# HAND, ARM & SHOULDER STRETCHES

For a free catalog of Stretching Inc. publications/products,
contact: P.O.Box 767, Palmer Lake CO 80133-0767
or call 1-800-333-1307 fax (719)481-9058
or visit our website at www.stretching.com

*Note: If you have had any recent surgery, muscle or joint problem, please consult your personal health care professional before starting a stretching or exercise program.*

## How to Stretch:

**Stretching should be done slowly without bouncing. Stretch to where you feel a slight, easy stretch. Hold this feeling for 5-15 seconds. As you hold this stretch, the feeling of tension should diminish. If it doesn't, just ease off slightly into a more comfortable stretch. The easy stretch reduces tension and readies the tissues for the developmental stretch.**

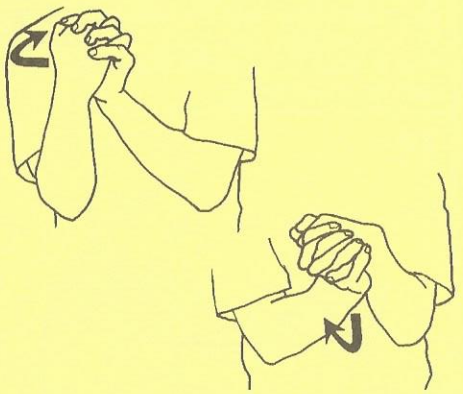
**After holding the easy stretch move a fraction of an inch farther into the stretch until you feel mild tension again. This is the developmental stretch which should be held for 5-10 seconds. This feeling of stretch tension should also slightly diminish or stay the same.**

**If the tension increases or becomes painful, you are overstretching. Ease off a bit to a comfortable stretch. The developmental stretch reduces tension and will safely increase flexibility.**

**Hold only stretch tensions that feel good to you. The key to stretching is to be relaxed while you concentrate on the area being stretched. Your breathing should be slow, deep and rhythmical. Don't worry about how far you can stretch. Stretch relaxed and limberness will become just one of the many by-products of regular stretching.**

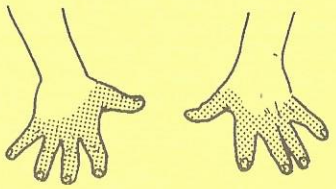
*The dotted areas are those areas of the body where you will most likely feel the stretch.*

**1**



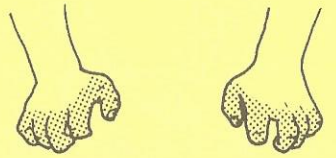
Interlace your fingers in front of you and rotate your hands and wrists clockwise 10 times. Repeat counter-clockwise 10 times. This will improve flexibility of hands and wrists and provide a slight warm-up.

**2**



Separate and straighten your fingers until tension of a stretch is felt. Hold for 10 seconds, then relax.

**3**



Next, bend your fingers at the knuckles and hold for 10 seconds. Relax.

**4**

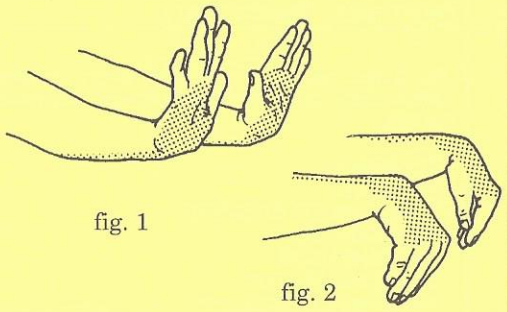


fig. 1

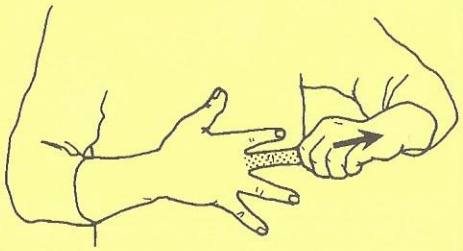
fig. 2

With your arms straight out in front of you, bend your wrists with fingers pointing upwards (fig.1). This will stretch the back of your forearms. Hold for 10-12 seconds. Do twice.
Then bend your wrist with your fingers pointing downwards (fig.2) to stretch the top of your forearms. Hold for 10-12 seconds. Do twice.

**5**

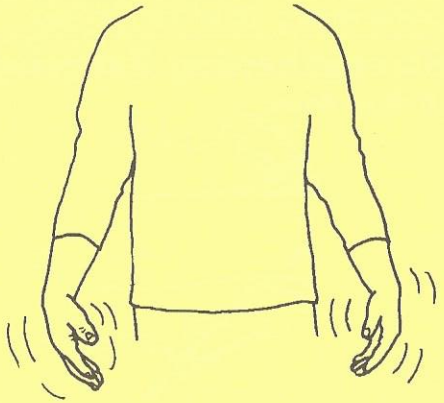
Start with index finger and thumb gently holding individual finger or thumb of opposite hand. Use your index finger and thumb to rotate each finger and thumb 5 times clockwise and counter-clockwise.

**6** **Repeat stretch1** **7**



Next, gently pull each finger and thumb straight out and hold for 2-3 seconds.

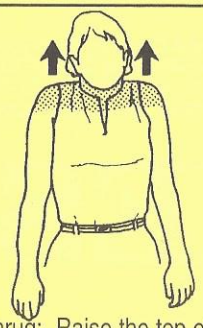
**8**



Shake your arms and hands at your sides for 10-12 seconds. Keep your jaw relaxed and let your shoulders relax downward as you shake out tension.

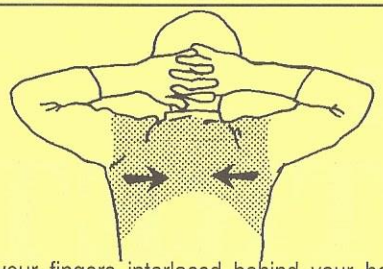
Reproduced from the 17 x 22" HAND, ARM & SHOULDER STRETCHES poster. Revised edition ©2002 Robert A. Anderson & Jean E. Anderson. All rights reserved.

## 9



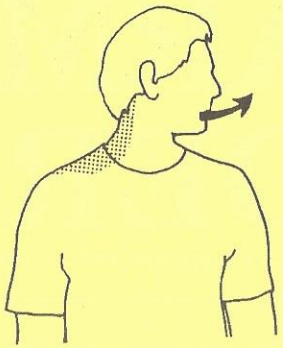
Shoulder shrug: Raise the top of your shoulders toward your ears until you feel slight tension in your neck and shoulders. Hold this feeling of tension for 3-5 seconds, then relax your shoulders down to their normal position. Do this 2-3 times. Good to use at the first signs of tightness or tension in the shoulder and neck area.

## 10



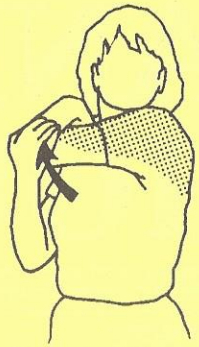
With your fingers interlaced behind your head, keep your elbows straight out to your sides with upper body in a good aligned position. Now pull your shoulder blades toward each other to create a feeling of tension through upper back and shoulder blade area. Hold this feeling of mild tension for 4-5 seconds, then relax. Do several times. This is good to do when shoulders and upper back are tense or tight.

## 11



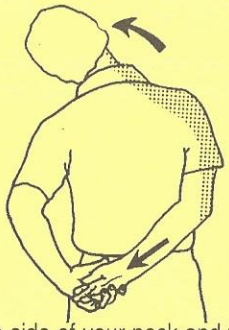
From a stable, aligned position turn your chin toward your left shoulder to create a stretch on the right side of your neck. Hold mild stretch tension for 5-10 seconds. Do each side twice.

## 12



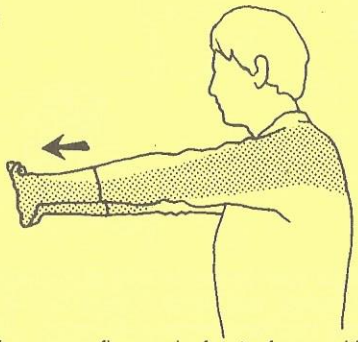
Hold your left arm just above the elbow with your right hand. Now gently pull your elbow toward opposite shoulder as you look over your left shoulder. Hold stretch for 15-20 seconds. Do both sides. Breathe rhythmically.

## 13



To stretch the side of your neck and top of shoulder, lean your head sideways toward your left shoulder as your left hand pulls your right arm down and across, behind your back. Hold an easy stretch for 10 seconds. Do both sides. This stretch can be done sitting on the floor, in a chair, or while standing. Do not hold your breath.

## 14



Interlace your fingers in front of you with palms facing outward and arms straightened. Pressing palms forward, feel the stretch in your hands, arms and the upper part of your back and shoulder blades. Hold stretch for 10-15 seconds. Do twice.

## 15

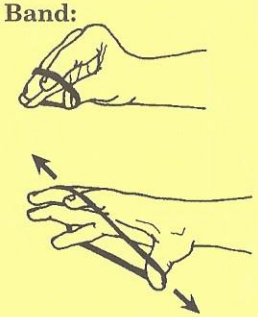
Interlace your fingers behind your back and slowly turn your elbows inward while straightening your arms. This is good to do when you find yourself slumping forward from the shoulders. The stretch can be done at any time. Hold for 5-15 seconds. Do twice. Breathe.

## 16

Interlace your fingers then turn your palms upwards above your head as you straighten your arms. Think of elongating your arms as you feel a stretch through arms and upper sides of rib cage. Hold for 10-15 seconds. Hold only stretches that feel releasing. Do three times. Do not strain. Breathe deeply.

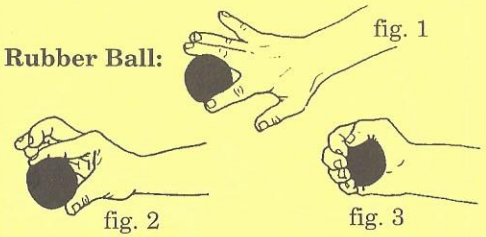
# Strengthening Exercises

### Rubber Band:



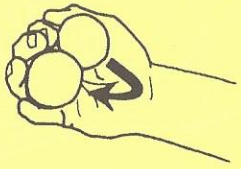
With a rubber band on the outside of your fingers, move your fingers outward against the resistance of the rubber band. Do 10-15 repetitions, each hand. Do twice with each hand.

### Rubber Ball:




Squeeze a rubber ball between fingers (fig.1). First between index finger and middle finger, then middle finger and ring finger, then ring finger and little finger. Do 10-15 reps or until slightly tired. Then squeeze ball between any one finger and thumb (fig.2). Do 10-20 reps for every finger and thumb or until slightly tired. And with four fingers and thumb (fig.3) simultaneously for 10-20 reps or until slightly tired.

### Chinese Reflex Balls:



Rotate the reflex balls clockwise and counterclockwise in one hand. Keep the balls moving for 10-15 seconds, each direction. Work up to rotating balls several minutes at a time. This is excellent for coordination, flexibility, and circulation.

For a free catalog of additional books, posters, videos, body tools, Maxit® athleticwear, and more, contact:

Stretching Inc.
P.O.Box 767
Palmer Lake CO 80133-0767
1-800-333-1307
fax (719)481-9058
office@stretching.com
website-www.stretching.com

Bob and Jean Anderson, creators of this stretching chart are also the authors of the book, STRETCHING. Now a revised ©2000 edition.

Reproduced from the 17 x 22" HAND, ARM & SHOULDER STRETCHES poster. Revised edition ©2002 Robert A. Anderson & Jean E. Anderson. All rights reserved.