



Pre and Post run advice

There are a couple of simple things we can do pre and post run to help us run better, recover faster, and stay injury free.

Stretching

Everyone hates stretching. After a long run the last thing you feel like doing is standing around while you hold that perfect stretch, however it's important to stretch to avoid injury. Here are a few tips and examples of some stretches you can do before and after a run.

Before - DYNAMIC stretching

Dynamic stretching loosens and activates your muscles ready for your run. There are a couple of simple dynamic stretches that you can do wherever you are, ready for your run.

Both these dynamic stretches loosen up and activate all your leg muscles, inner and outer thighs, hips, hamstrings, calves and quadriceps, through full range of motion.

Leg swings

Hold onto a sturdy object, stand on one leg and simply swing the other leg forwards and backwards. Your range of movement should improve as you begin to loosen up those muscles and joints. Do 20, then swap legs and do another 20.

Walking lunges

This is a fun one to do when in a public space... Take a large step forward with your right leg, and bend the knee until your thigh is parallel to the floor and knee is aligned with your ankle. Do not go beyond this point or you'll cause damage to your knee. Push back upward, draw your left foot even with your right and step forward with the left. Do 20 in total (10 on each side).

Heel kicks

Slowly run forward kick your heels up to touch your bum, ensure that your hands and arms are still moving as they would be if you were running. Do this for approximately 20 seconds.

After - STATIC stretching

When you have finished your run, don't just stop. Ensure that you slow your running pace before having a short walk to finish. You will then be ready to do some static stretching.

The following stretches target the major leg muscles to maintain healthy flexibility and range of motion. Hold all stretches for 30 seconds on each side.

Kneeling hip flexor and hamstring: From a kneeling position, plant the right foot on the ground in front of you, so the leg is bent 90 degrees, with the knee and ankle aligned. Keeping your back straight, press forward into your right hip while keeping your left knee pressed into the ground, stretching your left hip and right hamstring. To increase the stretch to the left hip flexors, squeeze and contract the glute muscles of your left hip.

Standing quad: Stand with legs together. Bend your left leg, bringing your heel toward your butt, and grasp your left foot with your left hand. Press your shoelaces into your hand, so that your leg does the stretching instead of pulling up with your hand.

Standing calf: Stand facing a wall with your hands on the wall at about chest level. Placing the ball of your right foot up against the wall, heel touching the floor, gently lean into the wall until you feel a stretch in your calf while keeping your leg straight.