

STRETCHING FOR ACTIVE JOBS

The work we do at Klinge is physical and demanding. Reducing the chances of injury in the workplace can be hard to achieve but stretching regularly helps to improve your physical movements, and assists in maintaining an active and healthy focus on your work. It will also help you enjoy the days away from work and make play so much easier.

The benefits of stretching

- Increased flexibility and joint range of motion – flexible muscles can improve your daily performance.
- Improved circulation – stretching increases blood flow to your muscles. Blood flowing to your muscles brings nourishment and gets rid of waste by-products in the muscle tissue.
- Better posture – Frequent stretching can help keep your muscles from getting tight, allowing you to maintain proper posture. Good posture can minimize discomfort and keep aches and pains to a minimum.
- Stress relief – Stretching relaxes tight, tense muscles that often accompany stress.
- Enhanced coordination – maintaining the full range of motion through your joints keeps you in better balance.
- Not taking time out to stretch can mean losing the ability to move freely and fully, in other words, you feel older than you are!



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HOW TO STRETCH

Muscles will stretch easier if you warm them up first. It can be as simple as a hot shower or a brisk walk.

A light stretching routine is advised before undertaking work or more vigorous activity.

When stretching;

- ✓ Hold each stretch for 10 to 30 seconds.
- ✓ Feel the stretch, but not discomfort.
- ✓ Ease back a little if you feel pain.
- ✓ Breathe freely while stretching.
- ✓ Do not bounce.
- ✓ Repeat each stretch 2 to 3 times, working both sides of the body equally.

By holding and repeating each stretch, you are allowing your muscles to gently lengthen in their own time. The more you stretch, the easier it will be.

STRETCHES



Neck side flexion.

Lower your ear towards your shoulder while keeping your face looking forwards; feel the stretch along the opposite side of your neck; return to upright. Repeat on the other side. In addition, you can also stretch the opposite hand towards the floor as this deepens the stretch on the neck muscles.



Triceps (back of upper arm) stretch.

Lift both arms above your head and bend your elbows so that your forearms are behind your head (but not resting on it); gently grasp your right elbow with your left hand; allow your right hand to drop towards the middle of your shoulder blades; feel the stretch on the outside of your upper right arm. Gently pull your right elbow towards your left shoulder to deepen the stretch. Repeat for your other arm.



Top of shoulder blade stretch.

Cross your right arm in front of your chest, placing your right hand over your left shoulder and keeping your right arm parallel to the ground; use your left hand to push your right elbow gently towards your left shoulder; feel the stretch in the muscle across the top of your right shoulder blade. Repeat for the opposite shoulder.

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**Chest stretch.**

Place your right hand on a doorway at shoulder height with your elbow straight; move your feet so that you turn your chest and body gently away from your arm; feel the stretch on the right-hand side of your chest and along the inside of your right upper arm. Repeat for the opposite side. (You can also do the stretch with your arm slightly elevated, as shown.)

**Side stretch**

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Bend your upper body to the right while continuing to face the front and not allowing your hips to rotate; at the same time use your right hand to push your right hip gently in the opposite direction; feel the stretch along the left-hand side of your torso. Repeat for the opposite side.

**Hamstring (back of thigh) stretch**

Place your right foot on a bench or chair with your leg extended at the knee (straight leg); slowly lean forwards while reaching your hands towards your right shin and keeping your torso straight; feel the stretch along the back of your right thigh. Keep your head up and looking forwards so that you bend from the waist and don't hunch. Repeat for the opposite leg.

**Thigh stretch**

Steady yourself by resting your left hand on a wall; keep an upright posture and lift your right foot off the ground. Bend the right knee and grasp your right ankle with your right hand; gently pull your ankle up and back until you feel a stretch in the front of your right thigh. Your left leg should be slightly bent at the knee. Repeat for the opposite leg.

**Calf stretch**

Stand facing a wall and place your hands on the wall at eye level; step your right leg back; bend the front knee and gently lean into the wall while keeping your back leg straight and the heel of your back foot on the ground; feel the stretch in the back of your right calf. Repeat for the other side.

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