



Stretching Guide for Runners



How to Stretch

After your run, particularly a long run, cool down with a short walk. If you stop running suddenly, your blood continues pumping blood to the muscles used and you can become light headed.

After this, stretch. This will help to minimise DOMS, and return your muscles to their pre exercise state.

When you feel your muscles begin to relax in a stretching position, increase the stretch further. Hold stretches for 20 seconds each to maintain muscle flexibility.

Muscles that are feeling particularly sore should be stretched for a little longer. Hold the stretch 45-60 seconds, gently increasing the stretch as your body relaxes.

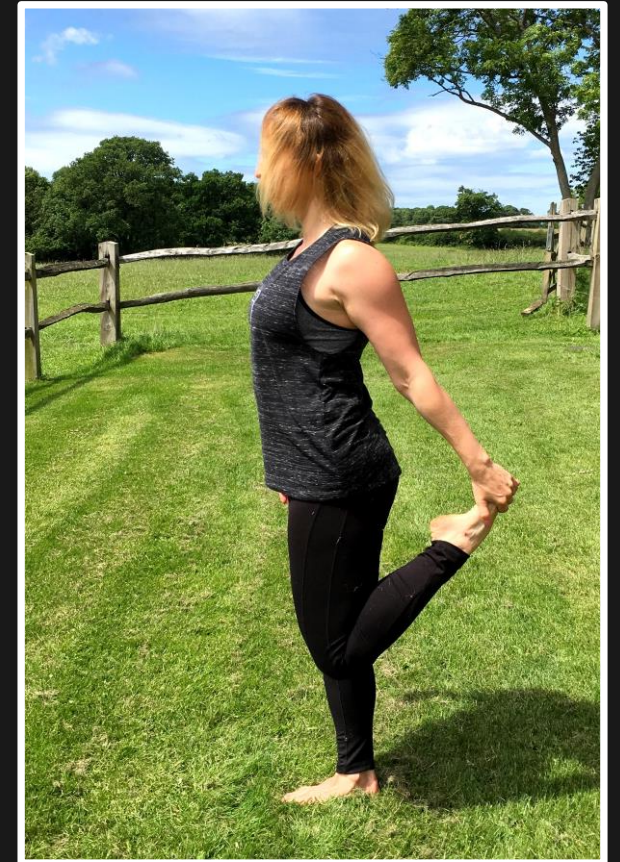


Standing Thigh Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Quads, Tibialis Anterior

Stand next to a wall or a chair and place a hand on it for balance. Bend the opposite knee, grabbing the ankle with the other hand. Standing up straight, pull the ankle towards the bottom.

To increase the stretch, push hips forwards.



Lying Thigh Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Quads, Tibialis Anterior

Lie on your front. Bend one knee, grabbing the ankle with the hand on the same side. Pull the ankle towards the bottom pushing hips forward into the ground.

Increase the stretch by using both hands to pull the ankle so that the knee and thigh raise off the floor. Increase it further by raising chest off the floor and pulling the ankle higher.





Lying Quad Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Quads

Lie on back and bend a leg outwards from the knee, so that the heel is resting next to your bottom. To increase the stretch, pull your heel closer to your bottom.

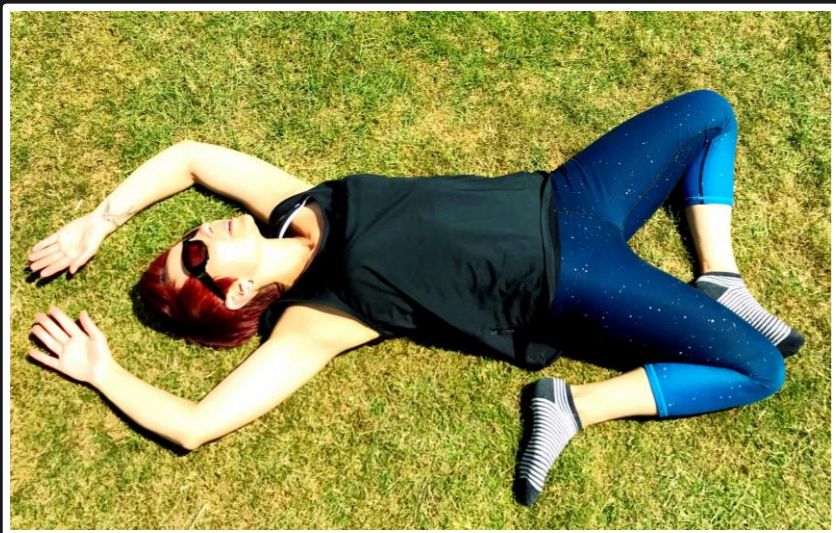


Lying IT Band Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Quads, Piriformis, Tensor Fasciae Latae, IT Band (not actually a muscle!)

Lie on back and bend the leg outwards from the knee, so that the heel is resting next to your bottom. Place the heel of the other leg on top of the bent knee. Use the heel to push the underneath leg backwards and down towards the floor.

To increase the stretch, use the hand to pull the heel of the underneath leg closer to bottom.





Standing Hip Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Tensor Fasciae Latae

Stand up straight and cross one leg in front of the other. Shift body weight onto the straight leg. Push the hip of the straight leg out, tilting the body away from it. Gently move hip forwards and backwards until the stretch is felt.

To increase the stretch, raise arm above your head and increase the lean away from the hip.





Kneeling Hip Flexor

Muscles Stretched: Rectus Femoris, Iliopsoas

Kneel on one knee and place the other foot on the floor in front of you. Push hips forward, keeping chest up.

To increase the stretch, walk the front leg forward and push hips further forward. Lifting the arms above the head will further increase the stretch.





Seated Groin Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Adductors, Glutes

Sitting on the floor, place the soles of the feet together pull them in towards the groin. Hold feet with hands, and use the elbows to push the knees down towards the floor.

To increase the stretch, pull feet in closer and push the knees further towards the floor.



Standing Groin Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Adductors, Gracilis

Stand with feet wide apart, pointing out at a 45 degree angle. Keeping back straight, move the torso to one side and bend the knee on the same side in a lunging motion.

To increase the stretch, allow the foot of the straight leg to rotate so that the toes point towards the ceiling.



Seated Hamstring

Muscles Stretched: Hamstrings

Sit on the floor with our legs extended in front of the body. Pull one foot in towards the groin. Reach down and grasp the ankle or below the knee of the straightened leg.

Keeping the leg straight, pull body towards the leg.

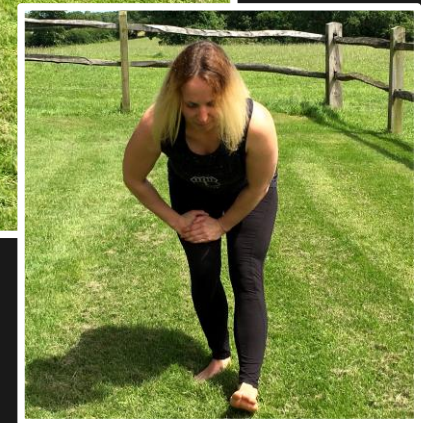


Standing Hamstring

Muscles Stretched: Hamstrings

Place one foot forward and one foot back. Keeping the back straight, lean forward towards the straight leg and raise the foot on the straight leg. Stabilise the body by placing hands on the top of the bent leg.

Increase the stretch by bending the leg further and increasing the forward lean.



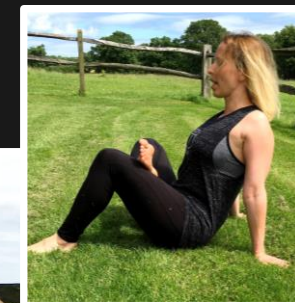


Seated Hip Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Glutes

Sit on the floor and bend the knees so that the feet are flat on the floor. Bend one leg across the other, so that the ankle rests on the thigh of the other leg.

Move bottom towards the foot on the floor, push the knee of the leg on top away from the body, and lean forward as far as possible, keeping the chest up.



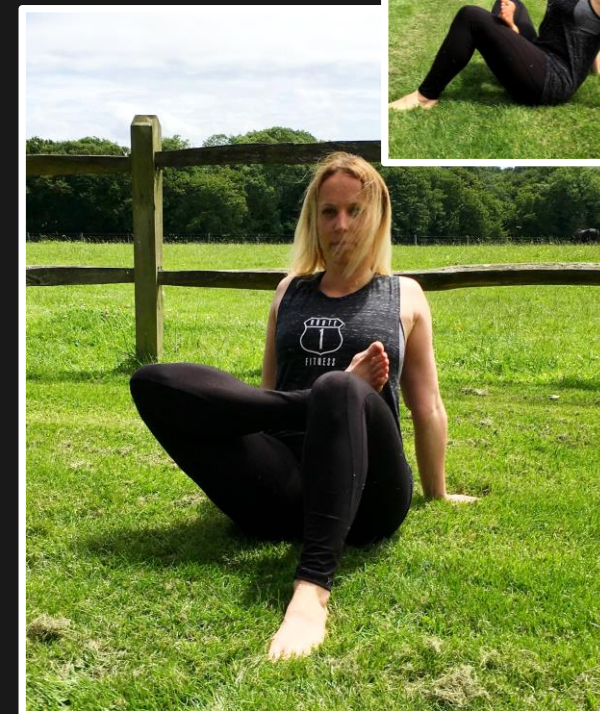
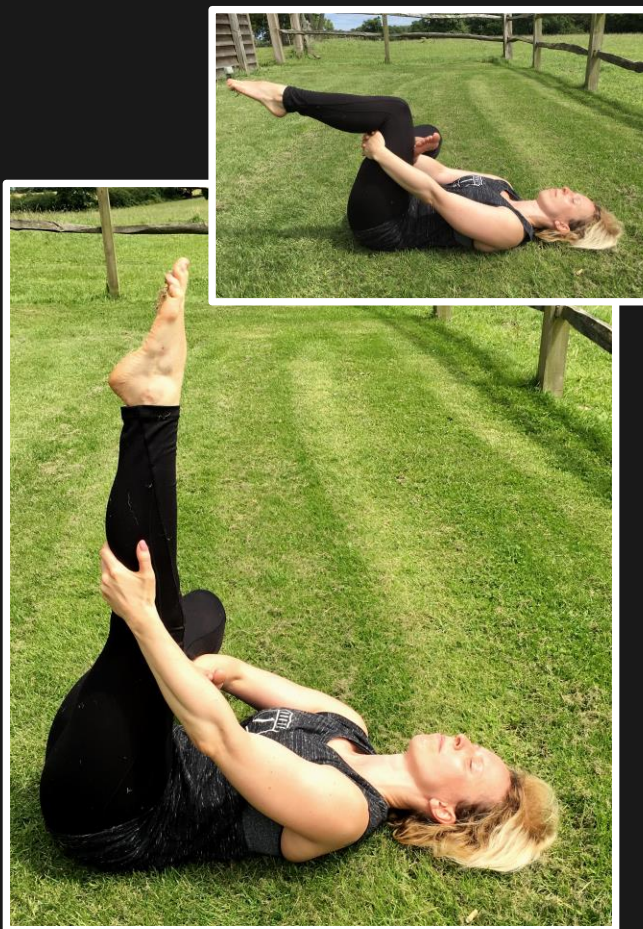
Lying Hip Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Glutes

Lie on your back and bend the knees so that the feet are flat on the floor. Bend one leg across the other, so that one ankle rests on the thigh of the other leg.

Grasp behind the thigh of the lower leg with both hands, and pull the leg towards the body.

To increase the stretch, straighten the leg that is being pulled into the body. Place the hands above the knee, and pull the leg closer to the body.



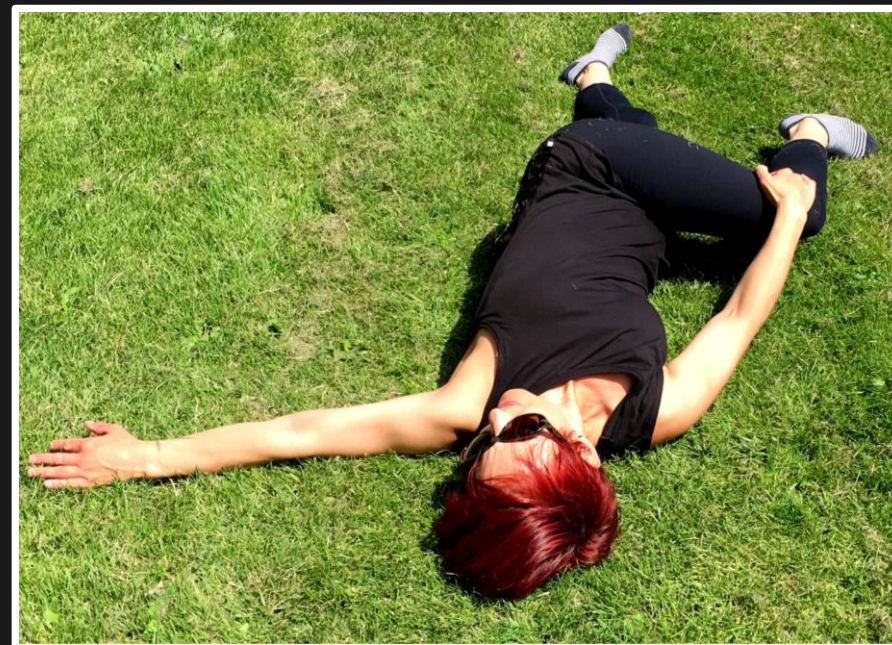


Lying Hip Twist

Muscles Stretched: Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Abdominal Obliques

Lie on back and extend arms out to the sides. Keeping shoulders on the floor, bend one knee and cross it over the other leg so that the foot of the bent leg is in front of the knee of the straight leg.

To increase the stretch, use the opposite hand to pull the knee up toward your shoulder whilst also pushing it further towards the ground

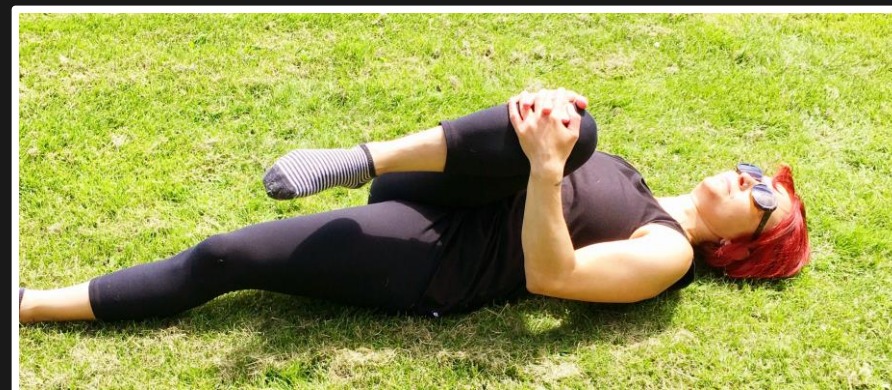


Lying Piriformis Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Piriformis

Lie on back and pull one knee up to the chest, grasp the knee with the opposite hand. Pull it towards the opposite shoulder and hold the stretch.

To increase the stretch, pull the knee closer to the shoulder





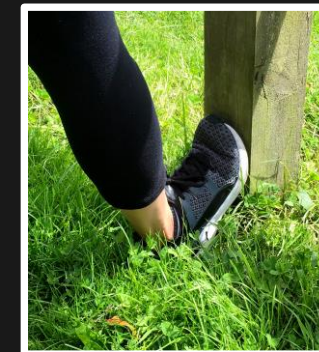
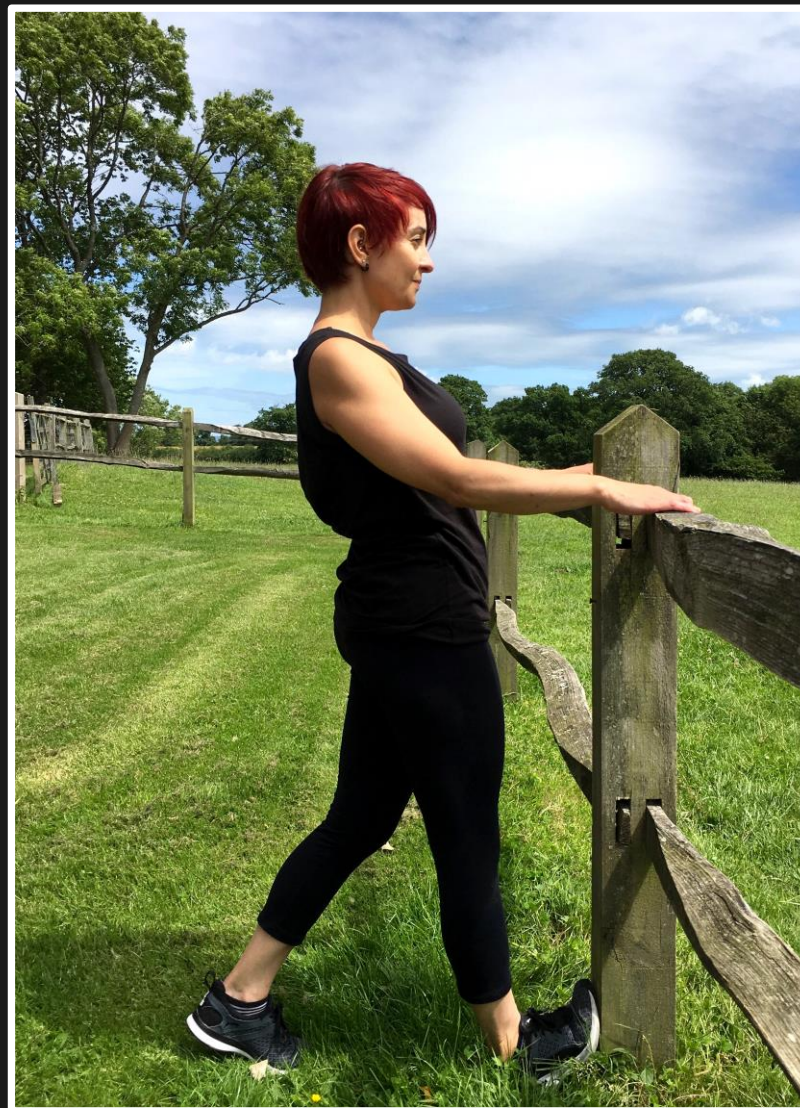
Calf Stretch - Wall

Muscles Stretched: Calves

Stand facing a wall. Place the heel on the floor as close to the wall as possible, and place ball of the foot on the wall. Lean body towards the wall until a stretch is felt.

To increase the stretch, push hips towards the wall and lean back from the waist.

Once the stretch is completed with the foot straight, rotate at the ankle so that the foot is pointing outwards, and continue to stretch. Rotate at the ankle so that the foot is pointing inwards, then stretch again.



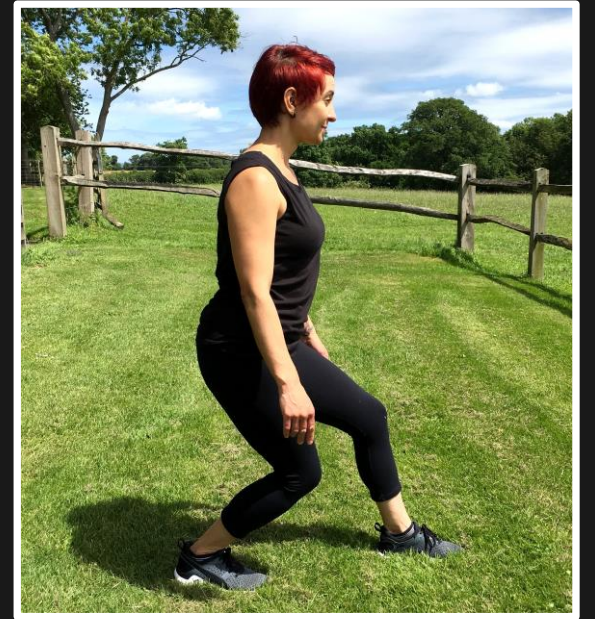


Calf Stretch – Standing 1

Muscles Stretched: Soleus

Stand with one leg in front of the other. Bend both knees, but emphasis the bend on the back knee.

Keep the heel of the back foot on the floor, whilst keeping most of the weight on the front of the foot.

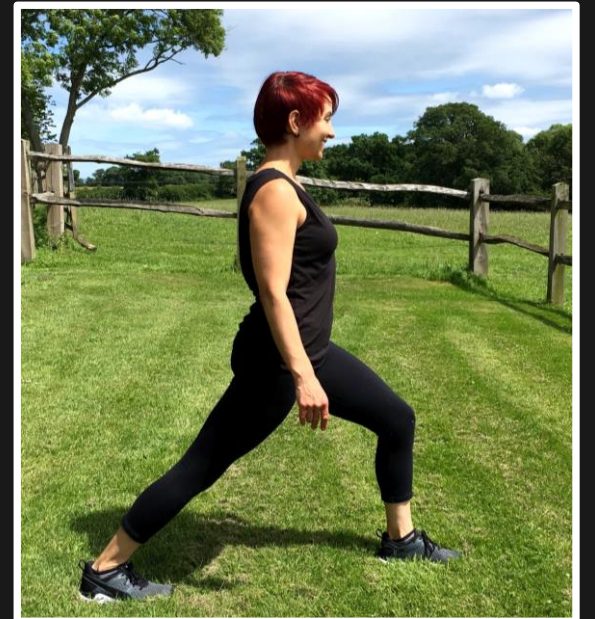


Calf Stretch – Standing 2

Muscles Stretched: Gastrocnemius, Achilles Tendon (not a muscle!)

Stand with one leg in front of the body, and one extended behind. Bend the front leg and lean body forward. Ensure that the heel remains on the floor.

To increase the stretch, shuffle the rear foot backwards.





Shin Stretch

Muscles Stretched: Tibialis Anterior

Stand with feet shoulder width apart. Using a support (wall or back of a chair), shift the weight onto one leg and bend that knee.

Tuck the toes of the opposite leg under and place them on the ground, gently pushing the ankle away.

To increase the stretch, keep the toes tucked under and invert your foot by gently pushing the ankle outwards.

