



CAT AND COW

Have you ever seen how a cat stretches its back—arching its back up to the sky and releasing all the tension inside? Have you ever wondered how a cow stretches with its long body?

This yoga pose is good for stretching your spine. Think of it like giving yourself a massage inside.

1. Begin with your hands and knees on the ground and your back flat like a table.
2. Let your head relax. Your eyes can look at the ground between your hands.
3. Take a deep breath in and out. First, you will stretch like a cat.
4. Taking a deep breath in, lift your back to the ceiling, like you are making an arch so that someone can crawl under you. Let your head naturally follow the arch, looking at the floor.
5. While breathing out, come back to the tabletop position with your back flat. Now stretch in the opposite direction.
6. Taking a deep breath in, lift your head and butt to the ceiling. Imagine you are creating a stretched-out U at the bottom of your back that could hold some water. Your eyes can look up to the ceiling.
7. While breathing out, come back to the tabletop position.
8. Take a deep breath in and out.
9. Repeat both poses again.
10. When you are done, return to the tabletop position, and breathe in and out before coming out of the pose.



COBRA

A cobra is a snake that has a lot of power. It slithers on the ground, and when it is ready to attack, it raises its head high and proud, then strikes quickly. It is focused and strong.

This pose helps you stretch your back, neck, and shoulders—areas where you can hold stress in your body. If you get headaches, this may be one to try on a regular basis. The main point to remember with this exercise is to be gentle. Think of the snake slithering: it does so smoothly and without much effort.

1. Lie on your stomach. Let your legs stretch out long behind you and your feet point toward the back of the room.
2. Breathe in and out. Think of the power that comes with the pause between your breaths. Breathe in, pause, and breathe out.
3. Bend your elbows and put your hands by the side of your shoulders.
4. Now, as you breathe in, gently straighten your arms, lifting your head and looking straight ahead. Don't stretch too far; rather, put your energy into focusing on something ahead of you.
5. Count to ten, breathing in and out at a pace that is comfortable for you. If you prefer counting to three at first, that is okay.
6. Take another breath in, and as you breathe out, gently come back down, bending your arms.
7. Put your arms by your sides to rest for a few seconds. You can turn your head to one side if that is comfortable.
8. Breathe in and out at least two times to rest.