

# Dynamic Stretching

A dynamic stretch is the opposite of a static stretch. In this version, you quickly move a muscle in and out of a stretched position. Example: A body-weight lunge is a dynamic stretch for your quadriceps and hips.

Here's why the difference matters: Improvements in flexibility are specific to your body position and speed of movement. So if you do only static stretching -- as most guys are advised -- you'll primarily boost your flexibility in that exact posture while moving at a slow speed. While certainly effective if you're a contortionist, it has limited carryover to the flexibility you need in sports and weight training, which require your muscles to stretch at fast speeds in various body positions. That's why dynamic stretching is a necessary component of any program: It improves your "active" flexibility, the kind you need in every type of athletic endeavor.

Dynamic stretching also excites your central nervous system, and increases bloodflow, and strength and power production. So it's the ideal warmup for any activity. And when you regularly perform both dynamic and static stretches, some of the flexibility improvements from one will transfer to the other.

## The Rules of Dynamic Stretching

**When:** As a warmup before any type of workout or sport

**Why:** To improve performance and reduce injury risk

**How:** Perform five to eight body-weight exercises or calisthenics at a slow tempo and in a comfortable range of motion. Increase your range and speed with each repetition, until you're performing the movement quickly from start to finish. Do one set of 10 repetitions of each exercise, one after the other.

**What:** Try this sample routine of movements that are probably already familiar to you: jumping jacks, arm circles, trunk rotations, front lunges, side lunges, high knees, and body-weight squats.

