

4 Easy Stretches for Lower Back Pain Relief



Lower back pain can be extremely debilitating and disrupt even the most basic day-to-day activities. From struggling to bend and tie your shoelaces, to experiencing agonizing pain during the workday, there are hundreds of ways in which pain in your lower back can make life harder. Lower back pain is incredibly common and can be caused by anything from sleeping in a funny position to lifting a heavy box the wrong way.

When the pain takes your breath away every time you try to move, it can feel as though your back will never recover. Don't lose hope!

There are a number of ways you can help relieve lower back pain and get back on your feet. Many people focus on exercises that work the muscles of the lower back, but sometimes when the pain is intense, exercising just isn't an option. In these cases, stretching is a great alternative – it offers similar benefits to exercise but is much easier on your body. In this article, we'll cover some simple, effective stretches for lower back pain relief.

The Benefits of Lower Back Pain Stretches

Have you ever noticed how good that first big stretch feels when you wake up? Do you have a cat that's always arching and stretching its back? Everyone loves a good stretch, and it's also an important part of looking after our muscles.

If you're suffering from lower back pain, stretching and flexing can loosen the back muscles and provide some much-needed relief from built-up pressure in the spine. Even if you're not in pain, stretching and strengthening the muscles around your lower back feels good, and can reduce your risk of future injury.

4 Simple Stretches for Lower Back Pain Relief

Everyone's pain is different, so not all of these stretches may work for you. Make sure you stop if you experience any pain or discomfort – you may be determined to keep going but this could worsen your pain or cause an injury. Listen to your body and be sure to perform each stretch slowly and gently.

Your back will be feeling better in no time.

Simple Back Extension



This is a low impact exercise that will stretch and extend your lower and mid-back muscles. You may look and feel a little like a seal as you do it, but this stretch can help improve your posture, and relieve back pain associated with postural strain.

- Start face down on the floor, legs straight and shoulder-width apart.
- Place your forearms on the floor, with your elbows bent and your hands at face level with palms down.
- Slowly raise your head, arch your back, and lift yourself onto your forearms.
- Push up as far as your elbows, but keep your hips and legs on the ground.
- Lower yourself back down slowly, and repeat ten times.

Piriformis Stretch - “Glute” Stretch



The piriformis is a small but mighty muscle running through the glutes. It can tighten and cause discomfort when we sit at a desk or behind the wheel of a car for too long. Inflammation of this muscle can also irritate the sciatic nerve, causing severe back pain.

- Start by lying on the floor with one leg straight and one bent at the knee.
- Cross the ankle of your straight leg over your bent knee and pull your knee towards your chest.
- Hold for 45 seconds, switch legs and repeat. Complete a total of 5 stretches for each leg.

The Cat and the Camel



Unleash your inner feline with a stretch that’s perfect for extending the lower back and mid-back muscles, and relieving tension in the lower back muscles. Perform this stretch as follows:

- Begin on your hands and knees on the floor, facing straight ahead.
- Keep your arms and legs shoulder-width apart and your back straight.
- Slowly arch your back by lowering your head down to your elbows.
- Then raise your head and look up at the ceiling, relaxing your back. Repeat 10 times.

Knee to Chest Stretch



This simple stretch helps to stretch muscles associated with the lower back, glutes and hamstrings. It can help to relieve hip tightness, which is a common cause of lower back pain. Here's how to do it:

- Start by lying on your back, with one leg straight and one bent at the knee.
- Place both hands behind the knee of the bent leg and gently pull your leg towards your chest.
- Stop pulling when you feel a light stretch down the back of your leg and hold for 30 seconds.
- Switch legs and repeat, then repeat the complete exercise 3-5 times.

Alternative Methods of Relieving Lower Back Pain

Stretches can certainly help to relieve your lower back pain, but they can be even more effective if you combine them with other pain-relieving options, such as:

- **Checking your footwear.** Comfortable shoes not only feel good to walk in, but they can help to keep our hips and backs aligned too. If you're experiencing consistent back pain, you may even want to consider visiting a podiatrist to see whether orthotics could help.
- **Investing in some ergonomic office furniture.** If you spend a lot of time sitting at a desk, it's important to be mindful of your posture and also to ensure you have a comfortable workstation. Invest in a quality chair that can be adjusted at the back, seat and arm rests.

Don't let back pain get you down –there are many simple and effective treatment options!