

Keeping Limber on the Links

Four Must-do Stretches Before a Round

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Stretching is extremely important for golf, but it's only one piece of the puzzle. Good flexibility in the game can only be achieved once you have maintained proper stability and correct your muscle or body imbalances. You can be flexible in your back, but if it is not stable, your body automatically decreases rotation. You can be extremely flexible in your hips, but not flexible in your back, which will limit your rotation. Therefore, when it comes to flexibility, I recommend stretching multiple muscles with each stretch. Why would you stretch one muscle at a time when you use every muscle in your body at once when you strike a golf ball?

There are also stretches that will actually cause more pain for golfers if done prior to playing. In general, stretching your lower back by bending forward toward your toes will increase — not decrease — back pain, especially if you add a twist and have a disc injury.

The following are four must-do stretches prior to starting your round:

Each stretch is done for a total of 30 seconds. I do not recommend bouncing or holding each stretch for more than two seconds at a time prior to playing. They start basic and get more complex (meaning you stretch with fast movements and stretch more muscles with each stretch as you progress)!



Dr. Matthew Cooper

Dr. Matthew Cooper of Florida Rehabilitation Center is a certified chiropractic sports physician, specializing in sports rehabilitation, injury prevention and nutrition through enzyme therapy. His team, located at The Fairmont Turnberry Isle Resort & Club in Aventura, remains on the cutting edge in treatment techniques and methodologies. His expertise lies in assessing the body and designing individualized rehabilitation techniques specific to one's injury, sports, nutritional composition and goals.



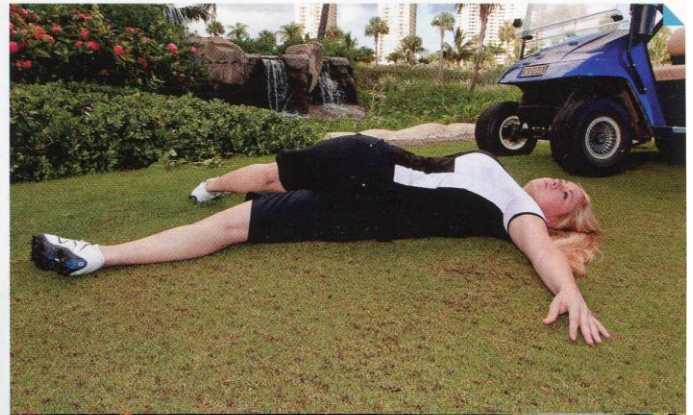
STRETCH 1

This stretch is for the anterior chain. Starting from top to bottom, it stretches your anterior shoulder, chest, stomach muscles including your obliques, hip flexors, quads, shin muscles (tibialis anterior) and ankle. It will also stretch some of your posterior chain including your mid and low back (erector spinae and multifidus), lats, and lower traps, all in one stretch!



STRETCH 2

This is more for your posterior chain. Starting from top to bottom, it stretches your posterior shoulder, traps, rhomboids, lats, mid and low back, glute muscles, hips, ITB, TFL, hamstring and calf.



STRETCH 3 AND 4

Stretch 3:
This is more of a ballistic stretch and is extremely functional for golf. You must do Stretch 1 prior. Start slow with a small range of motion and gradually increase the range and go faster. It should be done twice, 30 seconds each time. This stretches your posterior chain, very similar to the muscles in stretch one.

Stretch 4:
Same as stretch 3 but now you are working your anterior chain.