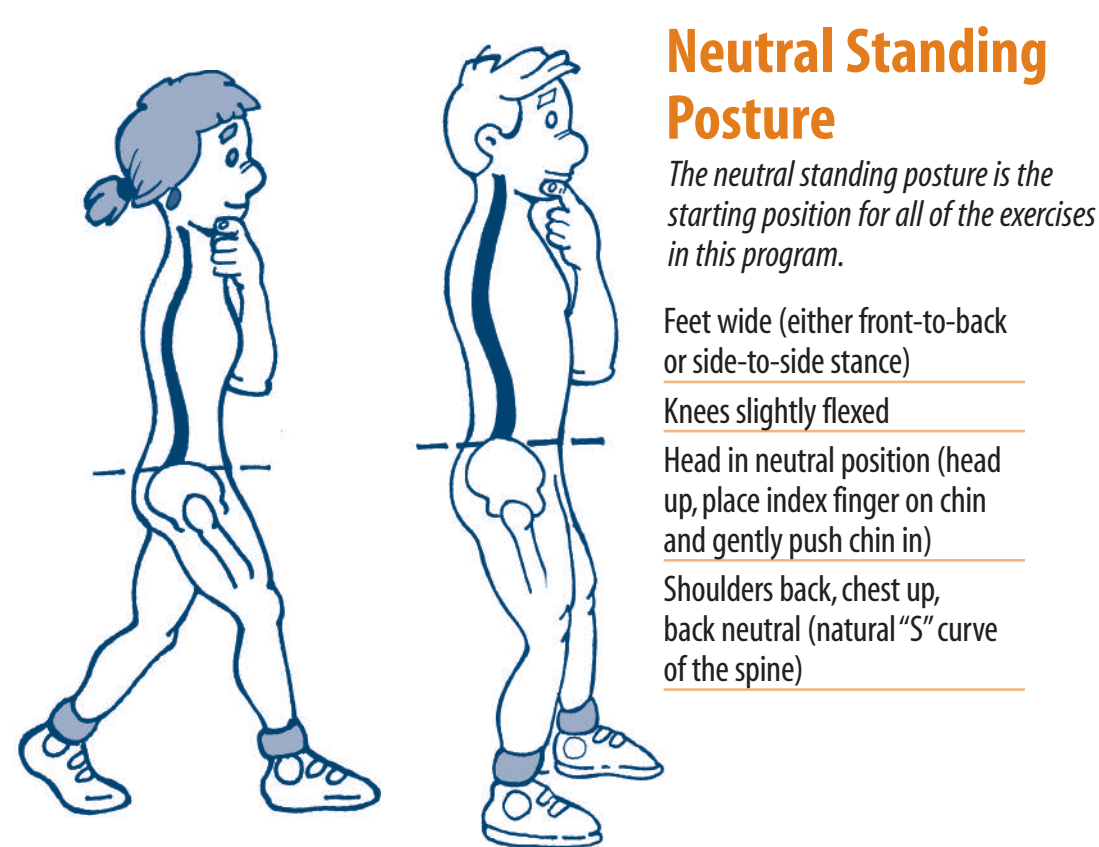


Warm-Up and Stretch



Key Positions in the Warm-Up and Stretch Program

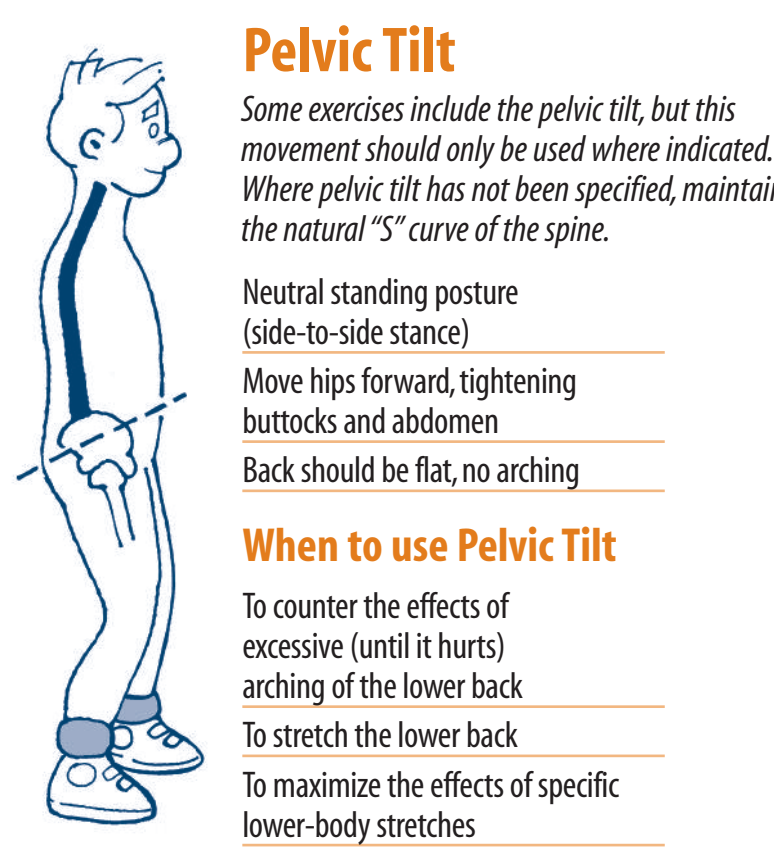
Here are a few important positions that you must know before you begin the program.



Neutral Standing Posture

The neutral standing posture is the starting position for all of the exercises in this program.

- Feet wide (either front-to-back or side-to-side stance)
- Knees slightly flexed
- Head in neutral position (head up, place index finger on chin and gently push chin in)
- Shoulders back, chest up, back neutral (natural "S" curve of the spine)



Pelvic Tilt

Some exercises include the pelvic tilt, but this movement should only be used where indicated. Where pelvic tilt has not been specified, maintain the natural "S" curve of the spine.

- Neutral standing posture (side-to-side stance)
- Move hips forward, tightening buttocks and abdomen
- Back should be flat, no arching

When to use Pelvic Tilt

- To counter the effects of excessive (until it hurts) arching of the lower back
- To stretch the lower back
- To maximize the effects of specific lower-body stretches

Note

This publication is part of WorkSafeNB's copyrighted *Back In Form (BIF) Program*. Before performing this warm-up and stretch program, contact WorkSafeNB and ask to speak with an ergonomics consultant in your area. We can provide proper training and help you to implement a program at your workplace.

Call us at 1 800 222-9775 to speak with your local ergonomics consultant, or visit us online at www.worksafenb.ca

If you have any personal health limitations, previous back injuries or other concerns, we strongly urge you to consult with your doctor, ergonomist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist or a certified fitness specialist before beginning the program.

We have produced a pamphlet to accompany this warm-up and stretch poster. In it, we have included a glossary of terms, specific information about proper technique, and several tips. Please read this pamphlet carefully before proceeding with the program.



A component of WorkSafeNB's **Back in Form Program**

www.worksafenb.ca

1 800 222-9775

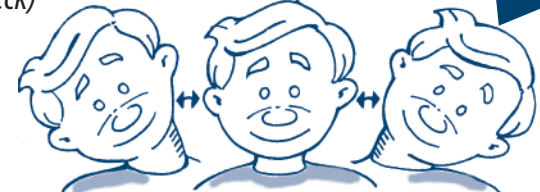
General Muscle Warm-ups

Repeat 5-10 times

Note: Shading on drawings indicates area being stretched.

Head Drops

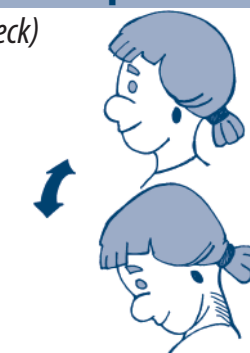
(neck)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Gently tilt head to one side, keeping ear aligned with shoulder
- Return head to neutral position
- Repeat, other side

Chin Drops

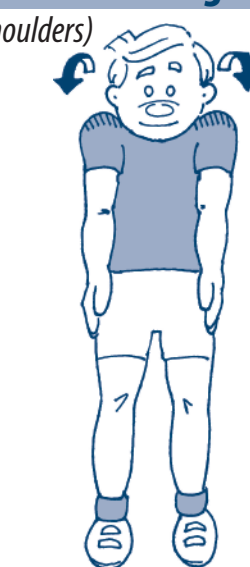
(neck)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Gently drop chin to chest
- Return head to neutral position

Shoulder Shrugs/Circles

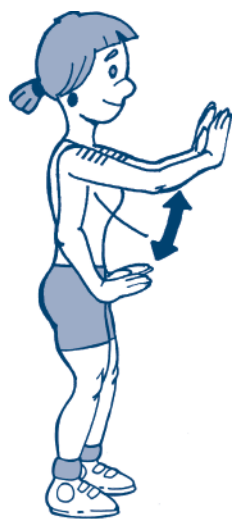
(shoulders)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Draw both shoulders up toward ears, pause and release
- Circle both shoulders slowly, forward or backward

Arm Raise

(front of shoulders)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Arms extended at sides, hands and elbows slightly flexed
- Raise arms to shoulder level, return to start

Arm Pullback

(back of shoulders)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Arms extended at sides, hands and elbows slightly flexed
- Behind back, raise and lower arms to a comfortable level

Wide Arm Circles

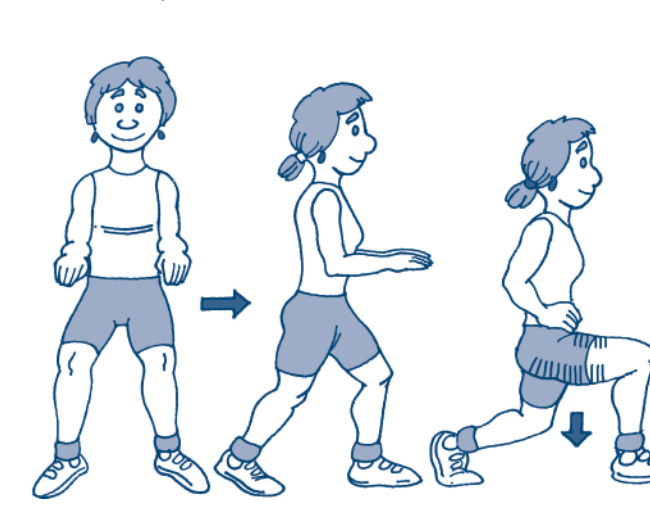
(shoulders)



- Neutral standing posture, front-to-back stance
- Move arm (on same side as forward foot) in forward or backward circle
- Repeat, other arm

Gentle Pivot

(lower body)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Elbows bent at 90 degrees
- Turn toe of one foot to side, rotate pelvis in a **slow and controlled** manner to same side
- Use toe of opposite foot as pivot point
- Entire body should turn as one unit (don't twist at the waist)
- At end of pivot, flex at hip, knee, ankle, and lower body
- Return to neutral standing posture
- Repeat, other side

Half-Knee Bends

(lower body)

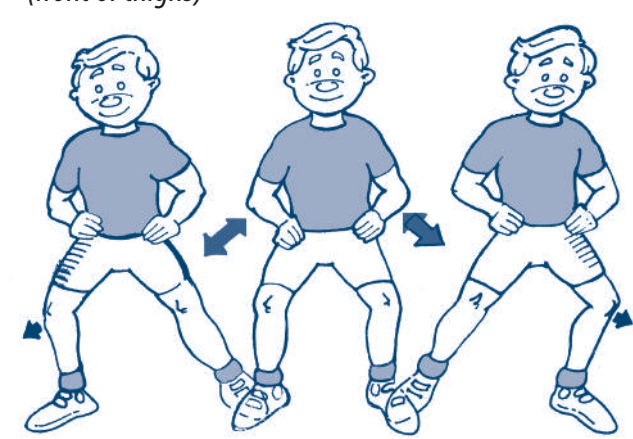


- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance, toes pointing slightly out
- Hands on hips
- Keeping back neutral, flex and extend legs in up and down direction

Tip: Let your fitness level determine how low you go!

Side Shift

(front of thighs)

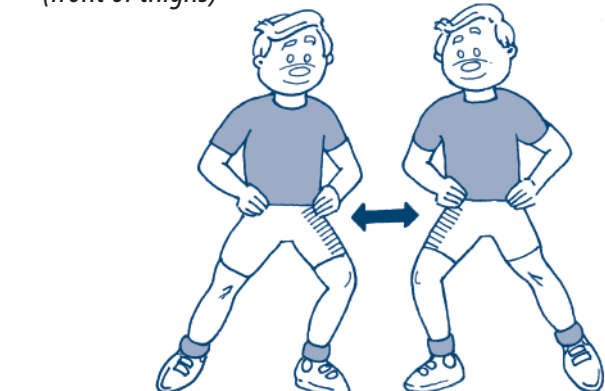


- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance, toes pointing slightly out
- Hands on hips
- Lower body to one side by shifting body weight over thigh (flex knee of shifting leg while extending opposite leg)
- Return to neutral standing posture
- Repeat, over other thigh

Tip: Always ensure knee flexes in line with direction in which toes are pointing. Let your fitness level determine how low you go!

Combination Side Shift

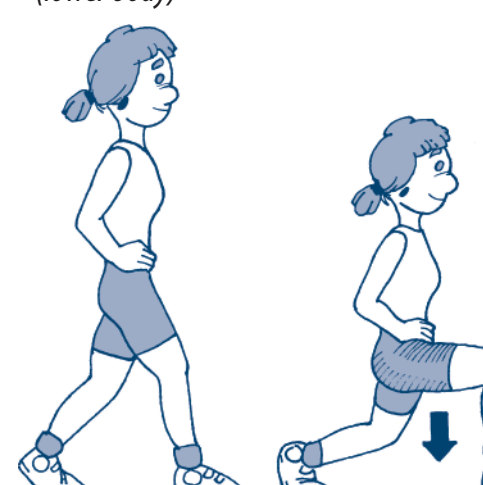
(front of thighs)



- Once comfortable with the "Side Shift", combine both sides into one movement by eliminating the up and down motion, and incorporating a horizontal, side-to-side movement over each thigh.

Front Shift

(lower body)

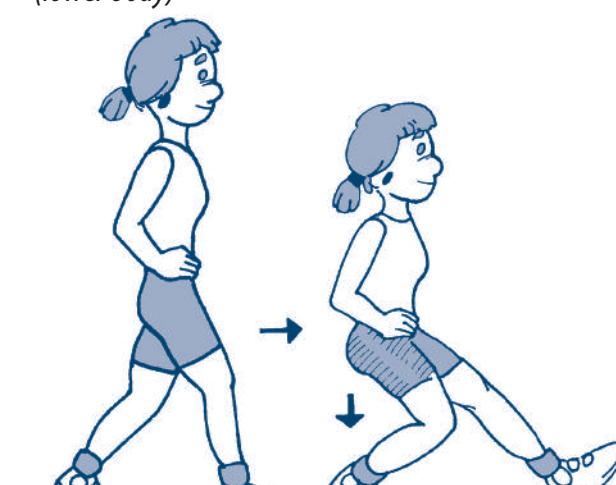


- Neutral standing posture, front-to-back stance
- Hands on hips
- Flex both knees and lower body toward the ground
- Return to neutral standing posture
- Repeat, over other thigh

Tip: Let your fitness level determine how low you go!

Back Shift

(lower body)

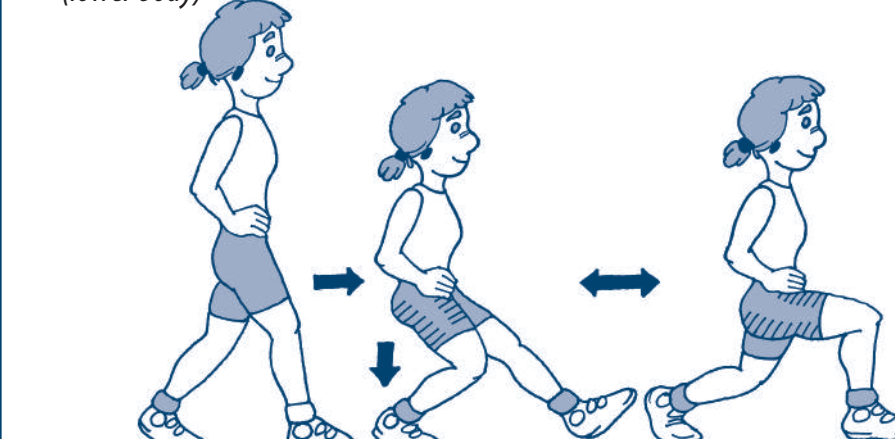


- Neutral standing posture, front-to-back stance
- Hands on hips
- Flex the back knee, and lower buttocks as though sitting in a chair
- Return to neutral standing posture
- Repeat, over other thigh

Tip: Let your fitness level determine how low you go!

Combination Back to Front Shift

(lower body)



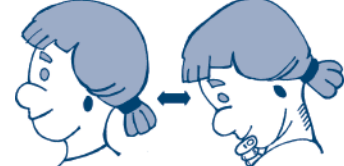
- Once comfortable with the "Front Shift" and "Back Shift", combine them into one movement by eliminating the up and down motion and incorporating a horizontal, back-to-front movement.

Tension-Breaker Stretches

Hold 8-10 seconds each side

Neck Forward

(back of neck)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Gently press chin inward with fingers

Don't force head down

Tip: If you don't feel a stretch, place hand on back of head and gently guide head forward.

Ear to Shoulder

(sides of neck, top of shoulders)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Tilt head to left, keeping ear aligned with shoulder
- Don't force
- Repeat, other side

Tip: If you don't feel a stretch on the right side of your neck, grasp right hand behind your back with your left hand, pull down gently at an angle across the back.

Upper Torso Stretch

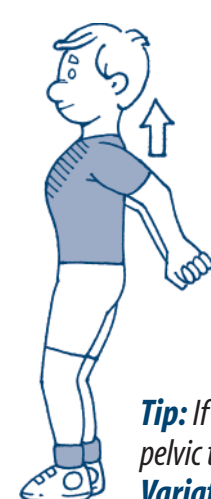
(upper back, back of shoulders, arms, hands, wrists, fingers)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Interlace fingers, palms out
- Raise arms to shoulder level
- Curl shoulders forward, push out on upper back and stretch through arms and fingers

Chest Stretch

(chest, front of shoulders)

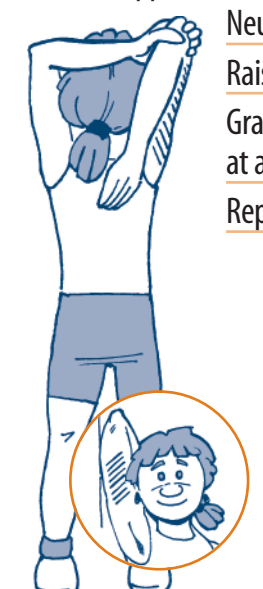


- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Clasp hands behind back, elbows flexed
- Guide elbows upward while pushing out and up with chest

Tip: If your back arches excessively, pelvic tilt to neutral. Variation: If clasping hands is uncomfortable, place hands on lower back, fingers down.

Triceps Stretch

(back of upper arms)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Raise one arm overhead, elbow flexed
- Grasp arm behind elbow, gently press down at an angle toward opposite side of back
- Repeat, other arm

Tips: Keep head up and chin in. It may be more comfortable to grasp the hand rather than the elbow. If back arches excessively, pelvic tilt to neutral. Variation: A hand or wall in front of the upper arm can be used to push elbow backward.

Shoulder Stretch

(back of shoulders)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Extend one arm in front of body
- Place opposite hand just above the elbow, gently apply pressure to move arm toward opposite shoulder
- Repeat, other arm

Tip: Ensure there is no upward movement in the arm being stretched and that the hand is positioned behind the elbow.

Cat Stretch

(lower back)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance, toes pointing slightly out
- Lower your body while sliding hands down thighs almost to knees (fingers pointed in, elbows slightly flexed)
- Keep back neutral to maintain natural "S" curve of spine
- Pelvic tilt to stretch lower back
- Push out on upper back, curl shoulders forward, like a stretching cat

Tip: Feels great after long periods of standing! Variation: You might perform this stretch more easily holding a chair back or table.

Shoulder Dip

(back)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance, toes pointing slightly out
- Perform the "Cat Stretch" at left
- While looking straight ahead, gently dip one shoulder in toward the opposite leg while pushing out on upper back
- Repeat, other side

Tip: Don't twist your torso; keep shoulder movement minimal. A nice stretch after standing for long periods!

Abdominal Stretch

(entire body, emphasizing abdomen)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Extend arms overhead, clasp hands, elbows in line with ears
- Stretch arms upward as though grasping for something that is slightly out of reach
- Allow slight arch in lower back

Tip: A nice stretch after sitting for long periods! Variation: Standing on tiptoes will maximize the stretch.

Side Stretch

(sides of abdomen)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance
- Raise one arm overhead, elbow in line with ear, opposite hand on hip
- Reach up and over toward opposite side of the body; reach for something just over the opposite shoulder
- Repeat, other side

Tip: Don't bend sideways at the waist; instead, reach up and over your head while pushing out on the side of your abdomen.

Hip Flexor Stretch

(front of upper thighs)



- Neutral standing posture, front-to-back stance
- Place hand on buttock of back leg
- Gently do a "Front Shift"
- If back is arching, move front foot farther forward to ensure that when in the end position of the move, the knee rests directly over the toe and the upper body is neutral.
- Rise to neutral standing posture
- Repeat, other side

Tip: To maximize stretch, pelvic tilt. If stretch is only felt in calf muscle, lift heel of back foot off the floor. Variation: If stretch is not felt or movement is uncomfortable, place front foot on a chair or bench and perform the above movement.

Hamstring Stretch

(back of legs)



- Neutral standing posture, front-to-back stance
- Place hands on thigh of front leg
- Perform "Back Shift" while pulling toe of front foot upward
- Gently push heel of front foot toward the floor while flexing through the hip of the same leg
- Don't bend at waist
- Rise to neutral standing posture
- Repeat, other side

Tips: Use a wall for support and balance, if needed. Remember, keep knee of front leg slightly flexed. Variation: If stretch is still not felt or movement is uncomfortable, perform with front foot on a chair, heel down, toe up.

Standing Groin Stretch

(inner thighs)



- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance, toes pointed slightly out
- Hand on hip
- Perform "Side Shift" (ensure knee of extended leg remains slightly flexed)
- Repeat, other side

Tips: A wall can be used for support. To maximize stretch, pelvic tilt. Variation: If stretch can't be felt, widen stance.

Standing Quadriceps Stretch

(front of thighs)

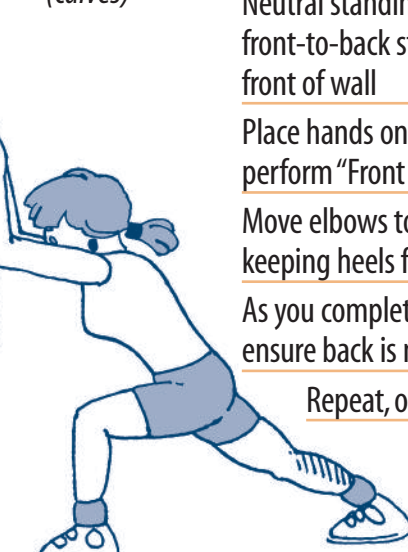


- Neutral standing posture, side-to-side stance, one hand on firm support
- Flex knees and lower body to grasp top of one foot
- Pull foot up toward buttocks, keeping thigh of the flexed leg parallel with the supporting leg
- Ensure knee is pointed toward the ground
- Repeat, other side

Tip: To maximize the stretch, pelvic tilt. If you can't grasp the top of your foot, try for a pant leg or the back of your shoe! Variation: To help with balance, you can also place the flexed knee on a chair, ensuring that the flexed knee doesn't bear your weight.

Calf Stretch

(calves)



- Neutral standing posture, front-to-back stance in front of wall
- Place hands on wall, gradually perform "Front Shift"
- Move elbows to wall, keeping heels flat on floor
- As you complete the movement, ensure back is not arched
- Repeat, other side

Tip: To maximize stretch, pelvic tilt. Variation: If you can't feel the stretch, widen stance.