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Wanna Know Why We Love Hamstring Stretches?

Because they feel so darn good...

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Home stretch proven to relieve back sciatic, & knee pain. IdealStretch

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The Facts, Options and Cures. How Pro Athletes Heal So Quickly.

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The hamstring stretches that you'll learn on this page will make you feel amazing. We promise. They literally make you feel 10 years younger...heck, 20 or 30 years younger.

Once you've sat down for a good half hour and stretched your hamstrings you will feel better in your legs, back, neck and glutes. That is what real freedom feels like. You can't possibly feel free when all of those muscles are being dominated by your tight hamstrings.

Quick Tip

You don't have to sit down for half an hour at a time. Just 10 minutes every day will give you massive improvements. But in the beginning it could be good to have a crack at a great big stretch. It will let you know what it feels like to be free.

Now, let's get into some basics...

First of all, you must realise that your hamstrings are very strong muscles. They often need a long time to stretch out to their fullest. It can take months of stretching to get to a reasonably flexible level. So don't expect any super-quick results.

A very important, but often overlooked, part of these stretches is the breathing. Proper breathing can make them work amazingly well. The proper technique goes like this...

Breathe in = Stretch and increase the tension in your hamstrings.
Breathe out = Consciously relax the muscle.

Keep doing this... You should feel your body relax and get into a rhythm. This is when your muscles start to release their tension.

Speaking of relaxing...

Rather than trying to *stretch* your hamstring, sometimes it is better to think of it more as *relaxing* your hamstring. What we're trying to say is not to stretch it too hard. It can make you tense up and it will be very hard to make any progress with the stretch. Get to know your own body and you will feel what is the right amount. If you put too much pressure you will feel your body resisting. If you then release some of that pressure you will feel your body relax a little. Try it out and see what happens.

Now, let's say you're doing the [basic hammie stretch...](#)

A common mistake made by a lot of people is that they try to get their head down to their knee's. With this goal in mind you will tend to stretch the muscles of your neck and back more than you do for your hamstrings. What you ideally want to do is imagine your body bending right at the hips. Do not worry about getting your head down further or your arms out further. Just worry about getting your



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- Kettlebells
- Resistance bands
- Elliptical
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abdomen flat with your thighs first of all. Then, after your flexibility increases, you can begin to move your head down until you are lying flat on your legs.

Just a quick piece of advice before we start...

Most of these hamstring stretches can be intensified by a simple pelvic tilt. This moves the stretch from lower in your leg to right up in the hamstring. It's like a "poking your bum out" movement. Give it a try, it's not hard.

And away we go...

These are the hamstring stretches that you will learn from this article:

- [Basic hammie stretch](#)
- [One leg in, one leg out](#)
- [Doorway stretch](#)
- [Bent over hammie stretch](#)
- [Lying stretch](#)
- [Leg on a ledge](#)
- [Touch your toes](#)

Benefits of These Hamstring Stretches

- ★ If you do them every day they will boost your flexibility beyond your wildest dreams.
- ★ Your hamstrings can be some of the most restrictive muscles if they are tight. These hamstring stretches loosen your hammies and free your body up.
- ★ They will help to keep your body strong and pain free. Hamstring stretches combined with [glute stretches](#) are especially good for lower back pain.
- ★ These hamstring stretches are very relaxing when done properly. Great for relieving stress.
- ★ You'll be able to touch your toes. :)
- ★ These hamstring stretches help tremendously when practicing to [do the splits](#).

Basic Hamstring Stretch

The basic hamstring stretch is one of the easiest and best ways of stretching your hamstrings. If you learn how to do one stretch properly on this page, make it this one.

This stretch has three stages to it. The three stages are in order of the way that you should progress.

Stage one

1. Sit on the ground with your legs straight out in front of you.
2. Try to sit a little forward of your tailbone. If you are finding this hard, sit on a cushion, and wriggle forward.
3. Sit up straight and breathe in.
4. Breathe out and bend at the hips.
5. Reach forward and touch your toes.
6. Make sure your feet are vertical.

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Stage two

1. Keep bending at the hips.
2. If you can, move your hands down to your heels.
3. Keep moving your abdomen closer to your thighs.
4. Concentrate on feeling that stretch in your hamstrings.



Stage three

1. Keep bending at the hips and flattening your abdominals towards your thighs.
2. See if you can lie flat on your legs.
3. Extend your hands along the ground.

Please bear in mind that it can take a long time to get from one stage to another. Obviously the more you practice the more benefits you will get. If you can stretch every single day your flexibility will improve in leaps and bounds.



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One Leg In One Leg out

This method of stretching your hamstrings is good for isolating just one of your legs. If you are very tight you will probably be able to stretch one leg a lot easier than doing both at once. It's a good idea to start with this way until you build up your flexibility a bit.

1. Sit up straight and a little forward of your tail bone. (Use a cushion if you're having trouble doing this).
2. Put your left leg out straight in front of you.
3. Bend your right leg and put your foot against your other leg.
4. Breathe in
5. Bend forward at the hip and breathe out.
6. Hold this stretch for 30 seconds.
7. Swap sides.

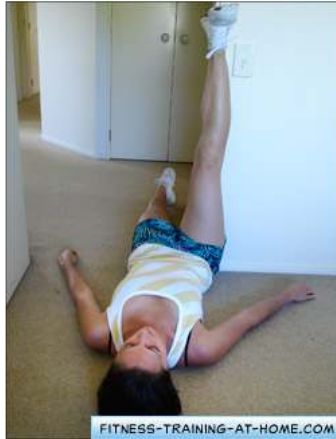


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Doorway Hamstring Stretch

This is a great hamstring stretch. It is easy to do and it's really good if you're feeling very tight. It's great for just chilling out listening to music or whatever it is you like to do down on the floor. ;) You can just have one leg resting up on the wall, you don't even have to think about stretching it. It just does it by itself. How's that for a great hamstring stretch.

1. Find a doorway in your house.
2. Put one leg through the doorway and the other leg up the wall next to the door.
3. Try to get your buttocks as close to the wall as possible.
4. Make sure your "floor leg" is straight out along the floor.
5. Hold this stretch for 30 seconds.
6. Swap sides.



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Bent Over Hammie Stretch

This is a very nice stretch. It's easy to get a nice strong stretch with this one.

1. Get into the position shown.
2. Rest your hands on your shins.
3. Bend forward at the hips and breathe out.
4. Tilt your pelvis until the stretch is nice and strong in your hamstring.
5. Hold for 30 seconds
6. Repeat on the opposite side.



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Lying Hamstring Stretch

This stretch can be done in two ways. If you're not very flexible yet you can use a towel like we've shown in the second picture.

1. Lie on your back and lift one leg up as high as you can.
2. Grab onto it with your hands (or a towel) and pull it back towards you.
3. Work towards having your "floor leg" straight out along the floor and your "air leg" straight and flat against your body.
4. Hold for 30 seconds.
5. Repeat with the opposite side.



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Leg on a Ledge

This can be a powerful stretch. It is good because you can control how much stretch you are getting by how far forward you are leaning and the height of the ledge that you are using.

1. Find a ledge that you think will be the right height.
2. Put one of your legs up onto it.
3. Keep both your legs straight.
4. Bend forward at the hips and stretch that hammie.
5. Hold for 30 seconds.
6. Repeat with the other leg.



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Touch Your Toes

This is a good one for doing first thing in the morning as soon as you get out of bed. It makes you feel more alive.

1. Stand up straight.
2. Bend at the hips and let your body relax down.
3. Keep your legs straight.
4. Just hang loose man!



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Want to get really flexible?

The best book we've read on flexibility is [Stretching Scientifically: A Guide to Flexibility Training \(4th Revision ed\)](#). It has allowed Tom to touch his palms flat to the ground while doing the "touch your toes" stretch above. He's never been able to do that before...It was a 10cm improvement in only 2 days.

[Return from hamstring stretches to flexibility training](#)

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