

Stretches for Seniors

Types of Stretching

- **Dynamic Stretching:** moves the body in full range of motion while tightening joints and moving muscles; ideal for decreasing muscle stiffness.
- **Static Stretching:** moves a particular muscle as far as possible without pain and holding that position for a period of time; ideal for routine stretching maintenance.



Neck

Side Bend Neck Stretch:

- 1 Tilt head to one side, as if trying to touch ear to shoulder.
- 2 Hold the pose for 15 seconds.
- 3 Relax from the pose.
- 4 Repeat on each side 3 times.



Diagonal Neck Stretch:

- 1 Turn head slightly to one side, then slowly look down as if looking at a hand or pocket.
- 2 Hold the pose for 15 seconds.
- 3 Relax from the pose.
- 4 Repeat on each side 3 times.



Triceps

- 1 Stand with back straight and feet shoulder-width apart.
- 2 Bring the left elbow straight up while bending your arm.
- 3 Grab the left elbow with the right hand, and gently pull elbow toward the head.
- 4 Hold 15 to 30 seconds, then switch elbows.
- 5 Repeat on each arm.



Shoulders

- 1 Sit or stand with your back straight.
- 2 Bring one arm across your chest, while using your other arm to hold it in place.
- 3 Hold the pose for 30 seconds.
- 4 Slowly relax from the pose.
- 5 Repeat with other arm.



Chest

- 1 Start by standing or sitting up straight then bring your arms straight up in front of you, with thumbs pointing up.
- 2 Keeping your arms straight, move them out and back, keeping them parallel to the floor.
- 3 Hold for up to 30 seconds.
- 4 Relax.
- 5 Repeat.



Overhead Side Stretch

- 1 Place feet hip-width apart.
- 2 Keep each leg straight, but do not lock knees.
- 3 Raise both hands overhead, interlocking fingers if preferred.
- 4 Gently lean to the left and hold for 10–30 seconds.
- 5 Repeat with the right side.



Quadriceps

- 1 Stand on one leg. Using a sturdy chair or wall for support is fine if necessary.
- 2 Bend the right knee and bring the right heel toward the buttock.
- 3 Reach for the right ankle with the opposite (left) hand.
- 4 Stand up straight and pull in the abdominal muscles. Try to keep both knees beside each other.
- 5 Relax your shoulders.
- 6 Breathe deeply and hold the stretch for 20–30 seconds, release and repeat on the left leg, this time holding your ankle with your right hand.
- 7 Repeat stretch as needed.



Hips

- 1 Lie down flat on your back and bring one knee towards the chest.
- 2 Wrap both arms around the knee.
- 3 Stay in that position, or bring the knee across the body for a twist.
- 4 Hold for at least 10 seconds.
- 5 Repeat on the other side.



Hamstrings

- 1 Lie flat on your back and extend your left leg perpendicular to the body.
- 2 Grasp around the back of the left thigh, gently pull the leg towards the head, keeping the right leg and hip on the ground, for about 10–30 seconds.
- 3 Do not pull on your knee when stretching.
- 4 Repeat with the opposite leg.



Lower Back

- 1 Lie flat on back with arms at your side, or fold them across the chest.
- 2 Bend both knees and pull feet toward the body until they're directly under the knees.
- 3 Keep your upper back in contact with the floor—do not raise up.
- 4 Tighten abdominal muscles to maintain form and balance.
- 5 Slowly raise the hips as high as possible.
- 6 Pause for one second, then lower.
- 7 Do 2–3 sets of about 10 reps.