

Chair Yoga Exercises

DIRECTIONS

Most positions begin using the same seated position (called Sit tall):

- Sit in a chair with feet planted firmly on the floor
- Back straight (to elongate your spine)
- Hands may be at your sides or on your legs

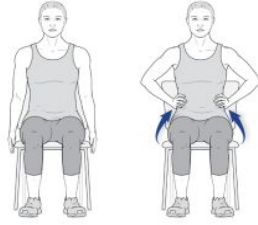


TIPS

Move slowly through each pose, holding each pose for 3 to 5 slow breaths. If a pose is challenging, pause and start again when your breathing returns to normal. Be cautious if you have arthritis in your spine or neck, or a low-back injury.

1 SEATED BREATHING

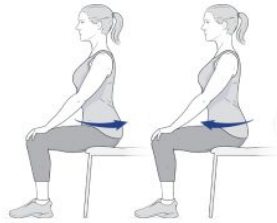
- A. Sit tall at the edge of the chair. Place your hands on your waist.
- B. *Breathe* (take a deep breath in through the nose), expanding through your sides and abdomen.
- C. *Exhale* slowly.
- D. Repeat for 3-5 breaths.



2 HIP CIRCLES

Helps release and relax hip muscles.

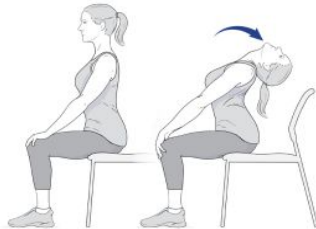
- A. Sit tall.
- B. Without moving your upper body, circle your hips clockwise five times.
- C. Repeat, rotating counterclockwise five times.



3 COW POSE

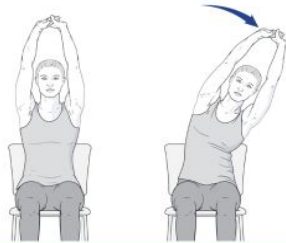
- A. Sit tall with your palms on your knees.
- B. *Inhale* and drop your head back, pulling your chest up and forward for a slight backbend. *If you have arthritis in your spine or neck, keep your neck straight.*

From Cow Pose, go directly into Cat Pose.



7 HIGH ALTAR SIDE LEANS

- A. Sit tall. Lift your arms and interlace fingers.
- B. Turn your palms toward the ceiling and straighten your arms above your head. *If you have sore wrists, gently grasp one hand with the other.*
- C. Lean to the left side.
- D. Hold for 2-3 breaths.
- E. Repeat, leaning to the right side.



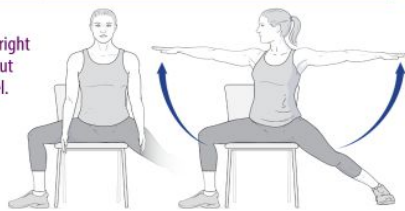
8 SEATED GODDESS WITH A TWIST

- A. Sit tall with your legs open wide and your toes pointed out.
- B. Place your left arm inside your left leg, pointing at the floor. Lift your right arm toward the ceiling and gaze toward the right hand.
- C. Hold for 2-3 breaths.
- D. Repeat on other side.



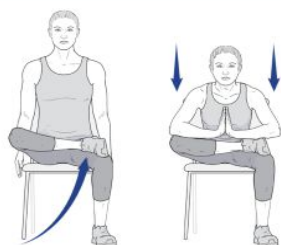
9 WARRIOR TWO

- A. Sit tall at the edge of the chair. Bend your right knee to the side and stretch your left leg out behind you, as you press through your heel.
- B. Raise your arms to the sides and turn your head to the right.
- C. Hold for 2-3 complete breaths.
- D. Repeat, adjusting for the left side.



10 FIGURE FOUR

- A. Sit tall and place your right ankle on your left knee. Flex your toes. Pull your belly towards your spine, heart reaching forward, and gaze straight ahead.
- B. Put your palms together.
- C. *Inhale* and slowly lean forward at the hips. Gently push your right knee down towards the floor with your palm or right elbow.
- D. Hold for 2-3 breaths.
- E. Repeat, adjusting for the other side.



4 CAT POSE

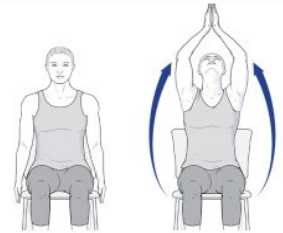
- A. *Inhale* and round your back, pulling in your belly towards your spine. Gently tuck your chin in your chest and expand the area between your shoulder blades.
- B. Repeat Cow Pose and Cat Pose 3-5 times.



5 SEATED SUN SALUTATIONS

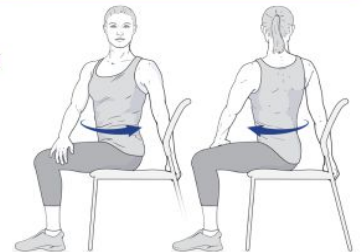
Helps to strengthen and increase shoulder flexibility. If you have shoulder discomfort, lift to shoulder level only.

- A. Sit tall and lift your arms overhead with your palms facing each other but not touching.
- B. Look up between your hands, towards the ceiling.
- C. *Exhale* and allow your arms to float down to your sides.
- D. Repeat for 3-5 breaths.



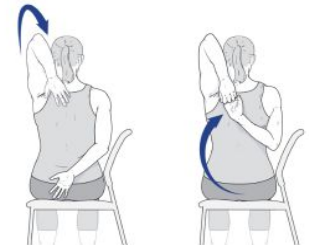
6 SIDE TWIST

- A. Sit tall in the chair. Place your left hand on the seat behind you and your right hand on the outside of your left knee.
- B. *Inhale* and reach your head up with energy toward the ceiling.
- C. As you *exhale*, gently turn your shoulders to the left. To help deepen your twist, gently press your left hand against your right knee.
- D. Hold the twist for 2-3 complete breaths.
- E. Repeat, rotating to the right side.



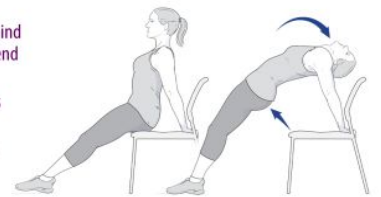
11 COW HANDS

- A. Sit tall with your feet hip distance apart.
- B. *Inhale* and lift your left hand toward the ceiling.
- C. *Exhale*, bend your arm at the elbow and place your arm on your upper back.
- D. *Inhale* and reach your right hand behind and clasp both palms together.
- E. Hold for 2-3 breaths.
- F. Repeat, adjusting for the other side.



12 UPWARD PLANK

- A. Sit tall and place both hands on the seat behind you. Hold the sides of the chair seat and extend your feet in front of you on the floor.
- B. *Inhale* and lift your butt and press your hips strongly toward the ceiling. *If comfortable, allow your head to drop back, close your eyes, and relax.*
- C. *Exhale* and set your butt on the chair.



13 FORWARD FOLD STRETCH

Stretches hamstring muscles and lower back.

- A. Sit tall on the edge of the chair. Extend your legs in front of you with your heels on the floor and your toes pointing up.
- B. *Inhale*, flex your quad muscles (try to lift kneecaps), and lean forward at the hips.
- C. Place your hands on your knees, shins or toes (whatever is comfortable). Keep your chest toward your feet and your gaze straight ahead.



14 FORWARD FOLD

Finish with a calming forward bend, which lets blood flow to the brain.

- A. Sit tall. Fold your upper body over your legs, letting your head, neck and body hang limp.
- B. Hold for as long as you want before rolling back up to a sitting position.

