

Stretching is key to helping you maintain flexibility and avoid injury. You will be amazed by how much it helps your walking. To help increase your flexibility you might want to consider adding a yoga or Pilates class into your training program.

### Some guidelines for stretching are:

- Warm up first (walk for 10 to 15 minutes).
- Stretching before warm up may not be beneficial and also may be harmful.
- After warm up, increase to your normal pace, stopping occasionally to stretch.
- Hold each stretch for 10 to 15 seconds.
- Achieve the stretching position gently. Do not bounce.
- Only stretch within your limits. If you feel any discomfort, stop.
- Remember to breathe while stretching.
- The most important time to stretch is after your exercise or during any breaks in activity (at pit stops or lunch, when you are done walking).

### Here are some stretching tips to follow while on the event:

- Stretch 5 minutes per hour.
- Stretch in the morning before you hit the road.
- Stretch at all the pit stops.
- Stretch waiting for the port-a-potty.
- Stretch at a red light.
- Stretch when you come into camp.



**The Achilles Crouch:** Keeping your heel planted, lean forward from a crouching position. You're stretching the Achilles tendon, which runs down the back of the ankle to the heel. Repeat for the other leg.



**The Lunge Stretch:** In a lunge position, keeping your forward knee behind the forward ankle, lower your pelvis to the ground. Keep your head up, shoulders level and eyes looking forward. This is for your groin and hips. Reverse foot positions and repeat on the other side.



**The Butterfly Stretch:** Using your elbows, press your knees down toward the floor. This stretches your inner thighs and hips.



**The Gluteus Stretch:** Lying on your back, hug your knee toward your chest to stretch the muscles in your buttocks. Repeat with the other leg.



**The Spinal Twist:** Cross one leg over the other extended leg, planting the foot on the floor. Twist your trunk toward the crossed leg. Switch legs and repeat on the other side.



**The Seated Hamstring Stretch:** Bending at the hips, lean forward reaching your hands toward your feet. This stretches the back of your thighs and lower back.



**The Squatting Stretch:** Keep both heels planted and lower your buttocks into a squatting position; hold the position.



**The Calf Stretch:** Using a wall, tree or walking partner for support, extend one foot three feet away from the support, with your heel firmly planted. Lean forward to stretch the calf of your extended leg, putting your weight over the bent leg. Repeat with the other leg.



**The Quadriceps Stretch:** Supporting yourself against a wall, tree or walking partner, bend one knee and grab your ankle or foot with the alternate hand. Gently pull your heel toward your buttocks, stretching the front of the thigh. Repeat with the other leg.



**The Shoulder/Chest Stretch:** Interlock your fingers behind your back. Keeping your chest high and eyes looking forward, gently raise your arms.



**The Iliotibial Band Stretch (Standing):** Cross one leg over the other and bend down to touch your toes. Repeat with other leg.



**Iliotibial Band Stretch (Side-leaning):** Stand sideways next to a wall or tree. Place hand on wall for support. Cross the leg that is closest to the wall over the leg that is farthest from the wall; lean into the wall. Repeat with other leg.



**The Hamstring Stretch:** Lie on your back with your buttocks close to a doorway and extend your legs straight out in front of you. Raise one leg and rest it against the wall next to the doorframe. Repeat with other leg.



**The Piriformis Stretch:** Lie on your back with your knees bent. Cross right foot over left knee. Place both hands behind your left knee and pull left knee toward left shoulder. Repeat with opposite side.