

STRENGTHENING AND STRETCHING EXERCISES FOR PEOPLE WHO LIFT

Try this strengthening and stretching routine to warm up before you start work in a job

that requires lifting or other manual materials handling tasks. Consult with your health care provider before starting a stretching program if you have had recent surgery, muscle or joint problems.

Remember these basics while stretching:

- Pain is not gain! Stretch until you feel a mild tension that relaxes as you hold the stretch. If the stretch hurts, ease up on the amount of stretch. Stop doing the stretch if you can not do it without pain.
- Don't bounce! Hold each stretch for the amount of time specified below.
- Don't hold your breath! Breathe naturally to help muscles relax as you stretch.

Wall sits



- Stand with your back against a wall and keep your heels positioned in front of your knees.
- Slowly lower your hips toward the floor until your thighs are almost parallel to the ground. Your legs may tire easily at first.
- Hold the position for 10 seconds.
- Repeat this strength exercise 3 to 10 times

Calf stretch



- Lean forward, with hands against a wall.
- Bend one leg with a lunge position in front of you. Keep your other leg straight behind you with your heel pressed to the floor and your toes pointed straight ahead.
- Hold for 15 seconds.
- Repeat on other side.

Quad stretch



- Hold onto something for support (e.g. a wall or chair)
- Bend on knee, grab your foot and gently pull your heel toward your buttock until a slight stretch is felt. Point your knee to the floor.
- Hold for 15 seconds.
- Repeat with your other leg.

Hamstring stretch



- Prop one leg up on low step, curb or chair.
- Lean forward slowly to stretch hamstring muscle in the back of your leg. Keep your back straight and knee slightly bent.
- Hold for 15 seconds.
- Repeat on your other leg.

Back stretch



- Stand with your feet about shoulder width apart. Don't lock your knees.
- Place your hands just above your hips with your fingers pointing downward.
- Gently push your palms forward, bending back at the waist.
- Look straight ahead. Don't throw your head back.
- Hold a comfortable stretch for 10 to 12 seconds and then return to the upright position.
- Repeat 2 or 3 times.

Overhead reach



- Lean against a wall with your knees bent.
- Press your low back flat into wall as you lift your arms overhead. Keep elbows straight.
- Hold for 10 seconds.
- Repeat 2 or 3 times.

Standing side bends



- Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and your hands on your hips.
- Bend sideways until you feel a gentle stretch on the opposite side. Keep your stomach muscles tight.
- Hold to 5 to 10 seconds and then repeat to the opposite side.
- Repeat 2 or 3 times on each side.

Shoulder shrugs



- Stand up straight with your shoulders relaxed. Look straight ahead.
- Lift your shoulders toward ears until you feel a slight tension in your neck and shoulders.
- Hold for 5 seconds.
- Relax your shoulders into their normal position.
- Repeat 5 to 10 times.

Neck rotation



- Stand or sit with your arms hanging loosely at your sides.
- Gently turn your head as though you were looking over your shoulder. Try not to tilt your head sideways. Keep your upper body still and your shoulders facing forward.
- Hold 5 to 10 seconds, then turn your head the other way.
- Repeat 3 to 5 times each direction.