

My Morning Routine: 30 Daily Exercises

I'm often asked about my morning exercise routine, so I thought I'd share them with you.

Here, you'll find 30 flexibility and strength exercises that I do each morning.

At the end of my routine, you'll see I have also included six bonus exercises for those of you looking for a more challenging workout. These include extra core (strength) exercises.

Thanks to my morning routine, I am able to greet each day with the fitness I need to achieve my goals.

I hope my routine inspires you to do the same, whatever your age or fitness level.

Of course, always consult a healthcare professional before starting any exercise program.

Here's to great health!

Cheers,

Dr Sam

1. Pelvic Tilt



With lower back flat on mat and knees raised, tilt pelvis up about 6 inches. (30-40 reps)

2. Bridge



While lying on back, extend arms to side and lift entire back straight up off mat, slowly roll back down, starting at neck and traveling down spine one vertebrae at a time until flat on mat. (20 reps)

3. Single Leg Bridge



Lift back off mat, straighten right leg as you lift, release, repeat with the left leg. (15 reps)

4. Neck Rotation



While flat on back with arms to the side, turn head from side to side. (15 reps)

5. Hamstring Stretch



Lying on back, use hands to lift right leg straight up, stretch, release, and repeat with left leg. Avoid bending either leg. (10 reps)

6. Crossover Back Stretch



While on back, lift left leg up and rotate it as far as possible across the body to the opposite side, release, then switch to the right leg. (5-10 reps)

7. V-Sit Boat Crunch



With back flat on mat, hold arms straight in midair. Pull knees toward chest with feet in the air. Reach arms forward a few inches, then bring them back. (30-40 reps)

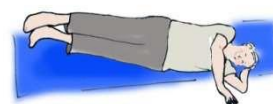
8. Modified Bicycle Crunch



With arms behind neck and knees up in the air and stationary, move upper body to the left, then to the right. (100-150 reps)

Need more of a challenge? Try windshield wipers or starfish crunch bonus exercises on page 4.

9. Side Lying, Straight Leg Hold



Lying on side with legs straight, lift legs up as high as possible, release, switch sides, and repeat. (100 reps per side)

Dr. Sam's Morning Routine

10. Knee Crossover Stretch



Lying on back, hook right leg over left knee, push leg to the side for a stretch, hold for 10 seconds, switch legs, and repeat on left side. (1 rep per side)

11. Modified Crossover Back Stretch



While on back, cross right knee over body and hold with left hand for resistance. At the same time, hold right hand to head and turn to the right, trying to touch elbow to the side, release and switch sides. (5-6 reps per side)

12. Single Leg Bicycle Pedal



Lying on back, put a resistance band around right foot and raise leg. Peddle right leg to the left, middle and right, switch to left leg and repeat. (30-40 pedals per side)

Note: As you can see above, my morning exercise routine incorporates resistance bands. These bands are easy to pack, so I'm ready to work out even when on the road.

I use two resistance bands: a black band with handles and a green band without handles. The color indicates the level of resistance. Here's the typical breakdown:

- Yellow: light resistance
- Green: medium resistance
- Red: medium/heavy resistance
- Blue: heavy resistance
- Black: ultra-heavy resistance

13. Single Leg Lift 3-Direction Stretch



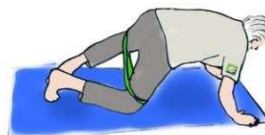
Lying on back with legs straight, put a resistance band around right foot and pull right leg in the air, keeping it straight. Stretch slowly towards upper body in three directions (left, middle and right), then repeat with left leg. (25 reps per leg)

14. Double Leg Lift



Lying on back, put a resistance band around feet and pull straight legs towards upper body. Bring legs as close to head as possible, then release. (1 rep, holding for a count of 100)

15. Kneeling Clam



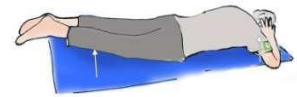
Wrap a resistance band around knees and tie a knot. With hands and knees on mat, keep back flat, feet stay together while knee lifts up (approximately 45 degrees and back to floor = 1 rep). (50 reps per leg)

16. Lower Back Hyperextension



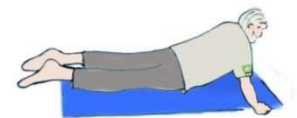
Lying face down on stomach with arms to the side, lift head, chest, arms and feet off mat. Don't forget to breathe! (1 rep, holding for a count of 50)

17. Lower Back Extension



While lying down on stomach with hands over head, lift head, chest and feet off mat. Don't forget to breathe! (1 rep, holding for a count of 50)

18. Up-Dog Extension



Lying flat on stomach, push upper body up off the mat to get a slight back bend, release. (25 reps)

19. Child's Pose Shoulder Stretch



Start in child's pose, reach left arm under body as far as you can and push down towards the mat putting a little pressure or weight for a deeper stretch. Release and repeat with the right arm. (1 rep per side)

20. Elbow Plank



Lying face down on mat, lift body up off the mat with a straight back, prop up on elbows and toes. (1 rep, holding for a count of 100)

Need more of a challenge? See the bonus plank variation exercises on page 4.

Dr. Sam's Morning Routine

21. Modified Pushup



Modified push up with knees on mat. (10 to 15 pushups, then move hands forward 6 inches to make it more difficult for another 10 to 15 pushups).

22. Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch



Kneel on right knee with toes down. Place left leg in front aligning knee with ankle of right foot. Place hands on left thigh. While keeping upright, press hips forward until tension in front of right thigh is felt. Hold for 30 seconds. Switch sides and repeat with the other leg. (1 rep per leg)

23. Anterior Chest Stretch



Stand tall and grab end of resistance band with hands. Place extended arms straight out in front of body and stretch extended arms out to side. (10-15 reps)

Take time every day to live, laugh, love – and exercise.

24. Bicep Curl



Using a resistance band with handles, step on the band and grasp the handles in each hand with palms facing up for bicep curls. (15 reps)

25. Bicep with Forearm Curl



Using a resistance band, stand on it and grab handles in each hand. Hold handles with palms facing down to engage forearms during the curl. (15 reps)

26. Single Arm Overhead Triceps Extension



Stand straight and hold one resistance band handle behind back. Grab other handle, stretch band over shoulder and extend arm, release and repeat with other arm. (15 reps per arm)

27. Band Shoulder Press



Using my resistance band, I step on one end, grab one handle with both hands and stretch up, fully extending my arms upward, then release (10 reps)

28. Toe Touch Stretch



Stand on mat and stretch forward to touch toes. Stretch as far as possible, stand back up, then repeat (6 reps)

29. Single Leg Balance



Extend arms out to sides, lift right leg off floor, balance on left leg for 30 seconds, switch sides. (1 rep per leg)

30. Child's Pose Kneeling Stretch



Kneel on mat, bow down and extend arms straight out in front of you (similar to the yoga position child's pose), hold for 3 to 4 minutes. While there, think of your blessings. You are now done! □ (1 rep)

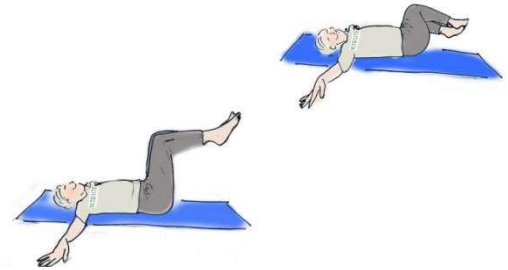
6 Bonus Strength Exercises

1. Windshield Wipers

Step 1. While lying on back, raise bent legs 90 degrees, and spread arms straight out to sides for support.

Step 2. Rotate legs to one side, stopping short of touching mat, then rotate to the other side. Make sure shoulders stay flat on the floor. (10 reps)

Intermediate/Advanced Level: Perform 2 to 3 sets (straighten legs to make more difficult).

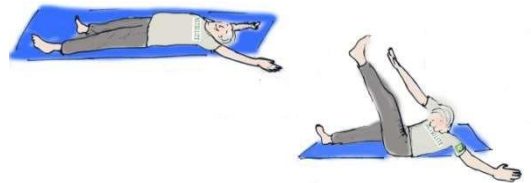


2. Starfish Crunch

Step 1: While lying down on back, stretch arms and legs out in an "X" position.

Step 2: Bring one arm straight up and diagonally across body while lifting the opposing leg. Finish the crunch by lightly touching your shin or coming as close as your level of flexibility will allow. Alternate back and forth for each repetition. (10 to 20 reps)

Intermediate/Advanced Level: Perform 2 to 3 sets (lift entire back off mat; keep legs and upper body slightly elevated from mat through entire exercise).



3. Side Plank

Lying on left side, extend legs and stack from hip to feet. Align left elbow directly under shoulder, keeping head directly in line with spine. (Right arm can be aligned along the right side of your body.) Lift your hips and knees off the mat, keeping your torso straight. Hold position for 30 to 60 seconds on each side.

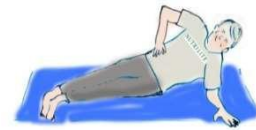
Intermediate/Advanced Levels: Perform 2 to 3 sets per side or do a hand side plank and hold for 30 to 60 seconds on each side. You can raise the top leg in the air along with the top arm and hold the same time to increase difficulty.



4. Side Plank with Hip Drops

Follow the same instructions for the side plank above, but drop hip to the floor, then lift back up to side plank starting position. (10 reps per side)

Intermediate/Advanced Levels: Perform 15 reps per side (2 to 3 sets each side).



5. Plank Rotation

Lie on mat in plank position with legs placed a little more than hip-width apart. Twist upper body and lift right arm to the ceiling. Rotate back to plank position (10 reps per side)

Intermediate/Advanced Levels: Perform 2 to 3 sets each side.



6. Mountain Climber (Plank Variation)

Step 1: Start in plank position on your mat, making sure to distribute weight evenly between hands and toes.

Step 2: Pull left knee into chest as far as possible. Then switch, pulling that knee out and bringing the other knee in. Keeping hips down, run your knees in and out as far and as fast as you can. Alternate inhaling and exhaling with each leg change.

Aim for time (30 to 60 seconds) or reps (10 to 20 reps; one rep is every 2 alternating knees).

Intermediate/Advanced Levels: Perform 2 to 3 sets.

