

## STRETCHING EXERCISES

Stretching exercises help loosen tight muscles.

<b>Technique:</b>	Stretch immediately after a game or workout. Stretch gently and hold for 20 seconds without bouncing (unless otherwise indicated).
<b>Frequency:</b>	Do 6-8 repetitions/stretch (unless otherwise indicated). Stretch at least five days a week.
<b>Precaution:</b>	Discontinue an exercise if it is painful, even with a gentle stretch.

### Low Back



#### **Cat** (mid back and low back)

Kneel on hands and knees.

Slowly arch back up toward ceiling.

Hold when you feel a stretch in mid and lower back.



#### **Knee-to-Chest**

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet resting on the floor.

With your hands, pull one knee to your chest, then the other knee until you feel a gentle stretch in the low back.

Hold both knees for 20 counts, and then put one leg down at a time.



#### **Trunk Rotation**

Lie on your back with knees bent and feet on floor.

Slowly lower knees to one side until you feel a stretch on that side, then hold.

Repeat on the opposite side.



### Side Bend

Sit or stand with your back straight.

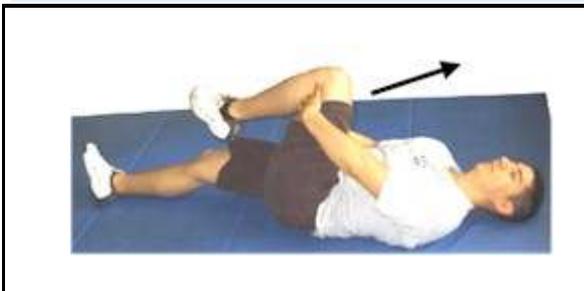
Raise your arm and slowly bend your body over to the opposite side until you feel a stretch.



### Abdominal

Lie on your stomach.

Slowly straighten your elbows pushing your upper body off the floor until you feel a stretch along your stomach.



### Gluteal muscles

Lie on your back with your legs straight.

Pull one knee toward the opposite shoulder until you feel a stretch along your outer hip.

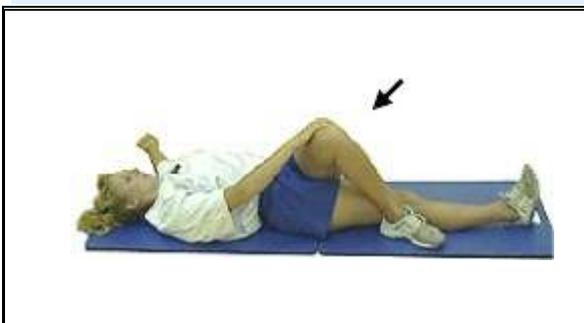


### Figure Four (outer hip)

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.



### Cross-Over (outer hip):

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

Keep your foot flat on the ground.



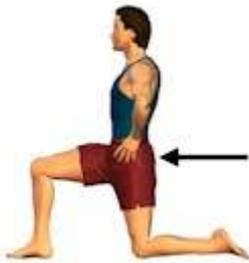
### **Quadriceps Stretch** (front thigh)

Stand with your back straight and knee bent.

Place your foot on a table or chair; keep the thigh pointing straight down.

Squeeze your behind together and shift your hips forward slightly until you feel a gentle stretch along the front of your thigh.

Don't lean forward or twist your hips.



### **Kneeling Stretch** (front hip)

Kneel on the knee of the leg that you are going to stretch.

Squeeze your behind together and shift your hips forward slightly until you feel a stretch along the front of your thigh.

Don't lean forward or twist your hips.



### **Seated Hamstring Stretch** (back thigh)

Sit with one leg straight and the other bent to your 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 your thigh.

Caution: Stop if this causes back pain or shooting pain down the back of your leg.



### **Hamstring Stretch** (back thigh).

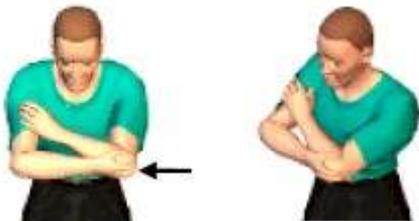
Lie with one leg resting on the floor and the other thigh flexed up toward the ceiling.

Holding your thigh with your hands, slowly straighten your knee until you feel a gentle stretch along the back of your thigh (hamstring).

Hold for two counts then relax. Do 10-20 repetitions with leg/day

## Upper Back and Neck

	<p><b>Priming the Pump Stretch</b> (back of shoulder)</p> <p>Lie on your side with your upper arm out 90% and elbow bent.</p> <p>Grab your forearm with the opposite hand.</p> <p>Slowly push your forearm down until you feel a gentle should stretch.</p> <p>Hold for 2-3 seconds then relax.</p> <p>Try 10-15 reps per day, especially after sports or workouts.</p>
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	<p><b>Shoulder Blade</b></p> <p>Raise one arm forward to shoulder level and bend your elbow.</p> <p>With the opposite hand, grab your elbow and pull it across your chest and rotate your upper body to the same side until you feel a stretch in the back of your shoulder.</p>
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	<p><b>Corner Stretch</b> (pectoral muscles - chest)</p> <p>Stand in a corner with your arms on the walls and one foot in front of the other.</p> <p>Slowly bend your knee until you feel a gentle stretch in your chest muscles, then hold.</p> <p>Do not rest your entire body weight on your upper arms - this can stretch the stabilizing structures of the shoulder.</p>
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	<p><b>Overhead Stretch</b> (lat muscles - mid back and back of shoulder).</p> <p>Bend over at the waist and rest your arms on a table with thumbs up.</p> <p>Slowly drop your head and body down below your shoulders.</p> <p>Hold when you feel a stretch behind your shoulders and mid back.</p>
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### **Head Tilt Stretch** (side neck)

Sit tall while holding onto a chair with your hand.

Grab the top of your head with the opposite hand.

Slowly pull your head over to the side until you feel a gentle stretch.

Repeat on other side.



### **Armpit Stretch**

(side neck, top of shoulder and upper back)

Sit tall while holding onto a chair with your hand.

Grab the top of your head with the opposite hand.

Slowly pull your head over to the side when you rotate your head down.

Hold when you feel a gentle stretch in the neck.

Repeat on other side.