



**BETTER POSTURE**  
**IN 30 DAYS**

# WHY IT MATTERS

"Stand up straight." That's timeless advice we've probably all heard at one time or another. It's worth heeding. Good posture is important to balance: by standing up straight, you center your weight over your feet. This also helps you maintain correct form while exercising, which results in fewer injuries and greater gains. And working on balance can even strengthen your abilities in tennis, golf, running, dancing, pickleball – and just about any other sport or activity.

Not an athlete? It still pays to have good balance. Just walking across the floor or down the block requires good balance. So do rising from a chair, going up and down stairs, carrying packages, and even turning to look behind you.

Poor posture isn't necessarily a bad habit, either. Physical reasons for poor posture include:

- Inflexible muscles that decrease range of motion (how far a joint can move in any direction). For example, overly tight, shortened hip muscles tug your upper body forward and disrupt your posture. Overly tight chest muscles can pull your shoulders forward.
- Muscle strength affects balance in a number of ways. The "core muscles" of the back, side, pelvis, and buttocks form a sturdy central link between your upper and lower body. Weak core muscles encourage slumping, which tips your body forward and thus off balance. Strong lower leg muscles also help keep you steady when standing.

The good news: You can improve your posture with a few simple exercises. Balance-specific workouts address posture and balance problems with exercises that build strength where it counts and stretches that loosen tight muscles. Quick posture checks in the mirror before and during balance exercises can also help you get the most from your regular workout. And increasing your core strength and flexibility can help you improve your posture noticeably in just a few weeks.

## GOOD POSTURE MEANS:

- chin parallel to the floor
- shoulders even (roll your shoulders up, back, and down to help achieve this)
- neutral spine (no flexing or arching to overemphasize the curve in your lower back)
- arms at your sides with elbows straight and even
- abdominal muscles braced
- hips even
- knees even and pointing straight ahead
- body weight distributed evenly on both feet.

When sitting down, keep your chin parallel to the floor; your shoulders, hips, and knees at even heights; and your knees and feet pointing straight ahead.





# THE PLAN

Every day we will focus on one aspect of improving our posture. These won't take long; only about 5-10 minutes each day. As with any goal, it's about consistency. If you stick with it, you WILL improve your posture. Fear not if you slip up one day. Just hop back on the next day and continue plugging away.

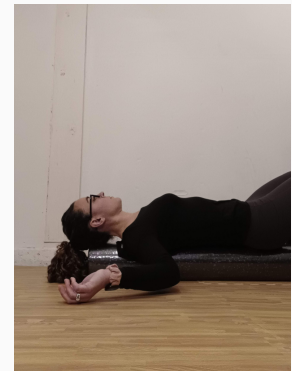
Step 1: Put a reminder in your calendar, put a post it on your fridge or bathroom mirror, set an alarm, or find another way to remind yourself and hold yourself accountable.

Step 2: Gather your equipment. You don't need much but you do need a yoga strap (long towel or even leggings work), light weights (cans of soup work well if you don't have weights), and a space to do your work

Step 3: Follow the guide! It's time to get to work!

# SUNDAYS

Stretching is where it's at on Sundays. Every Sunday follow these stretches to improve flexibility and mobility of your joints. It's important when stretching to try to relax as much as possible. Practice good breathing and it's important to be warm. I suggest doing these stretches after a walk or right after you get out of the shower. Hold each one for as much time as feels good. Intensity should be about a 7/10. It should feel uncomfortable but a good uncomfortable. Never painful.



# MONDAYS

Strength day. You've got to strengthen the back of body to allow your body to get into the right position when you aren't thinking about it. Do the following exercises 3 sets of 10 reps the first 2 weeks then increase to 3 sets of 15 reps thereafter.



## Belly T-Raises

With or without a weight, lay flat on the floor arms directly out to the side making a "T" shape. Only lifting your arms, lift up and hold for a second then slowly lower down.



## Bent Arm T-Raises

Similar to the belly T-raises except your arms are bent at 90 degrees. Be sure to left your elbows just as high as your hands.



## Band Pull Aparts

Grab a resistance band and with straight arms hold the band out in front of you about shoulder distance apart. Stretch the band all the way to a "T" so it hits your chest then slowly return to the start position. WITH STRAIGHT ARMS

# TUESDAYS

Mobility day. Mobility is different than flexibility. Flexibility is the muscle stretching. Mobility is the joint moving to it's full range of movement. Grab your weights and your strap for this one. Perform each exercise for 1 minute each.



Rotation with  
Dumbbell



Shoulder Pass  
Through



Reverse Fly  
"Bat Wings"

# WEDNESDAYS

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**Awareness day. Today we want to focus on building awareness. We can do all the exercises and stretches we want, but if we aren't aware of our posture throughout the day, we'll never improve it.**

**Week 1: Focus on how you brush your teeth. Are you hunched over? Are you leaning more weight on one foot more than the other?**

- When you brush your teeth, it's natural and necessary to lean forward over the sink. BUT you can adjust how you do this to help your posture. If you are standing with straight legs and leaning over, try bending them a bit. Support your back with one hand placed on the counter. Practice that deadlift posture as you lean forward hinging at the hips rather than hunching over.

**Week 2: Focus on how you sit in your car. Do you tend to lean more to one side? Are you reclining back? What is your left foot doing? Is it stretched out? Flat on the floor?**

- While sitting in the car, you want to make sure your weight is evenly distributed between both legs. No leaning to one side. For your legs, be sure both are extended equally. One leg should not be more bent than the other. If you have lumbar support, use it to make things more comfortable.

**Week 3: Focus on how you eat your meals. Do you sit on one foot? Are you hunched over with your shoulders?**

- Both feet should be flat on the floor and knees should be bent at 90 degrees. Weight should be equal on both sides. If you are using the back rest, your butt should be all the way to the back of the chair so your hips are at 90 degrees. To grab a bite to eat, hinge forward with that straight deadlift back rather than hunching over.

**Week 4: Focus on how you sit at the computer or watch TV. Do you use the back rest? Is your whole back touching the back rest?**

- This is similar to how you sit eating at the table above. If you work 8 hours (or so) at the computer, be sure you are checking in with yourself on your posture. You might start out well and then slowly start slouching as time goes on. That's ok! Just get in the habit of checking in and adjusting.



# THURSDAYS

You didn't think one day of stretching was enough did you? Nope! Just like on Sunday, it's important when stretching to try to relax as much as possible. Practice good breathing and it's important to be warm. I suggest doing these stretches after a walk or right after you get out of the shower. Hold each one for as much time as feels good. Intensity should be about a 7/10. It should feel uncomfortable but a good uncomfortable. Never painful.



# FRIDAYS

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That's right! Another strength day. But this time a few different exercises. Same concept: Strengthen the back of the body to pull your shoulders back. This time we are focusing on muscle endurance. You need to be able to hold these positions for long periods of time so its not uncomfortable to stand or sit in the correct posture.

Do the following exercises for 30 seconds each. Take a short rest then repeat 2 more times. When you feel ready (or perhaps it's too easy) increase the time to 40 seconds, 50 seconds, 1 minute, etc.



Try to get your elbows and forearms against the wall and hold



Try to get your elbows and forearms against the wall and hold - don't let your back arch

Lift and hold only your arms bent at 90 degrees



Lift everything up and off the floor and hold

# SATURDAYS

Mobility day. Time for different mobility drills to help our posture out. Again, perform each exercise for about 1 minute.



Do a shoulder roll but in the table top position



Really reach with your arm



Extend your arms overhead as far as possible without arching your back