

# Stretching

## Stretching

Stretching is a vital part of a healthy fitness regimen. Getting ready for a job means more than lining up tools and material or sitting at a desk for extended periods of time.

Pre-shift stretching and warm-up exercises reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injuries by reducing fatigue, improving muscular balance and posture, and improving muscle coordination.

## Controls

### Tips for safe stretching:

- Stretch slowly to a comfortable position
- Remember to breathe normally
- Hold each stretch for at least 15-20 seconds
- Repeat each stretch 2-3 times.

## Example Stretching Exercises

### Warm up first

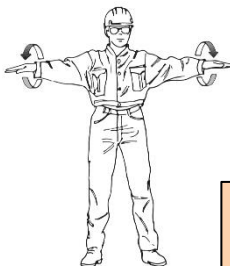
Muscles that are warm and loose are less likely to suffer injury than cold, tight ones.

### March in place

Stand in position. Raise your arms and legs in opposite directions. Make sure that your heels touch the ground. Continue 3 to 5 minutes.

### Arm Circles

Stand with arms raised horizontally and slightly in front of shoulders, palms down, and feet shoulder-width apart. Rotate arms in a forward circular motion for 15 seconds. Stop. Reverse the direction for 15 seconds. Repeat 3 to 5 times.



### Knee to chest stretch

Support yourself with one hand. With your free hand, pull your knee toward your chest and hold it for 15 to 20 seconds. Repeat with the other leg. Repeat 3 times for each leg.



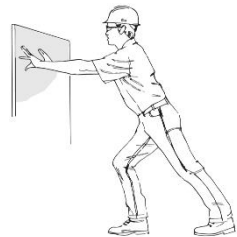
### Hip stretch

Stand with one foot in front of the other. Place your hands just above the knee of your front leg. Gently bend your front knee. Keep your back foot flat on the floor. Hold for 15 to 20 seconds. Repeat with the other leg. Repeat 3 times for each leg.



### Thigh stretch

Support yourself with one hand. With your free hand, bend your leg back and grasp your ankle. Gently pull your ankle towards your body. Keep your trunk straight. Hold for 15 to 20 seconds. Repeat with the other leg. Repeat 3 times for each leg.



### Calf stretch

Lean on a solid support with your outstretched hands. Bend one leg forward and extend the other leg straight behind you. Slowly move your hips forward. Keep the heel of your back leg on the ground. Hold for 15 to 20 seconds, relax and repeat with the other leg. Repeat 3 times each leg.

### Back stretch

Stand up and bend backwards, holding for 2 to 4 seconds. Repeat 3 times. This will help relieve lower back muscle tension. Do this stretch after working in a crouched, bent or stooped position.



**Caution:** If you have any doubts about your ability to complete the exercises safely, or if you feel any pain, then you should stop immediately.