



General Styles of Stretching,

Style Description, and Geared for What Practitioner or Ability Level

Style of Stretch	Explanation / Description	Geared for
Active Stretching (static)	Slowly elongating a muscle (group) to slight tightness/tension and holding in place using your own force. Often one muscle is stretched while another contracts.	Post-workout or warmed muscles to sustain or improve muscle pliability.
Passive Stretching (static)	Slowly elongating a relaxed muscle (group) into a stretch using external force i.e., a strap, gravity, a partner.	Post-workout or warmed muscles to improve flexibility and relaxation in muscles and connective tissues.
Dynamic Stretching	Stretching through repeated movements to warm muscles, increase heat and blood flow.	Wonderful for pre-workout, pre-stretch, slow cool down. Activates multiple muscle groups, lubricates joints.
Yoga (asana)	Strengthening and stretching muscles through movement.	Improving flexibility, mobility, stability, pain relief, stress reduction, balance.
Ballistic Stretching	Bouncing or high-speed position changes which increase muscle power and range of motion, boost performance.	Usually practiced in pro sports, martial arts, gymnastics, or dance.
Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation - PNF	Advanced form of stretch and contractions against resistance; advisable only with a pro trainer or physical therapist.	Recovery from surgery or injury, restoration of range of motion and muscle elasticity.
Myofascial Release	Hands-on (sometimes deep), sustained bodywork by a field professional in targeted areas of underlying tissue.	For release of muscle knots, healing scar tissue, muscular or blood flow restrictions, muscle imbalances, symptoms of migraine headaches.

From *So You Know How to Stretch?* Gwenn Jones, FitGram, 2003, no. 32.

Revised *Learn How Seniors Stay Mobile and Flexible Forever*, Gwenn Jones, YogaGrit.com, 2021, 2022.