



Joint Mobility Drills

(adapted from Pavel Tsatsouline's "Super Joints")

Years of mileage and wear and tear can pile calcium deposits on your joints and promote connective tissue growth in the wrong places. The result: stiffness, joint pain and painful movement. Enter joint mobility drills! Rotating a joint through its anatomically complete range of motion—or trying to if the joint is already damaged—smoothes out the joint surfaces and lubricates them (by warming and circulating synovial fluid). Connective tissue and muscles are warmed up and made more elastic. This contributes greatly to joint health and function. A full range of motion is gained or maintained.



Joint mobility is not the same as flexibility. Mobility drills don't give you much of a stretch, which is OK. Muscles do not need to be stretched necessarily to put a joint through its full range of motion (ROM). That is why stretching is not the best way to oil your squeaky joints and reduce pain.

Joint health can be thought of in 3 stages:

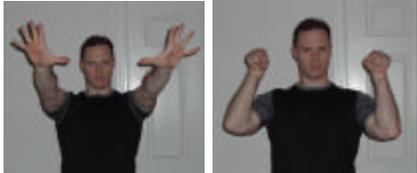
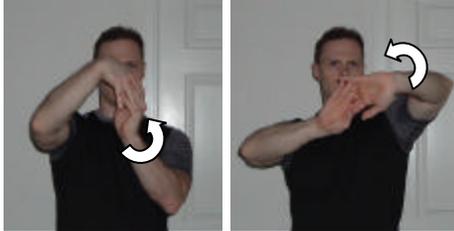
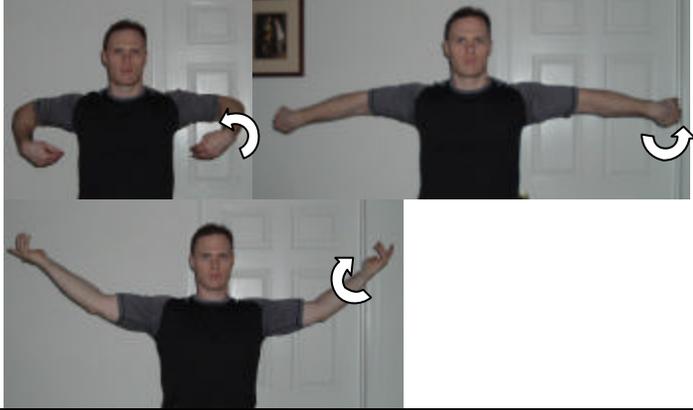
- First stage. 100% healthy—usually found in young people. Superb range of motion. 20 repetitions of joint exercises to keep things sweet.
- Second stage hits about age 40 or so. Salt deposits in joints are present as well as some aches and pains. Limited range of motion in some. 50-100 reps per joint are recommended.
- Third stage is constantly aching joints. Daily life and work is affected. Bone growth between vertebrae usually is present. Years of bad posture and poor body mechanics are to blame. 200-300 repetitions per joint are required at this stage.

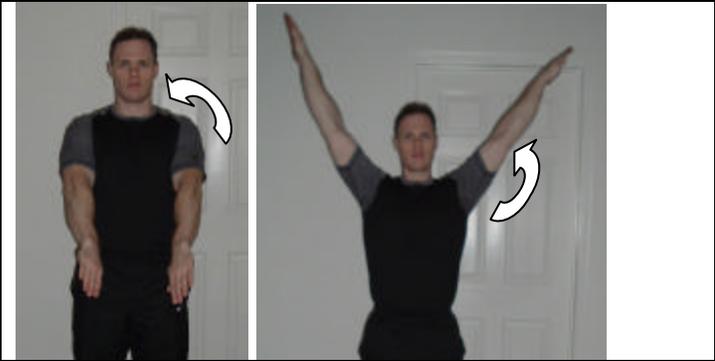
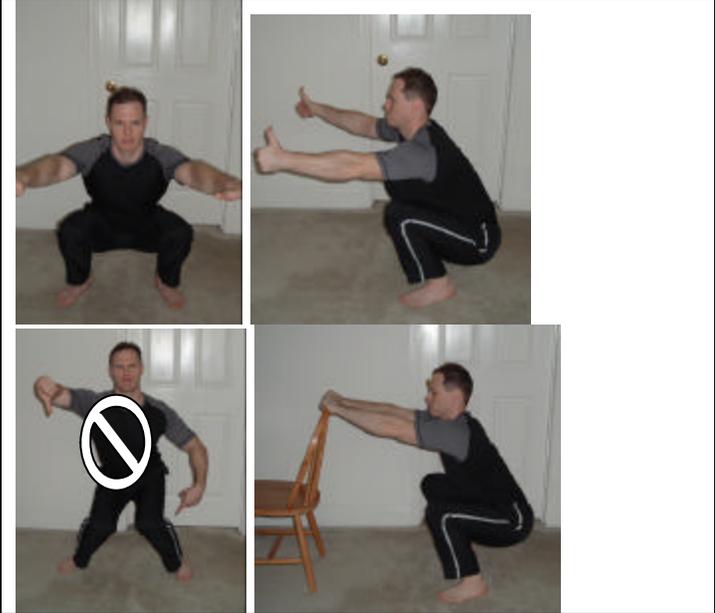
The Program:

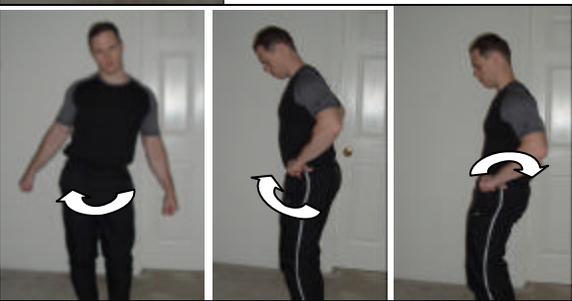
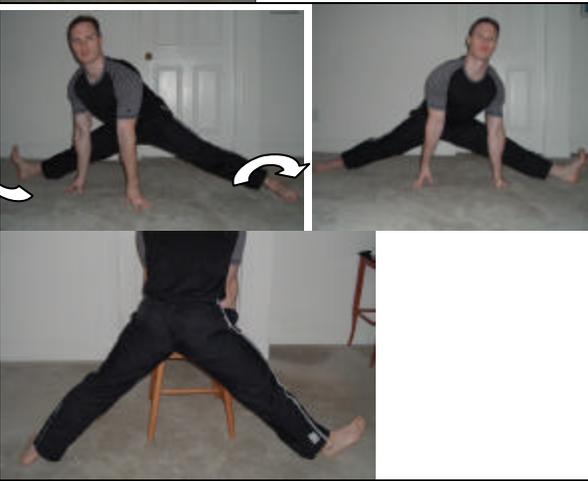
Try the following. Ease into the drills.

- Begin with 10-20 repetitions per drill. Add 10 per week.
- Try working up to your age for repetitions.
- Do the drills as soon as possible in the morning. 10-15 minutes. The faster you get full range of motion each day, the less pain and damage you cause yourself throughout the day.
- Morning movement wakes up your nervous system and recharges you for the day's events-- without caffeine!
- Don't forget to do repetitions in both directions.
- Try to increase ROM as you progress into the drills.
- Do them in the order you like.

Enjoy!

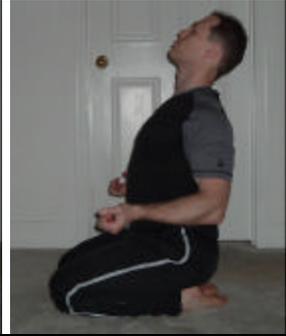
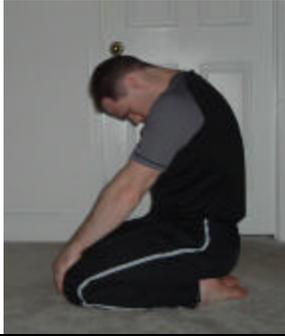
<p>Three Plane Neck Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn your head side to side • Flex and extend • Flex head to each side <p>Tip: gradually build up ROM. Do not roll neck.</p>	
<p>Shoulder Circles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw big circles with your shoulders. • Reverse directions every 10-20 reps. 	
<p>Fist Exercise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend your fingers wide. • Pull back and flex your wrist as you make a fist. 	
<p>Wrist Rotations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lace your fingers and put your wrists through every possible ROM. <p>Tip: A must for every keyboard punching office slave.</p>	
<p>Elbow Circles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make circles with your elbows. • Bring fingers to armpits (think chimp) and stretch arms out and rotate hands. • Keep elbows high. • Don't forget to go in both directions 	
<p>The Egyptian</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep both palms up. • Twist and rotate to the opposite direction. • Feel your shoulders work! 	

<p>Arm Circles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big circles in all directions. 	
<p>Ankle Circles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw circles with your ankles. • Do some with toes bent and some on the ball of your foot. • Don't forget to switch directions. 	
<p>Knee Circles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the circles small. • Feet stay flat on the floor. • One leg at a time as well as both. 	
<p>Squat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squat as deep as your current ROM allows. • Keep shins as vertical as possible. • Hold onto something if needed to maintain proper form. • Sit back on your heels, don't roll to the balls of your feet as you squat. <p>Tip: Squats are one of the best movements for your knees when done correctly and progressively. Do not let your knees cave in. In some parts of the world, it is the way people sit.</p>	

<p>Hula Hoop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move your hips in big circles. • Shoulders stay over your feet. 	
<p>Belly Dance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller movements than hula hoop. • Knees slightly bent. • Tilt pelvis in small circles. 	
<p>The Cossack</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knees always track your feet. At no point do they buckle in. • Start shallow. • Use a mirror if needed. • Move in all planes of motion. • Use a chair or other object for support. 	
<p>Split Switches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knees always track feet in this one as well. • At no point do they buckle in. • Legs stay straight and rigid! • Start shallow! • Use a mirror if needed. • Use a chair or other object for support. • One foot points up, the other lies sideways. <p>Tips: Excellent for learning the splits.</p>	

Spine Flexion and Extension

- Seated or kneeling.
- Round forward then pull back.
- Arch your back and open your chest wide.



Spinal Rotation

- Kneeling or sitting.
- Follow your hand with your eyes as you twist.
- Gradually increase ROM.

