

STRETCH GUIDE



Standing Hamstring Stretch

Stretches neck, back, glutes, hamstrings, calves

- Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart, knees slightly bent, arms by your sides.
- Exhale as you bend forward at the hips, lowering your head toward floor, while keeping your head, neck and shoulders relaxed.
- Wrap your arms around backs of your legs and hold anywhere from 45 seconds to two minutes.
- Bend your knees and roll up when you're done.

STRETCH GUIDE



Piriformis Stretch

Stretches hips, back, glutes

The piriformis muscle is a deep internal hip rotator, located on the outside of the butt. Its primary role is external rotation, Atkins says. "Deep internal rotators, while small, produce a lot of the movement at the hip and are often overlooked." Since the piriformis crosses over the sciatic nerve, "if it is tight, it can result in sciatic nerve irritation," Cyrelson says. "Stretching this muscle can prevent potential future sciatica, or help treat it."

- Sit on the floor with both legs extended in front of you.
- Cross your right leg over your left, and place your right foot flat on the floor.
- Place your right hand on the floor behind your body.
- Place your left hand on your right quad or your left elbow on your right knee (as shown) and press your right leg to the left as you twist your torso to the right.

If the spinal rotation bothers your back, take it out and simply use your left hand to pull your right quad in and to the left

STRETCH GUIDE

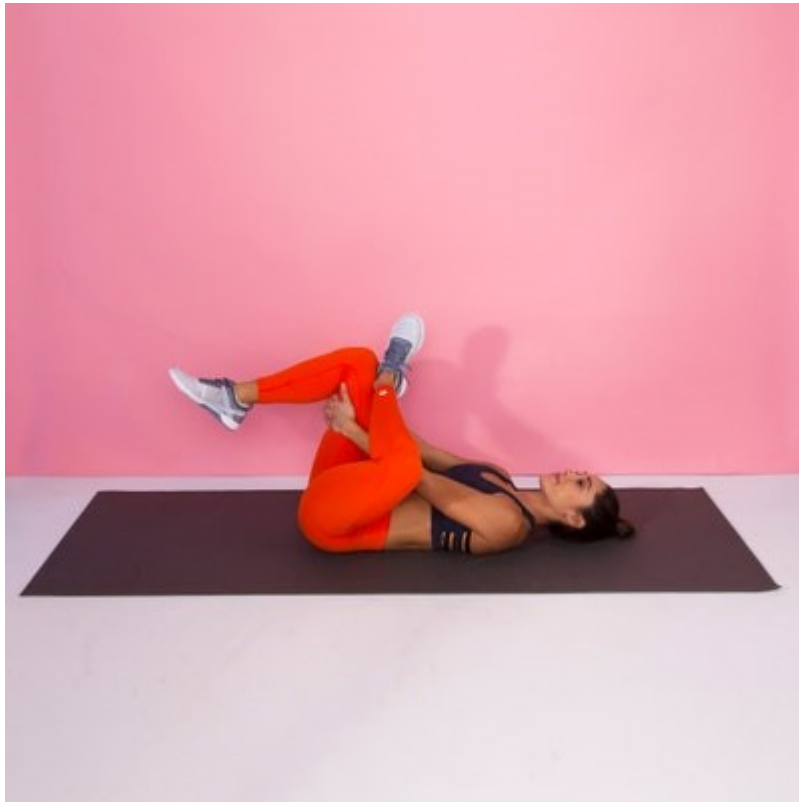


Figure Four Stretch

Stretches hips, glutes, lower back, hamstrings

"This specifically stretches the piriformis and iliopsoas muscles (essentially your hip rotator and flexor muscles) and the IT band. Because of this and the passive nature of the pose, it is an excellent and gentle approach to helping relieve symptoms associated with sciatica and knee pain.

Lie on your back with your feet flat on the floor.

- Cross your left foot over your right quad.
- Lift your right leg off the floor. Grab onto the back of your right leg and gently pull it toward your chest.
- When you feel a comfortable stretch, hold there.
- Hold for 30 seconds to 2 minutes.
- Switch sides and repeat.

STRETCH GUIDE



Figure Four Stretch

Stretches hips, glutes, lower back, hamstrings

"This specifically stretches the piriformis and iliopsoas muscles (essentially your hip rotator and flexor muscles) and the IT band. Because of this and the passive nature of the pose, it is an excellent and gentle approach to helping relieve symptoms associated with sciatica and knee pain.

Lie on your back with your feet flat on the floor.

- Cross your left foot over your right quad.
- Lift your right leg off the floor. Grab onto the back of your right leg and gently pull it toward your chest.
- When you feel a comfortable stretch, hold there.
- Hold for 30 seconds to 2 minutes.
- Switch sides and repeat.

STRETCH GUIDE



Butterfly Stretch

Stretches hips, glutes, back, thighs

- Sit tall on the floor with the soles of your feet together, knees bent out to sides.
- Hold onto your ankles or feet, engage your abs, and slowly lower your body toward your feet as far as you can while pressing your knees toward the floor.
- If you're too tight to bend over, simply press your knees down. Hold this stretch for 30 seconds to 2 minutes.

Stretches hips, glutes, back, thighs

STRETCH GUIDE



Knee to Chest Stretch

Stretches lower back, hips, hamstrings

- Lie on your back with both legs extended.
- Pull your right knee into your chest, while keeping the left leg straight and your lower back pressed into the floor.
- Hold for 30 seconds to 2 minutes.

Repeat on the other leg.

STRETCH GUIDE



Knees to Chest

Stretches lower back, glutes

- Lie on your back and pull your knees into your chest with both hands.
- Keep your lower back on the floor.
- Hold for 30 seconds to 2 minutes.

STRETCH GUIDE



Lying Quad Stretch

Stretches quads

- Lie on one side.
- Keep your bottom leg straight and bend your top knee so your foot is by your butt.
- Hold your top foot with your hand, pulling it toward your butt.
- Keep your hips stable so you're not rocking back as you pull.
- Hold for 30 seconds to 2 minutes.
- Switch sides and repeat.

STRETCH GUIDE



Seated Shoulder Squeeze

relieves poor posture and releases tension in the upper back

- Sit on the floor with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
- Clasp your hands behind your lower back.
- Straighten and extend your arms and squeeze your shoulder blades together.
- Do this for 3 seconds, and then release. Repeat 5 to 10 times

STRETCH GUIDE



Child's Pose — 1 to 3 minutes

Child's Pose takes the pressure off your lower back by elongating and aligning the spine, which decompresses it and gives you a nice stretch

- **Kneel on your mat with your knees hip width apart and your feet together behind you. Take a deep breath in, and as you exhale, lay your torso over your thighs.**
- **Try to lengthen your neck and spine by drawing your ribs away from your tailbone and the crown of your head away from your shoulders.**
- **Rest your forehead on the ground, with your arms extended out in front of you.**
- **Hold for one to three minutes.**

STRETCH GUIDE



Cat/Cow — 1 to 3 minutes

Cat/Cow also helps you get familiar with what your neutral spine is—not too arched and not too rounded—which can help improve posture.

- **Start on all fours with your shoulders over your wrists and hips over knees.**
- **Take a slow inhale, and on the exhale, round your spine and drop your head toward the floor (this is the “cat” posture).**
- **Inhale and lift your head, chest, and tailbone toward the ceiling as you arch your back for “cow.”**
- **Do this for one to three minutes.**