any chance you have. Splash your face and put some water inside your suit to help it seal if appropriate. Swim for a bit if you can.