



Safe Stretch Pro[®]

Partner Assisted Stretching Band

QUICK START GUIDE

Safer Stretching for Equine
Wellness and Performance



EQUINE
Technology Solutions™

INTRODUCING THE SAFE STRETCH PRO



The Safe Stretch Pro is the result of a multi-year collaboration among equine professionals, engineers, designers, and medical device experts to provide a safer and easier way to move and lift a horse's limb.

The Safe Stretch Pro protects the horse and the handler. The design allows the handler to use better form by standing upright when holding a limb and reduces force on the low back, making it safer and easier to hold stretches long enough to slowly improve a horse's flexibility.

The anatomical sling also protects the horse's tendons, ligaments, and joints by distributing force along the distal limb. The carefully engineered safety release limits risk to the horse and handler in case of a shy or bolt.

Please consult a licensed veterinarian or a certified equine massage therapist before starting a stretching or rehabilitation program.

Technique and Tips for Success

- Partner assisted stretching allows a horse to stretch with your help. For best results, use a gentle amount of force.
- Keep the horse focused on you and what you are asking by working in a quiet and familiar place. Eliminate as many distractions as possible by choosing a time when it is quiet and not close to feeding time. Have someone hold the horse rather than using cross ties. This allows the horse to balance and stretch properly.
- To help your stretching partner understand what you are asking, start with a brief manual stretch of the horse's front legs prior to using the therapy band.
- Keep the hooves low to the ground and move them slowly.
- Monitor acceptance and comfort at each increase in movement. If you feel the horse resist, relax the tension on the handles, and then ask again to allow the horse to release more easily.
- As the horse accepts pressure, raise the leg off the ground a few inches. The exact height and pressure to use will vary depending on the horse's age, fitness, previous injuries, and flexibility.

It takes time to understand the correct force to apply, but you will always achieve the best results by starting lightly and slowly and listening to the horse.

Thank you for caring for the wellbeing of our equine friends.

For further information regarding stretching technique, please refer to our website and feel free to submit questions if you need assistance.

Let's Get Started!

PREPARATION

1. Walk or exercise the horse for 10 minutes.

Find a quiet place to begin the stretches. Have someone hold the horse if the horse is new to stretching.

2. Let the horse see and smell the therapy band and get used to it. You can rest it on their back when they seem comfortable.

3. Open the therapy band and familiarize yourself with the way the sling opens and closes.

4. Use an archer stance with your arms and knees bent in all the movements. Lift by shifting your weight to your back leg and straightening your upper body.



FRONT LIMB STRETCHES

Carpal and Shoulder Flexor

1. Start by stretching the front shoulders to prepare the horse.
2. Place the sling around the horse's leg.
3. Make sure it is tucked underneath the fetlock.
4. Shift your weight backwards while you ask the horse to move his leg forward and raise the leg an inch or two. Use your free hand to help guide the leg into the first position but lifting enough to feel some shoulder resistance. This is where you want to pause and allow the horse to adjust.



5. Increase the movement slowly- hold the stretch 10-30 seconds depending on the horse's comfort.



6. After a horse is familiar with the forelimb stretches, the pocket of the Safe Stretch Pro can be slid down onto the hoof for a deeper stretch. If a horse shows resistance to this stretch or others, reduce the tension, and, if the resistance persists, consult a licensed veterinarian or physical therapist.



7. Hold the knee to remove the therapy band from the hoof.

Hold stretches for the same amount of time on both sides.



Suggested Protocols

1. Hold stretches between 10-30 seconds for the first two weeks.
2. Increase up to 60 seconds as the horse becomes more flexible.
3. For best results, stretch three times a week, doing each stretch three times.

Remember: Go Slow and Keep Hooves Low

HIND LIMB STRETCHES

Hip Extensor and Flexor

- 1.** Place the therapy band around the horse's hind fetlock.
- 2.** Shift the horse's weight to the other hind leg with gentle pressure with your shoulder.
- 3.** Lift your upper body and shift your weight to your back leg.



4. Place the sling over the fetlock, touch the horse's leg with your other hand to let the horse feel where you are.



5. Rock back gently in your archer stance- lift the leg a few inches. If the horse resists lifting the hoof, shift his or her weight onto the other hind limb.



6. Lift the leg to release the therapy band after you have done your stretch.



The therapy band can also be used for adduction and abduction stretches:





Special thanks to Camille Schaefer, the Camwood Farm team and horses for their support and generosity.

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Scan the QR code to watch
Safe Stretch instruction video



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