

**Editor's Note:** This article was sent to massage therapists who need to stretch between long periods other feet. The scratches are great for anyone however. © 2020 American Massage Therapy Association All rights reserved.

# Exercises for Maintaining Flexibility

Learn seven exercises to help improve and maintain flexibility in your neck, shoulders and back.

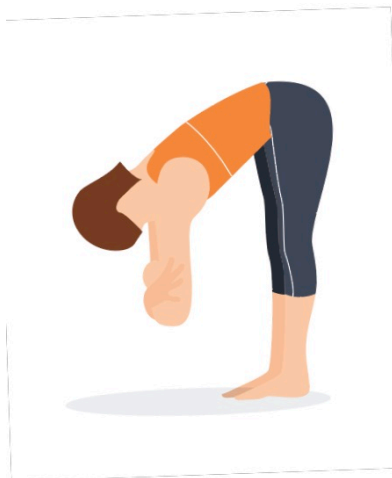


## Triceps Stretch

This stretch can be done standing or seated. Bending your right elbow, reach your hand behind your back. With your left hand, gently hold your right elbow to stretch for three to five seconds. Switch arms and repeat.

## Seated Shoulder Squeeze

Sitting in a chair or cross-legged on the floor, clasp your hands together behind your lower back and straighten your back to bring your shoulder blades together. Hold the pose for three to five seconds and then release.



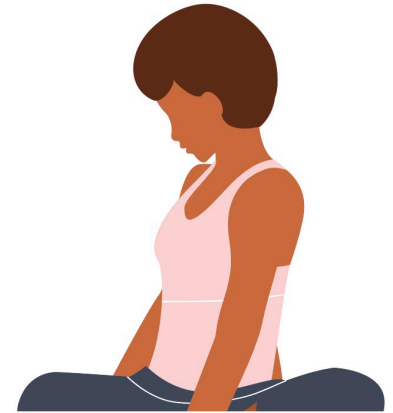
## Forward Fold (aka Hamstring Hang)

A popular yoga move, this gives your back and neck a good stretch. Standing with your feet hip-distance apart, you can interlace your hands behind your back or grab opposite elbows to fold forward. Once forward, relax your head, breathe, and hold for three seconds before standing upright.

## Shoulder Rolls and Head Rolls

### Shoulder Rolls

Another exercise that can be done standing or sitting down is to relax your arms by your sides and simply roll your shoulders forward and back.



### Head Rolls

Pointing your chin toward your chest, slowly roll your head to the right until your chin returns to your chest. Repeat three times and then switch directions. Additionally, you can pause in the middle of your movements, and hold your head to the right with your right hand, and to the left with your left hand.



### Side Bends

Standing up straight with your feet hip-distance apart, raise your arms above your head, clasp your hands and bend your torso to the right. This activates your left obliques and gives your triceps a stretch, too. Hold for three to five seconds, and then lean to the left side to stretch your right side.

### Figure Eights

This is a great exercise that can be done in between sessions. Standing up, interlace your hands in front of you, and create figure-eight motions from your wrists. Do this for 15 seconds and then change directions.

