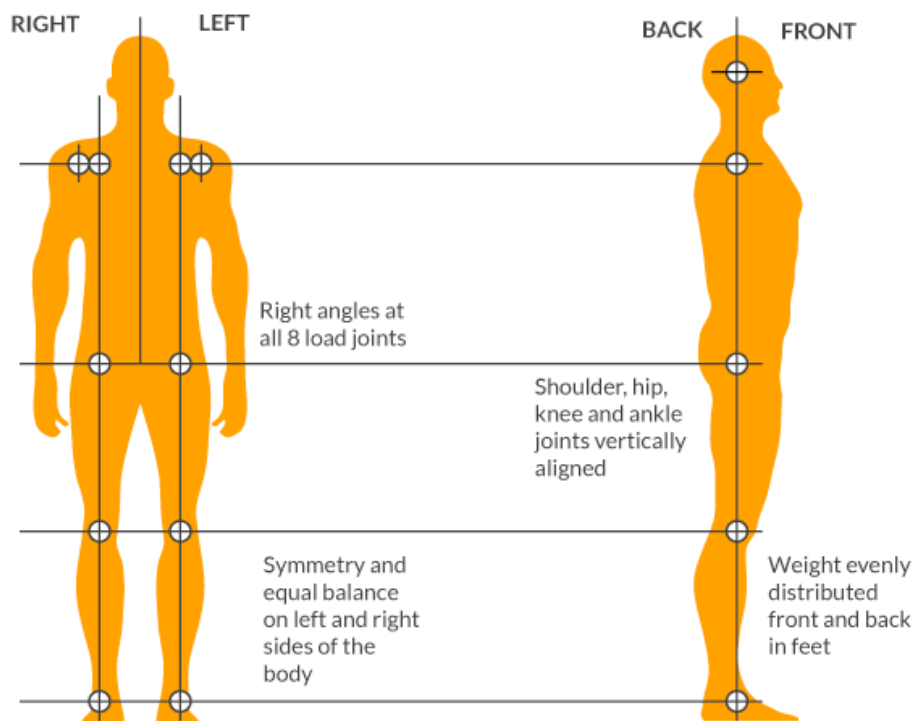


## Posture Exercise Programme

### Upper Body Rotation



## Suggestions:

- Use the written instructions on the pages ahead to help you do the exercises, but also watch the video explanations a few times initially, until you become confident about how to complete each one.
- Once you get used to doing the exercises, the whole programme should take between 25-35 minutes. At first however, it may take well over an hour to watch the videos, read the instructions and complete all 11 exercises. If this is too much time for you, then you can ease yourself into the programme by only doing the first 6 (or 3 or 4 or 5) exercises for the first week, and then add a new exercise each day until you build up to doing all 11 each day.
- The order of the exercises is important.
- For best results, aim to do the programme daily. On days where you feel you have limited time, select your favourite few, and do just those. It doesn't have to be all or nothing!
- None of the exercises should cause you any pain. If one does, skip that one for a few days and then try again. Remember to consult a doctor, if in doubt, before starting this programme.
- Focus on your form! How you do an exercise, is much more important than how many reps you can do, or how long you can hold the position for.

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## Upper Body Rotation Programme

	<b>Exercise</b>	<b>Reps/duration</b>
1	Static Back	5-10 minutes
2	Standing Windmill	5 reps in each position
3	Air Bench	2 minutes
4	Assisted Hip Lift	1 minute each side
5	Hip Crossover Stretch	1 minute each side
6	Upper Spinal Floor Twist	1 minute each side
7	Supine Foot Circles & Flexes	20 reps in each direction
8	Cats & Dogs	15 reps
9	Child's Pose Elevated	1 minute
10	Sitting Knee Pillow Squeezes	3 sets of 20 reps
11	Standing Elbow Curls	25 reps
A	Supine Groin Stretch	15 minutes each side

- The Supine Groin Stretch is a separate exercise from the main programme. How often you do it depends on how quickly you want to improve your posture and what you feel is a sustainable amount of time you can allocate. On one end of the spectrum, you could do both the main programme and the Supine Groin Stretch daily, either one after the other, or at separate times of the day. On the other end of the spectrum, you could do the Supine Groin Stretch once a week, and the main programme 6-7 days a week. Find the combination that works best for you, but aim to do the Supine Groin Stretch at least once a week.

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## 1. Static Back

Hold for 5-10 minutes



### Instructions:

1. Lie on your back with your legs up over a chair, the bed or a sofa.
2. Have your knees at hip-width apart initially and at right angles.
3. Place your arms at 45 degrees from your body with palms up.
4. Relax your entire body including the hips (even if this causes your legs to fall out a little).
5. Take deep and comfortable breaths into your abdomen (rather than the chest).

### Notes:

- If you are unable to get down to the floor, then do this on your bed or a table.
  - If your neck is uncomfortable/painful in this position, then place one or more folded towels under your head. After 5 minutes, see if you can remove one towel, and keep repeating until you have no more towels and your head gets down to the floor comfortably. This may take one session of 10-20 minutes or many days/weeks of doing this exercise daily until the upper back and neck are ready to have the head comfortably on the floor.
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## 2. Standing Windmill

5 reps in each position



### Instructions:

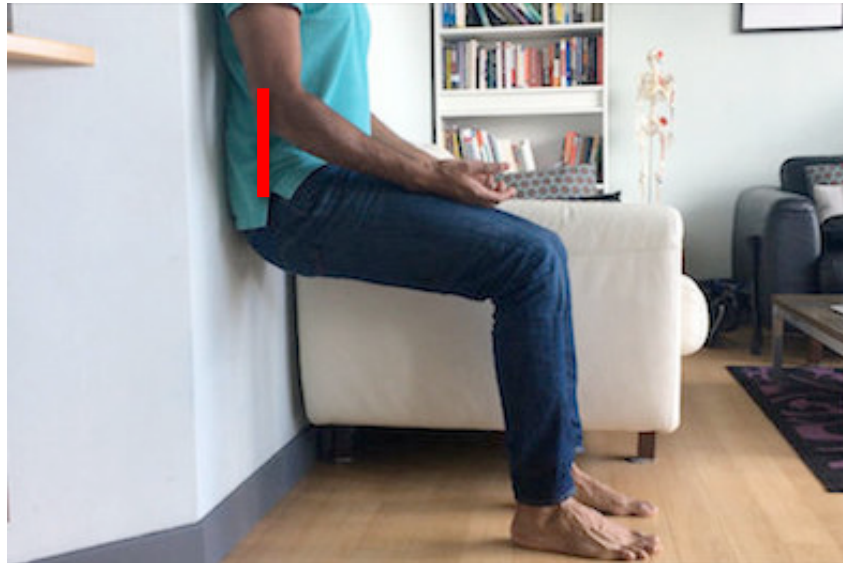
1. Stand with your back to a wall, with your feet hip-width apart & pointing straight forward.
2. The back of your feet, buttocks, upper back and head should touch the wall (but don't force your head back if it feels uncomfortable).
3. Bring your arms out to the side at shoulder-height with the back of your palms touching the wall and fingers spread wide throughout.
4. Gently squeeze your shoulder blades together and down and hold throughout.
5. Slowly bend your upper body to one side and then to the other side.
6. Repeat this 5 times.
7. Move your feet to shoulder-width apart and repeat the movement 5 times.
8. Then move your feet even wider apart and repeat 5 times.
9. Finally bring your feet back to hip-width apart and repeat 5 times.

### Notes:

- It's normal for your lower back to be arched and away from the wall.
  - Your feet must be pointed straight ahead in all the positions.
  - Keep the movement slow and steady.
  - The hips and pelvis stay fixed and do not jut out to the sides as you move.
  - Keep the back of the feet, buttocks, hands and upper body against the wall throughout the movement.
  - Your head moves with your upper body, don't tilt it left or right.
-

## 3. Air Bench

Build up to 2 minutes



### Instructions:

1. Stand with your back against a wall with your feet hip-width apart and pointing straight ahead.
2. Slowly walk your feet away from the wall and slide your body down the wall.
3. Stop when your hips are slightly above your knees (almost to 90 degrees), and your feet are slightly in front of your hips.
4. Gently push your **lower** back into the wall so there is no gap between the wall and your lower back.
5. Hold for 2 minutes.

### Notes:

- To prevent your feet slipping, wear trainers where necessary.
  - Keep most of the weight in your heels.
  - Don't force your shoulders and head to touch the wall – keep the upper body relaxed.
  - If you feel pain in the knees slide a little up the wall and see if this helps.
-

## 4. Assisted Hip Lift

Hold for 1 minute



### Instructions:

1. Lie on your back with your knees at a right angle and your feet flat on the wall pointing upwards.
2. Place your arms out to the side at shoulder level with palms facing up.
3. Cross your left ankle onto the right knee (if doing this lifts your tailbone/buttocks off the floor then shuffle away from the wall until it doesn't).
4. Push your left knee away from you towards the wall.
5. Make sure that your hips stay parallel (to the wall) without one shifting higher than the other. You can do a visual check to see if they are even.
6. Relax your upper body.
7. Hold for 1 minute then swap sides.

### Notes:

- When you feel ready and strong enough to progress, do this exercise without a wall. Push your left knee away from you while pulling your right knee (at 90 degrees in the air) towards you. Hold for 1 minute and swap sides.
-



## 5. Hip Crossover Stretch

Hold for 1 minute



### Instructions:

1. Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet pointing straight ahead.
2. Place your arms out to the side at shoulder level, palms down with your fingers spread wide.
3. Gently squeeze your shoulder blades together and down towards your buttocks.
4. Place your right ankle on your left knee.
5. Slowly rotate this right ankle/left knee complex to your left, until the right foot and the outside of your left knee are touching the floor.
6. Relax the left leg and push your right knee away from you.
7. Rotate your head gently to the right.
8. Hold for 1 minute and then rotate back to get to the initial position and swap sides.

### Notes:

- If your neck is uncomfortable rotate it less.
  - If your shoulders are uncomfortable try a) relaxing your shoulders and/or b) lowering both arms down to 45 degrees and/or c) having the palms up.
  - If you can't reach the floor when you rotate the foot/opposite knee, then place books under the rotating foot/opposite knee for support. As you improve you can remove these.
-



## 6. Upper Spinal Floor Twist

Hold for 1 minute



### Instructions:

1. Lie on your side with your knees bent at right angles to the body.
2. Place your arms out in front of you with the arms parallel to your legs.
3. Ensure all the major joints (ankles, knees, hips and shoulders) are stacked upon each other.
4. Slowly lift the top arm up and over to the other side, and turn your head to look to the ceiling.
5. Ensure your hips and knees stay stacked on top of each other. Do not let the top knee slide away from the bottom knee!
6. Breathe, relax and let the arm rest to the floor or as close as it can get.
7. After 1 minute slowly bring the arm back to the initial position and then switch sides.

### Notes:

- Turn the head less if it's uncomfortable.
  - Place a pillow under your head if the neck is uncomfortable/painful in this position.
  - If holding the stretch for longer than 1 minute feels good then do so!
-

## 7. Supine Foot Circles and Flexes

20 repetitions in each direction



### Instructions:

1. Lie on your back with one leg straight on the floor with the knee pointing up to the ceiling.
2. Hold the back of the thigh of the other leg with the shin parallel to the floor.
3. Circle the foot of the bent leg slowly and with full range of motion in one direction using the toes too. Keep the knee still throughout.
4. After 20 reps swap directions and circle the other way.
5. Then pull the toes towards your head and then push them away. Repeat 20 times.
6. Switch legs.

### Notes:

- Keep the knee of the rotating foot still.
  - Relax the shoulders and upper body throughout.
  - Ensure the straight leg doesn't rotate outwards – keep the knee pointing straight up.
  - Use the toes! It's not just the ankle joint moving.
-

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## 8. Cats & Dogs

15 repetitions



### Instructions:

1. Start on all fours. Your wrists are directly under your shoulders, shoulder-width apart and your knees are directly under your hips, hip-width apart.
2. Tilt your pelvis back away from the floor and pull in the abdominal muscles to round your back up to the ceiling and curl your head under – this is the cat position.
3. Roll your pelvis down towards the floor to place an arch in your back, look up and gently squeeze your shoulder blades together and back towards your buttocks – this is the dog position.
4. Slowly and smoothly move between the cat and dog position.

### Notes

- In the dog position only lift your head as much as is comfortable.
  - Don't let the elbows bend.
  - You're only moving upwards and downwards, not side to side or front to back. Keep your hands directly under your shoulders and your knees directly under your hips throughout.
-

## 9. Child's Pose Elevated

Hold for 1 minute



### Instructions:

1. Start on all fours. Your wrists are directly under your shoulders and shoulder-width apart and your knees are directly under your hips and hip-width apart.
2. Shuffle your hands forward to straighten your arms and pull your bum back in the opposite direction.
3. Gently roll your pelvis forward to put an arch in your lower back throughout.
4. Keep your fingers spread wide and gently press your hands into the floor and hold.
5. Take deep and comfortable breaths into the sides of your ribs.
6. Hold for 1 minute.

### Notes

- It's important that your back is not rounded up to the sky, but flat or ideally arched into the floor.
  - If this exercise is too hard or causes you pain, you can try a variation where your forearm and elbows are also touching the floor.
-

## 10. Sitting Knee Pillow Squeezes

3 sets of 20 repetitions



### Instructions:

1. Sit on a chair with your feet directly under your knees and hip-width apart.
2. Your hips should be slightly above your knees and your feet hip-width apart and pointed straight ahead.
3. Fold up a thick pillow and place it in between your knees.
4. Roll/tilt your pelvis forward to place an arch in your lower back.
5. Squeeze the pillow, hold for 1-2 seconds and release.
6. Complete 3 sets of 20 squeezes.

### Notes:

- Make sure you keep the arch in your lower back throughout.
  - Create this arch by focusing on rolling/tilting your pelvis forward rather than focusing on sticking your chest out and leaning back with the upper body. Indeed the upper body should be relaxed!
-



## 11. Standing Elbow Curls

25 reps



### Instructions:

1. Stand with your back to a wall, with your feet hip-width apart pointing straight ahead.
2. The back of your feet, buttocks, upper back and head should touch the wall but don't force the head back if it feels uncomfortable.
3. Tuck your finger tips into the pads of your hands with your thumb pointing straight out.
4. With this grip place your hands by your temple.
5. Pull your elbows back to touch the wall and then bring them together in front of your face.
6. Repeat 25 times.

### Notes:

- Keep the shoulders relaxed throughout.
  - It's normal for your lower back to be arched and away from the wall.
  - Try and keep the elbows close to elbow height throughout.
  - If your elbows can't touch each other or the wall at first don't force them, over time this should improve.
  - Only have your head touching the wall if it feels comfortable.
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## A. Supine Groin Stretch

15 minutes on each side



### Instructions:

1. Lie on your back with one leg straight on the floor with the knee pointing up to the ceiling.
2. Position the other leg on a chair/bed/sofa with the knee at 90 degrees.
3. Place your arms out at 45 degrees, palms up and relaxed.
4. Place a heavy weight against the outside of the straight ankle/foot so that it does not turn out.
5. Relax the entire body, especially the hips!
6. Hold for 15 minutes (or longer) and swap sides.

### Notes:

- After a while you should notice your lower back settling more into the floor. If it has not completely settled after 15 minutes feel free to stay longer until it does.
  - Remember to relax the entire body throughout including the hips.
  - It's essential that the knee and foot of the straight leg is pointing straight up, but without you actively holding it there, as the hip must stay relaxed. Therefore use a weight to stop the leg rotating out.
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