

POSTURE EXERCISE & SCRIPT

Begin to intentionally practice proper posture through seated and standing alignment. Below are examples of do and don't for each –



Dr. Rachel Dew,
DNM, PhD

**SPC: SOMATIC
PRACTITIONER
CERTIFICATION**

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Steps to proper aligned posture –

When standing

The Mayo Clinic recommends the following steps for good standing posture:

- When standing, keep these tips in mind:
- Stand straight and tall with your shoulders back.
- Keep your head level and in line with your body.
- Pull in your abdomen.
- Keep your feet shoulder-width apart.
- Don't lock your knees.
- Bear your weight primarily on the balls of your feet.
- Let your hands hang naturally at your sides.
- If you have to stand for long periods, shift your weight from your toes to your heels or from one foot to the other.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/multimedia/back-pain/sls-20076817?s=3>

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When seated: Correct sitting position

The Cleveland Clinic recommends the following steps for proper seated posture:

- Sit up with your back straight and your shoulders back. Your buttocks should touch the back of your chair.
- All 3 normal back curves should be present while sitting. You can use a small, rolled-up towel or a lumbar roll to help maintain the normal curves in your back.
- Sit at the end of your chair and slouch completely.
- Draw yourself up and accentuate the curve of your back as far as possible. Hold for a few seconds.
- Release the position slightly (about 10 degrees). This is a good sitting posture.
- Distribute your body weight evenly on both hips.
- Bend your knees at a right angle. Keep your knees even with or slightly higher than your hips. (Use a footrest or stool if necessary.) Do not cross your legs.
- Keep your feet flat on the floor.

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/4485-back-health-and-posture>

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Somatic standing exercise

The somatic standing exercise is designed to help your clients connect with their current resting posture state, feel how it feels and bring awareness to how it feels in the body to adjust it. This exercise can be taught to your clients to help them begin to shift their posture to one that is better aligned and more effectively supports their nervous system.

Somatic standing exercise script:

Stand in a position that feels natural. Close your eyes and bring your awareness to your body. Begin to notice how your weight naturally leans. Is it centered, forward or leaning backwards? Notice how your head and neck are naturally being held... is your head titled down and forward, straight or does your chin feel elevated as if your head is bending backwards? Next, bring your awareness to your lower back and pelvis. Do you feel like you are rounding forward or arching back? Finally, bring your awareness to your shoulders, are they rolled back or rounded forward or do they feel square over your body? Whatever you notice, do not try to correct it, just pay attention to how that position feels in your body.

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Now, open your eyes and begin to make adjustments and notice how each one feels before moving to the next one. Let's start with how your weight naturally leans, begin shifting your weight so that it feels centered and equally distributed on both legs.

Next, notice how your head and neck are naturally being held, begin to make adjustments so that your neck is straight, and your chin is parallel to the ground.

Now bring your awareness to your lower back and pelvis... begin making adjustments by drawing in your belly (activating your core) and look down at your hands. Tilt your pelvis (tuck your tailbone under) until you can see both your index and second fingers of both hands. This is a neutral position for the pelvis when standing.

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Next, bring your awareness to your shoulders, roll them up and back and allow them to relax. Try to keep them back and relaxed.

Finally, imagine a string attached to the top of your head pulling you upwards. The idea is to keep your body in perfect alignment, maintaining the spine's natural curvature, with your neck straight and shoulders parallel with the hips and your shoulders back and relaxed. Spend 15 seconds here feeling the connection to this posture and how it feels in your body.

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