



## ***Warm Ups***

Mild warm-ups are a necessity for everyone. The need for warm-ups increases with age as the body becomes less elastic over time. It is recommended that you execute the warm-up routine in this order as it warms the body up with the proper intensity for each area. These should not take much more than thirty minutes to do. Work at a pace and intensity that is comfortable for you. All techniques begin with the left side of the body. Do not hold your breath during stretches – keep breathing. Try to relax your muscles and you will get a better stretch.

Memorize this set of warm-ups so that you can follow along easily in class. Once you are a higher belt, you will need to be able to lead the class through these exercises.

### **Standing Stretches**

#### ***Neck Stretches:***

Keep your back straight and your shoulders relaxed.

- *Head Left:* Inhale then exhale as you lay your head over to the left side so your ear points toward your shoulder, then inhale and return to center.
- *Head Right:* Exhale as you lay your head over to the right side so your ear points toward your shoulder, then inhale and return to center.
- *Head Forward:* Exhale as you lay your head forward so your chin points toward your chest, then inhale and return to center.
- *Head Turn Left:* Exhale as you turn your head and look behind your left shoulder, then inhale and return to center.
- *Head Turn Right:* Exhale as you turn your head and look behind your right shoulder, then inhale and return to center.

#### ***Arm Stretches:***

- *Arm Across:* Extend your left arm straight out and fold it across your body. With your right hand pull your left arm toward your right shoulder. Repeat with your right arm.
- *Arm Over:* Extend your left arm straight up over your head, bend at the elbow letting your hand fall to your back. With your right hand, grasp behind your left elbow and pull backwards. Repeat with your right arm.
- *Arms Behind:* Extend both arms behind you, place the palms together and interlace the fingers. Raise the arms toward the ceiling as far as possible. Keep your head up and the upper body straight while doing this.



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- *Arms Above:* Extend both arms in front of you, place the palms together and interlace the fingers. Rotate the palms outward as you raise the arms directly above your head.
- *Side Stretch:* Stand with feet shoulder width apart and place your left hand on your hip. Raise your right arm up and over your head, bending sideways to the left. Repeat to the right side.

### ***Static Leg Stretches:***

- *Straight Leg Stretch:* With left leg forward, bend at the waist and stretch over the front of your leg. Keep the left leg straight. Hold. Release and switch legs stretching in the same fashion over the right leg.
- *Bent Leg Stretch:* With the left leg forward, bend the knee and stretch over the leg. Keep the lower part of the left leg (the shin) perpendicular to the ground, i.e., straight up and down. Extend the right leg straight back behind you with the toes on the ground holding the leg up. Continue to stretch downwards as far as you are able. Keep the left shin perpendicular to the floor at all times.
- *Calf Stretch:* Left leg forward and bent, right leg stretched back with the heel on the ground and both feet pointing forward. Repeat with the right leg in front.
- *Ankle Stretch:* Place the top of the left foot on the ground to stretch the top of the instep and the ankle. Switch feet and repeat.
- *Toe Stretch:* Set the ball of the left foot on the floor and raise the ankle to stretch the toes. Roll the foot left and right to give equal stretch to all the toes. Switch feet and repeat.
- *Quadriceps Stretch:* Grasp your left foot and pull the foot behind you, stretching the front of the thigh muscle. Switch feet and repeat.
- *Hamstring Stretch:* Lift the knee of your left leg straight up in front of you and grasp the leg just below the knee. Pull your knee toward you to stretch the hamstrings. Switch feet and repeat.

### **Standing Kicks**

These kicks are intended to warm-up the muscles in preparation for the floor stretches. Perform kicks with good form and at a height that is comfortable. These are warm-up kicks and once learned, are to be executed with proper technique but not at full power or speed. KIA with each kick during the warm ups in class.

See *Basic Kicks* section for a description of each kick and *Basic Stances* section for a description of the stances.



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- *Front Snap Kick:* Start in right front stance. Do 12 back leg front snap kicks. Change to left front stance with a KIA and repeat.
- *Inside Crescent Kick:* Start in right front stance. Do 12 back leg inside crescent kicks. Change to left front stance with a KIA and repeat.
- *Outside Crescent Kick:* Start in right front stance. Do 12 back leg outside crescent kicks. Change to left front stance with a KIA and repeat.
- *Roundhouse Kick:* Start in left straddle stance. Do 12 front leg roundhouse kicks. Change to right straddle stance with a KIA and repeat.
- *Side Kick:* Start in left straddle stance. Do 12 front leg side kicks. Change to right straddle stance with a KIA and repeat.

### **Punches**

- *Front Punch:* Start in good, solid straddle stance facing the front of the room. Do 25 punches to the solar plexus alternating left and right.
- *Double Punch:* A double punch is a set of two punches to the solar plexus – one with each fist. Starting with the left fist, execute 5 double punches, switch and do 5 double punches starting with the right fist.
- *Triple Punch:* A triple punch is a set of three punches - alternating hands. Starting with the left fist, punch high to the throat, punch to the solar plexus, and punch low to the groin. Your starting hand should alternate with each set. Do four sets of high to low punches and then do four sets of low to high punches. Be sure to chamber completely with each punch.

### **Floor Stretches**

These stretches are done sitting on the floor. Now that your muscles are warm, more intense stretching can be done without damaging them. These stretches will help improve your flexibility. Only perform the stretch to a point of slight discomfort. If you feel pain while stretching, stop and return to a point in the stretch where you are not in pain. Hold each stretch at that point of mild discomfort, inhale deeply, and as you exhale, try to sink lower than before. Pulling your toes toward you gives you an additional stretch.

Breathing correctly is of paramount importance in martial arts. Therefore, learn to inhale and then exhale as you stretch down. Always exhale with the exertions of your exercises or techniques.

- *Knee Press:* Place the soles of your feet together in front of you and draw your heels toward your groin. Straighten your back, grab your feet, and place your elbows on your thighs just above your knees. Press down with your elbows and hold. Keep your elbows in place; press up with your legs against your elbows and hold. Repeat 3 times.



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- *Modified Hurdler:* Extend your left leg laying it flat on the floor with the toes pointing toward the ceiling. Draw your right heel into your groin and lay your bent right leg flat on the floor. Turn and face your left foot. Straighten your back and while keeping your head up, reach for your left foot; bend at the waist and hold. Repeat to the right side.
- *Legs Together:* Straighten your legs and place them together flat on the floor in front of you. Point your toes and knees straight up, and keep your legs together. With your back straight, bend at the waist and reach for your toes.
- *Butterfly:* Place the soles of your feet together in front of you and draw your heels toward your groin. Straighten your back, grab your feet, bend at the waist, pull forward and hold. If you can, press your elbows against the front of your shins for leverage.
- *Legs Wide:* Straighten your legs flat on the floor in front of you. Spread your legs apart while pushing your hips forward. This creates an angle between your legs. Your toes are pointing straight up or forward and your hips are slightly rolled forward. Place both hands in front of you. Stretch the right arm over your head toward the left foot. Keep the left elbow in front of your knee (between your legs). Repeat to the right. Come back to center. Stretch your upper body forward and attempt to place your solar plexus in contact with the floor. Keep your head up and back straight.
- *Pretzel:* With your left leg in front, bend it so your foot points to the right. Put your right foot on the floor to the left of your left knee. Put your right hand on the floor behind your back. Stretch your left arm against the outside of your right leg and twist your body to the right, keeping your back straight.
- *Hip stretch:* With your left leg in front, bend it so your foot points right. Stretch your right leg straight back on the floor. If you cannot feel a stretch in your hip, try pressing your right hip towards the floor while keeping your left hip in contact with the floor. Repeat with the right leg in front.
- *Splits:* Lower yourself into a front-facing split. Support yourself with both hands and go as low as you can without causing undue pain. Do **not** try to tense your leg muscles to hold your weight. Let the weight be on your hands. The muscles you are stretching must be relaxed to stretch. Without coming up, pivot left so that you face 90° to the left with the left leg stretched out straight in front. The toes of your left foot should point at the ceiling. The right leg is behind you with the knee on the floor and your arms should be on either side of your legs. Stretch down and forward. If you can, the goal is to perform the splits with the legs fully extended and with your body resting on the ground. Again, without coming up, rotate back to center, breathe and then rotate to the right, executing the same stretches in the other direction.



## **Dragon School** **Conditioning Exercises**

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These exercises will increase your strength and add power to your techniques.

### ***Crunches:***

Exhale as you contract your stomach muscles. Try to use your stomach muscles instead of throwing yourself up with your arms and back. Do one set of each type of crunch. One set = 25 crunches.

- *Straight Up:* Lie flat on your back, knees bent with your feet about 12 inches apart. Cross your arms across your chest and lift your shoulders off the floor, hold and release to the floor gently.
- *Bent Leg:* Lie flat on your back; bend knees as if your calves are resting on the seat of a chair. Reach toward your feet as you raise your shoulders off of the floor then relax back down.
- *Legs Straight:* Lie flat on your back, legs extended straight up towards the ceiling. Reach up toward the ceiling raising your shoulders off of the floor, and then relax back down.
- *Hip Raises:* Lie flat on your back, knees bent with your feet together. Place your hands underneath your hips to support your lower back. Lift your legs straight up toward the ceiling and lift your hips off the floor. This is the same motion as if someone were to grasp your ankles and lift your hips off the floor. Relax back down.
- *Alternate Sides:* Lay flat on your back, knees bent with your feet about 12 inches apart. Place your fists by your ears and lift your shoulders off the floor while rotating to bring your right elbow toward your left knee. Return to the floor and then lift your shoulders and rotate to bring your left elbow to your right knee. One set = 15 repetitions.

### ***Push Ups:***

Inhale as you lower, exhale as you push yourself back up. Always start a set with straight push-ups and only switch to bent-knee if you absolutely have to.

- *Straight:* Support yourself on your palms with your hands under your shoulders. Lower yourself to the floor and back up again, exhaling on the exertion upward. Be certain to keep your heels, buttocks and shoulders in line. Lower and raise your body as one unit. Keeping your head up and eyes forward will help keep your back in a straight line.
- *Bent Knee:* If you are unable to do a straight push-up, place your hands under your shoulders with your knees bent and ankles crossed. Press upward, raising your body up until your arms are straight. Again, keep the body in straight alignment.



***Back Lifts:***

- *Arms Forward:* Lie flat on your stomach, with your feet together and your arms stretched out in front of you. Lift your arms and legs off the floor. Hold for 10 seconds and return to the floor. Repeat 3 times.
- *Back Arch:* Lie flat on your stomach with your feet together and your hands palm down by your shoulders. Extend your arms, raising your body upward as you arch your back. Hold for 15 seconds.

This concludes the stretches and exercises that are typically done during class during the warm-up period. If these are done everyday, the body's overall flexibility and strength will improve. Just stretching in class will help you avoid injury, but will not increase your flexibility. If you feel the need for improvement in a specific area, feel free to ask a Black Belt for additional exercises you can do on your own.