

Goalie Stretches

What are the best kind of stretches to increase a goalie's flexibility?

Goalie man: I am pretty basic on stretches. I do stretches that work on the lats, the forearms, quads, hams, butt and calves. Aggressive goalie play is tough on the lower back unless you keep the long muscles stretched. These can be done in the morning, the evening and before lifting and before practice/playing. If I tighten up during a game I have one stretch for that also.

Calf stretches - put all your weight on one foot lean forward with knee locked and lean against a wall or fence with your back bent forward to horizontal. Hold for a slow count of 20. Do the other leg. Almost the same stretch, but addresses the high ankle/Achilles area. Do it the same but bend the knee somewhat. Same count. Always do calves first.

Quadriceps (upper leg front) - Stand on one foot. Bring other foot up to the butt and grab the toe with the hand on the same side of the body as the leg. Pull the toe up toward the waist. Keep the foot to the back of the leg/butt. This stretches the quad and shin. Hold for at least 20 count. Do other leg.

Butt stretch - The butt contains important big muscles. Sit down on the ground with legs pointing forward. Put one ankle (lets start with the left leg on top of the right) on the other leg above the knee and raise that knee. Pull the left knee to your nose and hold for a 20 count. Your left butt will stretch. Do other butt/leg.

Hamstring - Stand with feet pointing forward shoulder width or more apart. With knees bent slightly bend from the waste and try to touch your toes with your hands. Do not bounce. Hold this and your hamstrings will slowly start to stretch (you will get closer to your toes). Hold for a slow 20 count. Then lock your knees and do this again (stretches different portion of the hamstrings).

Lats - these are the long muscles in the back. There are a couple of stretches but the best one is to do the hamstring stretch with knees bent but grasp you stick with your hands so that your left hand is on the right side of your body and your right is on the left with the shaft keeping them as far apart as possible and try to reach the ground with the stick handle (it is parallel to the ground). Do this for at least a slow twenty. A similar stretch (that I use in a game) is to squat and try to touch your hands outside your opposite toes (left outside the right foot, etc.) and hold that. This stretch helps the lats, quads, butt combination and can help if your lower back is cramping.

Forearms - interlace your fingers and push your palms out from your chest. Hold for 20 count.

Be patient on these stretches. They all require long hold times to work effectively