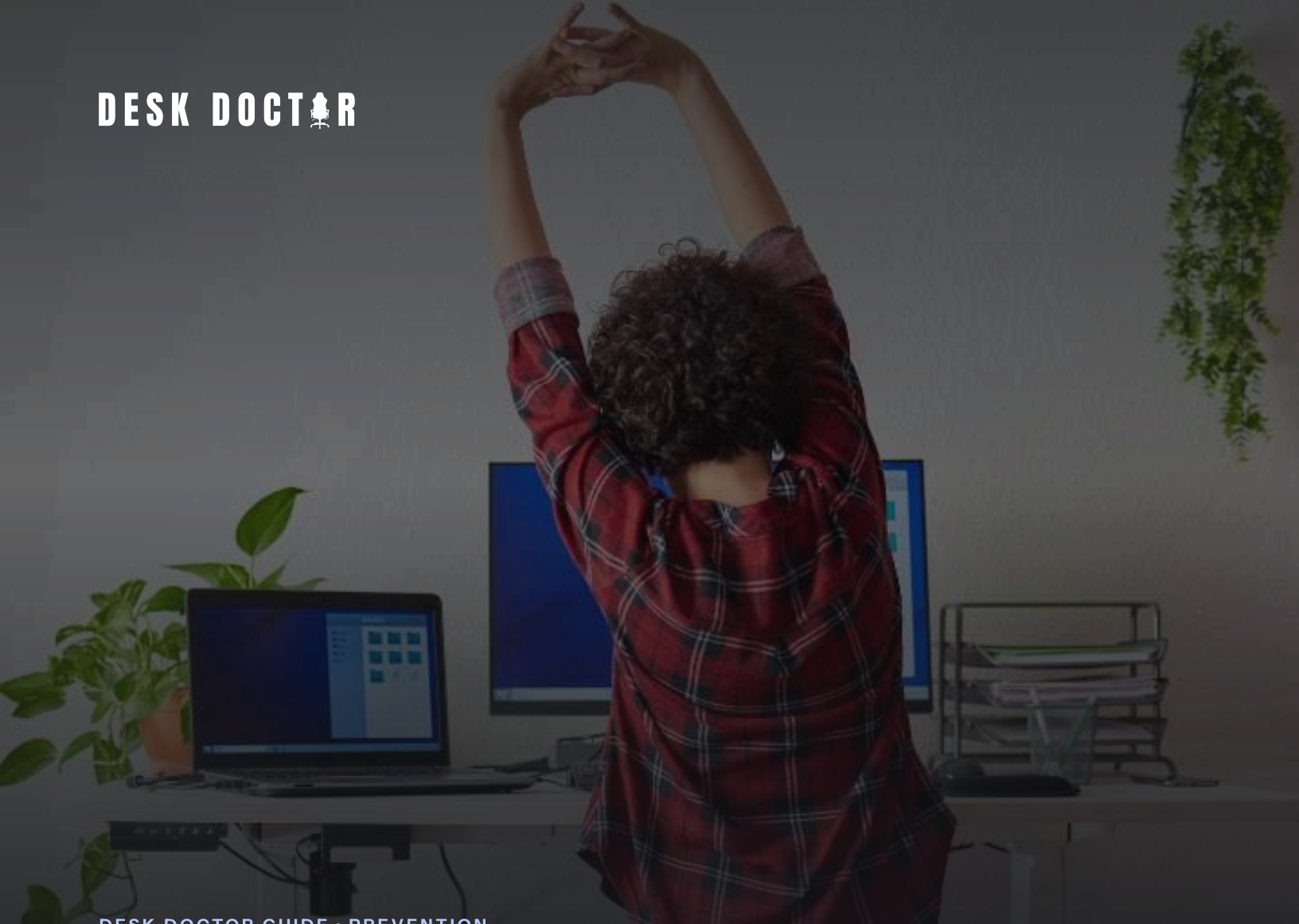
DESK DOCTOR



DESK DOCTOR GUIDE · PREVENTION

Desk *exercise* routines

Three 10-minute routines you can do at your desk, matched to the 8-movement screen. Find your weak area, then train it.

By AJ Prince, HEAS · Desk Doctor

Interactive version with timers: mydeskdoctor.com/guides/exercise →

8-movement screen to find your weak areas	PG. 2
Neck, shoulder & elbow routine	PG. 3
Wrist & hand routine	PG. 4
Hip, upper & lower back routine	PG. 5

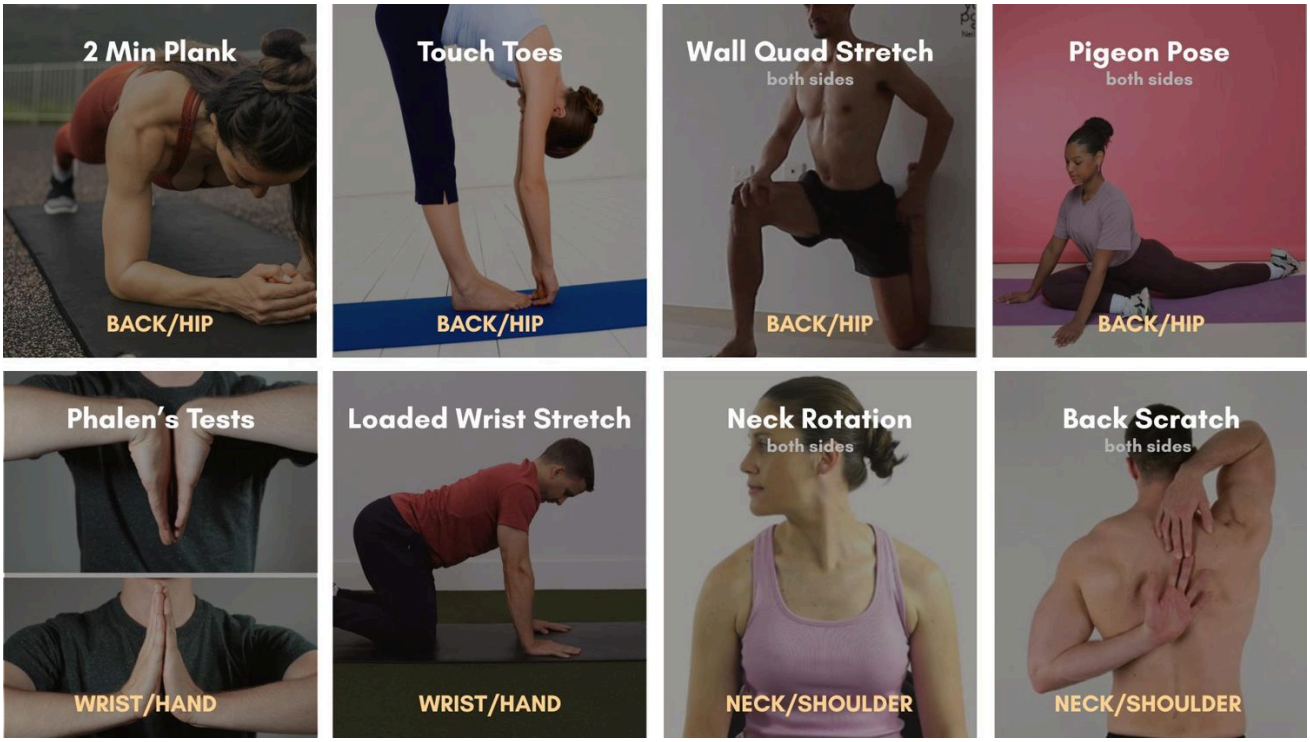
Not sure where to start?
The free assessment screens your movement, pain and desk in about 10 minutes.

TAKE THE FREE ASSESSMENT

THE MOVEMENT SCREEN

8 movements desk work *demands*

Can you perform each movement exactly as shown, without pain or difficulty? A “no” marks an area that is likely to tolerate long desk days poorly. Find the routine for that area below and start there.



THE STANDARD FOR A “YES”

ALL 8

1. 2-min plank — Back / hip
Straight line head to heels for 2 full minutes.

2. Touch toes — Back / hip
Knees straight, fingertips reach the floor.

3. Wall quad stretch — Back / hip
Knee at the wall, shin up it, torso upright. Both sides.

4. Pigeon pose — Back / hip
Hips square, torso upright. Both sides.

5. Phalen’s test — Wrist / hand
Wrists bent, hands pressed together 60 sec with no tingling or numbness.

6. Loaded wrist stretch — Wrist / hand
On all fours, palms flat, fingers forward, sit back slightly.

7. Neck rotation — Neck / shoulder
Chin turns nearly over each shoulder.

8. Back scratch — Neck / shoulder
Fingertips touch behind back. Both sides.

RETEST MONTHLY

Re-screen every 4 weeks. Once an area passes, keep it up 2–3 days a week.

A “NO” SENDS YOU TO

Neck / shoulder — pg. 3 →

Wrist / hand — pg. 4 →

Back / hip — pg. 5 →

HOW OFTEN

1 area — most mornings
2 areas — morning + after work
3 areas — morning, lunch, after work

The free assessment uses these same 8 movements

It cross-checks your results against where you hurt and ranks which routine to do first — plus your full desk setup.

TAKE THE ASSESSMENT

PREVENTION ROUTINE · 10 MINUTES

Neck, shoulder & elbow

Equipment Resistance band + body weight **Time** 10 min **When** most mornings

WARM-UP — 2 MIN

Neck rolls — 30 sec
- Slowly roll your head in full circles, 5 each direction
- Keep shoulders relaxed and down

Shoulder blade squeezes — 30 sec
- Pull shoulder blades together, hold 3 seconds
- Repeat 10 times with tall posture

Arm circles — 1 min
- 15 small circles forward, 15 back, each arm
- Gradually make the circles bigger

STRENGTH — 6 MIN

Band pull-aparts BAND — 1.5 min
- Hold band at shoulder height, arms straight
- Pull apart, squeezing shoulder blades
- 3 × 15, 15 sec rest

Band face pulls BAND — 1.5 min
- Anchor band at chest height, pull to face, elbows high
- 3 × 12, feel it in the back of the shoulders

Wall push-ups — 1.5 min
- Stand arm's length from a wall
- Lean in, push back slowly
- 3 × 12 for shoulder stability

Band external rotations BAND — 1.5 min
- Elbow at your side, bent 90°
- Rotate forearm out against the band
- 2 × 10 each arm for rotator cuff endurance

FLEXIBILITY — 2 MIN

Upper trap stretch — 45 sec
- Tilt head to the side, pull gently with your hand
- 15 sec each side, twice

Cross-body shoulder stretch — 45 sec
- Pull arm across chest with the other arm
- 15 sec each arm, twice

Doorway chest stretch — 30 sec
- Forearms on the door frame, lean forward
- Opens a chest tightened by hunching



DESK DOCTOR TIP

Do this routine before work. It primes the muscles that hold your shoulders back through a long day of screen time.

SAFETY

Stop if you feel sharp pain. Control beats speed. Keep your posture tall through every rep.

EQUIPMENT WE RANKED

Resistance bands →

Follow along with a timer

Every move, one at a time, with sets and rest counted for you.

OPEN THE ROUTINE

PREVENTION ROUTINE · 10 MINUTES

Wrist & hand

Equipment Finger web + grip strengthener + body weight **Time** 10 min **When** most mornings

WARM-UP — 2 MIN

Wrist circles — 45 sec
- Slow circles with both hands
- 10 each direction

Finger flexor stretch — 45 sec
- Arm straight, pull fingers back with the other hand
- 15 sec per hand, twice

Prayer stretch — 30 sec
- Palms together, lower hands keeping palms touching
- Feel it in forearms and wrists

STRENGTH — 6 MIN

Finger web extensions WEB — 2 min
- Finger web around all fingers
- Spread fingers apart against resistance
- 4 × 15, 15 sec rest

Grip squeezes GRIP — 2 min
- Squeeze the grip strengthener fully
- Hold 3 seconds, release slowly
- 3 × 10 each hand, 20 sec rest

Wrist flexor strengthener GRIP — 1 min
- Light grip strengthener or a closed fist
- Bend wrist up and down slowly
- 2 × 15 each direction

Finger web pinch grip WEB — 1 min
- Pinch the web between thumb and fingers
- Hold 5 seconds, release
- 2 × 8 each hand

FLEXIBILITY — 2 MIN

Tendon glides — 1 min
- Fist, then straight fingers, then hooks
- Move through slowly, 10 full cycles

Nerve glides — 1 min
- Start with a fist at your shoulder
- Straighten arm and open hand together
- 10 slow reps each arm



DESK DOCTOR TIP

Build forearm and grip endurance for heavy keyboard and mouse days. Repeat it at lunch on long typing days.

SAFETY

Never force a painful movement. Numbness, tingling or night symptoms need a medical evaluation — stop and get checked.

EQUIPMENT WE RANKED

Finger webs & grip strengtheners →

Follow along with a timer

Every move, one at a time, with sets and rest counted for you.

OPEN THE ROUTINE

PREVENTION ROUTINE · 10 MINUTES

Hip, upper & lower back

Equipment Dumbbells + mat + body weight **Time** 10 min **When** most mornings

WARM-UP — 2 MIN

Cat-cow MAT — 45 sec
- On hands and knees, arch then round your spine
- 10 slow, controlled reps

Hip circles — 45 sec
- Standing, hands on hips
- Large circles, 5 each direction

Marching in place — 30 sec
- Lift knees high, brace your core

STRENGTH — 6 MIN

Dumbbell Romanian deadlifts DB — 2 min
- Hold dumbbells, hinge at the hips
- Lower with a flat back to a hamstring stretch
- 3 × 10, 20 sec rest

Plank hold MAT — 1.5 min
- Straight line from head to heels
- 3 × 20 sec, 10 sec rest

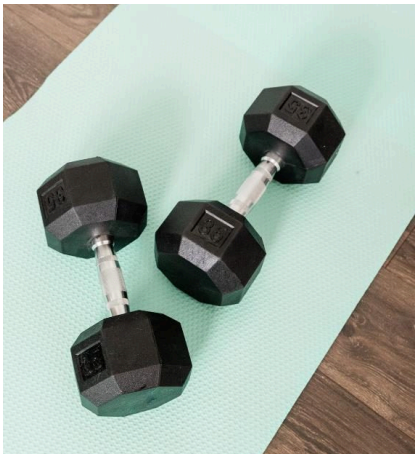
Dumbbell bent-over rows DB — 1.5 min
- Hinge forward, pull dumbbells to your ribs
- Squeeze shoulder blades together
- 3 × 10, 15 sec rest

Glute bridges MAT — 1 min
- Lie on your back, drive hips up
- Squeeze glutes at the top, hold 2 sec
- 2 × 15

FLEXIBILITY — 2 MIN

Hip flexor stretch MAT — 1 min
- Half-kneeling lunge
- Push hips forward until the front of the hip stretches
- 30 sec each leg

Spinal twist MAT — 1 min
- Seated on the mat, twist gently
- 30 sec each direction



DESK DOCTOR TIP

Counters long hours in a seated, hip-flexed position. A little most days beats a lot once a week.

SAFETY

Choose a dumbbell weight you can control for every rep. Keep a neutral spine. Progress gradually.

EQUIPMENT WE RANKED

Dumbbells →

Follow along with a timer

Every move, one at a time, with sets and rest counted for you.

OPEN THE ROUTINE