

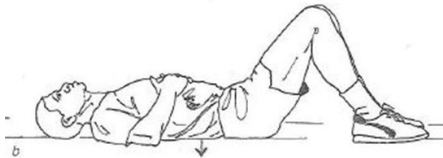
These are basic exercises to help strengthen the back and prevent back pain. **Make sure you have a chair nearby to provide support to get up from the floor.** Wear comfortable, loose clothes. Do the exercises on a hard surface covered with a thin mat or heavy blanket. If it makes you more comfortable, you may put a small pillow under your neck.

**Make sure to consult a health care professional before starting any new form of physical activity.**

**Warm-up:** Do **3-5 minutes** of walking or marching and make sure to move your arms to get your blood flowing. **Remember to breathe**—DO NOT hold your breath during the poses.

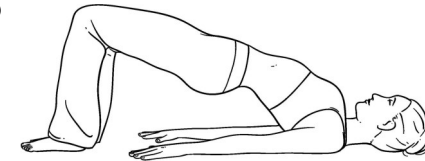


**1. Cat and Cow:** Start on all fours. Curl your back up towards the ceiling like a cat. Think of spreading the shoulder blades apart. Return to starting position. Pull your stomach down to the floor, sinking your back, and lifting your head like a cow. Slowly breathe in as you go to cat, exhale to cow.



### 3. Functional Abdominals Level 1

**Pelvic Tilt:** Lie on your back. Keep your feet flat on the floor with your knees bent. Push your back into the floor by pulling your lower abdominal muscles up and in. Hold your back flat while breathing easily in and out. Hold for a count of five. Do not hold breath.



**5. Bridge:** Lie on your back with both knees bent. Feet should be flat on the floor hip width apart. Lift the hips up, raising your spine towards the ceiling. Try to keep the knees hip-width apart. Slowly return to the starting position.

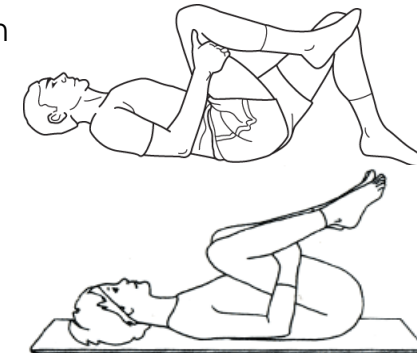
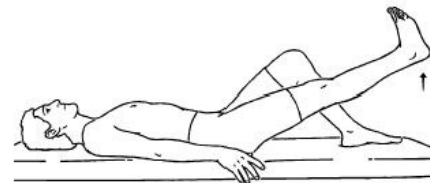
### 2. Opposite leg & arm lifts:

Start on all fours. Keep your belly button tucked in towards the spine to keep a strong core. Lift left arm and right leg at the same time. Return to starting position. Repeat on opposite sides. If this is too difficult, do one arm or leg at a time.



### 4. Functional Abdominals Level 2

**Leg Raises:** Lie on your back with one leg straight and one knee bent. Tighten abdominal muscles, same as pelvic tilt, to stabilize low back. Slowly lift one leg straight up about 6 to 12 inches, slowly return to the original position. Repeat this 5 times, then switch legs and do another 5.



### 6 Single or double knee to chest:

Lie on your back with both knees bent. Hold your thigh behind the knee and bring one knee up to chest. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Relax and repeat with opposite leg. If that felt okay, try hugging in both knees at the same time.

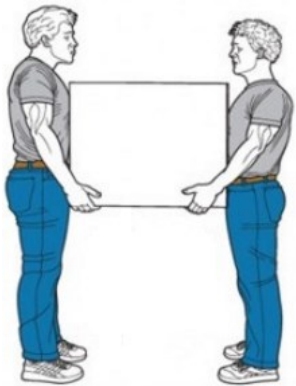


**7. Gluteal Stretch:** Cross your right ankle on the left thigh, just below your bent knee. Thread your right arm through the space created between the legs, and interlace your fingers around the back of your left thigh. Gently pull your left leg closer to your chest while keeping your lower back and head on the ground. Hold the pose for about 5 breaths. Repeat other side.



**8. Gentle Twist:** Lie on your back with both knees bent, feet flat on the ground. Open your arms to make a "T" shape. Gently move knees over to the right side, trying not to lift shoulders off the ground. Stay for 5-8 breaths. If it helps, you may use a pillow under the knees. Return to starting position. Repeat on left side.

### SAFE LIFTING & MOVING PRACTICES



**DO LIFT AS A TEAM**  
Find another person to help. Doing so is smart & the safe way to work.



**DO TURN WITH LEGS**  
Move your legs & feet when turning or lowering the load. Avoid twisting at your waist.



**DO USE YOUR LEGS**  
Lift the load using your powerful leg & buttocks muscles. Your feet should be wide apart, head & back upright. Keep abdominal muscles tight & the load in close.



**DO USE EQUIPMENT**  
Use equipment like hand trucks or dollies to do the heavy lifting. It's much less work & less risk of injury.



**DON'T LIFT BULKY OR HEAVY LOADS ALONE**  
Doing so puts great stress on your low back muscles & spine and can cause injury.



**DON'T TWIST WHEN LIFTING**  
This can cause injury to spine, hips, or knees.



**DON'T USE YOUR BACK**  
Don't lift the load with your rear end high & your head low. Use your leg muscles, not your weaker low back muscles.



**DON'T LIFT HEAVY LOADS**  
Don't lift heavy loads when you can use equipment or ask for help. It is less work & less stress on your low back.