

Warm Up and Stretching Routine

NOTE: In order to minimize the risk of injury please be sure to follow the sequence of each of the items listed below in the order that they are presented.

Perform Walking Routine in Order Listed Below

Warm Up
Perform Flexibility Exercises
Perform Walking Routine
Cool Down
Perform Stretching Exercising

Warm Up

Warming up is defined as exercising at a lower intensity in order to increase blood circulation throughout the body and let your body know that you are preparing for exercise. A typical amount of time to spend warming up is around five minutes. However, as you progress through your walking program you will need to warm up longer on days where you will be performing your fast workouts.

Flexibility Exercises

Flexibility exercises should be performed after you have completed your warm up and have warmed up with 5 to 10 minutes of easy walking. The faster you plan to walk the more time you will need to dedicate to performing your flexibility exercises. Below are several flexibility exercises that can be performed during the flexibility portion of your walking routine.

Toe Points

Stand on one leg and lift the other foot off the floor. Point your toes downward and hold for a few seconds. Next flex your foot pointing your toes up. Perform this exercise 5 to 10 times for each foot.

Ankle Circles

Stand on one leg and lift the other foot off the floor. Gently point your toe and rotate your ankle. Perform about 10 circles in each direction. This exercise can be performed while standing, sitting, or lying on your back with your leg raised. Perform this exercise 3 to 5 times for each foot.

Overhead Reach

Stand with your feet approximately hip distance apart. Extend one arm over your head until it is strait and then reach over your head and to the opposite side. Keep your hips steady and your shoulders straight. Relax and repeat with the other side. Perform this exercise 5 to 10 times per side.

The Twist

Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart and your arms straight out, parallel to ground. Keeping your lower body stationary swing both of your arms from side to side. Perform this exercise 5 to 10 times to loosen up your waist, back, and

Arm Circles

Hold your arms straight out from your sides, parallel to the ground. Make small circles with your arms going backward, gradually getting larger and larger. Rest for a second and then perform the same exercise in the forward direction. Perform this exercise 5 to 10 times.

Walking Routine

Perform your walking routine at your normal walking pace. during the first few weeks of your walking routine do not push too hard. While your breathing should be elevated, you should not be gasping for air. One rule of thumb that works for most individuals is if you can not talk while you are walking then you are walking too fast, however, if you can carry a tune while walking you are

Cool Down

Prior to the completion of your walking routine you need to walk at a slower pace to begin cooling down. The harder you push yourself the longer your cool down period should be. In the beginning your walks will be relatively short and you only need to cool down for a couple of minutes. However, as your walking time and intensity increases so should your cool down period.

Stretch

Stretching is essential for any workout routine and should be performed after every workout. In addition, adding a stretching routine to your workout will greatly reduce your risk of injury. As you begin your walking routine the stretching portion of your workout should take 5 to 8 minutes. However, as you increase your walking distance, time, and pace you will want to increase the

Rules for Stretching

Never stretch muscles that have not been warmed up. The ideal time to stretch is after you have completed your walking routine. However, if you have areas of your body that tend to be tight they can be stretched prior to your walking routine, but only after they have been properly warmed up.

Do not bounce or hold your breath during the stretching portion of the exercise. Instead, slowly move into the stretching position and hold gently. Perform each stretching exercise until you feel a gentle pull - never to the point of pain.

Each stretching exercise should be held for 30 to 40 seconds. If you have a particular part of your body that gives you problems then spend additional time stretching that area. For example, perform the specific stretching exercise and hold for 30 to 40

Make sure that you stretch all the major muscle groups and spend some additional time stretching any parts of your body that give you trouble.

Calf Stretch-1

While holding onto something for balance, stand on your toes on a step or curb. Remove your left foot and slowly allow your right heel to move downward. Once fully extended, hold this position. Maintain an upright and straight body position. Release and repeat with the left heel. Perform this stretching exercise 3 to 5 times per foot.

Calf Stretch-2

Take a large step forward with your left foot while keeping your right heel on the ground. Hold this position and repeat with the other foot. Make sure that your body is upright and your abdominals are tight - Do not arch your back. Perform this stretching exercise 3 to 5 times per foot.

Shin Stretch

While holding onto something for balance, stand with your weight on one leg and straighten it. Place your other foot on the ground, with the ends of your toes touching the floor. While only the ends of your toes are touching the ground, roll your foot and leg forward, from the ankle. Release and repeat on the other leg. Perform this stretching exercise 3 to 5 times per foot.

Hamstring & Lower Back

Slowly bend forward from your waist with your knees slightly bent. Reach to the floor and hold (Bend only as far as comfortable). Perform this stretching exercise 3 to 5 times.

Outer Thigh & Buttocks & Spine

While lying on the floor on your back bring your right knee up to your chest. Place your left hand on your right thigh and gently pull it over to your left side. While you gently pull your shoulders, left leg and back should remain flat. Release and repeat with the left leg. Perform this stretching exercise 2 to 3 times per leg.

Lower Back

While lying on the floor on your back, bring both knees up towards your chest and grasp your knees with your hands. Round the lower back and relax into the stretch. This stretching exercise is best performed on a soft surface as a hard surface can bruise the spine. Perform this stretching exercise 2 to 3 times.

Quadriceps Stretch

While standing up straight, hold onto something for balance. Bend your right knee, bringing your foot towards your buttocks. Keeping your left knee slightly bent, grasp your right ankle with the opposite hand. Slowly pull your right foot and leg up and back, bringing your foot at high as comfortable. Repeat with the left leg. Perform this stretching exercise 2 to 3 times per leg.

Shoulder Stretch

Standing upright, cross your left arm over chest. Place your right hand on your upper left arm and pull your left arm tight to chest. Be sure to keep your shoulders down and do not pull at the elbow. Repeat with the right arm. Perform this stretching exercise 3 to 5 times per arm.

Neck Relaxer

While sitting up straight or standing turn your neck and look over your right shoulder and hold. Repeat this same exercise on the left side. Next, gently lower your head to the right so that your right ear moves towards your right shoulder and hold. Return to upright position. Repeat this same exercise on the left side. Finally, lower your head and chin towards your chest and hold. Be sure to keep your spine in an upright position and do not hyper-extend your neck, jerk, or tilt your head backwards.