



# FLEXIBILITY *Benchmark Challenge*

DATE

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V Sit & Reach



Toe Touch



Forward Splits

L  
R



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Center Splits



Trunk Rotation

L  
R



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Trunk Extension



Back Scratch

L  
R



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Shoulder Rotation



Straight Leg Raise

L  
R



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Butterfly Stretch





# FLEXIBILITY *Benchmark Challenge*

## **Welcome to the Nerd Fitness Flexibility Benchmark Challenge!**

We've created this challenge to give you a clear, measurable starting point for a variety of common stretches. This will serve as your baseline to show progress as you embark on your journey to become a more fit and flexible nerd! We're firm believers of the mentality, "what gets measured gets improved," and we know the power of having pictures and exact measurements from day 1 so you can look back and see how far you've come.

We suggest you use this tracking sheet to record the 10 benchmarks **once a month for the next 4 months**. If you'd prefer to track over a longer period of time, try measuring every two months or three months! Keep in mind that progress and change take time, so we'd caution against testing more than once a month.

Print out this sheet and tape it up somewhere you'll remember, or save it to your computer and edit it as you go - whatever works for you. Over the next 5 days, we will be sending you details about how to complete these benchmarks. You will receive information about two measurements per day, with full written instructions and video about how to complete them.

We understand that you may be excited and want to jump ahead and do everything immediately, but we encourage you to take it slowly and follow our lead. This will help slowly ease you into a daily stretching habit that will actually stick!

If you want to do all of the benchmarks at once, we will be sending out a download on day 6 (the day after we send the last two benchmarks) that includes every single pose with all instructions. That way, if you can only get a friend to help for one day, you can do it all at once.

### **Last few things before we get started (IMPORTANT):**

- **These are benchmark tests, not a workout or stretching plan.** A regular practice like yoga or active stretching that is focused on improving flexibility will create more long term results. We will include a few yoga poses that you can focus on if you're struggling with a specific benchmark.
- **Many of the stretches are far easier to record with a friend helping.** If you have no options to get a helper, still try your best to record accurately. If you can, have a friend take a photo; sometimes, small increases in measurements can reflect much more clearly in before and after photos. If you're on your own, one great tip is to record yourself doing the stretch using the camera on your phone (**Pro tip: I use my shoe as a tripod!**), and then screenshot the video to get a picture.
- **This isn't a competition**, this is a benchmark to show personal improvement in several areas over time. Remember: that which gets measured gets improved. Be honest with yourself!
- **Breathe slowly and steadily, and stretch slowly.** Jamming your arms forward to stretch an extra inch for a fraction of a second doesn't count. Stretch slowly until you cannot stretch further, breathe, and take the measurement there.
- If you need to measure a different way because it's easier for you, that's fine, as long as you **consistently use the same method every time**.
- You don't need to do a full workout before, but it's good to **do something light (a 5 minute walk, a few squats, jumping jacks, or knee pushups) just to get your blood flowing** and your body into motion before recording your benchmarks. Keep it light, but move a little before jumping in.
- **If it hurts or doesn't feel right, stop!** Stay safe. Don't push your body into places where it isn't comfortable. That's not the point here! Get a safe, comfortable starting measurement, especially on any of the following movements you don't do on a regular basis. Stretch slow, move slow, and use a friend to help if at all possible.
- The lawyers made us say it: please make sure that before you start any exercise or fitness program you **check with your doctor!**