

Don't cramp your style!

WARM-UP EXERCISES FOR MUSICIANS

All skilled physical activity, including music performance, should be preceded by a warm up.

Warm up prepares the body for efficient and effective activity and minimises the risk of injuries.

Here are some useful exercises to help you prepare physically each time you play. More detailed guidance for physical and mental preparation is available in BAPAM's supporting resources.

Remember ..

Check your posture

Stand with feet a hip width apart and knees slightly bent

Breathe slowly and rhythmically throughout

Include the aerobic 'pulse raiser' (Exercise 7) to stimulate circulation

You should only do stretches once your muscles are warm

Be careful if you have high blood pressure or feel dizzy. **STOP** if you feel pain. If you are hypermobile (very bendy or flexible), you should seek advice from a performing arts specialist. Contact BAPAM for a free confidential assessment if you have any queries or concerns

Don't forget to take regular breaks during practise sessions

You can repeat the exercises to release tension and to re-align posture

Exercises 1 – 6: repeat each 5 times

1. HEAD TURNS

- Turn your head from side to side



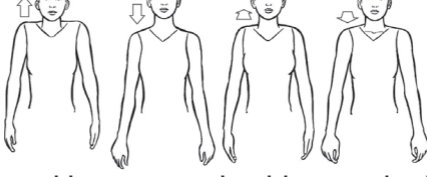
2. HEAD DROPS

- Drop your head forwards and backwards



3. SHOULDERS

- Raise and lower your shoulders, and roll forwards and backwards



4. ARMS

- Swing each arm full circle



5. SIDE BENDS

- Hold your left arm overhead and tilt your body to the right. Alternate with bends to the opposite side



BAPAM helps performing arts professionals and students with work related health issues. Free, confidential clinical advice from healthcare practitioners who understand the demands of a performing arts career.

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6. MIDDLE BACK TWISTS

- Stand or sit with your arms crossed over your chest. Rotate to one side then the other, stopping between rotations



Exercise 7 is aerobic: build up stamina by starting for 1 minute and increasing by 30 secs each week to a maximum 3 minutes

7. PULSE RAISER

- March on the spot with opposite arms swinging

Exercises 8 – 12: repeat each 10 to 15 times

8. WRIST BENDS

- Relax your arms and hands by your sides with the palms facing in. Bend and extend your wrists

9. WRIST ROTATIONS

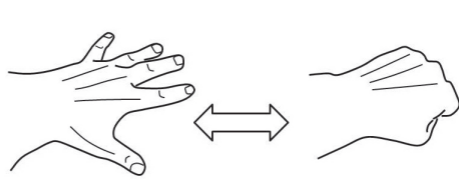
- Relax your arms and bend them at the elbows. Circle your wrists



10. FOREARMS

- Rotate forearms outwards and inwards

11. HANDS



- Form and release a fist

12. FINGERS



- Spread your fingers then bring them together

Cooling down after playing... can also be beneficial as it helps you recover from the session, including gentle stretching (or 'lengthening') of muscles out of playing postures. Detailed advice is available separately, but options for a 3-5 minute cool down include:

- Play something soft, slow and simple

- Sit or stand with feet wide apart. Allow arms and body to fall forwards and hold for at least 1 minute, feeling muscles lengthen down your back



- Lie or sit and breathe slowly, allowing ribs to extend sideways

- Quietly contemplate what you have been doing

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