

The Seated ***HEAD to TOE*** Stretch



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Hello Friend!

This booklet is a tool to be used in order to help you improve your flexibility. Flexibility is one of the five health-related components of fitness. Being flexible is having the ability to move a joint through its full range of motion without pain or discomfort. The stretches in this booklet are all performed from the comfort of your chair, and are designed to stretch all of the major muscle groups starting at your head and working down to your toes. These stretches are to be done statically. Static stretching involves slowly applying stretch to the muscle and then holding it in a lengthened position for a period **10 to 60 seconds**¹. You should be breathing easily and feel relaxed.

Research has shown that **30 minutes** of static stretching exercises performed **2 times per week** will improve flexibility within 5 weeks². Flexibility decreases due to inactivity not because of aging¹. Therefore, it is never too late in life to perform stretching exercises.

Benefits of Stretching include¹:

- Relaxation of muscle stress and tension
- Relief of muscle cramps and soreness
- Improved body fitness, posture, and body image
- Reduced risk of low-back pain
- Prevention of injury

Helpful Hints to Make Your Stretching More Enjoyable & Consistent:

- Stretch when you are calm and relaxed
- Stretch when you feel tension in your muscles
- Listen to relaxing and soft music to help sooth the body in the evening
- Take nice deep breaths to improve circulation
- Drink plenty of water to flush out all of the tensions and stressors that are released into the body after stretching
- Do your stretches at the same time each day

¹ Nieman, D.C. Exercise Testing and Prescription: A Health-Related Approach, 5th Ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2003.

² Powers, K. & Howley, E. Exercise Physiology: Theory and Application to Fitness and Performance, 5th Ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2004.



Tilt the head slowly, and gently to the right.
Hold the stretch.
Breathe.
Repeat on the Left.

Stretching: Head & Neck



Slowly pull the chin into your chest.
Breathe.

Stretching: Head & Neck



Gently pull the chin up toward the ceiling.
Elongate the neck.
Breathe.

Stretching: Head & Neck



Reach your Right arm across your body.
Place your Left hand on your Right elbow.
Lightly press your arm into your body, and Hold.
Breathe.
Repeat on the Left.

Stretching: Posterior Deltoid
(back part of the shoulder)



Place your Right arm behind your head.
Place your Left hand on your Right elbow.
Lightly press down on your elbow, and Hold.
Breathe.
Repeat on the Left.

Stretching: Triceps (back of arm),
Latissimus Dorsi (side of the body,
under axillary), & Deltoid (shoulder)



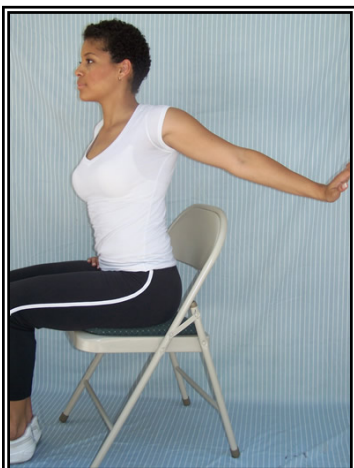
Overlap your hands. Reach forward.
Round your shoulders, to create
a curve in the middle of your back, and Hold.
Breathe.

Stretching: Deltoids (shoulders) &
Rhomboids (between the shoulder blades)



Overlap your hands.
Reach above your head,
pressing your palms to the ceiling, and Hold.
Breathe.

Stretching: Latissimus Dorsi
(side of the body, under the axillary)
& Thoracic Spine (middle of the back)



Sit up nice and tall.
Reach the Right arm back,
press your shoulder down, and Hold.
Breathe.
Repeat on the Left.

Stretching: Pectorals (chest) &
Anterior Deltoid (front part of the shoulder)



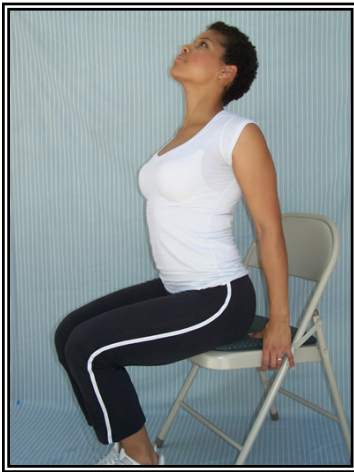
Give yourself a big hug!
Wrap your hands around to your back,
squeeze the arms tight to your body, and Hold.
Breathe.

Stretching: Rhomboids
(between the shoulder blades)



Place the Right hand on the back of the chair.
Place your Left hand on your Right knee.
Slowly twist the body to the Right, and Hold.
Breathe.
Repeat on the Left.

Stretching: Obliques
(side of the body, close to the hip)
& Erector Spinae (low back)



Place both hands on the seat of the chair.
Arch the back, push your shoulder back and down.
Pull your chin to the ceiling, and Hold.
Breathe.

Stretching: Pectorals (chest) &
Abdomen (tummy muscles)



Sit up nice and tall.
Place your hands below your Right knee.
Pull your Right knee into your chest, and Hold.
Breathe.
Repeat on the Left.

Stretching: Gluteals (buttocks)



Place your Left hand on the back of the chair.
Keeping the buttocks on the chair, lunge to the Left.
Place the ball of your right foot on the ground.
Keep your Left foot flat on the ground.
Lightly press the Left knee forward, and Hold.
Breathe.
Repeat on the Left.

Stretching: Quadriceps (thigh),
Hip Flexors & Groin (muscles of the pelvis)



Carefully extend your Right leg to the front.
Bend your Left knee, and keep your Left foot flat on the floor.
Keeping your back straight, reach toward your Right toes
with you Right hand, and Hold.
Breathe.
Repeat on the Left.

Stretching: Hamstrings (back of the thigh),
Calves (back of the leg) &
Achilles Tendon (area above the heel)



Straighten and lift your Right leg.
Point the toes, and Hold.
Breathe.
Rest a moment.
Then, straighten and lift your Right leg.
Flex your foot, and Hold.
Breathe.
Repeat on the Left.

Stretching: Ankle muscles