



Run For Fun – Coach/Teacher Guide

Every warm-up should include

- Pulse-raising aerobic activities to prepare the cardiovascular system and warm the muscles of the body.
- Mobility exercises to prepare the joints.
- Stretches to prepare the muscles and their associated ligaments and connective tissue.
- Activity- related movements to prepare the children for the focus of the main activity.

Warm-up games

Whistle freeze: teacher asks the children to walk, jog, or skip. Children follow instructions but on hearing teacher blow the whistle, each child must freeze. If they move then, they must do five jumps. Teacher may ask them to freeze in a balance or to perform a stretch after each whistle.

Note: This is a good starting warm-up game as the children learn how to respond to the whistle which is the teacher's *safety mechanism*. Any time they hear the whistle they must freeze. (Do not use the whistle to start activities).

Top gear: children are asked to imagine that they are driving a car and as the teacher calls out the various gears the children must accelerate or decelerate depending on the gear that is called. All children start travelling around the play area in first gear which is walking and get progressively faster up to running at a brisk pace for fifth gear.

Call the number: allow the children to walk, run or skip around the hall. The teacher calls a number for example, four. The children must form groups of four. Continue the game calling different numbers each time. Teacher may ask them to perform a balance or to perform a stretch after each whistle.

Busy bees: allow the children to walk, skip or run around the hall. When the teacher calls 'busy bees elbows' each child must find a partner and touch elbows. Continue the game calling different body parts each time. Teacher may ask the children to perform a stretch after each body part is called. For example, 'busy bees hands now do a calf stretch.

The DVD game: Children respond to the following DVD controls, using the appropriate actions: When the teacher calls 'play' the children walk around. 'Rewind' means run or walk backwards, 'Fast forward' means run, 'Pause' means jog on the spot, 'Stop' means stop and 'Eject' means jump up.

Partners: The children run about the play area. When the teacher calls out the number one, the children must find a partner and shake hands. This is partner handshake number one. The children leave their partner and run around the gym once more, this time the teacher calls out the number two and the children must find a different partner and shake hands. This is partner handshake number two. This process is repeated up to the number five. When children are used to their partners the numbers can be called out at random. The children must find the correct partner that corresponds to that number. There is a lot of memory work in this activity and it is a great energiser.

All Sessions

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Day 1 Aim for:	Day 2 Aim for:	Warm-up everyday to get bodies ready to run, & Cool-down to loosen out after the run.	Running Games
Week 1			
½ mile	½ mile	Warm-up: mobilisers for joints and short easy jog to get ready for running. Cool-down: walk and stop to stretch out.	Pair up: walk and jog with a partner Group relays
Week 2			
1 mile	1 ½ miles	Running relaxed- shoulders down, elbows bent, hands in relaxed fist shape for easy	Group Up: 4-5 run as a group Lead the Line: in pairs
Week 3			
1 mile	1 ½ miles	Practice Keeping pace so you can start and finish run sections without slowing down too much	Call the Spot: Fast Pairs:
Week 4			
1 mile	Great Limerick Run 4 Fun 2 miles Well done 😊	Practice Running in a group to talk while jogging a good pace	Lead the Line or Relays

4-7 year olds Event: 1km walk and jog on mainly grass and running track. Parents can cheer on or join in! No structured training program advised for 4-7 yr olds. Family relays and running games that children enjoy are encouraged as the best preparation.

8-12 year olds Event: 2miles walk/jog/run on pathways, trail and running track. For safety, marshals will guide runners on the route and adults may not run with the 8-12yr old group.

8-12 years old - Preparing for the 2 mile run involves learning to run in a group and pace your running. Take walk breaks when you need to catch your breath and add a little running in so your legs get used to going the distance.

How to Do Running Games:

Pair up: partner with somebody and stay together to run and walk when you need- challenge is to keep going and finish together.

Group relays: make a running track- laps can be formed around cones in big grass area, or up & down a straight. Mixed groups of 4-5 on a team. Pass a baton (or beanbag, scarf, ring..) for 1 or up to 4 runs each.

Mix groups so teams change and runners get a chance lead/finish and run different parts of relays.

Group Up: Get together in a group 4-5 run- stay together to finish as a group, with walk breaks if someone needs a breather. Run as a team!

Lead the Line: line up in pairs to make a running train. Coach or leaders at the front call the next pair to run up from the back to take the lead. Keep space from the runners ahead and be ready to hit the front.

Call the Spot: take turns to choose a spot the group must run to. Walk breaks allowed but when someone calls a spot you try to keep running til you reach it, then walk before the next spot called.

Fast Pairs: Team up in 2s- continuous relay runs over 60-100m. Can be *Fast Parents* if parents warm-up and like to join in the fun relay. Runners need to think about their pace so they can run to hand-over then ready to run again for 2, 3 or 4 hand-overs.

Coach/Teacher leading the group:

- Choose a trail or grass area if possible for some runs.
- Watch faces and listen for signs of over-exertion or over-heating.
- Guide distances are useful to make sure running increases gradually, but Run for Fun is not a competitive, timed event. Therefore, running games and group activity should focus first on fun and improving fitness from week 1 to week 4.
- Pace of progress will vary for each participant and games should be in mixed groups to encourage each child to run and have fun doing it.

For more information on local events, clubs and how to become a coach:

www.limerickcitysports.ie

www.cllsp.ie

www.athleticsireland.ie / www.athleticslimerick.com

www.getirelandactive.ie