

# Stretching for Walkers and Runners

## General tips on stretching

- **Never stretch a cold muscle.** Muscles need adequate blood flow to relax, and only a relaxed muscle can be stretched safely and comfortably. If you're tight before a running or walking workout, walk or jog very easily for 5-10 minutes first, then stretch the muscles before moving on into more vigorous training.
- **Stretch both sides of a muscle group to maintain muscle balance.** For instance, stretch the back and front of the lower legs with calves and shin stretches, and both sides of the upper legs with quadricep and hamstring stretches.
- **Breathe as you stretch!** Keep your breath even and slow. Exhale as you move into a stretch, and then breathe slowly in and out as you hold the stretch.
- **Hold each stretch for 15-30 seconds.** Consciously relax the muscle as you slowly breathe into the stretch.



Calf stretch



Achilles and soleus stretch



Hamstring stretch



Quadriceps stretch



Groin/adductor stretch



Piriformis stretch



Lower back stretch



Hip-flexor stretch



TFL/IT band stretch

# Core Workout for Walkers and Runners

“Core” work—strength training for the muscles of the pelvis, lower back, hips and abdomen—provides support to your spine for just about any activity. is very important for improving posture and preventing injuries. What exactly makes up your core? Core strength refers to the muscles of the back, abs, hips and pelvic floor. Work towards 2x20 sets unless otherwise instructed.



**Side and Forward Plank-** Ensure that transverse abdominals are engaged to protect the lower back. Make sure the butt is not high in the air or that the back is swayed back. The goal is to be long and strong like a wooden plank. Start on the knee and progress to full extension and then add lift. Start by holding for 30 seconds and build to 60 seconds.

**Gluteus medius leg lift-** Lying on your side with hips stacked bend the lower leg to 45 degrees to help with stability. With a straight top leg reach back 30 degrees. You should feel this in your gluteal (butt) muscles. Raise and lower the top leg 6-12” keeping the hips stacked.



**Bridge with addition of leg lift-** Ensure that the hips stay in alignment and do not shift with leg lift. Distribute weight equally between feet and shoulders.



**Superman-** Lie prone on the ground with the arms extended over head and the head in a neutral relaxed position. Lift the left leg off the ground while the right hand reaches up and forward. Hold for 1-2 seconds. Ensure that the abdominal muscles are engaged. Return to start position and repeat with the right leg and left arm. Do not allow the torso to twist or hips to move. Repeat.

**4-point with alternating leg and arm extension-** Start in table-top position with hands placed below the shoulders and knees placed under hips. Allow the eyes to gaze between the hands. Lift left leg and right arm only to the point that the hips can maintain their position. Do not let the hips sag. The goal is to allow the arms and legs to become parallel to the ground. Bring back to start position. Repeat with right leg and left arm.



**Wall squats-** Ensure that the ball is placed in the mid-back area so there is room for it to move. Do not allow the knees to go beyond the front of the toes as you lower to a squat position. Squat no lower than 90 degrees. Ensure you feel pressure on the heels NOT the toes to keep this out of the knees as you return to standing



**Clam-** This can be done with or without a resist-a-band placed around the knees. Lying on side of the body start with legs bent at 45 degrees and your head resting on the floor. Keep hips stacked and rolled forward Do not allow the hips to roll back. Using the gluteal (butt) muscles lift knee 6-12”. This does not have to be a large movement. Return to start position

# Strength Workout for Walkers and Runners

Breathe through a 2-3 second cycle, exhaling on the exertion. Use slow controlled motions and ensure that your core muscles are engaged to protect your back. Do not let the weight stacks bang together.



**Leg presses**- Strengthens the quads, hamstrings and glutes. Place feet shoulder width apart, do not allow the knees to bend beyond 90-degrees. Press equally through all points of the foot with feet parallel or slightly pointed out. Do not lock out your knees.



**Hamstring curls**- Position yourself on the machine so the pad hits your lower leg just above the ankle but below the belly of the calf muscle. Ensure that the upper pad is pressed lightly against the thigh. Using the hamstrings, bend your knees, pulling your feet towards your butt.



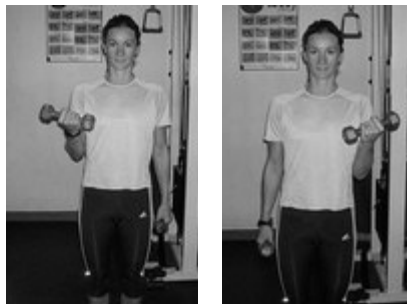
**Leg extensions**- Position yourself on the machine so the pads hit your lower legs just above your feet, and so the knees are bent at 90 degrees. Fully extend your legs without moving off of the seat or locking out your knees. Your upper body should remain still.



**Seated row**- Sit with your legs bent, back straight and feet against the block. Allow your arms to extend to feel a stretch in your lats. Pull the weight into your body until your hands touch your torso. Finish by squeezing the shoulder blades together, keeping your back straight.



**Calf raises**- Standing with your legs shoulder-width apart on a step slowly rise up onto your toes as far as you can to a count of 3 and then slowly drop your heels as low as you can to a count of 3. Hold onto a chair or a rail for balance.



**Bicep curls**- Start position is with both arms at your sides. Bend left arm at the elbow keeping elbow close to the body return to start position and repeat with the right arm. Ensure that upper body remains still. Movement is only at the arm.



**Lat pull-downs**- Hold the bar in a comfortable but wide grip (10 o'clock and 2 o'clock). Place your knees underneath the pad and your feet on the ground. Pull the bar down as you exhale to a count of 3 until it touches the top of your chest then return to the top position. Don't lock out your elbows.



**Tricep extension**- Start with the rope at chest level with hands together while keeping the elbows close to the body. Keeping your back straight and looking ahead, lower the rope and bring your hands to either side of your body. Do not allow the body to sway or the back to move.



**Flys with free weights**- Lying on a ball or bench, hold equal weights in each hand. With feet firmly planted on the ground and core engaged, start with your hands together above you and then slowly lower weights to each side. Do not go beyond the plane of the body and keep the elbows soft. Lower and then return to start position each to a count of 3.



**Reverse flys with free weights**- Sit with your legs bent, back straight and feet against the block. Allow your arms to extend to feel a stretch in the lats. Pull the weight into your body until your hands touch your torso. Finish the movement by squeezing the shoulder blades together, keeping your back straight.