

Why Do We Need to Stretch before or after Physical Activity?

- Before you stretch, it is important to get your heart pumping more blood to your muscles by doing a warm-up.
- Once your muscles are warmed up, you can stretch them to help prepare your body for exercise.
- Stretching can stop you from getting injuries and can also make your muscles more flexible.
- When you've finished exercising, it's important to cool down by doing some stretches, too.
- Stretching after a workout helps to stop your muscles from feeling stiff and sore by gradually returning them to their normal state.



Why Do We Need to Stretch before or after Physical Activity?

- Try to hold your stretches for a count of six (count "one elephant, two elephant," and so on).
- Stretching should never hurt, so make sure you stop if it feels painful.
- Try not to bounce when you stretch, as this can damage your muscles.
- Keep breathing during your stretches.



Stretch up tall with long arms.



This is a general stretch for the whole body.

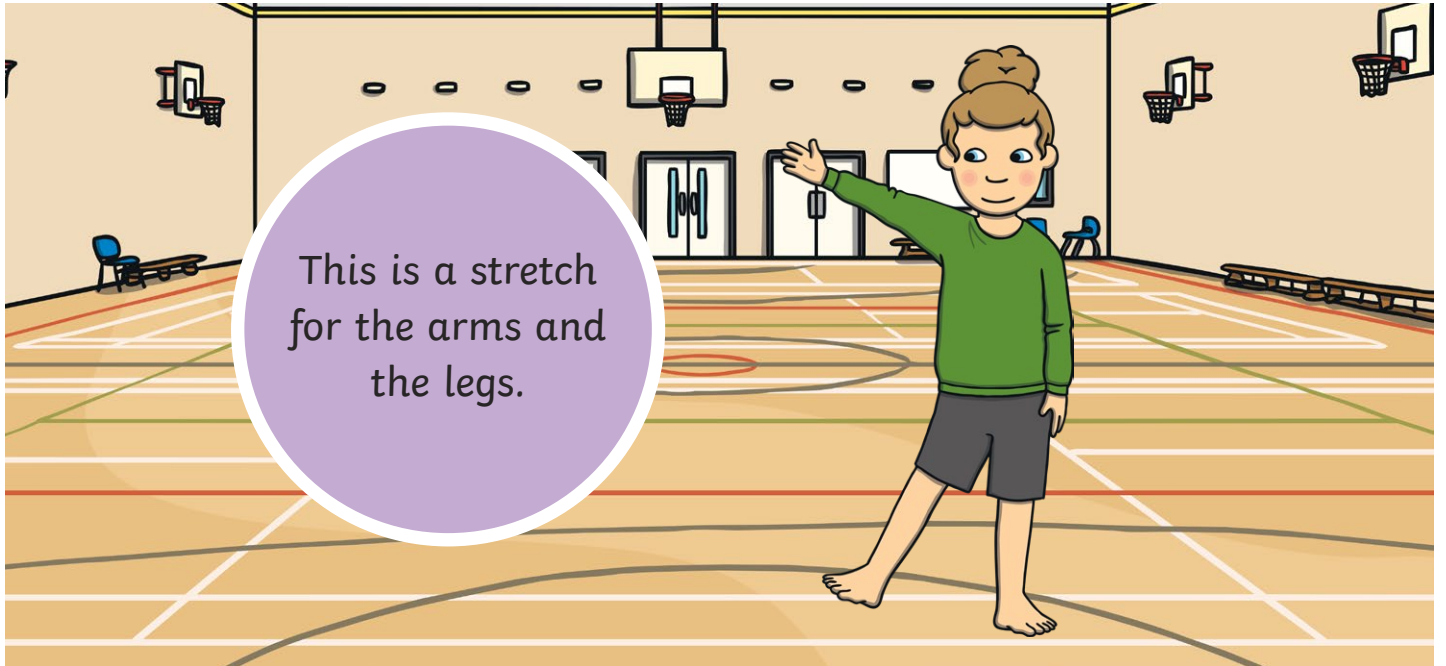


Stretch out wide, making a star shape.



This is a general stretch for the whole body.

Reach out to one side with one arm and one leg, keeping your body central.



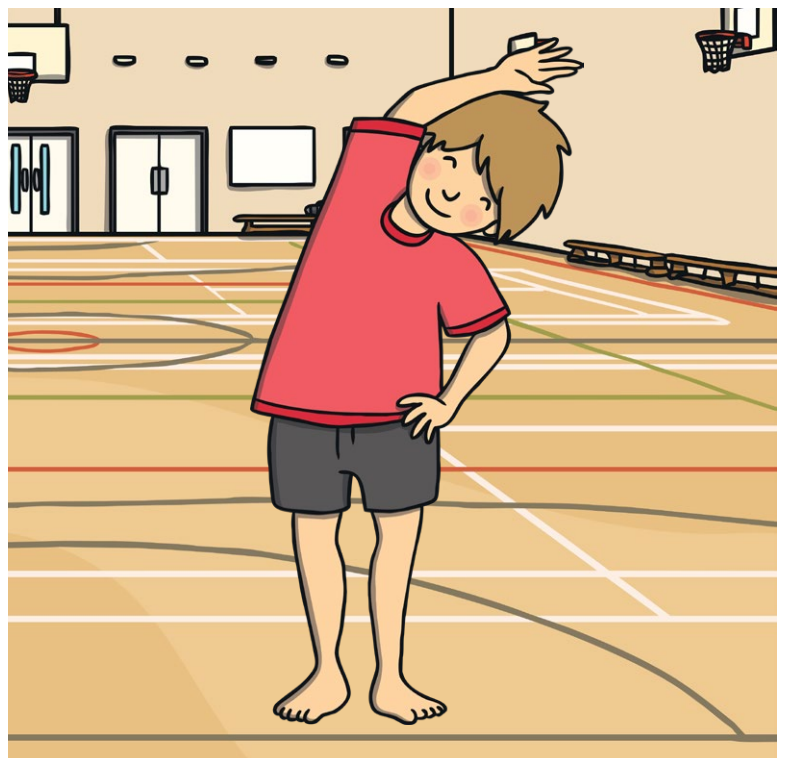
Repeat with the other side.

Stretch one arm above your head and reach over to the side.

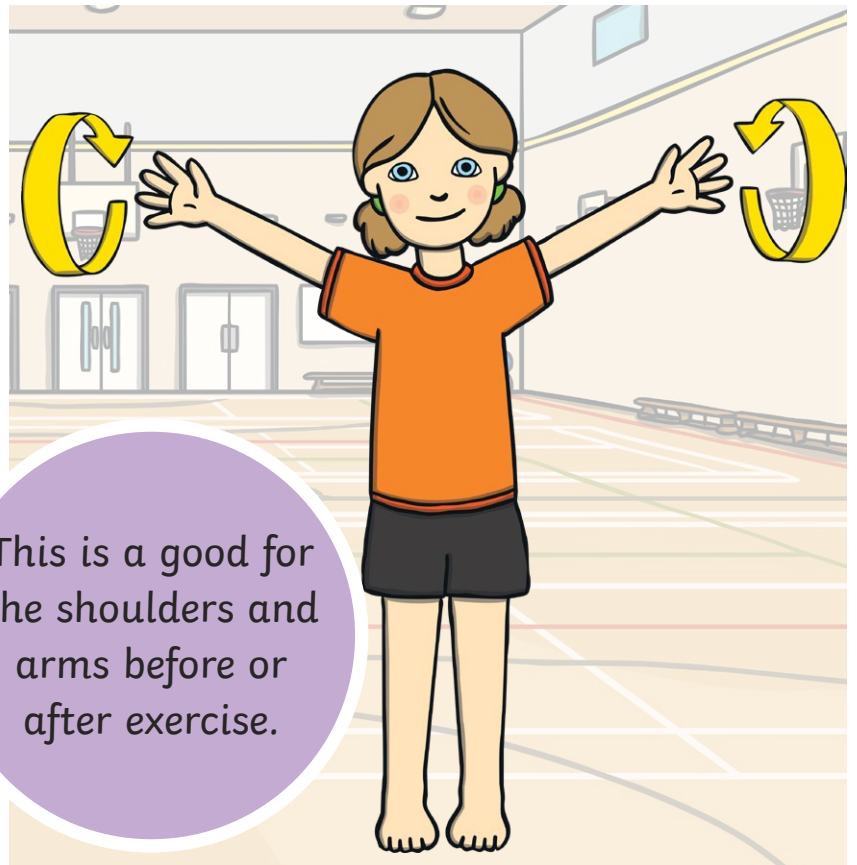
Then do the same with the other arm.

Keep your body upright – don't lean forwards or backwards.

You should feel the stretch down each side.



- Stand with your feet hip-width apart and knees slightly bent.
- Stretch your arms out to the side at shoulder height.
- Rotate your arms backwards in small circles.
- Change direction and rotate your arms forwards.

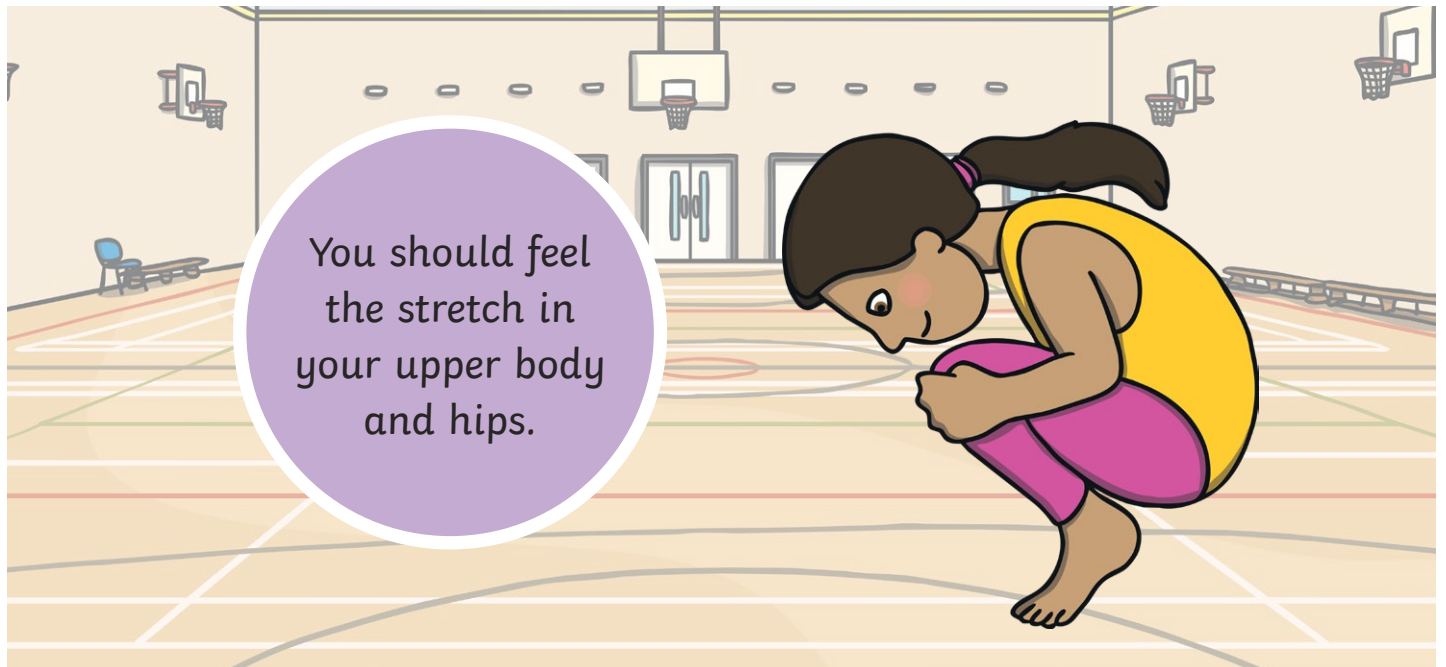


This is a gentle stretch for your neck.

- Look straight ahead.
- Turn your head to the left, twisting at your neck and then back to the centre.
- Turn your head to the right, twisting at your neck and then back to the centre.
- Put your chin on your chest and then raise it back up so you are facing forwards.
- Repeat this movement: left-centre-right-centre-down-centre-up-centre.
- Make sure you do not roll your neck.



Crouch down into a tucked shape and hug your knees, curling up small into a ball.



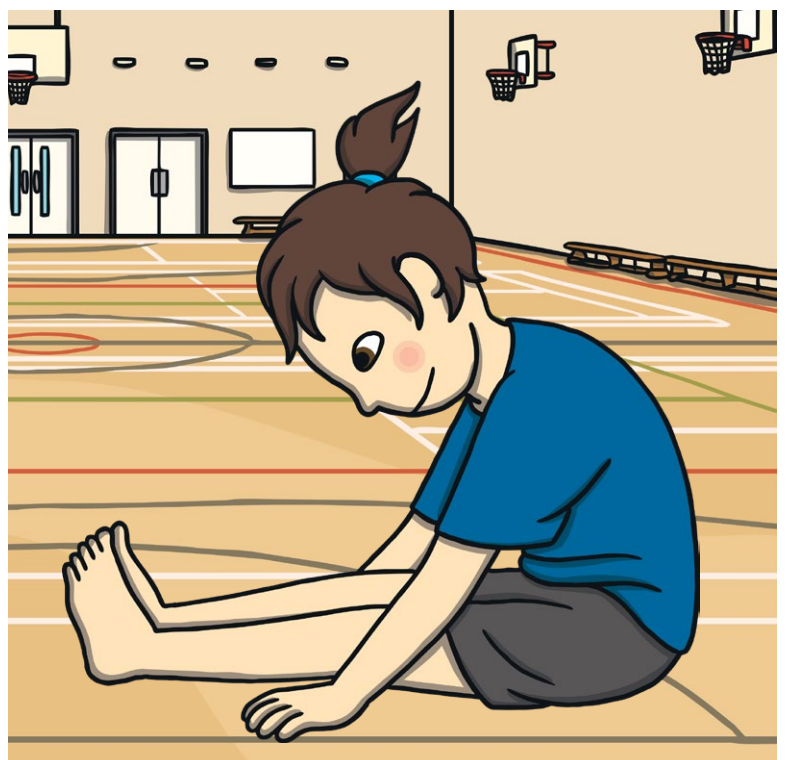
You should feel the stretch in your upper body and hips.

Stay on your feet.

Sit down and put your legs out in front of you.

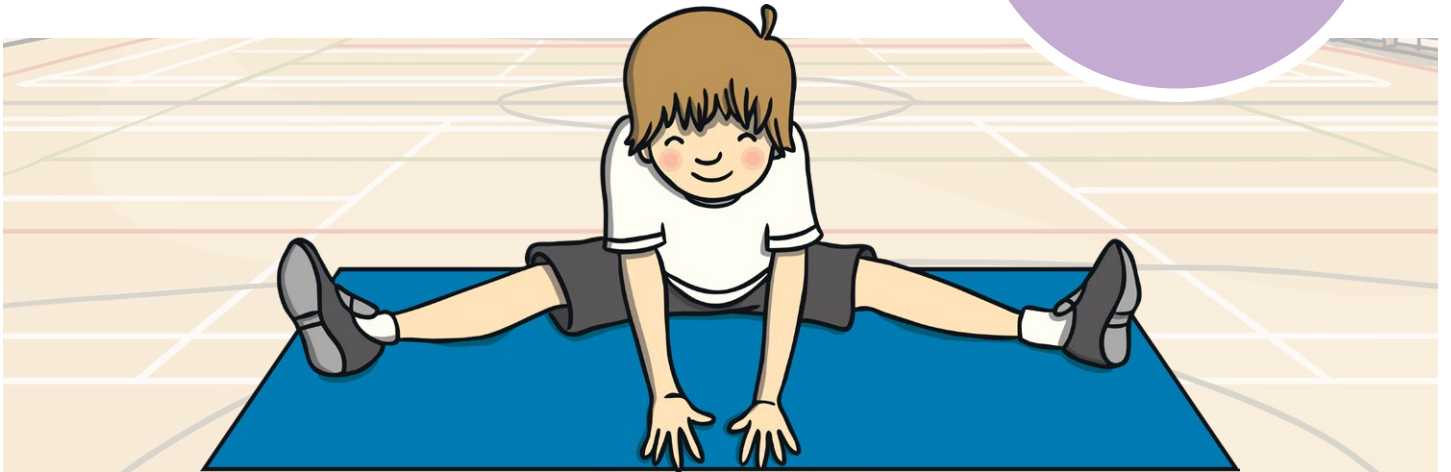
- Fold yourself over, bending from your hips.
- Point your toes upwards and try to touch them.
- Try to keep your legs straight.

You should feel the stretch down the back of your legs.



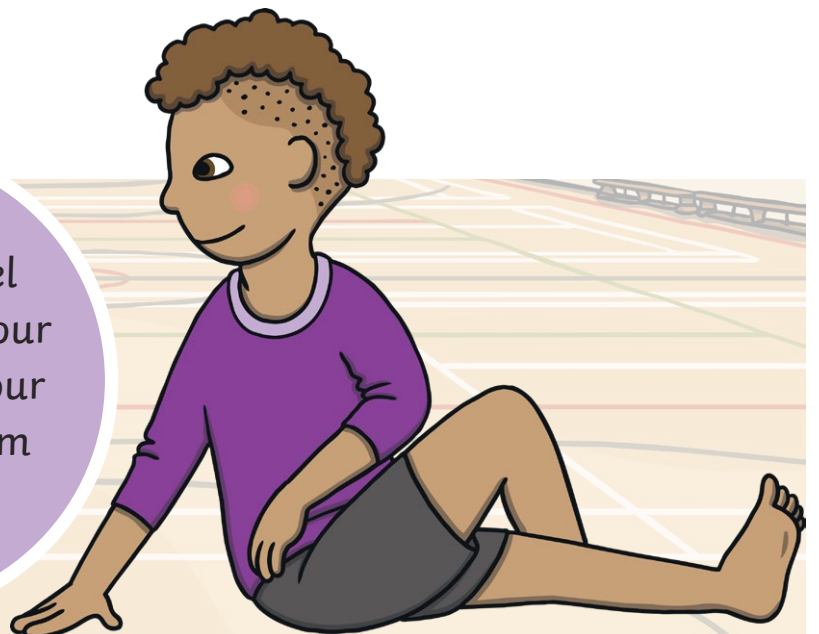
- Sit down and put your legs out in front of you.
- Move your legs apart into a straddle position.
- Fold yourself over, bending from your hips.
- How far can you walk your hands forwards?
- Try to keep your legs straight.

You should feel the stretch in your legs and groin.

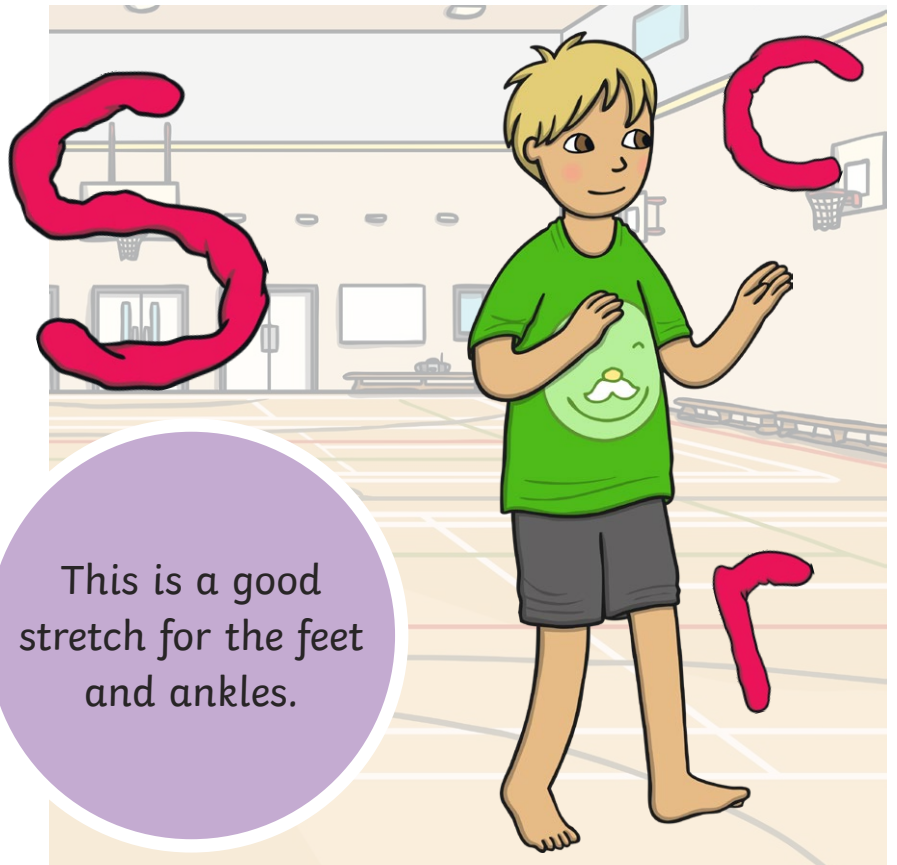


- Sit on your bottom and stretch your legs out in front of you.
- Put one leg over the other, bend your knees and reach around to the opposite side.
- Try to look over your shoulder.
- Now swap legs.

You should feel the stretch in your waist and in your hips and bottom muscles.



- Stand with your feet hip-width apart.
- With the toes of one foot, write out the letters of your first name on the floor.
- Raise your other foot off the floor slightly and write out the letters of your surname in the air with your toes.



Snake Pose

- 1 Begin by lying on your tummy.
- 2 Exhale and lift your head and upper torso off the floor.
- 3 Gaze forward or slightly upward.
- 4 Hold this position, then release.



This pose strengthens your spine, back of the arms and legs.
It stretches your shoulders, chest and tummy.

Frog Pose

- 1** Squat on the floor and balance on your toes with your knees spread wide and your hands on the floor between your legs.
- 2** Look up and inhale.
- 3** As you exhale, straighten your legs and lower your head toward your knees.
- 4** Return to a squatting position, then repeat.



This pose helps with hamstring flexibility.

Happy Baby Pose

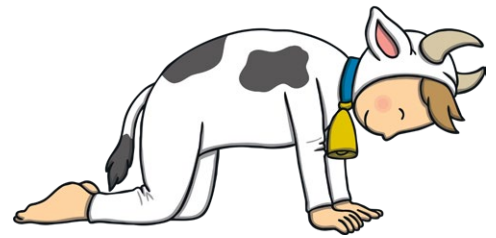
- 1** Lie down on your back.
- 2** Exhale, bend your knees towards your tummy and grab hold of your feet.
- 3** Allow your body to gently rock from side to side.



This stretches the groin and spine.

Cat Cow Pose

- 1** Start by kneeling on your hands and knees. Make sure hands are below your shoulders, and knees are below your hips.
- 2** Inhale, look up to the ceiling, and allow your tummy to sink toward the floor.
- 3** Exhale, round your back towards the ceiling, and look at your belly.



This pose is an easy and gentle way to stretch the upper body and neck.

Child's Pose

- 1** Kneel on the floor, touching your big toes together.
- 2** Sit back on your heels and separate your knees so they are hip-width apart.
- 3** Exhale and bring your head down to rest on the floor in front of you.
- 4** Place your hands wherever they are comfortable by your head, your knees, etc.
- 5** Relax and breathe, holding this pose.



This pose stretches the hips, thighs and ankles.

Corpse Pose

- 1** Lie down on your back, with arms next to your body and legs slightly apart.
- 2** Close your eyes, focus on deep breathing and relaxation. Try to do this for 2-5 minutes.



This calms the body and mind.