



Stretches for Mobility

Perform the following mobility exercises and stretches for the upper body, lower body, and spine and to address stiff joints and to increase muscle flexibility. These exercises should not increase or reproduce pain. If you cannot complete the full range of motion, do what you can comfortably.



Seated Piriformis Stretch

Sit with one ankle crossed over the opposite knee, same side hand on the knee. Push down gently on the thigh just above the knee joint. Keeping back flat, hinge forward at the hips and lean forward until stretch is felt. Hold 20-30 seconds, repeat 2-3 times with each leg.



Figure 4 Piriformis Stretch

Begin by lying on your back with your knees bent. Cross one leg over the other so your ankle is resting on your opposite knee. Pull your leg towards your chest until you feel a stretch and hold. Hold 20-30 seconds, repeat 2-3 times with each leg.



Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch

Kneel on the ground placing a pillow under your knee if needed. Squeeze your buttocks and push your hip of the back leg forward. Slightly lean back until stretch is felt in front of your hip and thigh. Do not arch your back. Hold 20-30 seconds, do not push into pain. Repeat 2-3 times on each leg.



Position A



Position B

Cat-Cow Pose

Lower Back Focus: Start in tabletop position (on hands and knees). Lift head and look at the spot where the wall meets the ceiling while you let your belly drop towards the floor (Position A). Then look between your knees as you round your back up towards the ceiling (Position B). Hold each position 3-5 seconds, moving smoothly between them for up to 10 repetitions.



Position A



Position B

Mid/Upper Back Focus: Start in tabletop and hinge back at your hips until your buttocks and heels are touching or close to it. While keeping the rest of your body still, round your mid back (Position A) followed by slowly arching your mid back (Position B). Hold each position 3-5 seconds, moving smoothly between them for up to 10 repetitions.



Stretches for Mobility

Chin Nod/Tuck



Sit or stand with your back straight. Gently push your chin backward and slightly down (as if you are trying to make a double chin). Hold for 1-2 seconds, then relax your chin and repeat. Repeat for 5-10 repetitions.

To Make it More Challenging: Begin lying on your back with your legs bent and feet resting flat on the floor. Gently tuck your chin, then lift your head roughly 2 finger widths from the floor keeping shoulders relaxed. Hold this position, keeping your chin tucked. Aim to hold for at least 30 seconds. Repeat 3-5 times.

Chest Stretch



Lie on your back with a foam roller (or rolled towel) running vertically along your spine. Allow arms to relax to the sides to feel a stretch and opening of the chest muscles, hold for 30-60 seconds while you take several slow breaths. Repeat 1-3 times.

Child's Pose



Start in tabletop position with feet touching. Sink bottom back and allow arms to straighten. Rest forehead on the ground. You should feel a stretch along the entire back, but don't stretch into pain! Hold this position for 30-60 seconds while you take several slow breaths. Repeat 1-3 times.

Open Book Pose



Begin lying on your side with your legs bent and your arms together straight in front of you on the ground.

Lift your top arm straight up and over to the floor on your other side. Keep your knees together and don't let your hips move. Repeat 5-10 times with each arm.

To Modify: Place your hand on your ribs vs. having a straight arm.

#3



Foam Roller Spine Mobility

Place a foam roller perpendicular to your upper back and place hands behind your head. Engage your abdominals. Try to move your elbows overhead as far as you can and then return upright. Be sure to keep your abdominal engaged so you don't arch your lower back. You can move the foam roller and do this at multiple points along your upper back.