



ORGANIZATION	<p><b>Have students form a large circle around you. While you lead the stretching exercises, it is also a great opportunity to build team leaders. This will allow you the freedom to observe if runners are stretching correctly and provide instruction and encouragement as necessary.</b></p>
DYNAMIC STRETCHES 	<p>Dynamic stretches prepare the body to run by using continuous, smooth, and repetitive motions that increase core temperature and muscle temperature, elongate the muscles, send oxygen-rich blood to the muscles, and stimulate the nervous system. Recent research shows they are a better alternative to static stretches for pre-workout routines. We focus on dynamic stretches for pre-workout routines, but they are appropriate for post-workout routines as well. Visit <i>A Running Start</i> at <a href="http://www.nyrr.org/arunningstart">www.nyrr.org/arunningstart</a> for video tutorials on a variety of dynamic stretches for all age groups such as arm scissors, leg swings, toe touches, and torso twists.</p>
STATIC STRETCHES 	<p>Static stretches are extensions in which a pose is struck and held in order to loosen up a specific muscle or tendon. Static stretches temporarily decrease muscle strength and are not effective warm-up exercises. We recommend you perform them after a workout, as they are great for releasing tension. Visit <i>A Running Start</i> at <a href="http://www.nyrr.org/arunningstart">www.nyrr.org/arunningstart</a> for video tutorials on a variety of static stretches for all age groups.</p>
STRETCHING GUIDELINES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not force exercises.</li> <li>• Focus on the area being stretched.</li> <li>• Always allow the body to warm up before stretching (light two- to three-minute jog).</li> <li>• Breathe while stretching – do not hold your breath.</li> <li>• Do not stretch injured or sore muscles. Give them time to recover.</li> <li>• Stretch all major joint areas and all parts of the body.</li> </ul>

STRETCH	INSTRUCTION
<p><b>Upper Body and Arms (Dynamic)</b></p>	<p>Stand with arms outstretched to your sides. Move your arms in small circles, slowly widening the size of the circles. As you loosen up, switch directions.</p>
<p><b>Hamstring and Lower Back (Static or Dynamic)</b></p>	<p>The hamstrings are one of the most important muscle groups for any runner to stretch. Cross one foot over the other and reach up toward the sky with both arms. Counting down from 10, slowly bend forward at the hips until the upper body is as low as it can comfortably go, with the arms reaching toward the toes. Breathe fluidly and try reaching a bit farther on each exhale. Slowly return to an upright stance. Repeat with the other leg. Now, lying on the back, raise one leg as high as it will naturally go; keep the other leg flat on the ground. Grasp the raised leg at the back of the thigh, just below the knee, and pull it gently toward the upper body until you feel a good stretch through the hamstrings. Breathe deeply and stretch the raised leg a little closer to the body on each exhale. Repeat the stretch on the other leg. Hold these stretches for 30 seconds per leg.</p>

STRETCH	INSTRUCTION
<b>Achilles, Calf, and Arch (Static)</b>	For the calf stretch, brace yourself with arms outstretched at shoulder height against a wall or other support. Take a large step backward with one leg. Bend your front knee while keeping your back leg straight and your back heel planted on the ground. Lean forward slightly while actively pushing your back heel into the ground to feel a good stretch in the calf of your back leg. To intensify the stretch, step farther back with your trailing leg. For the Achilles stretch, move your back foot forward a bit and bend your legs lightly while keeping your heels on the ground. For the arch stretch, come up on the toe of your right foot to stretch the arch. Repeat all stretches with the other leg. All stretches should be done for 30 seconds per leg.
<b>Quadriceps (Static)</b>	Standing upright, bend one knee behind your body, grasping your foot with the hand from the same side. If helpful, use your free arm to brace yourself against a wall or other support for balance. Gently pull your foot towards the glutes, bringing it as close as you can without overstretching and causing pain. If you are not feeling the stretch, push your foot against your hand as your hand continues pulling the foot toward the butt. Hold for 30 seconds per leg.

## ADDITIONAL STRETCHES

STRETCH	INSTRUCTION
<b>Ankle Roll (Dynamic)</b>	Sit cross-legged on the ground. Grasp your right foot with both hands and rotate the ankle with slight resistance from your hands for 10 seconds, then reverse directions. Repeat on the left side.
<b>Plantar Fascia (Static)</b>	Sit on the ground with left leg extended. The right knee should be bent with the right heel on the ground. Flex the right ankle by pulling the toes toward the ankle with your hands. This will also stretch the Achilles tendon. Repeat on the left side.
<b>Cat Back (Static)</b>	Get down onto all fours, with a straight spine. Arch your back like a cat while simultaneously dropping your head. Slowly reverse the arch by bringing your head back up and forming a "u" with your spine. Repeat several times.

