

FREE BEGINNER GUIDE · FLEXIBILITY

Gentle Stretching *for Beginners*



A simple, 10-minute daily routine to ease stiffness, loosen tight hips and shoulders, and help you move more comfortably, with clear instructions for every stretch.

12

gentle, beginner stretches

10 min

daily routines

14

day starter plan

Why stretching helps

Long hours sitting at a desk, in a car, or on the sofa can leave hips, hamstrings, shoulders, and the lower back feeling tight. A few minutes of gentle stretching each day can help you feel looser and move more comfortably.

Stretching can help you...

- ☐ Feel less stiff after sitting
- ☐ Move more freely in daily tasks
- ☐ Relax and unwind after a busy day
- ☐ Warm up for walks and workouts

Common tight spots

- ☐ **Hip flexors:** front of the hips, from sitting
- ☐ **Hamstrings:** back of the thighs
- ☐ **Chest and shoulders:** from hunching
- ☐ **Neck and upper back:** from screens

The 5 rules of safe stretching

1. **Warm up first:** walk or march for 2–3 minutes before stretching
2. **Go gently:** stretch to a mild pull, never to pain
3. **Hold, don't bounce:** hold each stretch for 20–30 seconds
4. **Keep breathing:** slow, relaxed breaths help your muscles let go
5. **Both sides:** always stretch left and right equally

Stop and get advice if: a stretch causes sharp pain, numbness, or tingling, or if you have a recent injury, joint replacement, or back problem. A doctor or physiotherapist can show you safe alternatives.

Relaxed breathing while you stretch

- ☐ Breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of 4
- ☐ Breathe out gently through your mouth for a count of 6
- ☐ On each out-breath, let the muscle soften a little more

Lower body: hips & legs

These target the areas that tighten most from sitting. Hold each for 20–30 seconds per side.

1. Kneeling hip flexor stretch

FRONT OF HIPS

1. Kneel on a cushion with one foot forward.
2. Tuck your hips under and shift gently forward.

Easier: do it standing in a short lunge, holding a chair.

2. Seated hamstring stretch

BACK OF THIGHS

1. Sit on the edge of a chair, one leg straight, heel down.
2. Lean forward from the hips with a straight back.

Tip: don't round your back to reach further.

3. Figure-4 stretch

GLUTES & OUTER HIP

1. Sit on a chair and cross one ankle over the other knee.
2. Lean forward gently with a tall back.

Floor version: lie on your back and pull the legs toward you.

4. Standing thigh stretch

FRONT OF THIGH

1. Hold a chair and bend one knee, bringing your heel toward your glutes.
2. Hold your ankle and keep the knees together.

Easier: use a towel around your ankle.

5. Calf stretch

CALVES

1. Hands on a wall, step one foot back.
2. Keep the back heel down and lean forward.

Tip: point both feet straight ahead.

6. Knees-to-chest

LOWER BACK

1. Lie on your back and hug one or both knees.
2. Rock gently side to side if it feels good.

Tip: keep your head relaxed on the floor.

Upper body: back, chest & neck

These are great after screen time. Move slowly, especially with neck stretches.

7. Cat-cow

SPINE

1. On hands and knees, slowly round your back up.
2. Then gently let your belly drop and look forward. Repeat 8 times.

Tip: move with your breath.

8. Child's pose

BACK & HIPS

1. Kneel, then sit back toward your heels.
2. Reach your arms forward and rest your forehead down.

Easier: put a pillow under your hips or chest.

9. Doorway chest stretch

CHEST & SHOULDERS

1. Place forearms on a door frame at shoulder height.
2. Step one foot through until you feel a stretch.

Tip: keep your shoulders down and relaxed.

10. Cross-body shoulder

BACK OF SHOULDER

1. Bring one arm across your chest.
2. Use the other arm to press it gently closer.

Tip: keep the stretched arm's shoulder low.

11. Seated twist

MID BACK

1. Sit tall on a chair, feet flat.
2. Turn gently to one side, holding the chair back.

Tip: grow taller as you breathe in.

12. Gentle neck tilt

SIDE OF NECK

1. Sit tall and tilt one ear toward your shoulder.
2. Let the opposite shoulder relax down.

Tip: no circling or forcing; stay slow.

THE ROUTINES

Three 10-minute routines

Pick the routine that fits your day. Start each with 2 minutes of marching or walking in place to warm up. Stretch numbers refer to pages 3 and 4.

Routine	Stretches (hold 20–30 seconds each side)	Best time
Morning wake-up	7 Cat-cow · 4 Standing thigh · 5 Calf · 9 Doorway chest · 11 Seated twist	After getting up
Desk reset	1 Hip flexor (standing) · 2 Seated hamstring · 3 Figure-4 · 10 Cross-body · 12 Neck tilt	Every 1–2 hours of sitting
Evening unwind	6 Knees-to-chest · 3 Figure-4 (floor) · 8 Child's pose · 1 Hip flexor · 7 Cat-cow	Before bed

Make it a habit

- ☐ Link it to something you already do, like after coffee
- ☐ Set a phone reminder for your desk reset
- ☐ Keep a mat or towel where you'll see it
- ☐ Stretch while the kettle boils
- ☐ Play calm music to help you relax
- ☐ Track your days on the next page

Sit a lot? Tight hip flexors are one of the most common results of long sitting. For a focused follow-on program, see [Unlock Your Hip Flexors](#) → (more on page 7).

Desk posture quick check

- ☐ Screen at eye level, an arm's length away
- ☐ Feet flat on the floor or a footrest
- ☐ Knees about level with your hips
- ☐ Shoulders relaxed, elbows near your sides
- ☐ Back supported by the chair
- ☐ Stand up and move every 30–60 minutes

YOUR PLAN

Your 14-day stretching plan

Ten minutes a day for two weeks is enough to build the habit. Tick each day as you go, and rate how loose you feel.

Day	Routine	Done	How I feel (1–10)	Day	Routine	Done	How I feel (1–10)
1	Morning	☐		8	Morning	☐	
2	Desk reset	☐		9	Desk reset	☐	
3	Evening	☐		10	Evening	☐	
4	Morning	☐		11	Morning	☐	
5	Desk reset	☐		12	Desk reset	☐	
6	Evening	☐		13	Evening	☐	
7	Your favorite	☐		14	Your favorite	☐	

Check your progress

- ☐ Day 1: sit on a chair and reach toward your toes. Note how far you reach.
- ☐ Day 14: repeat the same test and compare.

Pair it with movement

- ☐ Take short walks during the day
- ☐ Stand up every 30–60 minutes
- ☐ Try our free 30–Day Home Workout guide

YOUR NEXT STEP

Loosen up those tight hips

If long hours of sitting leave the front of your hips feeling tight, a focused program can help you go further than general stretching. Here's one we recommend looking at.

RECOMMENDED PROGRAM

Unlock Your Hip Flexors

Hip flexor focus

A step-by-step program targeting the muscles that tighten from sitting.

Practical exercises

A guided sequence of stretches and movements to follow.

Video & guide

Follow along at home, with no gym needed.

Digital access

Use it on your phone, tablet, or computer.

[See Unlock Your Hip Flexors →](#)

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Stay loose,

Uday Chandra

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