

# 8 Simple Stretches

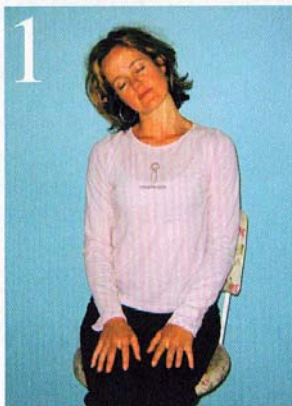
Office, Car, Airplane Stretches To Whittle Your Waist & Bring A Smile to Your Face

“Studies show that over the years the number of hours the average employee sits at a desk or in a car commuting to work has increased dramatically, which has enormous consequences on the body,” explains Kimberly Wilson, creative director of Tranquil Space Yoga in Washington, DC. “According to experts, more than 60% of the US population engages in little or no physical activity during the week. This decrease in physical activity has increased the rates of eyestrain, back problems, obesity, cancer, coronary heart disease, and a myriad of other health problems!” To combat inactivity and improve physical and mental health, Tranquil Space has created a simple yoga routine that can be practiced at a desk, on an airplane/train, or in a (non-moving) car while stuck in traffic. This simple routine combats fatigue, repetitive stress injuries, weight gain, and disease. After obtaining a physician’s approval, Tranquil Space recommends completing this yoga sequence at least once a day for approximately 15 minutes. Begin by sitting on the edge of your seat with feet hip width apart and flat on the ground. Extend the crown of the head toward the ceiling creating an elongated spine. The following yoga poses all begin from this basic starting position.

## 1. Three Part Yogic Breath

**Benefits:** Calms the nervous system; decreases tension and blood pressure.

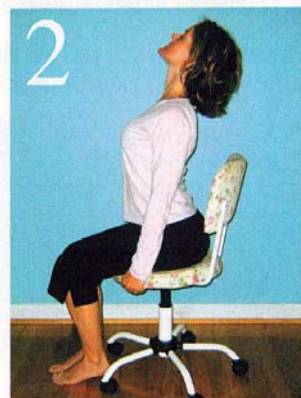
**The Pose:** Inhale deeply through



the nose, allowing the belly to rise as the air first fills the belly then the ribs and finally the chest. Exhale through the nose, allowing the air to release first from the chest then the ribs then the belly as the belly sinks back towards the body.

## 2. Neck & Shoulder Rolls With Closed Eyes

**Benefits:** Rests the eyes which prevents eye strain; lubricates and



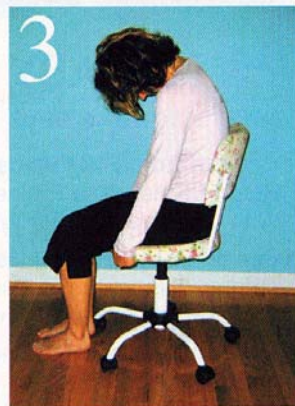
stretches the neck joints; relieves tension in the neck, shoulders, and upper back.

**The Pose:** Inhale deeply. Exhale and allow the eyes to close. Inhale, lengthen the spine and slowly lower the right ear to the right shoulder. Exhale, lowering the chin to the chest. Inhale, lifting the left ear to the left shoulder. Exhale, lowering the chin to the chest. Repeat five times with the eyes closed. Inhale, roll the shoulders forward and up to your ears. Exhale, rolling the shoulders back and towards the floor, allowing the shoulder blades to slide down the back. Repeat five times in both directions.

## 3. Seated Cat and Cow

**Benefits:** Warms and elongates the spine, relieves back tension.

**The Pose:** Clasp the seat of the chair, palms down and fingers point-



ing towards the floor. Inhale, bring the chest forward and draw the shoulder blades together, taking a slight back bend in cow position. Exhale, bring the belly towards the back of the chair allowing the shoulders to fall forward into cat position. Repeat five times, concentrating on co-ordinating each movement with an inhale and an exhale.

## 4. Chair Twists

**Benefits:** Whittles the waist by trimming inches; stretches the spine, shoulders and hips; relieves lower back, neck and sciatica pain; aids in

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digestion; massages internal organs which pushes out toxins and allows the organs to refill with fresh blood.

**The Pose:** Inhale, lengthen the head towards the ceiling. Exhale, twist to the right side bringing the left hand to the outside of your right leg. Place the right hand on the left side of the upright seat back. Allow the head to follow the twist of the spine and allow the eyes to gaze beyond the chair back. Inhale, coming back to center and repeat on the other side.

## 5. Eagle Arms

**Benefits:** Firms upper arms and stretches the upper back /shoulder muscles.

**The Pose:** Inhale, stretching the arms out to the sides. Exhale, bringing your left arm under your right



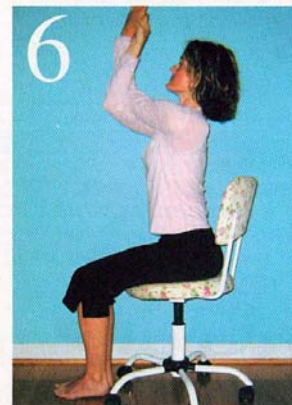
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arm. Cross both arms at the elbows, point the elbows towards the floor and fingers up towards the ceiling. Try to place the palms of the hands together. Inhale, try to raise your elbows to shoulder height while moving the fingers as far forward from the face as possible. Exhale, slowly draw up and down circles with the elbows in one direction and then the other. Repeat to other side.

## 6. Seated Child's Pose

**Benefits:** Rejuvenates the body; stretches the spine; massages the abdominal area.



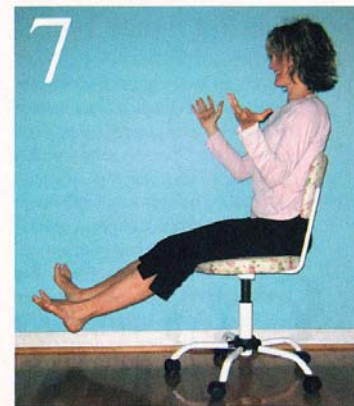
**The Pose:** Inhale, lengthen the spine toward the ceiling, exhale fold forward placing the chest on the thighs. Allow the arms to drop to the floor. Breathe deeply and relax for 30 seconds. Inhale, engage the abs and raise the upper body to a sitting position.

**Variations:** (1) Turtle pose: While in child's pose, open the legs to hip distance. Thread arms between the legs and around the calves. Attempt to grasp the outside of the foot with the hand. (2) Hands Clasped Behind the Back Pose: While in child's pose, reach the arms behind the back and clasp the fingers together. Lower the hands toward the head.

## 7. Ankle and Wrist Rolls

**Benefits:** Lubricates ankle and wrist joints; promotes blood circulation, eases Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

**The Pose:** Roll ankles and wrists



in clockwise circles. Repeat counterclockwise.

## 8. Walking Meditation

**Benefits:** Brings mindfulness into the mundane, creates tranquility.

**The Pose:** As you walk to the copier or to refill your water bottle during the workday, bring awareness to each step and movement. Notice sensations in your body, concentrate on your breath and practice awareness of your surroundings. Feel a sense of tranquility throughout your body and allow this feeling of peace to remain with you throughout the day.

*Kimberly Wilson is the founder and creative director of Tranquil Space Yoga in Washington DC which offers yoga for all types of people.*