

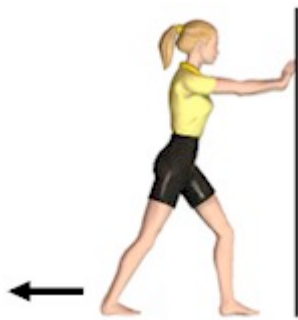
Stretching Your Potential

Run faster, jump higher, serve harder! If you have inflexible (tight) muscles, stretching can improve your ability to exercise, play sports and complete daily chores. Plus, stretching can reduce your risk of muscle strains or overuse injuries, especially in areas where muscles are often tight (thigh, calf, shoulders and low back).

GUIDELINES

- **Warm-up First** - with 5-10 minutes of aerobic exercise (walk, jog or bike) to increase blood flow to muscles and loosen them up.
- **Stretch to the Point of Tension** - NOT PAIN! Hold for 20 seconds. If it hurts, back off a little.
- **Don't Bounce** - Muscles have a reflex to protect against stretching too fast (bouncing) or too far. This may trigger the muscles to tighten instead of relax and is counterproductive.
- **To Loosen Tight Muscles** - Stretch daily especially after activity, while the muscles are still warm. Do 6-9 repetitions/stretches.

Calf Stretch



- Stand with your feet pointed forward.
- Keep your heels down and your back leg straight.
- Slowly bend the front of your leg until you feel an upper calf stretch in your back leg.

Hamstring Stretch



- Sit with one leg straight and the other leg bent to the side.
- Place your hands on the floor next to your hips.
- Slowly lean forward with your chest until you feel a stretch along the back of the thigh.

Heel Stretch



- Stand with your feet pointed forward.
- Keep your heels on the floor.
- Slowly bend your back leg until you feel the lower calf/heel stretch along that leg.

Quad (front of thigh)



- Stand with your back straight and knee bent.
- Place a foot on a table or chair, keeping your thigh pointing straight down.
- Squeeze your buttocks together and shift your hips forward slightly until you feel a stretch along the front of the thigh.

Cross-Over (outer hip)



- Lie on your back and cross one knee over your other leg.
- With the opposite hand, pull your knee up and over toward the opposite shoulder, until you feel an outer hip stretch.
- Keep your foot flat on the ground.

Lunge (front of hip)



- Kneel on one leg and place the opposite foot approximately two feet in front.
- Tighten your buttocks and slightly shift your hips forward until you feel a stretch in the hip or your back leg.

Figure Four
(outer hip)



- Lie on your back with one leg flexed up at the hip and bent 90° at the knee.
- Pull your knee and ankle together, up and over toward the opposite shoulder.
- Hold when you feel an outer hip stretch.

Cat
(mid back and low back)



- Kneel on your hands and knees.
- Slowly arch your back up toward the ceiling.
- Hold when you feel a stretch in the mid and lower back.

Glut



- Lie on your back with your legs straight.
- Pull one knee up toward the opposite shoulder until you feel a stretch along your outer hip.

Corner (chest)



- Stand in a corner with your arms out to the sides and elbows bent 90°.
- Rest your forearms on the walls.
- Slowly shift your weight forward over your legs until you feel your chest stretch.

Butterfly (inner thigh)



- Sit with your back straight and knees bent.
- Place the soles of your feet together.
- Drop your knees toward the floor until you feel a stretch along the inside of your thighs.
- **Do not bounce or lean forward.**

Overhead (mid back)



- Bend over at the waist and rest your arms on a table with your thumbs up.
- Slowly drop your head and body down below your shoulders.
- Hold when you feel a stretch behind your shoulders and back.

Side Bend



- Sit or stand with your back straight.
- Raise your arm and slowly bend your body over to the opposite side until you feel a stretch.

Abdominal



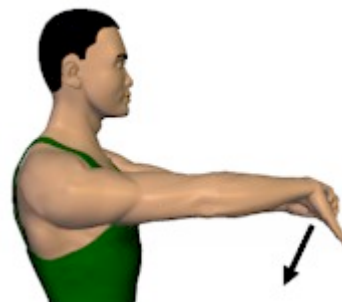
- Lie on your stomach.
- Slowly straighten your elbows until you feel a stretch along your stomach.

Trunk Rotation



- Lie on your back with knees bent and feet on the floor.
- Slowly lower your knees to one side until you feel a stretch on that side, then hold.
- Repeat on the opposite side.

Backhand (forearm)



- Straighten your elbow forward.
- Grab the back of your hand with your other hand.

- Pull your hand and fingers down until you feel a stretch on the back of your forearm.

Tricep



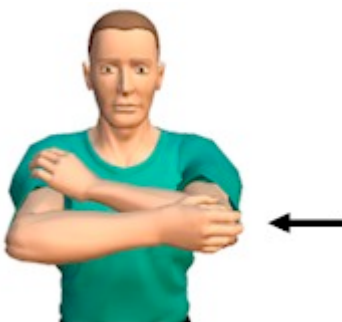
- Sit or stand up straight.
- Bend your elbow and reach back to your shoulder blade with your hand.
- Use your other hand to pull the elbow back until you feel a stretch along the back of your upper arm.

Forehand (forearm)



- Straighten your elbow forward.
- Grab the palm with your other hand.
- Pull your hand and fingers up until you feel a stretch on the front of the forearm.

Pull Across (shoulder)



- Stand or sit up straight.
- Raise one arm forward to shoulder level and bend your elbow.
- With the opposite hand, grab the elbow and pull it across your chest until you feel a stretch in the back of your shoulder.

Neck



- Sit tall and hold onto the edge of a chair with your hand.
- Slowly pull your head down to the side until you feel a stretch on the opposite side of your neck.

Quad	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cross-Over	X		X		X	X	X	X		X	X
Lunge	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Figure Four	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X
Cat	X			X	X				X	X	X
Glut	X	X			X	X	X		X	X	X
Corner	X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X
Butterfly	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X
Overhead	X	X			X				X		X
Abdominal	X				X				X	X	X
Side Bend				X	X			X	X	X	
Trunk Rotation	X			X	X			X		X	
Backhand		X			X			X			X
Tricep		X		X	X			X	X		X
Forehand		X			X			X			X
Pull Across		X		X	X			X	X	X	X
Neck		X			X			X		X	X
Shoulder Blade			X		X			X	X	X	
Pit		X									
Priming the Pump		X		X	X			X	X	X	X
Bicep		X		X	X			X	X		X