

Speed Skating Stretching

Warming up before skating is important. Start with a slow jog to warm your muscles, then try some of these skating stretches BEFORE you hit the ice.



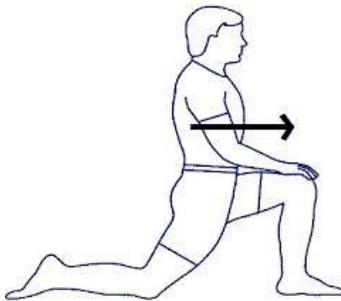
Hamstring stretch - keep one knee bent and reach forward toward straight leg's foot to feel the stretch (no bouncing!)



Groin stretch - Sit up straight and place the soles of your feet together. Place your elbows on the insides of your knees and gently push your knees towards the ground. If you don't feel anything, bring your feet closer to your body.



Seated Twist - Tuck your left leg around your body and place your right leg over the top of the left leg. Now twist around so you can see behind you. You should feel a stretch in your butt.



Hip Flexor stretch - Standing up, bend one leg in the skating position, and the other one stretched out. Gently ease your body down into a lunge position until you feel the stretch and hold it. Push your pelvis forward to stretch your hip flexors.



Quadriceps stretch - Standing up on one leg, grab one foot behind your butt. Use opposite hand to help with balance. Being a skater you should have no trouble doing this without holding on to something. Lean forward to increase the challenge, or to make it more entertaining, you can find a willing partner, hold the stretch position and bounce around on one leg trying to push each other over...



Calf stretch - Keeping your back leg straight, move your hips towards the wall until you feel the stretch. Keep feet pointing forward!



Ankle rotations - Rotate your ankles one foot at a time, clockwise 10 times, counter clockwise 10 times.



Upper body is important too, especially when doing sprints.

Shoulder stretches - Place one arm across your body and pull it towards you using the other arm.

You can also do some **arm swings** and circles like you are swimming freestyle, backstroke and butterfly.