

Flexibility Fitness Training for Improving Older Driver Performance



The exercises in this brochure were designed to improve flexibility as it relates to driving. You may want to consult your physician or an experienced exercise teacher before you attempt them. Keep in mind that flexibility varies from person to person—only stretch as far as is comfortable for you and always stop if you feel pain. Also, always move slowly when beginning these exercises, avoiding jerky movements.

What can flexibility do for me?

- Help prevent injuries, illnesses, and muscle spasms
- Improve posture
- Prevent premature aging
- Prevent excessive fatigue
- Permit freedom of movement
- Decrease lower back pain
- Reduce tension

Why is flexibility important to driving?

Flexibility permits drivers to move their entire body and all their joints more freely in order to observe the road from all angles. This can help alert drivers to potential hazards in unexpected areas on the road. Overall body flexibility helps with many driving requirements. Here are a few:

- Braking
- Getting in and out of the car
- Looking to the side and rear
- Steering
- Parking the car
- Adjusting seat belts
- Sitting for long periods of time

Adapted by :

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from :



Shoulder Back

1. Bring both shoulders forward as far as possible.
2. Bring both shoulders backwards as far as possible.

Repetition: Ten times.

Useful for: Steering, preventing fatigue, backing up, mirror checks.



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Chin Flexion-Extension

1. Keep your head facing forward.
2. Bend head forward, touching chin on chest.
3. Tilt head backward until forehead is parallel to the ceiling.

Repetition: Five times in each direction.

Useful for: Adjusting mirrors, preventing fatigue.



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Feet

On long trips one of the first things to get tired may be your feet, especially your driving foot. Stiffness, foot or leg cramps, or a foot that falls asleep can all cause crashes. Before a long trip be sure to exercise your feet, stretch them by moving them from side to side, and even massage them, to prevent fatigue.



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Neck Rotation

1. Turn neck as far to the right as possible.
2. Turn neck as far to the left as possible.

Repetition: Five times in each direction.

Useful for: Looking over your shoulder to check for blind spots, parallel parking, adjusting mirrors, backing up, fatigue.



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Side Bending

1. Look straight ahead.
2. Tilt head to the right as if trying to touch your ear to your shoulder. Keep left shoulder down—do not allow it to ride up.
3. Repeat move to left side.

Repetition: Five times in each direction.

Useful for: Preventing fatigue, parallel parking, backing up, adjusting mirrors, looking over your shoulder.



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Trunk Rotation

1. From a sitting position, slowly rotate your trunk, from the waist up, to the left. Try to keep hips in place, facing forward.
2. Return to the forward position.
3. Repeat move to the right.

Repetition: Five times in each direction.

Useful for: Parallel parking, backing up, adjusting mirrors, looking to the side or back.



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Chin Tucks

1. Nod your head slightly forward.
2. Glide your neck backward, aligning your ears perpendicular to your shoulders.

Repetition: Ten times.

Useful for: Parking, backing up, adjusting mirrors, preventing fatigue, looking over your shoulder.



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