Stretches for kids

Peabody · checked 2026-10-29

Peabody has 9 free stretches for kids, each one drawn so a child can see the shape, with cues in their own words and the common mistake beside the right way. They are the cool-down of every workout in the Gym, and 4 workouts are nothing but stretching.

9 stretches for kids

- Stretch: Arm circles · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · How long: slow reps · What it reaches: deltoid, trapezius, pectorals
- Stretch: Leg swings · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: a wall · How long: slow reps · What it reaches: hamstrings, quadriceps, glutes
- Stretch: Cat and cow · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · How long: slow reps · What it reaches: spine, abs, trapezius
- Stretch: Downward Dog · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: nothing · How long: hold it · What it reaches: hamstrings, calves, deltoid
- Stretch: Reach for your toes · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · How long: hold it · What it reaches: hamstrings, spine, calves
- Stretch: Butterfly · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · How long: hold it · What it reaches: glutes, sartorius, hamstrings
- Stretch: Heel to bottom · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: a wall · How long: hold it · What it reaches: quadriceps, sartorius
- Stretch: Calf stretch · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: a wall · How long: hold it · What it reaches: calves, tendons
- Stretch: Towel over your head · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: a towel · How long: slow reps · What it reaches: deltoid, pectorals, trapezius

Before or after?

Before: move everything gently — circles, swings, easy versions of what you are about to do. A cold muscle is stiff like cold chewing gum, and three minutes of easy moving makes it bendy.

After: the long, still holds, when you are warm. Holding a long stretch on a cold muscle is the one to avoid, and it is what most people do.

Stretching workouts

- Workout: Morning Stretch · Ages: 6 to 9 · Minutes: 6 · What it is: Bendiness is a thing you train, like strength. It just takes longer.
- Workout: After Sitting All Day · Ages: 9 to 12 · Minutes: 8 · What it is: Sitting still shortens things. Stretching gives them back.

• Workout: Before Bed Stretch · Ages: 6 to 9 · Minutes: 6 · What it is: Slow stretching at the end of the day tells a busy body it is allowed to stop.
• Workout: Long Legs · Ages: 9 to 12 · Minutes: 7 · What it is: Bendiness is trained like strength is. It just takes longer and feels like doing nothing.

How to stretch without hurting anybody

• Never bounce. Slow and still, and breathe out as you reach.
• A stretch should feel like a pull, never like a pinch or a sharp pain. Sharp means stop.
• Bend your knees as much as you need to. Reaching your toes is not the point; reaching further than last month is.
• Both sides, the same time each.
• Bendiness is trained like strength is. It takes weeks, and it feels like doing nothing.

Questions

Should kids stretch before exercise?

Gently, and moving — not the long still holds. Save those for afterwards, when the muscles are warm.

How long should a child hold a stretch?

Fifteen to thirty seconds is plenty, or about five slow breaths. Every stretch page here says which.

Where do these come from?

The way this section thinks about fitness — ten general physical skills, three ways to move, "do it right, do it right every time, then do it fast", and ending a session with a game — comes from CrossFit's published training model and its CrossFit Kids program. Peabody is not affiliated with them. The safety rules here are our own, and in several places stricter.

Nothing is sent anywhere

The Gym is free, with no ads and no sign-up. There is no camera, no pose detection and no leaderboard. What your child has done and their own best times stay on their own device and are never sent anywhere, so there is nothing to lose and no account to make.

Free at peabody.kids/stretches-for-kids