

Static Stretches

Here are some static stretches you may like to try. Consult your Sports Therapist or Physio for individual exercise advice



Calf



Hamstring



Latissimus



Pectorals



Quadriceps



Gluteals



Shoulder



Tricep



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Stretching

An introductory guide

Clinics in Cranleigh, Dorking and Horsham



For many of us, stretching is something we know we should do, but we are not always sure when or how best to do so.

This is an introductory guide to stretching, including why and when you should stretch, the different types of stretching and some examples you may like to try.

Information compiled by Claire Soames, Sports Therapist

Stretching should be an important part of every exercise regime.

Why Stretch?

- To reduce muscle tension
- Allows good movement within joints
- Increases range of motion (ROM)
- To maintain good muscle length
- Prevent injury
- Compensate for strenuous activity and training load
- Boost circulation (dynamic stretching)
- To promote body awareness
- Relaxation

When to Stretch?

- Before and after activity
- After being stationary for long periods
- Muscle soreness
- Muscle stiffness
- Separately from exercise to improve flexibility

Types of Stretching

Active: Actively contracting the opposing muscle to the one you are stretching.

Ballistic: Forcing yourself into a position which is beyond normal range. Not recommended.

Dynamic: Moving repeatedly through a comfortable range in a flowing motion challenging the muscle length. Good for warming up.

Passive: Holding a stretch in a static position using another part of the body, a partner, or a piece of apparatus.

PNF: Good for quickly increasing flexibility. Different methods. Normally performed 2-5 times with a partner. Works on the basis of muscle inhibition where the muscle is tricked into thinking it is going to relax when it is then pushed into a lengthened position.

Static: Holding a challenging but comfortable stretch for a period of time to improve your flexibility.

Pictured is a PNF stretch of the hamstring.

- A passive hamstring stretch for 15 seconds
- Force applied by partner
- Resisted to hold a static position for 10 seconds
- Patient relaxes
- Passive stretch is held again for 15 seconds



The above process can be repeated between 3 and 5 times



Thoracic Rotation



Leg Swings

Dynamic stretching has proven to be a very effective warm up technique. It helps to improve range of motion, increase heart rate, reduce muscle stiffness and prepare your body for exercise.

Exercises include;

- Open/close gate
- Leg swings
- Toe touches
- High knees
- Butt kicks
- Thoracic rotation
- Arm circles

Considerations

1. **Only stretch in a comfortable rather than painful range.**
2. **Maintain good posture when stretching**
3. **Consider using equipment to help such as belts, towels or foam rollers.**
4. **Time**

20 seconds – pre/post exercise

30 + seconds – improve flexibility