

Pre-Bed Stress Busters Various Levels

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Here are some mini routines to help you sleep better. Typically, people have trouble sleeping because their mind is racing or there is too much tension in their body. These two problems feed off each other until you find yourself tossing and turning. To ease yourself into rest, first take the tension out of your body. Usually this means the shoulders, lower back and legs need attention. While you're focusing on the stretches and on slow, rhythmic breathing, your mind will start to calm down. All of this will prepare you for step-by-step relaxation... which most people never finish before falling asleep! The best Breathing Themes for this will be ones where you slow down your breathing or develop its rhythm, such as Breathing Theme Number 2 or the Yellow Level breathing Themes, (Eleven, etc.). (Note, strong full breathing will only enervate you and keep you up!)

Step 1. For each of these mini-routines, start with a moment of meditation: noticing how your body sinks down as you breathe out. Part way through your meditation, start taking a little longer to breathe out, noticing how your body lets go even more.

Step 2. Do the stretches. 3 repetitions of each movement.

Step 3. Crawl into bed.

Step 4. Go back to your meditation for a moment.

Step 5. Do a step-by-step relaxation, relaxing your body in sections, from your toes up to your head and face. As you draw your attention to each part of your body, feel it sinking down and letting go as you let go of your breath.

Mini-routine 1 – Level 1 (Gentle Stretching)

Pelvic Lift



Leg Fold



Mini-routine 2 – Level 1 (Gentle Stretching)

Several repetitions of the **Cat**, moving with the breath. (See Breathing Theme 11)



Ease fully into and out of the **Puppy** pose several times. Hold briefly each time.



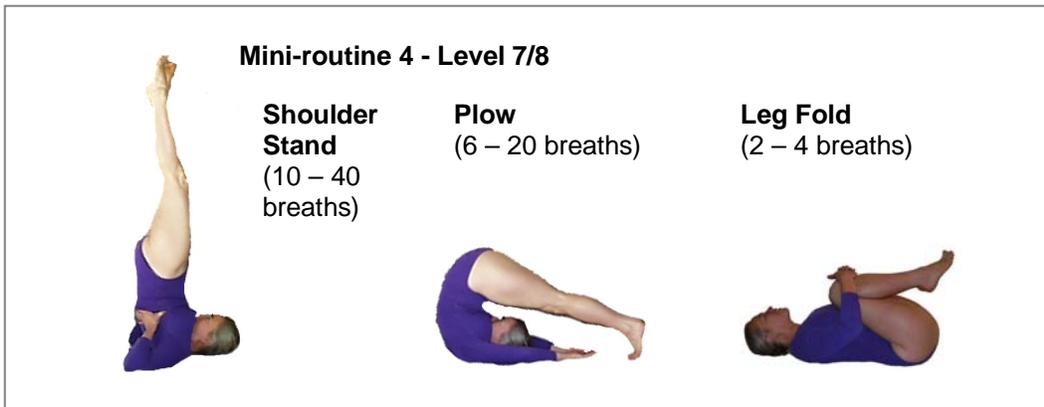
Mini-routine 3 Level 2 (Fairly Gentle Stretching)



Alternate repetitions of the **Back Bend Primer** with the **Back Stretch**, in movements that flow with the breath.



More Pre-Bed Stress Busters Various Levels



Min-routine 5 – Level 7/8 or 5. Repeat this sequence as much as you need to, allowing it to flow with the breath: Wood Chopper, Lunge, Downward Dog, Lunge (switching which leg is back), returning to Wood Chopper to bring you upright. To make it a Level 5 routine, leave out the Downward Dog. Simply lunge, then bring both legs back, then lunge, switching which leg is back, etc.

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