

The Back Stretch

adapted from Tom Bisio's "The Texting Disease: What is Forward Head Syndrome"

The Back Stretch should be done on a thin rug or yoga mat, such as a yoga mat. It should not be done on a bed or soft cushiony surface.

Step 1

1. Lie on the floor, feet flat on the floor and knees bent.
2. Gently tilt your pelvis so the low back is flat on the floor.
3. Draw the chin in slightly to lengthen and straighten the neck. By tilting the pelvis and drawing in the chin, you should feel a faint traction on the whole spine.



STEP 1

Step 2

1. Raise the arms up so that they are perpendicular to the floor.
2. Make sure you reach up enough so that the shoulder blades come off the floor.



STEP 2

Step 3

1. Keep reaching forward as you let the arms cross.
2. The elbows are on the midline of the body
3. The arms hang. Do not hug yourself.



STEP 3

Rest this way for 10 -15 minutes.

Ideally do The Back Stretch twice a day.

If the position is initially uncomfortable for your neck and upper back, you can elevate your head with a few magazines or slim books. As the posture of your neck and upper back improves, you can gradually remove the magazines or books.

When you have finished lying in The Back Stretch for 10-15 minutes, roll on your side and get up slowly. Walk around for a few minutes to let the muscles relax, and let the body accommodate to the new information you are giving it.

How Does the Back Stretch Work?

- Lying on the floor in this position gently:
 - opens the inter-vertebral spaces, taking pressure off the discs.
- Lifting your shoulder blades off the floor
 - means you are lying on your ribs
 - allows the back muscles to engage in such a way that the head is drawn back towards its optimal position.
- The shoulder blade and arm position
 - allows the ribs to fall into their natural alignment.
- Having the arms crossed
 - gently rounds the back and softens the chest
 - relaxes the trapezius muscles
 - slackens the chest muscles which pull the shoulders and neck forward
 - fixes the scapula if they are too tight by eliminating any restrictions that might interfere with normal scapular movement.
 - Freeing the scapula further aids the neck in returning to its correct position, because the shoulder assembly largely hangs off the neck, and any imbalance in muscle tension relating to the shoulder assembly will affect the neck alignment.
- The entire set of alignments used in the Back Stretch Exercise returns the shoulder girdle and neck to their normal positions.