



## H3 Stretch & Relaxation

### Benefits of Stretching

- Increases flexibility
- Reduces muscle soreness by flushing out lactic acid
- Increases range of motion in the joints

### Guidelines

- Warm up muscles prior to stretching
  - Never stretch beyond what is comfortable for you
- Use slow, controlled movements
  - Hold stretches for 20–30 seconds
- Breathe throughout the stretch
- Wear comfortable clothing
  - Turn the lights low and play relaxing music
- Close your eyes and relax

### Warm up

- Perform at least 5 minutes of low-impact movement
- Ex. Marching in place, thermal walk, relaxed bike ride

### Stretches (all take place lying on back)

#### Toe Stretch

- Wiggle each toe several times

#### Wrist and Finger Stretch

- Raise right arm to ceiling
- Gently rotate wrist, clockwise and counter-clockwise
- With arm still help upward, make the "OK" sign with each fingers several times
- Repeat with left arm

#### Neck Stretch

- Roll head to left side (left ear to mat)
- Bring back to center
  - Gently move chin to chest, pushing back of neck to the floor
  - Roll head to right side (right ear to mat)

#### Ankle Stretch

- Bring right leg up to 90 degree angle
- Gently rotate ankle, clockwise and counterclockwise

#### Shoulder Stretch

- Bring one arm straight across chest
- Use opposite hand to pull arm closer to chest





- Release and repeat with opposite arm

#### Single Hamstring Stretch

- Bend right knee, placing right foot flat on floor
- Place yoga strap under arch of left foot, holding one end in each hand
- Extend left leg and slowly lift it toward ceiling
- Pull extended leg
- Return left leg to starting position

#### Inner thigh stretch

- Start with knees bent and feet flat on floor
- Place soles of feet together, allowing knees to fall open to floor

#### Glute stretch

- Start with knees bent and feet flat on the floor
- Place yoga strap behind left thigh
- Place your right ankle on your left knee
- Gently pull strap toward chest while lifting left foot off floor
- Release and repeat on other leg

#### Diagonal Hip Stretch

- Place yoga strap under arch of left foot, holding ends in left hand
- Extend leg toward ceiling
- Slowly allow left leg out to fall toward floor on left side
- Return to starting position
- Slowly allow left leg to fall across your body to the right
- Avoid allowing your left hip to roll over your right hip
- Release and repeat on other leg

#### Low Back Stretch

- Bring right knee in toward chest
- Holding under the knee, lace fingers
- Release and repeat with other knee

#### *Variation:*

- Bring both knees in toward chest together

#### Back Massage

- Bring both knees in to chest together
- Hold behind knees, lace fingers
- Gently rock from side to side, massaging back

#### Full Body Stretch

- Fully extend arms behind head and reach fingertips to wall behind you
- Fully extend legs and stretch to opposite wall

