

Fitness Forum: Stretching the shoulders and the hamstrings

by CNS

The Moves: A postural stretch adapted from yoga.

Works on: Lengthening the spine, chest and abdomen. Stretching the shoulders and hamstrings.

SHOULDER STRETCH - Firefighter Robert Logan demonstrates a postural stretch. CNS Photo by Peggy Peattie.

Setup: Place both palms on a wall directly in front of the shoulders. Step away from the wall approximately 3 feet, or one full step.

Steps: Push the hands firmly into the wall, bend forward at the hips, and straighten your arms and torso until you have created a right angle at your hips. Rotate your shoulder blades back and down.

Tighten the thighs to straighten the knees with the toes pointing straight forward. Continue to push through the arms and down through the heels as you lengthen the front and back of the torso equally (don't let the back arch). The head stays in line with the spine. The goal is to have the torso stretched maximally with the hips centered over the ankles.

Repetitions: Hold 30 seconds. Repeat as needed.

Precautions: To come out of the stretch, bend the knees and step forward with one leg.

Options: Learn the stretch with the hands higher on the wall and progressively lower them to shoulder height.

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