

General rules of stretching:

1. Stretching should not be painful.
2. A stretch can feel uncomfortable.
3. A stretch should be felt in the intended muscle. Not in a joint.
4. Do not go over your boundaries, others cannot feel your boundaries.
5. Stretch without help of others/partner or apparatus.
6. Stretching is not effective for decreasing soreness or tension.
7. Staying in a static stretch for prolonged time (>30seconds) is not effective and not recommended

FLEXIBILITY METHODS

static stretching



Holding a stretched position for more than 20 seconds.

Goal: to gain flexibility.

How: 3 x 30 seconds per muscle is most effective.

When: after classes or at least 1,5 hours before class starts. Don't do this during the warming up.

dynamic stretching



Moving active through the range of a joint or muscle.

Goal: Warming up and maintaining flexibility

eccentric stretching



Strength training method that emphasizes the lengthening phase of a muscle contraction under load, commonly known as the "negative" or lowering movement.

Goal: increasing strength and increasing flexibility

Disadvantage: can cause muscle soreness 

ballistic stretching



Bouncing in endranges

Not recommended

stretching with partner



Not recommended

stretching with apparatus



Not recommended

EXAMPLES



Do you want more turnout? You probably need more strength.

Do you want higher legs? You need long hamstrings and strong hipflexors.

Do you want a deeper plie? Only small changes possible.

Do you want an improved arabesque? Carefully mobilize (upper) spine and increase strength in back and glutes.

Do you want to improve your pointe? Do not stretch, but strengthen foot and calf muscles.