

DON'T DO THAT
EXERCISE AND TRAINING
TECHNIQUES THAT YOU
SHOULD NOT DO

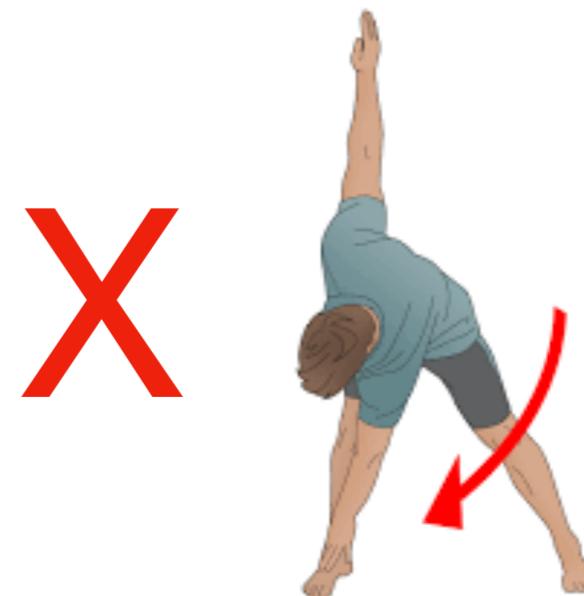
Do Not Do the Windmill Stretch

One of the worst things you could do to your spine is put it into deep flexion (bending forward) under full body weight load. You can make it even worst by bending and twisting. This happens when doing the Windmill Stretch. So do not bend over at the waist to stretch and for that matter whenever you pick things up (use good lifting mechanics).

There are other ways to stretch the low back. I do recommend the child pose, lower leg crossover, and the cat/cow stretches for most people.

Low Back Pain and Stretching (NSPF): Sub-maximal micro trauma of the low back tissue will cause inflammation that can result in a muscle spasm, where the individual will experience a feeling of tightness in the low back. This makes people feel they should stretch. Muscle spasms are born out of the inflammatory process and are a signal of significant tissue damage. The common yet misguided efforts to relieve the low back tightness, e.g., low back stretching, can actually lead to even more trauma. So instead of stretching the back into flexion when in pain there are other strategies that you should employ like Walking and the moderate Cobra Exercise, but never do if they cause additional pain. Eventually you will need to develop your core.

According to the US Navy the unsupported forward flexion with rotation as with the windmill stretch places a tremendous amount of stress on the spine and supporting muscles. Unsupported forward flexion means the smaller muscles of the low back are responsible for supporting the entire weight of the upper body. The Windmill Exercise also adds rotation in this flexed position, which can put excessive twisting forces on the spine, in an already compromised position. Additionally, by “fixing” the legs in a straight position and then adding movement in the upper body, there is a greater chance of hyper extending and straining the knee joints.



Sources: Navy Contraindicated Exercises and AceFitness