

Lets start at the beginning. The CrossFit warm up.

The “official” CF warm up consists of one short duration cardio effort, run 400, row 500, or jump rope x 150 followed by 3 rounds of (overhead preferably) squats, pull ups, push ups or dips, sit ups, and back extensions. In the beginning, we recommend just a few reps of each, say 5, slowly working up to 15 over a period of months.

This is the basic warm up and should be used as a guide when designing your own, unique warm up. It covers 5 of our basic motions- squat, push, pull, bend, and straighten. It serves as a good departure point to a effective, efficient, and useful warm up. If you haven’t already, you will fill out a skills self-evaluation. Take a look at the ones you marked on the left of the scale and include them in your warm up. The warm up is a good time to focus on the skills that trouble you the most, ask for help, and improve them. If you practice them each day, before you are tired, with time weaknesses become strengths.

Why warm up? It prepares us mentally and physically for activity. Physiologically it induces a host of responses including increases in heart rate, stroke volume (blood pumped per heartbeat), cardiac output (blood pumped per minute), oxygen extraction by the muscles, blood pressure, pulmonary ventilation (amount of air moved per breath) and core temperature. The increase in core and muscle temperature increases the elasticity of muscle and tendinous tissues (read: flexibility!), increases nerve conduction rates, and increases the speed of muscle contractions. How do we know if it’s working? A light sweat is a good indicator of a successful warm up.

We encourage everyone to make their warm up fit them. Change squats to one leg squats, do GHD sit ups instead of floor sit ups, climb that rope or kick up into a handstand. A big part of CrossFit is playing and challenging your skills. There is no right or wrong warm up. As long as you squat, push, pull, bend, and straighten, and use perfect form every time, the warm up is a great opportunity to not only prepare for the WOD but improve your skills and have fun.