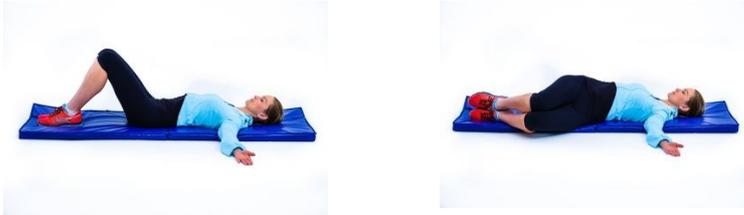


# Easy Back Stretches

**Safety notice:** When starting any new exercise always ease into the stretch gently to find your comfort limit. Some mild “stretching strain” may be experienced, but if significant pain is felt then ease off and try a more gentle version of the exercise. If pain restricts you from doing these stretches at all then consult a health professional for alternative options.

## 1. Lying back rotations



This exercise increases the flexibility of the joints of the lower back. Gently twist your back by allowing your legs to roll together towards the right side, then towards the left. Start gently and gradually increase the range of the stretch. The stretch should be felt in the lower back area. Repeat this exercise 10-15 times each way.

## 2. Slump stretch



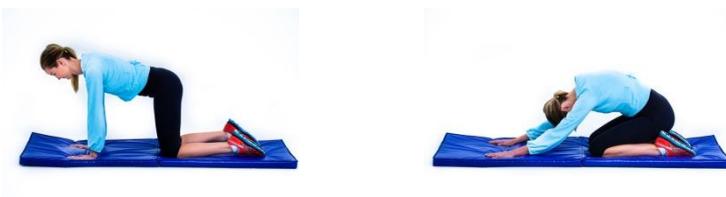
This exercise helps stretch the Sciatic nerve and soft tissue in the spine and legs. With your knees bent, reach for your toes, then bring your legs as straight as you can comfortably have them. Then bend your forehead down towards your knees as far as comfortable. This stretch can be felt anywhere from the calves right up to the back of the head, commonly in the hamstrings. Hold this position for twenty seconds. Repeat this twice.

## 3. Knees to chest stretch



This stretch increases lower back flexibility. Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Stretch your right leg up as far as comfortable and hold it in your hands as shown for 20 secs. Repeat this for the left side. If comfortable, progress to holding both knees in both hands as shown. The stretch should be felt in the lower back. Hold this for 20 secs. Repeat twice each way.

## 4. Cat stretch



This stretch increases lower back flexibility. Start in a kneeling position on all fours, and then stretch back bringing your buttocks towards your heels. When you have stretched as far as comfortable (lower back stretch predominantly) hold this position for 20 secs. Repeat this twice.