

STRETCHING

- ❖ Definition - process of lengthening the muscles and associated soft tissues around a joint.
- ❖ Goals- increase range of motion at a given joint for injury prevention and increased performance
- ❖ Frequency- To increase range of motion stretching should be performed daily. If you are maintaining flexibility, stretching should be performed two times a week. You should also stretch following each workout session.
- ❖ Stretch reflex- Muscles have a built-in reflex when a muscle is being stretched too far the muscles contract to stop the lengthening of the muscles. That is why it is important to not force yourself into a stretch. By forcing a stretch, you are counteracting what you are trying to accomplish.
- ❖ What to stretch- Target each of the major muscle groups. Quads, hamstrings, calves, glutes, hip flexors, back, shoulders.
<https://www.healthline.com/health/fitness-exercise/essential-runner-stretches>

- Dynamic stretching- refers to stretching exercises that are performed with movement. This type of stretching is best done before a workout to get your muscles warm and slowly increase range of motion at a joint to prepare for the needs of the workout ahead. The focus is not on improving flexibility but preparing the muscles for the workout ahead.
 - Examples include: knee raises, quad stretch, walking on heels, walking on toes, leg swings, walking lunges (hip flexor) into hamstring stretch, walking arm circles forward and backward.
- Static stretching- refers to stretching exercises that are performed without movement. This type of stretching is best done after a workout when the muscles are still warm, and the focus is on improving flexibility or lengthening the muscles. Hold each stretch for 30 seconds. Should be a gentle stretch not painful.
 - Examples include: standing quad stretch, seated hamstring stretch, butterfly, forward lunge (hip flexor), low back stretch, Calf and Achilles stretch, seated glute stretch