

# First Strides Dynamic Stretching Warmup



This is the dynamic stretching warmup to be done before the First Strides workout. Posture and the core are also important when doing these. Generally, the back should be straight and the core engaged.

## **Calf Raises**

Benefits: calf muscles (gastrocnemius and soleus muscles)

How to: Stand with feet hip-width apart, keeping ankles, knees, and hips in vertical alignment to protect the joints. Using the balls of the feet for support, raise both heels off the ground simultaneously. 10 repetitions total.

## **Ankle Circles**

Benefits: ankle strength and flexibility

How to: Raise one leg in front of body. Rotate ankle to make circles 5 times in one direction, then 5 times in the other direction. Repeat with other leg.

## **Hip Circles**

Benefits: hips, core muscles, lower back, and legs

How to: Stand with feet slightly more than hip width apart and hands on hips. Keeping hips level, slowly rotate hips to make a circle (mimic doing a hula-hoop action). Do 10 repetitions in one direction and then repeat in the other direction.

Video: [http://media.tumblr.com/tumblr\\_loqyn4kGw51qh1km4.gif](http://media.tumblr.com/tumblr_loqyn4kGw51qh1km4.gif)

## **Alternating Side Lunges**

Benefits: glutes, quadriceps, hamstrings, inner and outer thighs, as well as hip and knee extensors

How to: Stand with feet close together, aligned with hips. Hands can either be on hips or in front. Take a step to the right, bending the right leg and keeping the left leg straight. Squat down as though you are about to sit on a chair or stool. Make sure the knee does not extend past the toes. Come back to standing position. Repeat on the left side. Repeat 8-10 times on each side.

Image: <http://www.womenshealthmag.com/fitness/side-to-side-lunges>

### **High Knees (marching in place)**

Benefits: hip and knee joints, glutes, hamstrings, calves, arms

How to: Stand with feet about hips width apart and arms at 90 degrees. Bring one knee up as high as possible, as if marching in place, while simultaneously bringing the opposite elbow forward. Alternate sides, doing 10 repetitions on both sides.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jwofLNzZwKI>

### **Toy Soldier**

Benefits: hamstrings, glutes, hip flexors, quads, calves

How to: Stand with feet about hips width apart and arms at sides. In one motion, kick one leg in front of the body, keeping the knee straight and foot flexed while swinging the opposite arm forward. Return leg to the ground and arm to the side, repeating with the opposite arm and leg. Continue alternating between legs for 10 repetitions on each side.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5Pw6YVcFNq>

### **Arm Swing Body Hugs**

Benefits: pecs and upper back muscles

How to: Stand with feet about shoulder width apart. Raise arms out to the sides parallel with the ground. Swing arms forward, crossing one over the other, hugging yourself. Then open arms back up and out to the sides to feel a stretch in the front of your shoulders. Repeat and alternate which arm crosses over the other. Do about 16-20 repetitions total.

Image: [http://inspiredrd.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/dynamic\\_arm\\_swings.jpg](http://inspiredrd.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/dynamic_arm_swings.jpg)