



STRETCHING GUIDE

CHICAGO FIRE JUNIORS
RUSH PHYSICAL THERAPY

WARM UP STRETCHES



1. ALTERNATING QUAD STRETCH— Balance on left leg. Bend your right foot up towards your buttocks and grab with your right hand. Kick foot into hand while pulling foot towards your buttocks to create a stretch on the front side of your thigh. Stay tall, don't arch your back or lean forwards. Your knee shouldn't be pulled so far behind your standing leg. Hold for 3 seconds and release. Repeat on the other side. Complete 10x on each leg.



2. ALTERNATING HAMSTRING — Start by taking a step forward and plant your right heel on the ground with the toe up. Keeping your posture tall (not rounding), hinge at the hips and gently reach down towards your right foot. Keep your right leg as straight as possible, feeling the stretch down the back of your thigh. Return to standing and repeat on the other side. Complete exercise 10x on each leg.



3. ALTERNATING KNEE HUG — Balancing on the left leg, slowly lift the right knee towards your chest and use both hands to pull knee to chest. Stay tall, not rounding or arching the back. Return right foot to ground and repeat on the other side. Complete exercise 10x on each leg.

WARM UP STRETCHES



4. ALTERNATING SIDE LUNGE — Facing sideways, step out [laterally] with your right foot further than hip-width apart. Bend the right knee and reach your hips back to perform a side lunge, feeling the stretch in the inner left thigh. Keep the chest up and posture tall. Keep the bottom of your left foot on the ground. Return to standing and repeat on the other side. Complete exercise 10x on each leg.



5. WALKING LUNGE + TWIST — With your right foot, take a big step [lunge] forward. Slowly bend the right knee while lowering your left knee towards the ground. Knees should be flexed to 90 degrees, not allowing the front knee to go far over the front toe. Keep your posture tall, without leaning forward. Do not let your front knee buckle inwards. Once balanced, twist your torso to the right. Come back to center and step forward to standing. Repeat on the other side. Complete exercise 10x on each leg.



WARM UP STRETCHES



6. SQUATS — With feet hip-width apart, slowly hinge (bend) at the hips, bend at your knees, and drop your hips back to lower your hips like you're reaching to sit down in a chair. Keep your chest up and do not let knees collapse inwards. Weight should be midfoot, not leaning forwards on toes or leaning back on heels. Use your glutes while pressing back up to standing, bringing your hips forward to starting position. Do not let knees collapse in. Complete exercise 10x.



7. HIP CIRCLES - IN AND OUT — Balancing on the left leg, lift right knee forwards. Open the bent right leg laterally in a circular motion before lowering down to the ground. Keep your chest up and do not lean away while swinging the knee out. Do not let the knee on the standing leg buckle in. Repeat on the other side.

Balancing on the left leg, lift the right knee out to the side of your body. Bring the bent right leg medially in front of you in a circular motion before lowering down to the ground. Keep your chest up and do not lean away while swinging the knee in. Do not let the knee on the standing leg buckle in. Repeat on the other side. Complete exercise 10x on each leg.



WARM UP STRETCHES



8. BIRD DOG — In quadruped position (on hands and knees with back flat), extend the left arm and the right (opposite) leg at the same time. The extended leg should be straight with foot flexed, like you are stamping your foot on the back wall. Do not let your hips swing open or back arch towards the ground. Imagine a ball was on your back and you are not letting it roll off. Lower arm and leg and repeat on the other side. Complete exercise 10x on each side.



9. SKIPS - SMALL AND BIG — Lightly skip forward, alternating which leg lifts off of the ground, swinging opposite arm forwards to maintain momentum.

Skip for height - driving knee up and forcefully driving off the ground when you take off for your skip Complete exercise 10x on each leg.



MOBILITY/COOL DOWN STRETCHES



1. CAT/COW — In quadruped position (on hands and knees), round the back up towards the sky while dropping the head down towards your chest. Then, arch your back, dropping the belly towards the ground while lifting your gaze towards the sky. Exhale as you round the back, inhale as you extend and arch the back. Repeat this movement 10x.

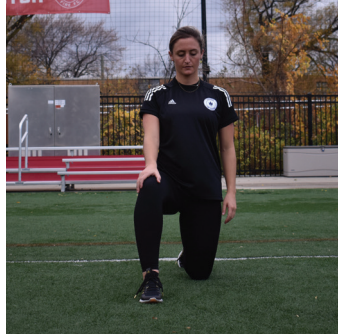


2. QUADRUPED T-SPINE (THREAD THE NEEDLE) —

In quadruped position (on hands and knees), reach the right arm under your body towards the left, like threading a needle under the left arm. Then, pull the right arm out and twist the body open to the right so that your right arm is extended towards the sky, chest is open with your gaze to the ceiling. Repeat 5x and switch sides.



MOBILITY/COOL DOWN STRETCHES



3. KNEELING HIP FLEXOR, + SIDE BEND, + QUAD —

In a kneeling position, place your right foot in front of you with knee bent and foot flat on ground. Stay tall, without arching the back, squeeze the glute so the pelvis is tucked under, and slowly press hips forward to feel stretch on the front side of your left hip.

While in stretch, take your left arm and reach up over your head towards the opposite side to deepen stretch and feel stretch down your left side.

Come back to neutral, reach back and grasp the left foot. Pull towards buttocks to stretch the quadriceps. Release foot to ground and repeat on the other side.



MOBILITY/COOL DOWN STRETCHES



4. QUADRUPED ADDUCTOR (FROG STRETCH) —

Start in quadruped position, lean forward to rest on your elbows. Slowly move knees apart from each other until you feel a moderate stretch in both groins. Keep feet flexed, with the inner side of the foot turned down towards the ground (toes pointing away from the body like a frog). Inside of the knees will rest on the ground. Hold for 30 second to a minute. Use a mat under your knees for padding.



5. SEATED HAMSTRING — Seated with both legs extended in front of you, bend at the hips and reach towards your toes. Keep your posture tall and do not round forward. hinge at the hips and move chest towards knees rather than collapsing forwards. Hold for 30 seconds to a minute.



6. SEATED FIGURE 4 — Seated with knees bent and feet on floor, cross the right foot over the left knee, keeping your foot flexed and ankle at the knee. Keep the chest tall and do not round. Gently press the knee away from your body to feel the stretch in the outside of your hips. Hold for 30 seconds and switch sides.

MOBILITY/COOL DOWN STRETCHES



7. SUPINE KNEE HUG WITH TWIST — Lying on back, pull the right knee to your chest while keeping the left leg extended. Hug knee to chest for about 10 seconds. Then, drop your right knee over to the left. Keep your right shoulder on the ground while in the twist. You can use the left hand to weigh the right knee down towards the ground. Return to neutral and repeat on the other side



8. DOWNWARD DOG + PEDDLE (HAMMIES, CALVES) — From plank position, press your hips back and upwards towards the ceiling. Drop your chest down towards the floor, keeping your weight in the palms of your hands. Straighten legs and press knees back and heels down towards the floor, feeling stretch in your hamstrings and calves. Alternate peddling heels towards the ground for about 1 minute.

