Workouts at Your Desk Worksheet

1. Why do you want to fit exercise into your workday?

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________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2. What long-term goal do you want to reach? Write it down.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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3. What short-term (daily or weekly) goals will help you meet your long-term goal? Write them down.

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4. When will you fit exercise into your workday? Identify blocks of time from 3 to 15 minutes long when you can fit in exercise.

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________________________________________________________________________

5. What exercises do I need to do or learn more about to be successful?

☐ Proper breathing
☐ Neutral spine position
☐ Flexibility (posture, upper body, lower body)

☐ Aerobic conditioning
☐ Balance training
Neutral Spine Position – Standing

Postural Exercise

**Equipment:**
Chair (optional); mirror

**Starting Position:**
Stand with your feet slightly apart and your knees slightly bent. Keep your weight evenly on both feet. Let your hands rest at your sides. You may use a chair if you need more support. If you have trouble with balance, you can ask someone to help out.

**Movement:**
Start by squeezing your buttocks together. Next, pull your stomach muscles inward toward your spine. Finally, roll your shoulders back and then drop them down again. At this point in the exercise, your buttocks, stomach, and upper back muscles should all be contracted at the same time.

Hold this position for 30–60 seconds. Remember to breathe as you perform this exercise. You can do this exercise any time during the day.

**Progression:**
As your balance improves, you can move your feet closer together to make it more challenging.

**Exercise Note:**
You should keep a slight curve in your lower spine. Keep your ears aligned with your shoulders. And keep your eyes looking forward while doing this exercise.
Flexibility Exercises

How
Flexibility guidelines:
Frequency: 2–3 days/week to daily, after muscles are warmed up
Intensity: To the point of mild discomfort (NOT pain)
Duration: Hold each movement 10–30 seconds or as tolerated
Repetition: At least 3 repetitions for each movement

Things to avoid:
• Holding your breath
• Forcing any movements
• Pain

Why
Benefits of increased flexibility:
• Less muscle tension
• Keep full joint range of motion

Make sure you check with your doctor before you start to get more active. Most people can safely work out at a moderate level. But activity may not be safe for people with some health conditions. Or it may need to be monitored by a doctor to be safe. Your doctor can give you specific guidelines for what is right for you.
Flexibility Exercises: Posture Stretches

Starting Position: Sit at the edge of a chair with your neck and back in the neutral spine position. Place your feet on the floor so that they are slightly farther apart than the width of your hips. Then, turn your feet out slightly by pointing your toes out.

Brugger’s Stress Relief Position

Movement:
Inhale slowly. Next, exhale as you turn your palms outward so that your palms are facing away from your body and your fingers are extended. While holding this position, try to raise your breastbone slightly.

Shoulder Protraction/Retraction Stretch

Movement 1:
Slowly roll both shoulders forward as far as possible until you feel a stretch along your shoulders and upper back.

Movement 2:
Then roll both shoulders backward as far as possible, squeezing your shoulder blades together.
Flexibility Exercises: Posture Stretches

**Seated Toe Touch**

**Movement:**
Slowly bend forward at your hips while moving your arms downward toward your toes. Relax your neck muscles and let your head bend forward as well.

**Neck Flexion/Rotation Stretch (with lean)**

**Movement:**
Flex and turn your head to the left. Use your left hand to apply gentle pressure to the crown of your head so that the muscle from the side of the neck down to the shoulder blade is stretched. Hold this position while holding on to the bottom of the chair with your right hand. Next, tighten your muscles for 5 seconds as if to raise your right shoulder, relax, and continue the stretch. Do this again while turning to the right side.

**Lateral Neck Stretch (with lean)**

**Movement:**
Bend your head to the left side. Use your left hand to apply gentle pressure to the crown of your head as you pull your head toward your shoulder. This will stretch the muscle from the opposite side of the neck down to the shoulder blade. Do this again while bending to the right side.
Flexibility Exercises: Upper Body Stretches

Starting Position: Sit at the edge of a chair with your neck and back in the neutral spine position. Place your feet on the floor so that they are slightly farther apart than the width of your hips. Then, turn your feet out slightly by pointing your toes outward.

Rear Deltoid
Movement:
Reach across the front of your body and apply gentle pressure on your left arm as pictured. Do this again using your right arm.

Arm/Elbow
Movement 1:
Sit with your back straight. Reach both arms out in front of you with the backs of your hands touching.

Movement 2:
Slowly move your hands away from each other by flexing your wrists until you feel a stretch in your upper and lower arms.

Overhead Triceps
Movement: Lift your left arm straight up in the air and then bend your elbow, letting your forearm gently drop behind you toward your back. Place your right hand over your left elbow and gently pull until you feel a stretch on the outside of your upper arm. Do this again using your right arm.
Flexibility Exercises: Upper Body Stretches

**Overhead Arm**

**Movement:**
Bring both arms above your head and reach toward the ceiling until you feel a stretch in your arms and the sides of your trunk.

**Wrist Extensor**

**Movement:**
Gently bend your right hand down. Pull your hand and fingers toward you with your left hand until you feel a stretch in your forearm and wrist. Do this again with your left hand.

**Wrist Flexor**

**Movement:**
Gently bend your left wrist and hand up and back with your right hand until you feel a stretch in your forearm and wrist. Do this again with your right hand.
Flexibility Exercises: Lower Body Stretches

Starting Position 1: Sit at the edge of a chair with your neck and back in the neutral spine position. Place your feet on the floor so that they are positioned slightly farther apart than the width of your hips. Then, turn your feet out slightly by pointing your toes outward.

Starting Position 2: Stand upright in the neutral spine position with your feet shoulder width apart and your arms at your side.

Knee-to-Chest

Movement:
Pull your right knee to your chest. You should feel a stretch in your lower back area and buttocks. Next, do this again with your left leg.

Quadriceps (front of upper leg)

Movement:
In a standing position, bend your right knee. Grasp your right ankle with your right hand and pull your foot back toward your buttocks. Do this until you feel a stretch in the front of your thigh. Next, do this again with your left leg.

Calf (back of lower leg)

Movement:
In a modified lunge position with your right leg behind your left leg, lean forward and bend your left knee until you feel a stretch in the back of the right lower leg. Keep your right leg straight and keep the heel on the floor. Next, repeat by stepping back with your left leg. Step back farther to increase the amount of stretch. Repeat on each side with the back leg slightly flexed.
Flexibility Exercises: Lower Body Stretches

**Hip Rotators (buttocks)**

**Movement 1:**
Place your right foot on top of your left knee.

**Movement 2:**
Gently push down on your right knee until you feel a stretch in your buttocks. Repeat with your left leg.

**Hamstring (back of upper leg)**

**Movement 1:**
Slowly bend forward at the hips with the right leg stretched out in front of you and your ankle flexed upward. Keep your head up and don’t flex your spine forward.

**Movement 2:**
Movement 2 shows a foot device to support the straightened leg. Repeat with your left leg.
Balance Training

Balance is what keeps you from falling over or leaning to one side. It helps you sit and stand upright. It also helps you do physical activity without falling. Balance exercises make your muscles stronger. They are especially good for the muscles in your thighs and lower legs. Having good balance can prevent you from slipping or falling.

Balance Training Guidelines

Better balance will help you do all of your exercises better. You will have much more control of your body’s movements. And this will help keep you safe. Safety and ease of movement are two important reasons for making balance training a part of your routine.

Most adults can follow these guidelines to get and keep good balance:

**Frequency:** May be done as often as you like. You can do them daily, as needed, or as part of your regular exercise routine.

**Duration:** Try to hold each pose for at least 30 seconds.

**Repetition:** It is best to do balance exercises for short periods. You can do these a few times each day.

Make sure you check with your doctor before you do balance exercises, especially if you have a history of osteoporosis or falls. Most people can safely work out at a moderate level. But activity may not be safe for people with some health conditions. Or it may need to be monitored by a doctor to be safe. Your doctor can give you specific guidelines for what is right for you.
Keep these safety tips in mind when you are working on your balance:

- Do these exercises barefoot or in sneakers (or other soft, flat shoes). Socks or hard-sole shoes on a slick surface can cause falls.
- For safety, do balance exercises in a doorway or with support from a stable chair, counter, or wall.
- Stand as straight as you can. Try to keep your head level.
- Keep your hips as level as you can while doing the exercise.
- Stop if you feel tired. Do not push yourself to the point of injury or fatigue.
- Progress to the next level only if you can balance easily for 30 seconds.
Single Leg Balance Exercise

Equipment
Doorframe, chair, countertop, or wall (for support, as needed)

Movement
- Look straight ahead.
- Stand on your right foot. Bend the knee of your other leg and lift your thigh up parallel to the ground (or as high as you can comfortably raise it).
- While balancing, try to grip the floor with your toes.
- Try to stand on one foot for 30 seconds without hopping, holding onto anything, or putting your foot down.
- Next, do this exercise on your left leg.

Progression
Once you can do this exercise easily, try it with your eyes closed.
Heel-to-Toe Balance

Equipment
Doorframe, chair, or wall (for support, as needed)

Movement
- Stand with your right foot in front of your left foot, heel-to-toe.
- Look straight ahead and try to grip the floor with your toes.
- Try to hold your balance for 30 seconds with your eyes open.
- Next, do this exercise with your left foot directly in front of your right.

Progression
Once you can do this exercise easily for 30 seconds, close your eyes. Try to hold it for another 30 seconds.
Aerobic Movement Exercises

Do exercise sessions of 3, 5, or 10 minutes. You can:

- Do one exercise per session.
- Rotate through some or all of the exercises during one session. Do 10–20 repetitions of each exercise on each side before moving to the next exercise.

Except for lower leg extensions, each exercise can be done from either a seated or a standing position. The lower leg extension exercise can be done safely only from a seated position.

Keep a neutral spine position as you do each exercise.

Maintain a steady pace that is safe for you.

1. March in place (raise your knees one at a time)
2. Step out to the side (extend one leg to the side, tap the floor with the ball of your foot, and return to center; alternate right and left foot)
3. Toe raises (start with feet flat, then alternate raising your toes while you keep your heels down; if you are standing, only raise your toes on one foot at a time and make sure you have a wall, counter, or sturdy chair nearby to hold on to for balance)
4. Step out heel touch (extend your leg to the front, tap your heel, and return to center; alternate right and left foot)
5. Step out toe touch (extend your leg to the front, tap your toe, and return to center; alternate right and left foot)
6. Lower leg extension (do from a seated position only; starting with your legs bent at a 90 degree angle, extend one leg out straight and parallel to the floor, then return it to the bent position; alternate right and left leg)

To increase the intensity, you can add:

- Time
- Resistance (such as resistance bands; consult a fitness professional for safety)
- Arm movements
  - Shoulder shrugs
  - Arm circles
  - Boxing punches
  - Forward arm swings
## MY DESK WORKOUT LOG

### AEROBIC MOVEMENT

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### EXERCISES

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