

## Suncorp: Five stretches to do at home or on the go

Stretching has a whole lot of good things going for it. On top of being an effective way to improve your [flexibility](#), do it right and it can help to relieve [pain](#) and prevent poor [posture](#). Plus, research also shows that stretching can help to lower stress [levels](#), reduce anxiety and improve mental health and wellbeing.

So, far from being that thing you reserve for pre- or post-workout, it pays to incorporate a few stretches into your routine a couple of times a day whether you're working from home, relaxing on the weekend or taking a break on a long road trip. And luckily the same handful of stretches suits all of those situations. Working from the top down, here are five to try.

### The neck flex

- Facing forward, sit or stand up tall.
- Grasping the right side of your head with your left hand, gently pull your head so that your left ear moves towards your left shoulder. Hold for 20 seconds before repeating on the other side.
- To finish, interlock your hands at the back of your head and gently pull your head down so your chin moves towards your chest. Hold for 20 [seconds](#).



### The shoulder stretch

- Standing up, lace your fingers together in front of you and, palms facing out and away from you, raise your arms to shoulder height, reaching out as far as you can in front of you and focusing on separating your shoulder blades as you do. Hold for 20 seconds.
- Repeat the action behind your back by interlacing your fingers behind you and, with your palms facing inwards towards your back, pull your shoulders back and lift your arms out and up as far as you can. Hold for 20 [seconds](#).



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## The side bend

- Standing up with your feet shoulder-width apart, place your right hand on your right hip and raise your left arm above your head.
- Keeping your left arm extended and your right hand on your hip, move your right elbow towards the floor and your left arm up and over to the right, so that you feel the stretch all the way down your left-hand side.
- Hold for 20 seconds before repeating on the other [side](#).



## The back curl

- Standing up straight with your feet shoulder-width apart, slowly bend forward at the waist, letting your arms hang down in front of you.
- Concentrating on your breathing, curve your spine down, imagining one vertebra moving at a time, until your finger tips are touching or are as close to your toes as possible.
- Hold for 20 seconds before slowly uncurling your back and standing [up](#) straight.



## The calf lunge

- Standing up straight with your feet shoulder-width apart, step forward with your right foot.
- Bend your right knee — making sure your knee doesn't extend over your toes — while keeping your left leg as straight as possible behind you and pushing your left heel towards the floor.
- Hold for 20 seconds before repeating on the other side.

