

Warming Up

Music

What a warm-up is for, and what belongs in one for each instrument family.

Five to ten minutes, low effort, no musical judgement applied.

All instruments

Slow, then gradually faster

Full range, quietly

Stop if anything hurts

No new material

Wind & brass

Long tones

Lip slurs / harmonics

Quiet articulation

Breathing exercises

Strings

Open string bowing

Slow scales, one octave

Shifting exercises

Left-hand finger patterns

Keys & percussion

Hanon or five-finger patterns

Slow contrary-motion scales

Single strokes, slow to fast

Wrist and forearm loosening

Tension is the enemy of every instrument. A warm-up that creates tension has failed at its only job.