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Six exercises for a break from the computer

Choose one or two exercises and do them during your workday. A few minutes a few times a day is enough: consistency matters more than intensity.

Listen to your body. Stay within a range of movement that feels comfortable. If you feel pain or dizziness, stop the exercise. If you have a spinal injury or are being treated for an orthopaedic condition, talk to a physiotherapist or doctor before you start.

1 Calf raises

Calves: better circulation in the legs

Stand up straight and rest your hands on the desk or the back of a chair. Slowly rise onto your toes, then lower your heels just as slowly, until your muscles feel pleasantly tired. Three times a day.

2 Abdominal brace

Lower back: stability for the lower spine

Stand up, tighten your abdominal muscles and place your hands on your lower back. Gently press your lower back into your hands and hold for six seconds. Breathe freely. Repeat three times.

3 Apple picking

Abdomen and back: a side stretch

Imagine an apple tree. For a few seconds, reach with your right hand for apples high on your left, as if they were just out of reach. Then switch hands. Keep breathing.

4 Spine roll-down

Back: releasing the back and neck

Stand with your feet hip-width apart, knees soft. As you breathe out, bring your chin to your chest and slowly roll your back down, one vertebra at a time, only as low as feels comfortable. On the next breath out, slowly roll back up.

5 Pendulum

Neck: releasing tension

Lower your chin towards your chest. Slowly swing your head like a pendulum from your right shoulder to your left and back. Avoid tilting your head backwards. A few slow repetitions.

6 Body tapping

Whole body: a quick energy boost

Use both hands to tap your calves, thighs, belly, arms, shoulders and, gently, your face. Repeat three times, then pause and notice your breathing, the warmth in your body and your energy.

My week of movement

Tick each day you take a movement break. At the end of the week, notice whether anything has changed in your energy.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri

The full article with research and detailed steps

Free online relaxation sessions every Thursday