

# Best Ergonomic Exercises and Stretches to do at the Office Cubicle

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<http://ergonomictrends.com/best-ergonomic-exercises-stretches-office/>

Have you ever felt intense back pain at work from sitting all day at the cubicle? Or maybe you find yourself hunching over or rounding your shoulders frequently, even after you've left the office?

These common maladies are called **MusculoSkeletal Disorders** (MSDs), and accounted for nearly 33% of all workplace injuries in 2013. However, ailments such as back pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, Tendinitis, rotator cuff injuries, Tennis Elbow, Trigger Finger, and other aches and pains are absolutely preventable with a proper routine that involves **ergonomic exercises at work**. In fact, something as simple as **standing periodically** or as easy as stretching your arms overhead often can have **major benefits** when done on a regular basis.

Let's go over a few simple ergonomic exercises and stretches that can be done in the comfort of your office cubicle. The key is getting the benefits from these ergonomic exercises is to do them every day at work, so blood circulation is allowed to flow, and your muscles are never left in a state of atrophy for too long.

## Wrist, Hand, and Arm Ergonomic Exercises

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### Wrist Tilt Exercise

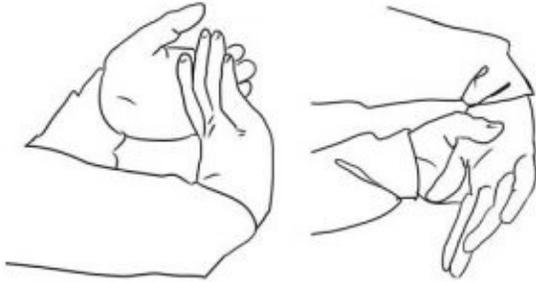
The wrist tilt is perfect to gain feeling and momentum back into the wrist joint, especially after long bouts of typing on the keyboard:



1. Begin with arm fully extended and palm facing downwards
2. Gently tilt wrist to the right
3. Hold for three to five seconds
4. Move wrist to the left and hold for another three to five seconds

## Wrist Flexion Exercise

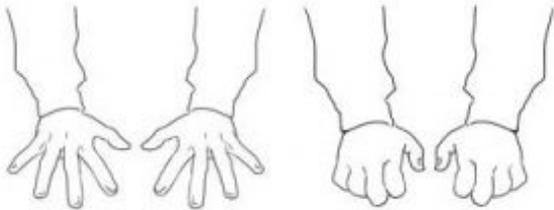
For people who have a shorter range of natural motion in their wrists, the wrist flexion exercise can help to increase flexibility and rejuvenate joints.



1. Hold arm outward with palm facing down
2. Catch the fingers of the extended hand with your opposite hand
3. Gently pull your fingers upwards until you feel a stretch on the underside of your wrist
4. Hold for 5 seconds, then release
5. Gently pull your fingers downwards until you feel a stretch on the front of your wrist
6. Hold for 5 seconds, then repeat on the other hand

## Extended Finger Stretch

The extended finger stretch is a great method for stretching through the entire hand, which helps to alleviate stiff joints.



1. Begin with both hands extended and palms facing downward
2. Extend all fingers outward
3. Hold for 10 seconds, then slowly release
4. Bend all fingers at the knuckles
5. Hold for 10 seconds, then slowly release

# Neck, Chest, and Shoulder Ergonomic Exercises

## Neck Relaxer

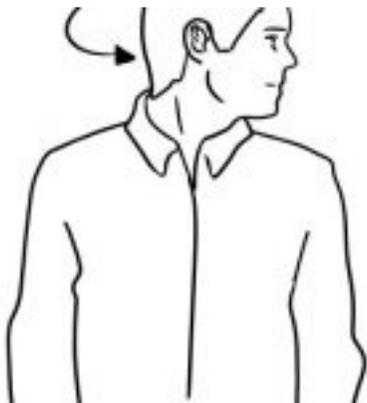
Most of us spend hours staring in the same direction at the computer screen or in our cubicles. The neck relaxer is a great way to break that tension in the neck.. It can also help to rejuvenate blood flow to the area and release tension in the shoulders.



1. Begin by sitting at the edge of your chair with your feet placed firmly on the ground
2. Extend your arms out to either side of your torso
3. Drop your head slowly to the right, trying to touch your right ear to your right shoulder
4. Hold the stretch for 5 seconds
5. Return to the starting position, then repeat on the other side
6. Drop your head down so that your chin touches your chest
7. Gently rock your head to the left and roll to the right; this should take about 5 seconds
8. Return to the starting position

## Head Turns

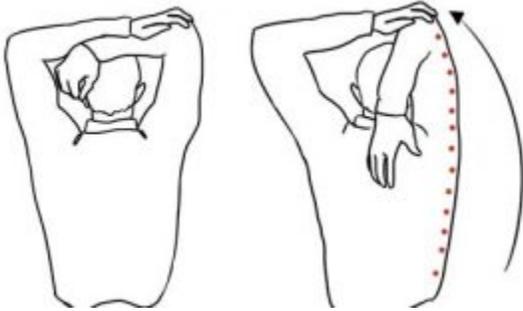
The head turn is another great way to alleviate tension and relax the muscles in the neck after staring forward all day inside the cubicle.



1. Begin with your head facing forward
2. Slowly turn your head to the right to look over the right shoulder
3. Hold for 10 seconds
4. Repeat on the opposite side

## Overhead Shoulder Stretch

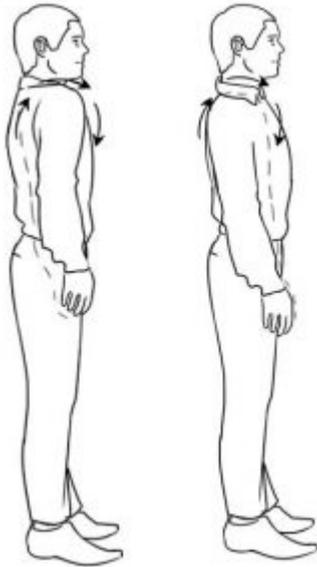
The overhead shoulder stretch is a good stretch to release the tension in your neck, shoulders, and upper back, all in one go. It's also great for repositioning the body back into proper postural alignment.



1. Begin with your body facing forward
2. Raise one arm directly overhead and bend it at the elbow
3. Catch the elbow with your opposite hand
4. Pull the upright arm towards the opposite side and hold for 10 seconds
5. Repeat on the other side

## Shoulder Roll

This exercise is perfect for alleviating tension in the shoulders, especially after sitting at a desk, and can help to relax the muscles downward.



1. Begin by standing up from your cubicle and facing forward
2. Slowly roll your shoulders backwards in a circular motion five times
3. Slowly roll your shoulders forward in a circular motion five times
4. Return to the starting position and relax the shoulders back down

## Chest Stretch

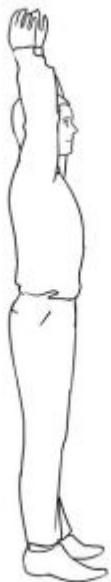
Many of us sit in a hunched posture at the cubicle desk, leading to sore shoulders and chest. The chest stretch is great for offsetting these issues, by relieving tension and letting blood flow back into these areas and for them to relax.



1. Begin by standing upright with your hands at your sides
2. Gently place your hands behind your head and interlock your fingers
3. Squeeze your shoulder blades together
4. Hold the stretch for 5-10 seconds, then relax and place your arms back down to your sides
5. Back Exercises and Stretches

## Low Back Stretch

The low back stretch is a great way to release tension all along the spine from sitting all day. It helps blood to flow back into the spinal cord and allows the surrounding muscles to relax.



1. Begin by standing up and facing forward
2. Reach towards the ceiling until you feel a light stretch along your sides
3. Hold the stretch for 10 seconds
4. Reach higher until you feel an intense stretch along your sides
5. Hold the stretch for 10 seconds, then relax

## **Back and Side Stretch**

The back and side stretch is a great addition to the low back stretch, and helps to release tension around the entire spinal cord and the obliques after sitting for hours on end at our cubicles.



1. Begin by standing tall and facing forward
2. Reach your hands toward the ceiling and interlace your fingers
3. Make sure to keep your elbows straight!
4. Reach back as far as possible and then slowly bend to one side
5. Hold the stretch for 10 seconds
6. Repeat on the other side
7. Relax your hands back to your sides

## **Seated Back Curl**

A simple exercise to perform right in your chair, the seated back curl is a great office way to release stiffness and tension in both your legs and upper back.



1. Begin seated at the front of your chair with your feet planted firmly on the ground
2. Slowly lift one leg up and grasp your shin with both hands
3. Bend forward and reach your nose to your knee
4. Make sure to bend through your upper back!
5. Relax back to the starting position
6. Repeat on the other side

## Standing Stretch

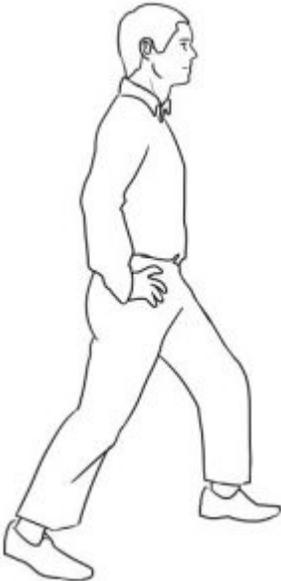
Great for releasing tension in the low back and glutes, especially after sitting for long periods, do the standing stretch. It's a great alternative stretch for those who have a more limited range of motion.



1. Begin by standing upright with your hands by your side
2. Place both hands on your lower back, with your fingers pointed toward the floor
3. Gently lean back into your hands while keeping your feet in place on the ground
4. Hold the stretch for 5-10 seconds, then release
5. Leg Exercises and Stretches

## Calf Stretch

When sitting, it's easy for our legs to become numb and stiff. The calf stretch is a great stretch to rejuvenate the muscles and increase blood flow to that area.



1. Begin by standing tall and facing forward
2. Place one foot a large step behind the other
3. Slowly push into the front foot while keeping the other planted firmly on the ground
4. Allow the front knee to bend
5. Hold the stretch in the back leg for 10 seconds, then relax
6. Bring both feet back to your midline, then switch feet
7. Repeat the stretch on the other side for another 10 seconds, then relax

## Leg Lift

The leg lift is a great office stretch to regain some momentum and feeling in your quadriceps and hamstrings, especially after sitting at a desk all day. It also helps to increase blood flow to the area and release tension in the knees and ankles.



1. Begin by sitting at the edge of your chair, leaving a healthy gap between the chair and the cubicle desk.
2. Keep both feet planted firmly on the floor and your knees bent at a ninety-degree angle
3. Keep a straight leg and lift one leg off of the floor
4. Feel a stretch along the back of your leg and hold for 10 seconds, then lower back down
5. Repeat on the other side

## Hip Stretch

More than any other joint, the hips become alarmingly tight when you're sitting all day at the cubicle. The hip stretch helps to break up built-up tension in the hips.



1. Begin by sitting on the edge of your chair with your feet firmly on the ground
2. Lift one leg and cross it over the other right above the knee
3. Grasp your bottom knee with your hand on the opposite side
4. Gently apply pressure to the bottom leg while looking over your shoulder
5. Feel the stretch along your lower back and hip and hold for 10 seconds
6. Lower your legs back to the starting position
7. Repeat on the other side

## Stretch and Get Moving Every Day

All of the above ergonomic exercises are extremely easy to do. These simple movements and stretches may not seem like much, but when performed daily whenever you start to feel a knot in your neck or stiffness in your back, can be the key to the prevention of long term disability from occurring. Combined with a [good ergonomic office chair](#), and you will be much healthier in the long term with just a few minutes a day spent.

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