

# Chair workout

## Get ready to warm up!



Focus on posture: Sit on your sits bones (if you sit on your hands, you can probably feel them) rather than your tailbone. Tighten your belly (think about bringing your belly button toward your spine), lift the rib cage, hold your neck long and straight, and tuck your chin down and back so you feel a long stretch on the back of your neck. “Feel like you have a string pulling up from the top of your head,”

## March in place



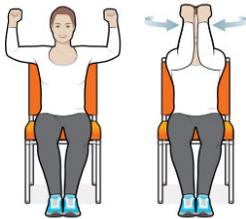
While you’re holding an upright posture, march in place with your seat firmly planted. Swing the opposite arm as you march each foot forward.

## Seated jumping jack



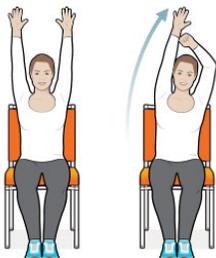
It’s no great leap to modify some traditional moves. Nicole Nichols, an ACE-certified personal trainer and fitness expert at [sparkpeople.com](http://sparkpeople.com), recommends the seated jumping jack. Start with knees bent and arms resting at your sides; then extend your legs, straight and wide, with heels on the floor, and raise your arms in a V. Then bring your limbs back to the center. Repeat for several minutes.

## Do the “peekaboo”



This will work your entire upper body, says Langdon. Form a goalpost with your arms: Keep your upper arms (shoulders to elbows) parallel to the floor and your lower arms (elbows to hands) perpendicular to it. Bring your forearms together in front of your face. Return your arms to the starting point, squeezing your shoulder blades together, and repeat as long as you can hold proper form. Your back, chest, and arms will get a workout.

## Release some tension



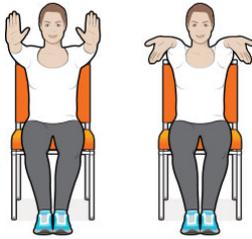
With the best posture you can muster, stretch and reach your arms overhead so that you’re lengthening your spine. Alternate moving your hands as though you’re climbing a rope, pulling yourself up. You’ll notice that you’re getting movement in your rib cage and spine.

## Move your shoulders



Bring your shoulders forward, up to your ears, roll down, and then relax. Do the same in reverse. Repeat as long as it feels good

## Focus on extremities



Rotate your palm so your fingertips point toward the ceiling and then rotate your palms towards the floor. Repeat until you feel the stretch.

## Let's move to the workout!

### Chair Squat



Benefits: Works hips and thighs

How to do it: Stand in front of the chair with your legs shoulder-width apart. Squat down like you are sitting on the chair but without actually touching it. Maintain a proper position: back straight, knees above the feet, weight on the heels. Keep your hands together, arms bent at the elbows. Straighten your legs to go back to the starting position. Repeat the movement 20 times.

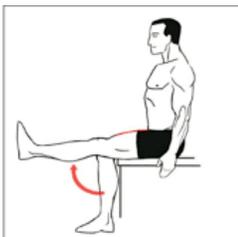
### Back Leg Raises



Benefits: Works your bottom and your lower back muscles

How to do it: Stand behind a chair. Slowly lift your right leg straight back – don't bend your knees or point your toes. Hold that position for one second, then gently bring your leg back down. Repeat this ten to 15 times per leg.

### Leg Extensions



Benefits: Works your front thigh muscle

How to do it: Sit on the edge of your chair with your arms by your sides. Extend your right leg out straight and flex your foot so that just the right heel is on the floor (keeping your foot flexed engages the muscles in the shins and ankle). Lift your leg up as high as you can without rounding your back. Hold for 3 counts then lower. Repeat with the other leg. Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps on each leg.

## Bent Over With Arm Lift

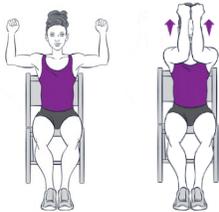
Benefits: Works your upper back muscles



How to do it: Sit on the edge of the chair and lean forward while keeping your lower back naturally arched. Your palms should be facing each other. Raise your arms straight out to your side. Pause and then slowly return to the starting position. Repeat the exercise 25 times.

## Chest Squeeze

Benefits: Works your chest muscles



How to do it: Form a goalpost with your arms: Keep your upper arms (shoulders to elbows) parallel to the floor and your lower arms (elbows to hands) perpendicular to it. Bring your forearms together in front of your face. Press forearms together and lift arms 1 inch, squeezing through chest. Return your arms to the starting point, squeezing your shoulder blades together, and repeat as long as you can hold proper form. Your back, chest, and arms will get a workout.

## Arm Circles

Benefits: Works shoulders, improves posture



How to do it: Raise your arms straight out to your sides, to form a T shape, and press your shoulder blades together. Extend arms with palms down, thumbs facing forward, and do 20 forward circles with your arms. Flip your palms up, thumbs facing behind you, and do 20 backward circles with your arms. Repeat 2 to 3 times.

## Seated Press-Ups

Benefits: Works the triceps, relieves spinal compression



How to do it: Sitting in a chair with your feet firmly planted on the floor, place your hands on the arm rests of the chair and press down, raising your body off the chair. Extend your arms straight and allow your hips and buttocks to lift up off the chair. Keep your head lined up over your pelvis. Allow your spine to “dangle” and unravel straight down, creating space between each vertebrae. Hold this position or push up and down to work the backs of the arms more. Repeat 4 times if holding; work up to 3 sets of 10 reps if lifting and lowering.



## Oblique Twist



Benefits: Works obliques and core

How to do it: Sitting in a chair with both hands behind your head, take your right elbow and twist your torso so that your elbow touches your left knee, while bending forward so you feel your abdominal muscles contract. Return to an upright position and then repeat, taking the left elbow and bringing it down to the right knee. Work up to 3 sets of 10 reps.

## Knee Tucks



Benefit: Works the core muscles

How to do it: Sit tall (chest high and shoulders down) on the front half of your chair. Grasp the sides lightly with your hands and lean back slightly as you tighten your abs and bring your right knee up to chest height. Lower it as you raise your left knee on the next rep. Alternate sides. If you get really good at this, try lifting both knees at once, even just a few inches. Do up to 5 reps per leg.

## Let's stretch!

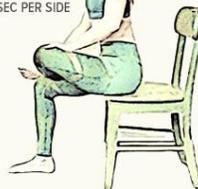


SEATED CAT COW | 8 BREATHS



SIDE STRETCH  
8 BREATHS PER SIDE

SEATED FIGURE 4  
30 SEC PER SIDE



SEATED GENTLE BACKBEND  
8 BREATHS



SEATED SPINAL TWIST | 8 BREATHS PER SIDE



SEATED FORWARD FOLD | 30 SECS



BOUND NECK STRETCH  
30 SEC PER SIDE

