

ACTOR WARMUP CHALLENGE

1. Your challenge: design a warmup for an actor to use before a show or audition.
2. Check out WHY DO WE WARM UP? (below)
3. Complete the DESIGN YOUR WARMUP WORKSHEET (below). Make sure to include games/exercises to warm up your body, voice, and mind!
4. Tell us about your warmup! Make a video demonstrating and telling us about the warmup you've created. What are the exercises or games you've chosen, and why? Don't worry about the length of your video; if needed, we can edit it down for The Intermission Show.
5. Upload and Share! Follow the link on the ACT Spotlight page to upload a your video. Make sure to title your submissions with your name!

WHY DO WE WARM UP?

Create an actor warm up to be used before rehearsal or performance. Must include elements designed to warm up physically, vocally, and mentally.

Ideas: tongue twisters, yoga, group games, concentration, etc.

The other day during the Olympics, I listened to a commentator talking about the athletes' dedication to their warm-ups. Suddenly it hit me, I don't like to warm up. As an actor, I don't like to do warm-ups and as a director I'm not inclined to lead my actors in them. Despite my feelings about doing them, however, I know their value and know that you and I should be warming up before rehearsals, auditions, and performances.

One reason some people don't bother with warming up is that when they are young, their body feels ready to go at any moment. Warming up seems like a waste of time since there are no obvious results. Ultimately, not warming up becomes their habit. Some people simply don't like to bend, stretch, or move beyond their comfort zones, so they don't warm up. Others say that the characters they are playing aren't very far from themselves so they don't prepare. Finally, some people think that they can simply start saying lines and that's all there is to acting. Well none of those are very good reasons because warming up will make your work better.

To prepare for rehearsals, auditions, or performances, actors need to do three types of warm-ups. Physical, vocal and mental...and the mental, which is focusing your attention on the work will actually be combined with the physical and vocal warm-ups. To do all of this should take you no more than 15 minutes.

First you need to do a physical warm up. While you do this, you can work on your focus and concentration, by paying attention to your breathing and to the feeling in your body and muscles. When you find yourself thinking about other things, simply come back to your body or your breathing.

Your physical warm up should take you briefly through your entire body, with the goal being to reduce tension. Why? Because tension and stress can stop you from breathing, thinking, feeling, and responding—all things that are essential to good acting. Because the voice is housed in the body, the physical warm-up is also essential to preparing your vocal apparatus.

After you do a physical warm-up, it's time to do a brief vocal warm up. The goal is release any tension, prepare the vocal apparatus, and work your range. As in the physical warm up, keep breathing and keep your focus on what you are doing and experiencing.

Remember, warming up will make your performances better; it will make you auditions better. It is a simple strategy that will improve all of your work. While it will take a few minutes, it will pay you dividends. So take responsibility for your work and warm up before every rehearsal, performance, and audition.

