

Stretch Your Horse: There's an App for That! Enhance Performance. Prevent Injury. Save Money Too!

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We have all heard many times.... Stretch your muscles before and after you exercise. But, did you ever stop and think that this applies to your horse too? Your horse is an athlete, and just like human athletes (and non-athletes too!), their muscles need attention to remain healthy.

What are the Benefits of Horse Stretching?

A horse's muscles can become tight, stiff, sore, strained or even develop tears. Stretching the muscles is an important part of maintaining muscle health. "We do not think enough about injury prevention. By warming up the horse and putting it through some stretches, we can increase range of motion and enable the horse to perform more fluidly and to the best of its ability," said Dr. Jack Root, DVM, [Oakhurst Equine Veterinary Services](#) and Owner, Grindstone 1996 Kentucky Derby winner.

The benefits obtained by safely and effectively stretching a horse's muscles are:

- Helps improve flexibility and range of motion (ROM) thereby enabling the horse to perform to the best of their ability
- Helps prevent injury by strengthening supportive tissue and helping to guard against muscle tightness and tendon shortening
- Helps reduce post-exercise soreness, stiffness and muscle fatigue
- Helps improve disposition by relaxing the horse
- Helps provide early warning signs of a potential injury and can aid in injury rehabilitation
- Helps the rider bond with their horse

Why Does Stretching Help? Just a Bit of Science....

Skeletal muscles are made up of several muscle bundles, which in turn are made up of muscle fibers. Muscle fibers have bundles of myofibrils, which are rod-like structures that run parallel to one another. Muscle is covered by fascia, a fibrous tissue, to which other muscles can attach. Muscles attach to bone via tendons.

When a muscle is overused or underused, it responds by shrinking or tightening which can cause stiffness. As explained by Dr. Ava Frick, DVM, "Stiffness can result in injury, leading to inactivity, and eventually speed up the aging of the musculoskeletal system. To remain supple, the connective tissue and muscles need regular stretching. Stretching helps resist the gradual shortening and tightening of tissue that otherwise sets in from both underuse and overuse, reducing discomfort and slowing the progressive loss of capacity that accompanies tightening." See [Stretching Exercises for Horses: Are They Effective?](#), Dr. Ava Frick, DVM, Journal of Equine Veterinary Science, Vol. 30 No. 1 (2010)

Stretch Your Horse: There's an App for That!

How Can I Learn to Stretch My Horse?

"The stretches Ilene taught me were a wonderful addition to my lesson horse Wyatt's regimen. I was so impressed with the results, I started doing stretches with all of my horses, and I taught all of my students how to do stretches too! I highly recommend stretching to anyone who wants to do everything possible to help their horse be successful in their work and happy in their body. "

Andrea Quale, Trainer

[Andrea'sHorseTraining](#)

The great news is that everyone can learn to safely and effectively stretch their horse's muscles regardless of riding ability or experience. The Stretch Your Horse App contains over 24 individual stretching videos that can be downloaded to an iPhone or Android phone. No cell service or internet connection is needed after the initial download. You can purchase all the videos in one bundle (and save 20% versus individual video purchases) or purchase videos of your choosing individually. Videos can be replayed as many times as desired right at your horse's side. It is almost like getting in person instruction!

Help get the word out about the importance of stretching! It is an important, though often overlooked, aspect of horse healthcare.

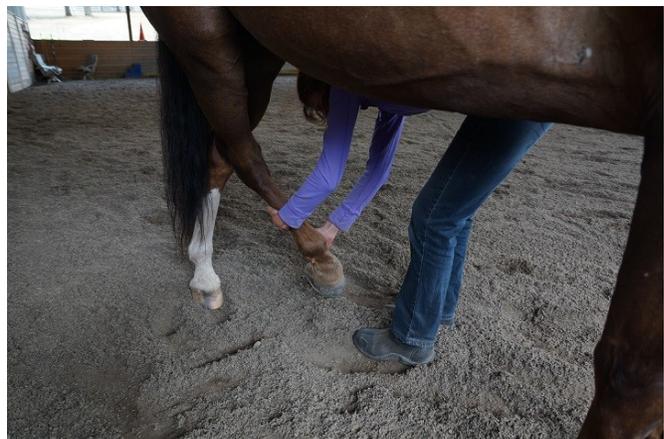
Check out StretchYourHorse.com for more details. You can also get more information or purchase the Stretch Your Horse App in the [Google Play](#) (for Android phones) or [Apple App Store](#) (for iPhones.)

Get Your Stretch On!

Questions? Contact ilene@StretchYourHorse.com



Lateral Extended Neck with a Twist Stretch



Forward Farrier Cross Through Stretch