



## 5 Stretches Every Tennis Player Over 60 Should Do Daily

As a seasoned tennis player, you know that staying active is key to a long, enjoyable life on the court. But as we age, mobility, flexibility, and recovery become even more critical for preventing injury and maintaining power. This daily routine focuses on the key areas of the tennis game: the **shoulders**, **hips**, and **lower back**. Dedicate 10 minutes a day to these five gentle, effective stretches, and your body will thank you during your next match!

**\*\* A quick note:** Always listen to your body and consult with your doctor or physical therapist before starting any new exercise routine. Stretch only to the point of gentle tension, *not* pain.

### The 5 Essential Stretches

#### 1. Chest and Shoulder Wall Stretch (For Serve & Forehand Power)

- **Why it helps:** Opens up the chest and the front of the shoulders, which can become tight from repetitive swinging and stooped posture. This improves your range of motion for serving and overhead shots.
- **How to do it:**
  - Stand next to a wall.
  - Place your forearm flat against the wall (elbow bent at 90°).
  - Slowly step one foot forward and turn your body away from the wall until you feel a gentle stretch across your chest and the front of your shoulder.
  - **Hold:** 30 seconds per side.

#### 2. Figure-Four Stretch (For Hip Mobility & Back Health)

- **Why it helps:** A powerhouse stretch for the glutes and hips, which are vital for side-to-side movement, quick stops, and explosive serves. Keeping these muscles loose can significantly reduce lower back strain.
- **How to do it (Lying down variation):**
  - Lie on your back with your knees bent.
  - Cross one ankle over the opposite thigh (forming a "4").
  - Gently pull the bottom knee toward your chest until you feel a stretch in the glute of the crossed leg.
  - **Hold:** 30–60 seconds per side.

### 3. Wrist and Forearm Extensor Stretch (For Grip & Stroke Stability)

- **Why it helps:** Prevents common issues like tennis elbow and wrist stiffness. Strong, flexible forearms are crucial for maintaining a firm grip and control during volleys and groundstrokes.
- **How to do it:**
  - Extend one arm straight out in front of you, palm down.
  - Use your opposite hand to gently pull your fingers *down* toward the floor, keeping your elbow straight.
  - You should feel the stretch along the top of your forearm.
  - **Hold:** 30 seconds per side, then repeat with the palm up (pulling fingers toward the body) to stretch the flexors.

### 4. Seated Spinal Twist (For Rotational Power & Core Health)

- **Why it helps:** Tennis is a rotational sport. This stretch keeps your spine mobile and your core flexible, directly benefiting your ability to coil and release power for groundstrokes.
- **How to do it:**
  - Sit comfortably on the floor with both legs extended.
  - Bend your right knee and step your right foot over your left leg, planting it on the floor.
  - Place your right hand on the floor behind you for support.
  - Hook your left elbow outside your right knee.
  - Gently look over your right shoulder and deepen the twist slightly.
  - **Hold:** 30 seconds per side.

### 5. Hamstring Stretch (Standing or Seated) (For Movement & Injury Prevention)

- **Why it helps:** Tight hamstrings pull the pelvis down, contributing to lower back pain and restricted movement. Flexible hamstrings allow for better lunging and reaching.
- **How to do it (Standing variation for stability):**
  - Place one heel on a slightly elevated surface (like a low stool or the net strap).
  - Keep your back straight and gently lean forward from your hips until you feel a stretch down the back of your thigh. *Do not round your back.*
  - **Hold:** 30–60 seconds per side.

### Conclusion: Make It a Habit

Consistency is the secret weapon of the longevity-minded athlete. Performing these five stretches daily—perhaps right after you wake up, or as a cool-down after practice—will keep your body feeling young, agile, and ready for your next set. Get stretching, and enjoy many more years on the court!

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