

# Desk Exercises

## For physical, mental and cognitive benefits



Doing exercises at your desk is a practical way to combat the negative health effects of prolonged sitting, which is common in many modern workplaces. Sitting for extended periods can lead to poor posture, muscle stiffness, and decreased circulation, increasing the risk of issues like back pain, neck strain, and even cardiovascular problems. Desk exercises help keep your body active throughout the day, improving flexibility, posture, and overall physical well-being without requiring you to leave your workspace.

In addition to physical benefits, incorporating desk exercises into your routine can significantly boost mental focus and productivity. Movement increases blood flow to the brain, which enhances concentration, reduces stress, and combats fatigue. Even a few minutes of stretching or light activity every hour can refresh your mind and reduce burnout, helping you stay engaged and energized during long work hours.

Here are some exercises you can do:

### Head and Shoulders

- Exercise 1: Sit straight up and slowly tilt your head down to 1 shoulder and then to the other.
- Exercise 2: Move your shoulders up and down in shrugs or around in small circles.
- Exercise 3: Slowly bring your chin down to your chest, hold there for 3 seconds and then release.

### Eyes

- Exercise 1: Every 20 minutes, look away from your screen into the distance and gaze at an object approximately 20 feet away for 20 seconds. Remember to blink often!

### Wrists and Forearms

- Exercise 1: Reach your arms out in front and draw big circles with their wrists – first clockwise and then anticlockwise.
- Exercise 2: Stretch your arms out to the side as far as they can and then above your head and then stretch them out in front of you.
- Exercise 3: Interlock your fingers and push them out in front of you with your palms facing out.

### Upper and Lower Back

- Exercise 1: Get up and walk around every hour or so.
- Exercise 2: Stand up and put your hands together with elbows facing out and slowly twist to the left and then to the right. Repeat a few times.

### Legs

- Exercise 1: Sitting in your chair, rotate your ankles in circles.
- Exercise 2: Sit up straight in your chair and press your hands on the chair for leverage and then straighten your legs out in front for 3-5 seconds.
- Exercise 3: Stand up and march on the spot.
- Exercise 4: Stand up on your tiptoes and stretch upwards as tall as you can.

### Fact:

According to [On Your Feet Britain](#), 45% of women and 30% of men spend less than 30 minutes a day on their feet at work. In the long term, this level of workplace inactivity can lead to a host of physical and mental health problems.