

Stretching Routine for Softball Players

No matter what position you play in softball, you'll help prevent injury and ensure your body is warmed up and ready to play by engaging in stretching exercises. Stretching exercises help increase blood flow to all parts of your body and it also increases flexibility and range of motion. Your coach might have specific exercises for you to perform before game time or you can do self-directed stretching exercises.

Rotator Cuff

Warm up your shoulder joint and rotator cuff muscles by doing a rotator cuff stretch before every game. This stretch warms up the entire shoulder and encourages flexibility and full range of motion. To do this stretch, stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Place your right hand behind your back, with the top of your hand against your spine. Grasp your right elbow with your left hand and gently pull your right elbow forward. Hold the stretch for five seconds and then release. Switch sides and repeat.

Hip Rolls

Hip rolls help loosen the pelvic muscles, stretch the hip joints and increase flexibility in your lower spine. This exercise is done lying on the ground on your back. Bend your knees and stretch your arms out at shoulder height. Slowly drop your knees to the left side of your body, but keep your left hip firmly planted on the ground. Hold the stretch for several seconds and then lift your knees and rotate them to the right. Repeat this back-and-forth roll 10 times.

Dynamic Stretches

Stretches that encourage motion are performed through dynamic stretches. Such stretches are not static but rather encourage movement while warming up muscle groups. You can perform softball dynamic stretches with slow running butt kicks and high knee raises while slow jogging. To perform a butt kick, take small steps forward, lifting first your right leg and then your left behind you high enough for your heels to touch your buttocks. Perform a high knee jog while jogging forward, lifting your knees to the waistline, alternating knees while moving forward.

Shaking Arms

An effective loosening stretch for the hands, arms and shoulders can be accomplished with a shaking arms exercise. Have a partner stand in front of you, holding your hands. Gently yet firmly, your partner shakes your hands up and down. Keep your wrist, elbow and shoulder joints loose during the shaking motion. If you prefer, shake one arm at a time and then switch sides. Shake each arm for approximately 10 to 20 seconds for an effective warmup and stretch.