



With the soles of the feet pressed together, sit up very tall and pull the knees down to the floor. The stretch should be felt on the inner border of the leg/groin.

EASIER - take feet further away from the bottom.

HARDER - bend forward at the trunk aiming to get the chest on the feet.



Sitting on the bottom, cross one ankle over the opposite knee. Bring the foot as close to the chest as possible. The back shoulder be flat and neck straight. The stretch should be felt in the bottom.

EASIER - take the bottom foot further away from the bottom.

HARDER - bring bottom foot closer to bottom and other leg closer to chest.



With both legs out front and extended together, lean forwards over the legs, keeping the back as straight as possible. Reach past the feet. The stretch should be felt in the back of the legs and lower back.

EASIER - reach only as far as the knees and press the chest forwards.

HARDER - if the chest is flat on the legs, pull the toes backwards.



Sitting with legs no more than 90 degrees apart. Turn the trunk and lean with the body over one leg, keep the back as flat as possible. Make sure that both legs are stretched. The stretch should be felt in the back of the leg that the body is leaning over.

EASIER - keep hands on the floor either side of the leg, press forward with the chest.

HARDER - if chest flat on leg, take the body on the inside of the leg towards the floor.



Sitting with the legs no more than 90 degrees apart, lean forwards taking the chest down towards the floor, aiming to get the belly button to the floor with the hands either out to the feet (as seen here) or out above head. The stretch should be felt in the inner leg muscles.

EASIER - keep hands flat on the floor and press forward with the chest.

HARDER - put both feet on a book to lift off the floor and then press down to the floor with the chest.



Lying on the front, put the hands underneath the shoulders and push up so the arms aim to be straight. The legs must stay together and shoulder pulled down, as well as hip bones staying on the floor. The stretch should be felt in the tummy and the lower back

EASIER - keep arms slightly bent - but keep hip bones on the floor.

HARDER - use a wall so the chest is pressed against the wall and the arms extended above the head.



Kneeling on one knee, keep the shoulders over the hips and push the hips forward. The front foot must remain fully on the floor and the hips squarely facing the front. Try not to arch the back into the position, keep back flat and upright. The stretch should be felt in the front of the back leg.

EASIER - use a wall nearby to steady the balance with the arms.

HARDER - see next picture - bend the back leg and bring the heel up towards the bottom.



Start in a kneeling position as above, put the hands on the inside of the front leg. Curl the back foot toes over and straighten the back leg. The back knee should be tightened straight and the back flat. Start with arms straight and aim to get elbows down to the floor. The stretch should be felt in the front of the back leg.

EASIER - keep arms straight

HARDER - put the back foot onto a step/book, and aim to get elbows on the floor.





Start in a kneeling position. Push the bottom backwards and lean over the front leg, keeping the back flat. Pull the toes back and keep the hips square. The stretch should be felt in the back of the front leg.

EASIER - keep the arms straight on either side of the front leg.

HARDER - take the trunk on the inside of the front leg, aiming to get the chest to the floor.



Take one leg behind the body and one leg out to the front keeping the hips square. Keep the shoulders pulled back over the hips and push forward with the back hip, aiming to get the back thigh onto the floor. The stretch should be felt in the front leg around the hip and the back leg around the front of the leg.

EASIER - sit on the heel of the front foot

HARDER - put the back foot on a book



Start all fours on hands and knees. Put the elbows down onto the floor and then slowly take the knees further apart. The feet should stay parallel with each other and the knees at 90 degrees. The knees and the hips should make a straight line. The stretch should be felt in the inner thighs. Try to keep the back flat and not arched.

EASIER - keep the hands on the floor

HARDER - if hip bones flat to the floor then bring the feet closer together (as pictured below)



OTHER ADVANCED STRETCHES:



If able to get flat splits - or nearly flat, then bend the back leg up a wall. This will stretch the front of the back leg more. Ensure that the hips stay square and the shoulders pulled back.



Extend the leg up the wall, using the hands to carry the weight. The heel of the bottom foot needs to be as close to the wall as possible to start - and then can progress away from the wall as the stretch gets easier. Use the arms to push the hips back against the wall.

SPLITS STRETCHES - TO DO AT THE END OF EVERY STRETCHING SESSION



Straight splits: need to do with the right and the left leg forwards.

Some swimmers will need support under the arms in order to keep the shoulders back over the hips, they will then be able to slowly lower themselves. Knees need to stay extended and the hips square.



All swimmers need to aim to get flat right and left splits. The hips need to be square, the legs extended and the shoulders back over the hips. The swimmer also needs to be able to hold the position without hands on the floor. They need to be either above the head or out to the side.



Once swimmers are flat in their splits - then they shouldn't stop there! They then need to progress onto over-splits. This means putting the front foot onto an object and pushing the hips down. The height of this object can increase as the swimmer gets flexible.



If the swimmer is not flat then they need to rest onto their elbows to take the weight and then gently take the feet out to the side. It is very important that the hips stay in line with the feet, if looking from the side.



If the swimmer is flat, then able to get the crotch/hips down to the floor with the legs extended and the trunk either leaning forwards (as pictured here) or sitting upright. Again it is important for the feet to stay in line with the hips - as you can see in this picture.



Again, if the swimmer is flat then don't stop there! Progress onto putting one, or both, of the feet onto a book and aim to push the hips down to the floor, taking the weight onto the elbows.

Box split.