Stretching Routines: Everyday

These stretching routines can be helpful in dealing with the muscular tension and tightness of everyday life. There are ideas about stretching for specific daily activities, such as walking or working, a special routine for those over 50, and stretches to do during spontaneous moments throughout the day. Once you learn how to stretch, you will be able to develop your own routines to suit your own particular needs.

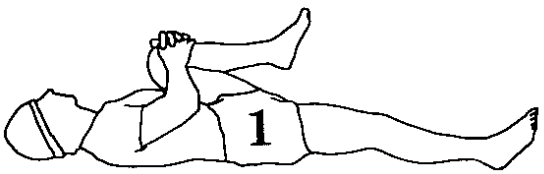
Be sure you are familiar with the individual stretches before you try these routines. For instructions, refer to the page number below each drawing.

In the Morning 100
Walking 101
Everyday Stretches 102
Over 50 104
Indoor and Outdoor Work 106
For Lower Back Tension 107
Sitting 108
TV 109
Spontaneous Stretches 110

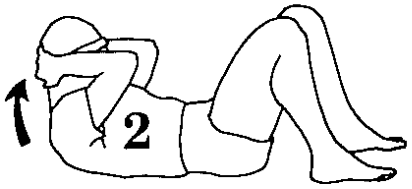
In The Morning

Approximately 5 Minutes

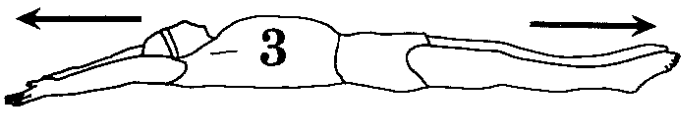
Start the day with some relaxed stretches so your body can function more naturally. Tight and stiff muscles will feel good from comfortable stretching. It may be helpful to take a hot shower to get warm before you stretch.



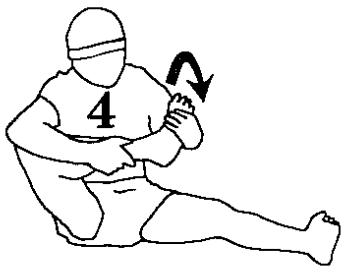
20 seconds
each leg
(page 28)



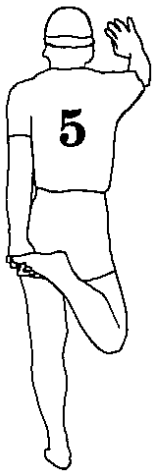
3 times
5 seconds each
(page 25)



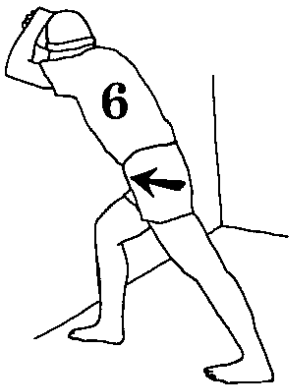
2 times
5 seconds each
(page 28)



10 times
each direction
(page 31)



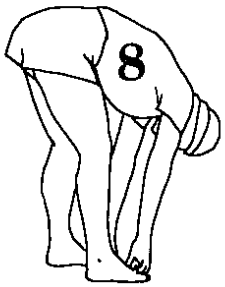
20 seconds
each leg
(page 74)



30 seconds
each leg
(page 71)



30 seconds
(page 53)



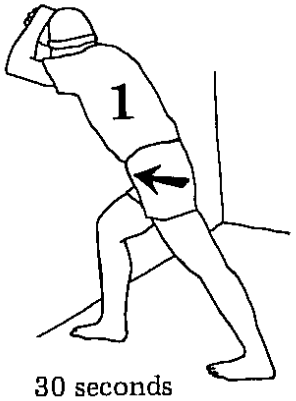
20 seconds
(page 52)

Before and After

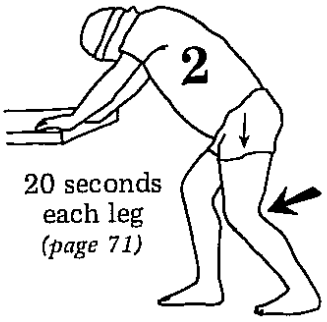
Walking

Approximately 7 Minutes

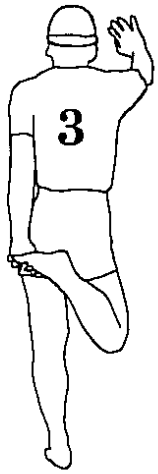
These stretches will make the movements of walking feel free and easy.



30 seconds
each leg
(page 71)



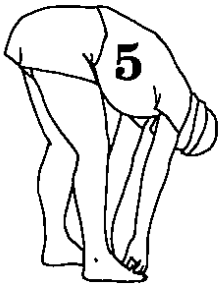
20 seconds
each leg
(page 71)



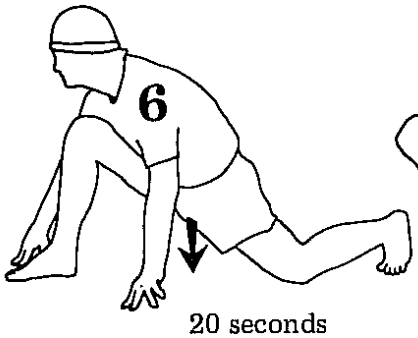
15 seconds
each leg
(page 74)



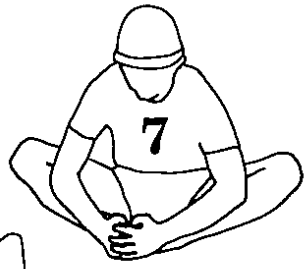
30 seconds
(page 53)



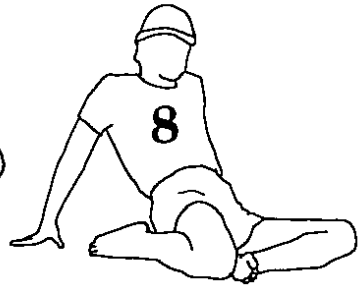
30 seconds
(page 52)



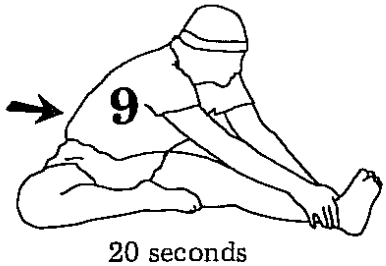
20 seconds
each leg
(page 48)



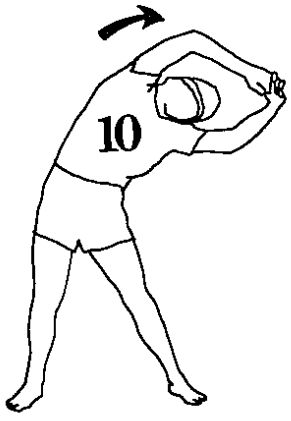
30 seconds
(page 56)



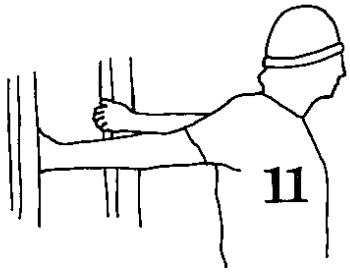
20 seconds
each leg
(page 33)



20 seconds
each leg
(page 36)



8 seconds
each side
(page 78)



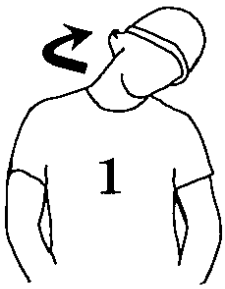
30 seconds
(page 44)

Everyday Stretches

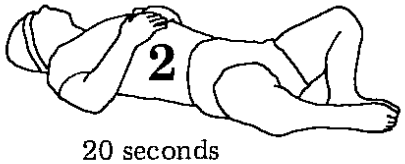
Approximately 10-15 Minutes

Use these everyday stretches to fine-tune your muscles. This is a general routine that emphasizes stretching and relaxing the muscles most frequently used during the normal day-to-day activities.

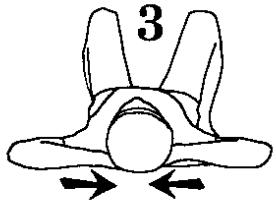
In the simple tasks of everyday living, we often use our body in strained or awkward ways, creating stress and tension. A kind of muscular *rigor mortis* sets in. If you can set aside 10-15 minutes every day for stretching, you will offset this accumulated tension so you can use your body with greater ease.



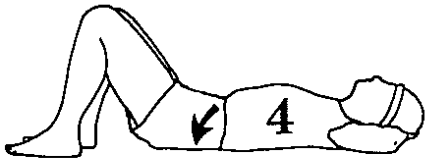
5 times
each direction
(page 89)



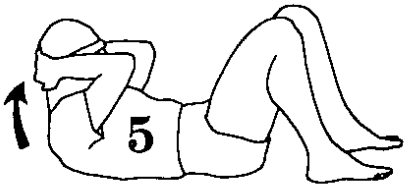
20 seconds
(page 24)



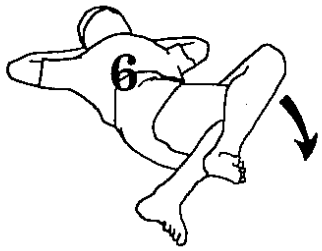
shoulder blade pinch
2 times
5 seconds each
(page 26)



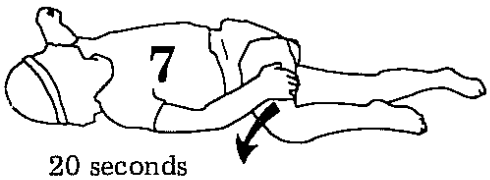
flatten lower back
2 times
5 seconds each
(page 27)



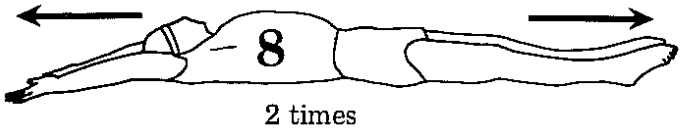
3 times
5 seconds each
(page 25)



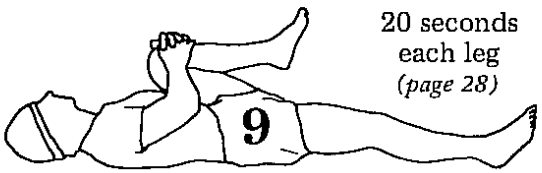
20 seconds
each side
(page 24)



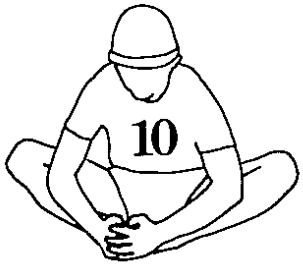
20 seconds
each side
(page 29)



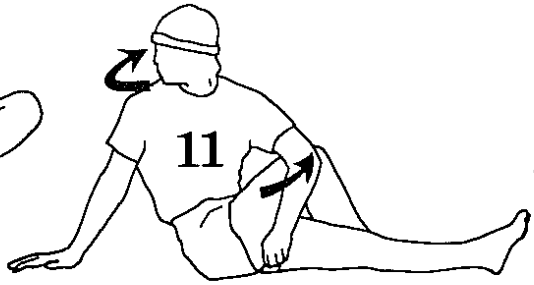
2 times
5 seconds each
(page 28)



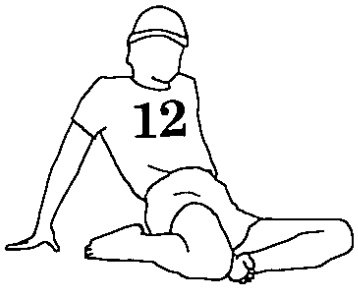
20 seconds
each leg
(page 28)



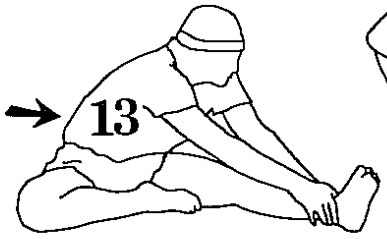
30 seconds
(page 56)



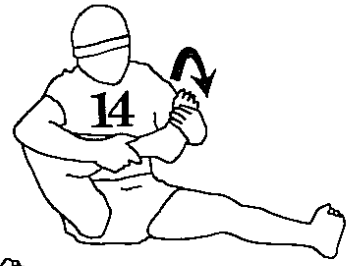
10 seconds
each side
(page 59)



30 seconds
each leg
(page 33)



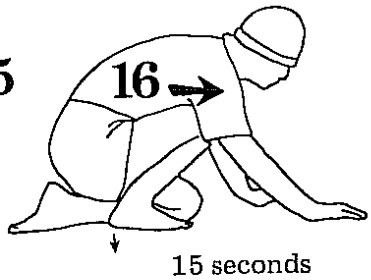
20 seconds
each leg
(page 36)



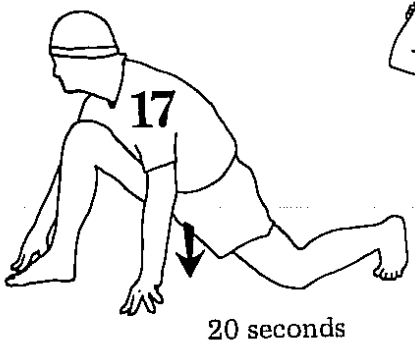
10 times
each direction
(page 31)



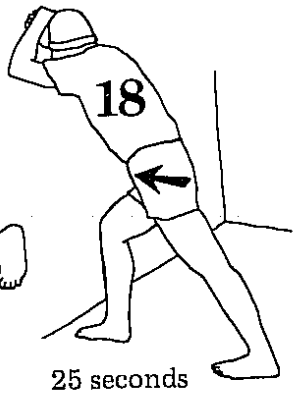
30 seconds
each foot
(page 31)



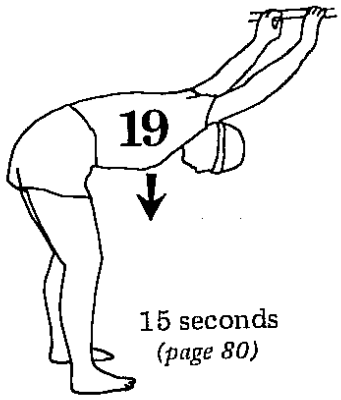
15 seconds
each leg
(page 47)



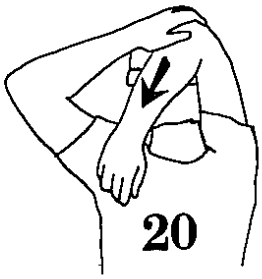
20 seconds
each leg
(page 48)



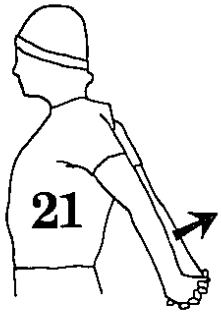
25 seconds
each leg
(page 71)



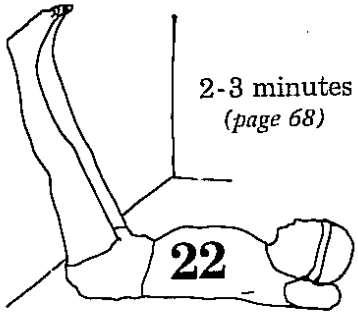
15 seconds
(page 80)



10 seconds
each arm
(page 41)



10 seconds
(page 44)



2-3 minutes
(page 68)

Stretches For Those

Over 50

Approximately 5-6 Minutes

It is never too late to start stretching. In fact, the older we get, the more important it becomes to stretch on a regular basis.

With age and inactivity, the body gradually loses its range of motion; muscles can lose their elasticity and become weak and tight. But the body has an amazing capacity for the recovery of lost flexibility and strength if a regular program of fitness is followed.

The basic method of stretching is the same regardless of differences in age and flexibility. *Stretching properly means that you do not go beyond your own comfortable limits.* You don't have to try to copy the drawings in this book. Learn to stretch your body without force; stretch by how you feel. It will take time to loosen up tight muscle groups that have been this way for years, but it can be done with patience and regularity. If you have any doubts about what you should be doing, consult your physician *before you start.*

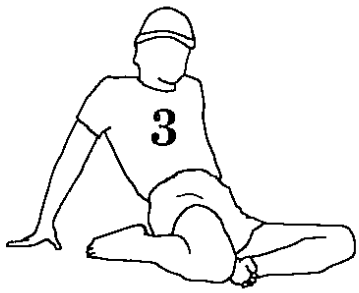
Here is a series of stretches to help restore and maintain flexibility.



20 seconds
(page 58)

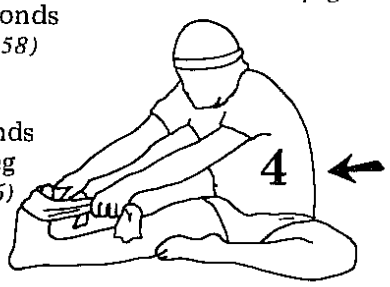


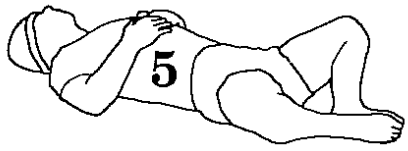
30 seconds
(page 56)



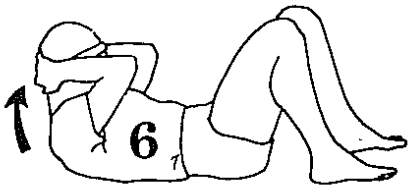
20 seconds
each leg
(page 33)

20 seconds
each leg
(page 36)

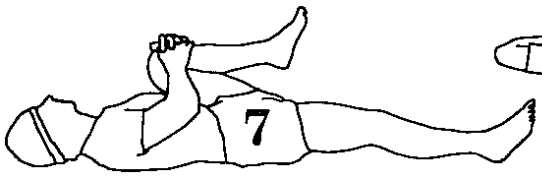




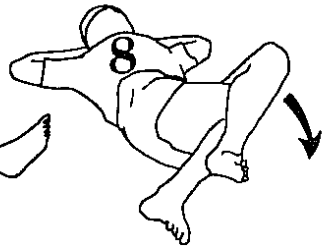
30 seconds
(page 24)



5 seconds each
3 times
(page 25)



20 seconds
each side
(page 28)



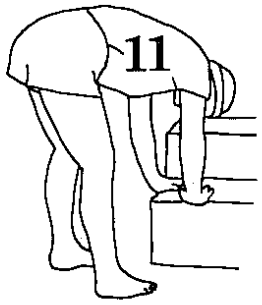
20 seconds
each side
(page 24)



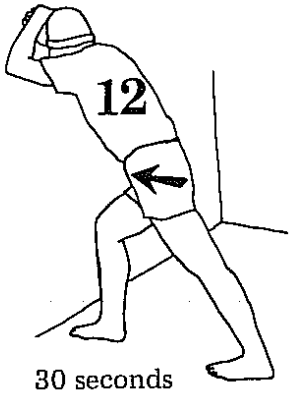
3 times
5 seconds each
(page 28)



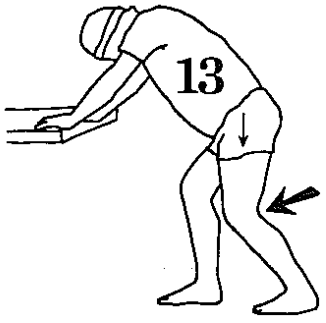
20 seconds
(page 53)



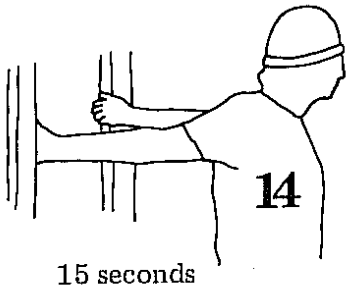
20 seconds
(page 54)



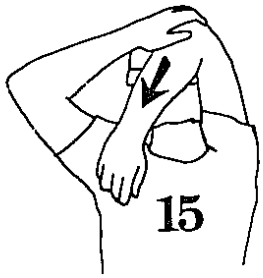
30 seconds
each leg
(page 71)



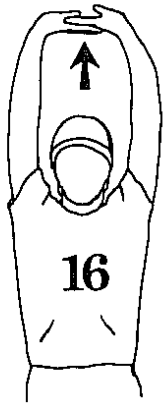
15 seconds
each leg
(page 71)



15 seconds
(page 44)



10 seconds
each arm
(page 41)



10 seconds
(page 43)

Before & After

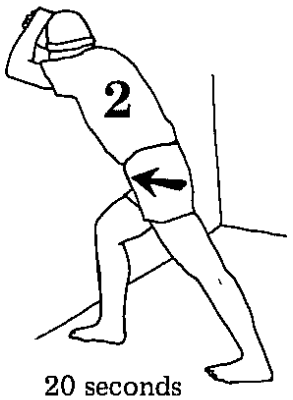
Indoor and Outdoor Work

Approximately 5 Minutes

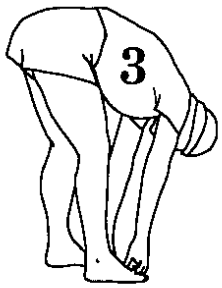
Before you do any indoor or outdoor work such as cleaning, painting, gardening, digging, building, carrying heavy loads, do a few minutes of easy stretching. This will help get your body ready to work efficiently without the usual muscle tightness and stiffness that results from this kind of work. Stretch to reduce muscle tension and make work easier.



30 seconds
(page 53)



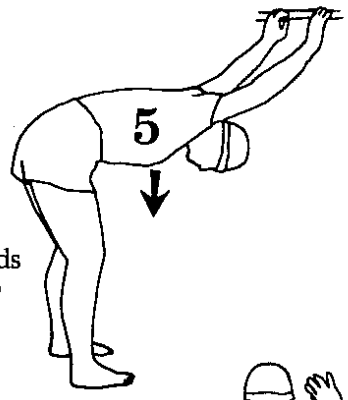
20 seconds
each leg
(page 71)



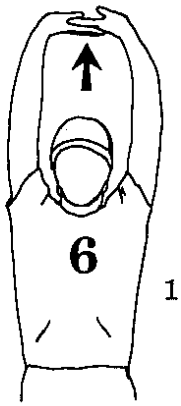
20 seconds
(page 52)



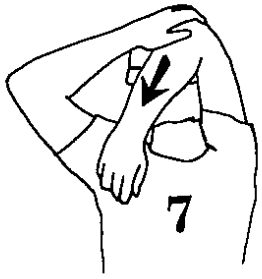
20 seconds
(page 65)



15 seconds
(page 80)



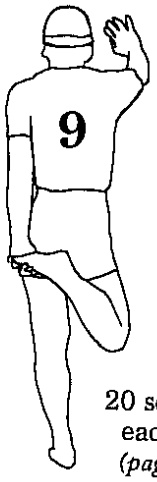
2 times
10 seconds each
(page 43)



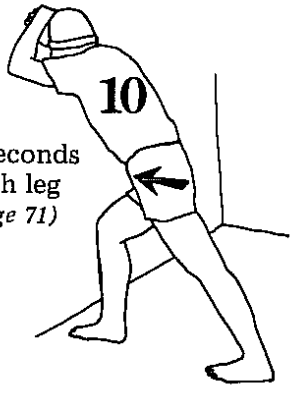
10 seconds
each arm
(page 41)



5 times
each direction
(page 89)



20 seconds
each leg
(page 74)



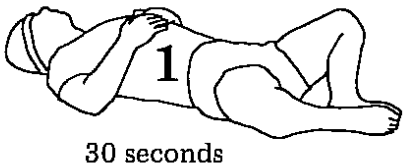
20 seconds
each leg
(page 71)

For

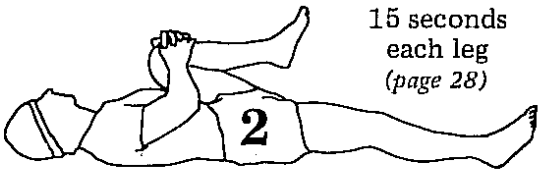
Lower Back Tension

Approximately 4 Minutes

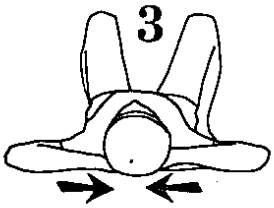
These stretches are designed for the relief of muscular low back pain and are also good for relieving tension in the upper back, shoulders and neck. For best results do them every night just before going to sleep. Hold only stretch tensions that feel good to you. *Do not overstretch.*



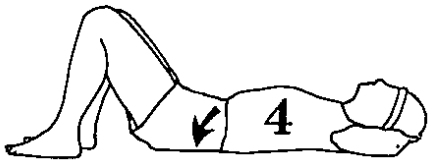
30 seconds
(page 24)



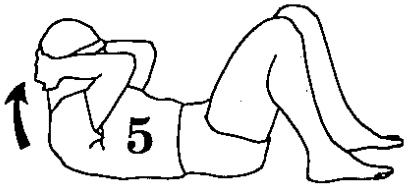
15 seconds
each leg
(page 28)



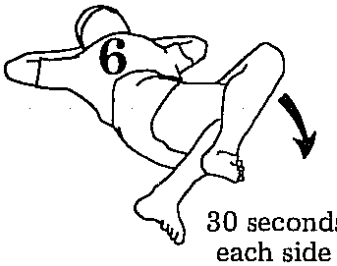
shoulder blade pinch
2 times
8 seconds each
(page 26)



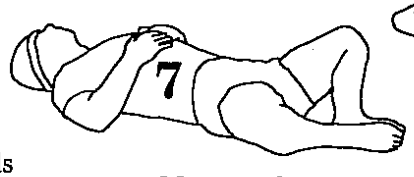
flatten lower back
2 times
10 seconds each
(page 27)



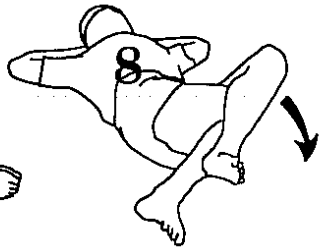
3 times
5 seconds each
(page 25)



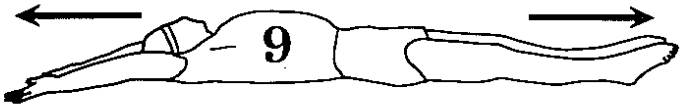
30 seconds
each side
(page 24)



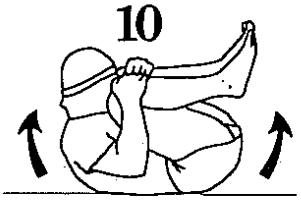
30 seconds
(page 24)



20 seconds
each side
(page 24)



2 times
5 seconds each
(page 28)



25 seconds
(page 29)



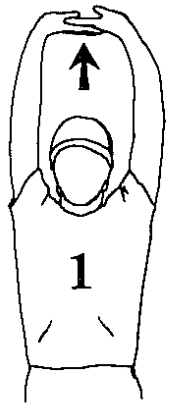
(page 30)

After

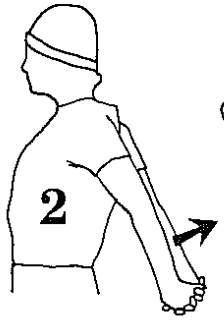
Sitting

Approximately 5 Minutes

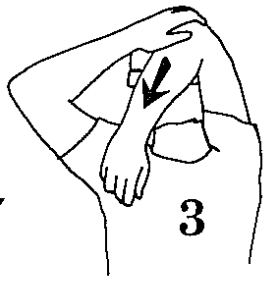
This is a series of stretches to do after sitting for a long time. The sitting position causes the blood to pool in the lower legs and feet, the hamstring muscles to tighten up, and the back and neck muscles to become stiff and tight. These stretches will improve your circulation and loosen up those areas that are tense from a prolonged period of sitting.



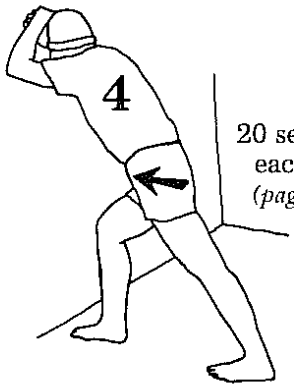
15 seconds
(page 43)



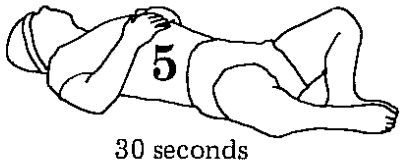
10 seconds
(page 44)



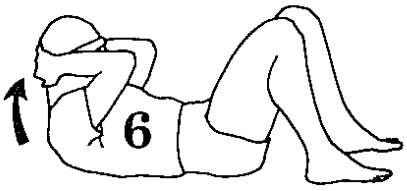
10 seconds
each arm
(page 41)



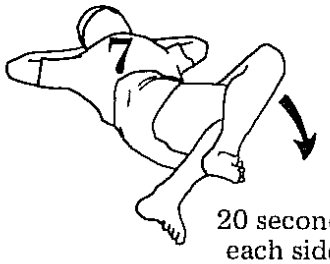
20 seconds
each leg
(page 71)



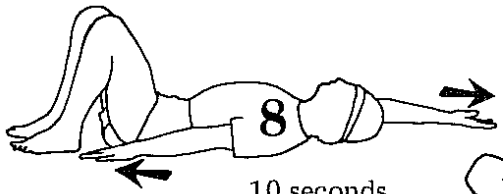
30 seconds
(page 24)



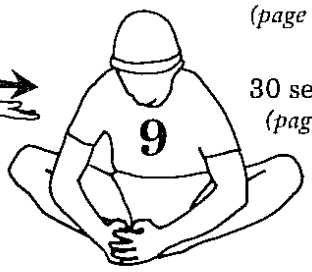
2 times
5 seconds each
(page 25)



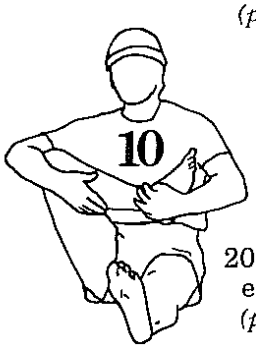
20 seconds
each side
(page 24)



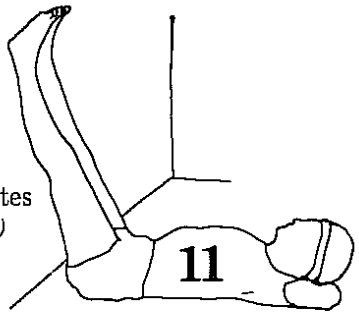
10 seconds
each side
(page 27)



30 seconds
(page 56)



20 seconds
each leg
(page 32)



2-3 minutes
(page 68)

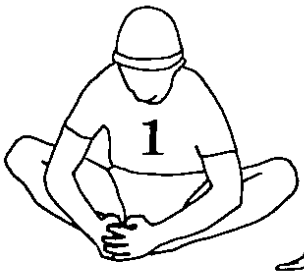


5 times
each direction
(page 89)

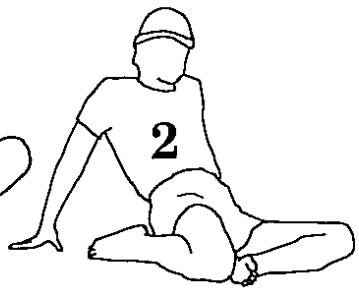
While Watching

TV

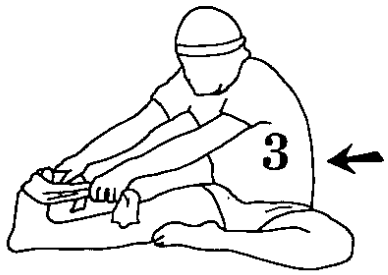
Many people think they don't have enough time to stretch, yet watch several hours of television a night. If you want to help yourself, stretch as you watch TV. This will not interfere with your viewing and you will be accomplishing something during otherwise sedentary times.



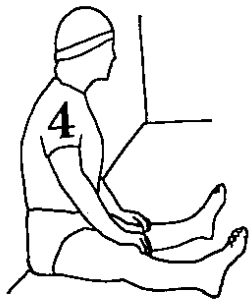
(page 56)



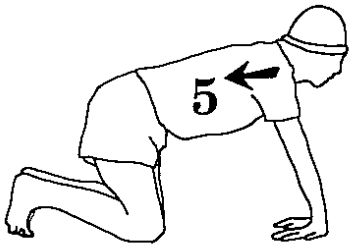
(page 33)



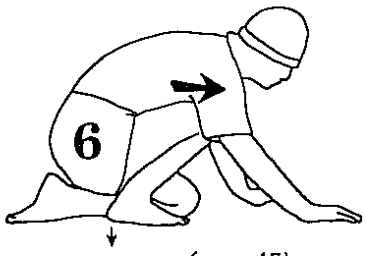
(page 36)



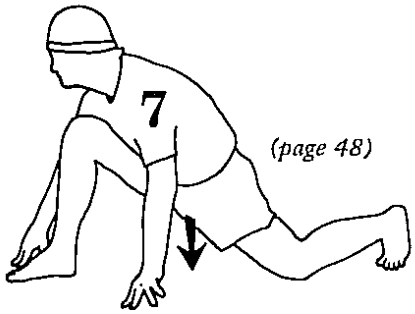
(page 94)



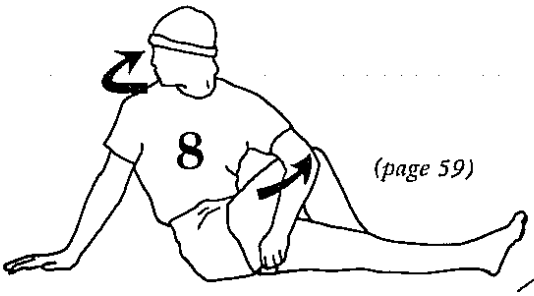
(page 40)



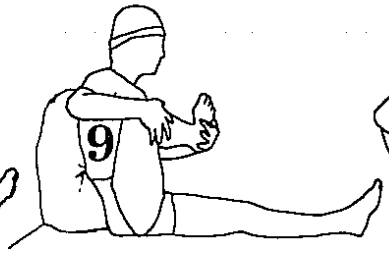
(page 47)



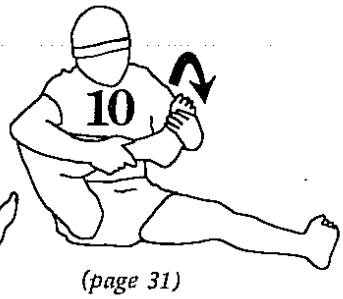
(page 48)



(page 59)



(page 32)



(page 31)

(page 31)





(page 89)

Spontaneous Stretches

You can't say you don't have time to stretch. Reading a paper, talking on the phone, waiting for a bus . . . these are times for easy, relaxed stretching. Be creative; think of stretches to do during normally wasted time.

