



This test measures the flexibility of the lower back and hamstring muscles. Flexibility testing is important in assessing range of motion, muscle weakness, and muscle imbalances.

The sit and reach test is the most common flexibility test.

Overview: Flexibility is the ability to move your joints freely and without pain through a wide range of motion without stiffness or resistance. Flexible muscle are less prone to soreness and injury, and can help improve overall muscular performance since they are actually longer and less likely to “tear” or strain than short, inflexible ones. How flexible are you?

To understand how stretching works think of a muscle as a rubber band. A too-tight band is likely to snap or break when you extend it unless you gradually stretch and release it to make it suppler. A too-tight muscle can “pull” if it not stretched regularly to keep it flexible. Try to do stretching exercises three or more times per week. Flexibility is a vital but often neglected ingredient of fitness. It can also decrease the tension we hold in our muscles and keep the body’s structure working smoothly.

Traditional sit-and-reach tests do indicate an individual’s degree of functional ability and therefore his ability to efficiently perform daily tasks.

Flexibility is just as important as cardio and strength training in the overall scheme of a personalized fitness program.

Procedure: Individual removes shoes and sits on floor with knees fully extended, feet shoulder-width apart and soles of the feet held flat against the end of the box. Both knees are held flat against the floor by the tester.

With hands on top of each other, palms down, and legs held flat, the individual reaches along the measuring line as far as possible. The participant leans forward slowly as far as possible and holds the greatest stretch for two seconds. After three practice reaches, the fourth reach is held while the distance is recorded. The tester will make sure there are no jerky movements, and that the fingertips remain level and the legs flat.

Individuals receive counseling and educational materials.