

Pliability Preparation

End each separate exercise on the stroke which is pushing blood and toxins from the muscle you are working on TOWARDS the heart.

Does it matter if you use a roller or a ball?

Ideally you'd have both as the roller is better for some muscles, the ball better for others but at a pinch or if on a budget you can get away with just one.

Howe much to do on each muscle?

Simply work on a muscle until you notice it soften, once it does move on to the next.

A full body pliability session should take around 15-20 mins. And don't be afraid to mix up the muscles your working on. If something feels tight spend more time on it.

I would suggest starting at the lowest speed and building up, if it feels too intense it probably is! You should start noticing differences between 2 and 4 weeks.

Below is a link to a video with someone much more attractive than me showing you how to get started with this.

How much to do?

Exactly how much pliability work you need to do depends on many factors, your sport, you age, your general level of strength vs pliability. The exact amounts are difficult to say with precision (again jump on the call and I'll go through it with you!).

As a rule the older you get the more you need to do. I'm 40 and spend roughly as much time on pliability as I do on a workout. If you're younger you'll have a greater level of inbuilt pliability so can get away with less, for those older you'll need to do more.

As an absolute minimum whatever your age you should be dedicating 20% of your workout time to pliability.

Pre and Post Session Differences

The pre and post workouts pliability sessions vary slightly in that the first one is done at higher intensity (more pressure) and speed, to prime the muscles and train the body to keep them long and soft.

The "after" session is lower intensity and slower to flush lactic acid out of the muscles and relax the muscles. Training the brain to store what the muscles have just learned...mainly to stay long and soft throughout intense training movements, the same movements you will be using on the water.

A Word To The Wise

Pliability is one of those areas that I see a lot of people paying lip service to in the gym. They go in wriggle around on a roller or a ball for 5 mins, not putting any real pressure on and think they've done them selves some good. This is a deep massage so you really have to get in deep to the muscles and work the sore points.

This will probably hurt more than you think especially when your starting out and you'll probably be tempted to simply avoid the areas that cause you pain, that is the wrong idea. We need to be targeting those areas as that's where we'll see the biggest changes.

I often find myself pulling quite ridiculous faces when making love to my roller simply because of the pain it's causing me and the weird positions I have to get into to really get to the muscles that need work.

You can see the rollers I use in the ***Sam Recommends*** section.