

# Warming Up and Stretching

Performing a **warm-up and stretching** routine is a vital component of overall good health and fitness, and is strongly recommended **before and after** each and every strenuous weight training workout (or any other exercise routine for that matter).

In general, warming up will elevate the heart rate and increase the flow of blood and oxygen throughout the body, thus preparing the body to be stretched. Stretching then prepares the soft tissue and joint of the body to safely perform a physical activity. It is important to remember that **a warm-up routine is not the same as a stretching routine**.

The pre-workout phase of your weight training routine can be broken down into two primary phases: a general warm-up phase and a stretching phase. You should perform your warm-up routine first, followed by your stretching routine.

Performing a **warm-up routine** involves the process of slightly raising your body temperature while increasing blood and oxygen circulation throughout your body.

By performing a **stretching routine** prior to your weight training exercise workout, you will increase the circulation of blood and oxygen throughout the soft tissue (i.e. muscles) of your body. This will prepare your muscles, ligaments, tendons, and skeletal frame for the weight training routine that you are going to perform.

In addition, regularly performing a stretching routine will improve your **joint flexibility and range of motion**, decrease the probability of injury, relieve tension and stress, and even accelerate the healing process associated with several types of injuries.

## Tips for Properly Stretching

As with any type of physical activity, it is important to understand the intent of the activity and how best to perform it so that you can reduce the probability of injury and receive the maximum level of benefits. To this end, below are a few **guidelines to consider when performing your stretching routine**:

- **Stretch each set of muscles evenly.** This balance is essential as stretching one side of your body fully and ignoring the other is counterproductive. For example, when you perform a stretching exercise on one leg, be sure to perform the exact same stretching exercise on the other leg.
- **Avoid stretching to the point of pain.** While it is normal to feel a little tightness at the furthest extension of the stretching exercise, pain is not the intent of the stretching exercise.
- **Move through your stretches slowly.** When maintaining each stretching exercise, relax the muscles and evenly balance the entire body. Upon releasing from the stretching exercise, slowly ease out of it and back to the starting position. In general, each stretching exercise should be held for 15 to no more than 30 seconds.
- **Avoid bouncing or jerking.** Doing so can extend your muscles past their point of comfortable extension and result in not only pain, but injuries related to a muscle strain or tear.
- **Pay close attention to your breathing.** Many individuals tend to hold their breath when performing a stretching exercise. Instead, focus on taking deep and cleansing breaths that promote a relaxing of the entire body rather than short, labored, quick breaths.

<http://www.fitnesshealth101.com/fitness/weight-training/beginners/warm-up>

**ABSENT MAKE UP – LEVEL 1 – HEALTHY BODY**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Date turned in: \_\_\_\_\_

Read the information in the article attached and then answer the first 2 questions:

1. Which of the following goes first: (circle the correct answer)

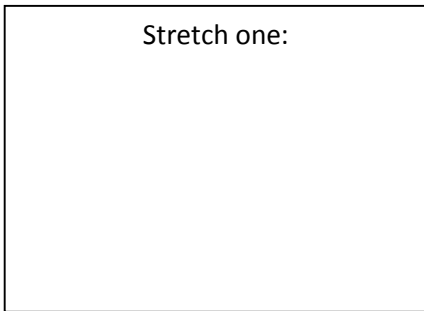
stretching

warming up the body

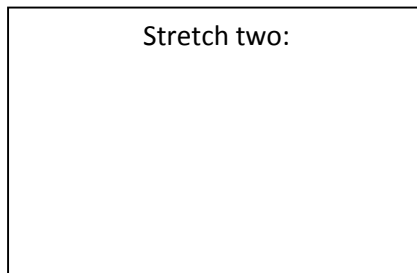
2. Write one thing you learned from reading this you didn't know before:

3. Then pick 5 different stretches and apply the tips of stretching to these stretches.

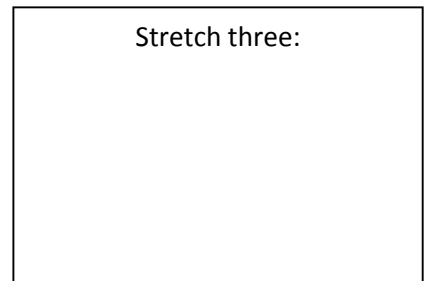
Stretch one:



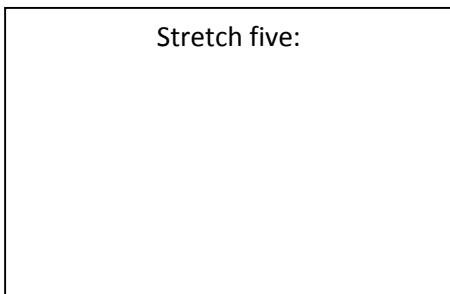
Stretch two:



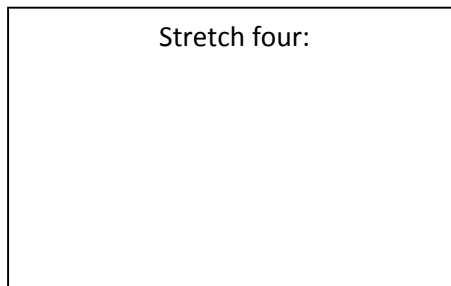
Stretch three:



Stretch five:



Stretch four:



4. Write 3-5 sentences about your experience.