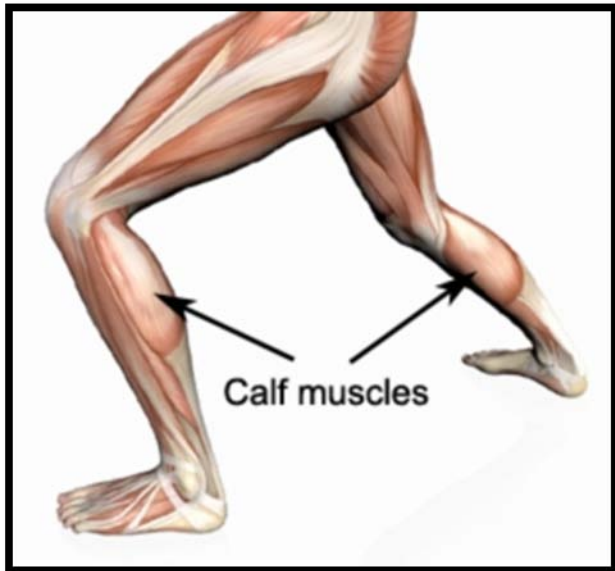


## Calf Stretches

The following calf stretches are designed to improve flexibility of the calf muscles (Figure 1). If you are injured, you should discuss the suitability of these calf stretches with your podiatrist prior to commencing them.

To begin with, the calf stretches should be held for 15 seconds and repeated 4 times at a mild to moderate stretch pain-free. Generally you should choose one or two calf stretches that feel comfortable for you and performed them 3 times daily. As your flexibility improves, the calf stretches can be progressed by increasing the frequency, duration and intensity of the stretches provided they are pain-free.



**Figure 1 – The Calf Muscles**

### Calf Stretch (Soleus)

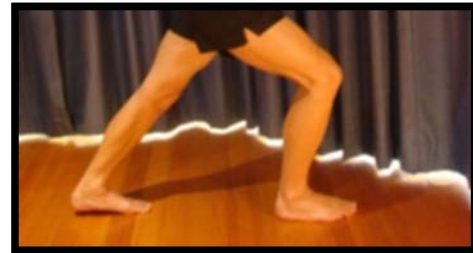
Begin this calf stretch with your hands against the wall and your leg to be stretched in front of you as demonstrated (figure 2). Keep your heel down. Gently move your knee forward over your toes until you feel a stretch in the back of your calf or Achilles tendon (figure 2). Hold for 15 seconds and repeat 4 times at a mild to moderate stretch pain-free.



**Figure 2 – Calf stretch (Soleus) (right leg)**

### Calf Stretch (Gastrocnemius)

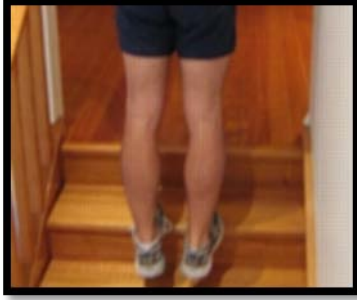
Begin this calf stretch with your hands against the wall and your leg to be stretched behind you as demonstrated (figure 3). Keep your heel down, knee straight and feet pointing forwards. Gently lunge forwards until you feel a stretch in the back of your calf or knee (figure 3). Hold for 15 seconds and repeat 4 times at a mild to moderate stretch pain-free.



**Figure 3 – Calf stretch (Gastrocnemius) (left leg)**

### Calf Stretch over Step (Gastrocnemius)

Begin this calf stretch standing with your heels over the edge of a step and hold onto a rail for balance as demonstrated (figure 4). Keeping your knees straight slowly let your heels drop down below the step until you feel a stretch in the back of your calf or knee (figure 4). Hold for 15 seconds and repeat 4 times at a mild to moderate stretch pain-free. This exercise can be progressed by placing more weight through the leg to be stretched provided it is pain free.



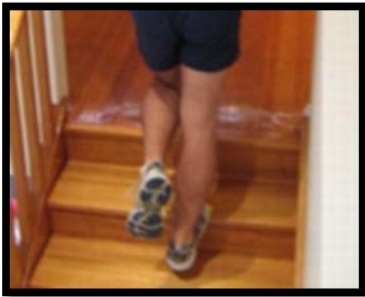
**Figure 4** – Calf Stretch over Step  
(Gastrocnemius)



**Figure 6** – Advanced Calf Stretch over Step  
(Soleus) (left leg)

### **Advanced Calf Stretch over Step (Gastrocnemius)**

Begin this advanced calf stretch standing with both of your heels over the edge of a step and hold onto a rail for balance (as demonstrated in figure 4 – Calf Stretch over Step). Keeping your knees straight slowly let your heels drop down below the step and then slowly take one leg off the step until you feel a stretch in the back of your calf or knee (figure 5). Hold for 15 seconds and repeat 4 times at a mild to moderate stretch pain-free.



**Figure 5** – Advanced Calf Stretch over Step  
(Gastrocnemius) (right leg)

### **Advanced Calf Stretch over Step (Soleus)**

Begin this advanced calf stretch standing with both of your heels over the edge of a step, your knees bent and hold onto a rail for balance. Slowly let your heels drop down below the step keeping your knees bent and then slowly take one leg off the step until you feel a mild to moderate stretch in the back of your calf or Achilles tendon. If comfortable and pain free, take one leg off the step entirely (figure 6). Hold for 15 seconds and repeat 4 times at a mild to moderate stretch pain-free.