

***Be not afraid of growing slowly,***

***Be afraid only of standing still.***

*Chinese proverb*

A personal return on experience from over 30 years strength sports experience.

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## 5. 5.Stretching - flexibility and Agility

Stretching is a training form in the act of a sporting activity, where muscles are put under tension to improve flexibility, agility and condition.

Strength athletes very frequently neglect this aspect in their training approach. And become the proverbial “muscle-bound muscle man”. Be aware that movements like a proper executed deadlift, squat and many strongman acts do require a high level of flexibility in hips, shoulders, knees, lowerback and hamstrings to be executed in proper form – i.e. generate maximum force while avoiding injuries. If you want to learn to move heavy weights safely, you need to learn to be flexible and agile.



Stretching is often used after a workout to bring down the tonicity and to prevent a bend position due to specific training. Some muscles tend to a functional contraction and are therefore in need of elongation after each physical activity. The affected muscles are the neck muscles, the pectoral muscles and the thigh muscles.

or joint deflections, such as dancing and acrobatics, and to reduce the risk of injuries.

Stretching exercises have to be performed with caution. If you stretch over a slight or moderate pain you can damage tissue and cartilage, tear muscles, tendons or ligaments. A very common mistake, for example, intensive stretching exercises despite the presence of muscle soreness. The muscle has small fiber tears and needs time and rest to heal the damaged tissue.

However, the risk of injury when stretching is very low. It causes a generally good mobility, which can be achieved through regular exercise and it also increases the confidence in moving. Stretching exercises may even reduce the likelihood of injury to the muscles by poorly coordinated movements.



Stretching before workout serves as preparation for effort in sports where it comes to quick and powerful movements



