

Sit and Reach Training Program

Just like any other type of training, it is important to follow the FITT principle when working to improve your flexibility. Follow the program below and you will be ready for the work ready assessment in no time!

Frequency: Do flexibility exercises at least 3 days a week. It is important to warm your muscles up first with a light 5-10 minute warm-up such as walking, biking or jumping rope.

Intensity: Take static stretches to the point of tension, not pain.

Time: Hold each stretch for 10 to 30 seconds; repeat one or two more times.

Type: Static stretching following the technique below. Start with either a seated hamstring stretch or a standing hamstring stretch and work up to a hamstring stretch with a band.

Static Stretching Technique:

Static stretching involves slowly positioning a muscle into a position where it's lengthened and you feel mild discomfort, and then holding that position for a period of time. Hold each stretch for 10-30 seconds. Do not jerk or bounce in an attempt to stretch further. When you jerk, you initiate the muscle reflex, which in an attempt to protect muscles from injury prevents you from overstretching a muscle. Jerking is not only an ineffective technique for improving flexibility; it can result in muscle strains.

Seated Hamstring Stretches

Sit on the floor with both legs fully extended out in front of you. Flex your ankles by pulling your toes up toward your shins. While keeping your knees straight, bend forward at the waist and reach your hands toward your feet. To address each hamstring independently, perform single-leg seated hamstring stretches. Keep one leg extended and bend the knee of the other leg, tucking your foot into the inside of your thigh. Keep your shoulders square to the foot of your extended leg and bend forward. Switch legs.

Standing Hamstring Stretch

Stand behind a chair, holding the back of it with both hands. Bend forward from the hips (not waist), keeping back and shoulders straight at all times. When upper body is parallel to floor, hold position for 10 to 30 seconds. You should feel a stretch in the backs of your thighs.

Hamstring Stretch with Band

For a more intense hamstring and glute stretch, use a band or rope to increase the tension. Lie on your back with one leg extended on the floor. Loop the band around your other foot and extend that leg up toward the ceiling. Hold the ends of the band with each of your hands. Keep your knee straight and lift up your leg as high as possible. Pull on the bands to increase the stretch. Hold that level of tension throughout the 10 to 30 seconds, and then switch legs.