

# STRETCHING

## Upper Body

### Safety Rules:

1) Breathe in and out rhythmically. 2) All movements are slow and controlled at all times. 3) Stop if you feel unexpected pain.

**WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND YOU CONSULT A PHYSICIAN BEFORE BEGINNING ANY EXERCISE REGIME.**

### Neck Retractions/Chin Tucks

Neck extensors

1. While standing, poke head forward, keeping it vertical.
2. Draw head backward, tucking in chin and flattening back of neck.
3. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Repeat often during day.



### Head Tilts

Scalenes, Upper trapezius

Perform Gently

1. Tilt head to the right and lower left shoulder.
2. Place right hand on left side of head to gently intensify stretch.
3. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.

Caution: Be very gentle when intensifying stretch.

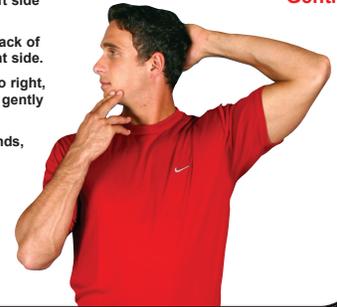


### Neck Rotation

Neck rotators

Perform Gently

1. Place right index and middle fingers on left side of jaw.
2. Place left hand on back of head, slightly to right side.
3. Gently rotate head to right, using hands to very gently intensify stretch.
4. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.



### Ball Arch

Intercostals, Pectoralis major, Pectoralis minor, Abdominals

1. Lie back on a stability ball.
2. Holding abs tight, place hands on back of head.
3. Squeeze shoulder blades together, opening arms further.
4. Keeping feet flat on floor and neck neutral with gaze upward, arch back over ball.
5. Breathe deeply, expanding chest.
6. Hold for 5 seconds, then release. Over time, gradually increase to hold 30-60 seconds. Repeat 2-3 times.

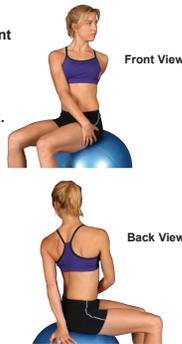


### Seated Ball Twist

Spinal muscles, Erector spinae, Obliques

1. Sit on a body ball with hips and knees bent to 90 degrees.
2. Keeping back straight, gently squeeze shoulder blades back and down.
3. Place left hand on ball behind left buttock.
4. Place right hand on outside of left thigh.
5. Keeping knees fixed, use arms to rotate body gently to right.
6. Take a deep breath. On exhale, gently twist slightly further to right.
7. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times per side, alternating sides.

Note: Do not slouch or hold breath. Stop if stretch becomes painful.



### Prayer Stretch

Latissimus dorsi, Posterior deltoid, Triceps



1. Kneeling in "prayer" position, reach forward and place hands on floor.
2. Keeping arms straight, gently drop chest, shoulders and head toward floor, stopping when you feel a comfortable stretch in armpits.
3. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times.

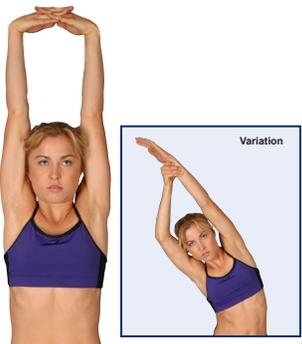
Advanced: Place left hand on left shoulder blade, then lean slightly into left armpit. Repeat on other side.

### Overhead Reach

Latissimus dorsi, Obliques

1. Standing or kneeling, interlace fingers and reach arms overhead, palms down.
2. Keep neck neutral, avoid poking head forward.
3. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times.

Variation: Clasp left wrist, pulling arm up and to right. Repeat on left.



### Shoulder Towel

Bottom arm stretch; External rotator, Anterior deltoid  
Top arm stretch; Posterior deltoid, Triceps

1. Holding one end of towel in right hand, raise right arm overhead.
2. With towel hanging behind back, grasp other end with left hand.
3. Pull towel up with right hand, straightening arm to stretch left (bottom) shoulder. Hold for 30-60 seconds.
4. Pull towel down with left hand, straightening arm to stretch right (top) shoulder. Hold for 30-60 seconds.
5. Repeat 2-3 times, switch sides.

Note: Keep shoulder blades squeezed together.



### Handcuff Towel

Anterior deltoid, Chest, Biceps

1. Hold a towel behind your back with palms facing body.
2. Squeeze shoulder blades together and raise arms backwards.
3. Keep abs tight and don't arch lower back.
4. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times.

Note: Avoid leaning forward, rolling shoulders forward, or poking neck forward.



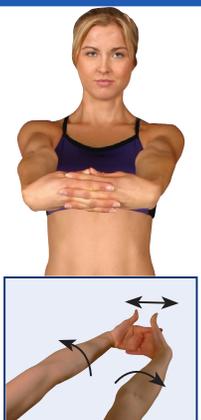
### Upper Back

Mid-trapezius

1. Stand upright and draw back head slightly, tucking chin.
2. Lift arms straight forward, intertwining fingers with palms facing in.
3. Engaging shoulders and upper arms, pull arms gently away from one another without pulling hands apart.
4. Holding tension, rotate arms outwards bringing elbows closer together.
5. Still holding tension, extend arms forward from shoulders, stretching shoulder blades and upper back.
6. Raise and lower arms slightly to find angle of maximum tension.
7. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times.

#### Notes:

1. Do not bend elbows.
2. As an alternative to interlocking fingers, grasp a towel in both hands with palms facing upwards and baby fingers touching.
3. For added benefit, have someone gently massage the knots between shoulder blades as you perform stretch.



### External Rotator Cuff

Teres minor, Infraspinatus

Perform Gently

1. Sit on floor with right knee bent up and left leg straight out diagonally from hip.
2. Place right elbow on right knee, forearm bent to 90 degrees and parallel to floor.
3. Keeping upright neutral back, gently squeeze and hold shoulder blades back and down.
4. Press gently down on right wrist with left hand until you feel a comfortable stretch in rear of arm and shoulder.
5. Hold for 30-60 seconds, switch sides, repeat 2-3 times per side.

Note: Do not raise or over-rotate shoulders during stretch.



### Posterior Deltoid

Posterior deltoid, Rhomboids, Mid-trapezius

1. Stand or sit and place left hand on right shoulder.
2. Drop left elbow slightly to mid-chest level.
3. Lightly grasp left elbow with right hand and pull it gently right.
4. Hold for 30-60 seconds, switch sides. Repeat 2-3 times per side.



# STRETCHING

## Lower Body

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### Single-Knee Corkscrew

Gluteus maximus, Obliques, Erector spinae, Piriformis

1. Sit with left leg straight and right knee bent close to chest, placing right foot on outside of left knee.
2. Place right hand on floor behind you for support.
3. Wrap left arm around right knee, pulling knee into left shoulder.
4. Sitting straight as possible, rotate torso right until you feel a comfortable stretch.
5. Breathe deeply. On exhale, gently intensify stretch by rotating further.
6. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.



### Cross-Leg

Gluteus medius and minimus

Perform Gently

1. Sit on a chair or bench, crossing left leg to rest left ankle on right knee.
2. Straighten back, lifting chest and squeezing shoulder blades together slightly.
3. Gently press down on left knee with left hand until you feel a comfortable stretch.
4. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.



### Lower Back and Piriformis

Lower back, Piriformis

1. Lie on back with knees slightly bent, then cross left leg over right knee.
2. Grasp under right knee with both hands.
3. Pull knees into chest, exhaling.
4. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.



### Runner's Hip

Tensor fasciae latae, Iliopsoas, Rectus femoris, Obliques, Erector spinae, Spinal muscles

1. Take a large step forward with right leg, and place a stability ball under right buttock.
2. Bend left knee, lowering onto ball but keeping most of weight on legs.
3. Twist torso to right, placing right hand on right buttock or ball beside it, and left hand on right side of right thigh.
4. Squeeze buttocks and tilt pelvis forward (like a bucket pouring out behind you), stretching through left hip and thigh.
5. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.

Note: Avoid arching lower back.  
Advanced: Cross left leg over behind you to right; complete as above.



### Inner Thigh

Adductors

1. Standing with feet wide apart, drop into a slight squat, leading with buttocks and keeping chest lifted.
2. Placing hands on left thigh for support, shift weight left until you feel a comfortable stretch.
3. Point left foot out slightly, aligning knee with second toe.
4. Point right foot forward with sole flat on floor.
5. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.

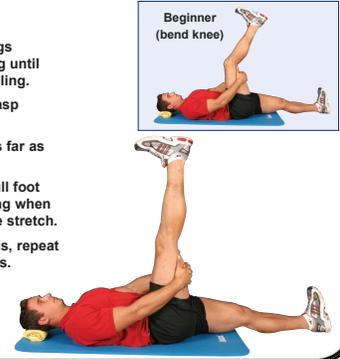
Variation: Place hands on a body ball instead of thigh for support.



### Supine Hamstring

Hamstrings, Gastrocnemius

1. Lying on back with legs straight, bend right leg until knee is pointing at ceiling.
2. Using both hands, grasp beneath right knee.
3. Straighten right leg as far as you can.
4. Use arms to gently pull foot towards head, stopping when you feel a comfortable stretch.
5. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.



### Seated Towel

Hamstrings, Gastrocnemius

1. Sit on floor, both legs slightly bent.
2. Wrap a towel or rope around bottom of left foot.
3. Arch lower back, lifting chest. Keeping neck neutral, pull shoulder blades back.
4. Gently straighten left leg until you feel a comfortable stretch.
5. Gently intensify by pointing left toes toward head.
6. Hold for 30-60 seconds, and repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.



### Knee-to-Chest

Gluteus Maximus, Lower erector spinae

1. Lie on back, both legs straight.
2. Bend right leg until knee is pointing at ceiling.
3. Using both hands, grasp under right knee and pull it toward chest until you feel a comfortable stretch.
4. Gently intensify by pointing right toes toward head.
5. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.



### Front of Hip

Iliotibial band, Tensor fascia latae

1. Lie on right side, bending right arm under head and for support, and placing left hand on floor for balance.
2. Placing left leg behind you, bend left knee to 90 degrees and rest foot on floor.
3. Crossing right leg over left, place right foot on outside of left knee.
4. Gently press down on left knee with right foot.
5. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.



### Standing Quad

Quadriceps, Hip flexors

1. Stand, holding left ankle behind you.
2. Pointing left knee toward floor, pull left heel toward buttocks until you feel a comfortable stretch.
3. Tilt pelvis (like a bucket of water you are tipping out behind you).
4. Keep spine straight and upright, chest lifted and head neutral.
5. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.

Variation: If holding foot is uncomfortable, place it on a bench or chair and continue.



### Combo Hamstring and Calf Stretch

Soleus, Hamstrings, Gastrocnemius

- Note: This stretch combines a hamstring stretch (straight leg) with a calf stretch (bent leg).
1. Step forward with right foot placing heel on floor, toes up.
  2. Keeping left foot flat on floor, place both hands on left thigh and squat gently on left leg.
  3. Keeping heels on floor and weight on left leg, lift chest and arch lower back slightly.
  4. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times. Switch sides.



### Straight-Knee Calf

Gastrocnemius

1. Step forward with left foot.
2. Straighten right leg, pressing right heel gradually towards floor and stopping when you feel a comfortable stretch in right calf.
3. To intensify, pull right toes toward shin.
4. Hold for 30-60 seconds, repeat 2-3 times.

Note: Keep heels down and weight on back leg; lift chest and arch lower back slightly.

