



ST. JOHNSTONE FC ACADEMY



Performance Lifestyle – Stretching and Recovery

Introduction

How you look after your body out with training is perhaps one of the most important parts of being a professional footballer. Professional players are required to perform consecutive intense training sessions day-in, day-out. In order to train at the required intensity each day, players must ensure they are adequately recovered from the previous days training. Muscle soreness and stiffness is an after effect of intense training and cannot be avoided. However, players can implement various interventions which can minimise the undesirable muscle soreness and fatigue associated with training hard. One of these strategies is an appropriate stretching routine which can keep the muscle supple and reduced the feelings of fatigue. On top of this, flexibility in the key areas associated with performance such as the hips, hamstrings and groins can also reduce the risk of injury.

The following stretching routine can help improve flexibility, can help with recovery and reduce the risk of injury if performed 3-4 times per week. Each stretch should be help for a minimum of 30 seconds on each leg and repeated 1-2 times

Straddle Stretch



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- Spread legs wider than hip width
- Bend over at the waist bringing your head toward the ground
- Reach both hands toward the right foot,, the left foot, then to the middle



Side Groin Lunge



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- Spread legs wider than hip width
- Lunge over one leg while keeping the opposite leg straight
- Instead of performing 30 sec on each legs, keep the feet where they are (in the wide position) and perform 5-6 lunges on each side trying to go deeper each time

Saigon Squat



- Stand with feet shoulder width
- Squat down and press out on your knees with elbows
- If you are having difficulty with this one, use a wall to lean against



Hip Flexor and Hamstring Stretch



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- Lunge forward allowing the back knee to rest on the ground and hold
- Straighten front knee and bend upper body over the leg
- Drop your elbow closest to your front foot and try and touch the ground with it to give an extra stretch
- Try and keep the knee, hip and shoulder in a straight line as shown in the diagram (push your belly button towards the ground)



Hip/ Glute Stretch



- Sit on the ground with one leg straight and the other bent across it
- Pull your bent knee into your chest
- Place your opposite elbow outside the bent knee and twist

Quad Stretch



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- Grab your foot and pull your heel to your butt

Calf Stretch



- Lean against a wall as shown
- Keeping the heel on the ground (back foot) lean forward
- To stretch the soleus muscle, bend the back knee whilst trying to keep the back heel on the ground

