



DOWNSHIFT DOZEN

Stretching & Movement for Better Well-Being

Taking micro-breaks frequently throughout the day is a great way to downshift and shed stress. Choose 1-2 exercises from the list below and perform each 1-2 times between work tasks or after sitting longer than 60-75 minutes. Repeat at least twice daily.

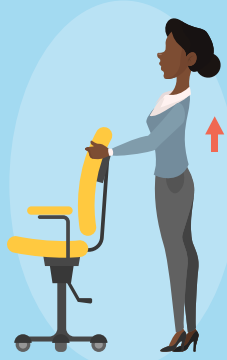
Stretches and movements should be done slowly and smoothly. Breathe normally throughout each exercise and avoid jerky movements. Modify any movement or stretch if you experience discomfort.

1 WARM UP



Prepare the body to stretch and move. Walk briskly around the work area, walk in place, or perform any moderate physical exercise to increase the core temperature of your body.

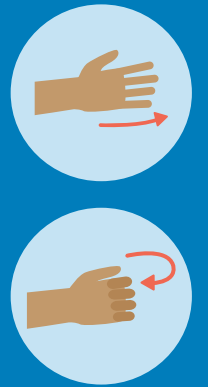
2 NEUTRAL STANDING



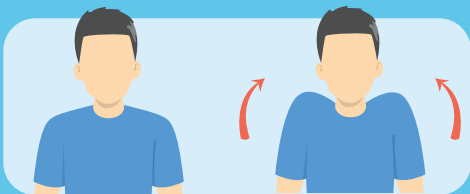
Take back what gravity has claimed! Stand tall. Relax your shoulders. Open your chest. Feet should form a comfortable base of support. Breathe normally.

3 FINGER STRETCH

Stand tall with your arms at your side. Slowly open and close your hands. When you open your hands, spread your fingers as wide as possible. Repeat 5X. Gently shake your hands when done.



4 SHOULDER ROLLS



Standing in neutral posture, slowly shrug your shoulders upward, roll them back and then down. Repeat this cycle 5X. Don't turtle your head forward.

5 REACH FOR THE SKY

Standing in neutral posture, reach up in front of your body over your head. Extend your reach as high as you comfortably can. Slightly extend your trunk and slowly lower your arms out to your sides. Open your chest as wide as possible. Repeat the movements 3X.



6 SIDE BEND REACH

Standing in neutral posture, reach overhead with one arm. Reach as high as you comfortably can. Gently side bend to the opposite side of the raised arm. Gently rotate your head toward the raised arm. Hold for 2-3 seconds, don't bounce. Repeat to the other side with the opposite arm raised. Repeat the movements 2X to each side.



7 TRUNK ROTATION



Sit in a chair with your back straight. Twist your upper body to one side. You can use the back of the chair to pull and get more of a stretch. Hold the stretch then repeat on the other side. Repeat 2X both sides.

8 BACKWARD BENDS



Stand in neutral posture. Place your hands below your hips, slightly bend your knees, and gently lean backward. Hold for 5-10 seconds. Repeat 3X. (Avoid if you are pregnant.)

9 THIGH STRETCH



Stand in neutral posture near a wall or desk. Use the wall or desk for support and balance with the left hand. Bend the right knee backward and grasp the right ankle with the right hand. Pull the ankle gently toward your buttock. Hold for 3-5 seconds. Repeat both legs 2X.

10 HAMSTRING STRETCH

Stand upright in a neutral position. Place the right leg in front with the foot flexed and toe pointing toward the ceiling. Slightly bend the left knee. Gently lean forward and place hands on the straight right leg. Hold for 10-30 seconds. Repeat on each leg, 2-4 times.



11 HIP/BUTTOCK STRETCH

Sit in a chair or stool. Cross one leg over the other. Keeping the back erect, lean forward while keeping the crossed leg parallel to the floor. Hold for 3-5 seconds. Switch legs and repeat on the other side. Repeat 2X both legs.



12 CALF STRETCH

Standing in neutral posture, place most of your weight on the right foot. Place the left foot in front of the body. Bear weight on the left heel and raise the toes off the ground until a stretch is felt in the right calf. Hold for 3-5 seconds. Repeat 3X both legs.

