

10 Desk Exercises You Can Do at Work

1. The Magic Carpet Ride

This works your core and arms. Sit in your chair with your legs crossed and your feet on the seat. Then place your hands on the armrests, suck in your abs (stomach muscles) and raise yourself a few inches above the seat, using your belly muscles and hands. Hold for 10 to 20 seconds. Rest for 30 seconds. Repeat five times.



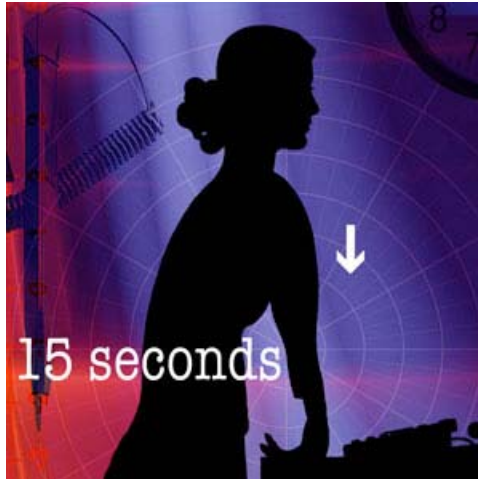
2. Tricep Desk Dips

This is for upper-body strength. This will help the backs of your arms. Place your rear on the edge of the desk, then place your palms on the edge of the desk on either side of you. Keeping your feet together, bend at the elbows and slide forward off of the desk and dip down a few inches, and then push back up. Dip to where your elbows are bent at 90 degrees. Do this 20 times. For a more difficult variation, straighten your legs or put your feet on a chair.



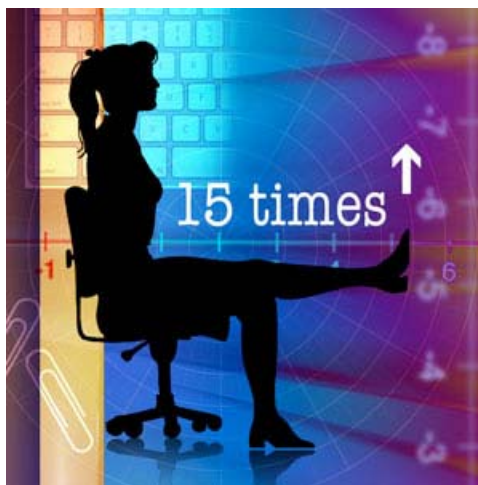
3. Carpal Tunnel Reliever

Carpal tunnel syndrome shouldn't catch up to you if you repeat this simple move every day. Stand at your desk with your arms straight, place your palms on the desk with your fingers pointed toward you, palms up. Lower your body slowly until you feel the stretch (you won't have to go far). Hold for 15 seconds. Repeat as needed through the day.



4. The Wooden Leg

For lower-body strength: Sit in your chair, extend one leg out straight in front of you and hold for two seconds. Then raise it up as high as you can, and hold it again for two seconds. Repeat with each leg 15 times.



5. Sitting Spinal Stretch

This enhances both flexibility and muscle strength. Sit tall in your chair, and stretch your arms toward the ceiling. Put your left hand on the desk, grab the back of the chair with your right hand and twist to the right. Hold for 10 seconds. Release and raise your arms toward the ceiling again. Then repeat the twist going the other way. Hold for 10 seconds.



6. Shoulder Spin

A good move for flexibility. Sit tall in your chair and reach your left hand behind your back, between your shoulder blades, palm out. Then reach your right hand up toward the ceiling, bend it down, and try to touch your left hand. If you can reach it, great: Hold for 10 seconds. If not, grab onto your shirt and keep practicing. Switch arms and repeat.



7. Feet-Up Hamstring Stretch

To ease the hamstrings, lower back and calf muscles, push your chair away from your desk and put a leg up on the desk or short file cabinet or open a drawer. (Ladies, try this on a day you're not wearing a skirt.) Flex your foot and lean forward slightly over your leg while keeping your back straight. Hold for 10 seconds. Point your foot, lean and hold for five seconds. Switch legs and repeat.



8. Invisible Chair Sit

These squats from the chair are a strengthening exercise. They work best if you lower your seat as far as it will go. Stand in front of your chair with your feet a hip's width apart. Place your hands on your hips and lower your butt until it's just above the seat. Then sit down as slowly as possible. Do 20 repetitions. To make it harder, reach your hands overhead as if you were holding a beach ball. If you're really feeling steady, try it on one leg.



9. The Little Mermaid at Work

This exercise is for both flexibility and core strength. Sit upright in your chair. Hold your right wrist over your head with your left hand and pull it, stretching your right side. Make sure to keep your shoulders down as you bend. Hold for 10 seconds. Return to upright posture. Take hold of your left wrist over your head with your right hand and stretch the other way. Repeat five times on each side.



10. Desk Push Ups or Wall Push Ups

These are for upper-body strength. Stand a yard or more away from your desk or a wall, with your feet together. Place your palms on the edge of the desk a shoulder's width apart. Lower your chest to the edge of the desk, and push back up. Remember to exhale on the way up. Do 20 times.

