

Press Up: Sphinx Position



Start by lying on your stomach. Begin to raise your upper body slowly, while keeping your pelvis flat to the floor. Try to create an arch in your low back. Go up only as far as you can without discomfort. Work up to the position shown here, also known in Yoga as the Sphinx position.

Superman



Start by lying on your stomach with face down. Raise your shoulders and hold yourself up with your arms extended in front of you. Hold for 30 seconds, then return to starting position. Repeat exercise ten times.

Standing Back Extension



This exercise can be done at work or any other place where doing a press up on the floor is practical. Start with hands on low back. Slowly arch backward as far as you can without discomfort. Hold only for three seconds, and return to starting position. Repeat five times.

The "Dog"



Start on all fours. Create an arch in your low back by lowering your abdomen toward the ground, while at the same time raising your head. Hold for 30 seconds. Go back to starting position. Repeat exercise 20 times.

Single Knee To Chest



Start with both legs and heels together flat on the ground. Raise your right knee upward and pull it toward your chest with your hands. Hold for 30 seconds, then return to starting position. Repeat with other leg. Do ten repetitions with each leg, alternating between right and left leg.

Piriformis Stretch



Lie down with your right knee up, and both arms stretching outward at 45 degree angles away from your body. Slowly let your right knee fall across your body to the ground. Keep your shoulders as flat as possible. Hold for 30 seconds. Return to starting position. Raise your left knee and let it fall across your body to the right side. Hold for 30 seconds. Return to starting position. Do the exercise ten times, alternating knees.

Piriformis Standing



This exercise can be done at work, or during recreational activities such as golf, because it can relieve back pain without requiring you to lay down on the floor for the standard piriformis stretch. To help you maintain your balance, you can lean against a wall or tree. Start by raising your knee in front of you. Slowly swing your knee across your body and hold for ten seconds. Repeat with other knee.

Body Flexion



Start on your knees with hands across abdomen. Slowly lean forward and let your body curl forward, keeping your head off the ground. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat several times.

Body Flexion And Stretch



Start on your knees. Slowly lean forward and let your hands stretch outward and forward. Be sure to keep your head off the ground. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat several times.

Bend Over



Start by standing straight up. Cross your arms across your chest. Slowly bend over, allowing the weight of your upper body to stretch your back. Relax as you stretch both your back and the back of your legs. Hold for ten seconds. Return to stand up position. Repeat exercise 20 times.

Stretch To Foot



Start in a sitting position with legs extended and feet together. With your hands flat against the ground, slowly extend forward as far as you can comfortably. Hold for 30 seconds and relax. Repeat stretch ten times.

Advanced Back Stretch



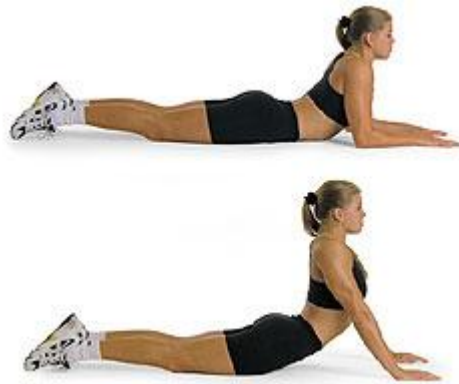
This exercise is more difficult than it looks. Start on all fours. Raise your right leg backward, and raise your left arm up reaching in front of you. Hold for ten seconds. Go back to starting position. Repeat position with left leg and right arm. Do the exercise ten times alternating legs/arms.

The Plow



This is an advanced yoga position called "the plow." It should be attempted **ONLY** after you are pain free and have mastered the simple back stretches involving extension and flexion. Start by lying on your back. Slowly raise both legs back over your head, using your outstretched arms to balance. Hold for 30 seconds and go back to starting position. Repeat ten times.

Press Up



Start by lying on your stomach. Begin to raise your upper body slowly, while keeping your pelvis flat to the floor. Try to create an arch in your low back. Go up only as far as you can without discomfort. Work up to the top position also known in Yoga as the Sphinx position. Then over several days, move on to the final position, with arms straight.