



## Teaching Developmentally Appropriate Warm-Up Drills in Physical Education

Hüseyin Ünlü, Büşra Özdek, Bijen Filiz & Ferman Konukman

To cite this article: Hüseyin Ünlü, Büşra Özdek, Bijen Filiz & Ferman Konukman (2023) Teaching Developmentally Appropriate Warm-Up Drills in Physical Education, Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance, 94:6, 67-68, DOI: [10.1080/07303084.2023.2221611](https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2023.2221611)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2023.2221611>



© 2023 The Author(s). Published with license by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.



Published online: 21 Aug 2023.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 319



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

# Teaching Developmentally Appropriate Warm-Up Drills in Physical Education

Hüseyin Ünlü , Büşra Özdek , Bijen Filiz and Ferman Konukman 

Children and young people spend a significant part of their time in classrooms. Schools have the critical task of engaging children in physical activity and improving their physical fitness. Recess, activity breaks and physical education classes are the most important opportunities to engage in physical activity during the school day. However, physical education in schools provides regular planned and scheduled activities for children compared to the other activities. In this respect, physical education differs from the other subject matters and activities in the school curriculum.

The quality of the lesson is considered extremely important to obtain the desired efficiency from school physical education lessons. A quality physical education lesson is organized into three parts: the introduction phase, the main phase and the closure phase. The introduction phase of physical education lessons is usually handled as a section that includes general explanations about the subject and objectives of the course, as well as warm-up drills. The warm-up activities in this phase prepares for all of the exercises and sport activities in the lesson. It also includes the preparation of the body for movement, both physically and mentally. The focus of the physical education lesson and the part that provides for the subject or content to be covered is the lesson's main phase. This stage is usually the part where the applications are related to the content that the teacher explains and demonstrates. The last phase of the physical education lesson is known as the closure phase. This phase includes several brief activities to evaluate how much the students learned about the subject covered in the previous phase through individual or group activities and cool down.

The warm-up is the most important part of the physical education classes, where the student's interest and attention are drawn and motivated

toward the lesson's purpose. However, many physical education teachers do not give enough attention to the beginning and warm-up part of the lesson when planning their lessons. Faigenbaum and McFarland (2007) stated that warm-up activities help prepare students for dynamic activities and increase their lesson time with physical activity. Warm-up in physical education classes should be emphasized, primarily because it constitutes a basis for the main phase. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to provide some developmentally appropriate warm-up examples to increase the quality of the physical education lesson.

## Warm-Up in Physical Education

Warm-up is defined physical or mental activity to prepare the body for the demand of physical activities and prevent injuries. Warm-up activities in the introduction phase provide a more comfortable and convenient contraction by increasing the intramuscular temperature of the body, especially in the regions with large muscle groups (Hatano, 2019). A quality warm-up revitalizes the neuromuscular system, improves mobility, increases flexibility and prepares students for the main activity. Moreover, it can contribute to the establishment of lesson rhythm and classroom management. The warm-up usually begins with the physical education teacher's greeting to the class. It can be in the form of a ceremony or ritual where all students line up and meet together in the gym. In this section, the teacher initiates by providing a brief overview of the previous lesson and elaborating on the present lesson's goals and subject matter. This approach captures the students' attention and establishes connections between the new material and their prior knowledge. By doing so, the teacher facilitates a more effective learning experience for the students.

## How to Warm Up in Physical Education

The best warm-up activities for children should be fun, engaging and developmentally appropriate. A well-designed warm-up can add a new, exciting and valuable dimension to physical education class. Warm-up activities are usually planned to cover the lesson's first 3 to 5 min (Pangrazi & Beighle, 2019). Examples of activities that can be included in the warm-up section should be slow for adaptation. Developmentally and age-appropriate moderate-paced jogs and motor skills activities will increase the heart rate.

The warm-up activities should consist of large locomotor movements that are not rigidly structured, allowing considerable freedom of movement. In the warm-up part, the activity time allocated to practice should be greater compared to the instruction time. Therefore, instruction should be kept as brief as possible. The most important point is that warm-up activities should be chosen considering students' interests, developmental levels and physical abilities. Moreover, because school-age children are less likely to do the exercises in a gym or using special equipment, the warm-up exercises must be easily performed without equipment. For example, plyometric drills can be used without any equipment.

Basic principles of plyometric training as a skill theme approach using basic locomotor skills provide an excellent basis for designing developmentally appropriate warm-up activities. Children's games and activities are plyometric in nature, such as leaping, galloping, sliding and skipping (Konukman et al., 2018). Using the skill theme approach (Graham et al., 2013), fundamental skill themes in physical education such as locomotor skills (e.g., walking, running, hopping, skipping, galloping, sliding, chasing, fleeing, dodging),

**Table 1.**  
**Sample Warm-Up Games in Physical Education Classes**

Exercise	Description Link
Cat and Mice	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgPXsQbJ1kw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgPXsQbJ1kw</a>
Quarter Eagle	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnBnwHkg3ss">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnBnwHkg3ss</a>
Seat Roll	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rpY9FeZR0I">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rpY9FeZR0I</a>
Square Drill	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gKxeL4g-NY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gKxeL4g-NY</a>
Lateral shuffle	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tre3_bIVRrho">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tre3_bIVRrho</a>
Push-up Tag	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olmOTXdVbjI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olmOTXdVbjI</a>
Blob Tag	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIKKGWGP1gs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIKKGWGP1gs</a>
Freeze Tag	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYzZdKVI3bA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYzZdKVI3bA</a>
Triangle Tag	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_2epGmCpww">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_2epGmCpww</a>
Catch at one Bounce	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuVdirR25IM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuVdirR25IM</a>
Jumping Jacks for Children	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxKRZ6DKJ50">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxKRZ6DKJ50</a>
Shuttle Run	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0N5D_kjyD4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0N5D_kjyD4</a>
Traffic Light Game	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxEZ_1goxRo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxEZ_1goxRo</a>
Jump the River	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4-T_V9bDSI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4-T_V9bDSI</a>
Clap and Catch	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHxCizl6TqU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHxCizl6TqU</a>
Popcorn	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aT9FaveoSao">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aT9FaveoSao</a>
Snake Pits	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZL0edzHkqk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZL0edzHkqk</a>
Dice Tag	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FsYu5Uwn1ug">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FsYu5Uwn1ug</a>
Yoshi	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp0BGh0BmbE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp0BGh0BmbE</a>
Aladdin Slide	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6TfSngJdDg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6TfSngJdDg</a>
Dance Activities	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=933WlpH4jws">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=933WlpH4jws</a>

nonmanipulative skills (e.g., rolling, balancing, transferring weight, jumping and landing, stretching, curling) and manipulative skills (e.g., throwing, catching) are simple but good examples of warm-up activities.

Teachers should choose different weekly activities to add variety to the warm-up portion of the lesson. Table 1 displays some game activities that can be applied as a warm-up drill in physical education classes. Game-related warm-up activities are more fun for children compared to traditional warm-up drills.

For example, the activity begins with students walking or jogging for approximately 2 to 3 min around the gym. Then, if the class is ready and follows the directions for the activities, an educational game can be played as a reward for the class's attention and readiness to learn. In addition, small-sided tactical games can be played as a warm-up activity. Teachers can relate these tactical games to the main subject of a lesson, such as soccer, volleyball or tennis, using a skill theme approach (Konukman et al., 2018).

In summary, physical education class is more than participating in

sports and physical activity. Physical education classes should go beyond sports and physical activity to support and encourage lifelong healthy lifestyle habits (Corbin et al., 2020). Teachers should enable students to have a more positive and longer-term relationship with physical activity by providing information on crucial exercise components such as an effective developmentally and age-appropriate warm-up drills. Unfortunately, warm-up is an often-ignored part of physical education. However, it can motivate children for physical activity if it is well planned and designed.

### ORCID

Hüseyin Ünlü  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3079-4417>

Büşra Konukman  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8333-9971>

Ferman Konukman  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9508-8874>

### References

Corbin, C. B., Kulinna, P. H., & Sibley, B. A. (2020). A dozen reasons for including conceptual physical education in quality

secondary school programs. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 91(3), 40–49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2019.1705211>

Faigenbaum, A., & McFarland, J. J. E. (2007). Guidelines for implementing a dynamic warm-up for physical education. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 78(3), 25–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2007.10597985>

Graham, G., Holt/Hale, A., & Parker, M. (2013). *Children moving: A reflective approach to teaching physical education*. McGraw-Hill.

Hatano, K. M. (2019). Oriented warm-up. In S. Rocha Piedade, A. Imhoff, M. Clatworthy, M. Cohen, J. Espregueira-Mendes (Eds.), *The sports medicine physician* (pp. 71–84). Springer, Cham.

Konukman, F., Erdogan, M., Yilmaz, I., & Gumusdag, H. (2018). Teaching plyometric drills to children: A skill theme approach. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 89(3), 54–56. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2018.1419009>

Pangrazi, R. P., & Beighle, A. (2019). *Dynamic physical education for elementary school children* (pp. 266). Human Kinetics Publishers.

Hüseyin Ünlü is a professor in the Faculty of Sport Sciences at Aksaray University in Aksaray, Turkey. Büşra Özdek is a research assistant in Faculty of Sport Sciences at Aksaray University in Aksaray, Turkey. Bijen Filiz is a former Physical Education Teacher and associate professor in the Faculty of Sport Sciences at Afyon Kocatepe University in Afyonkarahisar, Turkey. Ferman Konukman ([fkonukman@qu.edu.qa](mailto:fkonukman@qu.edu.qa)) is an assistant professor in the Department of Physical Education, College of Education at Qatar University in Doha, Qatar.

© 2023 The Author(s). Published with license by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.