

DESKUNLOCK

Free educational guide

Desk Mobility Plan

A breath-led sequence for people who work at a laptop.
Open the front. Move gently. No equipment.

~7–10 minutes

8 steps

Breath-led

Open the front

Educational fitness content. Not medical advice.

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GETTING STARTED

Before you begin

This guide is free educational mobility content for people who sit at desks. It is not medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Stop if something feels wrong. Consult a qualified professional if you have an injury, medical condition, dizziness, numbness, or pain.

THE USEFUL FLIP

After laptop hours, many people only stretch the neck and upper traps. Those areas can feel tight while carrying load, while the front (chest and front of shoulders) is often the restricted side.

Long screen time is commonly linked with shorter tissue in the front of the shoulders and chest, and with muscles in the back of the shoulders that get overstretched and underused. Opening the front and waking support muscles (including lower traps) is the emphasis here.

That's a general desk pattern, not a diagnosis of your body. Individuals vary. This routine de-emphasizes aggressive upper-neck stretching as the main event.

30-SECOND SELF-CHECK

Optional observation — not a medical test.

01

Stand or sit tall

Easy posture. Soft jaw. No force.

02

Look up slowly

Toward the ceiling — zero push.
Stop at strain.

03

Notice the front

Restriction in throat or chest can mean the front is limited.

Stop if anything hurts.

Sharp pain, dizziness, numbness, or known injury? Skip this guide and talk with a qualified professional.

THE METHOD

Breath first (and last)

Slow, deliberate breathing is how we practice every stretch. Calm, counted breaths (including belly-first breathing) are a simple way many people settle the body — we use a similar pace while moving.

Warm-up & cool-down · 4 rounds

Palms forward

- Stand easy, palms facing forward.
- In ~4s: belly first, then chest expands.
- Soft hold ~5s at the top of the breath.
- Out through the nose ~4s — empty without strain.
- Brief 1s pause. Repeat ×4.

During each stretch

4 · 1 · 4 · 1 cycle

- In 4s: expand chest; gently meet the stretch (no pain).
- Hold 1s at a comfortable peak.
- Out nose 4s: relax into available range.
- Pause 1s.
- If you cannot breathe easily, ease off.

In 4

Expand

Hold 1

Peak

Out 4

Release

Pause 1

Reset

Breathing is the governor.

On the inhale, gently meet the stretch. On the exhale, relax into available range. If breathing is hard, you're pushing too far — ease off until the breath is easy again.

THE FULL ROUTINE

Eight steps · 7–10 minutes

About 7–10 minutes including breath. Easy range only. Skip anything that feels wrong. No equipment required.

01 Standing breath — palms forward

~1 min · 4 rounds

Warm-up: stand easy with palms facing forward. In 4s (belly first, then chest), soft hold 5s, out through the nose 4s. Brief pause. Four rounds total.

Feel where: ribs and chest expanding without shoulder shrug.

02 Chest opener (doorway or clasped hands)

~60–90s

Doorway: place forearms on the frame, one foot forward, gently lean until you feel the front of the chest and shoulders. Or clasp hands behind you and lift slightly while lifting the chest. Use the 4 · 1 · 4 · 1 breath throughout.

Feel where: front of chest and shoulders — never sharp pain.

03 Soft front opening (optional)

~45–60s · very gentle

From easy upright posture, allow a tiny lift of the chin only if 100% comfortable — or simply stay tall with palms forward and breathe into the front of the neck and chest. No forcing the ceiling look. One or two easy breath cycles.

Feel where: gentle length in the front — stop at the first strain.

04 Seated thoracic rotation

5 each side

Sit tall at the edge of a chair. Cross arms over the chest or hold opposite shoulders. Rotate the mid-back left and right with the breath (inhale to prepare, exhale to rotate). Keep the hips quiet; move from the ribs, not the neck.

Feel where: mid-back and ribs — not a crank of the neck.

Steps 5–8

05 Standing hip flexor stretch

30s per side

Half-kneeling or staggered stance. Tuck the pelvis slightly, then shift forward until you feel the front of the rear hip. Hands on a chair for balance if needed. Avoid a hard low-back arch. Breathe with 4 · 1 · 4 · 1.

Feel where: front of hip on the back leg.

06 Lower-trap activation — prone Y

5–8 easy reps

Lie face-down on a mat (or lean over a firm bed or table edge). Arms in a soft Y shape, thumbs toward the ceiling. Lightly lift the arms and a whisper of chest without shrugging the upper traps. Think “shoulder blades slide toward the back pockets.” Keep effort low.

Feel where: mid/lower shoulder blade area — not a neck squeeze.

07 Forward fold (soft knees) — optional

~30s · optional

Feet under hips, soft knees, hinge only as far as comfortable. Let the head hang heavy — do not pull on the neck. Easy breath. Skip entirely if it bothers your back.

Feel where: backs of the legs.

08 Cool-down breath — palms forward

~1 min · 4 rounds

Same sequence as the warm-up: palms forward, in 4s (belly then chest), soft hold 5s, out nose 4s. Four rounds. Optionally notice whether there is a little more room to breathe — curiosity only, not a result you must achieve.

Feel where: settled breath, no strain.

PRACTICE NOTES

How to use this plan

One full round after work or mid-day, 3–5 days per week. No equipment. Pair with a short walk when you can — moving more and sitting less through the day is widely recommended in public health guidance.

WHAT THIS GUIDE INTENTIONALLY DOES NOT DO

- Aggressive upper-trap or neck stretching as the main event
- Chasing pain or forcing range of motion
- Diagnosing, treating, curing, or healing injuries
- Selling a product inside this PDF — free educational content only

QUICK SAFETY CHECKLIST

- Easy range only — never force a stretch
- Stop at sharp pain, pinching, dizziness, or numbness
- If you cannot breathe easily in a position, ease off
- Skip any step that feels wrong for your body
- Talk with a qualified professional about injury or medical conditions

DISCLAIMER

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DeskUnlock provides educational fitness and mobility content only. It is not medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Background reading linked on deskunlock.com is not proof this routine works for you. Stop if something feels wrong. Consult a qualified professional if you have an injury, medical condition, dizziness, numbness, or pain.

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