

2-Minute Time-Outs



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Our bodies aren't meant to sit still for long periods. Yet it's easy for hours to go by without getting up from your chair. In the short term, this may not be a problem, but over the day, your muscles may begin to tighten — leading to fatigue, loss of focus, and decreased productivity.

2-minute time-outs can prevent these symptoms. Plan quick breaks to actively stretch and move your muscles. Some guidelines:

- Schedule at least 2 in the morning and 2 in the afternoon.
- Space them 1-2 hours apart. For many, 90-minute intervals work, while others need to stretch and move more often.
- What you do is less important than *doing* it. The idea is to disengage mentally from your work while fully engaging in something physical.
- Try different activities throughout the day. If possible, get away from your workstation, even if it's just a few yards.

Ideas:

- Get up and take a water break
- Walk up and down the stairs
- Deliver messages in person
- Do 10 jumping jacks in the conference room or your office
- Visit a coworker and ask about their latest vacation
- Go and tell someone how much you appreciate their help
- Step outside or look out a window.

Stretches for Relieving Tension:

Side Neck Stretch

1. Face forward, with your head straight up.
2. Tilt your head to one side, gently pushing your ear toward your shoulder; hold for 20-30 seconds.
3. Lift your head into an upright position.
4. Relax and repeat on other side.



Arm and Shoulder Stretch

1. Lace your fingers together and turn your palms facing out.
2. Straighten your arms.
3. Hold for 20-30 seconds.
4. Relax and repeat.



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Strengthening Exercises:

Lunge

1. Stand with both feet together.
2. While maintaining a tall posture, take a giant step forward, bending the forward knee and keeping your knee directly above your foot.
3. Press forcefully off the forward leg to return to the starting stance. Alternate 10 times on each leg.



Calf Raises

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and toes pointing forward.
2. Keep your knees straight and raise your heels off the floor.
3. Lift as high as you can and then return slowly to the starting position. 

