

## **Isometric Stretching**

### **What is Isometric Stretching?**

Isometric stretching is a type of static stretching (does not use motion) that involves the resistance of muscle groups through tensing the stretched muscles. One of most effective methods for improving static passive flexibility is through the use of isometric stretching. It is demanding on the muscle tendons and joints and should not be performed more than once per day on a given group of muscles.

### **Why do Isometric Stretching?**

Isometric exercises apply tension on specific muscles without moving the surrounding joints. By applying continuous tension to the muscles, isometric exercises can be beneficial in improving physical endurance and posture by strengthening and stabilizing the muscles. An advantage with this type of stretching is that they are easy to perform, do not require equipment, and can be incorporable into many weightlifting exercises.

### **Benefits of Isometric Stretching**

Stretching can be good for a number of reasons. Here are some isometric stretching benefits:

- Activate several muscle fibers at once.
- Suitable for individuals with an injury or medical condition that limits movement.
- May be a useful way to lower blood pressure.
- Improve muscle stability and the ability to hold weight over longer periods.
- Assist with pain relief for lower back pain, knee osteoarthritis, and neck pain.

### **How to do Isometric Stretching**

Isometric stretches can work many different muscles. Here are a few isometric stretches you can try:

#### **Plank**

1. Start in a press up position.
2. Bend the elbows so that the forearms are flat on the ground.
3. Hold the body in a straight line, with the forearms underneath the shoulders, keeping the core muscles tight.
4. Start with holding this position for 10 seconds and build up over time.



### Wall sit

1. Stand around 2 feet in front of a wall, with the feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Slowly lower the body into a sitting position so that the back rests flat against the wall.
3. Bend the knees to a 90-degree angle as if sitting on a chair, keeping tension in the core.
4. Hold this position for as long as possible.



### Calf raises and hold

1. Stand with your feet hip-distance apart. You may wish to stand about 2 feet from a wall for support.
2. With your hands on your hips (or resting lightly against a wall for support), push into the balls of your feet and lift your heels off the ground.
3. Hold this position for 20–30 seconds.
4. Perform 2–3 rounds.



**References:**

Davidson, K. (2022, January 26). Examples of isometric exercises: Try these to Bust gym boredom. Healthline. <https://www.healthline.com/health/fitness-exercise/isometric-exercises>

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