



HOW TO TEACH GROUP CLASSES

TEACHING INTRODUCTORY LEVEL, GENERAL FORMAT GROUP CLASSES

As an Animal Flow instructor, you'll have been exposed to the library of Animal Flow movements, language, and planning and coaching tools to create high caliber Animal Flow sessions. And while this is a great starting point for your coaching journey, the ability to create outstanding group class experiences for multiple participants requires some additional knowledge and practice.

We've created this resource to give you access to our recommended method for teaching introductory level classes, following the format that I've personally trialed and tested.

KEEPING YOURSELF AND YOUR PARTICIPANTS SAFE

If you're new to teaching group classes, you'll want to be sure to check into a few things with your local fitness industry governing organization or insurance company. Every country is different, with some regions having more stringent requirements than others, so be sure to do your research to make sure that you're covered.

- ✓ **Qualification:** Some countries (such as Australia and New Zealand) require group instructors to hold a separate level of certification that specifically qualifies you to teach groups.
- ✓ **Insurance:** If your country requires fitness professionals to hold insurance, be sure to check that the level of coverage you have extends to teaching groups.
- ✓ **Registration:** If you're registered with a peak industry body (such as REPS in the UK) be sure to confirm that your registration permits you to provide fitness services to groups. Often your registration category is also linked to your level of qualification and insurance, and may also govern the number of participants that you can include in a group session.
- ✓ **Pre-class screening:** Some countries also require a verbal pre-screening at the beginning of each and every class to make sure that you're only admitting healthy participants. I've provided an example below but you'll want to check with any local industry governing body to identify whether that's the case, and if so, whether there is any specific wording that you'll need to include to be considered as meeting any legal obligations around duty of care.

"If you have any medical condition, or a past or present injury that could impact your ability to safely participate in this class, we/I/insert facility name recommend that you seek clearance from a medical professional before participating."

60 MINUTE GROUP CLASS FORMAT

5 MINS	INTRODUCTION
	↓
8 - 10 MINS	WRIST MOBILIZATIONS
	↓
3 - 5 MINS	FLUID MOBILITY
	↓
10 MINS	ACTIVATIONS
	↓
25 MINS	ANIMAL FLOW WARM UP
	↓
5 MINS	BUILD THE FLOW
	↓
	WRAP UP & WRIST MOBILIZATIONS

INTRODUCTION

While you, as the Animal Flow instructor, get to figure out your own introduction, it's important to give some information on what to expect, as well as some of the more important concepts of the Animal Flow program. Below you'll find the common intro that I use in my beginner classes, which typically follows this format:

- ✓ Welcome and prior experience check
- ✓ What is Animal Flow?
- ✓ What does it achieve?
- ✓ How will we achieve it?
- ✓ (Verbal pre-screening)

Welcome and prior experience check

"Hey guys, first of all, welcome to Animal Flow!

Before we get started, may I see a show of hands if you have tried Animal Flow before or any other style of ground-based movement program?

Awesome, so my next question is: what type of workouts or hobbies/sports do you typically do?

Great, so if this is your first time at an Animal Flow class, welcome. And if you're coming back, then welcome back. It's always great to see some familiar faces."

What is Animal Flow?

“When I’m asked what Animal Flow is, I’ll typically explain it like this: if you were to see AF visually for the first time, it may look like Yoga meets breakdancing, with modern dance (or gymnastics) thrown in.

And while there is an Animal component, I have to admit that it’s only one component of the overall program. So, if you were expecting to find your spirit animal or roar like a lion the entire class, unfortunately this is not that class.”

What does it achieve?

“One of our main goals in AF is to improve the connection and communication of the Human Animal. One of the best ways to do that (at least in our opinion) is by putting your hands and feet in contact with the ground, and challenging you to figure out a range of “movement puzzles” which are our Animal Flow movements. Throughout this hour that we’ll spend together, you’ll be challenged in multiple ways, but most importantly you’ll be present in your body.

The other goal of Animal Flow is to fill in the gaps or deficits of some of your other go-to training strategies or hobbies. For example, if we’re looking at this spectrum of our physical attributes, and let’s say you’re a Crossfit athlete, well, you may only be expressing your ability to be strong, powerful, to endure; while if you’re a yoga practitioner, maybe you’re only expressing your ability to be mobile, flexible and stable. It’s our goal in Animal Flow to bridge the gaps, fill in the deficits, and allow you to be a more complete Human Animal.”

How will we achieve it?

“Just so you know what to expect, if this is your first class, we’ll be spending roughly 45 minutes on your hands and feet, and if you’ve never done that before, it could seem to be quite a daunting task. This is why we’ll always warm up with some fluid movements that we call ‘Wrist Mobilizations’, and I’ll even show you a wrist stretch that you can perform throughout the class at any time that I’m giving instruction or whenever you feel a little discomfort or fatigue in your wrists. Most importantly, I want to give you the freedom to take a break at any time, go grab some water, even have the freedom to feel like you can leave. I want to encourage you to keep in mind that this is a practice and as you keep coming back to class, your body will continue to adapt. So, if this feels like a lot for the first time, just remember, consistency is king here.”

Verbal pre-screening

If you’re including a verbal pre-screen, this is the perfect place to do so. Refer to our recommendations on page 1.

Once I’ve completed these steps, it’s time to commence Wrist Mobilizations.

WRIST MOBILIZATIONS

When choosing the Wrist Mobilizations (or Wrist ‘Mobs’) that you’ll be using, feel free to pick any of the ones that were taught in the L1 Workshop, or any additional mobs that you have in your toolbox.

Level 1 Wrist Mobilizations	- Wrist Waves - Lateral Wrist Stretch - Dynamic Wrist Relief	- Wrist Rolls - Shaka
Additional preferred Wrist Mobilizations	- Magnetic Wrists	- Wrist Rocks

- ✓ Begin teaching the Wrist Mobs as you continue to talk through the following script:

“As I mentioned before, the Wrist Mobs are fluid motions that are intended to prepare the wrists for the Animal Flow practice. We’ll begin warming up with a few different variations but please feel free to revisit them any time throughout the class, as well as throughout the day. The more motion we can get into our wrists, the better the adaptation process will be.

Our number one goal with the Wrist Mobilizations is to stay out of painful ranges or angles, so if you experience any particular areas that feels “pinchy” or painful, you’re going to want to cut that motion just shy of the discomfort.”

- ✓ As you are getting towards the last standing Wrist Mob, it’s time to show the class the Flow that they’ll be working on that day.

“In each class, we work on building a Flow that’s completely unique to that class. Here’s the Flow you’ll be working on today.”

- ✓ Perform the Flow to both sides with the Call Out.

“But before we get to the Flow, let’s continue our warm up and bring it down to the ground.”

- ✓ Be sure to show the wrist relief position at some point during the wrist mobilizations section.

FLUID MOBILITY

When picking the Fluid Mobility movements that you'll be using with your class, you have full freedom to choose any that you have in your toolbox. I'll usually pick two to three from the Fluid Mobility class that we have on the On Demand channel or from the Bodyweight Athlete. It's a good idea to pick the movements that complement each other, meaning that each movement focuses on a different area of the body. There's no need to over complicate this; shoulders, hips, spine, and ankles are always great areas to prioritize in your warm up.

Some examples of Fluid Mobility movements include:

- ✓ Shin Box or 90/90 transitions
- ✓ Shoulder Clocks
- ✓ Regressed Wave Unload
- ✓ Rolling Patterns

Over the following pages, you'll find a more detailed suggested breakdown, including the times for each segment. For the Fluid Mobility segment, you'll need to practice each movement for the allotted time in order to figure out how many repetitions you'll be able to fit in.

ACTIVATIONS

When choosing your Activation, it's a good idea to base it on what other AF moves are planned for the class. For example, if I know there will be a Crab Reach in the Flow or Animal Flow Warm Up, I may plan to use a Static Crab activation. Alternatively, I may use the opposite approach and decide that since they will be doing a lot of Crab Reaches in class, I may want use Beast as their Activation for variety.

I usually introduce this segment with something along these lines:

"Before we get moving with our Animal Flow Warm Up, we're first going to "prime" the system, encouraging all of your muscles and nerves to start talking. These Activations, as we call them in Animal Flow, are static holds. They may look easy but you'll see that they are actually more demanding than they seem, particularly when we start to progressively increase the challenge."

We spend a considerable amount of time on Activations in the Level 1 workshop with the intent of ensuring that you fully understand the objectives and application. However, when it comes to utilizing these in your group classes, you don't need spend a lot of time over-coaching them.

ANIMAL FLOW WARM UP

We call this section the Animal Flow Warm Up since this is the portion where we really want to start to get the heart rate up, and begin to challenge the participants. In this section you will always be using either two Traveling Forms, two Form Specific Stretches, or one of each. If you decide to use two Form Specific Stretches, you'll want to keep the tempo of the repetitions slightly higher than we would if we were performing them for strength, since our goal in the Warm Up section is to increase the cardiovascular demands.

Traveling Forms

When teaching Traveling Forms, crowd control is an important concept to consider as it allows you to keep your participants moving by managing the flow of traffic. Here are two options to consider when it comes to how you teach the Traveling Forms.

1. **Fill The Room.** With all of the attendees spread throughout the room, teach the movement and drill first in one spot then have them travel across the room
2. **Side of the room.** Put everyone on one side of the room, demonstrate the movement for them, then have them attempt, traveling across the room

I may use a combination, depending on the Traveling Forms I've selected for inclusion. Below is an example of how I incorporate the two.

- Start with movement 1: Lateral Traveling Ape 1 – Low Hip
- Teach participants using option 1: Fill the Room; drill the movement, alternating sides
- Bring participants to the side of the room and have them travel across
- Then demonstrate movement 2: Forward Traveling Beast and instruct your participants to travel across the room on their first attempt.

It's a great idea to alternate between two Traveling Forms, especially when teaching new participants as this proves to be a successful method for managing fatigue.

Combining Traveling Forms and Form Specific Stretches

If you're using a combination of one Form Specific Stretch and one Traveling Form, I would recommend teaching the FSS first. Once the participants have practiced both chosen movements, you have a couple of options.

1. Have the entire class perform the Traveling Form for a few rounds across the room, then fill up the room and have them perform repetitions of the FSS, then repeat

- Combine the Traveling Form with the FSS. For example, you may have them performing Lateral Apes across the room, and after every two reps, they drop into Crab and perform one Crab Reach on each side, then continue to repeat across the room.

Be sure to keep an eye on your time here, as this entire section should only be ten minutes, bringing you to the midway point of the class.

BUILD THE FLOW

When choosing the movements that will be in your Flow, remember that simplicity will be your best friend here! It's very common for newer instructors to build Flows that are either too technically challenging or just have far too many movements in them. Remember that this is a beginner class so you'll have participants of all levels and what may seem easy to you, may be incredibly challenging to them.

Build The Flow Formula
1 Teach a movement
2 Drill the movement
3 Add it to the Flow
4 Repeat

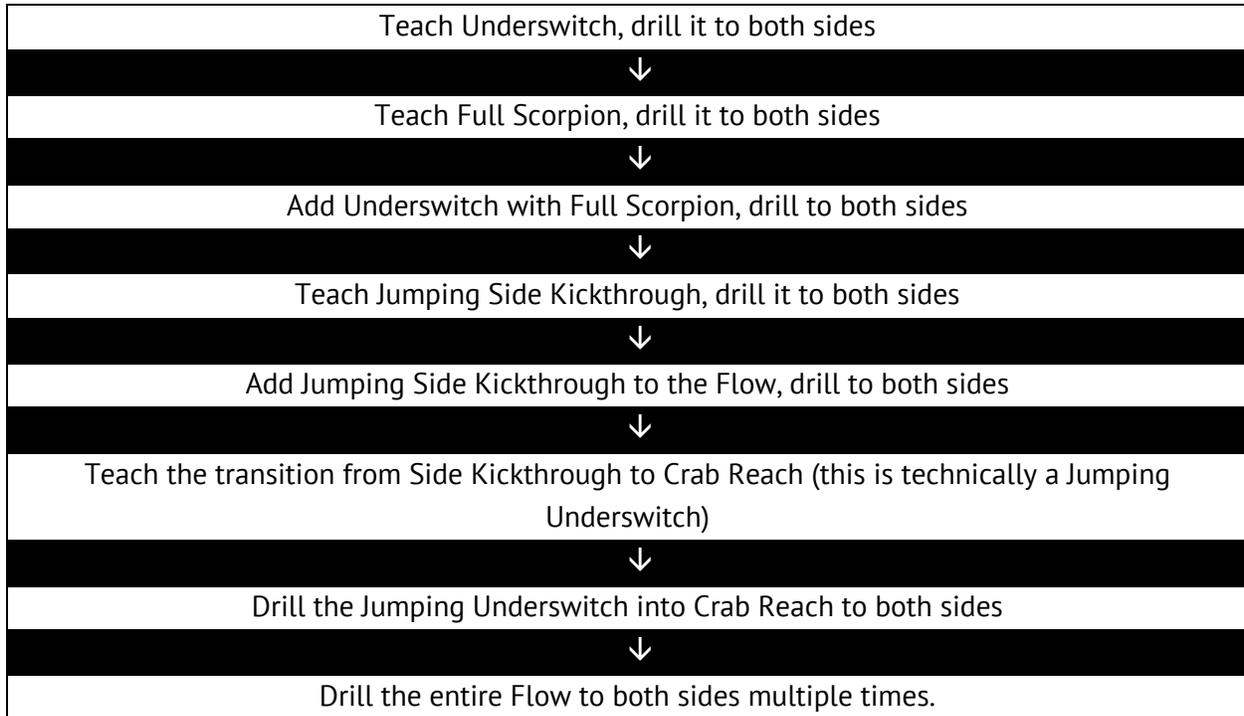
While it's ultimately dependent on your proficiency in teaching each movement and how well the class is absorbing the information, I've found 3-4 movements to be the perfect amount to build a beginner Flow. You may be able to add an additional movement if you've already taught it as part of the Animal Flow Warm Up section of the class.

SAMPLE FLOW	
Call Out	Written Flow
Set Beast	Beast
RL Underswitch	R L US,
LL Full Scorpion	L L FS,
Jump to LL Side Kickthrough	L L J-SKT,
LL Jumping Underswitch TO	L L JUS -
LA Crab Reach	L A CR -
Return to Crab	Crab
Repeat the Flow, starting with the left leg.	

This Flow does have 5 movements, but in this example, I have chosen to include Crab Reach since it was taught earlier in the Animal Flow Warm Up. Plus I know that in learning J-SKT they will learn the Modified Beast transition, which will make the Jumping Underswitch very easy to learn.

BREAKDOWN

Here's how to break down the steps for teaching the Sample Flow on the previous page.



The exact amount of repetitions or amount of times you drill each part of the Flow will be a trial and error situation. You'll really want to make sure that you get to the end of the full Flow with enough time to practice the entire Flow for 2-3 sets. Typically, one set means going through the full Flow for 2-3 repetitions per side. This may not seem like a lot of practice, but keep in mind the entire volume that they'll be doing during the drills and chunking.

On the next page you'll find a more detailed breakdown of all of your options for each portion of the class.

GROUP CLASS GENERAL FORMAT BREAKDOWN			
INTRODUCTION & WRIST MOBILIZATIONS 5 mins	<p><i>Choose 3-4 of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wrist Rolls - Wrist Waves - Lateral Wrist Stretch - Wrist Rocks - Magnetic Wrists - Dynamic Wrist Relief - Shaka 		
FLUID MOBILITY 8-10 mins	<p><i>Choose 3-4 mobilizing movements from those listed below or from your own toolbox.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regressed Wave Unload - Shoulder Clocks - Shoulder Rolls - Shin Box or 90/90 hip variations - Rolling Patterns - Supine Leg Sweeps 		
ACTIVATION 3-5 mins	<p><i>Choose one Activation per class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Static Beast - Static Crab 		
ANIMAL FLOW WARM UP 10 mins	<p><i>Choose either two Traveling Forms, two Form Specific Stretches, or one of each.</i></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Traveling Forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forward Traveling Beast - Reverse Traveling Beast - Lateral Traveling Beast - Lateral Traveling Ape (1, 2, or 3) - Forward Traveling Crab - Reverse Traveling Crab - Forward Traveling Ape - Forward Traveling Frog </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Form Specific Stretches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loaded Beast – Unload - Wave Unload - Ape Reach - Beast Reach - Crab Reach - Scorpion Reach </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Traveling Forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forward Traveling Beast - Reverse Traveling Beast - Lateral Traveling Beast - Lateral Traveling Ape (1, 2, or 3) - Forward Traveling Crab - Reverse Traveling Crab - Forward Traveling Ape - Forward Traveling Frog 	<p>Form Specific Stretches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loaded Beast – Unload - Wave Unload - Ape Reach - Beast Reach - Crab Reach - Scorpion Reach
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BUILD & DRILL THE FLOW 25 mins	<p><i>Choose 3-5 Switches & Transitions. Form Specific Stretches are also acceptable.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Underswitch - Underswitch Tap - Jumping Underswitch - Side Kickthrough - Jumping Side Kickthrough - Levitating Side Kickthrough - Full Scorpion - Scorpion Switch - Front Step - Front Step Through - Front Kickthrough 		
WRAP UP & WRIST MOBILIZATIONS 5 mins			

WRAP UP

When you're just beginning to teach classes, you may find that you're either ending with too much time, or not enough. If you find that your class seems pretty burnt out early, you can always go back to the Fluid Mobility segment that you started the class with and use it as a cool down, followed by an extended Wrist Mobilization cool down. However if you find that you're flowing all the way up until the last minute, be sure to leave the class with at least one Wrist Mobilization.

It's also important to remind them once more that Animal Flow is very much a practice and, as such, consistency will be the key to success.

A FEW WORDS ON CUEING

Although this may seem obvious, you want to be as clear and concise with your cueing as possible. Once we find the cues that work for you, you'll want to make sure that you stick with them. Repetition is going to be an important key in helping the attendees remember the details in each of the AF movements.

Here is just an example of the cues that can be used in a Full Scorpion. While this may seem like a lot, you have to keep in mind that a Full Scorpion is one of the most complex AF movements, and that you would not be giving all of these cues at once.

Full Scorpion

- ✓ Lift right hand, left foot
- ✓ Push on the gas
- ✓ Pointed toes go through the window
- ✓ Begin to draw the circle as your hand finds the ground
- ✓ Head goes down, as hips go up
- ✓ Shoulders find your ears
- ✓ In the peak position, your eyes are looking towards the base leg so that we can go through the check list
- ✓ Heel is high off of the ground and rotated outward
- ✓ Knee is slightly bent
- ✓ Shin pulls up towards the sky
- ✓ Squeeze out the rotation
- ✓ Pull the lower rib towards the same side hip
- ✓ Lock out your knee
- ✓ Drop the ankle to 90 degrees, as you roll around the outer ridge of the foot

- ✓ Continue to reach toward the ground as the weight of the leg peels the hand from the ground
- ✓ Land quietly with your foot as you pull the elbow into the side ribs.

CONSISTENT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

You'll note that I've highlighted how important it is to remind your class participants that their success in Animal Flow is dependent on consistency and practice over time. This same thing needs to be said to you, the instructor. The more you teach your AF classes the better you'll get!

Good luck!

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN TEACHING ONLINE**Level of interaction:**

- One on one training (apps like True Coach)
- Group interaction (Zoom, Google Hangouts, GoToMeeting, Skype Group)
- Streaming to a group with one-way video (Zoom Webinar, Vimeo Livestream, FB Live, IG Live, Twitch)

Longevity

- One time live event only - see it live or miss it
- Recording that can be accessed for a limited time only
- Recording that can be accessed “forever”

Time Investment

- Is this just a temporary fix until the current crisis has passed?
- Or is this something you’ll incorporate as an “add on” to your core business?
- Will this become your primary business model?

Equipment

The type of equipment you choose will depend on all the items above.

If you plan on leading classes online more than one time, you’ll want to get a minimum basic set up. This can be as simple as your smart phone and Bluetooth earbuds - there are simple apps that make it easy to use your phone instead of the computer’s built-in webcam, so that you can put it on a tripod and keep it in a good range; and the Bluetooth earbuds can function as a makeshift wireless mic so you aren’t shouting across to the room to your laptop’s mic.

And you can invest in more equipment from there, depending on your needs and budget.

Simple Ways to Improve Your Online Classes:

- Don’t depend on your computer’s built in webcam and audio. You can start out with a phone and Bluetooth mic set up if you don’t want to spend money on it. A wireless mic head set will be a good idea if you plan to keep doing this.
- Test your framing. You want to be as close to the camera as possible without going out of frame. Mark on the floor where your end-points are for going out of frame.
- Shine LOTS of light on yourself. If you plan on shooting indoors a lot, invest in a basic video light or even a selfie-ring. Your students/clients need to see you!
- Test the internet speed from wherever you are hosting or broadcasting from. This site has a good speed test: <https://www.speedtest.net> If you plan to stream lots of live video for full-length classes, you’ll want an upload speed of at least 10mbs. A lot of residential wifi defaults to 5mbs for upload speeds and this can cause your video to freeze or pixelate.