

The AIDS/LifeCycle Ride is a seven day, challenging ride. We want nothing more than for all the riders to enjoy their ride and complete as many miles each day as they would wish. In order to complete the ride without health challenges, you must prepare by training. Not only on your bike, but also preparing your core strength and muscle length. Note that if any movement is painful, you should stop doing that stretch/exercise and seek medical assistance for guidance. Pain is your body sending you a message and you must translate that through either experience or a medical professional.

WHY STRETCH & STRENGTHEN: You must have good range of motion in order to prevent your muscles from tightening on the long days on your bike. If you are not familiar with effective stretches and your range of motion is already limited it will make your days on the ride much less enjoyable. Similarly, you must have good core strength to maintain healthy riding posture all day on your bike. Otherwise, your core muscles will begin to let you down. As muscles fatigue, the body builds work-around patterns to continue pushing to reach your goals. These work-around patterns use secondary muscles to do the work of primary muscles and they can't do that without causing more pain and tension in muscles and joints.

WHEN TO STRETCH: Stretching before exercise is a good general practice. However, the stretches that make the largest difference in your program will be those done after exercise. When the muscles are hot, like after exercise, they will stretch with less resistance and retain their new length much more efficiently than after a light warm-up or when cold. Stretching after exercise helps to avoid muscle soreness and directs the muscle repair systems in the body to strengthen the connective tissue of the muscles stretched. The most important time to stretch during training is post-ride & at breaks. However, on the AIDS/LifeCycle Ride in June you should stretch every morning, at every rest stop & at base camp when you arrive.

HOW FAR TO TAKE A STRETCH: Stretching should never be painful. Only go far enough to feel "the edge of discomfort," no further. If you're trying a new stretch and you don't feel the target muscle stretching, review your instructions and try again with careful attention to the details of form. Feel free to call me if you have any questions, I'll be happy to help.

HOW LONG TO HOLD EACH STRETCH: The Golden Rule of stretching is to always hold a stretch for at least 30 seconds. If you are having problems with a muscle group, hold all stretches for that group one full minute.

SYMMETRY: Please honor your body's natural goal of symmetry and stretch both sides of the body evenly with each stretch performed.

1. **CALF STRETCH -2 STAGES:** GASTROCNEMIUS & SOLEUS

- Find either a curb/step to drop your heel off or a pole or wall to push against.
- Use either position to stretch your calves, one leg at a time.
- IT IS VITAL TO STRETCH WITH YOUR KNEE STRAIGHT **AND** WITH IT BENT.
- There are two layers of muscles to be stretched in the calf and they must be stretched separately for 30 seconds each.
- Repeat on the other side.



Calf stretch



Straight knee version



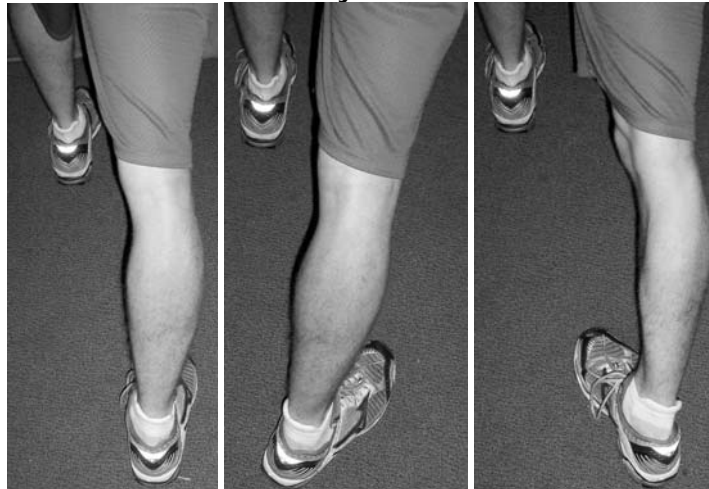
Bent knee version



Step-straight knee Step-bent knee

CALF STRETCH HEEL-DETAIL

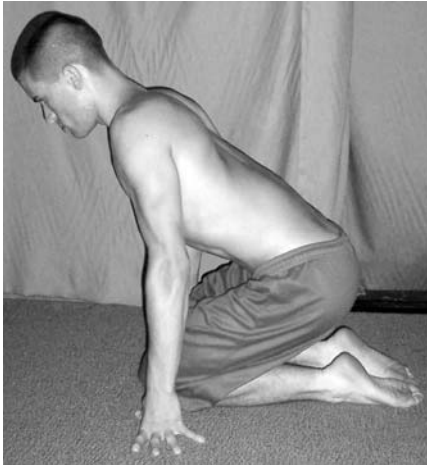
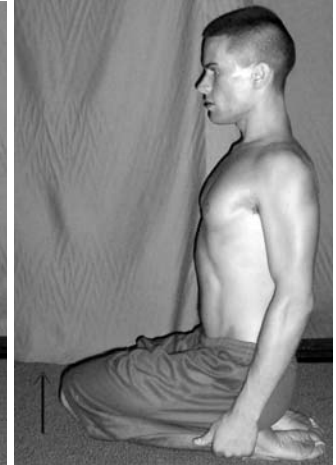
It is possible, when stretching the calf, to isolate the inside or outside head of the calf. Generally, it is best to stretch with the heel/foot straight unless your doctor or physical therapist directs you to address either head of the calf muscle individually.



Like this.....NOT this.....OR this.

2. FRONT OF SHIN: TIBIALIS ANT.

- Kneel with your knees & feet hip width apart.
- Place the tops of your feet on the ground and slowly sit back onto or toward your heels.
- Take your time if your shins feel tight.
- Don't force the stretch if you can't sit on your heels.
- Go only as far as you need to achieve that "edge of discomfort."
- If you're sitting on your heels & still don't feel a stretch, slowly raise one knee at a time to add length to the stretch. With this last option, be sure to repeat on the other side.

**Step one****Sit back until you feel a stretch****Sitting on heels****Raising one knee**

NOTE THAT YOU DO NOT HAVE TO GO AS FAR AS THE MODEL IN THE PICTURES. ONLY TAKE A STRETCH AS FAR AS YOU NEED TO ACHIEVE THAT EDGE OF DISCOMFORT. THAT IS WHERE YOU WILL ACHIEVE YOUR BEST RESULTS.

3. LATERAL SIDE OF LOWER LEG: PERONEALS

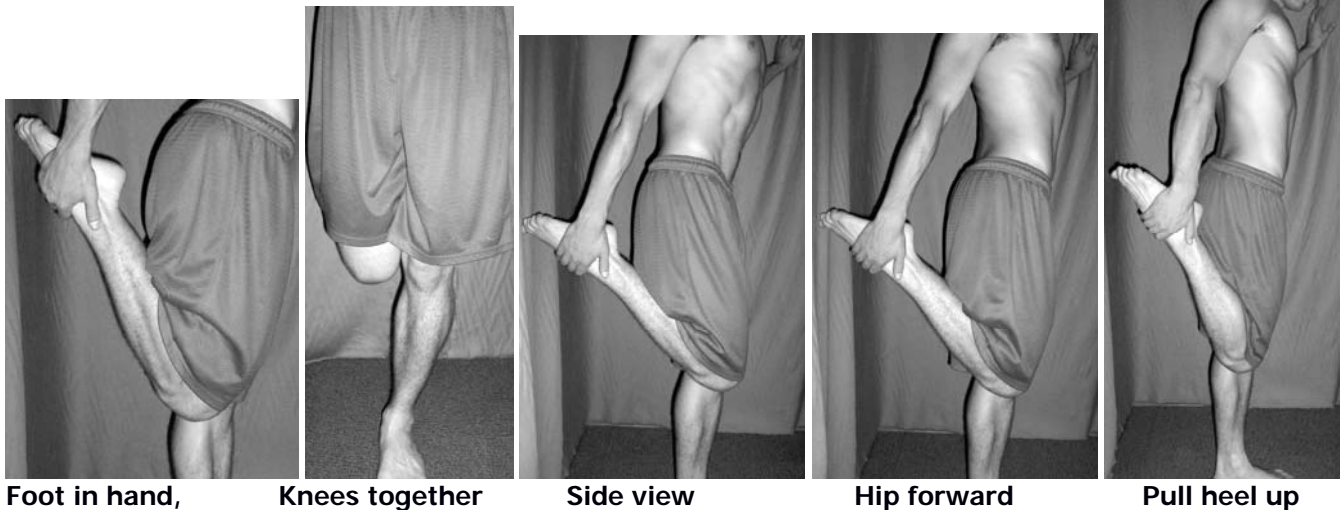
- Holding onto something solid for stability, in a controlled manner, slowly & gently allow one ankle to roll onto the outside of your foot.
- You should feel a stretch on the lateral (out)side of your lower leg.
- Repeat with the other leg.

**Start position****Finish position****Start detail****Finish detail**

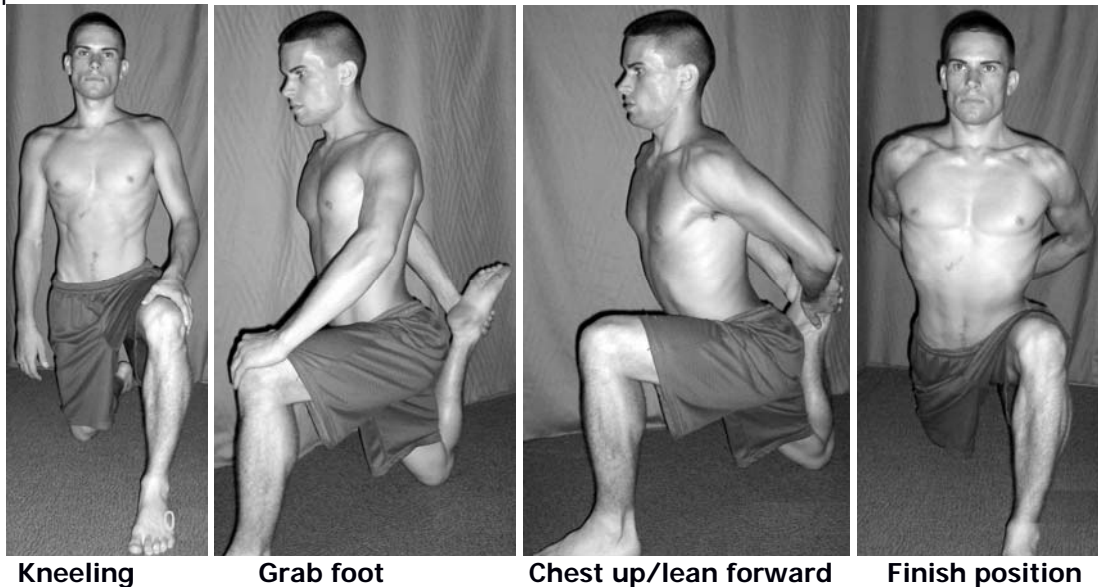
4a. FRONT OF THIGH STRETCH: QUADRICIPS

- Holding onto something solid for stability, raise one foot behind you & hold it with your hand on the same side.
- Stand up straight, PLACE YOUR KNEES SIDE-BY-SIDE, and PUSH YOUR HIP (on the stretching side) FORWARD.
- If that isn't a stretch, slowly pull the foot toward your glutes.
- Repeat on the other side.

If you have really long quads & don't get a stretch with this version, you may need to do the 3-POINT QUAD STRETCH below.

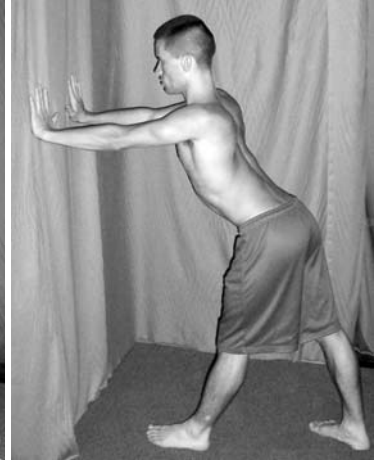
**4b. 3-POINT QUAD STRETCH: Alternative**

- Kneel on your right knee, place your left foot on the ground in front of you, left knee bent a little less than 90°.
- Reach back with one or both hands to grab your right foot.
- Hold it there while you raise your chest up high, back straight.
- If you're still not in a stretch, shift your weight forward, keeping your chest high.
- Do not allow your front knee to bend beyond 90°.
- Repeat on the other side.



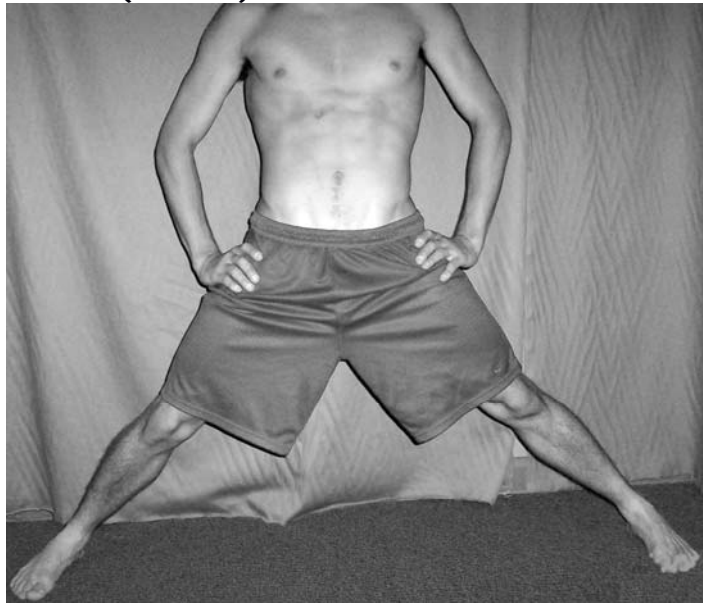
5. BACK OF THIGH STRETCH: HAMSTRINGS

- Standing tall, a little more than arms' length from a wall, place your left foot in front and your right foot in back as if you'd just taken a step. Right foot 2 to 3 feet behind your left foot.
- Align your right heel directly behind your left heel.
- Turn your right toes out about 30°.
- Square your hips to the front foot (left hip back/right hip forward), straighten your knees & arch your low back (see 2nd picture below).
- Arch your lower back and try to maintain that arch as you bend forward from the hips.
- Reach for the wall and then walk your hands down until you feel the stretch in the back of your left thigh.
- Repeat on the other side.

**Foot position****Square your hips****Arch your low back****Reach for the wall****6a. GROIN STRETCH:** ADDUCTORS

- From a standing position, widen your legs, with your knees straight, until you can feel a slight stretch in your inner thighs with your hips back.
- Now, slowly shift your hips forward till you can feel a general groin stretch.

Do this Adductor stretch and one of the other two below (6b or 6c).

**Place your feet as wide as possible****Stand up straight, push your hips forward**

6b. INSIDE THIGH STRETCH: ADDUCTORS

- From a standing position, widen your legs, with your knees straight, until you can feel a stretch in your inner thighs.
- Bend at the waist & reach straight down from your shoulders for the ground.
- You can deepen the stretch by walking your hands back between your legs.
- Mind your balance.

If this version is too hard on your knees, do the reverse butterfly version (6b) instead.



Reach for the floor



Shift weight & hands back

6c. REVERSE BUTTERFLY ADDUCTOR STRETCH: Alternative

- You may want an exercise mat or soft carpet for this stretch.
- Start on your hands & knees, move your knees as wide as they will go, turning your feet out.
- Brace your elbows directly below your shoulders.
- Now slowly shift your hips back toward your feet until you can feel a stretch in your inner thighs.



Knees wide as they go



Shift hips back toward feet

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7. OUTSIDE OF HIP & THIGH STRETCH: ABDUCTORS

- Stand at a little less than arm's length from a wall or pole for stability.
- Face 90° away from wall/pole on your right side, bracing yourself with the wall/pole.
- Stand on your left foot and cross your right foot in front, placing your whole right foot solidly on the ground so you can put weight into it.
- Push your left hip out to the side as far as you can. Really push it out!
- Keeping your body in one plane, bend to your right side.
- Reach your left hand to the top of your head.
- If possible, turn your chest upward toward the sky. Do not stretch into pain.
- Repeat on the other side.



Facing 90° from wall



Cross inside foot



PUSH your hip out



Hand to head



Turn your chest to the up

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8a. STANDING GLUTE STRETCH: GLUTEUS MAXIMUS

- Stand on one leg, raise the other foot to knee level and cross it over the other knee.
- Bend at the hips, keeping your back as straight as possible and reach for the ground, a wall or a fence for stability.
- Repeat on the other side.



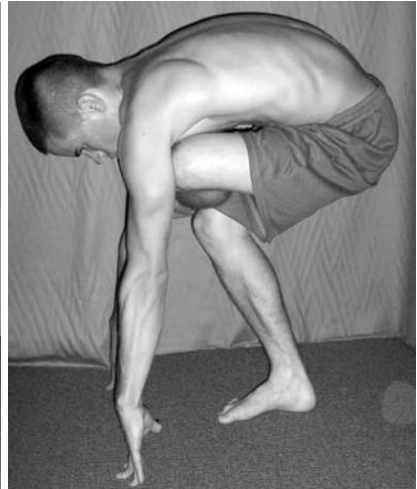
Cross knee



Side view



Reach for floor/wall



Side view

8b. SITTING GLUTE STRETCH: GLUTEUS MAXIMUS

- Sitting at about knee height, cross one ankle over the other knee.
- Bend at the waist, keeping your back as straight as possible until you feel the "edge of discomfort" in your glutes.
- Repeat on the other side.



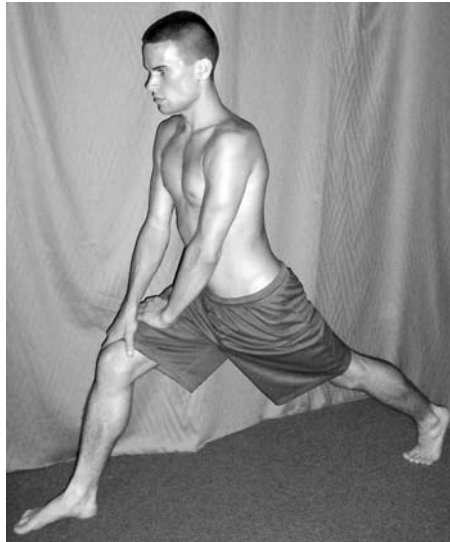
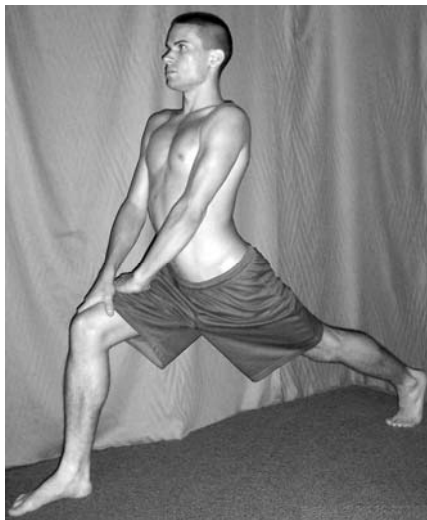
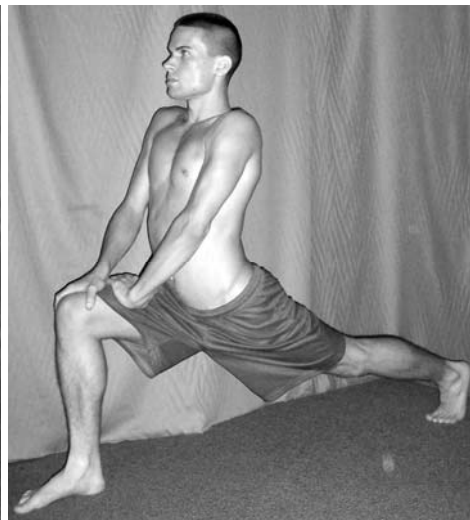
Cross your knee



Bend forward from the waist

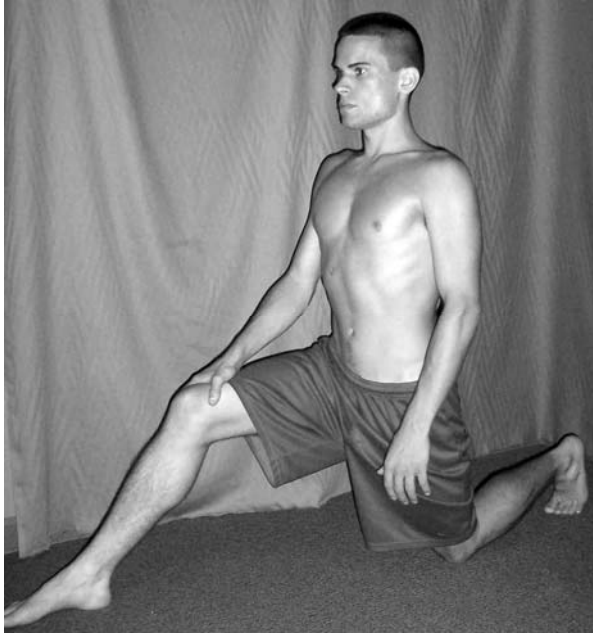
9a. STANDING HIP FLEXOR STRETCH: ILIOPSOAS

- Start in a wide stance and turn 90°, bringing your back heel off the floor and over your toes.
- Your front knee should be just shy of straight and your back knee should be locked straight.
- Draw your navel to your spine (stomach in), hold your torso upright and place your hands on your front knee to brace yourself upright.
- Next, shift your hips and torso evenly forward, bending your front knee, until you feel the stretch in the front of your left hip.
- If you don't feel the stretch, go back to the beginning of the instructions and make certain you keep your hips, and back straight.
- Don't allow your low back to curve as you shift forward.
- Repeat on the other side.

**Wide stance to start****90° turn, back knee straight****Heel detail****Keep your torso upright****Bend your front knee**

9b. KNEELING HIP FLEXOR STRETCH: ILIOPSOAS

- Start in a kneeling lunge on your left knee with your right foot out in front, on the ground.
- Your front knee should be just short of straight at this point.
- Draw your navel to your spine (stomach in), hold your torso upright and place one or both hands on your front knee to brace yourself upright.
- Next, shift your hips and torso evenly forward, bending your front knee, until you feel the stretch in the front of your left hip.
- If you don't feel the stretch, go back to the beginning of the instructions and make certain you keep your hips, and back straight.
- Don't allow your low back to curve as you shift forward.
- Repeat on the other side.



Front leg almost straight

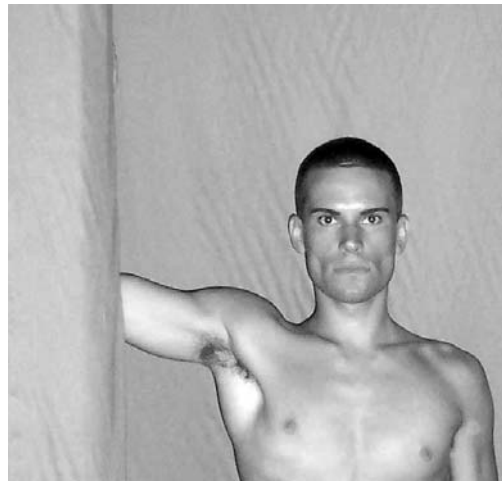
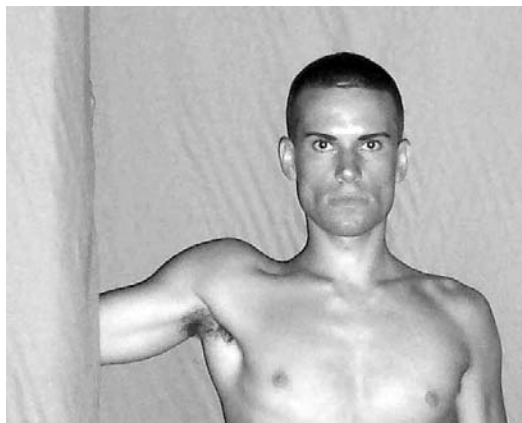
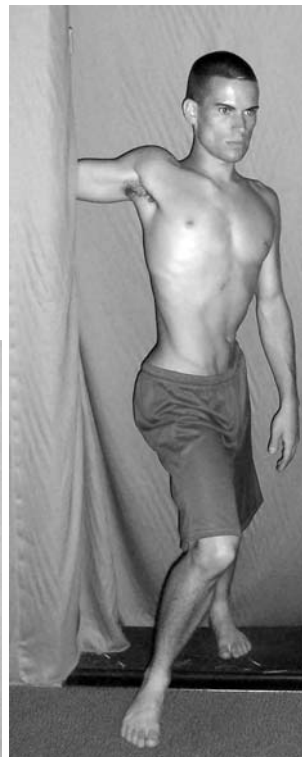


Chest up, bend your front knee

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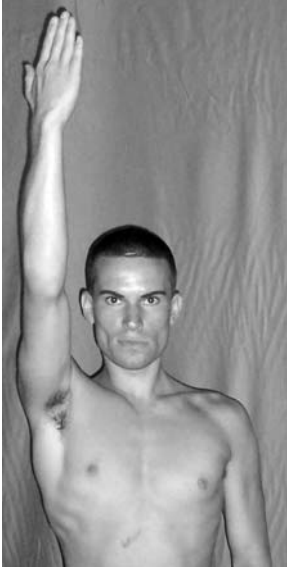
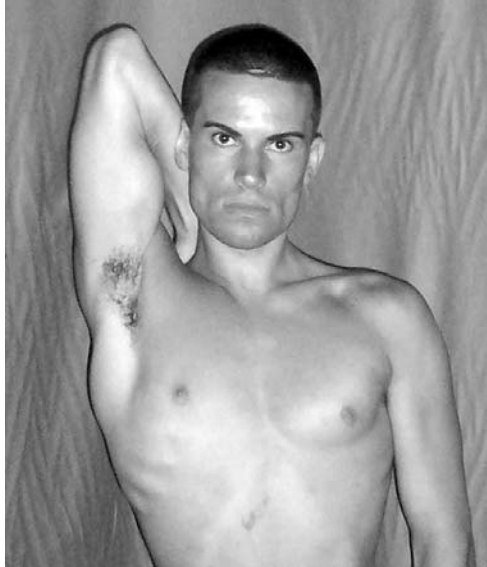
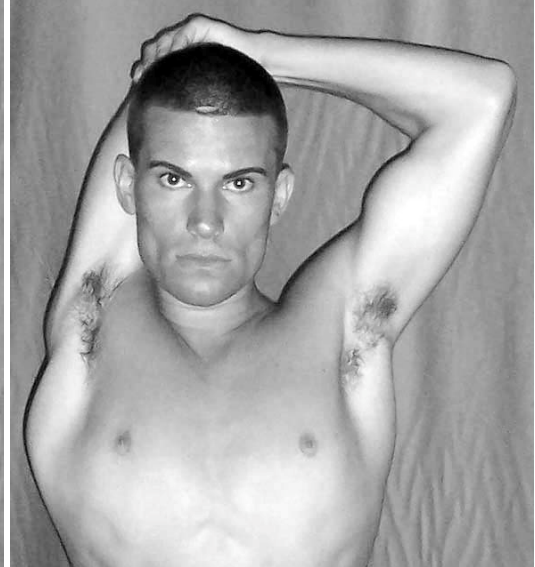
10. CHEST STRETCHES- 3 STAGES: PEC MAJOR & ANT. DELTOIDS

- Find a doorway or pole to push against.
- Place your right upper-arm straight out against the doorway/pole, with your elbow even with your shoulder (shoulder & elbow at 90°).
- Put your right foot forward, shift your torso forward and turn to the left.
- You should feel a stretch across the top of your chest muscle. Hold for 30 seconds.
- Slide your elbow up a couple inches so it's slightly higher than your shoulder and repeat the stretch. Hold for 30 seconds.
- This time you should feel the stretch at a downward angle across your chest, maybe in the front of your shoulder as well.
- Move your elbow slightly below your shoulder to stretch the very top of your chest muscle. Hold for 30 seconds.
- Now repeat all three stretches on the left side of your chest.

**Shoulder & Elbow at 90°****Elbow level****Elbow raised above shoulder****Elbow below shoulder****Shift forward and twist**

11. BACK OF ARM STRETCH: TRICEPS

- Reach one arm overhead and bend the elbow, extending your hand behind your neck or back.
- Reach up with the other hand to draw the elbow gently back until you feel that "edge of discomfort."
- Repeat on the other side.

**Reach arm overhead****Bend elbow behind head****Draw elbow toward back of head**

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12. FOREARM FLEXORS:

- Stand or sit with your elbows out evenly, hands together with the fingertips of one hand against the heel of the other hand.
- Press with the heel of the upper hand against the fingertips to extend the wrist back until you feel a stretch in the palm, the wrist or the lower part of the forearm.
- Repeat on the other side.

**Elbows out****Fingertips at palm****Press palm against fingers**

13. FOREARM EXTENSORS:

- Start with your right elbow in your side. Make a "soft fist" by lightly closing the fingers of your right hand.
- Place your left thumb on top of the soft fist.
- Wrap the fingers of your left hand around the soft fist.
- Relax your right hand completely.
- Using the left hand, curl the soft fist upward and outward toward the outside of your right shoulder.
- Hold for 30 seconds and repeat on the other side.



Elbow in side, make a soft fist



Thumb on top of fingers



Curl your fingers around the soft fist



Curl the wrist toward your shoulder

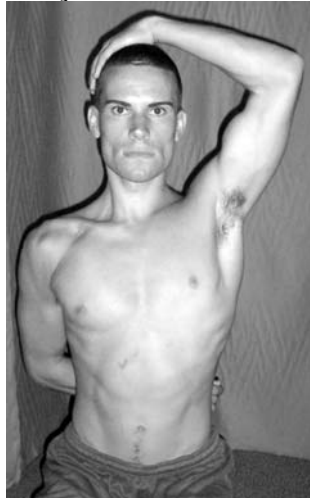
14. NECK SERIES: Many of the neck muscles attach on or just below the shoulder girdle (collar bone & shoulder blade). In order to stretch your neck, you need to lock one shoulder down by putting that arm behind your back. With the other hand you can gently stretch your head & neck muscles on the "locked down" side. Be sure to repeat the whole series on both sides. Also, be sure to do this series of stretches with good posture; sit up straight with your head held high.

14a. TOP OF TRAPEZIUS:

- Reach your hand across to the other side of your head.
- Pull your head straight over toward your shoulder.



Arm behind back



Hand on head



Pull straight toward other shoulder

14b. LEVATOR SCAPULAE:

- Turn your head 45° away from the "locked down" shoulder.
- Place your free hand over the side of your head to the back & pull your head gently forward at that 45° angle (toward your arm-pit).



Arm behind back



Hand on back of head



Pull toward your arm pit

14c. SCALENES:

- Turn your head toward the free hand side as far as it will go.
- Now reach up from behind, put your hand above your ear & gently pull your head over as if you would fold the other ear onto your shoulder blade.
- You should feel this stretch on the front side of your neck.

**Arm behind back****Hand over your ear****Pull your head back****14d. SCM:**

- Release the pressure from the last stretch but keep your head & hand in the same position.
- Now turn your head slightly to look up while you gently pull your head straight to the side (as in 14a).
- You should feel a stretch from the front of the neck to just behind your ear.

**14c Finish position****Turn to look up while...****Pull your head straight to the side**

*******Be sure to repeat each of the Neck Stretches on the other side.*******

The following exercises are intended to strengthen your core muscles for stability on your bike when riding for long hours. As with any exercise program, you should consider consulting your medical professional before you begin to be certain you won't injure yourself.

15. CRUNCHES: RECTUS ABDOMINUS, TRANSVERSUS ABDOMINUS, ABDOMINAL OBLIQUES

- Lay on your back with your knees at a little more than 90°.
- Place your fingertips on either side of the back of your head – without lacing them together.
- Spread your elbows as wide as they'll go and keep them there throughout.
- Put your eyes on a spot on the ceiling you can just see under your eyebrows and keep them there throughout the crunches.
- Tilt your pelvis back (pelvic thrust) so your low back goes flat on the floor. Keep it there.
- Now raise up to the starting position, the point where your shoulder blades just leave the floor.
- THIS IS YOUR START POSTION.
- Now slowly crunch upward, keeping your neck straight and your eyes on the spot on the ceiling. Do not strain your neck.
- Use your stomach muscles only, keeping your pelvis perfectly still. Your movement should only be an inch or two. Then slowly lower to the start position, ready for your next repetition.
- Repeat your slow crunch motion, preventing your shoulder blades from touching the floor until you have finished your first set of however many you can do before your stomach gives out.
- Rest 30 seconds and repeat once.
- Let your eventual goal be 3 sets of 20 or 30, but take your time getting there.



Knees at a little more than 90°



Eyes locked on one spot



Elbows wide, fingertips on either side of head

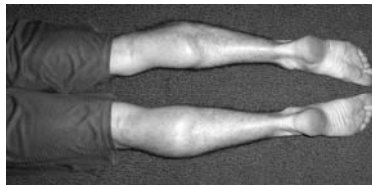
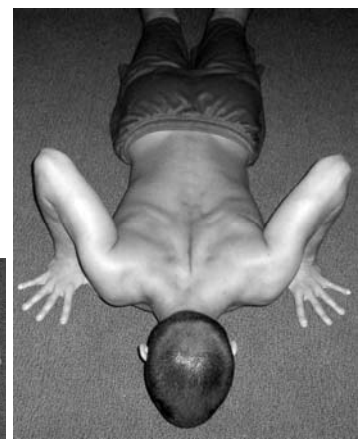


Tilt your pelvis so your low back goes flat on floor

On each of the holding postures where you are counting breathes, start with short holds. Do not overexert yourself, causing an injury and a set-back in your training. Take your time. As you get stronger you can extend both sets up to a full minute. As stated in the first paragraph of this worksheet, "Pain is your body sending you a message". Do not ignore that message. Get help. That's why we're here.

16. COBRA: ERECTOR SPINAE, MID TRAPEZIUS, RHOMBOIDS, TRICEPS

- Lay on the floor, face down with your hands directly under your elbows.
- Direct your index finger toward the space beyond your head (see photos) and spread your fingers as wide as possible.
- Place all ten toes solidly on the floor and keep them there throughout the movement. Actively engage the muscles in your front thighs to hold the toes down.
- Draw your shoulder blades together strongly and use your back muscles to raise your head and shoulders up off the floor as far as is comfortable.
- Do not use your hands and arms yet.
- Keep your chin in (DO NOT CRANK YOUR HEAD UP).
- Hold this position for one to 3 breaths and then release back to the start position.
- On the second repetition, hold for 1 to 3 breaths and then push down and back with your hands as if you would drag your body forward. Raise your head and shoulders a little more off the floor and hold for another 1 to 3 breaths.
- DO NOT STRAIGHTEN YOUR ARMS ALL THE WAY.
- Be gentle with yourself and allow time to advance.
- Work within your physical limits to prevent injury.

**Hands under your elbows, fingers spread****Hold toes down****Shoulder blades together****Keep your chin in as you come up****Do not extend your arms all the way**

17. ELBOW PLANK:

- Lay face down on the floor, lace your fingers and place your elbows under your shoulders.
- Pull your shoulder blades together on your back as far as possible and raise up on the balls of your feet, toes tucked under.
- Keep your chin in (**DO NOT CRANK YOUR HEAD UP**).
- Keep your body straight and maintain this position for 1 to 3 breaths, then release back to the floor.
- On the second repetition, hold until your body begins to shake or for one minute, whichever is greater.
- Be gentle with yourself and allow time to advance.
- Work within your physical limits to prevent injury.

**Lace fingers, elbows under shoulders****Shoulder blades on back, body straight****18. SIDE PLANK:**

- Lay on one side, prop yourself up with your elbow directly under your shoulder.
- Your forearm should extend in the same plane as your body. If it doesn't turn that way, turn it as far as it comfortably goes in that direction.
- Keep your body straight. Do not allow your butt to stick out or hips to droop.
- Place your top foot out in front of you with your hip, knee and ankle at right angles.
- Hold this position for one to 3 breathes, then release back to the floor.
- On your second repetition, extend your top leg out with the lower leg. You can either stack the feet or place one in front of the other.

Note that if this second position is too much for you, keep practicing the first position until your body strengthens and you can complete at least 2 breaths in this new position.

- Hold until your body begins to shake or for one minute, whichever is greater.
- Be gentle with yourself and allow time to advance.
- Work within your physical limits to prevent injury.
- Repeat on the other side.

**Elbow under shoulder, top foot on floor****Both legs straight, feet stacked or staggered**

19. POINTER:

- Start on your hands and knees, wrists under shoulders, knees under hips.
- Extend one foot out toward the wall behind you.
- Keep your hips level and your stomach tucked in toward your spine.
- Raise the opposite arm out in front of you, thumb up.
- Hold this position for one to 3 breathes, then release your limbs back to the floor.
- Be gentle with yourself and allow time to advance.
- Work within your physical limits to prevent injury.
- Repeat on the other side.
- Do a second set on each side until you begin to shake or for one minute, whichever is greater.

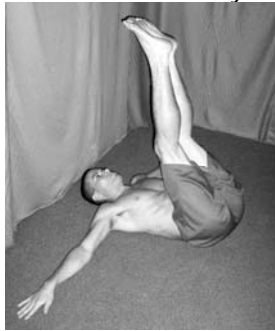
**Start on all fours****Extend opposite arm/leg, stomach in****20. TABLETOP:**

- Sit up straight on the floor, knees bent, feet on the floor.
- Place your hands at the back of your butt, thumbs behind, index fingers in line with your thighs.
- Press your palms into the floor and draw your shoulder blades together on your back.
- Shift your weight into your hands and feet as you lift your butt off the floor and form a table with your body.
- Check your shoulder blades to make certain they have stayed together as much as possible.
- Keep your head in line with your torso and your chin tucked in.
- Hold this position for one to 3 breathes, then release your butt back to the floor.
- Be gentle with yourself and allow time to advance.
- Work within your physical limits to prevent injury.
- Repeat, holding a second repetition until you begin to shake or for one minute, whichever is greater.

**Hands on either side of your butt****Shoulder blades together****Raise into a tabletop**

21. AB ROLL:

- Ab roll is a 4 position core movement that involves the entire core of the body; abs, spine, hips and shoulders.
- Start in Position 1 with your feet and hands on the floor, toes up, palms down.
- Move into Position 2 by flexing your hips and core to raise your feet up to the level of your shoulders.
- Shift your feet to the right until your feet are just above the floor at the level of your shoulders and pause (Position 3)
- Shift your feet back to Position 2 and then to Position 4 pausing with your feet just off the floor.
- Lift your feet back into Position 2 again and then proceed left to Position 5, again pausing with your feet just off the floor at the level of your shoulders.
- Raise your feet back to Position 2 and then again to Position 4. That's one repetition.
- Be gentle with yourself and allow time to advance.
- Work within your physical limits to prevent injury.
- The goal is to build to 5 repetitions.
- When you tire, continue with your knees bent until you complete 5 reps, resting when necessary.

**Position 1****Position 2****Position 3****Position 4****Position 5**

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

1. Stretching, by Bob Anderson (ISBN 0-936070-22-6) The stretching standard in the bodywork and physical therapy community.
2. Sport Stretch, by Michael J. Alter (ISBN 0-88011-823-7) An advanced book on stretching for specific sports and muscle groups.
3. Hatha Yoga Illustrated For Greater Strength, Flexibility, and Focus, by Martin Kirk, Brooke Boon & Daniel DiTuro (ISBN 0-7360-6203-3) A great book on Hatha yoga based on the Anusara principles of yoga alignment.