

Exercises for Young Athletes

Staying injury-free throughout the sports season requires a proper conditioning and exercise program. Here are some stretching exercises developed by the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons that young athletes can perform before participating in any athletic activity.

Athletes must do each one of the exercises carefully, speed is not important. Once the exercise routine is learned, the entire program should take no longer than 10 minutes.

It also is important to warm up before doing any of these exercises. Good examples of warm up activities are slowly running in place and walking for a few minutes.

	<p>Seat Straddle Lotus - Sit down; place soles of feet together and drop knees toward floor. Place forearms on inside of knees and push knees to the ground. Lean forward, bringing chin to feet. Hold for five seconds. Repeat three to six times.</p>
	<p>Seat Side Straddle - Sit with legs spread; place both hands on same ankle. Bring chin to knee, keeping the leg straight. Hold for five seconds. Repeat three to six times. Repeat exercise on opposite leg.</p>
	<p>Seat Stretch - Sit with legs together, feet flexed, hands on ankles. Bring chin to knees. Hold for five seconds. Repeat three to six times.</p>
	<p>Lying, Quad Stretch - Lie on back with one leg straight, the other leg with hip turned in and knee bent. Press knee to floor. Hold for five seconds. Repeat three to six times.</p>
	<p>Knees to Chest - Lie on back with knees bent. Grasp tops of knees and bring them out toward the armpits, rocking gently. Hold for five seconds. Repeat three to five times.</p>
	<p>Forward Lunges - Kneel on left leg; place right leg forward at a right angle. Lunge forward, keeping the back straight. Stretch should be felt on the left groin. Hold for five seconds. Repeat three to six times. Repeat on opposite leg.</p>
	<p>Side Lunges - Stand with legs apart; bend the left knee while leaning toward the left. Keep the back straight and the right leg straight. Hold for five seconds. Repeat three to six times. Repeat on opposite leg.</p>
	<p>Cross-Over - Stand with legs crossed; keep feet close together and legs straight. Touch toes. Hold for five seconds. Repeat three to six times. Repeat with opposite leg.</p>
	<p>Standing Quad Stretch - Stand supported. Pull foot to buttocks. Hold for five seconds. Repeat three to six times.</p>

Source: American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, *Athletic Training and Sports Medicine*, 1991

ESLL Pre-Practice / Pre-Game Checklist

Prior to each practice/game the manager must confirm the following:

- Medical Release forms for all players are at hand.
- Any player returning from being injured has a physician's release indicating fit to play.
- Fully equipped First Aid Kit and ice packs are readily accessible to all participants. Do not use chemical packs on face or broken skin.
- Managers have walked the field and found it free of hazards and conditions are fit for play. (If both managers cannot agree a league official shall be consulted). This includes fencing and dugouts.
- Access to a telephone or cell phone is readily available. In case of an emergency call 911.
- All players have completed adequate warm-up and stretching exercises.
- Players and Uniforms (LL Rule 1.11)
 - No casts – players and umpires. Coaches, managers, players with casts must remain in the dugout.
 - No jewelry (watches, pins, necklaces, etc.) or metallic buttons.
EXCEPTION: medical alert bracelet or necklace.
 - No metal spikes, molded cleats only.
 - Uniform meet Little League Standards - shirts, hats, etc. worn properly, shirts tucked into pants, no torn or frayed uniforms. No white or gray undershirts
- All equipment is inspected, found fit, and safe for use.
 - Meets Little League Standards
 - Gloves must be one color, no white or gray, and not exceed maximum specifications (LL Rule 1.14)
 - NO BATING DONUTS! (LL Rule 1.10)
 - Batting helmets – padding intact, no cracks, dents, etc.
 - Bats – diameter and length meet specifications (LL Rule 1.10). MORATORIUM on COMPOSITE bats except for those approved for use by Little League International.
 - For Little League's "Baseball Bat Resource Page" go to:
<http://www.littleleague.org/learn/equipment/baseballbatinfo.htm>
 - For a list of licensed 2-1/4 inch composite bats (majors and below) go to:
<http://www.littleleague.org/learn/equipment/licensedcompositebats.htm>
 - Catcher's required gear – protective cup for males, helmet with ear covers, mask with throat guard, chest protector (with flap-LL only), shin guards, catcher's glove, all in good condition and well fitted
- Field Properly Prepared
 - Grass cut
 - Infield dragged; mound, home plate area and base paths raked
 - Foul line chalked, coached boxes marked
 - Fencing and dugout areas in good condition, gates secured
 - Bases properly anchored
 - Trash containers empty
- Field round rules have been reviewed between managers and umpires
- Managers, Coaches and Players Decorum
 - No unsportsmanlike behavior, foul language or throwing equipment (Automatic Ejection)
 - No arguing judgment calls (safe, out, balls, strikes, etc.)
 - Helmets to be worn at all times for all offensive players on the field including youth base coaches
 - Do not leave the dugout onto the field until proper timeout is called
- Recite Little League Pledge
- Play Ball (BE SAFE)