



Stretching

allow your body to slowly roll up, one vertebra at a time, so that your head comes up last.

Torso Stretch

In a standing position bring your arms over your head and clasp them together. Facing forward, allow your arms to lean to the right. This will extend your middle torso to the left, stretching that entire left region of your body. You will resemble a quarter moon. Breathe into the stretch. Release and come back into standing position. Switch sides.

Shoulder Roll

In a standing or seated position, relax your shoulders. With your arms at your side, do a circle motion with one shoulder, then the next. Close your eyes and focus on your breathing as you do this. Now take a deep inhalation and bring your shoulders up toward your ears, and with the exhalation, release them. Now roll both shoulders together from front to back. Next roll both shoulders from back to front.

Neck Stretch

In a standing or seated position, looking straight ahead, let your head drop to the right side so that your ear is close to your shoulder. Bring your right hand to the top of your head and gently pull to the right. At the same time, pull your left shoulder down. This will give you a maximum stretch. Breathe into the stretch. Gently bring your head back to its normal position and switch sides.

Arm Stretch

Raise your arms above your head. Interlace your fingers, palms facing up as far as you can. Reach for the sky. Breathe into the stretch. Hold for 10 seconds. Release and Repeat.

Leg Stretch

In a seating position on the floor with your legs straight in front of you, relax your head and body forward and with your arms, reach for your toes. With each breath, relax further into the stretch. Relax and repeat.

Back Stretch

Lie on your back, keeping your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Bend your right leg and with your arms around your knee, bring it in toward your chest. Breathe into the stretch. Relax and Repeat. Switch sides.

If you are feeling stressed and have not had much recent physical activity, doing some simple stretching exercises will help loosen up tight muscles. Stretching can help you to feel more relaxed and more flexible. Regular stretching prevents muscle stiffness, strain, and soreness. Stretching can improve blood flow, and keep your muscles from getting tight after doing other exercises. Stretching leaves you feeling refreshed.

You can stretch anytime and anywhere. You don't need a special time or place to do stretching. You can do it at home, at school, standing up or sitting down.

It's important to never stretch cold muscles. The first thing to do before you stretch is to do some gentle movement. Warm up all the joints in your body, paying special attention to each of them. Close your eyes and exhale. Focus on your breathing for a few moments and let yourself relax into the breath.

Listen to your body as you stretch. If a particular motion causes discomfort or pain, modify it so you don't over exert yourself. Keep at it because the more you stretch, the more flexible you become.

Never bounce your stretch. This can cause muscle strains and tears. Just do a gentle slow even stretch of the muscle group.

Here are some simple ways to stretch:

Body Bend

Stand with your feet together and your arms at your side. Bend your body at the waist, allowing your head, arms, and torso to hang loosely toward the ground. Keep a very gentle bend at the knees so you don't hyperextend them. Now just let yourself hang in this position for a few moments. Focus on your breathing. With each exhalation, let yourself relax a little bit more. When you feel ready,