

Feel Great at Work with These Great Desk Based Stretches

Don't Sit there getting all tense at your desk...Release the pressure by trying our desktop exercise routine!



You'll love it - Do these quick and effective movements at your desk to improve your circulation, energy and posture, it'll give you a great sense of physical wellbeing.







First, some quick tips on how to get the most from these exercises...




- ✓ **Relax** – Take your time and be conscious of every move you make. It doesn't have to be perfect so enjoy yourself.
- ✓ **Breathe Easily** – Keep using nice, deep breaths from the stomach/diaphragm to begin blowing the cobwebs away...In through the nose, out through the mouth.
- ✓ **No Pain** – Work within your comfort zone. No bouncing at the extent of your range of motion, and no forcing past comfortable movement. This isn't a competition you know!

Starting posture -

Check in with yourself to make sure you're sitting up with good posture...open up the chest, head above shoulders... Let the shoulders and arms relax and bring the chin in slightly so the top of your head points to the ceiling. Now, follow the exercises below...

What Stretch?	Duration & Repetitions	Helpful Notes
	<p>5 seconds, 3 times</p>	<p>Gently and slowly clench your fingers and thumbs as shown, then relax your hands completely in between each stretch</p>
	<p>5 seconds, 3 times</p>	<p>Now open your hands as much as possible – move each finger away from every other one to really stretch out the palm</p>

What Stretch?	Duration & Repetitions	Helpful Notes
	<p>5 seconds, 2 times</p>	<p>Lift your shoulders up towards your ears then concentrate on totally relaxing and dropping them in a controlled manner as far as they will go</p>
	<p>5 seconds, 2 times</p>	<p>Feel this stretch in both your back and in the pectoral muscles of your chest. This is particularly good if you have been hunched over for too long!</p>
	<p>5 seconds, once each side</p>	<p>Very gently tip your ear towards your shoulder. You should just <i>begin</i> to feel the stretch down the side of your neck</p>
	<p>5 seconds, once each side</p>	<p>Again, very gently turn as if you are going to look over your shoulder. Are you equally flexible on both sides or is your range of motion different?</p>
	<p>5 seconds, once</p>	<p>Control your head carefully as it drops towards your chest. You may find that you feel some tenderness in your upper or mid back as the muscles there can become tight</p>
	<p>10 seconds, once each arm</p>	<p>This is a great stretch if you have been typing or using a mouse for an extended time. To achieve a deeper stretch, you can do this whilst standing, and twist your torso too</p>

What Stretch?	Duration & Repetitions	Helpful Notes
	<p>10 seconds, once</p>	<p>Clasp your hands together in front of your chest, then invert them, turning your palms outward away from your body. You can point your arms towards the desk or up in the air for variation</p>
	<p>10 seconds, once</p>	<p>You can transition into this stretch from the one above, or start it completely anew. If you want to stand, keep your feet shoulder-width apart and you can gently lean back a little to challenge your abdominal muscles too!</p>
	<p>10 seconds, once each side</p>	<p>Pulling your elbow closer to your head stretches your triceps more (which lies along the back of your arm). Gently leaning to each side also stretches your latissimus dorsi and the stabilising muscles either side of your spine</p>

Self-Massage Helps to Release Tight Muscles -

Using your right hand, reach up to the top of your left arm and squeeze around the deltoid (the bulk of muscle that allows you to lift your arm out to the side). Repeat on the other side using your left hand.

Using the first two or three fingers of your right hand, with small circles, rub along the top of your shoulder from the neck to the top of the arm – be aware of any tense or sore areas and focus on these. Now move back along your shoulder to the neck and then down the centre of the back and out across the shoulder blade. Repeat on the other side.

End the exercise with good posture and some more deep breathing exercises (as outlined at the start) to become more alert, and get back into your body after the exertion!

Remember -

- Prolonged sitting at a desk or computer terminal can cause muscular tension and pain
- Taking a few minutes to do a series of stretches can make your whole body feel better
- Learn to stretch spontaneously throughout the day whenever you feel tense
- Don't just do seated stretches, but do some standing stretches too – Great for circulation!