

RECHARGE



Instant Recess

Instructions

- 1) Select a series of movements appropriate for your employees, space, and time available. Mix and match or choose all activities from the same category.
- 2) Practice each movement by following the detailed instructions provided
- 3) Use Leader's Notes to lead effective Instant Recess!

RECHARGE Instant Recess Activities

- Standing stretching
- Chair stretches
- Yoga (with mat)
- Yoga (without mat)
- Chair Yoga
- Meditation

Standing stretches

Neck Release

- Sit or stand tall and straight
- Roll the shoulders back and down
- As you inhale, raise the left arm up and rest the hand over the right ear
- Use the weight of your arm to stretch the right side of the neck
- Hold for a couple of breaths
- Repeat on the other side



Arm Circles

- Start with your legs in a comfortably wide stance, knees slightly bent.
- Reach one arm up and imagine that you're drawing a large circle with your arm and torso, following a full circumference from ceiling to floor.
- Stay relaxed throughout the movements—particularly relax your shoulders and elbows. Focus on breathing deeply throughout the swings.
- Repeat on the other side



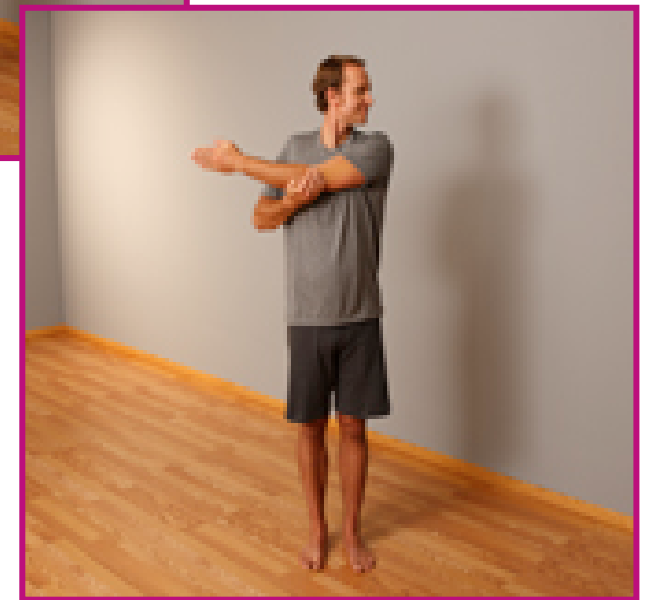
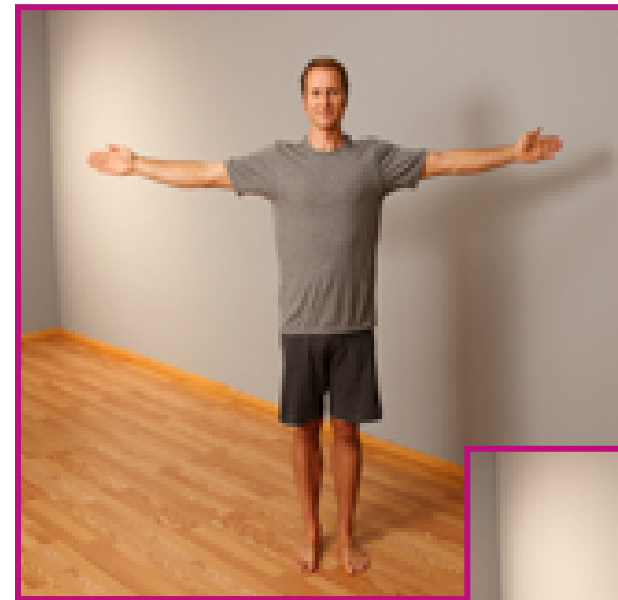
Zombie Swings

- Stand with your feet in a comfortably wide stance. Tuck your tailbone under your hips (never stick your butt out), and bend your knees.
- Slowly walk your fingertips down the fronts of your thighs; stop when you arrive at your knees.
- Relax your neck as you lower your head forward.
- Slowly sway side to side 4 to 8 times.
- Slowly roll up one vertebra at a time to your starting position.



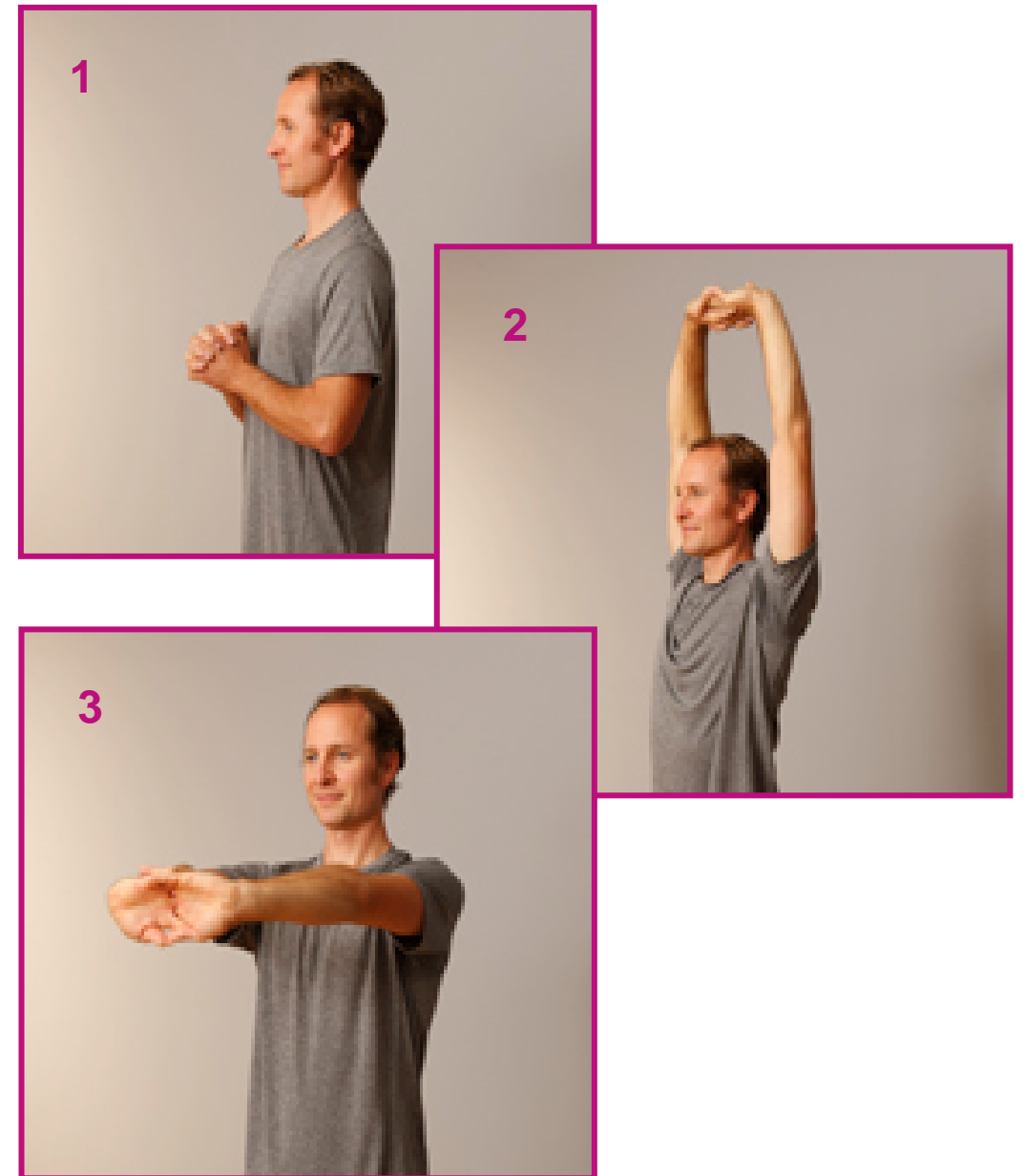
Shoulder Stretch

- Stand up straight and raise your arms to shoulder height
- From below, place your left hand on your right arm above the elbow and gently press
- Repeat on the other side
- Return to center and roll your shoulders forward and backward several times to release tensions



Arm Stretch

- Bend the wrists while interlocking the fingers
- Exhale and roll the palms out, keeping the tips of the thumbs touching
- Inhale and take the arms up alongside the ears holding for several breaths
- Exhale, bringing the arms forward and down
- Repeat, changing the interlock of the fingers so that the other index finger is on top



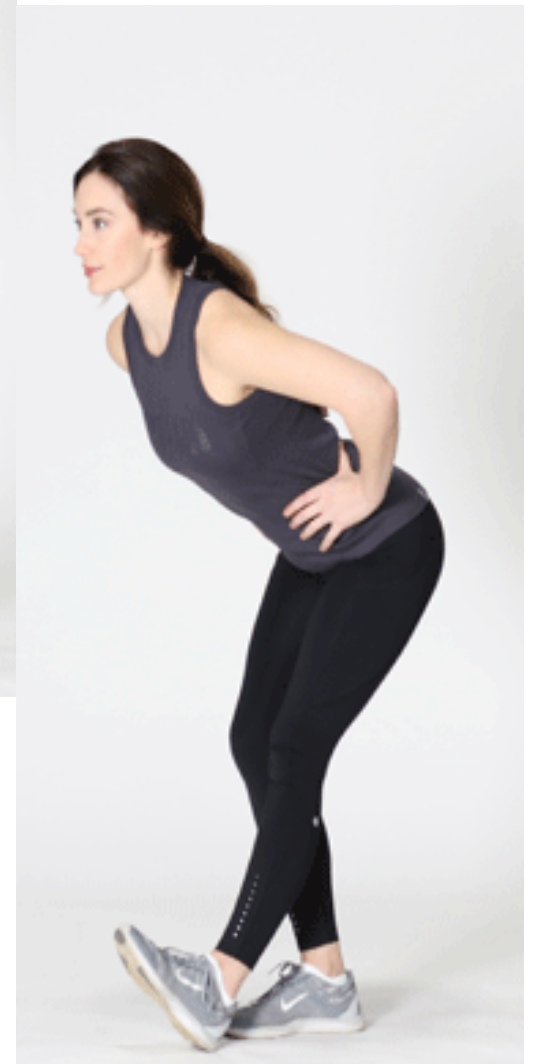
Side Stretch

- Stand with your feet hip-width apart
- As you inhale, bring both arms over your head and place your left hand around your right wrist
- As you inhale, slowly lean to the left and hold for three breaths
- Return to the center and release the arms. Repeat on the other side



Calf Stretch

- Place your right foot in front of you.
- Hinge at the waist to lean your torso forward toward the extended right leg, and bend your supporting knee.
- Slowly flex your right ankle so that your toes are pulling up toward your body.
- Hold for a cycle of relaxation breathing and then repeat with the left foot.



Inner Thigh Stretch

- Stand with a very wide stance.
- Bend your right knee as you shift your entire body right until you feel a stretch in your left inner thigh.
- Hold for a cycle of relaxation breathing, then shift your weight to the other side and repeat with the left leg.



Chair Stretches

Calf Stretch

- Bring the hands to the edge of a table or desk
- Take a step back with the left leg. Turn the left foot to a 45-degree angle while pressing the left heel to the floor
- Press your left knee back until you feel a stretch
- Repeat on the other side



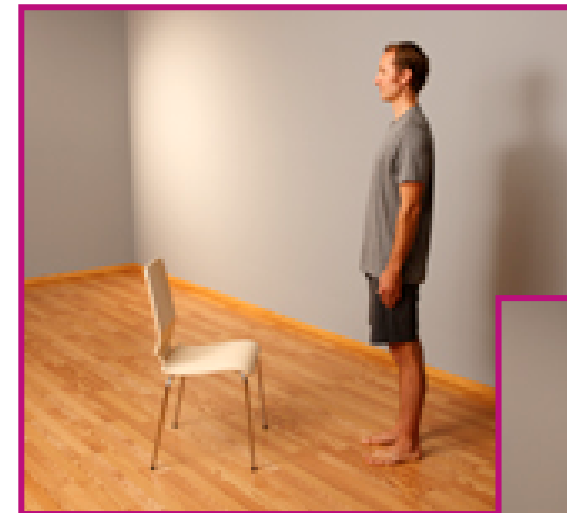
Chest and throat stretch

- Look straight ahead, keeping the back straight and long
- Roll the shoulders up and down while pushing the chest forward
- Clasp the palms together and pull them down while looking up, stretching the neck, throat, and chest



Hamstring Stretch

- Stand a couple of feet away from the front of a chair that does not slide
- Breathing in, place your right heel on the seat and point your toes upward
- Place your lower arms just above your right knee for support
- Exhale and gently lean forward without pushing down on your leg
- Repeat on the other side



Shoulder Stretch

- Sit or stand tall
- Move one arm across body at low chest height
- Take other arm and gently hug the arm on your chest to your body



Shoulder Rolls

- Sit or stand tall
- Bring shoulders to ears
- Pull back and depress down
- Relax and repeat



Triceps Stretch

- Raise your arm and bend it so that your hand reaches toward the opposite side.
- Use your other hand and pull the elbow toward your head.
- Hold for 10 to 30 seconds.
- Repeat on the other side.



Neck Stretch

- Gently pull your head toward each shoulder until a light stretch is felt.
- Hold the pose for 10 to 15 seconds.
- Alternate once on each side.



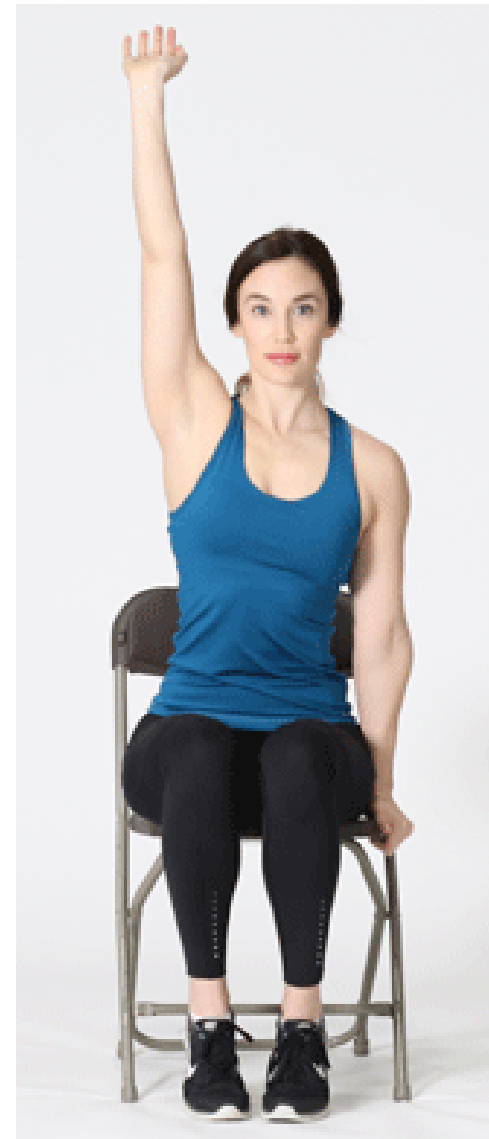
Upper Body Stretch

- Clasp hands together above the head with palms facing outward.
- Push your arms up, stretching upward.
- Hold the pose for 10 to 30 seconds.



Side Stretch

- Extend each arm overhead.
- Reach to the opposite side.
- Hold for 10 to 30 seconds.
- Repeat on the other side.



Torso Stretch

- Keep your feet firmly on the ground, facing forward.
- Twist your upper body in the direction of the arm that's resting on the back of your chair.
- Hold pose for 10 to 30 seconds.
- Repeat on other side.

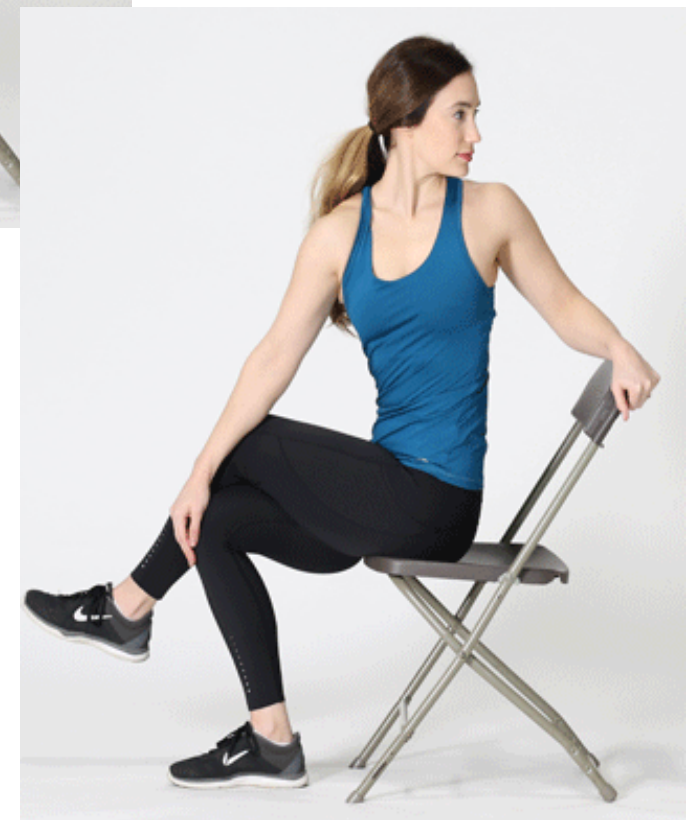


Figure 4 (Outer Thigh Stretch)

- Sit tall in a chair with hips and knees at about 90-degree angle.
- Cross one leg over the other.
- Keep back straight and lean forward.
- Modification: allow bottom leg to remain straight at the knee and cross stretching leg onto shin.



Seated Dive Stretch

- Sit tall in a chair with hips and knees at about 90° angles and knees wide **OR** Place hands on thighs and lean head forward.
- Go further by sliding hands down to lower leg & continue to roll upper body down.
- If comfortable, go further with hands resting on floor and head directed down.
- As you roll up, pause at each of above positions for a breath.



Quad Stretch

- Stand tall, holding onto the chair for balance.
- Bend your knee and reach back to hold your foot, pantleg, sock, or shoe.
- Tuck your tailbone slightly and be sure your knee points to the ground.
- Hold a slight bend in the knee of the standing leg.
- Option: place the foot of your bent leg on the seat of the chair if holding it is too much.



Yoga (with mat)

Downward Facing Dog

- Get on all fours. Place your hands in alignment under your wrists and your knees under your hips. Press into your hands, tuck your toes under, and lift up your knees. Bring your sitting bones up toward the ceiling.
- Keep a slight bend in your knees and lengthen your spine and tailbone. Keep your heels slightly off the ground.
- Distribute your weight evenly between both sides of your body, paying attention to the position of your hips and shoulders.
- Keep your head in line with your upper arms or with your chin tucked in slightly.
- Hold this pose for up to 1 minute.



Cat-Cow

- Get on all fours. Place your wrists underneath your shoulders and your knees underneath your hips. Balance your weight evenly between all four points.
- Inhale as you look up and let your stomach drop down toward the mat.
- Exhale as you tuck your chin into your chest, draw your navel toward your spine, and arch your spine toward the ceiling.
- Maintain awareness of your body as you do this movement. Focus on noting and releasing tension in your body.
- Continue this fluid movement for at least 1 minute.



Sphinx Pose

- Lie on your stomach with your legs extended behind you. Engage the muscles of your lower back, buttocks, and thighs. Bring your elbows under your shoulders with your forearms on the floor and your palms facing down.
- Slowly lift up your upper torso and head. Gently lift and engage your lower abdominals to support your back.
- Ensure that you're lifting up through your spine and out through the crown of your head, instead of collapsing into your lower back.
- Keep your gaze straight ahead as you fully relax in this pose, while at the same time remaining active and engaged.
- Stay in this pose for up to 5 minutes.



Locust Pose

- Lie on your stomach with your arms next to your torso and your palms facing up. Touch your big toes together and turn out your heels to the side. Place your forehead lightly on the floor.
- Slowly lift your head, chest, and arms partway, halfway, or all the way up.
- You may bring your hands together and interlace your fingers behind your back. To deepen the pose, lift your legs.
- Look straight ahead or slightly upward as you lengthen the back of your neck.
- Remain in this pose for up to 1 minute.
- Rest before repeating the pose.



Bridge Pose

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and heels drawn into your sitting bones. Rest your arms alongside your body.
- Press your feet and arms into the floor as you lift your tailbone up. Continue lifting until your thighs are parallel to the floor.
- Leave your arms as they are, bringing your palms together with interlaced fingers under your hips, or placing your hands under your hips for support.
- Hold this pose for up to 1 minute.
- Release by slowly rolling your spine back down to the floor, vertebra by vertebra. Drop your knees in together. Relax and breathe deeply in this position.



Spinal Twist

- Lie on your back with your knees drawn into your chest and your arms extended to the side.
- Slowly lower your legs to the left side while keeping your knees as close together as possible. You may place a pillow under both knees or in between your knees.
- You can use your left hand to gently press down on your knees. Keep your neck straight or turn it to either side.
- Focus on breathing deeply in this position.
- Hold this pose for at least 30 seconds.
- Repeat on the opposite side.



Knees-to-Chest Pose

- Lie on your back and draw both knees in toward your chest.
- Draw your ankles and knees together as you reach your hands around the backs of your thighs or around your shins.
- If your hands reach, interlace your fingers or take hold of opposite elbows.
- To deepen the stretch, lift your head and tuck your chin into your chest.
- Hold this pose for up to 1 minute.



Child's Pose

- Sit back on your heels with your knees together.
- You can use a bolster or blanket under your thighs, torso, or forehead for support.
- Bend forward and walk your hands in front of you. Rest your forehead gently on the floor.
- Keep your arms extended in front of you or bring your arms alongside your body with your palms facing up.
- Focus on releasing tension in your back as your upper body falls heavy into your knees.
- Remain in this pose for up to 5 minutes.



Corpse Pose

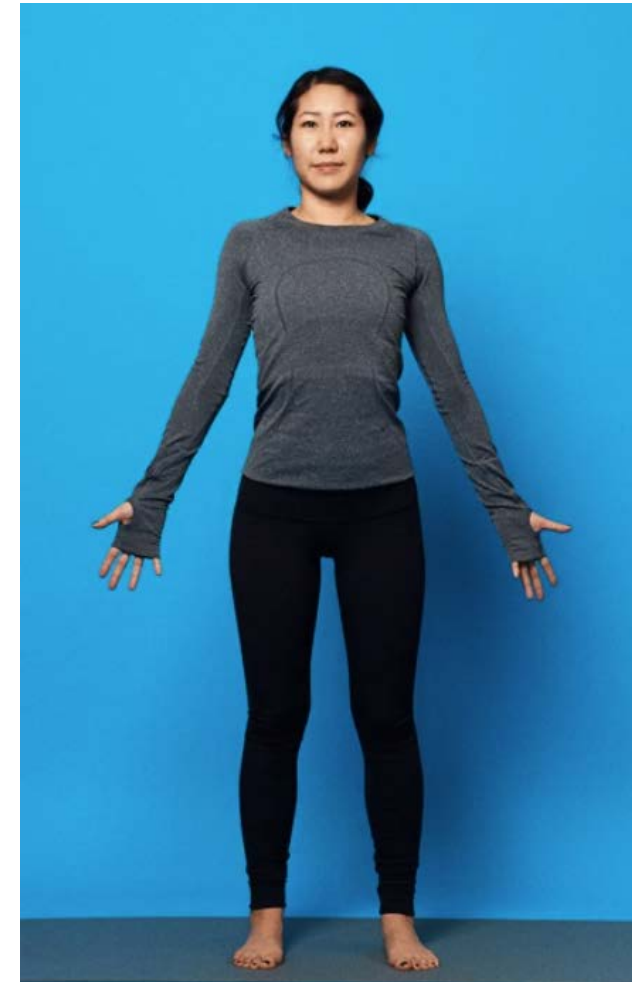
- Lie down on your back with your feet a little wider than your hips and your toes splayed out to the side.
- Rest your arms alongside your body with your palms facing up.
- Adjust your body so that your head, neck, and spine are aligned.
- Focus on breathing deeply and releasing any tightness in your body.
- Remain in this pose for at least 5 minutes.



Yoga (without mat)

Mountain Pose

- Stand with your big toes barely touching, and your heels slightly apart. A good way to gauge your stance is to see if your second toes are parallel.
- Press into all four corners of your feet: big toe, little toe, right side heel, left side heel. As you push into your feet, feel how that engages your entire leg and keeps those muscles active.
- Take a deep breath and roll your shoulders up and back, releasing them down, so your shoulder blades are resting toward each other, and your neck is long.
- Take a few deep breaths here. Close your eyes if you like.



Standing Forward Bend Pose

- Come into a standing position with your feet under your hips.
- Lengthen your body as you fold your upper body forward, keeping a slight bend in your knees. Bring your hands to your legs, a block, or the floor. Tuck your chin in to your chest, and let your head and neck fully relax.
- You can gently shake your head from side to side, front to back, or make gentle circles. This helps to release tension in your neck and shoulders.
- Hold this position for at least 1 minute.
- Bring your arms and head up last as you roll your spine up to standing.



Tree Pose

- From standing, bear your weight with your right foot and slowly lift your right foot off the ground.
- Slowly turn the sole of your left foot toward the inside of your left leg.
- Place it on the outside of your left ankle, calf, or thigh.
- Avoid pressing your foot into your knee.
- Bring your hands into any comfortable position. This could be in prayer position in front of your heart or hanging alongside your sides.
- Hold this pose for up to 2 minutes.
- Repeat on the opposite side.



Warrior II pose

- From standing, bring your left foot back with your toes facing out to the left at a slight angle.
- Bring your right foot forward. The inside of your left foot should be in line with your right foot.
- Bring up your arms until they're parallel to the floor, with your palms facing down.
- Bend your right knee, being careful not to extend your knee further forward than your ankle. Press into both feet as you extend up through your spine.
- Remain in this pose for 30 seconds.
- Then do the opposite side.



Extended Triangle Pose

- Walk your feet apart so that they're wider than your hips. Turn your right toes forward and your left toes out at an angle.
- Bring your arms up so they're parallel to the floor with your palms facing down. Reach forward with your right arm as you hinge at your right hip.
- From here, lower your right arm and lift your left arm up toward the ceiling.
- Turn your gaze in any direction or you can do gentle neck rotations looking up and down.
- Remain in this pose for 30 seconds.
- Then do it on the other side.



Chair Yoga

Seated Mountain

- Take a deep breath and sit up straight, extending your spine. As you exhale, root down into the chair with your sit bones (the lowest part of your tailbone, or the two points that take the weight when you sit).
- Your legs should be at 90-degree angles, knees directly over your ankles. You want to have a little room between your knees.
- Take a deep breath and as you exhale, roll your shoulders down your back, pull your bellybutton in toward your spine, and relax your arms down at your sides.
- Engage your legs by lifting your toes and pressing firmly into all four corners of your feet.



Seated Forward Bend

- Inhale in Seated Mountain, focusing on extending your spine, and simply fold over your legs. You can start with your hands resting on your thighs and slide them down your legs as you fold for a little extra support, or you can keep them at your sides as you work toward laying your torso on your thighs.
- Take 5 or more even breaths in this pose. It massages your intestines, helping with digestion, as well as passively lengthening your spine and stretching your back muscles.
- When ready, inhale as you lift your torso back to an upright position.



Eagle Arms

- Take a breath and then, as you inhale, stretch your arms out to your sides. As you exhale, bring them in front of you, swinging your right arm under your left and grabbing your shoulders with the opposite hands, giving yourself a hug.
- If you have more flexibility in your shoulders, you can release your grip and continue wrapping your forearms around each other until your right fingers rest in your left palm.
- Inhaling, lift your elbows a few inches higher. Exhaling, roll your shoulders down, relaxing them away from your ears.
- Take a few breaths, repeating the elbow lift and shoulder roll if you like.



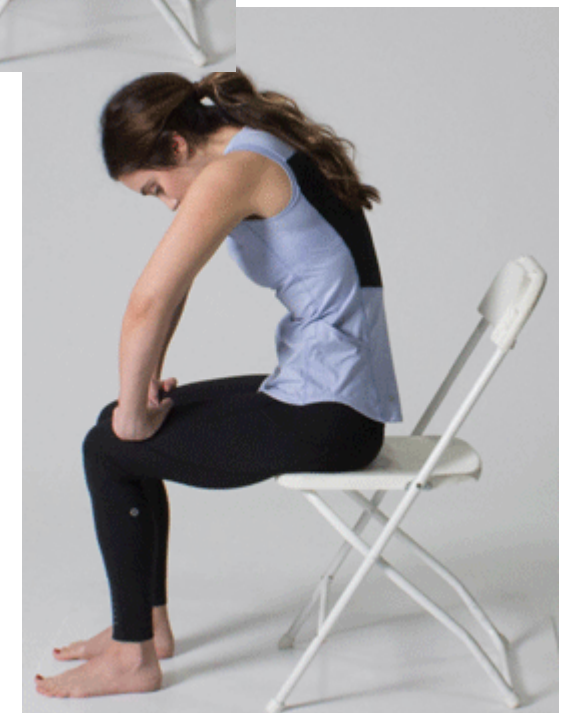
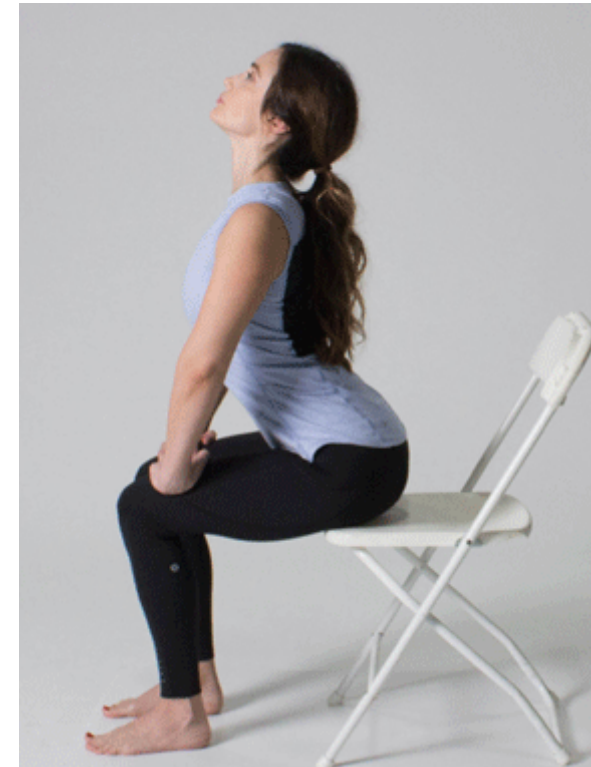
Reverse Arm Hold

- As you inhale, stretch both arms out to your sides, palms down. As you exhale, roll both shoulders forward a little, which rolls your palms so they're facing behind you, then bend your elbows and let your hands swing behind your back.
- Clasp hands in any way you like (fingers, hands, wrists, or elbows) and gently pull your hands away from each other without releasing your hold.
- If you gripped a wrist or elbow, note which side it's on.
- After you've taken 5 slow, even breaths with arms clasped this way, reclasp the other wrist or elbow and hold for 5 breaths.



Seated Cat-Cow

- With feet planted firmly on the floor and knees at a 90-degree angle, place your hands on your knees, fingers pointing in toward each other, the heel of your hands on the outside of your legs.
- Inhale, and as you exhale, press into your hands and arch your back using your entire spine. As you inhale again, roll your shoulders forward and pull your bellybutton toward your spine, dropping your chin toward your chest and pushing toward your knees with your hands.
- During your next exhale, reverse the motion, pulling your chest through your arms and arching your spine again, pressing down into your legs, instead of toward your knees.
- Repeat this slowly, on your breath, 3 to 5 times.



Meditation

Simple 1 minute Meditation

- Sit down
- Plant your feet on the floor
- Sit up
- Start a timer for 1 minute
- Put your hands in a balanced position
- Close your eyes
- Focus on your breathing moment-by-moment
- When the timer sounds, gradually open your eyes

Guided Meditation

Choose and play a guided meditation from the following:

- [1, 10, and 15 minute Focused Attention Meditation](#)
- [6 minute breathing practice to stay in the moment](#)
- [3 minute meditation to recharge your mind](#)
- [6 minute mindful garden walk](#)
- [3 minute body scan meditation](#)
- [More breath, sound, and body meditations](#)