

ROCK CLIMBERS' FOREARMS AND FINGERS



BY ERIN MYERS

Rock climbers have a group of muscles in their forearms and hands that many other athletes may not focus on keeping strong and flexible. Tons of forearm and finger strength is needed to pull yourself up a rock face, especially when you are only clinging to tiny little crevices. While strength is extremely important in this sport, so is flexibility. Because not many other sports use these groups of muscles, not many people are aware of how to stretch them. Here are three quick moves to love on rock climbers' forearms and fingers.

PUSH-UP JUMPS FOR FOREARM STRENGTH

Stand about two feet away from a wall in a plank position with hands at shoulder height. Keeping your elbows straight push yourself away from the wall with just the strength in your fingers and forearms. The stronger these muscles get the more you can “jump” your body away from the wall. Remember to keep your elbows straight while your fingers “jump.”

FINGER PULL STRETCH

Stand about two feet away from the wall with your right hand on the wall. Rotate your arm 180 degrees clockwise until your fingers are pointing to the floor. Firmly push the palm of the hand into the wall while spreading the fingers wide. With the left hand, pull one finger away from the wall, holding for about 30 seconds, then moving onto the next finger. Repeat with the left hand on the wall, but rotate it counter-clockwise before pushing it firmly to the wall.

ARM NERVE STRETCH

Standing up straight, place your hands straight out in front of you with the palms of your hands together. Flex the fingers away from each other. Flex the wrists away from each other. Open the arms wide to the side with straight elbows while keeping both fingers and wrists flexing and pulling back. Hold for a few seconds once you feel a “nervy” pull in your hands and return the arms to the start position.