

BOWLING STRETCHES

Note If you have had any recent surgery muscle evident problem, please consult your personal health care professional before starting a stretching or exercise program

Stretching should be done before and after activity or whenever you feel like it.

How to Stretch:

Stretching should be done slowly without bouncing. Stretch to where you feel a slight, easy stretch. Hold this feeling for 5-15 seconds. As you hold this stretch, the feeling of tension should diminish. If it doesn't, just ease off slightly into a more comfortable stretch. The easy stretch reduces tension and readies the tissues for the developmental stretch.

After holding the easy stretch move a fraction of an inch farther into the stretch until you feel mild tension again. This is the developmental stretch which should be held for 5-10 seconds. This feeling of stretch tension should also slightly diminish or stay the same. If the tension increases or becomes painful, you are overstretching.

Ease off a bit to a comfortable stretch. The developmental stretch reduces tension and will safely increase flexibility.

Hold only stretch tensions that feel good to you. The key to stretching is to be relaxed while you concentrate on the area being stretched. Your breathing should be slow, deep and rhythmical. Don't worry about how far you can stretch. Stretch relaxed and limberness will become just one of the many by-products of regular stretching.

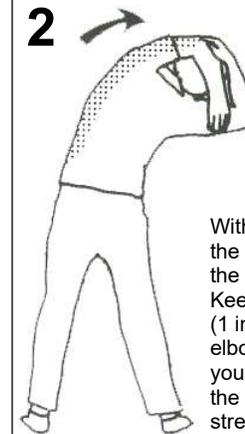
Warm-up lightly before stretching by walking in place and gently swinging your arms back and forth for 2-3 minutes.

1



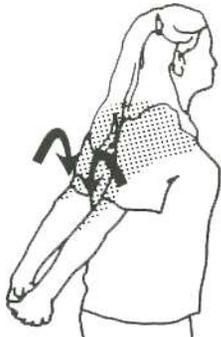
In a standing or sitting position, interlace your fingers above your head. Now, with your palms facing upward, push your arms slightly back and up. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Do not hold your breath. This stretch is good to do anywhere, anytime. Excellent for slumping shoulders. Breathe easily.

2



With arms overhead, hold the elbow of one arm with the hand of the other. Keeping knees slightly bent (1 inch), gently pull your elbow behind your head as you bend from your hips to the side. Hold an easy stretch for 10 seconds. Do both sides.
Keeping your knees slightly bent will give you better balance. Breathe rhythmically.

3



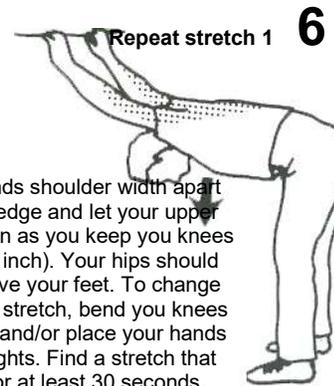
The next stretch is done with your fingers interlaced behind your back. Slowly turn your elbows inward while straightening your arms. An excellent stretch for shoulders and arms. This is good to do when you find yourself slumping forwards from your shoulders. Hold for 5-15 seconds. Do twice. Do not hold your breath.

4



Hold a towel near both ends so that you can move it with straight arms up, over your head and down behind your back. Do not strain or force it. Your hands should be far enough apart to allow for relatively free movement up, over and down. To isolate and add further stretch to the muscles of a particular area, hold the stretch at any place during this movement 10-20 seconds. Breathe.

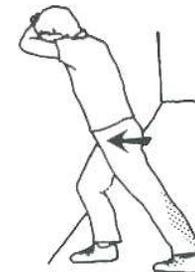
5



Place both hands shoulder width apart on a fence or ledge and let your upper body drop down as you keep your knees slightly bent (1 inch). Your hips should be directly above your feet. To change the area of the stretch, bend your knees just a bit more and/or place your hands at different heights. Find a stretch that you can hold for at least 30 seconds. This will take some of the kinks out of a tired upper back. **Remember to always bend our knees when coming out of this stretch.**

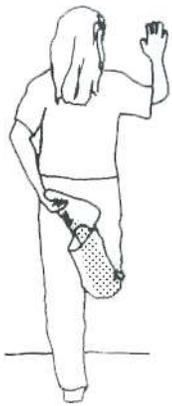
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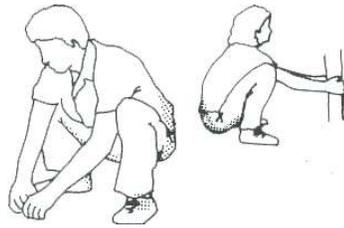
To stretch your calf, stand a little ways from a solid support and lean on it with your forearms, your head resting on your hands. Bend one leg and place your foot on the ground in front of you leaving the other leg straight, behind you. Slowly move your hips forward until you feel a stretch in the calf of your straight leg. Be sure to keep the heel of the foot of the straight leg on the ground and your toes pointed straight ahead. Hold an easy stretch for 20 seconds. Do not bounce. Stretch both legs.

8



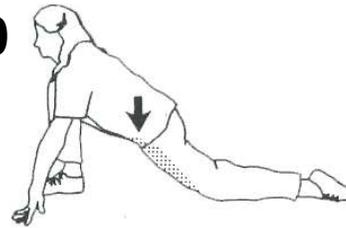
Opposite hand to opposite foot, quads and knee stretch: Gently pull your right foot (from inside of foot) toward buttocks with your left hand until you feel a mild stretch. If necessary, place your other hand on a support for balance. Hold for 15 seconds. Stretch other leg. Breathe.

9



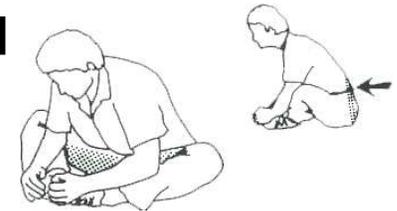
With your feet shoulder width apart and pointed out to about a 15 degree angle and heels on the ground, bend your knees and squat down, If you have trouble staying in this position hold onto something for support. It is a great stretch for your ankles, Achilles tendon area, groin, lower back and hips. Hold stretch for 20-30 seconds. **Be careful if you have had any knee problems. If pain is present discontinue this stretch.**

10



As in the drawing above, move one leg forward until the knee of the forward leg is directly over the ankle. Your other knee should be resting on the ground. Lower the front of your hip downward until an easy stretch is felt in front of the hip and possibly in you hamstrings and groin. Do this without changing the position of the knee on the ground or the forward foot. Hold the stretch for 15-20 seconds. Repeat for other leg.

11



Put the soles of your feet together with your heels a comfortable distance from your groin, With your hands around your feet, slowly contract your abdominals to assist you in flexing forward until you feel an easy stretch in the groin. Make your movement forward by bending from the hips and not from the shoulders. If possible, keep your elbow on the outside of your lower legs for greater stability during the stretch. Hold a comfortable stretch for 20-30 seconds. Do not hold your breath.

12



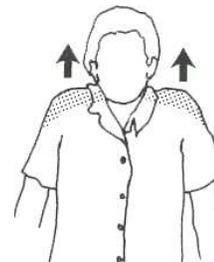
With your right leg straight put your left foot flat on the ground on the other side of your right knee. Reach over your left leg with your right arm so that your elbow is on the outside of your left leg. With your left hand resting on the ground behind you, slowly turn your head to look over your left shoulder, and at the same time, turn your upper body (but not your hips) toward the left hand and arm. Be sure to bend your right elbow and to gently push it against your bent leg. This will help create and stabilize the stretch. Hold for 5-15 seconds for each side. Stretches the outside of your upper leg and lower back. Breathe rhythmically.

13



To stretch the upper hamstrings and thigh, hold on to the outside of your ankle with one hand, with your other hand and forearm around your bent knee. Gently pull the leg as one unit toward your chest until you feel an easy stretch in the back of the upper leg. You may want to do this stretch while you rest your back against something for support. Hold for 15-20 seconds. Stretch other leg. Make sure the leg is pulled as one unit so that stress is not put on the knee. Breathe easily.

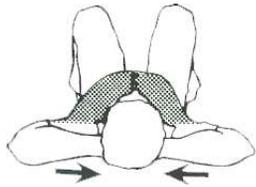
14



Shoulder Shrug: Raise the top of your shoulders toward your ears until you feel slight tension in your neck and shoulders. Hold this feeling the tension for 3-5 seconds, then relax your shoulders downward into their normal position. Do this 2-3 times. Good to use at the first signs of tightness or tension in the shoulder and neck area.

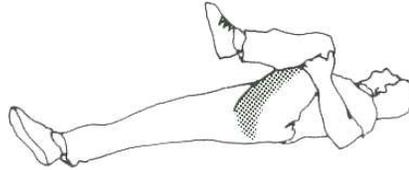
15 Additional Neck & Back Stretches:

Interlace your fingers behind your head and rest your arms on the mat of floor. Using the power of your arms, slowly bring your head, neck, and shoulders forward until you feel a slight stretch. Hold an easy stretch for 5 seconds. Repeat three times. Do not overstretch.

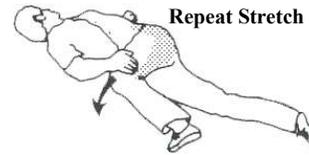
1**Repeat
Stretch 1****6**

Shoulder Blade Pinch: From the bent-knee position pull your shoulder blades together to create tension in the upper back area. (As you do this your chest should move upward.) Hold this controlled tension for 4-5 seconds, then relax and gently pull your head forward as shown in the previous stretch. This will help release tension and allow the neck to be stretched effectively.

Think of creating tension, relaxing the same area, then stretching the back of the neck to help keep the muscles of the neck free to move without tightness.

17

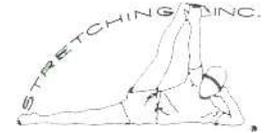
Next straighten both legs and relax, then pull your left leg toward your chest. For this stretch keep the back of your head on the mat or floor, if possible, but don't strain. Hold an easy stretch for 30 seconds. Repeat, pulling your right leg toward your chest. Relax and breathe comfortably.

18**Repeat Stretch 4****19**

Next, straighten your right leg and, with your right hand, pull your bent leg up and over your other leg as shown above. Turn your head to look toward the hand of the arm that is straight (head should be resting on the floor). Make sure the back of your shoulders are kept flat on the ground. Now, using your hand on our thigh (resting just above the knee), pull your bent leg down toward the floor until you get the right stretch feeling in your lower back and side of hip. Keep feet and ankles relaxed. Hold a comfortable stretch for 15 seconds, each side. Do not hold your breath.

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Bob and Jean Anderson, creators of this stretching chart are also the authors of the book STRETCHING. Now revised 2000 edition