



THE SWIMMER'S --- **WARM UP DECK**

Exercise Companion Guide

*A practical movement guide for swimmers,
coaches and parents*

Prepare better. Move better. Perform better.

INTRODUCTION

This guide supports **the Swimmer's Warm Up Deck** by adding more detail behind each exercise card.

Together, the deck and guide form a simple, structured system to support better preparation, movement and performance.

It is designed to be simple and easy to use, either at home or before training.

If time is tight, swimmers can start the warm-up at home and finish it before getting in the water.

This companion guide helps swimmers, coaches and parents understand:

WHY EACH EXERCISE IS INCLUDED

HOW TO PERFORM IT PROPERLY

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

That matters because a warm-up is not just about getting moving.

A good warm-up helps swimmers prepare the body properly, move with quality and arrive ready to train or race well.

Each movement is listed in the same order as the deck and follows the same structure:

- Deck name
- Adult / Gym name
- Why this exercise?
- Perform
- How to do it well
- What to look out for

How to use this guide

Use this guide alongside the card deck:

- To understand each movement more clearly
- To improve movement quality
- To coach warm-ups with more confidence
- To help swimmers prepare with more purpose

The aim is simple:

Prepare better.
Move better.
Perform better.

USING THE DECK EFFECTIVELY

The **Warm-Up Deck** is designed to support movement quality, readiness and confidence in swimmers.

This introduces swimmers to structured, land-based warm-ups appropriate for their stage.

This is not about doing more. It is about preparing properly.

The goal is simple: to train and perform with quality.

You do not need to use every exercise in one session. Instead, select a small number of movements from across the five pillars:

Raise TEMPERATURE

Mobilise JOINTS

Activate MUSCLES

Prime MOVEMENT

Explode POWER

A good warm-up should feel **structured and controlled**.

Quality always comes before quantity.

Recommended equipment

- A small mat for floor-based movements
- A low-resistance stretch band

COACHING NOTES

Choose exercises based on:

- The age and stage of the swimmers
- The space and environment
- The session goal
- The quality of movement being shown

The aim is simple: prepare better.

Focus on:

- Controlled, accurate movement
- Strong posture and positioning
- Maintaining movement quality throughout



SAFETY NOTES

Warm-ups should always be adapted to the space, surface and conditions available.

All exercises should be performed with **control, balance and good technique**.

Swimmers should:

- Work within their own ability
- Avoid forcing movements or positions
- Stop if something feels painful or unusual

If a swimmer has an existing injury or medical concern, movements should be adapted or cleared with an appropriate professional.

Coaches and supervising adults should always use judgement based on:

- Swimmer ability
- Surface and space
- Equipment available
- The demands of the session

Some exercises include a **yellow warning triangle**. These highlight movements that require extra care, space or control, and should only be used where it is safe to do so.

For younger swimmers, or in wet or crowded environments, these movements should be used with care, adapted where needed, or replaced with more suitable options. **Extra care should always be taken on wet poolside surfaces or in crowded warm-up areas.**

Raise TEMPERATURE



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R1



Skipping

(Jump Rope)

Why this exercise?

Skipping is a simple way to raise body temperature quickly while improving rhythm, coordination and lower leg stiffness. For swimmers, it helps wake up the feet and ankles, sharpen timing and prepare the body for more reactive movement later in the warm-up.

Perform

25–35 seconds

How to do it well

- Stand tall with feet under hips and elbows close to the body
- Hold the rope handles lightly and keep the shoulders relaxed
- Stay light on the balls of the feet
- Use small, quick jumps rather than big, slow ones
- Turn the rope with the wrists rather than the whole arms
- Keep rhythm smooth and relaxed

What to look out for

- Heavy, noisy landings
- Over-jumping
- Arms doing too much
- Looking down and collapsing posture

R2

Static Jogging

(Jog on the Spot)

Why this exercise?

Static jogging is a simple temperature-raiser that gets the body moving without complexity. It helps increase heart rate, blood flow and general readiness while beginning to build rhythm and posture before more dynamic work. For swimmers, it also helps organise posture and body awareness before streamlining, kicking and coordinated movement.

Perform

30 seconds

How to do it well

- Stand tall with chest up and feet under hips
- Jog lightly on the balls of the feet
- Keep steps short, quick and rhythmic
- Use relaxed arm action to support movement
- Keep ribs stacked over hips and avoid leaning back as the feet cycle

What to look out for

- Flat-footed steps
- Excessive bounce
- Leaning back
- Sloppy arm action



R3

High Knees Jogging

(High Knees Jog)

Why this exercise?

High knees raise temperature while also challenging coordination, rhythm and front-side running mechanics. For swimmers, it helps improve posture, trunk control and lower-body readiness before more athletic movement.

Perform

25–30 seconds

How to do it well

- Stand tall and begin jogging on the spot
- Drive knees towards hip height one at a time
- Keep feet quick and light under the body
- Use relaxed arm drive and keep the foot strike directly under the body
- Maintain a fast but controlled tempo
- Keep posture upright throughout

What to look out for

- Leaning backwards
- Slow feet
- Over-reaching knees
- Tension through shoulders

R4



Sideways Jumps

(Lateral Jumps)

Why this exercise?

Most swimming movement is forward, but athletes still need to control side-to-side force well. Sideways jumps raise temperature while improving balance, reactivity and lateral control through the ankles, knees and hips.

Perform

20–25 seconds

How to do it well

- Stand in a balanced athletic stance with soft knees
- Push sideways and land softly on the opposite foot
- Use the arms naturally to help rhythm and balance
- Land softly, absorb through hips and knees, and regain balance before changing direction
- Stay light and elastic rather than heavy
- Keep the chest organised and feet active

What to look out for

- Stiff landings
- Knees collapsing inward
- Loss of balance
- Rushing side to side



R5

Heel Flicks

(Butt Kicks)

Why this exercise?

Heel flicks are a simple way to keep temperature rising while introducing quicker lower-limb turnover. They help improve rhythm, lightness and running coordination while encouraging the body to stay active and switched on. For swimmers, they also help wake up the lower body before kicking, push-offs and more reactive poolside movement.

Perform

25–30 seconds

How to do it well

- Stand tall and begin jogging lightly on the spot
- Flick heels towards the glutes
- Stay light and rhythmic through the feet
- Keep chest tall and posture relaxed
- Maintain smooth arm rhythm

What to look out for

- Heavy foot contact
- Poor rhythm
- Leaning too far forward
- Minimal heel lift

R6

Mountain Climbers

(High Plank Knee Drives)

Why this exercise?

Mountain climbers raise temperature while also introducing trunk control, shoulder stability and hip movement. For swimmers, they are useful because they begin to connect upper and lower body movement under control.

Perform

6–10 each leg

How to do it well

- Start in a strong push-up position with hands under shoulders and body long
- Brace lightly through the trunk before moving
- Drive knees forward one at a time under control
- Maintain pressure through the hands
- Keep shoulders pushed away from the floor and avoid letting the lower back sag
- Move with rhythm without losing shape

What to look out for

- Hips bouncing up and down
- Poor plank shape
- Rushed switching
- Shoulders collapsing



R7



Jumping Jacks

(Star Jumps)

Why this exercise?

Jumping jacks are a classic whole-body temperature raiser. They help increase heart rate, coordinate upper and lower body movement and create a simple transition into the rest of the warm-up.

Perform

15–20 seconds

How to do it well

- Stand tall with feet together and arms by your sides
- Jump feet out as arms go overhead
- Land softly and under control
- Maintain a steady rhythm
- Keep posture tall and movement tidy
- Return smoothly to the start each rep

What to look out for

- Sloppy arms
- Heavy landings
- Loss of rhythm
- Overarching through the back

R8

Fast Feet

(Quick Steps)

Why this exercise?

Fast feet raise body temperature while improving rhythm, reactivity and foot speed. For swimmers, they help wake up the lower body, sharpen coordination and prepare the body for quicker, more athletic movement before training or racing. They are especially useful before starts, relay takeovers and any session where sharper reactions are needed.

Perform

15–20 seconds

How to do it well

- Stand tall in a light athletic stance with soft knees
- Stay on the balls of the feet throughout
- Move the feet quickly with short, fast steps
- Keep the chest organised and arms relaxed
- Stay light and controlled rather than noisy or frantic
- Maintain rhythm and posture throughout

What to look out for

- Heavy, flat-footed steps
- Excessive upper-body tension
- Leaning too far forwards or backwards
- Letting the movement become messy or uncontrolled



Mobilise JOINTS



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M1

Neck Side Tilt

(Lateral Trap Stretch)

Why this exercise?

The neck and upper shoulder area often hold unnecessary tension in swimmers, especially before racing. This movement helps reduce stiffness, improve relaxation and encourage better head and neck posture. That can support a calmer bodyline, easier breathing positions and less unnecessary tension through the shoulders.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Sit or stand tall with chest up and shoulders relaxed
- Gently tilt head to one side
- Keep shoulders relaxed and level
- Move slowly and stay controlled
- Return to centre before changing sides

What to look out for

- Pulling too hard
- Shoulder lifting
- Rushing
- Twisting rather than tilting

M2

Spider-Man Switches

(Hip Mobility Switches)

Why this exercise?

Spider-Man Switches help open the hips, load the shoulders and prepare the body for more dynamic movement. They are especially useful for swimmers who need better hip mobility, stronger body control and more freedom through athletic floor-based positions.

Perform

6–8 switches each side

How to do it well

- Start in a strong push-up position with hands under shoulders
- Step one foot outside the same-side hand
- Keep hips low and body controlled
- Keep the front foot planted fully and avoid bouncing between positions
- Switch sides smoothly under control
- Stay active through shoulders and trunk

What to look out for

- Hips lifting too high
- Poor control through the switch
- Short stepping
- Rushing the movement



M3

Locked Streamline

(Overhead Reach)

Why this exercise?

A good streamline is one of the most important shapes in swimming. This exercise helps swimmers rehearse a strong overhead position while opening the shoulders and improving postural control.

Perform

8–10 reps

How to do it well

- Stand tall with feet under hips and hands locked in streamline overhead
- Reach tall without shrugging the shoulders
- Keep ribs down, trunk long and avoid reaching by arching through the lower back
- Stay aligned through arms and ears
- Lower with control between reps

What to look out for

- Bent arms
- Arching through the back
- Shoulder shrugging
- Rushed reps

M4

Wall Slides

Why this exercise?

Wall slides help improve shoulder mobility and overhead control while encouraging better rib and trunk position. For swimmers, this is useful for improving streamline shape and overhead movement quality.

Perform

8–10 reps

How to do it well

- Stand with back and hips against the wall and arms in a goalpost position
- Set ribs and trunk before moving
- Slide arms upwards while keeping shape
- Keep ribs down, lower back quiet and shoulder blades moving smoothly as the arms travel
- Move slowly enough to stay in control
- Return with control each rep

What to look out for

- Lower back arching
- Arms losing wall contact
- Rushing
- Neck tension



M5

Shoulder Rotation

(Internal and External Rotation)

Why this exercise?

Shoulder rotation is important for healthy swimming movement and shoulder control. This exercise helps prepare the rotator cuff and improve awareness of how the shoulder should move without compensation.

Perform

8–10 reps

How to do it well

- Stand tall with elbows tucked by your sides and bent to 90 degrees
- Set shoulders down and relaxed before moving
- Rotate hands outward under control
- Move only at the shoulder joint and keep the elbows pinned to the body
- Return smoothly each rep

What to look out for

- Elbows drifting away
- Twisting through the body
- Shrugged shoulders
- Fast, sloppy reps

M6

Seated Twist

(Thoracic Rotation)

Why this exercise?

Thoracic rotation is important for posture, shoulder function and overall upper-body movement quality. This exercise helps improve upper-back mobility without encouraging unnecessary lower-back movement. For swimmers, that can support cleaner freestyle and backstroke rotation and better upper-body freedom through the stroke.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Sit tall with feet grounded and hands across your chest
- Rotate through the upper back
- Keep hips and lower body still
- Return to centre before switching sides
- Move evenly and smoothly

What to look out for

- Slumping
- Twisting through hips
- Forcing range
- Uneven movement side to side



M7

Kneeling Rotations

(4-Point Thoracic Rotation)

Why this exercise?

This is another strong thoracic mobility exercise that also adds trunk control. It helps swimmers improve upper-body rotation while keeping the lower body more stable. That is useful for stroke rhythm, shoulder freedom and maintaining shape while rotating in the water.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Start on hands and knees with hands under shoulders and knees under hips
- Place one hand behind the head
- Rotate elbow upwards under control
- Keep body stable throughout
- Return smoothly each rep

What to look out for

- Loss of balance
- Fast movement
- Poor posture
- Rotation coming from the hips

M8

Side Openers

(Side Lying Thoracic Openings)

Why this exercise?

Side openers help improve thoracic mobility and chest opening. For swimmers, this can support better posture, improved upper-body freedom and easier overhead positioning.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Lie on one side with knees bent and hips stacked
- Extend the lower arm comfortably and open the top arm across the body
- Keep hips stacked and controlled
- Move slowly through range
- Return with control

What to look out for

- Rolling hips backwards
- Rushing
- Forcing the movement
- Poor control on return



M9

Hip Turn In

(Prone Hip Internal Rotation)

Why this exercise?

Hip internal rotation is often limited in swimmers, but it matters for kicking mechanics, squat patterns and lower-body control. This movement helps gently improve hip rotation and awareness.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Lie on your front with knees bent to around 90 degrees
- Keep knees close together and hips flat on the floor
- Let the feet drop outwards to the sides
- Move slowly and under control
- Only go as far as you can without the hips lifting
- Return smoothly to the start position

What to look out for

- Hips lifting off the floor
- Feet moving too quickly
- Forcing the range
- Loss of control

M10



Hip Lateral Lunges

(Lateral Lunge)

Why this exercise?

Lateral lunges help improve hip mobility, groin range and side-to-side lower-body control. This is useful for more athletic movement and helps balance out the straight-line nature of swimming. They can also support stronger land-based movement quality for starts, turns and general athletic development.

Perform

8–10 reps each side

How to do it well

- Stand tall with feet wider than hips
- Step or shift into a side lunge
- Bend one knee while keeping the other leg long
- Keep chest tall and hips back
- Push back to the middle with control
- Move evenly side to side

What to look out for

- Knee collapse
- Leaning too far forward
- Poor balance
- Short range



M11



Hip Flexor Lunges

(Split Stance Hip Flexor Lunge)

Why this exercise?

Tight hip flexors can affect posture, kick mechanics and general movement quality. This exercise helps open the front of the hip while encouraging better pelvic and trunk position. For swimmers, that can support a cleaner bodyline and better connection between trunk position and kick action.

Perform

8–10 reps each side

How to do it well

- Start in a split stance with one foot forward and one foot back
- Lower the back knee under control or hover just above the floor
- Keep hips level and chest tall
- Tuck the pelvis slightly rather than opening the stretch by arching the back
- Return smoothly and reset before repeating

What to look out for

- Leaning too far forward
- Arching the lower back
- Rushing
- Poor balance

M12

Calf Stretch Lunge

(Standing Calf Stretch)

Why this exercise?

Good ankle mobility matters for starts, turns, squats and lower-body movement quality. This exercise helps improve calf length and ankle dorsiflexion while reinforcing posture and control.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Start in a split stance with the back heel flat on the floor
- Keep the back leg straight
- Press the heel into the floor
- Lean forwards slightly under control
- Keep posture long and balanced
- Move in and out smoothly

What to look out for

- Bouncing
- Heel lifting
- Poor posture
- Rushing the stretch



M13



Heel Drops

(Calf Raises Off Step)

Why this exercise?

Heel drops help improve calf, Achilles and ankle dorsiflexion mobility while also preparing the ankle for more reactive work later in the warm-up. They are especially useful before jumps and more athletic movement.

Perform

8–10 reps each side

How to do it well

- Stand on a step or raised edge with the balls of the feet supported
- Hold onto a wall or rail if needed for balance
- Lower heels slowly through range
- Rise back up under control
- Use the full available range with control rather than bouncing at the bottom
- Stay balanced throughout

What to look out for

- Dropping too quickly
- Loss of balance
- Very short range
- Uneven loading

M14

Knee Extension + Ankle Dorsiflexion

Why this exercise?

This movement helps mobilise the back of the leg and ankle together. It can improve hamstring awareness, calf mobility and lower-limb readiness before more loaded movement.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Lie on your back with one hip flexed and one knee bent towards your chest
- Hold behind the thigh if needed
- Extend the knee under control
- Pull the toes back towards the shin as the leg straightens
- Keep the other leg relaxed and the upper body quiet
- Move slowly and smoothly
- Return under control

What to look out for

- Forcing the stretch
- Jerky movement
- Poor control
- Rounding posture



Activate MUSCLES



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A1

Side Opener

(Lying Clams)

Why this exercise?

This activates the glutes and side hip muscles, helping improve pelvic control, lower-body stability and alignment. For swimmers, it supports better body position and more controlled kicking.

Perform

10–12 each side

How to do it well

- Lie on your side with knees bent and feet together
- Stack the hips directly on top of each other
- Keep feet together as you lift the top knee
- Open only as far as you can without rolling backwards
- Move slowly and stay controlled throughout
- Lower smoothly and repeat

What to look out for

- Rolling backwards through the hips
- Letting the feet separate too much
- Rushing the movement
- Losing control on the way down

A2

Forward Punches

(Double Arm Serratus Punch)

Why this exercise?

This activates the serratus muscles which control the shoulder blades. It helps swimmers stabilise the shoulders and improve overhead movement quality.

Perform

10–12 reps

How to do it well

- Stand tall with both arms extended forwards at shoulder height
- Set ribs and trunk before moving
- Reach the hands forwards without bending the elbows
- Let the shoulder blade glide forwards without shrugging
- Keep the body still and controlled
- Return smoothly each rep

What to look out for

- Shrugging shoulders
- Twisting through the trunk
- Bending the elbows
- Snapping back too quickly



A3

External Rotation

Why this exercise?

This activates the small stabilising muscles around the shoulder, helping protect the joint and improve control during swimming.

Perform

8–10 reps

How to do it well

- Stand tall with elbows tucked into your sides and bent to 90 degrees
- Set shoulders down and relaxed
- Rotate hands outwards under control
- Keep wrists neutral and elbows pinned
- Move only at the shoulder joint
- Return smoothly each rep

What to look out for

- Elbows drifting away
- Twisting through the body
- Shoulders lifting
- Fast, uncontrolled reps

A4

Superman Arms

(Quadruped Arm Reach)

Why this exercise?

This builds shoulder stability and trunk control, helping swimmers move the arms without losing body position.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Start on hands and knees with hands under shoulders and knees under hips
- Brace lightly through the trunk
- Reach one arm forwards in line with the shoulder
- Keep ribs down and hips level
- Keep weight evenly distributed through hands and knees
- Return under control before switching

What to look out for

- Twisting through the trunk
- Reaching too high
- Shifting weight excessively
- Losing posture



A5

External Rotation

(45° Shoulder External Rotation)

Why this exercise?

This variation activates shoulder stabilisers in a more swim-specific position, improving control in mid-range arm positions.

Perform

8–10 reps each side

How to do it well

- Stand tall with arms positioned around 45 degrees from the body
- Set ribs and posture before moving
- Rotate forearms under control
- Keep shoulders relaxed and stable
- Maintain alignment throughout
- Return smoothly

What to look out for

- Shoulder shrugging
- Back arching
- Elbows drifting
- Rushed reps

A6

Glute Bridge

(2 Up 1 Down)

Why this exercise?

This improves single-leg strength and hip control, supporting starts, turns and overall body stability. For swimmers, it also helps improve how force is transferred through the hips without losing trunk position or alignment.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat
- Lift hips using both legs
- Remove one foot and lower slowly on the working leg
- Keep hips level throughout
- Keep heel close enough to load the glute
- Reset and repeat with control

What to look out for

- Hips dropping unevenly
- Overusing lower back
- Losing control on lowering
- Knee drifting



A7

Superman Legs

(Quadruped Leg Reach)

Why this exercise?

This activates the glutes and teaches control of leg movement without losing body position.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Start on hands and knees in a stable position
- Brace lightly through the trunk
- Extend one leg straight behind
- Reach long rather than high
- Keep hips level
- Return under control

What to look out for

- Arching the back
- Hips rotating
- Kicking too high
- Loss of balance

A8

Hip Bridge

(Double Leg Glute Bridge)

Why this exercise?

This activates the glutes, helping posture, bodyline and reducing reliance on the lower back. Stronger glute control can also support better alignment through kicking and streamline positions.

Perform

10–12 reps

How to do it well

- Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat, hip-width apart
- Brace lightly through the trunk
- Push through feet to lift hips
- Finish with hips extended but ribs still down
- Squeeze glutes at the top
- Lower under control

What to look out for

- Lower back taking over
- Knees collapsing
- Uneven pressure
- Dropping too quickly



A9

Side Lying Leg Lifts

(Straight Leg Hip Abduction)

Why this exercise?

This activates the side glutes, improving pelvic control and lower-body alignment. For swimmers, that can support cleaner body position, more stable kicking mechanics and better control through the hips.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Lie on your side with hips stacked and legs straight
- Keep the top leg slightly behind the body line
- Lift the leg under control
- Pause briefly at the top
- Lower smoothly
- Stay balanced through the trunk

What to look out for

- Rolling backwards
- Toes turning up too much
- Swinging the leg
- Rushed reps

A10

Superman Reach

(Quadruped Bird Dog)

Why this exercise?

This develops trunk control and coordination, key for maintaining body position in the water. It also helps swimmers organise the body more effectively when the arms and legs are moving together.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Start on hands and knees with a strong base
- Reach opposite arm and leg
- Keep spine neutral and trunk stable
- Reach long through fingertips and heel
- Keep hips and shoulders square
- Return under control

What to look out for

- Twisting
- Overarching
- Reaching too high
- Poor control



A11

Single Arm Punch

(Single Arm Serratus Punch)

Why this exercise?

This improves single-arm shoulder control and stability, important for alternating stroke patterns.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Stand tall with one arm extended forward
- Set posture before moving
- Reach forwards smoothly and under control
- Keep trunk still
- Control the return
- Maintain smooth rhythm

What to look out for

- Shoulder shrugging
- Body twisting
- Bending elbow
- Snapping movement

A12

Shoulder Squeeze

(Quadruped Scap Squeeze)

Why this exercise?

This activates the upper back and shoulder blade muscles, helping improve posture, shoulder control and stability. For swimmers, it supports stronger shoulder positioning and better control through pulling and overhead movement.

Perform

6–8 reps

How to do it well

- Start on hands and knees with hands under shoulders and knees under hips
- Set a stable trunk and keep the neck relaxed
- Let the chest stay open without dropping through the shoulders
- Gently squeeze the shoulder blades back and slightly down
- Keep the arms straight and body still throughout
- Pause briefly, then release smoothly

What to look out for

- Shrugging through the shoulders
- Bending the elbows
- Dropping through the chest too much
- Losing trunk control



Prime MOVEMENT



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P1

Box Push Ups

(Kneeling Push Up)

Why this exercise?

This prepares the upper body for pushing and shoulder stability while keeping the movement controlled and accessible. It helps swimmers build strength and control without losing body position. That is useful for shoulder organisation, body tension and more effective force transfer through the upper body.

Perform

4–6 reps

How to do it well

- Start on hands and knees with hands under shoulders
- Create a straight line from knees to head
- Brace lightly through the trunk
- Lower chest towards the floor under control
- Keep elbows slightly back, not flaring out
- Push away strongly to return

What to look out for

- Hips dropping or lifting too high
- Head poking forwards
- Elbows flaring too wide
- Rushing or partial reps

P2

Band Swim Pulses

Why this exercise?

This is one of the most swim-specific activation exercises in the deck. It helps swimmers rehearse catch and pull positions, switch on key pulling muscles and prepare the shoulders and trunk for effective water movement.

Perform

6–8 pulses

How to do it well

- Stand tall holding a band overhead or slightly in front
- Set ribs and posture before moving
- Set your body position before moving
- Pulse through a clean catch-to-pull movement
- Think about a strong catch shape and clean pull path as you pulse
- Keep tension through the band throughout
- Stay controlled rather than rushed

What to look out for

- Overarching the back
- Pulling from the neck and shoulders
- Losing tension between reps
- Messy arm path



P3

Zombie Squats

(Bodyweight Squat with Reach)

Why this exercise?

Zombie squats help prime lower-body movement, trunk control and posture. The arm position also challenges upper-body organisation, making it a useful full-body prep exercise before more dynamic work. For swimmers, it helps connect posture, trunk control and lower-body movement in a way that supports starts, turns and bodyline.

Perform

8–10 reps

How to do it well

- Stand tall with feet around shoulder-width apart and arms extended forwards
- Set posture before each rep
- Push hips back and lower into the squat
- Keep chest up and knees tracking in line with toes
- Keep pressure through mid-foot and heel
- Stand back up smoothly

What to look out for

- Knees collapsing inward
- Heels lifting
- Chest dropping too far forward
- Rushing the movement

P4



Split Squats

Why this exercise?

Split squats help build single-leg control, posture and lower-body strength through range. They are useful for improving balance and movement quality in positions that transfer well to starts, turns and athletic movement. They also help swimmers organise the trunk and hips while producing force through one leg at a time.

Perform

8–10 reps each side

How to do it well

- Start in a split stance with feet set front to back
- Keep front foot planted and torso upright
- Lower straight down under control
- Keep balance and alignment through both legs
- Push back up smoothly
- Reset posture between reps if needed

What to look out for

- Front knee collapsing inward
- Leaning too far forwards
- Poor balance
- Short, rushed reps



P5



Reverse Lunge

Why this exercise?

Reverse lunges help prepare the lower body for more athletic movement while reinforcing balance, posture and single-leg control. They are often easier to control than forward lunges and work well in a warm-up setting.

Perform

6–8 reps each side

How to do it well

- Stand tall with posture set before stepping
- Step one foot backwards into a controlled lunge
- Lower both knees under control
- Keep the front shin stable and torso upright
- Push back to standing with balance and intent
- Reset fully before the next rep

What to look out for

- Front knee collapsing inward
- Leaning too far forward
- Poor balance on the return
- Rushing between sides

P6

Neutral Grip Row

Why this exercise?

Rows help activate the upper back and pulling muscles in a way that supports swimming posture and shoulder balance. They are a useful counter to push-dominant or rounded positions and help prepare swimmers for stronger pulling mechanics.

Perform

8–10 reps

How to do it well

- Stand tall holding the band or handles in a neutral grip
- Set chest and trunk before pulling
- Pull elbows back under control
- Finish with shoulder blades engaged rather than shrugged
- Keep the neck relaxed and posture organised
- Return smoothly each rep

What to look out for

- Shrugging shoulders
- Pulling with the neck
- Rounded posture
- Snapping back too quickly



P7

Prisoner Squats

(Hands-Behind-Head Squat)

Why this exercise?

Prisoner squats challenge posture, trunk control and lower-body movement while also demanding better upper-body position than a normal squat. For swimmers, they are useful for reinforcing chest position and body control. That can carry over well to streamlining, posture and movement quality before getting in the water.

Perform

8–10 reps

How to do it well

- Stand with feet around shoulder-width apart and hands behind the head
- Keep elbows wide and posture set
- Sit into the squat under control
- Keep ribs organised and chest lifted
- Push through the floor to stand back up
- Move smoothly throughout

What to look out for

- Elbows collapsing forwards
- Chest dropping
- Heels lifting
- Knees collapsing inward

P8

Kneeling Push Ups

Why this exercise?

This is a simpler pressing option that helps prime upper-body pushing strength, shoulder control and trunk position. It is useful for younger or less developed swimmers who still need quality upper-body prep without too much fatigue.

Perform

4–6 reps

How to do it well

- Start on hands and knees with hands under shoulders
- Create a long line from knees to head
- Brace lightly through the trunk
- Lower chest towards the floor under control
- Push the floor away strongly to finish in a good shoulder position
- Maintain shape throughout the rep

What to look out for

- Hips dropping or lifting too high
- Head poking forwards
- Elbows flaring too wide
- Partial reps with no control



P9

Band Pull Downs

Why this exercise?

Band pull downs are a strong lat and shoulder prep exercise. They help swimmers feel the muscles that support catch, pull and bodyline control, making them highly relevant before getting in the water. They are especially useful for reinforcing a stronger connection between shoulder position and pulling mechanics.

Perform

6–8 reps

How to do it well

- Stand tall holding the band overhead
- Set ribs and posture before moving
- Pull from the lats with long arms
- Keep shoulders organised and avoid flaring the ribcage
- Maintain tension through the full range
- Return smoothly each rep

What to look out for

- Overarching the back
- Pulling from the neck
- Losing band tension
- Rushing through reps

P10

Full Push Ups

Why this exercise?

Full push ups are a stronger upper-body primer that challenge shoulder stability, trunk control and pressing strength. They suit more developed swimmers who can hold good shape and use the movement with quality.

Perform

4–6 reps

How to do it well

- Start in a strong full push-up position
- Set a straight line from shoulders to heels
- Brace lightly through the trunk
- Lower under control with elbows slightly back
- Push strongly back to the top
- Maintain bodyline throughout the rep

What to look out for

- Hips sagging or lifting
- Head poking forwards
- Elbows flaring too wide
- Poor bodyline throughout



Explode
POWER



THE SWIMMER'S
WARM UP DECK

Prepare better. Move better. Perform better.

E1



Streamline Jumps

(Reach Ups)

Why this exercise?

This movement bridges the gap between warm-up and performance. It helps swimmers prepare for explosive take-off, full-body extension and stronger streamline posture while staying simple and safe to perform poolside. It also reinforces the tall, organised body shape needed off starts and push-offs. That makes it especially useful before racing or any session involving speed and power.

Perform

2 x 4 reps

How to do it well

- Stand tall in an athletic stance with feet under hips
- Use a small controlled dip through the hips and knees
- Jump vertically with intent
- Lock arms into a strong streamline overhead
- Land softly and absorb through hips and knees
- Regain balance before resetting for the next rep

What to look out for

- No proper set position before take-off
- Jumping with stiff legs
- Poor streamline overhead
- Heavy or uncontrolled landings

E2



Start Block Jumps

(Explosive Reach Ups)

Why this exercise?

This is the most specific power movement in the deck for racing swimmers. It helps rehearse intent, projection and full-body extension from a start-like position while reinforcing control and athletic posture.

Perform

2 x 6 reps

How to do it well

- Start in a block take-off stance with hands on the floor
- Set body position before each rep
- Drive forwards and upwards with intent
- Extend fully through hips, knees and ankles
- Finish in a strong streamlined shape
- Stick the landing before resetting

What to look out for

- Poor setup before take-off
- Jumping without full extension
- Arms not finishing in streamline
- Losing balance on landing



Train Like a Pro

The best swimmers do not just train hard.

They learn how to prepare properly, move with purpose and take responsibility for the details that support long-term progress.

Warm-ups are one of the first places these habits are built.

They help build the habits that matter most over time:

READINESS

SKILL DISCIPLINE

APPROPRIATE EFFORT

LEARNING

That is part of what it means to train like a pro.

Explore more swimmer development resources at Bluefins.

bbfsc.org/warmup

THE SWIMMER'S WARM UP DECK

Exercise Companion Guide

Prepare better. Move better. Perform better.

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