

***Simple Yoga for the Chair-bound.**

Set a timer for about 4 minutes, and keep a check on the length of the holds until you are familiar with the sequence. As it involves some deep breathing, it is important to take normal breaths in between stretches to allow your diaphragm to relax and avoid hyperventilation. Make sure your feet are supported, either on the floor or on a couple of thick books.

- Sit upright, hips well back onto the chair. Linking your fingers behind the back of chair, roll your shoulder back and lift your arms. (You may not get very far at first, but this is a strong stretch on the upper chest and arms, so a little is still a good thing!) Breathe in slowly and lift your chest, feeling your lungs expand. (20 seconds.)
- Release gently and take a couple of normal breaths in and out. Repeat twice more. (40 seconds.)
- Sitting as before, link your fingers closely and put extend your arms in front of you. Turn your palms away and draw your shoulders back. (Tuck your tailbone towards your heels, and keep checking to see it has stayed there through this sequence.) (10 seconds)
- Raise your arms straight up and hold, allowing your side ribs to slowly stretch and open. (10 seconds)
- Bring your hands down in front of you and take a normal breath in and out. (10 seconds)
- Stretch your arms up again, drawing your shoulders down your back. (10 seconds.)
- Finally, bring your hands back down onto your thighs, and allow your arms to rest, keeping your shoulders back and your chest open.
- Stretch your left arm forward, swing it round behind you and place your hand against your spine, as high up as you can reach. Stretch your right arm up and bend the elbow, taking the hand down your back to meet the left hand. Clasp your fingers together, stretching your elbows away from each other and keeping your head straight. (10 seconds)
- Bring your hands back down onto your thighs, and allow your arms to rest, keeping your shoulders back and your chest open. (10 seconds)
- Repeat the stretch on the other side. (If you have trouble catching your hands, and most people do at first, use a tie or a belt to help.) (10 seconds)
- Finally, bring your hands back down onto your thighs, and allow your arms to rest, keeping your shoulders back and your chest open. (10 seconds.)
- Place your right hand outside your left knee and your left hand on the back of your chair. Turn your trunk to the left, breathing steadily, and turning your head last of all. Do these twists slowly

and use your exhalations to help you turn a little more, keeping your shoulders level – ask someone to tell you if one has lifted, as it's hard to see for yourself.(20 seconds.)

- Come back to the centre and repeat to the right. (20 seconds.)
- Repeat to the left and right once more. (40 seconds.)

The object of this four minute sequence is to counteract some of the effects of long periods of sitting, taking the shoulders back and down and opening and expanding the chest. By lifting the trunk, the downward pressure on inner organs is relieved. The sequence will tone and strengthen your arms, refresh your brain and improve your lung function. Repeat two or three times a day, whenever you feel you need a lift!

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