

TAKE FIVE!

13 stretch descriptions



SHOULDER SHRUG

Place hands at the sides; elevate the shoulders up and down



FOREARMS 2 - EXTENSOR MUSCLES

Place one hand, palm down, out in front and gently pull the hand down with the other hand. Repeat with the other side



FORWARD NECK ROLLS

Beginning with the head to one side, roll forward from side to side



LOWER BACK

Stand feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent. Drop the head, then slowly bend forward, reaching towards the floor



LATERAL NECK STRETCH

Place the right hand on the left side of the head and gently pull to the right side. Repeat using the other hand and other side of the head



HAMSTRING

Place one leg out in front with the toe pointed up. "Sit down" into the opposite leg. Lean forward, keeping the back straight. Repeat by switching the legs



SHOULDERS

Bring one arm straight across the chest, using the other arm to apply light pressure. Repeat with the opposite arm



QUAD

From a standing position, grab the ankle or foot with the same side hand pulling the foot back towards the buttocks. Repeat with the opposite leg and hand



TRICEPS/LAT

Raise one arm above the head with a bent elbow. Grasp the elbow with the opposite hand, pulling it back. At the same time, lean at the waist to the opposite side



CALF

Lunge forward with one leg, while keeping the back leg straight. Lean forward while easing the back heel to the ground. Concentrate on keeping the back leg straight, pushing the heel to the floor



CHEST

Place hands on the sides of the waist, then draw the elbows back while looking up to the ceiling



GROIN

Stand with feet more than shoulder width apart and lunge to one side, keeping the opposite leg straight. Repeat to the other side



FOREARMS 1 - FLEXOR MUSCLES

Place one hand straight out in front and gently pull on the fingers with the other hand. Repeat with the other side

If you're not a regular exerciser, you can still benefit from a regular stretching routine. Try to stretch at least once a day to maintain flexibility.

Essentials

Basic stretches to improve your flexibility should focus on the major muscle groups of the body: calf, quadriceps, hamstrings, hip, lower back, neck, shoulder and wrist.

Don't bounce. Bouncing as you stretch can lead to muscle injuries.

Stretch through movement throughout your day. Gradually move through the stretches without holding, and utilize your momentum to increase flexibility.

Hold each stretch for at least 15 seconds... and up to 30 seconds for a really tight muscle or problem area.

Focus on a pain-free stretch. If you feel pain as you stretch, you've gone too far. Back off to the point where you don't feel any pain.

Relax and breathe freely. Breathing must be slow, rhythmical and controlled.

Stretch before, during and after. Stretch before, during and after. Light stretching before the start of your day should be followed up with more in-depth stretching throughout and at the end of your day.

Benefits

You'll reap many benefits from adding regular stretching to your day:

Increased flexibility - Flexible muscles can improve your daily performance.

Improved circulation - Stretching increases blood flow to your muscles.

Better posture - Frequent stretching can help keep your muscles from getting tight, allowing you to maintain proper posture.

Stress relief - Stretching relaxes tight, tense muscles that often accompany times of stress.

Enhanced coordination - Maintaining the full range of motion through your joints keeps you in better balance, especially as you get older.

