

# COOL-DOWN GUIDE



## SNOWBOARDING

***Special  
Olympics***





# Special Olympics **Health**

MADE  
POSSIBLE BY **Golisano** FOUNDATION

This resource was supported by cooperative agreement #NU27DD001156 from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are the responsibility of Special Olympics and do not necessarily represent the view of CDC.

# Cool-Down Directions

When your training, practice or sport session is complete, you should always cool-down. A good cool-down allows your body to gradually return to a state of rest.

A typical cool-down includes:

1. Light aerobic activity
2. Static stretching

The aerobic activity in a cool-down should decrease in intensity. It could be a light jog, moving into a brisk walk and finally ending to a slow walk.

After you complete the light aerobic activity, you will want to stretch. Stretching for flexibility is very effective in the cool-down.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- Hold each stretch for **at least 30 seconds**.
- **Stretch both sides** – if you stretch your right shoulder muscle, stretch the left!
- Stretches should be performed to **mild discomfort**, but should not be painful.



# Sample Cool-Down

## LIGHT AEROBIC ACTIVITY

The light aerobic activity in a cool-down should decrease in intensity. It could be a light jog, moving into a brisk walk and finally ending to a slow walk.

## STATIC STRETCHES

Unlike dynamic stretches, static stretches consist of one position that is held in place. If you don't have enough time, select a few that focus on the different muscles used in your sport:

- Butterfly Stretch
- Cross Arm Shoulder Stretch
- Downward Dog
- Figure Four Stretch
- Hamstring Stretch
- Quadriceps Stretch
- Shoulder Rotation Stretch
- Side Stretch
- Standing Back Bend
- Standing Straddle Stretch



# Butterfly Stretch

## DIRECTIONS

- Sit on the ground with the bottoms of your feet touching each other.
- Let your knees fall toward the floor. Your feet should be close to your body.
- Sit tall and lean forward over your feet.
- You should feel a stretch in your groin.



# Cross Arm Shoulder Stretch

## DIRECTIONS

- Cross your left arm across your chest with your elbow slightly bent. Make sure to keep your left shoulder down away from your ear.
- Place your right hand on the back of your left arm just above the elbow. Pull your left arm in toward your chest until you feel a stretch. Repeat with your right arm.



# Downward Dog

## DIRECTIONS

- Start on your hands and knees. Curl your toes under and raise up your hips and straighten your legs as much as possible.
- Keep your arms and legs straight.
- Keep your toes pointed forward and let your head hang down.



# Figure Four Stretch

## DIRECTIONS

- Lay on the ground with your right knee in the air.
- Put your left ankle on top of your right thigh.
- Grab underneath your right thigh. Pull your thigh towards your chest. You should feel a stretch in your left hip.
- Switch legs and repeat the stretch.





# Hamstring Stretch

## DIRECTIONS

- Stand tall with your left foot a few inches in front of your right foot. Lift your left toes.
- Bend your right knee slightly and lean your body forward.
- Reach for your left toes with your left hand. Keep your right hand on top of your right thigh for balance and support.
- You should feel a stretch in the back of your left leg.
- Repeat the stretch with your right leg forward.

**NOTE:** You can also do this stretch kneeling on the ground.



# Quadriceps Stretch

## DIRECTIONS

- Stand up tall and shift your weight to your right leg.
- Lift your left foot and hold it with your left hand. You may put your right hand on a stable surface, like the back of a chair or wall, to help you balance.
- Pull your left foot toward your body until you feel a stretch in the front of your left leg.
- Switch legs and repeat the stretch on your right leg.

**NOTE:** You can also do this stretch laying down.



# Shoulder Rotation Stretch



## DIRECTIONS

- Stand or sit tall.
- Put your right arm next to your ear. Bend your elbow and reach your hand down as far as you can on your back.
- Now reach your left arm behind your back. Bend your elbow and reach your left hand as high up on your back as you can.
- You should feel a stretch in both shoulders.
- Repeat the stretch with your left arm next to you.



# Side Stretch



## DIRECTIONS

- Stand tall with your feet a little wider than your hips.
- Bring your left arm up so that it is close to your ear.
- Bend sideways at your waist toward your right side. Keep your arm next to your ear the whole time. You should feel a stretch in the left side of your torso.
- Repeat with your right arm up and your left side bent.



# Standing Back Bend



## DIRECTIONS

- Stand tall. Place the palms of your hands on your lower back, with your fingers pointing downward, as you squeeze your elbows together.
- Exhale to arch your back, only go as far as feels comfortable for your body.



# Standing Straddle Stretch

## DIRECTIONS

- Stand with your feet slightly wider than shoulder width.
- Bend forward at your hips and reach toward the ground keeping your knees straight.
- Try to place your hands flat on the ground between your feet.



# Benefits of a Cool-Down

It is just as important to have a good cool-down as it is to have a good warm-up. A good cool-down **allows the body to gradually return to a state of rest.**

## Physical and Mental Benefits

- Decrease heart rate
- Decrease breathing rate
- Decrease body and muscle temperature
- Returns rate of blood flow from the active muscles to resting level
- Decrease muscle soreness
- Improve flexibility
- Increases the rate of recovery from exercise
- Promote relaxation

