

# Your stretching exercises

...so there's no excuses

**When stretching, the most important thing to remember is to remain within reasonable limitations.**

If you have not stretched for an extended duration or you are stretching before exercise, make sure you engage in the stretches gradually and gently. Most stretching injuries occur when an over-zealous action is applied. Under no circumstances should you bounce when stretching as this has a far greater potential for injury. If you experience pain or discomfort while attempting a stretch, cease the stretch and seek professional advice from your Evolve practitioner. In the case of an injury it is recommended to also seek professional advice to ensure the stretches are appropriate for your condition.

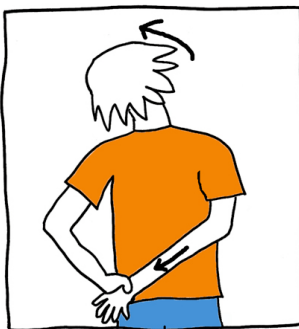
## Stretching your neck

It's important with all stretches – but particularly with the neck – to engage the stretch *gently*. This helps prevent injury.



Gently pull your head forward until a stretch is felt on the back of the neck. Only use the weight of your arms. Hold for 30 seconds.

Gently pull your head to one side with your right hand, aiming your ear toward the tip of your shoulder. Reach away from the body with your left arm, palm towards the sky. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat other side.

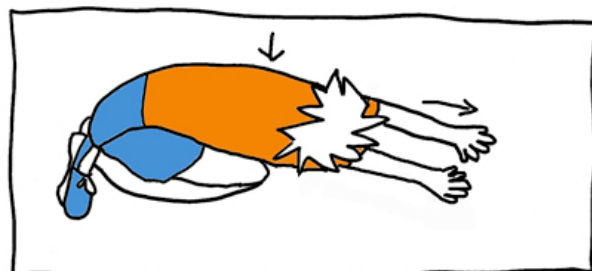


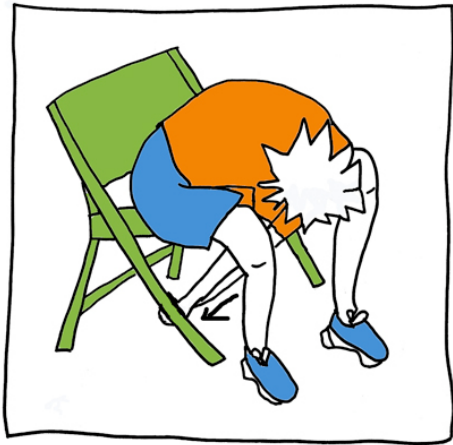
## Stretching your neck & top of shoulder

Lean your head sideways toward your left shoulder. Pull your right arm behind your back with your left hand as per arrow direction on diagram. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat other side.

## Stretching the shoulders and arms

Position yourself on all fours, making sure your hands are 15-20cms in front of the line of your shoulders. Lean backwards, aiming to place your buttocks on your ankles - keeping your hands in place and pushing your chest toward the floor. Hold for 1 minute and breathe deeply.





### Stretching your upper back

Sit in a chair with your legs. Move your arms to the inside of your thighs and lower your chest down toward the chair. Reach back gently as far as you can with your arms. Hold for 30-60 seconds, breathing deeply.

### Stretching your shoulder and side

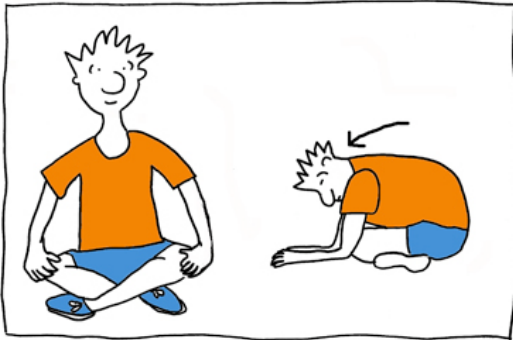
Hold your elbow with your opposite hand and gently reach down the centre of your back with your hand. Use your elbow to support this action. As you do this, bend gently to the side with your knees slightly bent. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing gently.



### Stretching your chest

Place your arm and elbow against a doorframe with your elbow at the same height as your shoulder. Lunge forward with the same leg forward as the side you are stretching. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing gently. Repeat this exercise with the elbow 10cms above shoulder height.

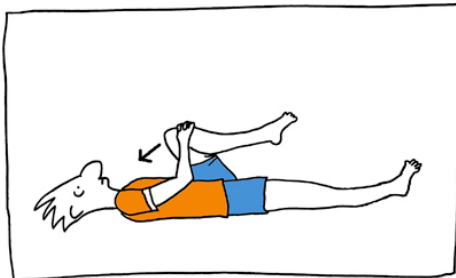
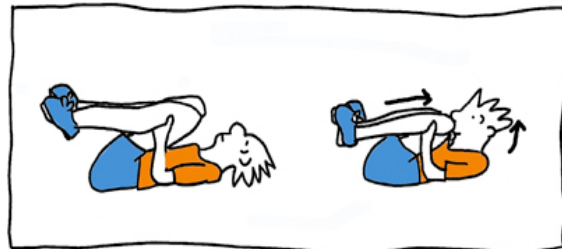




## Stretching your lower back

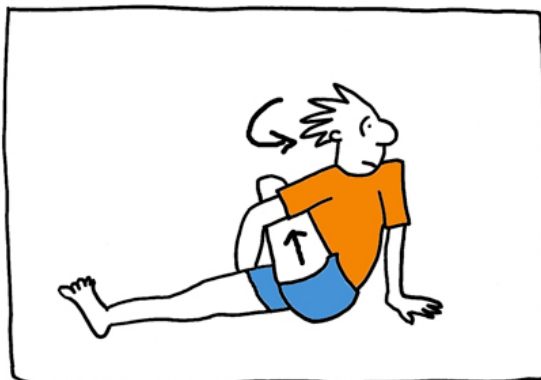
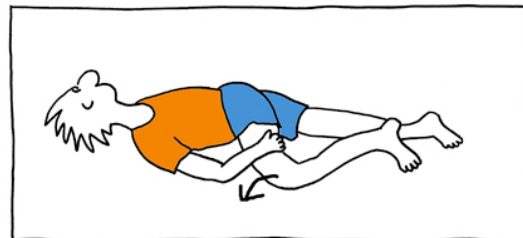
Cross your legs in front of you, gently lean forward and reach out with your arms to the front. Hold for 30 seconds and breathe gently.

Lie on your back, bring your knees up towards your chest and grab hold of them with your arms. Pull the knees gently toward your chest, and move your head toward your knees at the same time. Hold for 30 seconds.



Lying on your back, raise one leg up towards your chest and grab with both hands. Pull the knee towards your chest, making sure your head remains on the floor. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat other side.

Lying on your back, raise one leg at 90 degrees to the body and roll across to the opposite side using the opposite hand as support. Keep both shoulders in contact with the floor. Hold for 30 seconds and breathe gently. Repeat other side.



## Stretching your lower back and outside of upper leg

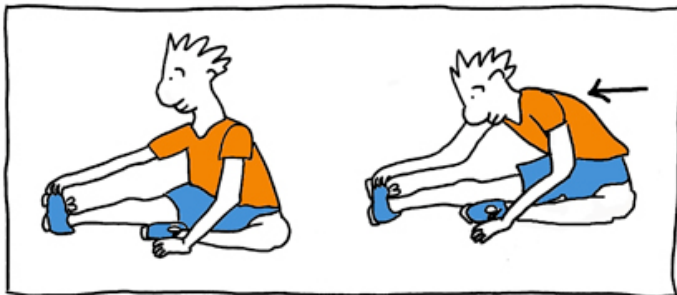
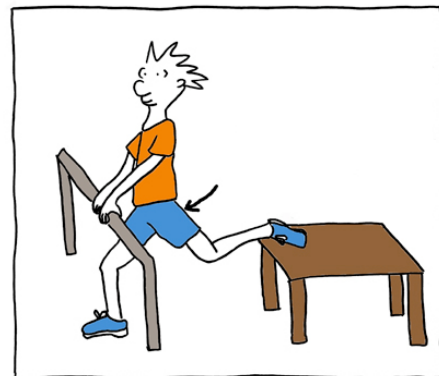
Sitting on the floor with your legs stretched out in front of you, place your left foot on the outside of your right knee. Reach your right elbow around to the outside of your left knee and turn your torso to the left, looking backwards. Support your body with your left hand behind your buttocks. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat other side.



## Stretching your Quadriceps

Holding onto a door or wall with one hand, grab your ankle with the other hand and pull the heel towards your buttocks. As you do this, try to tuck your buttocks downward. Hold for 30 seconds. This stretch can be done holding the same or opposite side ankle. Repeat with the other leg.

Holding onto a bench or railing, place your left leg behind you, place your foot on a low table or chair (max.45cm height) approximately one step distance behind you. Lunge forward and down until you can feel a stretch. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat with the other leg. Do not use this stretch if you have a lower back injury



## Stretching your hamstrings

Sitting on the floor with your legs stretched out in front of you, 45 degrees to one side. Place the sole of the opposite leg against the inner thigh. Turn to face the toe of the extended leg. Grab hold of the calf, ankle or foot (stay within your limitations) and pull your face towards your shin. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat with the other leg.

## Stretching your calf muscles

Supporting yourself with your arms, stand on a step with your heels over the edge. Allow the weight of your body to push the heels below the height, making sure your knees are slightly bent. Hold for 30 seconds. This can be repeated for each leg individually.

