

## THE ROLE OF STRETCHING IN THE SPORTS' TRAINING

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**Key words:** stretching, sports training, mobility, flexibility and warming up.

**Summary:** What does the word stretching mean? This is an English word and is translated *întindere* in Romanian. However, in the sports' field it's got a wider significance, that is a set of stretching exercises having the capacity to improve the body's mobility and flexibility.

In sports' training, apart from the warming up itself, stretching has recently appeared. The latter means the revival of joints and tonifying the muscles with the help of stretching movements. These exercises are slow movements that lead to a general improvement of mobility through the stretching of certain groups of muscles. In the sports' training it can be placed as part of the warming up at its beginning or at the end, as a stage of the body's recovery after effort.

### **Introduction:**

Stretching can be regarded as a method of training in itself, especially by those whose aim is to attain a high level of flexibility.

The training will be adjusted according to the individual features: age, sex, weight, height, effort capacity, aim.

Stretching is a set of exercises that lead to improvement of the body's mobility and flexibility. It is done after the muscles' in advance warming up. These stretching exercises are excellent also for those who wish to strengthen their muscular mass. When not working with bar bells, stretching has the capacity to keep the strength and muscular force to an acceptable level.

In the past years stretching has become more and more frequent in the training programmes of sportsmen, in the warming up stage and in the postfort recovery. It is a means by which the muscles are stressed in the sense if their stretching and at the end they recover their initial dimension. Apart from its action on the active elements of the muscles, stretching also has effects on the passive elements: tendons, ligaments and bones. The stretching elements make up a training system that raises the stretching limits of muscles and joints, developing the force and

strength of muscles, helping them to remain at a high level of flexibility.

**Material-method:**

These stretching exercises have a particular set of qualities such as:

- improve joints flexibility;
- reduce strong muscular pain after effort (muscular fever);
- favour the recovery after certain accidents;
- increase athletic performance;
- reduce muscular spasm;
- help maintaining correct position of the body;
- favour maintaining the amplitude concerning normal movement at the joints' level;
- favour the oxygen and nutrients transport on a cellular level;
- reduce stress;
- raise the ability to study and carry out different movements;

Stretching can be divided in:

- passive, in which muscular stretching is carried out with external help;
- active, carried out through muscular contraction antagonist to the one that needs to be stretched;

In case of stretching, the contraction is of an isometric type without modifying the length of the muscles; it only appears a slight tension in muscles.

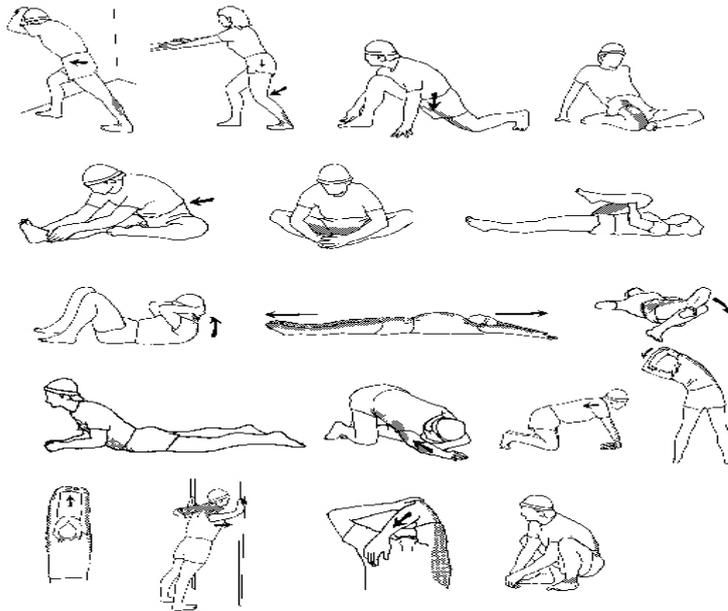
**Results:**

Each stretching session must start with some easy exercises which should impose on muscles and joints gradually. Stretching is far more efficient with a pre warm up stage, if not the effects will only be temporary. These exercises must be carried out softly, with patience until reaching certain tension so that muscular fibres can be maintained stretched for approximately 15-30 seconds and after that total relaxation should occur. These exercises are efficient only when a pleasant, unharmed muscular tension occurs. If pain appears, the exercises must be stopped and another set of exercises, an easier one, should be started.

When doing these stretching exercises it is vitally important to control your breathing since the latter improves their efficiency. Thus the breathing in is done through nostrils and the breathing out is done in a prolonged manner, through nostrils or mouth.

In sports training, as mentioned before, stretching is done at the beginning and the end as well. At the end of training the stretching movements have the role to put an end to muscular tension and improve

circulation on muscular group level that has been burdened during training.



These exercises are very important because they help get rid of toxins settled in the human tissue during the burning process. Another positive effect of stretching in training is that by raising flexibility, the possibility of accidents decreases.

There are a few rules that must be obeyed as far as stretching is concerned:

- the most important one is that before doing any stretching exercises a 5-10 minutes warm up must be done;
- if the exercises are done at the end of some hard training, then one should wait for the slow down of the heart beat; if this rule is not obeyed, cramps or dizziness can occur due to sanguine acceleration at the muscles' level;
- another basic rule refers to gradual, slow stretching, without sudden movements;
- breathing should be the right one, with no breathing in.

Stretching involves all sets of exercising with muscles, ligaments and tendons. Doing the stretching exercises without taking into account the above-mentioned rules, leads to fatigue and harm. The main advantage of the new system refers to the fact that it can be done individually or collectively throughout the year.

### **Discussions:**

We can assert that using stretching in sports' training is beneficial because:

- improves muscular tonus;
- stretches and strengthens muscular fibres;
- prevents accidents, injuries;
- favours recovery after certain accidents.

We should also mention that good warm up, here included stretching, ensures the best shape for sportsmen to achieve performance. In postfort as well, stretching is invaluable in the sense that on one hand it ensures muscular flexibility and on the other hand it quickly gets rid of the local products of catabolism.

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**Titlu:** Rolul stretchingului în antrenamentul sportiv

**Cuvinte cheie:** stretching, antrenament sportiv, mobilitate, flexibilitate, încălzire.

**Rezumat:** Ce înseamnă cuvântul „*stretching*“? Acest cuvânt vine din limba engleză și se traduce prin „întindere”, însă în sport a căpătat o semnificație mai largă, de complex de exerciții de întindere, cu capacitatea de a îmbunătăți flexibilitatea și mobilitatea organismului.

În antrenamentul sportiv pe lângă încălzirea propriu-zisă s-a introdus mai nou și stretchingul. El presupune dezmoțirea articulațiilor și tonifierea musculaturii cu ajutorul unor mișcări de întindere. Exercițiile de stretching sunt mișcări lente care duc la îmbunătățirea mobilității generale prin alungirea anumitor grupe de mușchi. În antrenamentul sportiv poate fi integrat ca parte a etapei de încălzire la începutul acestuia sau a etapei de revenire a organismului după efort, la finalul lui.

**Titre:** Le rôle du stretching dans l'entraînement sportif.

**Mots clé :** Stretching, entraînement sportif, mobilité, flexibilité, échauffement.

**Résumé :** Qu'est-ce que c'est que le stretching? Ce mot provient de l'anglais et on le traduit par "extension", mais dans le sport il a des connotations plus larges, un ensemble d'exercices d'extension, ayant la capacité d'améliorer la flexibilité et la mobilité de l'organisme.

Durant l'entraînement sportif on a introduit à côté de l'échauffement le stretching aussi.

Il suppose le débourdissage des articulations et la tonification de la musculature à l'aide de mouvements d'extension. Les exercices de stretching sont de mouvements lents qui mènent à l'amélioration de la mobilité générale par l'allongement de certains groupes de muscles.

Dans l'entraînement sportif le stretching peut être intégré comme étape d'échauffement au début ou comme étape de retour de l'organisme, après l'effort à sa fin.