

Lower Extremity Stretching Home Exercise Program

Flexibility exercises are done to increase overall muscle length. This reduces the incidence of injuries, such as muscle strains, pulls or tears. Flexibility exercises also increase efficiency and therefore improve performance. All stretching should be static; **no bouncing stretches**. Stretching should be slightly uncomfortable, but not painful. Do each stretch slowly and hold for 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 to 5 times.

Note: Shading indicates area being stretched.

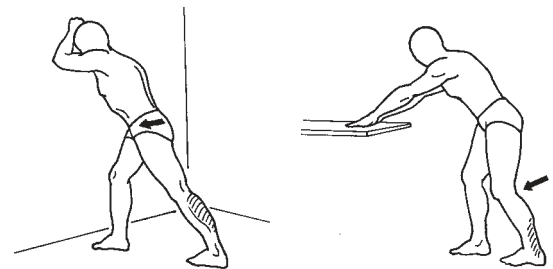
Warm up muscle group you intend to stretch with a low intensity aerobic activity such as biking, walking or jogging.

1. Gastroc-Soleus Stretch

Stand with hands on counter or wall for support. Put one leg behind you. Make sure toes point straight ahead. Bend opposite leg and place foot on the ground in front of you. Keep heel of backward leg down and keep arch up, toes curled under. Slowly move your hips forward, keeping back straight until a stretch is felt in back of calf. Hold 20 to 30 seconds.

Repeat _____ times/leg.

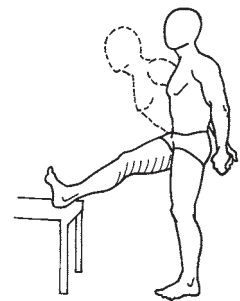
Variation: Perform above exercise with knee bent on side to be stretched.



2. Hamstring Stretch (Standing)

Stand with leg to be stretched supported on a table or platform of comfortable height, knees straight. Opposite foot should point straight ahead. Slowly bend forward from hips keeping your back straight until stretch is felt behind the knee of the leg on the table.

Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



3. Hamstring Stretch (Sitting)

Sit on floor with leg to be stretched extended out in front of you with your toes up. Bend opposite leg and place sole of foot against knee of straight leg. Slowly bend forward from hips keeping your back straight and head up.

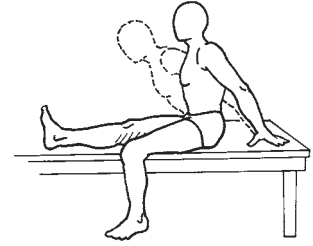
Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



4. Hamstring Stretch (Sitting)

Sit on bench with leg to be stretched extended in front of you, toes up, and the opposite foot resting on the floor. Slowly bend forward from the hips keeping the back straight until a stretch is felt behind the knee.

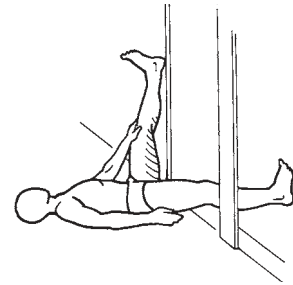
Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



5. Hamstring Stretch (Doorway)

Lie on back in a doorway. Place heel of leg to be stretched on wall keeping the opposite leg straight through doorway. Slowly slide closer to the wall until a stretch is felt behind the thigh.

Hold this position for 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.

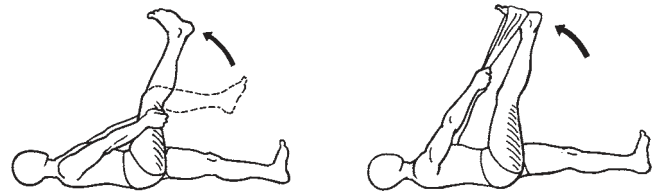


6. Hamstring Stretch in 90/90 Position

Lie on back, bring leg up until hip is at a 90 degree angle. Keep opposite leg straight. Slowly straighten your leg until a stretch is felt behind the thigh.

Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.

You may use a towel to assist with the stretch.

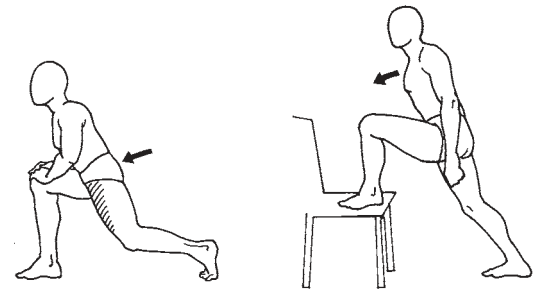


7. Hip Flexor Stretch (Lunge Position)

Standing, take a long step forward assuming a lunge position with leg to be stretched straight and in back. It is not necessary to have heel on the floor. Rest hands on hips or front leg, keeping front foot flat on floor. Keep torso upright and back straight. Slowly lower hips forward and downward until a stretch is felt in the front of the thigh.

Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.

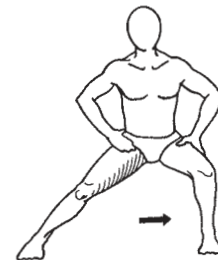
Variation: A chair may be used to increase the stretch.



8. Hip Adductor Stretch

Stand with feet wide apart. Make sure toes point straight ahead. Bend one knee. Shift weight toward the bent knee until a stretch is felt on the inner thigh of the straight leg.

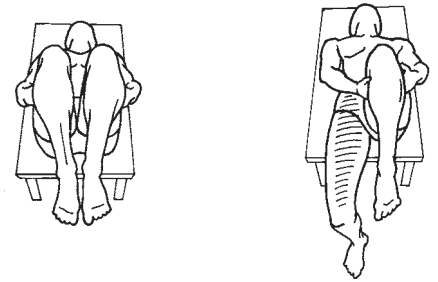
Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



9. Hip Flexor Stretch (Lying)

Lying on your back with thighs extending halfway off the mat, bring both knees to chest holding the back of the thighs. Lower the leg to be stretched off the mat allowing the knee to bend. Stretch is felt on the top of the thigh. Do not allow back to arch. Bring both knees to chest, then switch legs to stretch the opposite side.

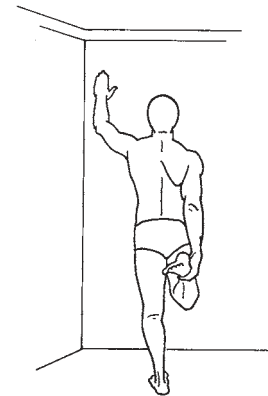
Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



10. Quadriceps Stretch (Standing)

Stand close to a wall or chair for support with the leg to be stretched extended behind you. Knee of opposite leg slightly bent. Hold foot of leg to be stretched with your hand, gently pulling the heel toward the buttock until a stretch is felt in the front of the thigh. Do not allow back to arch.

Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



11. Quadriceps Stretch (Prone)

Laying on your stomach, bend knee of leg to be stretched. Use your hand or a towel to gently draw your heel toward your buttocks until a stretch is felt in front of the thigh. Do not let lower back arch.

Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



12. Low Back/Buttock Stretch

Lay on your back bringing one knee toward your chest. Place hands behind knee, gently bringing knee toward chest until a stretch is felt in buttock and lower back. Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.

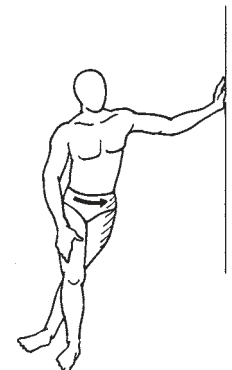
Variation: Bring knee toward the opposite shoulder to stretch the lateral buttock.



13. IT Band Stretch (Standing)

Stand sideways, arms length from wall, hand on wall for support with leg to be stretched next to wall. Slowly lean hip into wall until a stretch is felt along the outside of the hip.

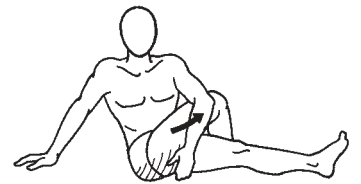
Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



14. IT Band Stretch (Sitting)

Sit on the floor. Bend one knee and cross the leg over the other leg. Turn upper body towards the bent leg. Using the opposite hand slowly pull the knee towards the opposite shoulder until a stretch is felt in the buttocks and along the outside of the hip.

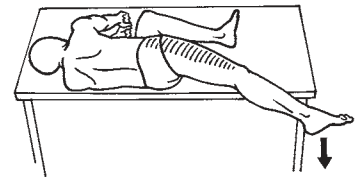
Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



15. IT Band Stretch (Inside Lying)

Lay on your side close to the edge of the table, with lower leg bent up towards your chest. Slowly lower top leg off the edge keeping your hip perpendicular to the table.

Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



16. Piriformis Stretch (Lying)

Lie on your back with both knees bent. Cross one leg with the foot resting on the other thigh. Put your hands behind the knee of the leg with the foot on the floor. Pull up toward your chest.

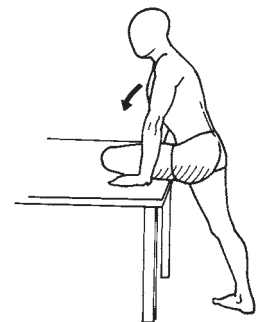
Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



17. Piriformis Stretch (Standing)

Stand with the leg to be stretched, knee bent and your foot to the inside. Slowly bend forward at your hips towards the knee that is bent.

Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



18. Inner Thigh Stretch

Sit on the floor with knees bent, soles of feet against each other. Use your forearms to give gentle stretching pressure against inner thigh of each leg.

Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.



19. Hip Internal Rotator Stretch

Lay on your back with leg to be stretched in bent position at a 45 degree angle from body. Slowly lower your knee outward until a stretch is felt on the inner thigh.

Hold 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat _____ times/leg.

