

Static Stretching and Calisthenics

Increases your general range of motion, cardiovascular endurance and strength.

Our general order of exercise

1. Neck flexion
2. Jump rope or calf presses
3. Calf stretch A
4. Pull-Ups
5. Calf stretch B
6. Squats (followed by a short rest)
7. Leg and lower back stretches
8. Push-ups
9. Shoulder and pectoral stretches
10. Hip/leg stretches
11. Sit-ups, leg-lifts or crunches
12. Butterfly
13. Back arches
14. Straddle stretch
15. Hip circles
16. Deep breathing

Unlike dynamic stretching, the order of exercise for static stretching and calisthenics is important. Begin by exercising and stretching extremities and move toward (and conclude with) the “core.” Each static stretch should be held for roughly 45 seconds. Each calisthenic should be performed until the muscle feels fatigued, then try a few more repetitions. Some people like to keep a record of their repetitions to set goals and measure improvement.

Depending on your level of fitness, a good starting goal for most people is 10-20 of each exercise with perfect form, 1-5 pull-ups, and 40-or-more squats. Once you can do more than 40 of any exercise (or 10 pull-ups or 80 squats), mix in different exercises. For example, instead of just doing 60 sit-ups, do 20 sit-ups, 20 crunches and 20 leg lifts. Also consider adding resistance such as a weighted vest. Incorporating a medicine ball, dumbbells or kettlebells into the routine can help too.

For variety, mix up the emphasis during the calisthenics: Do them normally one day, as fast as possible on another, as slowly as possible, with resistance, using modified exercises, etc.

When jumping rope, start at one minute. Try to work to where you can jump rope for 10 minutes without a break. That is a good workout in itself.

Pull-ups are very difficult for some people, but are an important exercise. If you can't do a pull-up, try to just hang for as long as possible, ideally with your chin "up," then let yourself down very slowly.

It is important to do the exercises with proper form, or you will cripple your own muscles' effectiveness and ultimately limit your strength.

Follow up with a drink of water to replenish lost fluids, a light meal, or a protein supplement (to help with soreness).