

WARM UP SMARTER, NOT LONGER

The 5-Minute *Pre-Run Mobility* Routine

Six dynamic moves that wake up the hips, ankles, and hamstrings so your first mile feels like your third. No floor, no equipment — do it right by the door or at the trailhead. Move through it, don't hold and stretch: the goal is warm and springy, not loose and sleepy.

🕒 ~5 minutes

6 moves

Standing — no equipment

Do it **before** you run

The routine

Go top to bottom, one round. Keep it flowing — each move blends into the next.



Ankle Rocks

ANKLES · CALVES · ACHILLES

0:45

~10 / SIDE

Why: Your ankle is the first joint to hit the ground on every stride. A few seconds of dorsiflexion now buys you a smoother push-off and less calf grabbing in mile one.

SET UP

Stand in a short split stance, front foot flat, hands on a wall or your thighs for balance.

CUES

- ◆ Drive the front knee **forward over the toes**, heel glued down.
- ◆ Rock back to straight, then repeat in a slow, steady rhythm.
- ◆ Feel a gentle stretch in the calf and the front of the ankle.

COMMON MISTAKE

Letting the heel pop up. If the heel lifts, shorten the range — keep it planted so the ankle actually mobilizes instead of the calf just bouncing.

2

Leg Swings — Front & Side

HIPS · HAMSTRINGS · GROIN

1:00

~10 EACH WAY

Why: Running is repeated hip swinging. Priming that exact motion in two planes tells the hip flexors and glutes to switch on before you ask them to do it 1,000 times a mile.

SET UP

Hand on a wall or pole. Swing one leg front-to-back for 30s, then face the wall and swing it side-to-side across your body for 30s. Switch legs.

CUES

- ◆ Start with small swings and **let the range grow** each rep.
- ◆ Stay tall — swing from the hip, not by folding the spine.
- ◆ Relaxed, pendulum tempo. Never force the top of the swing.

COMMON MISTAKE

Yanking to end range on rep one. Cold, ballistic yanking is how you tweak a hamstring — ease in and build the arc.

3

Walking Lunge + Reach

HIP FLEXORS · GLUTES · UPPER BACK

0:50

~5 / SIDE

Why: Sitting all day shortens the front of the hip. This opens it while your torso rotates — the same open-hip, rotating posture you want at full stride.

SET UP

Step into a long forward lunge. Sink the back hip toward the floor, reach both arms up and rotate your chest over the front leg. Step through to the next lunge.

CUES

- ◆ Long stride — you should **feel the back hip open**.
- ◆ Front knee tracks over the middle toes, not caving in.
- ◆ Reach tall, then twist toward the front knee.

COMMON MISTAKE

Short, upright steps. If your torso stays vertical and the stride is tiny, the hip never opens — lengthen the lunge.



Open the Gate

HIP ROTATORS · ADDUCTORS

0:40

~6 / SIDE

Why: Runners move mostly straight ahead, so the side and rotational hip muscles get lazy. Circling the hip open keeps your stride from turning stiff and shuffly late in a run.

SET UP

Stand tall, hand on support if needed. Lift one knee to hip height in front of you, then sweep it out to the side and set the foot down. Alternate "open the gate" and "close the gate."

COMMON MISTAKE

Leaning the upper body to fake the range. Let the hip do the work; keep your chest quiet and upright.

CUES

- ◆ Knee leads the circle — **lift first, then rotate open.**
- ◆ Keep the standing leg tall and the belly braced.
- ◆ Smooth arcs, no wobble. Slow down if you're tipping.



High Knees → Butt Kicks

HEART RATE · HIP FLEXORS · HAMSTRINGS

0:45

~20S EACH

Why: This is the "turn the engine on" move. It nudges your heart rate up and rehearses the two halves of the stride — driving the knee up, then folding the heel back — at running-ish speed.

SET UP

March or jog in place. 20s of high knees (drive knees to hip height), flow straight into 20s of butt kicks (heels flick toward the glutes).

COMMON MISTAKE

Leaning back to throw the knees up. Keep a tall, slightly forward posture so it looks like running, not like sitting in a chair.

CUES

- ◆ Stay on the **balls of your feet**, quick and light.
- ◆ Tall posture, quick arms — let the arms set the rhythm.
- ◆ Quiet landings. Snappy, not stompy.



Build-Up Strides

WHOLE-BODY · RUNNING SPEED

1:00

2 x ~20M

Why: The last step is the bridge from "warm-up" to "run." Two easy accelerations tell your legs the real thing is about to start, so mile one doesn't feel like a cold start.

SET UP

On flat, clear ground, jog and gradually build to about 80% of a sprint over ~20 meters, then ease down. Walk back and repeat once. (No space? Do 30s of light in-place pogo hops instead.)

COMMON MISTAKE

Treating it as an all-out sprint from a dead stop. This is a smooth build to fast, not a max effort — you're waking the legs up, not racing.

CUES

- ◆ Build speed **gradually** — accelerate, don't explode.
- ◆ Stay relaxed: soft jaw, loose hands, smooth arms.
- ◆ Ease down over the last few steps, don't slam the brakes.

WHEN YOU'VE GOT 30 SECONDS, NOT 5 MINUTES

The "I'm Already Late" Version

Short on time is better than skipping it. Do this and get moving — then let the first half-mile finish the job at an easy pace.

- 1 **10 leg swings** each leg, front-to-back — the single biggest bang-for-buck move.
- 2 **5 walking lunges** per side to open the hips.
- 3 **20 seconds of high knees** to lift the heart rate.
- 4 **Start your run easy** for the first ½ mile, then settle into pace.

Want a plan built around your body and your race?

This routine is the warm-up. The training, the pacing, and the strength that actually make you faster are the run. That's what I coach. Come tell me what you're chasing at

ontherunfit.com/apply. — Lindsey, On The Run Fit

General education, not medical advice. This guide is general fitness information for healthy adults and is not a substitute for care from a qualified medical or health professional. It is not personalized to you and does not account for any injury, condition, or medication. Check with your physician before starting or changing an exercise routine — especially if you are pregnant, injured, recovering, or managing a health condition. Move within a comfortable range. **If anything causes pain (not the normal effort of warming up), stop.** You take part at your own risk.

On The Run *Fit*

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