

10 Remarkable Stretching Exercises Before Workouts

Deblina Biswas [Workouts](#)

Stretching is a crucial part of [warm up exercises](#) that most of us tend to skip because of the lack of time. But fitness experts will tell you that stretching can actually make things easier during actual workouts by increasing flexibility and boosting blood flow beforehand. It increases the effectiveness of workouts, minimizes the chances of injury and speeds up muscle recovery. So, prepare your muscles and get your heart rate pumping with these easy stretching exercises mentioned below.



Why is Stretching as Important as Exercise itself?

Stretching is an indispensable part of any fitness workouts regime that helps the muscles in warming up and reduces the risk of injuries.

Increasing Blood Flow

Stretches prior to workouts promotes blood flow and circulation throughout the body that in turn increases the supply of oxygen to the brain, which helps in maintaining a good mood. It also helps in supplying the essential nutrients to the muscles and cartilage which improves endurance and performance, plus reduces muscle pain and soreness.



Improving Flexibility

One of the main aspects of body fitness is flexibility, and stretching is one of the best ways to enhance flexibility. With age, our muscles and joints become stiffer and tighter, thus reducing the flexibility of the body. But regular practice of muscle stretching exercises help in keeping the muscles, tendons and joints flexible and agile, thus reducing the risk of injuries.

Increasing Mobility

Stretching for flexibility has been shown to increase the scope of motion in muscles and joints which helps in improving balance of the body and keeps the body moving. And it is known that with better

balance comes lower risk of injuries caused by accidental falls. This becomes particularly important as we age and gradually lose the power of mobility.

Stress Reduction

Stress and anxiety have emerged as the most common problems in recent times, but stretching exercises can [relieve stress and tension](#) effectively by relaxing the tense muscles. It also promotes the release of feel-good hormones endorphin, which help in elevating the mood and feeling of well-being in general.

Improving Posture

Stretching prevents tightening of the muscles and joints to make them flexible and loose, thus correcting slouching and other defects in posture. Apart from improving your appearance, it also helps in treating muscle pains and aches.

Relieving Lower Back Pain

Stretching, like [yoga, helps in relieving lower back pain](#). It helps in strengthening the lower back muscles as well as reduces pain and soreness. Since stretching exercises engage and work a wide range of muscles such as lower back muscles, hip flexors, quadriceps and hamstrings, they help in reducing lower back pain and correct the posture.

10 Remarkable Full Body Stretching Exercises before Workouts

Stretching is equally important as exercise itself, and prepares the body for the upcoming exertion by loosening the muscles, improving movement and relaxing the joints.

Side Stretch

The Side Stretch is a simple upper body workout that helps in stretching and mobilizing the oblique muscles of the abdomen. It is an effective warm-up exercise for boosting the process of calorie burning.



Start the exercise in a standing position with your arms raised overhead and hands joined together. Now bend your upper body towards the right while exhaling, hold for 5 seconds and come back to the starting position while inhaling. Now bend your body to the left and hold it for 5 seconds, then come back to the starting position. This makes one repetition. Repeat it 30 times at a stretch.

Triceps Stretch

The triceps stretch is one of the [best stretching exercises for the neck](#), shoulder, back and triceps, which helps in mobilizing and warming up these muscles and also tones them to give the perfect shape.



Begin in the upright position with your legs hip-width apart and arms raised overhead, now bend your right hand from the elbow so that the right palm touches the upper back and clasp your right elbow with your left hand. Be in this posture for 30 seconds and repeat it with the other arm. This makes one repetition. Repeat it 5 to 6 times at a stretch.

Standing Thigh Release

The Standing Thigh Release is an amazing stretch workout that works as well as [Pilates exercises](#) in toning the glutes, hip flexors, quads and thighs. It helps in enhancing the flexibility of the calf and back, thus minimizing injury.



Stand straight with your arms and legs relaxed. Now bend your right leg backwards from the knee to bring the right heel near the butt. Clasp the right foot with your right hand and raise your left arm overhead or place it on a chair if you need support. Hold the posture for 1 minute and do the same on the other side. Repeat it 3 to 4 times for best results.

Hip Flexor

The Hip Flexor is one of the best stretches for flexibility that helps in working the whole body. This stretch must be practiced before any high-intensity [cardio exercise](#) session to reduce the risk of sprains and other injuries.



Start by kneeling on the floor. Now, bring your right foot forward by bending the right knee so that your body stays in a lunge position. Rest your hands on your right knee and push your hip forward so that you feel a stretch at your back. Stay in the position for 30 seconds and repeat it on the other side. This makes one repetition. Repeat it 5 to 6 times at a stretch.

Low Lunge Arch

The Low Lunge Arch is one of the best stretching exercises that help in increasing the flexibility of the lower back, hip flexors, quads and hamstrings. In addition, it is also an effective [exercise for toning the arms](#) and cutting out excess arm fat.



Start in a lunge position by putting your right foot forward and placing your left knee on the floor. Now, bring your arms forward over your right knee and join the thumbs, palms facing the floor. Now, slowly raise your arms overhead as you inhale, stretching your back as much as possible. Maintain the posture for 5 seconds and come back to the starting position. Repeat it on the other side. This makes one repetition. Repeat it 6 times at a stretch.

Seated Twist

The seated twist is one of the most easy stretching exercises that help in mobilizing the muscles of the back, abdomen and oblique muscles. It is also an effective [exercise for losing belly fat](#).



Begin in a sitting position with your legs extended in front of you. Bend your torso to the right while keeping your abdomen muscles engaged. Try to rotate as much to the right as you can and hold the posture by taking support of your hands. Wait for 30 seconds and return to the starting position. Now repeat the same to your left side. This makes 1 repetition. Repeat it 5 to 6 times at a stretch for best results.

Butterfly Stretch

The Butterfly Stretch is one of the best stretching exercises that helps in relaxing the neck, back, glutes, thighs and hamstrings – all at once. It is an amazing [exercise to relieve neck pain](#).



Sit on the floor with your backbone straight, the soles of your feet joined together and knees parallel to the floor and pointing outside. Now, hold the feet with your hands and lower your body forward as much as possible without hurting yourself, hold the posture for 30 seconds keeping your abs engaged at all times. Slowly come back to the starting position. Repeat it 6 to 8 times at a stretch for best results.

Runner's Stretch

The Runner's Stretch is undoubtedly one of the most effective muscle stretching exercises that help in working all the muscles of the body right from the shoulders to the calf. It is an amazing [stress buster exercise](#) that reduces the stiffness and soreness of the shoulders and other muscles.



Begin in a lunge position with your right foot bent and placed forward, and your left foot extended backward. Now, place your hands on the floor on two sides of the right foot and push your back to straighten your right leg in one swift motion. Return to the lunge position and repeat it 5 to 6 times. Now, switch sides and repeat the same on the other side.

Modified Cobra Pose

The modified cobra pose is one of the [best yoga poses for weight loss](#). It helps in stretching the back, shoulders, chest, abdomen, oblique muscles and hip flexors. This exercise is often included in the list of stretching exercises for hips.



Lie face down on the yoga mat with your palms on the floor just below your shoulders and legs joined and extended behind. Raise your torso from the floor up till the belly, while keeping the pelvis grounded. Keep your abdomen engaged and stretch your shoulder blades to open your chest. Hold the position for 40 seconds and return to the starting position. Repeat it 5 to 6 times at a stretch.

Hamstring Stretch

The Hamstring Stretch helps in stretching all the muscles of the legs, thus improving strength of the leg muscles, mobilizing the joints and minimizing the risk of injuries during workouts. Lie on your back on the yoga mat with legs extended. Bring the right leg up to the chest by bending the knee and place the hands behind the hamstrings. Now raise your leg straight towards the ceiling keeping your abdomen and pelvis engaged. Hold it for 15 seconds and return to the starting position. Repeat it with the other leg. This makes one repetition. Repeat this exercise 8 times at a stretch.



Make these simple stretching exercises a part of your daily exercise regime and increase the flexibility of your muscles and joints for boosting the effectiveness of your workouts.

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