

What about the usual stretching exercises?

Static stretching exercises, in which you're not moving around at all but are simply elongating a particular muscle or group of muscles, do have a place in your training program, but their value and proper usage are often misunderstood.

It's probably best to place your static stretches at the end of your workout as part of the cool-down, not at the beginning of a training session. Static exercises help bring your body back toward a state of rest and recovery and allow you to relax and lengthen the muscles that you have put under stress during your workout.

Placing static stretches at the beginning of a training session, on the other hand, tends to interrupt the natural flow of an optimal warm-up and fails to prepare you fully for the dynamic movements that follow.