



LET'S S-T-R-E-T-C-H!

This warm-up and stretching program was designed by professionals recognized in the field of fitness. If you have any personal health limitations, previous back injuries or other concerns, consult your doctor, physiotherapist or a certified fitness specialist before beginning the program.

WARM UP AND STRETCHING EXERCISES

Note: shading indicates area being stretched.

The Pelvic Tilt:

This 10-minute warm-up is a series of general warm-up and tension-breaker stretches. Before starting, ensure that your body is properly positioned in a neutral standing posture.

Some exercises include the pelvic tilt, but this movement should only be used where indicated. (Where pelvic tilt has not been specified, maintain the neutral position or natural "S" curve of the spine.)

NEUTRAL STANDING POSTURE:

- Stand with feet slightly wider than shoulders, knees unlocked.
- Head up, chin in, shoulders back, chest out.
- Natural "S" curve of the spine.



PERFORMING THE PELVIC TILT

- Stand with feet slightly wider than shoulders, knees unlocked
- Head up, chin in, shoulders back, chest out.
- Natural "S" curve of the spine
- Move hips forward, tightening buttock and stomach muscles.
- You've got it right when back is flat, no arching.
- Can be performed to varying degrees.



When to use pelvic tilt:

- To counter effects of excessive* arching of the back.
- To effectively stretch the lower back.
- To maximize the effects of specific stretches.

*Excessive: Arching until it hurts.

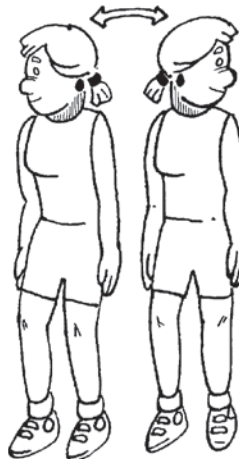
GENERAL WARM-UPS

(12 EXERCISES, REPEAT 5 TO 10 TIMES, EACH SIDE.)

1. NECK TURNS

(neck area)

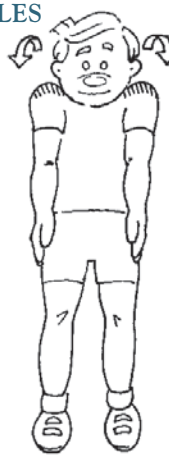
- Neutral standing posture.
- Turn head to one side and look over shoulder.
- Turn head to other side, and look over shoulder.



2. SHOULDER SHRUGS/CIRCLES

(shoulder area)

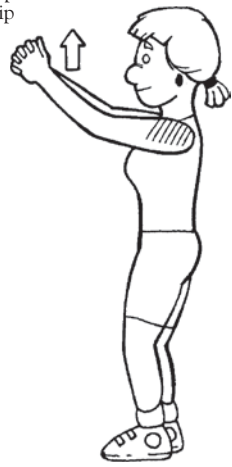
- Neutral standing posture.
- Draw both shoulders up toward ears, pause and release.
- Circle both shoulders slowly, forward or backward.



3. ARM RAISE

(front of shoulders)

- Neutral standing posture.
- Clasp hands at hip level; elbows flexed.
- Raise arms to forehead level and return to start.

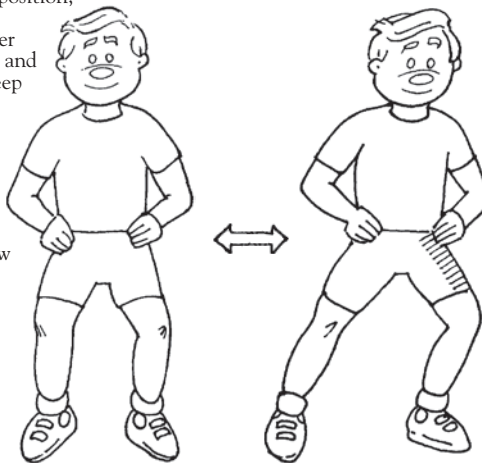


8. SIDE SHIFT

(front of thighs)

- Stand wide, toes pointing slightly out, knees unlocked and hands on upper thighs or hips.
- Keep upper body in neutral position, and gradually lower buttocks.
- Gently shift body weight over one thigh by flexing that knee and extending the opposite leg. Keep knee of extended leg slightly flexed.
- Return to upright, and repeat with other leg.

Tip: Keep the knee flexed in line with toes; and let your fitness level determine how low you go.



4. ARM PULLBACK

(back of shoulders)

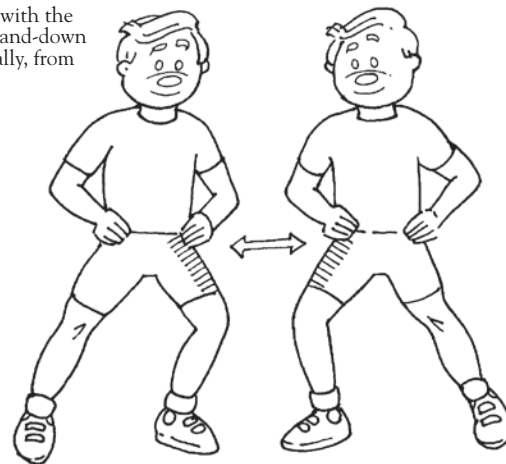
- Neutral standing posture.
- Clasp hands behind body at hip level, elbows flexed.
- Raise and lower arms to a comfortable level.
- If excessive arching of the back occurs, pelvic tilt to neutral.



9. COMBINATION SIDE SHIFT

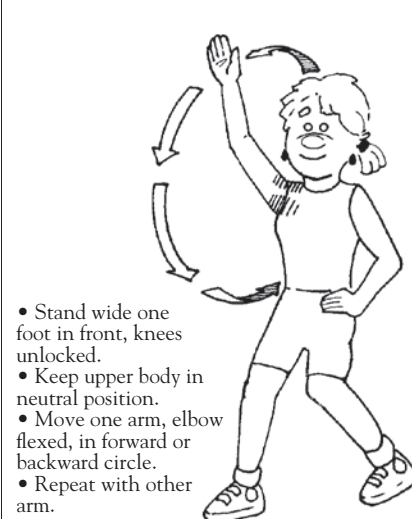
(front of thighs)

- Once you're comfortable with the side shift, eliminate the up-and-down motion and move horizontally, from side to side.



5. WIDE ARM CIRCLES

(shoulder area)

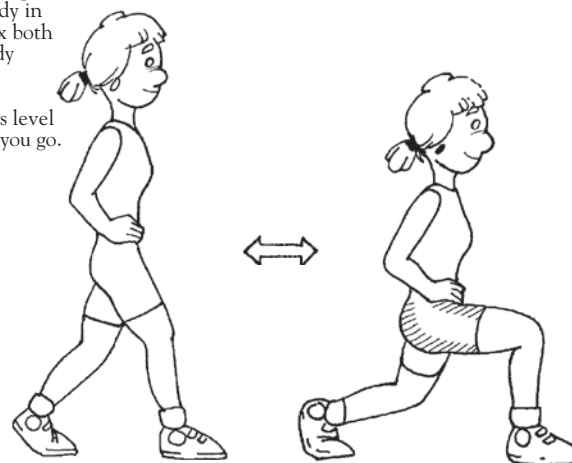


10. FRONT SHIFT

(lower trunk)

- Stand wide, one foot in front, knees unlocked, hands on hips.
- Keeping upper body in neutral position, flex both knees and lower body towards the ground.

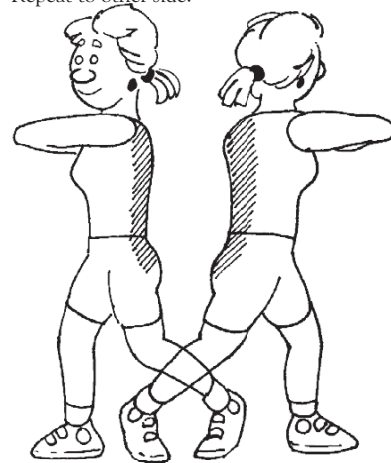
Tip: Let your fitness level determine how low you go.



6. GENTLE PIVOT

(entire body)

- Stand wide, toes pointing slightly out, knees unlocked.
- Extend arms, elbows flexed.
- Pivot one foot to the side and rotate body, in a slow and controlled manner, to the same side, using the toe of the opposite foot as a pivot point.
- Turn body as a unit to avoid twisting at the waist.
- Push to a pleasant stretch.
- Repeat to other side.

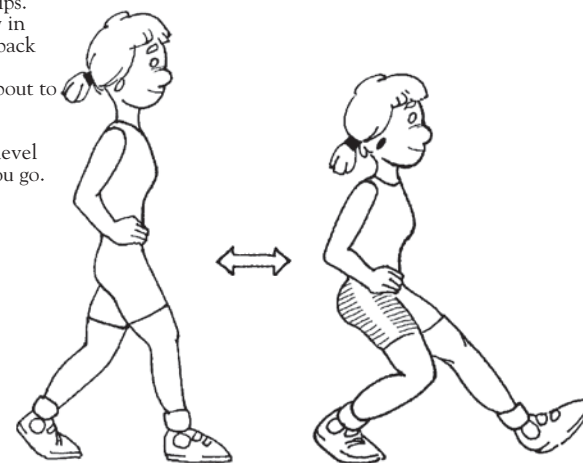


11. BACK SHIFT

(lower trunk)

- Stand wide, one foot in front, knees unlocked, hands on hips.
- Keeping upper body in neutral position, flex back knee and lower your buttocks, as though about to sit down.

Tip: Let your fitness level determine how low you go.



7. HALF KNEE BENDS

(lower trunk)

- Stand wide, toes pointing slightly out, knees unlocked, and hands on upper thighs or hips.
- Slowly, keeping upper body in neutral position, flex and straighten legs.

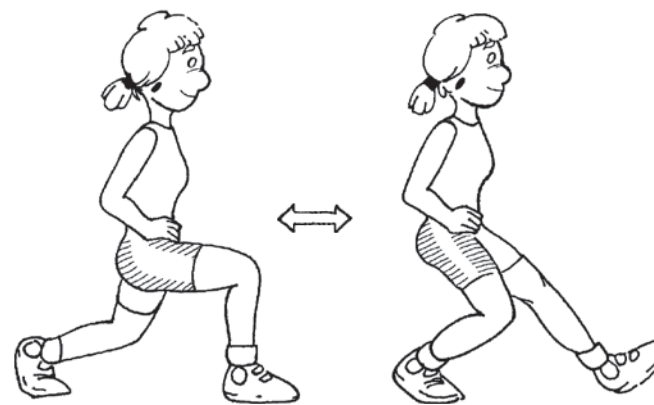
Tip: Let your fitness level determine how low you go!



12. COMBINATION FRONT TO BACK SHIFT

(lower trunk)

- Once you're comfortable with the front and back shifts, eliminate the up-and-down motion and move horizontally front to back.



1. NECK FORWARD

(back of neck)

- Neutral standing posture.
- Tuck chin in and gently press chin inwards with finger.
- If you don't feel a stretch, use hand to guide head forward.
- Do not force head down.



6. SHOULDER STRETCH

(back of shoulder)

- Neutral standing posture.
- Bring arm across chest to opposite shoulder.
- Gently press behind elbow with opposite hand.
- If your back arches excessively, pelvic tilt to neutral.

Tip: Make sure the arm being stretched doesn't move upwards.

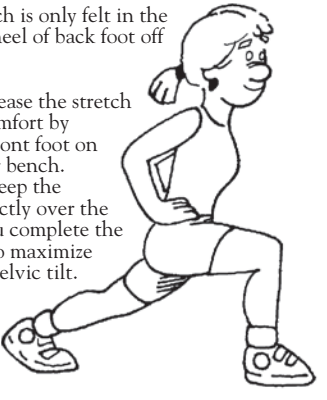


11. HIP FLEXOR STRETCH

(front of upper thigh)

- Stand wide, one foot in front, knees unlocked.
- Place hand on buttock of back leg.
- Gently do a front shift.
- If back is arching, move front foot farther forward.
- If stretch is only felt in the calf, lift heel of back foot off the floor.

Tip: Increase the stretch or the comfort by placing front foot on a chair or bench. Always keep the knee directly over the toe as you complete the move. To maximize stretch, pelvic tilt.



2. EAR TO SHOULDER

(sides of neck, top of shoulder)

- Neutral standing posture.
- Tilt head to left, keeping ear aligned with shoulder.
- If you don't feel a stretch on the opposite side of your neck, grasp right hand behind your back with your left, pull down and at an angle.
- Don't force.



7. CAT STRETCH

(lower back)

- Stand wide, toes pointing out, knees unlocked.
- Flex knees and elbows, lower your body while sliding hands down thighs almost to knees, fingers in.
- Keep upper body in neutral position.
- Pelvic tilt to stretch lower back.
- Push out upper back and curl shoulders forward, like a stretching cat.

Tip: Feels great after long periods of standing! You might perform this stretch more easily holding onto a chair back or table.



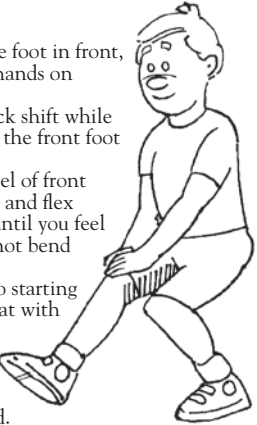
12. HAMSTRING STRETCH

(back of legs)

- Stand wide, one foot in front, knees unlocked, hands on thigh.
- Perform the back shift while pulling the toe of the front foot upwards.
- Gently push heel of front foot towards floor and flex through the hip until you feel the stretch. (Do not bend trunk)
- Rise carefully to starting position and repeat with other leg.

Tip: Use a wall for support and balance, if needed.

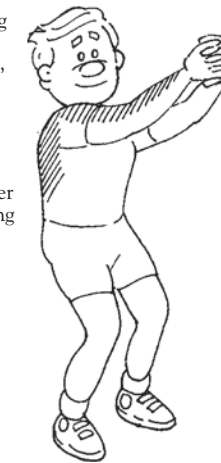
Variation: Increase the stretch by placing foot on a chair, heel down, toe up and use movement described above.



3. UPPER TORSO STRETCH

(upper back, back of shoulders, arms, hands, wrists, fingers)

- Neutral standing posture.
- Interlace fingers, palms out.
- Raise arms to shoulder level, elbows flexed.
- Curl shoulders forward, push upper back out, stretching arms and fingers.

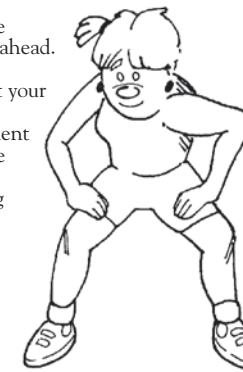


8. SHOULDER DIP

(back)

- Stand wide, toes pointing slightly out, knees unlocked.
- Perform the cat stretch, above.
- Slowly dip one shoulder towards opposite leg, pushing out on upper back while looking straight ahead.

Tip: Don't twist your torso, and keep shoulder movement minimal. A nice stretch after standing for long periods.

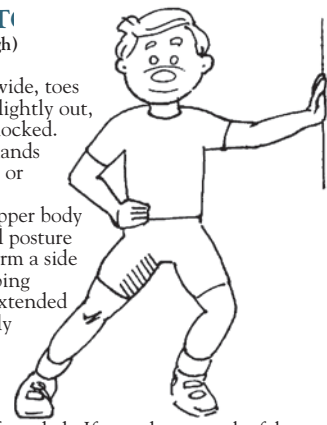


13. STANDING GROIN STRETCH

(inner thigh)

- Stand wide, toes pointed slightly out, knees unlocked.
- Place hands on thighs or hips.
- Keep upper body in neutral posture and perform a side shift keeping knee of extended leg slightly flexed.

Tip: Use a wall for support if needed. If stretch cannot be felt, widen stance. To maximize stretch, pelvic tilt.



4. CHEST STRETCH

(chest and front of shoulders)

- Neutral standing posture.
- Clasp hands behind back, elbows flexed.
- Move elbows upwards while pushing chest out and up.
- If your back arches excessively, pelvic tilt to neutral.



9. ABDOMINAL STRETCH

(entire body, stomach)

- Neutral standing posture.
- Clasp hands overhead, elbows in line with ears.
- Standing on tiptoes, stretch arms upwards (as if reaching for an apple on a big tree).
- Allow a slight arch to occur in lower back.

Tip: Feels great after long periods of sitting!



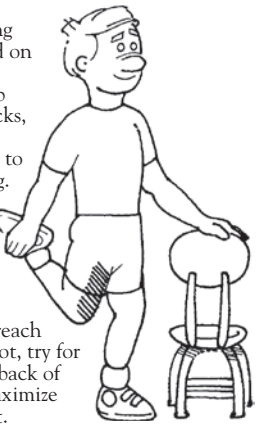
14. STANDING QUADRICEPS STRETCH

(front of thigh)

- Neutral standing posture, one hand on firm support.
- Pull one foot up toward the buttocks, keeping thigh of flexed leg parallel to the supporting leg.
- Keep upper body in neutral position and the knee pointed down.

Tip: If you can't reach the top of your foot, try for a pant-leg or the back of your shoe. To maximize stretch, pelvic tilt.

Variation: You can also place the flexed knee on the seat of a chair, ensuring that the flexed knee does not bear your weight.



NEED HELP? MORE INFORMATION?

Contact the Workers Compensation Board of PEI
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www.wcb.pe.ca

Adapted from the New Brunswick Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission's Back in Form program