

Stretching and Warm Up Exercises

The player should stretch to the point of mild tension and should relax while holding the stretch.

NEVER bounce up and down or stretch to the point of pain.

When a player begins stretching, he or she should spend 5-12 seconds holding the position.

- Repeat all stretches at least 2 times.
- Exercise both sides of the body.
- Stretch all major muscle groups.
- Never hold the breath while stretching.
- Check that players are doing the stretches correctly.

Shoulder Stretches:

Interlace the fingers above the head. With palms facing upward, push the arms slightly back and up. Grasp the hands behind the back. Slowly lift the arms. Do not bend at the waist.

Triceps Stretch:

Place the elbow of one arm behind the head, fingers pointing down. Hold the elbow with the other hand. Gently push the elbow downward.

Waist Stretch:

Begin with the same position as exercise no. 3. Gently push the elbow downward while bending from the hips to the side. Keep the knees slightly bent.

Arm Stretch:

Grasp the left elbow with the right hand. Gently pull the left elbow across the chest to the right. Repeat on the other side.

Hurdle Stretch:

Straighten one leg and bring the opposite foot to the inside of the straight leg. Slowly bend forward toward the foot of the straight leg. Do not bend the knee. Repeat on the other side.

Foot Circles:

Lift one foot towards the chest, bending at the knee. Rotate the ankle in both directions through as large a circle as possible. Rotate foot 10 times in each direction.

Groin Stretch:

Put the soles of the feet together and hold onto the ankles. Push forward from the hips, while gently pressing the elbows on the knees. Do not round the shoulders.

Hip Stretch:

Move one leg forward until the knee is directly over, the ankle. The other knee should be behind and on the ground. Push the hips downward without changing position. Repeat on the other side.

Quad Stretch:

Lie flat on the stomach. Grasp the outside of the left ankle with the left hand. Pull the foot closer to the buttocks and hold. Keep the shoulder in line with the knee. Repeat on the other side.

Buttocks Stretch:

Lie with back flat on the ground. Bend one knee to the shoulder, keeping the other leg flat on the floor. Repeat on the other side.

Hamstring Stretch:

Lie with back flat on the ground. Raise one leg as high as possible without bending it. Keep the knee of the other leg bent. Repeat on the other side.

Calf Stretch:

Lean forward against a support (wall, fence, backstop, etc.). Place one leg behind the other, keeping the heel of the back leg in contact with the floor, toe pointing forward and knee straight. Slowly lean forward from the hips, until a stretch is felt in the calf of the rear leg (do not lift heel.)

Once stretching has an increased range of motion, calisthenics should be performed. Calisthenics help to increase body temperature, promote circulation and prepare the body for strenuous activity. A combination of the following calisthenics or any others may be used for general warm-up:

ARM CIRCLES (while jogging in place):

Circle the arms forward and backward in large and small circles.

JOGGING (knees high):

Jog in place, bringing the knees up as high as possible.

JUMPING JACKS:

Start with the feet together, arms at side. Jump, landing with the feet shoulder width apart, while bringing arms over head. Return to starting position.

SKIER:

Begin with both feet together. Jump side to side.

JUMPING:

With both feet together, jump straight up.

BOX JUMP:

With both feet together, jump forward, left, back, right. After several jumps in one direction, reverse direction.

CURL-UPS:

Lie with the back and feet flat on the ground, knees bent. Raise the shoulders and head as far off the floor as possible, while keeping the lower back on the ground.