

GROIN & HIP STRETCHES

Note: If you have had any recent surgery, muscle or joint problem, please consult your personal health care professional.

How to Stretch:

Stretching should be done slowly without bouncing. Stretch to where you feel a slight, easy stretch. Hold this feeling for 5-15 seconds. As you hold this stretch, the feeling of tension should diminish. If it doesn't, just ease off slightly into a more comfortable stretch. The easy stretch reduces tension and readies the tissues for the developmental stretch.

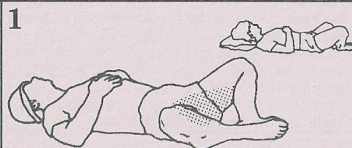
After holding the easy stretch move a fraction of an inch farther into the stretch until you feel mild tension again. This is the developmental stretch which should be held for 5-15 seconds. This feeling of stretch tension should also slightly diminish or stay the same. If the tension increases or

becomes painful, you are overstretching. Ease off a bit to a comfortable stretch. The developmental stretch reduces tension and will safely increase flexibility.

Hold only stretch tensions that feel good to you. The key to stretching is to be relaxed while you concentrate on the area being stretched. Your breathing should be slow, deep and rhythmical. Don't worry about how far you can stretch. Stretch relaxed and limberness will become just one of the many by-products of regular stretching.

Do a light warm-up of walking for several minutes prior to stretching.

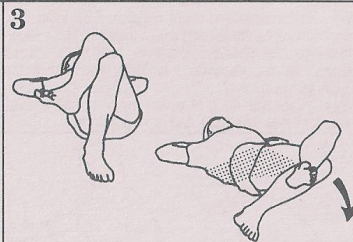
The dotted areas are those areas of the body where you will most likely feel the stretch.



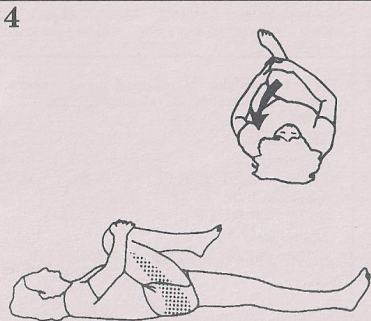
Relax with your knees bent and the soles of your feet together. This comfortable position will stretch your groin. Hold this stretch for 30 seconds.



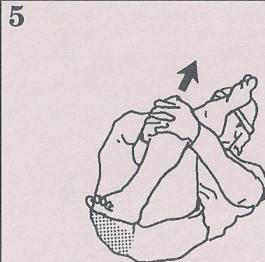
From the lying groin stretch, gently rock your legs as one unit back and forth, 10-12 times. These are real easy movements of no more than 1 inch in either direction. Initiate movements from top of hips. This will gently limber up your groin and hips.



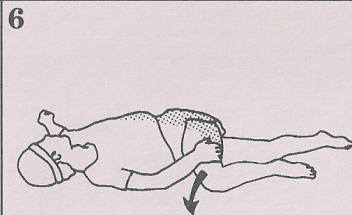
After gently stretching the groin, bring your knees together and rest your feet on the floor. Lift the left leg over the right leg and from here, use your left leg to pull your right leg toward the floor until you feel a good stretch. Stretch and relax. Keep the upper back, shoulders and elbows flat on the floor with your head resting in your hands. The idea is not to touch the floor with your right knee, but to stretch within your limits. Hold for 30 seconds. Breathe easily. Repeat stretch for other side, crossing right over left and moving legs down to the right.



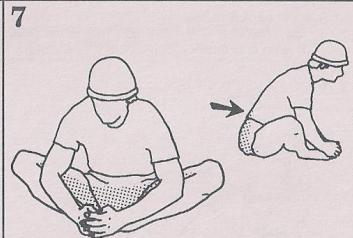
Gently pull your right knee toward your chest, then pull the knee across your body toward your left shoulder to create a stretch on the outside of your right hip. Hold an easy stretch for 15-20 seconds. Do both sides.



Lie on your back. Bend your right knee and put the outside of your right lower leg just above your left knee. With your hands just below your left knee, gently pull your leg toward your chest until a stretch is felt in your right buttocks area (piriformis). Hold for 15-20 seconds. Lift the back of your head off the ground and look straight ahead as you stretch. Breathe slowly and deeply. Repeat for other side.



Bend your leg and, with your opposite hand, pull that bent leg up and over your other leg as shown in illustration. Turn your head to look toward the hand of the arm that is straight (head should be resting on the floor). Make sure the back of your shoulders are kept flat on the floor. Now, using your hand on your thigh (resting just above the knee), pull your bent leg down toward the floor until you get the right stretch feeling in your lower back and side of hip. Keep feet and ankles relaxed. Hold a comfortable stretch for 30 seconds, each side.



Put the soles of your feet together with your heels a comfortable distance from your groin. With your hands around your feet slowly contract your abdominals to assist you in flexing forward until you feel an easy stretch in the groin. Make your movement forward by bending from the hips and not from the shoulders. If possible, keep your elbows on the outside of your lower legs for greater stability during the stretch. Hold a comfortable stretch for 20-30 seconds. Exhale as you go forward. Breathe rhythmically during the stretch.