



## Information Guide

### Your Health and Fitness



# Chair-based mobility exercises

## What this guide is about

Mobility exercises involve taking joints through their range of motion. Their purpose is to lubricate the joints worked, facilitating smooth and easy joint movements. They also help to relieve tension, prevent rounded shoulders, mobilise the spine and help with everyday activities.

They are traditionally performed as part of a warm-up to help prepare your body for the work to come; but they can, in fact, be performed at any time – whilst sitting working at your desk or when watching TV, for example. They can be a great ‘pick-me-up’ and help to keep you feeling sprightly throughout the day.

Please see the following free AllActive® information guide for information on creating your own chair-based exercise workout to see where mobility exercises fall within it:

- Building your own chair-based exercise session.

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## How much mobility training should I do?

There are no official guidelines regarding mobility exercises such as these. They are not strenuous or fatiguing, so you could perform them daily – possibly even multiple times every day as required.

Performing a few repetitions of these mobility exercises should help loosen the joints targeted and relieve tension. For example, perform 6 repetitions for each of shoulder shrugs, shoulder rolls (forwards and then backwards), trunk twists and side bends, after slaving away at your computer for a while; this can help you feel rejuvenated (especially if you then get out of your chair and have a little walk round your office or home).

These mobility exercises should not be painful, you are just taking the joints through their full range of motion.

## Seated Posture



There are a lot of key points to remember here. Do not worry about remembering them all at once – focus on a couple each time you exercise and they will soon become a habit.

Feedback from another person or from looking at yourself in a mirror is a good way of checking and improving your seated posture.



**BREATHE COMFORTABLY  
AT ALL TIMES**

## 1. Squeeze and spread

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up finger joints and start to warm up forearm muscles.

### Instructions:

- Clench your fists tightly into a ball, and then spread your fingers out wide.



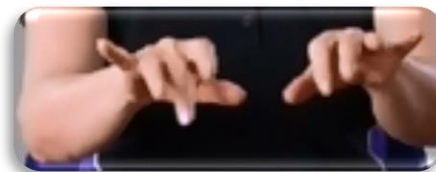
## 2. Piano playing

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up finger joints and start to warm up forearm muscles.

### Instructions:

- Bend your fingers slightly, and wiggle them as if you were playing the piano.



### 3. Wrist wringing

**Purpose:**

- This will loosen up wrist joints and start to warm up forearm muscles.

**Instructions:**

- Bend your arms and clench your fists (not too tight though).
- Twist your wrists in opposite directions as if you were wringing out wet clothes.





## 4. Wrist circles

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up wrist joints and start to warm up forearm muscles.

### Instructions:

- Bend your arms and clench your fists (not too tight though).
- Rotate your wrists in circular motions, - a few repetitions circling inwards, and then a few more circling outwards.



## 5. Arm curls

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up elbow joints and start to warm up the biceps muscles.

### Instructions:

- With palms facing forward and elbows fixed into your ribs, bend your arms so hands raise upwards towards your shoulder.
- Lower and repeat.



## 6. Shoulder shrugs

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up the shoulder girdles and start to warm up muscles acting on them.

### Instructions:

- Lift your shoulders up towards your ears as if shrugging your shoulders.
- Lower and repeat.



## 7. Shoulder rolls

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up the shoulder girdles and start to warm up muscles acting on them.

### Instructions:

- Roll the shoulders backwards slowly (i.e. forward-up-back-down).
- After a few repetitions, change direction to rolling forwards (i.e. back-up-forward-down).
- When moving shoulders back, try to squeeze shoulder blades together; and when moving shoulders forwards try to spread shoulder blades as far apart as possible.



## 8. Swimming

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up the shoulder girdles and shoulder joints, and start to warm up muscles acting on them.

### Instructions:

- Perform different swimming strokes with your arms.
- This may include a few repetitions of front crawl, followed by back stroke and then breast stroke.



## 9. Neck nods

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up the neck and start to warm up surrounding muscles.

### Instructions:

- Whilst looking forwards, tuck your chin down towards your chest.
- Return to an upright position – make sure you do not take your head back beyond the vertical.



## 10. Neck turns

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up the neck and start to warm up surrounding muscles.

### Instructions:

- Turn your head to the left as far as you can comfortably (as if looking over your left shoulder).
- Return to centre, and then repeat to the right side.



## 11. Trunk twists

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up the spine and start to warm up the muscles supporting it.

### Instructions:

- Keeping thighs pressed into the chair, take your left hand to the back of the chair's seat and place your right hand on your left knee.
- As you do this, slowly turn your head and shoulders towards the left side.
- Return to centre, and then repeat to the right side.





## 12. Side bends

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up the spine and start to warm up the muscles supporting it.

### Instructions:

- Bend to your left, reaching down towards the floor with your left hand – do not lean forwards or backwards, or twist your torso.
- Return to centre, and then repeat to the right side.



## 13. Knee lifts

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up the hip joints and start to warm up surrounding muscles.

### Instructions:

- Holding onto the seat of the chair, raise your left knee as high as you can comfortably.
- Lower, and repeat with the right knee.



## 14. Knee extension

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up knee joints and start to warm up the thigh muscles.

### Instructions:

- Keeping the knee as still as possible, straighten the left leg out in front.
- Return to the starting position, and repeat on the right leg.



## 15. Heel and toe taps

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up ankle joints and start to warm up lower leg muscles.

### Instructions:

- Hold onto the seat of the chair, and keep the right foot flat on the floor throughout.
- Plant the heel of the left foot on the floor (raising toes up as you do so).
- Then lift the heel and press the ball of that foot into the floor.
- After a few repetitions, repeat with the other foot.



## 16. Foot rolls

### Purpose:

- This will loosen up joints around the ankle and start to warm up surrounding muscles.

### Instructions:

- Holding onto the seat of the chair, squeeze your knees together as you roll onto the inside edge of both feet.
- Spread your knees apart as you roll onto the outside edge of both feet.



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**Please don't throw this guide away when you have finished with it; perhaps pass it on to a friend, health professional or to your local GP surgery.**

**More free information guides can be found at [www.allactive.co.uk](http://www.allactive.co.uk)**



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