

STRETCHING HANDOUT

(Adapted from the Serpentine Running Club)



Calf – Gastroc



Calf – Soleus



Hamstrings



Quadriceps

Side-to-Side Lunges

- Stand with feet spread apart.
- Bend one knee at a time and lunge side-to-side.
- Do 8-16 repetitions and then HOLD the stretch for the count of 8 - 16

Calf – Gastrocnemius

- Step one foot a large step in front of the other
- Feet parallel, pointing forward
- Back heel flat on the ground
- Hands on the front bent knee
- Back straight and head slightly down
- FEEL the stretch in the calf of the back leg
- Use a tree or wall to lean into to increase the stretch

Lower calf - Soleus

- One foot in front of the other, small step
- Weight on the back leg
- Feet parallel, toes pointing forward
- Both heels flat on the ground
- FEEL the stretch in the lower calf of the back leg
- Use a tree or wall to lean into to increase the stretch

Hamstrings

- One foot in front of the other, a small step apart (same as above)
- Shift your weight back onto the back leg
- Straighten the front leg (flex foot upwards for extra resistance)
- Lean forward, reaching for your toes
- FEEL the stretch in the straight leg – just below your buttocks

Quadriceps and Hip-flexors

- Back straight, stomach in, feet shoulder-width apart
- Balance and bend the knee, grab the foot/shoe behind the buttocks
- Push bent foot into your hand at the ankle – Not your toe
- Use a wall or partner for balance
- FEEL the stretch in the quad (hip) of your bend leg and try to move the muscle out for extra flexibility

Calf Raises

- Stand with feet shoulder-width apart
- Lift both heels slowly together, lower and repeat

Ten tips on how to stretch

1. Move slowly into the stretch.
2. Hold the stretch for 10 seconds prior to exercise (warm-up) and for 30 seconds post exercise (cool-down).
3. Breathe and relax while holding the stretch.
4. NEVER do any bouncy stretching, always hold and relax.
5. Focus on the muscle you are trying to stretch and then try to lengthen it.
6. You may be able to breach in and push the stretch slightly further half way through the stretch. This is most important during cool-down.
7. Move slowly out of the stretch again.
8. Remember to stretch both sides.
9. Increasing the range of movement around a joint will help the blood flow to the muscles surrounding the joint and increase circulation that will carry away any lactic acids that may build up in the muscle.
10. Do more stretching than just warm-up and cool-down. A lot of gyms offer stretch-classes where the aim is to permanently and progressively to increase your flexibility.