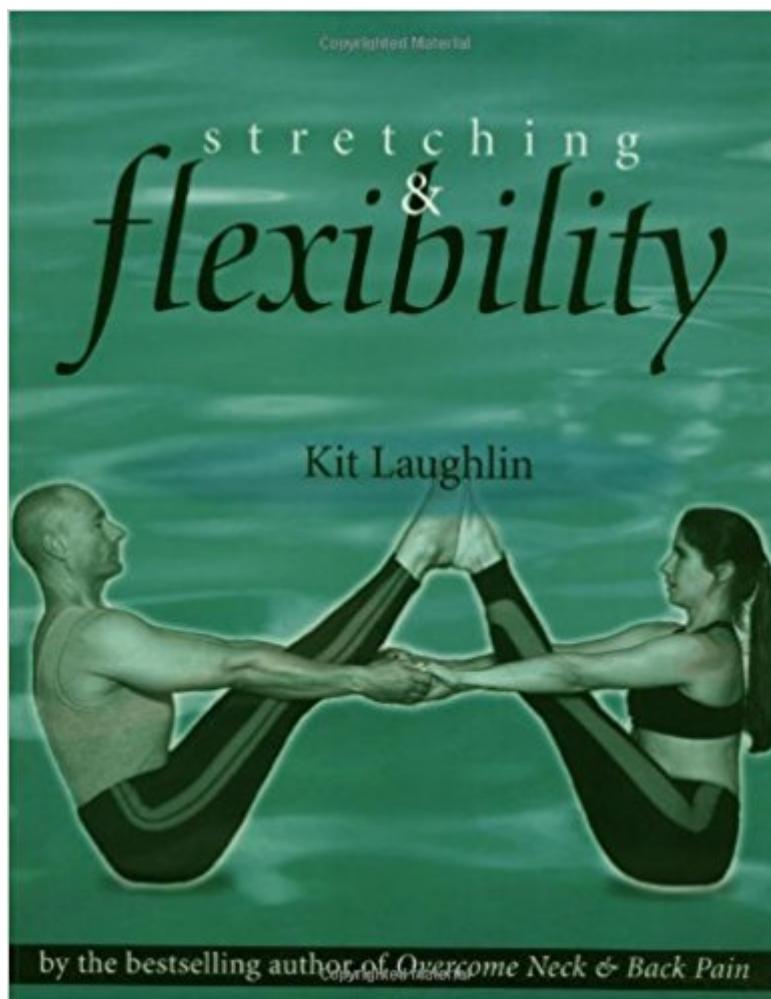


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# Stretching & Flexibility



## **Synopsis**

Everyone knows that stretching is good for you, for all sorts of reasons -- but the most important one is rarely mentioned. Stretching feels great to do and leaves you feeling wonderful. How to get the most out of this aspect of stretching is part of what the book is about. No matter whether you're an office worker wondering how to stretch that tight spot between your shoulders and neck or a martial artist wanting to do side-splits, this is the book for you. Or possibly you're a weekend athlete and you want to know how to get more whole-body rotation to improve your golf swing. Perhaps you've just finished gardening or the housework and you want to know how to relax your back. Or maybe you simply want to know what's the best way to stretch your hamstrings. Whatever your interest in stretching, this book will provide the techniques you need, from the easiest exercises to the most difficult. It is organised into 15 lessons, plus an 'unnumbered' one which you can do anytime to check your progress. The book features:

- \* 96 stretching exercises, plus additional warm-up movements
- \* exercises which use the Contract-Relax (C-R) method
- \* advanced stretching movements
- \* exercises for all parts of the body, including hands and feet
- \* exercises for athletes, grouped by sports
- \* exercises shown in partner and solo versions
- \* over 700 photographs
- \* many illustrations of key anatomical details

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Stretching is healthy and natural: animals do it all the time. Stretching can alter consciousness by releasing tension in both the body and the mind. Laughlin, who teaches at the Australian National University Sports Union, has developed a comprehensive stretching program that combines basic warm-ups and yoga-type postures performed solo and with a partner to stretch virtually every

muscle in the body. To explain exactly what takes place during these workouts, Laughlin provides accurate anatomical diagrams which show precisely which muscle groups are involved in various movements of the body, and the book's more than 700 photographs may be all readers need to perform the stretches he recommends, but the text is extremely clear and detailed as well. Laughlin presents nearly 100 exercises in all, and every part of the body is covered, from neck muscles down to fingers and toes. This is an excellent guide for athletes, health instructors, physical therapists, and all who want to increase their flexibility, strength, and peace of mind. David SiegfriedCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

I agree with the author that emotional strength is based on physical flexibility. I have been dabbling in stretch for years, as part of my bodywork. I achieved temporary effects, but very little cumulative. But these techniques explained by Laughlin are effective at producing a lasting change. The essential element is the contraction release. It seems that contracting a muscle at the current 'edge' of its length somehow not only allows a deeper stretch in the moment, but also seems to 'reset' the nervous system's idea of what is the correct resting length of the muscle should be. One is no longer fighting one's own body but changing it! Although I was not expecting increased strength, that happened also. It seems that the isometric contraction element of these stretches strengthens the nerve function which is the real key to gaining strength. I also enjoy the elaborate thinking that has gone into each stretch that allows the participant to isolate the muscle and keep the proper form. Once one learns the stretches, they are very quick to set up, but in the beginning all the extra instructions are essential in ensuring that the stretch is not defeated by an unwanted compensation or misalignment elsewhere in the body. Just going to a yoga class or Pilates mat class will not provide the benefit these stretches do because the postures are too uncontrolled and the typical western stiff body doesn't really achieve the 'guts' of the pose. This book however, is truly a remedial approach that expects the participant to have a very limited range of motion to begin with. Just to read the material, the techniques do not sound impressive, but when one actually does the stretches, the genius is revealed. After a good session, the blissful feeling lasts for hours. I have made great progress in just three months. Though the author only touches on this briefly, a prominent effect that many readers may not be anticipating is an increased calm and poise that enters one life. By resetting muscle through resetting muscle length, the arousal and defensive parts of the nervous system become themselves more flexible and less reactive. A partner is not essential, but an enhancement, perhaps emotionally as well as mechanically. I notice also that the author has generously placed many demonstration videos on youtube.

I am in good shape. I prune and remove trees for a living; plus I have spent some time in a weight room, but I am as stiff as the tin man. Always have been and no amount of stretching or effort has ever helped. I even took kick boxing lessons to try and limber up and all I ended up doing was kicking everyone in the nether regions. This books procedures have made an instant noticeable difference. I still cant get a job at the circus but I can tie my shoes without grunting now. All that and I am only half way through the book! I have been into fitness for a while now and thought I new all the stretches, but there are a lot of very effective stretches I have never seen before. Most of what is in the book actualy I have never seen. Simpler variations maybe but not this stuff. I wish I could take one of their classes. The pictures are numerous and clear but kinda 80's ish .

Excellent book for those into stretching. Some of the stretches are very advanced and should only be done by flexible people. Covers almost every single part of the body that can stretch.

Very detailed, step-by-step, with great pictures. One of the best stretching books I own. The exercises are described fully, with emphasis on the rationale behind the action. It shows that anyone can increase their flexibility.

Not only an excellent book on stretching but an even better template on what a "how to" guide should include: photographs (from different angles), thorough explanations, without filler. It includes beginner, intermediate, and advanced in one volume, rather than "spreading" them across three or four books. That, to me, demonstrates a great deal of integrity on the authors' part. There are partner exercises as well as individual exercises for each muscle group. I would place Stuart McRobert's Insider's Guide to Weight Training in the same category. Solid, user friendly, and thorough work.

Another awesome job by Mr Laughlin. I'm a big fan of pretty much everything he does and while I'm sure the new version has plenty of stuff updated, I'm very satisfied with what is in this edition.

Kit Laughlin has produced the best stretching book ever. From a clear and understandable discussion about stretching through a well layed out structure and progression of stretches for your entire body. Wonderful.

Excellent book with challenging stretches. Only one problem, the book had so many stretches that you would have to have a while to get all of them done. Good for anyone who wants to increase flexibility.

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