

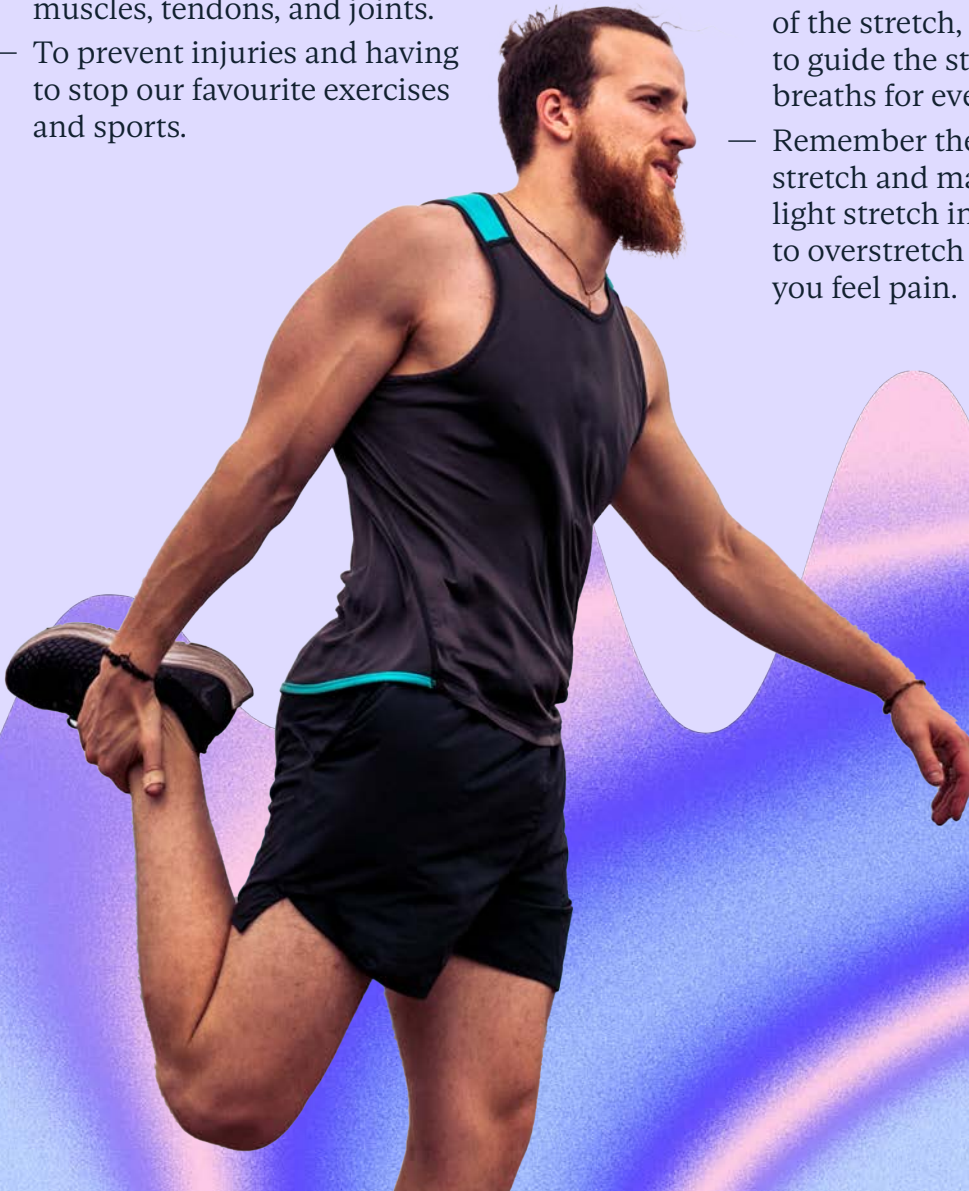
Stretching Tips for After Exercise.

Why should we stretch?

- To improve our movement patterns by preventing muscle and joint stiffness.
- To improve our posture and body positions.
- To promote relaxation and reduce stress on our nervous system.
- To improve muscle efficiency and performance.
- To reduce aches and pains from prolonged periods spent sitting.
- To reduce aches and pains from overused muscles, tendons, and joints.
- To prevent injuries and having to stop our favourite exercises and sports.

How do we stretch?

- To stretch optimally, it is best to be in a relaxed, comfortable environment –this could be in front of the TV, beside your bed, or in your favourite park.
- Stretching while concentrating on our breath will provide the best results. A steady, deep, and consistent breathing pattern will relax our nervous system and allow the muscle fibres and tendons to lengthen with more oxygen and less stress.
- Instead of looking at a clock for the duration of the stretch, try using the number of breaths to guide the stretch. We recommend five deep breaths for every stretch.
- Remember the muscles you are trying to stretch and manoeuvre your body to feel a light stretch in these muscles making sure not to overstretch and allows stop immediately if you feel pain.





Top 5 stretches:

Calf Stretch:

- Lean your hands against a wall or any vertical surface and place one foot in front of the other.
- Heel of the back foot should touch the floor.
- Straighten the knee of the back leg and point the toes straight ahead.
- Stretch should be felt down the back of the lower part of your leg.
- Hold for 5 deep breaths and repeat on other leg.

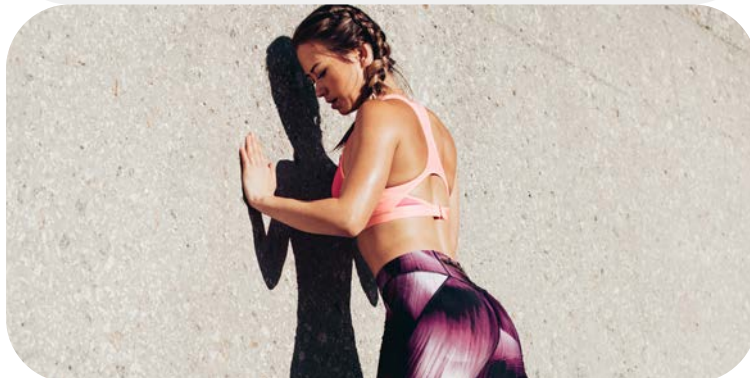


Quad Stretch:

- Stand upright ensuring you are balanced, use a wall if needed.
- Bend forward and grip your right foot in your right hand and stand upright again.
- Stretch should be felt down the front of your thigh.
- Hold for 5 deep breaths and repeat on other leg.

Glute Stretch:

- Lie flat on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
- Place your right foot on top of your left knee.
- Lift your left leg off the ground by pulling the back of your left thigh with both hands.
- If you cannot do the above step, then gently push the right knee down towards the floor.
- Stretch should be felt in the right buttock.
- Hold for 5 deep breaths and repeat on other leg.



Chest Stretch:

- Stand beside a wall or inside the frame of a door.
- Place your left forearm on the wall keeping a 90-degree angle at the elbow.
- Gently pull your left shoulder blade backwards while at the same time leaning forward.
- Stretch should be felt at the top of the chest across the armpit.
- Hold for 5 deep breaths and repeat on other side.

Back Stretch

- Starting on all fours, slowly bend your knees and sit back towards your heels.
- Then begin to move your hands further overhead along the floor.
- Keep your head down and hands flat on the floor.
- Stretch should be felt along the outside of the back along the rib cage.
- Hold for 10 deep breaths.

