Stretching Frequency and Volume

There’s a lot of information out there on how often you should stretch and how much stretching you should do. That can make it difficult to determine what the appropriate amount of stretching is and the frequency at which you should be stretching. Fortunately, there is some good information out there on what will work best for most people.

How Often Should I Stretch?

You should be doing stretches every day. This is important because in order to see results from stretching exercises, you need to stretch at least 6 times per week. So, making it a daily thing will ensure that you get those 6 stretching sessions in every week, even if something comes up and you have to skip a day. Plus, an extra stretching session surely won’t hurt anything.

How Much Stretching Should I Do?

The minimum amount of stretching that you need to be doing to see results is one minute per muscle per day. Although you can certainly stretch for longer if you want, studies have shown that it’s usually the first 60-second stretch that has the most impact on flexibility. It’s also best to do this as one 60-second stretch rather than trying to break it up throughout the day.

In younger people, they can get the same benefit of a 30-second stretch as they can a 60-second one. However, in older people, they had to do the same stretch for 60 seconds to get the same benefit from it. It should also be noted that in older people, they had to stretch frequently in order to maintain the gains they had gotten from stretching.

Full Body Verses Split Stretch Routine

A full body stretch routine is one in which every muscle in the body is stretched, either one at a time, or in groups. This type of stretching is often focused on in yoga, as the poses engage and stretch multiple areas of the body at once. The main benefit of full body stretching is that it ensures that every part of your body is stretched every day.

Split stretch routines are ones that focus only on one muscle group or part of the body at a time. These are typically split up throughout the week, so that a different area of the body is stretched every day. The idea is that this gives those muscles time to rest and recover in between. This has the benefit of being a much shorter stretching session since you’re only doing a few muscles every day.

While the only drawback of the full body stretch routine is that it takes up a larger portion of your day, there are several to the split stretch routines. Since it may not be possible for you to get in 6 stretches per muscle per week if you’re stretching different muscles every day, you may not see the benefits that you would if you stretched everything every day.

Bottom Line

The best way to benefit from stretching is to do a full body stretch routine every day, in which every muscle in your body is stretched for at least 60 seconds.