



SESSION HANDOUT

Mastering The Warm Up & Cool Down

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Presenter

Joy Smith

Schedule

5 min: Intro & Overview
15 min: Purpose & Importance of the Warm Up, Safety Concerns & Music
30 min: Theory & Movement: 3 sections of a Zumba Fitness Warm Up, Dos and Don'ts
15 min: Purpose & Importance of the *Pre-Cool Down* & Cool Down
25 min: Movement & Choreography Examples
15 min: Stretching and Rhythmic Limbering, Theory & Movement
15 min: Final wrap-up/Q&A
(Total: 2 hours)

Session Objective

To refine or refresh your skills to provide not only a fun warm up and cool down, but safe and appropriate movements for your Zumba[®] Fitness class.

To provide inspirational movement, choreography tips and options.

History & Background

The Zumba[®] Fitness Basic Level One Training Course provides Zumba Instructors the necessary tools to begin teaching a Zumba Fitness class. Instructors come from varying backgrounds; including previous dance training, group fitness instructor or personal trainer, or perhaps their base experience was gained solely as a current student of a Zumba Fitness class.

During the Basics Skills Training, participants learn about many different facets of teaching, including the importance and technique of providing a safe and effective warm-up and cool down in each and every class. In this session, we will focus on perfecting your skills and understanding of these vital elements of your Zumba class as well as providing movement options and inspirations for you to apply to your own classes.

Application of Movement

The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends that the warm-up portion of the class consist of 5-10 minutes of low intensity, large muscle activity, gradually progressing to the lower end of intensity. The warm-up is designed to:

- Increase blood flow
- Raise the core temperature
- Stretch/mobilize your core or postural muscles
- Loosen the joints, ligaments, and tendons
- Decrease the risk of injuries
- Preview movements or activities of the upcoming workout

Music selection, BPM, and controlled body actions will dictate the warm-up.

ACSM recommends that the cool-down portion consist of 5 minutes of diminishing intensity and 5 minutes of stretching. Moderate to low activity in the cool-down is designed to allow the body to return to a normal state and create the ideal state for stretching the muscles used in the workout. Doing a proper cool-down also helps to prevent muscular and cardiovascular injuries.

It is extremely important to stretch all the muscle groups used:

- Neck
- Upper & Mid Back
- Deltoids
- Chest & Arms
- Core
- Quads & Hamstrings
- Gluteus & Hip Regions
- Calves, Ankles, & Shins

Proper alignment, muscle isolation, and controlled movement in the warm-up and cool-down phase will help to decrease injuries as well as prepare the body for the workout itself.

- Take care not to lock your elbows or hyperextend the elbow joint
- Core to be tucked in to help keep the spine in line
- Control or avoid any major twist or torque in the core
- Knees over your ankles (not toes) in a squat or lunge position
- Avoid twisting your knees away from the direction of travel

Musical Recommendations

Music is the Key ingredient in a Zumba Fitness Class. From the smooth earthy melodies of a salsa, to the hard hitting beats of Reggaeton; music sets the tone and feel of the class. Having the right music for your warm-up and cool-down also sets the right energy for the Zumba Experience. You want to create an energizing blood pumping intro to get the party started. Emotional serenity and relaxation is the key to ending a class on a positive note. Many styles of music work perfectly for a warm-up.

Keep these things in mind:

- Warm-up BPM is recommended around 120-134
- If you choose a typical “latin” dance style of music for your warm-up, avoid “dancy” movements until your body is ready for it; post warm up.
- You may choose to have a long mix of music, separate songs blended together or overlap, or choose to do one song at a time for each section of your warm up.
- Avoid long of breaks between your warm-up segments.

Choreography Music and Timing Notes

The Power of 4! Most of the music utilized in a warm-up is made up of a 4/4 timing. Breaking up the beats will allow unique patterns as well as being able to emphasize parts of the music. It could be the use of single, single, double, or 3 step touch and 1 squat.

Some song choices to consider for your pre cool down song are cha cha, tango or the latest pop song that is too mellow for the more intense portion of the class. Leave your class humming a song with a sweet melody or inspiration lyrics.

Use the time at the end of each class to thank and connect with your participants, make announcements about upcoming events and offer individual attention as needed. Your positive influence and leadership means more to them than you may ever know.

References

ACSM's (American College of Sports Medicine) *Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription 8th edition*. (Walter Thompson, Neil F. Gordon, and Linda S Pescatello, editors). Baltimore, MD: Wolters Kluwer/Lippincott, Williams, & Wilkens; 2010.

Zumba® Fitness Basics One Manual