

Introduction to Stretching

Benefits of Stretching

- Stretching is a key component of a balanced exercise program.
- Performing stretching exercises daily can increase flexibility and maintain healthy joints.
- Regular flexibility exercises can make activities of daily living easier and improve physical activity performance.

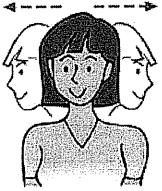
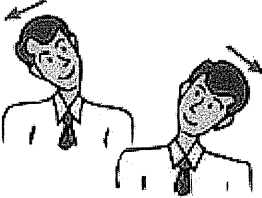


When You Should Stretch

- Stretching should be performed before and after your exercise session.
- The flexibility exercises shown here can also be performed as a daily exercise routine.
- These simple exercises can be performed during commercial breaks of your favorite TV show or after prolonged work at your desk.


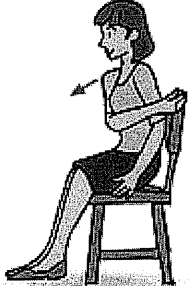



How to Stretch

- You should never experience pain with any stretching exercise.
- You should only feel a gentle pull in the muscles being stretched. Each stretch should be held between 15 to 30 seconds.
- You should perform stretching exercises on both sides of the body and your goal should be to move your joints through the full range of motion as determined by your abilities.
- Do not bounce during any stretch, as this could lead to injury. As you stretch, remember to breathe.
- Deep relaxation breathing which consists of deep breathing in your nose and long exhalation through your mouth can help to relieve stress and relax your mind and body during your flexibility exercises.

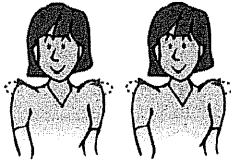
Stretches

<p><u>1. Neck</u></p> 	<p>Look forward, turn your neck to the right slowly, then back to starting position, and turn your neck to the left. Repeat 4 times. (Remember not to turn your neck too many times.)</p>
	<p>Look forward, stretch your neck towards the right slowly. Return to starting position and stretch your neck towards the left. (Avoid drawing the neck downward too hard.)</p>
	<p>Draw your chin towards the neck, and lower your head. Return to starting position. Put one or both hands behind the neck, and slightly lean your head backward. Return to starting position. (Remember not to lean the head backward too much.)</p>
<p><u>2. Shoulders</u></p> 	<p>Bring your shoulders backward and inward. Lift your shoulders and rotate towards the front. Repeat 8 times.</p>

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	<p>Raise and rest your right arm on your left shoulder. Pull your right elbow towards the body with your left hand. Return to starting position and repeat with the other arm.</p>
	<p>Sit upright, turn your waist to the left, and put your right hand on the left side of the back of a chair. Lean forward slightly, and draw your chin slightly inward. Return to starting position and repeat for the other side. (You are advised to use a chair with a fixed back.)</p>
	<p>Put both hands behind your neck. Hold your right wrist with your left hand at your left waist or hip. Look forward and stand erect. Slowly stretch your neck towards the left, return to starting position and repeat for the other side. (Avoid drawing the neck downward too hard.)</p>
	<p>Look forward, raise both arms and cross your arms with your palms touching each other. Extend your arms upward as far as you can. Then return to starting position.</p>
	<p>Stand next to the wall. Raise your right arm and extend it as far as possible. Return to starting position. Repeat with the other arm. Mobility Exercises Stretching Exercises.</p>

3. Chest and Back



Bring your shoulders forward and inward as far as possible. Return to starting position. Bring your shoulders backward.
Repeat 8 times.



Stand erect. Put both hands on the back of your waist or your hips. Move your arms towards each other.



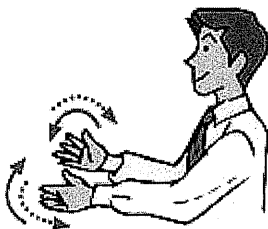
Stand erect. Put both hands behind your back with fingers interlocked and arms stretched. Raise your arms slowly and bring your shoulders backward. Return to starting position. (**Note: Do not lean forward.**)



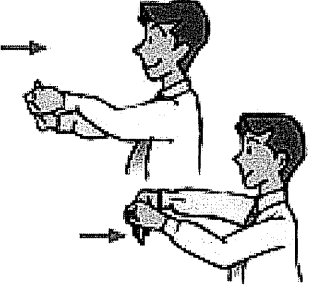

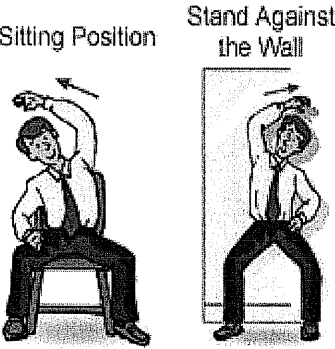
Anti-interlock your fingers and stretch both arms to the front with palms facing the front. Bring your shoulders forward and inward while keeping your back straight.
Return to starting position

4. Wrists

Wrist Rotation



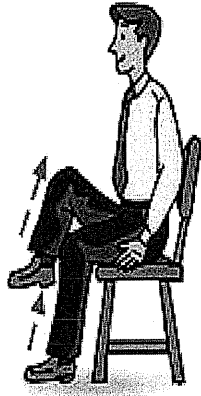
Rotate your wrists inward. Repeat 8 times. Repeat in the opposite direction.

	<p>Stretch your right arm with the palm facing the front. Slightly bend your right wrist backward with your left hand. Return to starting position. Repeat the movement with the palm facing yourself.</p>
<p><u>5. Waist</u></p> <p>Upper Body Rotation</p> 	<p>Stand with legs apart and knees bent. Bend your elbows and turn your upper body to the left slowly. Then to the right. Repeat 4 times.</p>
<p>Side Bend</p> <p>Sitting Position Stand Against the Wall</p> 	<p>Sit on a chair. Look forward. Raise your left arm. Put your right hand on your right thigh. Bend your trunk to the right slowly. Return to starting position. Repeat with the other arm. (You can stand against the wall and do this exercise to achieve better results.)</p>

6. Waist and Back

Waist Straight and Knee Lift

Sitting Position



Hold onto the sides of the chair and keep your back straight. Lift your knees one by one. Repeat 4 times.

Upper Body Stretch



Lean your upper back on the chair. Lift your arms overhead.
Extend your head and upper body as far as possible.
Keep your feet on the floor.

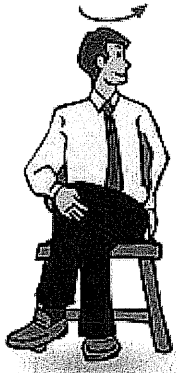
7. Hips and Legs

Seated Hamstring Stretch



Sit on the edge of a chair. Straighten your left leg with the heel touching the floor and toes pointing upward.

Turn your Waist and Stretch your Legs (Elementary)

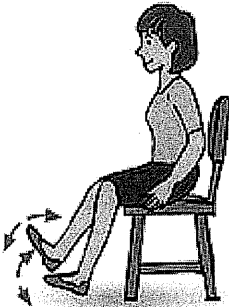


Sit straight. Cross your left leg over your right leg and press your left knee lightly with your right hand. Hold onto the back of a chair gently with your left hand for support. Turn to the left with the waist as the turning point. Look forward or turn your head to the left. Return to starting position and repeat for the other side of the waist.

8. Calves

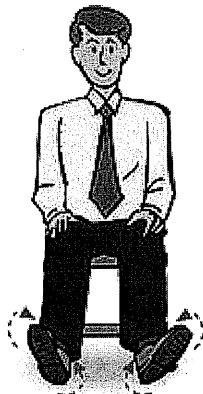
Toes Pointing up and down

Sitting Position



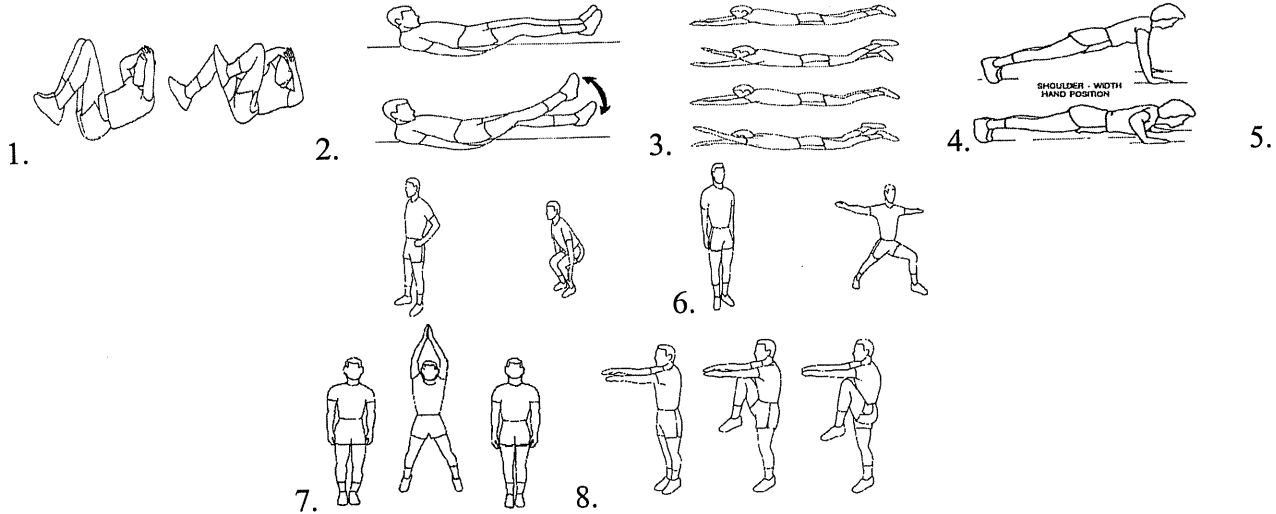
Lift both heels off the floor and point the toes up and down. Do it with alternate feet. Repeat 8 times.

Sitting Position



Sit upright. Lift heels off the floor and rotate both ankles inward for 8 times. Return to starting position. Repeat it but rotate the ankles in the opposite direction.

Muscular Endurance Exercises – 1 minute intervals



1. **Crunch** – On back, hands behind your head, stomach tight, Curlup
2. **Flutter Kick** - On your back with your stomach tight, and your legs 6 inches above the ground kick in the air.
3. **Swimmer** - On your stomach raise the opposite hand and leg.
4. **Push-up** – On your stomach hands a little wider than shoulder width, go until your elbows are at 90 degrees, and then back up.
5. **Squats** – Bend your knees, and keep your back straight go until your knees are little above 90 degrees and back up. Keep knees behind toes.
6. **Lunges** – With one foot forward lower your body until your front knee is bent at 90 degrees, don't let your knees go in front of your toes
7. **Jumping Jacks** – Jump and clap your hands over your head
8. **Knee-Highs** –Stand up back straight, raise your knee up to your chest and down

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Stretching Do's and Don'ts

Do:

1. Hold for 15-30 seconds.
2. Stretch both sides of your body.
3. Ease into the stretch until you feel a slight pull in your muscle.

Don't:

1. Bounce back and forth while you are stretching.
2. Stretch until you feel pain.

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STRETCHING GUIDELINES

- Always move slowly into the stretch position.
- Concentrate on the muscles being stretched.
- Breathe in a normal manner.
- Stretch to the point that you feel tension but not pain.
- Hold each stretch for 12-15 seconds.
- Repeat each stretch 3 times.
- Do not bounce when holding a stretch.
- Stretch before, during and after work.
- Have fun!

DO'S LIST

- Do stretch your shoulders, elbows and wrists before, during and after work.
- Do keep your elbows close to your sides when working.
- Do work with your wrists in a neutral position.
- Do use ice at the first signs of pain, swelling or stiffness.
- Do change positions frequently.
- Do avoid extended reaching.
- Do avoid slugging shoulders.
- Do keep elbows bent at 90°.

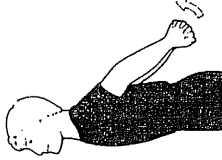
3 Neck Stretch

- look straight ahead (neutral)
- drop left ear toward left shoulder and hold
- return back to neutral
- drop right ear toward right shoulder and hold




4 Anterior Shoulder Stretch

- stand upright
- clasp hands behind back
- bend elbows slightly
- move arms upward



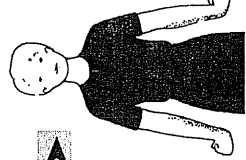
5 Rotator Cuff Stretch

- reach up and over with left hand
- place back of right hand in middle of back
- reach right hand toward left hand
- repeat on opposite side



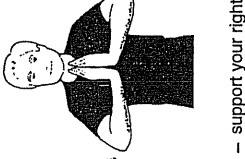
6 Wrist Extensor Stretch

- relax arms at sides
- rotate both hands inward
- make loose fist
- curl fist upward




7 Wrist Flexor Stretch

- place palms together with fingers at chin level
- raise elbows slowly, keeping palms together



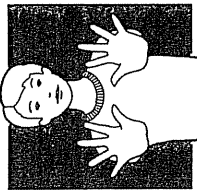
8 Wrist Curls

- support your right arm with your left hand
- with a loose fist, make large slow circles with your right hand
- keep the rest of your arm motionless
- do 10 circles in each direction
- repeat with your left hand



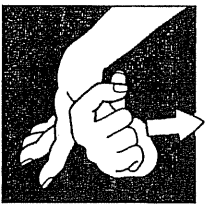
9 Finger Fan

- with arms straight in front and your palms down, bend your wrists up
- straighten and spread your fingers as wide as possible
- hold for 10 seconds
- make a loose fist and repeat

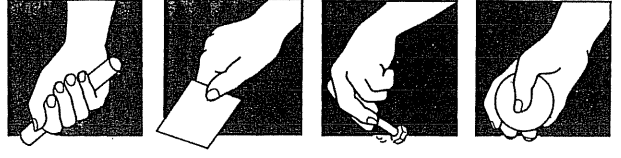


10 Thumb Stretch

- with right palm up and wrist relaxed, use left hand to pull your right thumb downward until you feel a gentle stretch
- do not pull outward
- hold 10 to 15 seconds
- repeat with the left thumb
- this may be repeated for each finger also



Proper Grips



The **Power Grip** is an effective grip. Use the whole hand and all of the fingers to grasp an object.

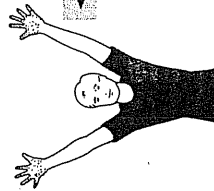
The **Lateral Pinch** should not be used for lifting or moving heavy objects. This grip is used for light tasks such as sorting.

The **Three-Point Pinch** is used for tasks requiring precision and accuracy but not for tasks requiring strength. This grip is ideal for oil painting.

The **Palmar Grip** is the grip used for holding a baseball. Using all 4 fingers and the thumb, this grip can be used in place of the 3-point pinch.

1 High Reach Stretch

- raise up on tip toes
- raise arms up
- spread fingers
- reach as high as you can



2 Shoulder Roll

- place arms at your side
- lift your shoulders up toward your ears
- hold for 5 seconds and release
- roll your shoulders forward three times
- roll your shoulders backward three times

