

6 Best Back Exercises



Rocking the knees and head in opposite directions

This exercise works in two ways. The gentle movement of your joints helps lubricate them, while the opposing movement of the head and knees unlocks tightness in the muscles. Keep the movement small and concentrate on doing it very smoothly. Continue for a minute or so.

Spinal stretch

This exercise loosens the sacro-iliac joints and can relieve some facet joints. These are often tight and cause back pain-like symptoms. Keeping both shoulders on the floor, roll one leg over and up as far as you can. Repeat on the other side. You may feel a 'crack' in your back which is your facet joints releasing pressure.

Piriformis Stretch

Lying on your back with both knees bent, cross one ankle over the opposite knee. Then pull the uncrossed leg towards you (use a belt if you can't reach). You will feel a sharp stretch in the buttocks of the crossed leg - this is the piriformis muscle. Hold for 3 deep breaths then do the other side.

Hamstring Stretch with a towel/strap

Let's face it - If you want to take the pressure off your lower back you need to increase your hamstring flexibility! Use a towel or strap around the ball of your foot if you like, keeping the leg as straight as possible and pull it towards you.

Hip Flexor Stretch

Probably the most under-rated stretch for the lower back. Kneeling on one knee, lunge forwards. Tighten your tummy muscles so that your back doesn't arch. If you do this correctly, you will feel a mild stretch in the front of your thigh or groin in your back leg. Hold for 3 deep breaths and repeat on the other side.

Core Stability

Lying on your front, propped on your elbows with your toes pulled back towards you. Lift your hips and knees from the floor and maintain a straight body line from shoulders to ankles. Pull your tummy in so you don't sag and keep the shoulder's directly above the elbows. Start with 20 seconds and build up to 2 minutes. If you feel any back pain, try some of the other exercises for a few weeks and try again. Don't forget to breathe!