

Stretching exercises can be performed daily and are best done when the muscles are warm (i.e. - immediately after an aerobic exercise like walking or jogging.) Hold each stretch 10-30 seconds. Always stretch both sides even if we have established that one side is tighter.

Strengthening exercises in general should be performed 2-4 times per week for a given muscle group, unless otherwise specified. Always perform the strengthening exercise on both sides even if we have established that one side is weaker.

Curl-ups



Lie on your back with one knee bent and your hands underneath the arch of your lower back. Brace the abdominals, then lift your chest (not your head) slightly towards the ceiling, just enough to lift your shoulders off the floor. Try to use your abs to hold the spine in position relative to your hands. If your neck hurts doing this, you can support your head with one hand. Hold for 5-8 seconds, relax and then repeat.

TRUNK STABILITY - 6 Bent Leg Lift (Hook-Lying)



Place hands under the back (not pictured) and brace the abs to lock the spine in place as in the "Curl-up." Lift one leg only about 1-2 inches off the floor, pause, then lower back down- as soon as that foot hits the floor, lift the other leg. Be sure to maintain the abd brace the entire time. To increase the difficulty of this exercise, just go a little faster, but make sure there is always one leg in contact with the ground at all times.

Side Plank



Lie on your side with your top foot in front of the other. Prop up onto your elbow as show, using your other hand to grasp your shoulder to stabilize it. Brace your abs to hold your torso in a rigid straight line. Hold for 5-8 seconds, relax, and then repeat. If this proves too difficult, you can rest on your knees instead of your feet.

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Start on all fours with the abdominals braced to hold your spine rigid. Extend the opposite arm and leg, squeezing the glut and shoulder blades to hold the arm and leg rigid. Hold for 5-8 seconds, and then repeat on other side. Do 2-5 reps on each side.

TRUNK STABILITY - 13 Bridging: with Straight Leg Raise



Start on back with knees bent and heels tucked in close to buttocks. Straighten one leg. Raise hips off of the floor until your torso and hips are straight, hold for one second and then lower down again.

Repeat 5-10 times per set. Do 2-3 sets on each side per session. Do one session 3-4 times per week.

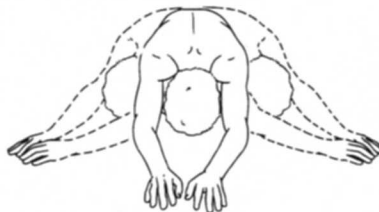
Wall Squats

Place a swiss ball behind your lower back. Place feet slightly wider than shoulder-width apart with toes pointing slightly out. Squat down as low as you comfortably can while focusing on keeping your back straight and abs braced. On the way up, think about pushing your feet apart and squeezing your gluts together to accomplish most of the lifting power. You can add weight in your hands to increase the difficulty.

Do _____ reps x _____ sets
2-3 times per week.



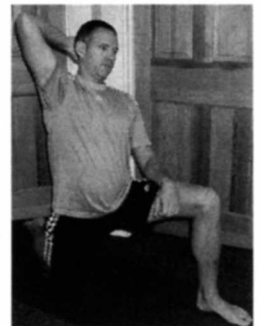
BACK - 21 Mid-Back Rotation Stretch



Start on hands and knees. Keeping buttocks resting on heels, reach forward with hands. Once fully stretched, walk hands to the right until you feel the stretch through the left lower back. You may have to adjust your hands a little to feel the stretch in the correct area. Hold 10-30 seconds. Repeat on other side.

Stretch: Hip Flexors

Start in a kneeling position as shown with the right knee down. Keeping your back straight (but not arched), shift your weight forward until a stretch is felt along the front of the RIGHT hip. You can add a very slight bend to the left to further isolate the muscle. Don't allow the left knee to go past the left toes, scooting the left foot forward if necessary.



BACK - 33 Hamstring Stretch



Start by sitting as pictured. Keep knee straight, toes pointing up, and back straight. Reach for your foot or ankle until you feel the stretch in the back of the leg. If you can't reach your foot, just grab the ankle. Hold for 1-30 seconds and repeat on other side.

Stretch: Piriformis: Supine



Lie on the back and bend both knees. Cross the left leg over the right. Grab the left thigh with both hands and pull until the stretch is felt in the RIGHT buttocks.

Stretch: Gluts: Prone



Start on your hands and knees. Bring the right leg underneath you as shown, using your hands to pull it there if necessary. Sliding your left leg back, drop your torso as low to the floor as possible until you feel the stretch in the RIGHT buttock. Drop down onto your elbows and relax your head and neck.