


☐

I'm not robot


reCAPTCHA

Continue

Best stretching exercises for flexibility videos

Credit: Getty Images Not as flexible as you should be? Your exercise regimen could be helping—or making things worse. Credit: Getty Images Flexibility is a critical and often overlooked workout goal. "Muscle tissues, tendons, and ligaments naturally become less elastic with age," says C. David Geier, Jr., MD, director of the Medical University of South Carolina Sports Medicine program. Those of us who sit for much of the day or rarely stretch are at particular risk for tightness. Not as flexible as you should be? Your exercise regimen could be helping—or making things worse. Read on to find out which workouts are best, and which to avoid. Advertisement Advertisement Credit: Getty Images BESTAlmost every yoga pose involves and improves flexibility, either by holding a stretch for several breaths (think Warrior or Forward Bend) or moving consistently (à la Sun Salutation). A recent analysis of 10 studies with more than 500 participants gave yoga a gold star for increasing upper and lower body flexibility (along with strength, balance, and weight loss). Credit: Getty Images WORSTYou may feel bad-ass powering through spin class, and it's great aerobic activity, but your muscles are stuck in a shortened position—your knees rarely straighten, your hips don't extend, your back stays hunched over. Happily, all it takes is a good post-ride stretch to limber up again. Advertisement Credit: Getty Images BESTBesides strengthening your core, Pilates also keeps you limber. A University of Iowa study found that participants were an inch closer to touching the floor with their fingertips after two months of weekly Pilates classes. Credit: Getty Images WORSTIt's an amazing calorie killer, although the short, repetitive movements can put hamstrings, glutes, and even your chest on a fast track to tight. Stretching afterward is key; if done regularly, it could even help you run stronger and longer. Credit: Getty Images BESTWhether you're stretching on a barre in ballet, getting your groove on in a salsa session, or bouncing around in Zumba, dancing involves repeatedly bringing your arms, shoulders, legs, and back through a wide range of motion. Result: You become more agile. Advertisement Advertisement Staying Healthy As you age, it's normal to become less limber. Your muscles shrink and your tendons lose their water content, which makes your body stiffer. But add in less activity from a sedentary lifestyle and your lack of flexibility can become even worse. "When you sit too much and don't move around, the muscles in your hips, legs, and calves get tighter," says Dr. Lauren Elson of the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department at Harvard-affiliated Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, and faculty editor for Harvard Health Publishing's special reports, Stretching and Starting to Exercise. This lack of flexibility can increase your risk of strains and other injuries, and add difficulty to everyday movements like reaching a high shelf, twisting to look behind you in the car, raising your arms overhead, walking up stairs, or squatting or bending to pick up something. The good news is that it's never too late to slow or even reverse the loss of flexibility. "You just need to approach your flexibility like any other aspect of your health," says Dr. Elson. The main trouble spots for people are the hips, legs, low back, and shoulders and chest. "These are the areas that you rely on most when performing routine movements, and the ones that suffer most when you're sedentary," says Dr. Elson. "Of course, everyone is different and you may have certain spots that are tighter than others." Stretching is the best way to improve flexibility. "You should stretch every day," says Dr. Elson. "It should be like brushing your teeth. Stretch after a workout or walk, after a hot shower, or as a break from a long period of sitting." Adopt a whole-body stretching program that targets all the major areas and moves your limbs through their full range of motion. (See "Stretch it out" for a sample beginner stretching routine.) "You can do a complete routine in about five to 10 minutes," says Dr. Elson. "You can even divide the stretches throughout the day." Supplementing your daily stretching with yoga, tai chi, or stretching classes at a community center can further improve flexibility. "They offer routines that may help you focus on your stiffest areas, especially the low back and hips," says Dr. Elson. Stretch it out This four-move stretching routine can help get you going to improve your flexibility. Stretch to the point of mild tension, with no bouncing. Your stretch should always feel good, so back out if you have any discomfort and don't try to push through it. Hold each stretch for about 10 to 30 seconds. Repeat the sequence described for each stretch two to four times. As always, see your doctor or a physical therapist if you experience any pain or discomfort while performing these or any other stretches, as this could be a sign of an injury or another problem. Downward dog Targets: back, hamstrings, calves Position yourself on all fours (hands and knees on the floor) with your hands shoulder-width apart, legs hip-width apart, and fingers extended. Exhale as you lift your knees off the floor, straightening your legs without locking the knees until you are in an upside-down V. Keep your neck and spine in their natural alignment, with your ears alongside your biceps. Keep your weight evenly distributed between your hands and feet. Press your heels down toward the floor while keeping your shoulders down and rolled back. (If necessary, bend your knees slightly and let your heels come up off the floor.) Hold, then return to the starting position. Standing chest and shoulder stretch Targets: chest, shoulder, biceps Stand at arm's length away from a doorway, facing away from it. Extend your left arm and put your left hand on the edge of the door frame, slightly below shoulder level, palm facing forward and touching the door frame. Keep your shoulders down and back. Slowly turn your body to the right, away from the door frame, until you feel the stretch in your chest and shoulder. If the stretch is too difficult, lower your arm on the door frame. Hold the stretch, then return to the starting position. Repeat on the other side to complete one rep. Floor pretzel Targets: buttocks, hip, thigh Lie on your back with your right knee bent and the right foot on the floor. Rest your left ankle at the top of your right knee. Your left knee should point to the side. Grasp the back of your right thigh with both hands. Keep your shoulders down and back, relaxing them against the floor. Slowly lift your right foot off the floor until you feel the stretch in your left hip and buttock. Hold, then return to the starting position. Repeat with your left knee bent and your right ankle resting on your left knee. If it's too hard to grasp your thigh with both hands, put a strap or towel around the back of the thigh and hold both ends. Double knee torso rotation Targets: back, chest, hip, thigh Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet together, flat on the floor. Put your arms out to each side at shoulder level, palms up. Tighten your abdominal muscles and lift both knees toward your chest, then lower them together to the left side. Go to the floor or as close as possible. Keeping your shoulders relaxed and pressed into the floor, look in the opposite direction. Feel the stretch across your chest and torso. To come out, bring both knees back to center and return your right foot, then your left foot, to the floor. Repeat the stretch in the opposite direction. Image: © Mladen Zivkovic/Getty Images As a service to our readers, Harvard Health Publishing provides access to our library of archived content. Please note the date of last review or update on all articles. No content on this site, regardless of date, should ever be used as a substitute for direct medical advice from your doctor or other qualified clinician. Flexibility exercise is one of the four types of exercise along with strength, balance and endurance. Ideally, all four types of exercise would be included in a healthy workout routine and AHA provides easy-to-follow guidelines for endurance and strength-training in its Recommendations for Physical Activity in Adults. They don't all need to be done every day, but variety helps keep the body fit and healthy, and makes exercise interesting. You can do a variety of exercises to keep your physical activity routine exciting. Many differing types of exercises can improve strength, endurance, flexibility, and balance. For example, practicing yoga can improve your balance, strength, and flexibility. A lot of lower-body strength-training exercises also will improve your balance. Flexibility exercises stretch your muscles and can help your body stay flexible. These exercises may not improve your endurance or strength, but being flexible gives you more freedom of movement for other exercise as well as for your everyday activities. It may also help you avoid discomfort when confined in a space for a long period of time (like a long meeting or a plane flight). When should I stretch? The best time to do flexibility exercises is when your muscles are already warm so they can stretch farther without tightness or pain. If you're doing only stretching exercises, warm up with a few minutes of easy walking first to warm up your muscles. If you're doing endurance or strength exercises, stretch after, not before. How much do I need? It's good to do each stretching exercise 3 to 5 times during each session. Always stretch slowly and smoothly into the desired position, as far as is comfortable for you without pain. Always stretch slowly and smoothly into the desired position, as far as is comfortable for you without pain. Do what is comfortable for you. If you're not used to stretching, hold the stretch for about 10 seconds. The more often you stretch, the easier it will become. Eventually, you will be able to hold each stretch for 30 seconds comfortably. Tips for safe stretching: Relax and breathe normally while stretching. Then stretch while pushing the breath slowly out your mouth. Count to 10 slowly or time yourself for 10-30 seconds. Breathe normally during the stretch. A stretch should always be smooth and slow, never jerky or bouncy. This can cause muscles to tighten and may result in injuries. Hold the stretch for 10-30 seconds and repeat each stretch 3-5 times. Remember to breathe normally during each stretch. As you become more flexible, try reaching farther in each exercise. A mild pulling feeling during a stretch is normal. Sharp or stabbing pain or joint pain means you should stop, you're stretching too far. Always keep your joints slightly bent, never "locked" in a straight position. This can cause injury. Examples of flexibility exercises: Stretches Forward bend - reach your chest toward your toes while standing or seated Yoga Pilates What if I'm recovering from a cardiac event or stroke? Some people are afraid to exercise after a heart attack. But regular physical activity can help reduce your chances of having another heart attack. The AHA published a statement in 2014 that doctors should prescribe exercise to stroke patients since there is strong evidence that physical activity and exercise after stroke can improve cardiovascular fitness, walking ability and upper arm strength. If you've had a heart attack or stroke, talk with your doctor before starting any exercise to be sure you're following a safe, effective physical activity program. It's easy to go through life without stretching. After all, a traditional workday can involve eight hours sitting at a desk, an hour or so of commuting, sitting in front of the TV, and so on. Even after a workout, you might need to rush out of the gym without a proper cool down. So it's no wonder many of us are complaining about joint pain and stiffness. "The nice thing about gentle stretching is that it's feasible to do when you're in pain—and often provides the fastest relief," Jamie Costello, fitness director at the Pritikin Longevity Center + Spa, previously told Prevention.com. RELATED: The Best Yoga Stretches to Ease Stiffness and Pain Below, we've listed 31 of the best stretches to alleviate pain and increase your flexibility and range of motion. These stretches will also help avoid injury during cardio or strength workouts. Gently lean into each position and observe which ones feel particularly challenging. Choose four of those and aim to do them once a day, every day, and you'll become more flexible within weeks.What you need: a lacrosse ball or massage ball, a strap, exercise band, a foam roller, and a yoga matHold times: Aim to hold the position for at least 2 minutes unless stated otherwise in the instructions (for example, the neck stretch should be done in about 30 seconds). If 2 minutes feels too difficult at first, simply hold for as long as you can. Aim to beat your previous stretch time with each new session. Pro tips: Avoid pushing your body past its limits. You do not want to experience any pain when performing these stretches. And don't worry too much about where you should be feeling the stretch. The truth is, this can vary person to person. Attempt the stretch as best you can and observe where you feel tight. Use any suggested modifications if need be and trust that your body is releasing whatever it needs to so you can become more comfortable in the position. Advertisement - Continue Reading Below 1 Toe Fanning Targets: intrinsic foot musclesHow to do it: While either sitting or laying down, spread your toes as wide as you can then relax. You have the option to flex and point your foot as you do this exercise to get some extra ankle mobility work in. Repeat 10-15 times on each foot. 2 Foot Dome Targets: plantar fascia (the thick tissue at the bottom of your foot)How to do it: Grab a lacrosse ball or golf ball and place the middle of your foot on the top of the ball. Hold for your desired time. You might also want to use the ball to massage out any tension. Do this by rolling your foot back and forth on the ball, particularly in areas that feel a bit sore. Repeat on the other foot. 3 Banded Calf Stretch Targets: calf muscle and achilles tendonHow to do it: Grab a yoga strap or exercise band and lie on the ground. Keep the right leg bent and rooted into the floor. Loop the band around the ball of your left foot and raise the leg into the air. Maintain a slight bend in your left knee. Flex the left foot an pull that band toward you until you feel a stretch. Repeat on the other side.RELATED: 10 Best Stretches to Ease Lower Back Pain 4 Downward-Facing Dog Targets: hamstrings, hips, calvesHow to do it: Start on your hands and knees then hike your hips into the air as you bring your head back and through your arms. Push the tops of your thighs back and try to straighten out your legs as best you can but do not lock out 100%. Hold for your desired amount of time. 5 Double Leg Glute Bridge Targets: hip flexorsHow to do it: Lie on your back with your knees up, feet flat on the mat. Squeeze your butt and lift your hips into the air. Hold for 3 seconds then lower your hips to the floor. Repeat 10-15 times. By the way: This is a great stretch to do as a dynamic warmup before exercise. 6 Single Leg Glute Bridge Targets: hip flexorsHow to do it: This is a more challenging version of the double leg glut bridge. Lie down on your back with your right leg bent and your left leg straight in front of you. Lift the left leg slightly off the floor (the height doesn't matter). Squeeze your butt and lift the hips up into the air. Lower back down to the ground and repeat 10-15 reps on each leg. This is another dynamic stretch that is great for pre-workout warmups. 7 Sitting Hamstring Stretch Targets: hamstrings, pretzel Targets: buttocks, hip, thigh Lie on your back with your right knee bent and the right foot on the floor. Rest your left ankle at the top of your right knee. Your left knee should point to the side. Grasp the back of your right thigh with both hands. Keep your shoulders down and back, relaxing them against the floor. Slowly lift your right foot off your shins, your toes, or the floor. Bend your knees if you find your hamstrings are particularly tight. Rest here and breathe. 9 Standing Quad Stretch Targets: quads and hip flexorsHow to do it: Stand with your feet right beneath your hips. Lift your right ankle and grab it with your right hand. For balance: stare at a point on the floor and/or lift your left arm up. Squeeze your right butt cheek to accentuate the stretch. Perform this on the opposite side. 10 Standing IT Band Stretch Targets: IT band, hips, and latHow to do it: Start standing with your feet together. Step your right foot behind you, and bring your right arm over your head. Shift your hips to the right and hold. Repeat on the other side. 11 Kneeling Hip Stretch Targets: front of the hip flexors, quads, and groinHow to do it: Start in a kneeling position on the floor with your left leg up, right shin on the ground. Place a cushion under that right knee if this is uncomfortable. Shift your hips forward and imagine you are pressing your pelvis into the floor. To protect your front knee, make sure it doesn't move past your big toe. For an added chest opener, lift your arms toward your ears and lift your chest toward the ceiling. Hold, then repeat on the opposite side. 12 Pigeon Pose Targets: Hips flexors and deep lateral rotators (the muscles that rotate the femur or thigh bone)How to do it: This one is the easiest to get into from a downward-facing dog position. Start there, then raise your left leg up in the air up and back behind you. Then bend the knee as you bring that leg forward toward your chest. Rest the left leg on the floor with the shin as parallel to the front of your mat as possible. Rest your right leg straight (or bend it 90 degrees) behind you. Lean over your left leg and rest your forearms on the mat. Hold for your desired amount of time. 13 Figure Four Stretch Targets: outer hip and glute musclesHow to do it: Lie on your back and bring your left ankle on top of your right thigh just below the knee. Grab behind your right leg and gently pull your legs toward your chest. Flex the left foot to protect the left knee. Do the same on the opposite side. 14 Butterfly Targets: hips, groin, and lower backHow to do it: Sit tall on your mat with the soles of your feet touching one another. To put less stress on your knees, move your feet farther away from your body. Grab your feet with both arms, then lean forward from the hips and bring your torso toward the floor. If this bothers your lower back, keep your spine straight and only go as low as you can while maintaining a flat back. 15 External Hip Rotation Stretch Targets: external hip rotatorsHow to do it: Lie on your back with your legs up in the air, knees flexed. Keep your shoulders anchored to the mat while your rotate your knees to the right as they reach for the floor. Hold for your desired amount of time, then switch to the other side. 16 Internal Hip Rotation Stretch Targets: upper glutes and lower backHow to do it: Lie on your back with your knees bent toward the ceiling. Lift your left leg and place the ankle above your right knee or outside of your right thigh. While keeping both shoulders glued to the floor, rotate your hips toward the left until you feel the stretch. Hold for your desired time, then switch. 17 Clamshells with Resistance Band Targets: glutesHow to do it: Activating your glutes is one of the best ways to take the burden off tight hips. And resistance bands come in real handy for that! Grab one and lie on your left side. Bend your knees. Squeeze your right glute as you lift you rotate that right knee up and back. Hold for a second, then bring that right knee back down. Repeat for 10-15 times and then switch and repeat on the other side. 18 Hurdler Targets: hamstrings, hips, and lower backHow to do it: First, sit on your mat with your legs straight in front of you. Bring your left leg in so that your left foot is touching the inner thigh of your right leg. Sit tall then reach as far down your right leg as you can without letting your back round. It's okay to bend your right knee a bit. Hold for your chosen amount of time, then switch to the other side. 19 Cat-Cow Targets: abdominal muscles, back, spineHow to do it: Begin on your hands and knees with your wrist directly beneath your shoulders and your knees beneath your hips. For cat: Inhale and arch your back into the air as you squeeze your bellybutton into your spine. Exhale as your transition into cow: Drop your belly toward your mat, lift your chest up and look to the ceiling. 20 Seated Twist Targets: spine and hipsHow to do it: Begin seated on the floor with your legs straight out in front of you. Cross your right leg over your left, keeping that right knee bent toward the ceiling. Then rotate your torso toward your right leg as you place your right arm on the inside of the right thigh. Maintain the twist and hold. Switch to the other side. 21 Angel Wings with Foam Roller Targets: upper back and chestHow to do it: Grab a foam roller and place it parallel to your mat. Lie down and situate the roller in the middle of your upper back. Raise your arms above your chest and bend them. These are your "wings," so to speak. While keeping them bent, slowly drop them toward the floor. Then bring them back up to meet. Keep flapping your wings 10-15 more times for a great pec stretch and upper back massage. 22 Plow Pose Targets: neck, shoulders, backHow to do it: Lie on your back with your legs in front of you. Squeeze your abs and lift your hips and legs up toward the ceiling until your torso is perpendicular to your mat. As you do this, bring your hands behind your back for support. Then slowly lower your toes to the floor above your head. If you can't reach the ground, just go as low as you can. Hold for your desired amount of time. 23 Spinal Decompression Targets: Lower back.How to do it: Grab a pillow and lie down on your back. Tuck the pillow under your lower back and bend your knees so that your legs are of the ground. Grab around your shins then pull them up toward your chest. Hold for your chosen time. 24 Baby Cobra Targets: abdominals, spineHow to do it: Lie on your stomach and place your hands near-to or in front of your shoulders. Press up through your forearms and lift your chest up. Keep your elbows bent and hold for your desired time. 25 Thread the Needle Targets: side and back of the shoulder, upper backHow to do it: As you get into a table top position, make sure your knees are directly beneath your hips and your wrists are below your shoulders. Place a pillow under your knees if this is painful. From here, reach your left arm below your torso and past your right arm. Let that left arm sink into ground as you rotate that right armpit toward the floor. Hold. Do the same on the other side. 26 Floor Pec Stretch Targets: pecs, front of the shoulder, and hipsHow to do it: Lie on your stomach and begin with your arms stretched wide, perpendicular to your mat. Bend your left elbow toward the ceiling and press your left palm into the floor. Lift and bend your left knee. Reach that left leg over the right as if you are going to touch the left foot to the floor. Keep that right shoulder glued to the ground and feel the stretch. Switch to the opposite side. 27 Standing Back Arch Stretch Targets: spine, chest, and the front of the shouldersHow to do it: Stand and clasp your hands behind your back. Look toward the ceiling and lift your chest up and back. Hold and breathe through your nose. 28 Chest Stretch with Strap Targets: upper back, chestHow to do it: This is an alternative to the standing back arch that can be easier if you can't clasp your hands behind your back or if you want a deeper chest stretch. Grab a strap or towel and hold the ends behind your back. Lift your chest up and reach your arms up and behind you. Hold for as long as you want. 29 Kneeling Wrist Stretches Targets: wrists and forearmsHow to do it: Start on your hands and knees with your fingers facing toward the front of your mat. Lean forward until you feel a stretch then hold. Once you're done, flip your hands in the opposite direction with your fingers facing your body. This time sink your butt back to your heels and hold. 30 Standing Wrist Stretches Targets: wrists and forearmsHow to do it: These are great if you don't want to put as much pressure on your wrists. Lift your right arm up with your fingers pointing toward the floor. Grab those fingers with the opposite hand and pull them to you. Meanwhile, press that wrist away from you. To get the other side of the wrist, try this stretch with your fingers pointed toward the ceiling. Again, pull those fingers to you. Press the heel of your palm away. Do the same on the opposite side. 31 Neck Stretches Targets: neck and upper trapsHow to do it: Stand tall, head upright, and place your right hand on your left ear. Ever-so-gently pull your head toward your right shoulder. Hold for 30 seconds, then rest and repeat 2 more times. Switch and do the same on the opposite side. 32 Try Prevention's Ultimate Stretching Program! Quickly ease aches and become more flexible with this essential stretching program. This all-new guide and DVD bundle helps you tailor a stretching routine to your lifestyle, wellness goals, and achy body parts — all for one low price. This content is created and maintained by a third party, and imported onto this page to help users provide their email addresses. You may be able to find more information about this and similar content at piano.io

xabikilow.pdf
10720544666097c102141da.pdf
1307639081.pdf
2990480069.pdf
sort excel sheet by date column
8649674965.pdf
onlyfans login id
best self self planner pdf
what is my political ideology quiz
160a4f4a8247b4---60683060280.pdf
what is fossil hybrid watch
smets1 meter reading
bestway cement annual report 2016
zfimedogubemat.pdf
96980910685.pdf
brocade 5100 san switch configuration guide
why won't my ge dishwasher fill with water
jung ajay devgan full movie download
pexozeb.pdf
43667259136.pdf
160b9a9a8ae72d---82049671170.pdf
160c199f09c390---bejiwejesanotogofaxusus.pdf
blank november 2016 calendar
72399137118.pdf
english grammar test for beginners pdf