

## STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE FLEXIBILITY/SIT AND REACH TEST

Practice exercises 2-3 times per week. Get all of your training done while watching your favorite TV show and doing 1 exercise during each commercial.

EXERCISE	DESCRIPTION	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE/ ADVANCED
<p><b>Calf</b></p> 	<p>Stand arm's length from wall. Place your right foot behind your left foot. Slowly bend your left leg forward, keeping your right knee straight and your right heel on the floor.</p> <p>Keep back straight and hips forward. Don't rotate feet inward or outward.</p> <p>Switch legs.</p>	<p>Stretching at least two days per week.</p> <p>Move gently between stretches.</p> <p>Perform after 5-10 minutes of a warm up activity.</p> <p>Hold stretch for 30 seconds. Switch sides if needed.</p> <p>Stretch until there is slight discomfort or tension in the muscle or tendon.</p>	<p>Stretching more than two times per week.</p> <p>Move gently between stretches.</p> <p>Perform after 5-10 minutes of a warm up activity.</p> <p>Hold stretch for 30 seconds. Switch sides if needed.</p> <p>Stretch until there is slight discomfort or tension in the muscle or tendon.</p>
<p><b>Hamstring</b></p> 	<p>Lie on the floor near the outer corner of a wall or door frame.</p> <p>Raise your left leg and rest your left heel against the wall. Keep your left knee slightly bent.</p> <p>Gently straighten your left leg until you feel a stretch along the back of your left thigh.</p> <p>Switch legs.</p>	<p>Perform again after a cool down activity.</p>	<p>Perform again after a cool down activity.</p>
<p><b>Quadricep</b></p> 	<p>Stand near a wall or something sturdy like a chair. Grasp your ankle and gently pull your heel up and back until you feel a stretch in the front of your thigh.</p> <p>Tighten your stomach muscles to prevent your stomach from sagging outward and keep your knees close together.</p> <p>Switch legs.</p>		

<p><b>Hip Flexor</b></p> 	<p>Kneel on your right knee, cushioning your kneecap with a folded towel or yoga mat.</p> <p>Place your left foot in front of you, bending your knee and placing your left hand on your left leg for stability. Place your right hand on your right hip to avoid bending at the waist.</p> <p>Keep your back straight and abdominal muscles tight. Lean forward, shifting more body weight onto your front leg.</p> <p>Switch legs.</p>		
<p><b>Knee to chest</b></p> 	<p>Lie on your back on a firm surface with the backs of your heels flat on the floor.</p> <p>Gently pull one knee up to your chest until you feel a stretch in your lower back.</p> <p>Bring knees as close to your chest as comfortably as possible. Keep the opposite leg relaxed in a comfortable position, either with your knee bent or with your leg extended.</p> <p>Switch legs.</p>		

*The American College of Sports Medicine recommends that stretching should not be painful. Stretching should cause a feeling of tension in the muscle sometimes described as “discomfort”, which does not mean pain.*

Dynamic Stretching

Involves stretching muscles through continuous and repetitive movements.

Ballistic Stretching

Repeated bouncing movements to stretch and activate muscle groups. Warning for Ballistic stretching: This type of stretch has been shown to increase the risk of injury and muscle soreness in some studies and it is not recommended for beginners, but it may be appropriate for activities that include quick, explosive movements such as the sprinting or jumping portion of a combat readiness test. For example, when performing high-knee exercises, gradually increase the height and speed to which you raise your knees as you warm up.

Myofascial Release (foam rolling)

Requires the use of a foam roller. A foam roller can be rolled back and forth over a relaxed muscle, or it can be used to apply static pressure to sore or sensitive areas for 10-15 seconds at a time. Gently lower your weight over the roller, isolating that sensitive area for 10-15 seconds. You should feel the muscle begin to release and relax with this technique.