

FITNESS FOCUS

Why Stretch?

The pros do it. We should, too.

Stretching can keep us loose and limber, able to do more. It can relax us, which helps us to sleep and reduce stress. Stretching also releases muscle tension, easing headache or back pain.

Just the stress of daily life sets up chronic, energy-draining contractions in many of our exo-skeletal muscles. Both laughing and crying release that tension by stretching muscles from head to groin. However exercising does it better, if done correctly.

Proper stretching before activity can increase flexibility and allow for greater muscle contractions. Baseball players take wide swings with a weighted bat to stretch before batting to allow greater muscle contraction.

The correct type of stretching is called static”, or stationary. Ballistic” or bouncing stretches can be harmful to the muscles. It is best to put tension on the muscle for 20-30 seconds to gain optimum results, and move slowly into each stretch.

Stretching after exercise is also important as it helps to prevent delayed muscle soreness and lessen chance of injury.

To get your best performance, make sure you S-T-R-E-T-C-H!!

LESSON REVIEW

1. List 4 benefits of stretching.
2. How do laughing and crying release stress?
3. List the two types of ways to stretch.
4. Which of the two is the correct way to stretch?
5. How long should you hold each stretch?
6. Why is it important to also stretch after exercises?

Please log your daily activity **OUTSIDE** of Physical Education class. You need to do a minimum of 20 minutes of exercise everyday.

	Example	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Type of Exercise	Basketball practice				
Length of Time	2 hours				
Who did you exercise with?					
Parent/Guardian Initials	<i>S.F.M</i>				