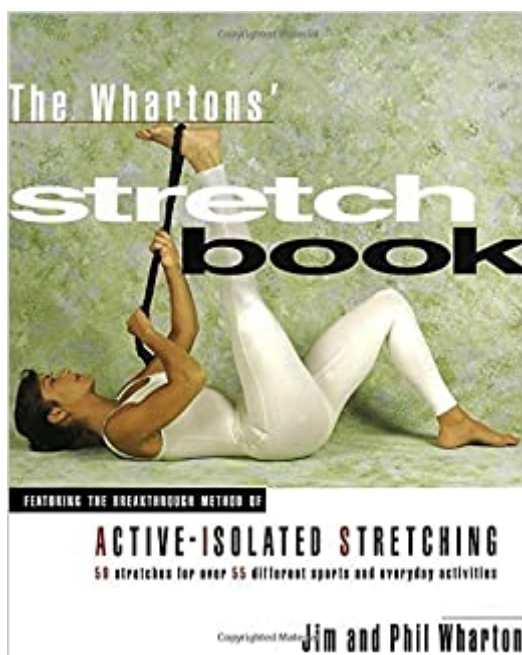


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The Whartons' Stretch Book: Featuring The Breakthrough Method Of Active-Isolated Stretching



Synopsis

Whether you're a serious competitor or weekend warrior, you know that proper stretching before and after your workout can improve your performance, increase your flexibility, help prevent injury, and make you feel better. But did you know that the traditional way of stretching -- lock your knees, bounce, hold, hurt, hold longer -- actually makes muscles tighter and more prone to injury? There's a new and better way to stretch: Active-Isolated Stretching. And with *The Whartons' Stretch Book*, the method used successfully by scores of professional, amateur, and Olympic athletes is now available to everyone. This groundbreaking technique, developed by researchers, coaches, and trainers, and pioneered by Jim and Phil Wharton, is your new exercise prescription. The routine is simple: First, you prepare to stretch one isolated muscle at a time. Then you actively contract the muscle opposite the isolated muscle, which will then relax in preparation for its stretch. You stretch it gently and quickly -- for no more than two seconds -- and release it before it goes into its protective contraction. Then you repeat. Simple, but the results are outstanding. *The Whartons' Stretch Book* explains it all. Part I contains the Active-Isolated Stretch Catalog, with fully illustrated, easy-to-follow stretches for each of five body zones, from neck and shoulders to trunk, arms, and legs -- over fifty stretches in all. Part II offers specific stretching prescriptions for over fifty-five sports and activities, from running, tennis, track, and aerobics to skiing, skating, and swimming. You'll also find advice on stretching for daily activities such as driving, working at a desk, lifting, and keyboarding. Part III discusses stretching for life, with specific recommendations for expectant mothers and older athletes. It also includes specific stretching exercises that could help you avoid unnecessary surgery. Give Active-Isolated Stretching a try for three weeks. You'll never go back to your old stretching routines again.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of the dirty secrets of the fitness world is that for all the talk about the importance of stretching, many athletes and other fit people don't bother with it. It's hard to gauge the benefits, and it seems as if the time could be better spent running, lifting weights, or perfecting sports skills. This sentiment is expressed by Dr. Bob Arnot in the foreword to "The Whartons' Stretch Book," and he says that the Whartons changed his mind. He went to them with a stiffened hip that he thought needed surgery, but after a regimen using the active-isolated stretching technique, his flexibility in that hip had increased 40 percent. Active-isolated stretching is very different from what your high-school gym teacher made you do. Rather than holding a stretch for a half-minute, you hold it for just two seconds. This prevents the muscle from activating an instinctual braking device to keep itself from overstretching. Traditional stretching forces that braking to occur, and the Whartons think that's not only counterproductive, but dangerous. If you force too deep a stretch while the muscle is doing all it can to keep itself from being stretched, something's got to give. And a torn muscle will repair itself with scar tissue, ultimately making that muscle less flexible. The Whartons--a father-and-son personal-training team who've worked with many pro athletes and Olympic medalists--show you how to use their stretches to prepare for dozens of sports, from aerobics to wrestling. Nonathletes get an entire section of the book, which describes stretch routines to get your body feeling better after prolonged driving, sitting, standing, and word processing. The routines are a bit on the longish side--20 minutes or more--but it doesn't seem like much time when you think of how long you have to live in your body, and how much better it will feel if you keep it supple and flexible. --Lou Schuler

This humorously written, nonscientific book is directed at both amateur and professional athletes. The authors describe their "breakthrough method" of Active-Isolated Stretching. The premise is that quick contractions of the muscle opposite the desired muscle will greatly boost athletic or occupational performance. The 20-minute routine is divided into five body zones. Each stretch is held for only two seconds. A minimal time commitment is required for a large payoff in terms of greater flexibility, fewer injuries, and delayed aging. The second part of the book is indexed by sport and occupation and directs the reader to specific stretches that should be performed for each activity. There is also a section on stretching during pregnancy and stretching for seniors.

Recommended for large fitness collections. Goldman Horning, Lawrenceville, Ga. Copyright 1996
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I think the stretches are great. But the way the book is written it is very difficult to figure out how to perform some of the stretches. The drawn pictures help with some, but on others they are not enough to figure out what is going on and then the explanation seems a bit confusing too on a few of them. Though I would like to say that most of the stretches are easy to figure out, but it is frustrating that a few of them I feel like I am guessing on how to do them. Also, a couple errors in the color chart that explains different levels of flexibility. I have been following the book for a few weeks and I like the technique and will continue with it. I am thinking about getting the DVD they offer on their website to clarify the movements. Another pet peeve I have with it, is they say it will only take about 20min to go through all the stretches and that is not true in my experience. It takes me 20min to get through Zone 1 stretches. Then about 20-30min to get through Zone 2-5. I have memorized Zone 1, so I move through it pretty quick, but I still take 20min to do it. I end of doing mostly Zone 1 and 5 to save time.

I purchased this copy for my grandchildren 15 & 16 whom are both very active in sports. The fact that numerous sports and activities are listed individually with the recommended stretches for each has great appeal. As a LMT for 26 years now I cannot tell you how often I have referred my clients to this book for help with various muscle issues. Also the feature that shows you how to self test to determine which muscles need attention is invaluable. I highly recommend it .

Here is what is wrong with this book:It needs about 4 times the amount of illustrations. There should be three or four of each stretch showing it from different angles. It would also be helpful to highlight which muscles one is supposed to be stretching, and which ones one is supposed to be contracting. Since I didn't major in anatomy, I had to use google to figure out what I was supposed to be doing. I'm betting most people who buy this book will not have as much perseverance as I had. After trying the stretches for about 2 weeks, I didn't see much improvement. Then I caught a Youtube of the Dana Torres DVD. I tried the stretch as shown. It was challenging, but the instruction was clear. And better yet, I immediately did the deepest forward bend I've ever done. I ordered the DVD and gave the Wharton book away. I only wish I hadn't squandered my time and money on it.

My doctor diagnosed carpal tunnel in both wrists. I knit and sew; numb fingers were really a

problem. My son and daughter-in-law suggested I try the stretches in this book as they had used the stretches with success. For the past 7 weeks I have been using pages 225, and 18 through 46. Some of the wrist and hand stretches can be quietly, unobtrusively done anywhere. GREAT RESULTS. I am back to knitting and sewing without problems. THANK YOU, Phil!

This is the third copy of this book that I have purchased because I give it out to friends who have back problems. I have had back problems since I was 23 (I'm now 56) and tried traditional medicine and then went to a chiropractor on a monthly basis for 10-years. A few years ago I had a herniated disc and was seeing my chiropractor once a day. I was still in severe pain. I saw the stretch book at a book store and decided to try it. It really worked. After doing the stretches in the book for 21 days I was pain free. I also stopped seeing my chiropractor and haven't had any severe pain since. I'm so flexible now that I can adjust my own back. As long as I continue the stretch program there are no back problems. Currently, I bicycle at least 150 miles per week. The occasional spills on my bike do not result in any serious injury because my body is so limber from stretching. I recommend this book for everyone because when you stay flexible you are less prone to injuries. This book has a stretch for every part of your body.

This book is concise and well put together. The explanations for the various stretches are well written and easy to follow and the diagrams are excellent. The length of time required is a bit daunting at first, but I find this improving as I get to know the routine and details of the stretches. I liked the fact that they provide benchmarks for how flexible you should be, and tests of how flexible you are to start with, so you can measure progress. I found some of my muscle groups were OK, but quite a few are too tight, an eye opener, and the probable reason for a recent nasty case of shin splints from hiking. I'm looking forward to seeing how things work out. Best of all, I felt good after doing the routines, which is a great incentive to do more. A one inch thick dog leash with an adjustable loop works better than a rope, for the many stretches requiring the assistance of a rope. I had gotten this book from the library, and meanwhile ordered the Aaron Mattes book from However the Whartons book seems better organized and easier to follow, for me, so I just ordered my own copy. I guess that's the best recommendation I can give.

I have separately reviewed the Mattes books on this method of stretching and strengthening and this book is the one for people who want a quicker answer to the "What do I do for my [fill in your ailment here]?" question. It is clear, simple to follow and not overburdened by details. It is not the

book for a PT professional who wants all of the explanation. It is a great resource for a regular runner or recreational athlete with a need to have a good method to stretch that really works. If you are in that latter category, get this one. If you are a PT pro get the Mattes books.

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