

InSeason Conditioning

Introduction

The hockey season has quickly arrived for most of us, and the Goalie Doctor receives many questions regarding stretching and other goaltending specific off-ice routines that can be adopted for the season. With that in mind, we have put together in this first article a regiment of stretching exercises that can be implemented into your regular routine to help you increase your level of performance. Hand-eye coordination drills and mental preparation exercises that you can add to your training during the season will follow in our next article. If you already have an off-ice program that you follow during the season to complement your on-ice efforts, take a close look to see if we provide any ideas on training goaltender specific skills that can be added on to your existing routine. Our purpose is not to change what you are already comfortable with, but to draw attention to a few areas directly related to your capacity for performance that may be neglected.

Finally, a word on strength training. Most elite athletes incorporate some form of training to maintain the level of strength and power that they built up in the off-season. The goalies that we work with range in age from barely teenagers to older adults, and there are health and safety issues specific to each stage of physical development. Without question, building up strength and explosive power can directly benefit your goaltending and should be examined, but we recommend consulting a physician and professional trainer to develop a program that meets your individual goals.

STRETCHING

Quite obviously, the more flexible we are as goalies, the greater range of motion and extension we have when executing saves. That said, there are a number of other benefits that also come as a result of stretching: reducing the chance of joint sprain or muscle strain, reducing muscular tension, promoting development of body awareness, and increasing mental and physical relaxation. Needless to say, if one had to weigh the benefits of each off ice activity, he would be hard pressed to find stretching an equal.

Still, while the act of stretching is likely one of the easiest to initiate (it requires no outside equipment or costs) and has the most benefit to our game, many of today's goalies treat it as an afterthought. Indeed, I myself am guilty. In the six years that I played Junior A and University hockey, I worked diligently on my off ice conditioning, trying to balance weight training, aerobic and anaerobic workouts, plyometrics, and goaltender specific exercises. Time and time again, stretching took a backseat to my other workouts. At best, I stretched simply as a means to help warm-up my muscles, both on the ice and before off-ice workouts.

In retrospect, I made a costly mistake. Stretching should be treated as an ends unto itself. Don't look past the significant benefits that come from concentrating on your flexibility and treating it as more than just a formality. Make your stretching workout the cornerstone of your midseason conditioning. If you can afford 20 to 30 minutes per day, do so. If stretching seriously every day is too much to ask from your busy life, then schedule 3-4 sessions per week, and discipline yourself to follow through with your intentions. Stretching before practice or as a prelude to another workout does not count, your stretching routine should stand on its own as the focal point of a training session.

Aging and Flexibility

Increased flexibility can be developed at any age given the appropriate amount of

training, but the rate of development will vary for different athletes at different ages. It is generally understood that children are naturally quite flexible, and that flexibility increases during their elementary school years. As they enter into adolescence however, natural flexibility tends to level off and then decrease. Scientifically, the decline in flexibility with age is related to changes that occur within the connective tissues of the body. From a practical point of view, it is reasonable to say that by the time we are able to make a mature commitment to hockey, our best years of natural flexibility are behind us. Thus, teenagers on up need to make a devoted commitment to developing their range of motion or it will steadily decrease.

Warming Up

The warm-up is a vital component of a conditioning program, yet is an area often misunderstood by the goaltender. Warm-up exercises are designed to provide the goalie with a period of adjustment from rest to exercise and mobilize the goalie both physically and mentally. Stretching exercises, on the other hand, are meant to increase the goalie's range of motion progressively and permanently. Stretching, therefore, should always be preceded by a proper warm-up. The benefits of a warm-up for a goaltender include: increasing the blood flow through active muscles, decreasing muscular tension, enhancing the ability of connective tissues to elongate (foundation of flexibility), and most importantly, increasing the speed at which nerve impulses travel (your body's "reaction time").

There are essentially two types of warm-ups that should be employed by the goaltender. First, a *general* warm-up is the most common means of preparing for athletic activity. It involves movements that are not directly related to playing goal, such as jogging or jumping rope. Such a warm-up should be employed before any off-ice conditioning session, including stretching.

The second method of warming up, a *formal* warm-up, includes movements that are actually used in playing the position, but performed at a reduced intensity. Thus, some light skating, moving in your stance, and light kicking would be included. Such a warm-up should be used on the ice before games or practices.

The intensity and duration of the goalie's warm-up needs to suit the environment. Ideally, the warm-up should be intense enough to increase body temperature and cause some light sweating. It shouldn't be so intense, however, as to cause fatigue.

A big problem that goalies face, particularly those not playing Junior, College, or Pro hockey, is the limited amount of pre-game warm-up time. The common routine that we see before a game is a 5 minute warm-up, where the goalie skates out onto the ice, does a lap or two, stretches for 30 seconds, then jumps in the net to face pucks. Obviously, this does not meet the goals of a proper warm-up. In this case, when there is limited time to utilize a formal on-ice warm-up as described above, the goaltender should look to employ a general warm-up and thorough stretching routine before he gets dressed. Once he gets on the ice, a shortened formal warm-up can be incorporated to "reheat" the body that may have cooled while getting dressed, but essentially the goalie should be quickly ready to go.

In practices though, the goalie usually has the time to get in a proper on-ice warm-up, we just don't take advantage of it. Instead, just like before a game, we skate a lap or two, then plop down in the corner to do some stretches. Again, we are not properly preparing ourselves to play, and the benefits of our stretching in this case is minimal. Take the time to increase your heart rate and get your body temperature rising with a formal warm-up before starting anything else.

A Word of Caution

Seek the advice of a physician before continuing a stretch that has any of the following effects: a bone blocks movement, you've had a recent fracture of a bone, there is a sharp pain with muscle movement or elongation, you've had a recent sprain or strain.

On With The Show...

Obviously, the goalie's lower body is responsible for both supporting/propelling his body in his movements around the crease and extending to reach and kick pucks. Thus, there are few muscles in the lower body that don't come into play in the process of playing goal. With this in mind, the major focal point of the stretches that we present here will revolve around the lower body. In particular, the goalie needs to pay particular attention to the groin, and hip region. Obviously, the groin comes under stress when we kick out for a puck, regardless of whether we use pad or skate save. The more extension we have in our groin, the easier these saves become. The hip region, including the hip flexors, hip rotators, buttocks, and abdomen, often goes largely neglected in most stretching routines. This is a major mistake, especially for goalies, since it is this area that controls how much outward rotation you can get from your legs in a butterfly. Keep in mind that physiological factors beyond your control, i.e. bone structure, affect the width of your butterfly as well, but we will pay particular attention to the muscles in this region nonetheless. If you want to increase the width of your butterfly, concentrate on the hip region.

Before beginning a stretching routine, follow these guidelines

- Warm up as discussed prior to stretching.
- Move slowly and smoothly into the stretch to avoid initiation of the stretch reflex. (a defensive reaction of the muscle to guard against injury where the muscle actually contracts)
- Breathe normally and freely, but accentuate the exhalation when moving deeper into the stretch.
- Hold the stretch (usually about 20 seconds to 1 minute) and relax. Do not strain or passively force a joint beyond its normal range of motion.
- Concentrate and feel the stretch.
- Come out of each stretch as carefully as you went into it.
- Stretches are shown for 9 different muscle groups, Adductors (groin), Hips/Buttocks, External Hip Rotators, Hip Flexors, Knee, Lower Back, Abdomen, Hamstrings, and Quadriceps. Choose 3-4 exercises from each muscle group during every stretching session.



Adductors 2

1. Sit upright on the floor with your legs flexed and straddled and heels touching each other.
2. Grasp your feet or ankles and pull them as close to your buttocks as possible.
3. Exhale, lean forward from the hips without bending your back, and attempt to lower your chest to the floor.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Adductors 4

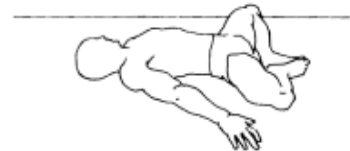
1. Lie flat on your back; flex and straddle your legs with the heels and soles of your feet touching each other and resting against a wall.
2. Place your hands on the upper inside portions of your legs.
3. Exhale, and slowly straddle your legs as wide as possible.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.

▼ Move farther from the wall if you feel pressure building in your lower back.



Adductors 1

1. Sit upright on the floor.
2. Flex your knees and bring the heels and soles of your feet together as you pull them toward your buttocks.
3. Place your elbows on the inside portion of both upper legs.
4. Exhale, and slowly push your legs to the floor.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



Adductors 3

1. Lie flat on your back with your body straight.
2. Flex your knees and bring the heels and soles of your feet together as you pull them toward your buttocks.
3. Exhale, and straddle your knees as wide as possible with the soles of your feet remaining in contact.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Adductors 5

1. Lie flat on your back with your legs raised and together and your buttocks several inches from a wall.
2. Exhale, and slowly straddle your legs as wide as possible. (Wear shoes to intensify the stretch.)
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



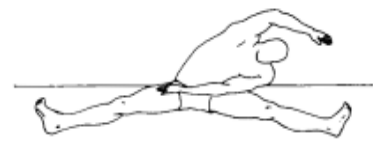
Adductors 6

1. Sit upright on the floor with both legs straight.
2. Straddle your legs as wide as possible.
3. Exhale, rotate your trunk, and extend your upper torso onto your leg. Concentrate on keeping both the lower back and the legs extended.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



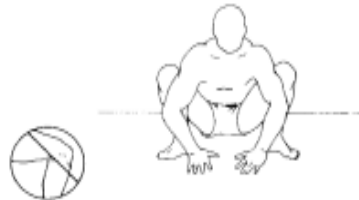
Adductors 8

1. Lie flat on your back with your body straight.
2. Flex one leg, grasp the foot, and extend the leg vertically.
3. Exhale, and slowly lower your leg to the floor at your side forming the letter Y.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Adductors 7

1. Sit upright on the floor with both legs straight.
2. Straddle your legs as wide as possible.
3. Drop one arm and raise your other arm overhead.
4. Exhale, rotate your trunk, and extend your upper torso onto your leg.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



Adductors 9

1. Kneel on all fours with your toes facing backward.
2. Extend one leg out sideways.
3. Exhale, bend your arms, lower the hip of the opposing side to the floor, and roll the hip.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.

Adductors 10

1. Assume a squat position with your feet about 12 inches apart and your toes turned slightly out.
2. Place your elbows on the inside portions of your upper legs.
3. Exhale, and slowly push your legs outward with your elbows. Remember to keep your feet flat on the floor to reduce strain on the knees.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Adductors 11

1. Kneel on all fours with your toes facing backward.
2. Bend your arms and rest your elbows on the floor.
3. Exhale, slowly straddle your knees, and attempt to lower your chest to the floor.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.

▼ This is one of the most intense stretches for the adductors—it's extremely deceptive.



Adductors 12

1. Stand upright with your legs straddled about 2 feet apart.
2. Turn the left foot 90 degrees sideways to the left, keeping the toes and heel in line with the body.
3. Place your hands on your hips.
4. Exhale, slowly lunge forward, and press down on your right hip.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



Adductors 13

1. Stand upright with one leg raised and the foot resting on the seat of a chair.
2. Exhale, bend at the waist, and lower your hands toward the floor.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.
4. Exhale, and bend the knee or round the upper torso when returning to the upright position.



Hips and Buttocks 1

1. Lie flat on your back with your legs extended.
2. Flex one knee and raise it to your chest.
3. Grasp your knee or thigh with one hand.
4. Exhale, and pull your knee across your body to the floor while keeping your elbows, head, and shoulders flat on the floor.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hips and Buttocks 2

1. Lie flat on your back with one leg raised and straight and your arms out to your sides.
2. Exhale, and slowly lower your raised leg to the opposite hand while keeping your elbows, head, and shoulders flat on the floor.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hips and Buttocks 3

1. Lie flat on your back with your knees flexed and your hands interlocked underneath your head.
2. Lift your left leg over your right leg and hook your leg.
3. Exhale, and use your left leg to press your right leg to the floor while keeping your elbows, head, and shoulders flat on the floor.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hips and Buttocks 4

1. Lie flat on your back with your left leg crossed over your right knee.
2. Inhale, flex your right knee, and let it push your left foot toward your face while keeping your head, shoulders, and back flat on the floor.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hips and Buttocks 5

1. Lie flat on your back with your knees flexed and arms out to the sides.
2. Exhale, and slowly lower both legs to the floor on the same side while keeping your elbows, head, and shoulders flat on the floor.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.

Hips and Buttocks 6

1. Lie flat on your back with your legs raised and straight and your arms out to the sides.
2. Exhale, and slowly lower both legs to the floor on the same side while keeping your elbows, head, and shoulders flat on the floor.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hips and Buttocks 7

1. Sit upright on a chair with one leg flexed and the heel resting on the chair edge.
2. Interlock both hands and grasp your raised knee.
3. Exhale, and slowly pull your knee to your body as your heel remains flat on the chair.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.

Hips and Buttocks 8

1. Sit upright on the floor with hands behind your hips for support and your legs extended.
2. Flex your left leg, cross your left foot over your right leg, and slide your heel toward your buttocks.
3. Reach over your left leg with your right arm, and place your right elbow on the outside of your left knee.
4. Exhale, and look over your left shoulder while turning your trunk and pushing back on your knee with your right elbow.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hips and Buttocks 9

1. Lie on your side with knees and hips extended in a straight line with your trunk.
2. Exhale and push up to a resting position on your hip, placing your arm directly under your shoulder and bearing weight on your extended arm and hand. (It may be necessary to place the opposite foot on the floor to stabilize the pelvis.)
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hips and Buttocks 10

1. Sit upright in a chair or on the floor with one leg crossed over the opposite knee.
2. Place your hand on the medial part of your knee.
3. Exhale and slowly lean forward.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hips and Buttocks 11

1. Sit upright on the floor, resting your left leg in front of you with your knee flexed and your foot pointing to the right.
2. Cross your right leg over your left leg and place the foot flat on the floor.
3. Exhale, round your upper torso, and bend forward.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hips and Buttocks 12

1. Sit upright on the floor.
2. Cross one knee over the other.
3. Exhale and lean forward.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hips and Buttocks 13

1. Lie on the floor with your body extended.
2. Flex one leg and slide the heel toward your buttocks.
3. Grasp the ankle with one hand and the knee with the opposite hand.
4. Exhale, and slowly pull your foot to the opposite shoulder while keeping your head, shoulders, and back flat on the floor.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



External Hip Rotators 1

1. Lie face down on a table with your body extended.
2. Flex your leg nearest the table edge.
3. Your partner stands at your side with one hand anchoring your body and the other hand grasping the lower leg.
4. Exhale as you allow your partner to pull your leg away from your body. Communicate with your partner and use great care.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



External Hip Rotators 2

1. Lie flat on your back with your body extended.
2. Raise one leg so the thigh is nearly vertical and the knee is flexed.
3. Exhale, and slowly move your foot away from your body.
4. Your partner is positioned in front of you and to the side, on one knee with the opposite foot on the floor, and holding your knee and ankle of the side to be stretched.
5. Exhale as you allow your partner to slowly move your foot away from your body. Communicate with your partner and use great care.
6. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hip Flexor 1

1. Lie on a table, flat on your back, with both legs hanging over the edge.
2. Inhale, flex one knee, and raise it to your chest.
3. Interlock your hands behind the raised knee.
4. Inhale, and pull your knee to your chest as you keep the opposite leg hanging over the edge.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



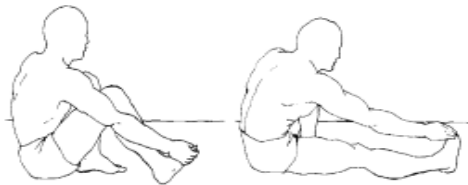
Hip Flexor 2

1. Lie on a table, flat on your back, by the edge.
2. Allow one of your legs to hang over the side.
3. Inhale, flex the opposite knee, grasp it with your hands, and bring it to your chest.
4. Inhale, and compress your thigh to your chest.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hip Flexor 3

1. Stand upright with the legs straddled 2 feet apart.
2. Turn your right foot 90 degrees sideways to the right, keeping your toes and heel in line with your body.
3. Flex your right knee, and roll your left foot under so the top of the instep rests on the floor.
4. Place your hands on your hips. (Some may prefer placing one hand on the forward knee and one hand on the buttocks.)
5. Exhale, and slowly lean or push your left hip toward the floor.
6. Hold the stretch and relax.



Back of Knee 1 (one leg)

1. Sit upright on the floor, knees flexed and grasping the toes of one foot.
2. Exhale, and slowly extend the leg.
3. Exhale, and pull back on the foot.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



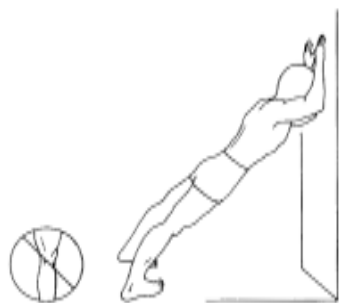
Back of Knee 2 (one leg)

1. Sit upright with the legs straight.
2. Keep one leg straight, and position the opposite leg so its heel touches the groin of your extended leg.
3. Exhale, lean forward, and grasp your foot.
4. Exhale, keep your leg straight, and pull on your foot.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



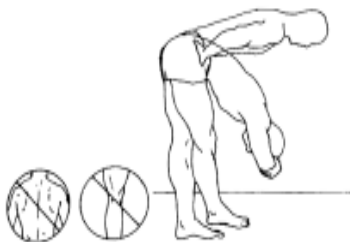
Back of Knee 3 (one leg)

1. Stand upright 4 or 5 steps from a wall.
2. Bend one leg forward and keep your opposite leg straight.
3. Lean against the wall without losing the straight line of your head, neck, spine, pelvis, rear leg, and ankle.
4. Keep your rear foot down, flat, and parallel to your hips.
5. Exhale, bend your arms, move your chest toward the wall, and shift your weight forward.
6. Exhale, and slowly contract the quadriceps of your rear leg without excessively jamming or locking the knee.
7. Hold the stretch and relax.



Back of Knee 4

1. Stand upright, feet shoulder-width apart and toed-in, and 4 or 5 steps from a wall.
2. Lean against the wall without losing the straight line of the head, neck, spine, pelvis, legs, and ankles.
3. Keep both feet down, flat, and toed-in.
4. Exhale, bend your arms, move your chest toward the wall, and shift your weight forward.
5. Exhale, and slowly contract the quadriceps but avoid excessively jamming or locking the knee.
6. Hold the stretch and relax.



Back of Knee 5 (One Leg)

1. Stand upright on the floor with one leg crossed over the other.
2. Exhale, keeping one leg straight, extend your upper back, bend forward at the waist, and lower your trunk onto your thigh.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.
4. Exhale, bend the knees or round the upper torso up rather than lifting with an arched back when returning to an upright position.



Lower Back 1

1. Kneel on all fours with your toes facing backward.
2. Inhale, contract your abdominals, and round your back.
3. Exhale, relax your abdominals, and return to the "flat back" position.



Lower Back 2

1. Sit upright in a chair with your legs straddled.
2. Exhale, extend your upper torso, bend at the waist, and slowly lower your stomach between your thighs.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



Lower Back 3

1. Sit upright on a bed or bench with your knees flexed.
2. Exhale, extend your upper torso, bend at the waist, and slowly lower your stomach onto your thighs.
3. Exhale, and slowly extend your legs.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



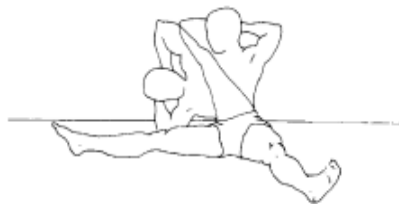
Lower Back 4

1. Lie flat on your back with your body extended.
2. Flex your knees, and slide your feet toward your buttocks.
3. Grasp behind your thighs to prevent hyperextension of the knees.
4. Exhale, pull your knees toward your chest and shoulders, and elevate your hips off the floor.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.
6. Exhale, and extend your legs slowly, one at a time, to prevent possible pain or spasm.



Lower Back 5

1. Sit upright on the floor with your legs crossed.
2. Interlock your hands behind your head with the elbows lifted.
3. Exhale, bring your right elbow to your right knee, and keep your left shoulder and elbow back.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Lower Back 6

1. Sit upright on the floor with your legs straight and straddled.
2. Interlock your hands behind your head with your elbows lifted.
3. Exhale, and bend your upper torso to the side, attempting to touch your right elbow to the floor outside your right thigh while keeping your left shoulder and elbow back.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Abdomen and Hip Flexors 2

1. Kneel upright on the floor with legs slightly apart and parallel and with toes pointing backward.
2. Place your palms on your upper hips and buttocks.
3. Exhale, slowly arch your back, contract your buttocks, and push your hips forward.
4. Exhale, continue to arch your back, drop your head backward, open your mouth, and gradually slide your hands onto your heels.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.

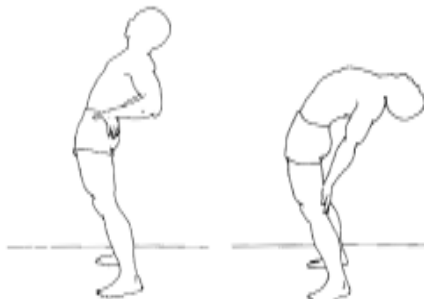


Abdomen and Hip Flexors 5

1. Lie flat on your back with your body extended.
2. Flex your knees and slide your heels toward your buttocks, keeping them hip-distance apart.
3. Inhale. Keeping your feet flat on the floor, contract your gluteals, lift your pelvis off the floor, and support your weight with your hands.
4. Exhale, and grasp your ankles.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.

Lower Back 7

1. Kneel upright on the floor.
2. Extend your right leg out to the side, keeping it in line with your left knee, and raise your arms sideways.
3. Exhale, bend from the hips to the right, lower your right hand onto your right foot, and extend your left arm over your left ear.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Abdomen and Hip Flexors 3

1. Stand upright with legs straddled 2 or 3 feet apart and your hands placed on your hips.
2. Exhale, slowly arch your back, contract your buttocks, and push your hips forward.
3. Exhale, continue arching your back, drop your head backward, open your mouth, and gradually slide your hands below your buttocks.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hamstrings 1

1. Sit upright on the floor with both legs straight.
2. Flex your right knee and slide your heel toward your buttocks.
3. Lower the outer side of your right thigh and calf onto the floor.
4. Place your right heel against the inner side of your left thigh so that a 90-degree angle is formed between your extended left leg and flexed right leg.
5. Exhale, keeping your left leg straight, bend at the waist, and lower your extended upper torso onto your thigh.
6. Hold the stretch and relax.



Abdomen and Hip Flexors 1

1. Lie face down on the floor with your body extended.
2. Place your palms on the floor by your hips with your fingers pointing forward.
3. Exhale, press down on the floor, raise your head and trunk, and arch your back while contracting the gluteals (buttock muscles) to prevent excessive compression on the lower back.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Abdomen and Hip Flexors 4

1. Lie flat on your back with your body extended.
2. Flex your knees and slide your heels toward your buttocks, keeping them hip-distance apart.
3. Inhale. Keeping your feet flat on the floor, contract your gluteals (buttock muscles), lift your pelvis off the floor, and support your weight with your hands.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hamstrings 2

1. Sit upright on a bench with one leg extended and your opposite foot on the floor.
2. Exhale, extend your upper back, flex at the hips, and lower your trunk from the hips onto your thigh while keeping the leg straight.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hamstrings 3

1. Lie flat on your back with the legs flexed and heels close to the buttocks.
2. Inhale, and extend one leg upward.
3. Grasp underneath the leg.
4. Exhale, and slowly pull the leg toward your face while keeping the leg straight.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.

▼ If you have a bad back, flex the extended leg and slowly lower it to the floor.



Hamstrings 5 (One Leg)

1. Stand upright, slowly raise one leg, and rest it on an elevated platform at a comfortable height.
2. Exhale, keeping both legs straight and your hips squared, extend your upper back, bend forward at the waist, and lower your trunk onto your raised thigh.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



Quadriceps 1

1. Lie face down with your body extended.
2. Flex one leg and bring your heel toward your buttocks.
3. Exhale, swing your arm back to grasp your ankle, and pull your heel toward your buttocks without over-compressing the knee.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Quadriceps 2

1. Lie on your side.
2. Flex one leg and bring your heel toward your buttocks.
3. Exhale, swing your arm back to grasp your ankle, and pull your heel toward your buttocks without over-compressing the knee.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Hamstrings 4 (One Leg)

1. Lie flat on your back in a doorway.
2. Position your hips slightly in front of the door frame.
3. Raise one leg and rest it against the door frame while keeping your knee extended and your bottom leg flat on the floor. To increase the stretch, slide the buttocks closer to the doorpost or lift the leg away from the door frame.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



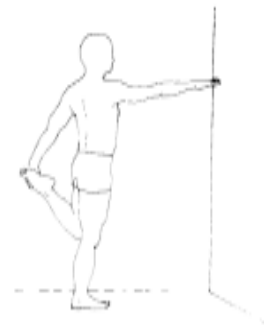
Hamstrings 6

1. Sit upright on the floor with both legs extended.
2. Exhale, keeping both legs straight, extend your upper back, bend forward at the waist, and lower your trunk onto your thighs. Stop when you feel excess tension.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



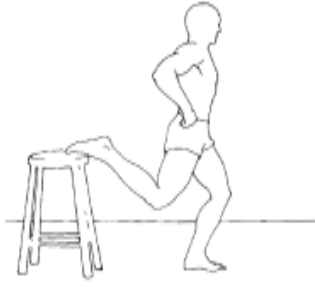
Hamstrings 7

1. Sit upright on the floor with both legs extended.
2. Straddle your legs.
3. Exhale, keeping both legs straight, extend your upper back, bend forward from the waist, and lower your trunk onto the floor.
4. Hold the stretch and relax.



Quadriceps 3

1. Stand upright with one hand against a surface for balance and support.
2. Flex one leg and raise the foot to your buttocks.
3. Slightly flex the supporting leg.
4. Exhale, reach down, grasp your raised foot with one hand, and pull your heel toward your buttocks without over-compressing the knee.
5. Hold the stretch and relax.



Quadriceps 4

1. Stand upright with the top of one foot resting on a chair or low stand behind you.
2. Exhale, and flex the front knee.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



Quadriceps 5

1. Kneel on all fours with your toes facing backward. (If this is uncomfortable, place a blanket underneath your shins.)
2. Exhale, and slowly sit on your heels (if you can).
3. Hold the stretch and relax.



Quadriceps 6

1. Kneel upright with knees together, buttocks on the floor, heels by the side of your thighs, and toes pointing backward.
2. Exhale and slowly lean backward without letting your feet flare out to the sides.
3. Hold the stretch and relax.

* The stretching exercises presented here are reprinted from Michael J. Alter's book, Sport Stretch, published in 1990 by Leisure Press.

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