

# 8 Easy Ways To Get More Flexible

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Flexibility is one of those funny use it or lose it type things. Just because you were able to do a split when you were 10 years old, doesn't mean it will stay with you for life, explains LA-based yoga instructor [Caley Alyssa](#). (That's her above!)

Even if you have no Cirque du Soleil aspirations, working on your flexibility has important benefits. A lack of flexibility may be leaving you susceptible to injury. Small muscles aches and pains and even issues with form generally spring from a lack of flexibility, Alyssa says. Translation: You're not able to reach your full potential in *other* workouts if your muscles aren't pliable.

So start integrating more flexibility training into your routine with the eight stretches below from Alyssa. But remember to be patient with your body and to never push beyond your limit.

**Your Flexibility Training Plan:** Perform the passive stretches twice a day, once in the morning and once in the evening. Do the active stretches once a day, before a workout or first thing in the morning (before passive stretches).

## Passive Stretches

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### 1. Low Lunge with Quad Stretch

Start standing with feet together. Step right foot forward and lunge down, keeping right knee stacked over right ankle and back leg straight. Untuck left toes and allow left foot, shin, and knee to rest on the ground. Slowly bend left knee, twist torso to the right, and grab left foot behind you with right hand (as shown). Hold for 60 seconds; then repeat on opposite side.

### 2. Lizard Pose

Start in [downward facing dog](#). Shift weight forward and step your right foot to the outside of right hand, knee stacked over ankle, back leg fully extended. Lower hips down as far as you can. If you're able, come to forearms. Hold for 60 seconds; then repeat on opposite side.

### 3. Wide-Legged Forward Fold

Spread legs about three feet apart. Keeping feet parallel to each other, toes pointing forward, fold forward from your pelvis as far as you can. Be sure weight distribution in feet is equal and grab onto calves or ankles to help deepen stretch if needed. Hold for 60 seconds.

### 4. Forward Fold With Shoulder Stretch

Start with feet hip-distance apart and toes pointing forward. Interlace fingers behind back. Gently bend knees and fold forward as far as you can bringing torso to meet thighs and allowing arms come raise, while hands remain clasped together. Hold for 60 seconds.

## Active Stretches

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### 1. Cat Cow

Start on all fours, wrists directly under shoulders, knees under hips. As you inhale, slide chest forward and through your upper arms, drawing shoulders back and away from neck. As you exhale, round into your upper back and feel a stretch between shoulder blades. Continue for 30 seconds.

### 2. Downward Facing Dog to Plank

Start in downward facing dog. Inhale and roll forward into plank position, hands under shoulders, body in straight line from head to toe. Exhale and return to downward facing dog. Continue moving between these two poses for 30 seconds.

### 3. Malasana Squats

Start with feet slightly wider than shoulder-width apart and toes point out about 30 degrees. Bend knees and sit back, lowering as far as you can, with weight in heels. Lengthen lower back towards the ground as you lift chest towards ceiling. Inhale, press through heels and come to standing, reaching arms overhead. Exhale to return to squatting position, hands at heart center in a prayer position. Continue for 30 seconds.

### 4. Lizard Hip Circles

Start in downward facing dog. Step your right foot to the outside of your right hand, knee stacked over ankle, back leg fully extended. Lower hips down as far as you can. If you're able, come to forearms. Begin to roll your hips in circles in one direction a few times, then reverse the direction. Repeat on the opposite side.

Photo Credit: Instagram @caleyalysa