

Dynamic Flexibility

All exercises should be done smoothly while taking care to maintain good posture and good technique.

Lying on back:

Hip Crossover: Arms out in "T" position, feet flat on the floor, knees bent and together, roll both knees to the right side slowly controlling the lowering of your legs, letting the weight of your legs pull to end range even if the opposite shoulder comes off the floor; pause briefly, then in a controlled manner, take legs to the opposite side. Repeat 3 times to each side.



Hip Rotation: Arms out in "T" position, knees bent, feet flat on floor slightly wider than shoulder width apart, anchor the right foot to the floor while letting the left knee roll inward and letting the weight of the left leg pull to end range, pause briefly, return to starting position, then repeat with right knee. Be sure to keep your anchored foot flat on the ground as you move the opposite leg. Repeat 3 times to each side.



Leg Overs: Arms out in "T" position, legs straight on floor, lift left leg up as high as you can while keeping knee straight and then cross it over your body toward the floor. Contract your abdominal muscles and return to starting position. Repeat 3 times to each side.



Lying on stomach:

Scorpions: Arms out in "T" position, legs straight on floor, lift one leg up and over toward opposite shoulder being sure to bend the knee and keep the leg abducted (apart from opposite leg), pause briefly, return to starting position and repeat to opposite side. Be sure not to let your thigh drop toward the opposite leg during the movement. Repeat 3 times to each side.



Press Ups: Hands under shoulders, press up one vertebral level at a time while keeping low back and buttocks relaxed. Go as far as you comfortably can, pause, making sure your buttocks are relaxed and return to starting position. Repeat 3 times.



Thread-the-Needle Stretch: On hands and knees, lift one leg up and over the opposite ankle, sliding foot down and back, keeping hips squared up until you feel a stretch on the outside of the hip on your bent leg. Hold for 45 seconds. If possible, add a “thread-the-needle” component by threading the arm opposite the bent leg through the space between the supporting arm and the bent leg. Repeat once on each side.



Quad Stretch: From tall kneeling, sit back on heels keeping knees together in front and bringing hands to the floor behind you; if still don't feel a stretch, lift hips toward ceiling, Do not let knees come apart in front. Hold for 30 seconds.

Helpful hint: You may use a small towel roll under your ankles for support if it is uncomfortable; You can also put your hands on a foam roll or any other object if you lack the flexibility to get in the regular position.



Standing progression:

Tall march with knee hug. Maintain vertical posture and focus on balance. Raise up on toes as knee is pulled to chest.



Lunge steps. These can be performed with the rear leg either dropping straight to the ground (first photo) or with it stretched behind and the knee maintained in extension (second photo). In both cases, avoid compensating by rolling into an anterior pelvic tilt which will result in hyperextension in the lumbar spine.



Lateral lunge steps. While maintaining a “sternum up” posture in the torso, weight is shifted first to the right and then the left followed by a pivot which leaves you facing the opposite direction and the shift is repeated.



Inch Worms: Start in a push up position and walk your feet to your hands, keeping your knees straight and your heels on the ground. Stop when you feel a stretch in the back of your legs. Then slowly walk your hands away from your feet until the stretch goes away. Repeat this 3 – 5 times. This can be performed by either walking your hands back toward your feet or walking your feet toward your hands.



Lunge steps with rotation. Lunge steps can be combined with rotation of the torso and upper body in either direction. This can be made more aggressive by holding a medicine ball.



Lunge steps with overhead reach. While performing lunges the arms can be held overhead (static) or can reach from waist level to overhead (dynamic). Maintain a vertical posture and avoid increasing pelvic anterior tilt which will result in lumbar hyperextension. This can be made more aggressive by holding a medicine ball.



Lunge step with anterior reach. While performing a lunge step, reach with both hands toward the toe and extend the supporting hip and knee while also extending the rear leg. Try to avoid compensating with lumbar flexion.



Soldier March/Skip: Lift right leg to outstretched left hand while maintaining upright posture. As you warm up, increase the velocity and height of the kick, progressing up onto the toes of your standing leg. Alternate feet for 5 repetitions to each side



Sprinter's Stretch: Kneel on right knee with your left leg in front of you with your foot flat on the ground, place hands on the floor to support yourself. Straighten left hip and knee slowly, keeping foot flat. Hold for a count of 1-2, lower, and repeat five times in a slow pumping motion. Repeat stretch with left foot turned out, and then with left foot turned in. Perform same stretch with right leg in front.



Heel Cord Stretch/Big Toe Rocks: In pike position with both hands on floor, lift one foot to heel of opposite foot; lift heel off the floor to achieve great toe extension, then slowly lower back to the floor giving pressure in a downward direction with the opposite foot from behind, Repeat 3 times to each side.



Spider Man: Lunge forward onto right leg, bringing right arm to the inside of the right leg and lower hips toward the floor until you feel a stretch in the left hip flexor; pause and then reach forward with opposite leg – like Spiderman – to the same position with the opposite leg. Repeat 3 times on each side.



Twister: Arms straight and to the side in a “T” position; bend forward at the hips keeping back straight similar to the setup position in golf; keeping knees pointed straight ahead, rotate trunk and swing arms from side-to-side, letting the weight and momentum of your arms pull you to end range, then slowly start to raise up to upright position while maintaining arm swinging motion; from upright position, continue arm swing but now bend elbows to 90 degrees, then slowly straighten arms to overhead position while continuing arm swing motion, then slowly lower arms through each position back to the starting position—the whole time maintaining arm swing motion.



Hug World/Hug Self: Wrap arms around trunk by crossing them in front while in a forward bent/back straight position (similar to golf set-up position) emphasizing spreading shoulder blades apart, then while coming to upright position, squeeze shoulder blades together as if hugging the world; then back to the “hug self” position, etc Repeat 3 times.

