
PICKLEBALL

WARM-UP & COOL-DOWN

As with any sport, it's important to properly prepare for a pickleball game. Warm-ups ensure that your body is stretched and ready to play, and cool-downs bring your body back to resting mode so you can safely play again next time. Putting in an extra 5-10 minutes of work before and after you play will pay off in the way of keeping you healthy and improving your game.





THE WARM- UP

Pickleball is a full-body sport, so a good warm-up should target the whole body. We'll break it down into a few key dynamic moves to keep the warm-up short, but effective.

- **Arm circles:** Make large forward circles with your arms for 30 seconds. Then, switch directions and make backwards circles for 30 more seconds.
- **Core twists:** Stand with your feet slightly wider than hip-width apart. Primarily using your core, twist your shoulders to the left, then to the right, while keeping your hips facing forward. Do 10 twists to each side.
- **High-knee marches:** Slowly bring one knee at a time up to hip height. Tap your knee to your palm before taking the leg back down and repeating the motion on the other leg. Continue this pattern for 30 seconds.
- **Overhead stretch:** Take your arms above your head and stretch as far as you can (like you're trying to make your body as long as possible). Swing them back down just behind your hips, then take them back up. Repeat this for 15 reps.



THE WARM- UP CONT.

- **Ankle-rolls/balance:** Lift one leg and roll your ankle in one direction for 3 rotations, then switch directions. Put that leg down, and repeat the exercise on the second leg. Do 3 rounds of this on each leg.
- **Standing side-crunches:** With your hands on your head, lift one leg up and out to the side while crunching your elbow down to meet your knee on the same side. Repeat this move for 10 on each side.
- **Court length forward/backward jog:** At a comfortable pace, jog up the length of the court, turn then forward lunge to return to your starting point. Repeat this 3-5 times.



THE COOL DOWN

When the game is over, it's tempting to walk right off the court and move on with your day, but forgetting to cool down can be detrimental. Taking the time for a quick cool-down stretch is in your best interest.

- **Slow walk the length of the court:** If your heart rate is really high after a tough game, you'll want to slowly bring it back down to resting. A good way to do this is to decrease the intensity of your cardio, which in this case would mean walking as opposed to jogging or sprinting on the court. Walk back and forth a couple of times until your breathing returns to normal.
- **Across the chest arm stretch:** Pull one arm across your chest using the other hand for support. Hold for 10-15 seconds and then switch sides.
- **Quad stretch:** Kick your foot back up and grab the toe of your shoe with your hand. Hold this position for 10-15 seconds, making sure to grab onto something with your other hand if you're struggling to balance yourself. Switch legs and repeat.



THE COOL DOWN CONT.

- **Side stretch:** Stand with your feet wider than hip-width apart. Put a hand on your hip and bring the other arm over your head towards the other side of your body. Pulse here for 10 seconds, then switch to the other side.
- **Toe touch:** Stand with your feet together and bend at the waist. If you can, touch your toes. If you can't, push your hands down your legs until you feel a good stretch and hang there for 10-15 seconds
- **Inhale/exhale overhead stretch:** Inhale deeply while you take your arms out to the side, continuing upward until they meet above your head. Look up at your hands and stretch your whole body out. Exhale, then bring everything back down to neutral. Repeat 5 times.

By the time you've finished your cool-down, your heart rate and your breathing should be almost back to normal and you should feel-well, cool.

Make your warm-up and cool-down your own by adding any other stretches or exercises that you feel are necessary in order to play your best and prevent injury.