

FORWARD FOLDS

Stretch and strengthen your pelvic muscles

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We are all guilty of it. Walking out of a WOD without doing any recovery work. We wake up the next day sore, tired, and knowing we'll be dragging. One solution you've surely heard is to try a yoga class. As yoga teachers at two CrossFit affiliates in Northern Virginia we get it, yoga is not for everyone. However, finding different ways to incorporate yoga stretches into your CrossFit cool-down can add benefits to your mobility and recovery.

It's common for athletes to lack an understanding on how to find counter movement. Given the incredible number and variety of squats athletes perform every week, forward folds can counter all the stress we induce to strengthen the muscles of our pelvic girdle. Here are two forward folds that can help calm the mind while stretching and alleviating stress in the joints and muscles.



PIGEON

Stretches the thighs, groins, psoas, and opens the shoulders and chest.

How To: Starting in Samson Stretch drop your knee all the way to the floor. In the full expression of this stretch, the shin is parallel in front of the body, but for most of us it comes at an angle. The back leg should be dropped behind you, straightening the knee and thigh to the floor.

Tip: If your hip is lifted use a prop like a blanket to keep the hips level.



MODIFICATION 1

Use a box to do a standing pigeon. Increase your stretch by taking the shin parallel with the top of the box.



MODIFICATION 2

Lie on your back. Lift one leg while crossing the other over in the same Pigeon position.

SEATED FORWARD FOLD

Follow your breath to make this a dynamic stretch in your hamstrings and hips.

How To: Starting seated on the ground, extend your legs out straight in front you. Push yourself slightly forward so your shoulders are directly over hips. With a slight bend in your knees, start reaching for your toes while flexing them towards your body. Maintain a flat back by locking in your core and stop before your back rounds.

Hold each pose for 3-5 breaths (remembering both legs in the Pigeon). Use a breath mantra like "Let" on the Inhale and "Go" on the Exhale.



MODIFICATION

Wrap a band around your feet, bend the knees, and sit on the edge of a folded mat.