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Horizontal Abduction: Moving your arms out to the side (i.e. rows)**Extension:** Lowering your arm straight down from a raised position (i.e. lat pushdowns or swimming)**Internal Rotation:** Bringing your arm towards the midline of your body (i.e. arm wrestling)It's a super strong muscle that facilitates movements of the arm when your torso is fixed and vice versa. The lats also assist in keeping your scapula against your thorax during upper arm movements as well as other stability roles for your spine.It should be noted that most movements powered by the latissimus dorsi also concurrently recruit the teres major, posterior deltoids, long head of the triceps brachii, and other shoulder and elbow flexors which are important for all of the aforementioned functions, certain movements alter which region of the muscle is at the greatest advantage (and thus activated the most). This is why the lats are often broken down into three parts in fitness, the upper, middle and lower lats. The upper lats are at a biomechanical advantage during movement that involve shoulder adduction. The middle lats are at a biomechanical advantage during movements that involve horizontal abduction of the shoulder. The lower lats are at a biomechanical advantage during movements that involve shoulder extension.This is why a variety of exercises based on each of these types of actions is important for full and equal development of your lats as a whole.All in all, your lats are a very big and strong muscle that is involved in pretty much every compound movement of your upper body, whether that be as a primary mover or stabilizer. The lats play a role in every pulling exercise (to some degree, often a high degree) and even pushing exercises.**14 BEST LATISSIMUS DORSI EXERCISES**There is an endless assortment of moves you can do to build your back and lats. But, these exercises are the absolute best latissimus dorsi strengthening exercises.We will categorize the exercises by vertical pulls, horizontal pulls, and shoulder extension exercises, while making note of the emphasized region of your lat (upper, middle or lower) where necessary.As not everyone has access to the same equipment, for certain exercises, we will provide alternative examples using different equipment.Note: We will also highlight the best lat exercises for home (without equipment). So, if you want to build your lats purely with bodyweight exercises, skip through these 14 latissimus dorsi gym exercises.**VERTICAL PULLS**Vertical pulls involve pulling a weight down vertically in relation to your torso.The three main types of vertical pulls are pull ups, chin ups, and lat pulldowns.All vertical pulls emphasize the lats, which is why we're starting here.While vertical pulls are categorized by their grips, they all share the same function: pulling a weight down vertically. Pull ups and chin ups are a bit more complex because they require a lot of core strength and balance, so we'll focus on lat pulldowns first. Lat pulldowns are performed by sitting under a barbell or cable machine and pulling it down towards your chest. They are a great way to isolate the lats and build strength in the upper back and shoulders. There are many variations of lat pulldowns, including wide grip, close grip, and one-arm lat pulldowns. Each variation targets slightly different muscles in the back and shoulders, so choose the one that feels best for you. Remember, the key to a good lat pulldown is to keep your torso upright and avoid leaning back. If you lean back, you're putting too much stress on your neck and shoulders, which defeats the purpose of the exercise. Form Tips: Don't go too wide, your arms should make a Y from the starting, hanging position. And if this is too hard, bring your hands in closer, you will still get great lat activation.Be sure to keep your core engaged. Glutes too!From a dead hang, draw your scapula down and together, which will raise your body slightly. THEN, pull yourself up by pushing your elbows down toward your torso.Stop when your chin is above the bar and your chest is as close to the bar as possible. Dont lose your form at the top by letting your shoulders round forward.Your head should remain straight forward at all times.Use a full range of motion each rep for best results and lat development (go all the way down and all the way up!)Weighted Pull UpsWhen you are able to do 3-4 sets for 10-12 reps of wide grip pull ups, its time to add some weight. Use a dip belt and connect a plate (start light) and then perform as many pull ups as you can (i.e. 6+). When you reach 10-12 reps, use the weight slightly and repeat.Weighted pull ups is a must if you want to keep progressing rolling. 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back day. They should be done near the end of your workout (or beginning with light weight just to get the blood flowing to your lats).13. Lat PushdownThe lat pushdown is also called a pullover, is the first lat exercise up till now has no elbow movement. Your arms will remain straight for the entire exercise (a slightly bend in your elbow is ok).This movement is purely shoulder extension.4) It is essentially a lat isolation exercise that is particularly good for the lower cervical region of your lats. Form Tips: Set up a cable pulley machine with a straight bar attachment. Bring your hands a little wider than shoulder width apart. Step a few feet away from the machine so that in the starting positioning with your arms up, you feel a stretch and tension in your back/lats. While keeping your torso firm and your arms fixed, push the bar down toward your hips. Flex your back at the bottom hard then very slowly return your arms to the starting position. Another way to do the cable pushdown is to start with a slight bend in your knees, your hips back, and your torso leaning slightly forward. Then as you press down, you perform hip extension (bring your hips to neutral) while pressing your chest up proud and squeezing the heck out of your lats. Seated Incline Lat Pushdown This is another variation of the lat pushdown. This one is worth trying out to see if it does a good job of allowing you to really focus on your lats. Essentially, with the backrest, you can be sure you have no movement at your torso. To do this one, position an incline bench so that it is facing away from the machine. Sit on it, then grab the straight handle overhead behind you at about shoulder width and pushdown with your arms fixed as seen in the pic.14. Lat Pullover: The lat pullover is similar in terms of movement pattern. It is also a purely shoulder extension movement. The big advantage of the pullover is that you can overload with more weight during the stretching phase of the lift. That said, your lats become less activated as the weight moves over your head and your chest takes over. So, unlike the pushdown, which is a lat isolation exercise, the pullover is a lat and upper chest exercise. As for equipment, the dumbbell pullover is the most popular, but we find the barbell gives better lat activation due to grip and hand positioning. You can try both to see what works best for you. Form Tip: You can do this exercise two ways. One is with your back fully lying on the bench and the other is with your back lying off the side of the bench (just your upper back on the bench). The dumbbell variation below shows the latter. To start, hold a barbell or EZ bar with an overhand grip at shoulder width. Then bring the bar straight back and down. Your arms should be straight, with just a slight bend in your elbow. Bring your arms down behind you as far as you can comfortably go. You want to feel good stretching tension in your lats. Then, keeping your arms fixed, pull the bar over until your arms are straight up above your chest. Use your lats to power the movement as you pull from the bottom up. Lower your arms back slowly and really feel the stretching tension as your arms come down behind you. Again, keep your arms in a fixed position at all times. This movement is simply shoulder extension/flexion. No elbow movement. Dumbbell Pullover The dumbbell pullover with this body positioning allows you to better target your lats rather than your chest. So we recommend positioning yourself off the side of the bench rather than with your back fully on the back like the barbell pullover above. Programming Tips For Lat Muscles If you want to build your lats fast (or at least as fast as humanly possible), there are a few things you need to consider: Type of Exercise & Variety Volume Intensity Progression Diet Lets go over each of these points. 1) Types of Exercises & Variety: There are three main types of exercises for the lats: Vertical Pulls (i.e. pull ups, pulldowns) Horizontal Pulls (i.e. rows) Shoulder Extension Exercises (i.e. pushdowns) If you want well-developed lats, you need to do all three of these types of movements, as each one targets the lat muscle differently. Whats more, you need to consider the way your arm is moving, or in other words, the action of your shoulder joint, as that will determine which region of the lat is being worked more or less. Shoulder adduction targets the upper lats best (i.e. wide grip pull ups), horizontal abduction targets the middle lats best (i.e. rows), and shoulder extension targets the lower lats best (i.e. pushdowns). Depending on your grip and angle of your body, the action of your shoulder joint can change, which in turn means your back muscles are worked differently. Grip positioning plays an important role in determining which region of the muscle is at the greatest advantage, not to mention, whether the lat is the primary focus or not. For example, overhand barbell rows will work your middle lats more because it involves more horizontal abduction with your arms flared out, whereas reverse grip keeps your elbows tucked thus making the movement act more on shoulder extension. So, with the same bent over row, you can target your middle or lower lat more simply by changing the grip. The same is true for vertical pulls. With wide grip pulldowns or pull ups, the movement will be more shoulder adduction, whereas with a close grip, your elbows are tucked and the movement acts on shoulder extension. This is why variety is key. By changing grip and performing vertical and horizontal pulls as well as shoulder extension based movements, you will be able to develop your lats as fully. Now, it should be noted that no matter what lat exercise you are doing, your entire latissimus dorsi will be working. You CANNOT isolate your upper, middle, or lower lats. Again, its just certain regions will be activated more or less. Certain movements also do a better job of activating the lat as a whole, too. 2) Equipment: Equipment plays into variety as well, whether you just want to change things up to stress your muscles differently (i.e. use dumbbells rather than a barbell to work each side independently and iron out muscle imbalances or do seated rows rather than bent over rows to take your low back and legs out of the equation a bit) or you just dont have access to certain equipment. All that said, some equipment is better than others for developing the lats. Most would say that the barbell is the best for rows, with dumbbells being a close second, and pull ups being the best for vertical movements (weighted pull ups if you are strong enough). This is because they are the hardest and provide the most load potential. Be that as it may, other equipment like cable machines most certainly have their place, as we will explain when we demonstrate all the different variations. 3) Volume: By volume, we are referring to rep ranges and total volume. The best rep range for hypertrophy of the lats is 10-15 reps. You can even go higher depending on the exercise. If you want to focus more on strength, which you should too, lower reps are also good as well. The best rep range for strength will be somewhere in the 6-10 rep range, give or take. Its important that you train for both strength and hypertrophy. So, mix things up. Plus, you will build pure size in any rep range, and endurance will be gained in the hypertrophy rep ranges, as will strength. In terms of total volume (weekly sets + reps), your lats are a tough muscle. Think about how often you hear someone tell you they tore a lat. You probably never heard that. The point is, your lats can handle more volume than many other muscles. So, if the optimal training volume for muscle groups is 10-15 sets per week, you can up this to 15-20+ sets for the lats. 4) Intensity: Volume doesnt mean anything without noting intensity, and by intensity, we mean weight load. Before we get into that, its important to understand that the latissimus dorsi has an even ratio of slow and fast twitch muscle fibers, which means its going to respond best to moderate loads or moderate to higher reps. However, it will do well with moderate-heavy loads for moderate reps as well. So, again, you should be training with the well-rounded rep scheme we mentioned above (6-10 and 10+). In terms of weight load, we cant say what will be right for you, but an easy way to know if the weight load is appropriate is to gauge the difficulty within that rep range. Essentially, if you are working for 10-12 reps, then you want the weight load to bring you to or near failure within that rep range. If you are training for hypertrophy and you are able to go well past 15 reps, then you need to up the weight load. The same is true for the strength rep range. Its really that simple. 5) Progression: You obviously cant keep the same intensity week in and week out. To build muscle and strength, you need to progressively make your workouts harder. This will ensure that your muscles are being overloaded each workout so they are forced to adapt (grow and get stronger). The easiest form of progression is to increase weight, which we recommend for beginners, but as you get more advanced, you will need to play around with progressive overload methods. Related: Progressive Overload Guide 6) Diet: We arent going to go too in-depth on this point, but you obviously need to eat enough food if you want your muscles to grow and if you want to have enough strength during workouts. When it comes to building up some big lats, you need to eat A LOT. Check out our 7-Day Meal Plan For Muscle Gain to get started! 7) Mind-Muscle Connection: None of the above about exercising your latissimus dorsi will matter if you dont have a good mind-muscle connection with your lats. You need to be able to perform the exercises with maximum activation of your lats, and to do that, you need a good mind-muscle connection. Its a lot harder with the lats since they arent on the front of your body like your chest. So, work on this, and the best way to do that is to really focus on contraction with light weight when first starting out, and then progressing from there. HOW TO INCORPORATE LAT EXERCISES INTO YOUR WORKOUTS This really depends on your training program. Its going to be different if you do a body part split comparing to a full body split or upper/lower split. Ultimately, the goal is to get around 15+ sets in per week. This includes vertical pulls, horizontal pulls, and pushdowns/pulldowns. Since a lot of people do back days or pull days, here is an example of a well-rounded back workout that has plenty of lat volume. data table Exercise Sets Reps Weighted Pull Ups 36-12 Bent Over Barbell Rows 36-12 7-Bar Rows 38-15 Lat Pulldowns 30-12 Lat Pushdowns 30-15 Rear Delt Flys 315-20 Not only will the be an effective workout for your lats, but your entire back as well. If you need a little additional erector work, add in some back extensions at the end. If you do a full body routine or an upper/lower routine, just spread the volume out appropriately throughout the week. Here are the 5 best training splits (with full routines), each of which will ensure you are getting enough work in for your lats. BEST LATISSIMUS DORSI EXERCISES AT HOME (BODYWEIGHT LAT EXERCISES) Whether you dont have access to equipment or you simply prefer bodyweight training at home, the below exercises are your best option for developing and strengthening your latissimus dorsi muscle. 1) Pull Ups & Chin Ups: Weve already discussed the benefits of pull ups and chin ups, so you can scroll up to learn why you should do them and how to do them. As you progress, weighted pull ups and chin ups are a must. 2) Inverted Rows: Weve also already covered inverted rows, but we used a smith machine above. You dont actually need a smith machine to do inverted rows (although it is arguably the best option due to your ability to change the height of the bar easily). There are many ways you can do inverted rows, from under a table to a set up with chairs as seen in the pic above. Figure out a good set-up and get them done. This is going to be the best bodyweight row you can possibly do. Note: If you have a suspension trainer, you can use it for rows as well. These are very effective. 3) Towel Rows: Get a towel and anchor it to something at about chest height and perform rows! Its essentially like an inverted row but from a standing position (its easier, but if you use high reps and volume, squeeze the heck out of your lats, and work on full range of motion, it can be effective for your lats). You can increase the difficulty with one arm towel rows too! Alternatively, to decrease the difficulty, use just your hands rather than a towel. The towel increases stability, range of motion, and grip demand, so it is harder. 4) Resistance Band Lat Exercises: With resistance bands, you can mimic all of the free weight exercises above. For example, . Bent Over Rows Single Arm Rows Pulldowns Pushdowns, and more... We wont go in-depth on resistance band lat exercises as weve covered this in another post. Related: Resistance Band Row & Pulldown Variations Progressive overload with bodyweight lat exercises With free weights and other equipment, you can progressive overload by increasing weight load. With body weight, the only way to do this is by using an external load of some sort like a weighted backpack or resistance bands. However, you can also use other progression methods to increase intensity... You can increase reps and volume, decrease rest time, slow down your tempo, speed up your tempo, and do harder bodyweight exercises. Play around with these variables and you will be able to keep making your workouts harder, thus overloading your muscles to force them to continue adapting. It wont be as easy as with weights, but you can surely build your lats in any case. BENEFITS OF HAVING STRONG WELL DEVELOPED LATSThe lats are an interesting muscle in that they play a small role in the average (modern) persons daily life, but they play a big role when it comes to athletics and fitness. Its not like your glutes or quads that are pretty active throughout the day (due to walking and standing up regularly). With that, if you dont workout, your lats can easily be underdeveloped. Now, your lats are not completely unused during the day, as they are involved in things like pulling on a shirt, closing a cars trunk, and swinging your arms while walking, but this is obviously not enough. So, while the lats may not play a big role in your daily life, unless you are required to do things like climbing and swimming, if you plan to get into fitness or some sport, having strong lats is going to boost your performance tremendously. In truth, if your lats are strong, then everything else will follow. Thats how big of a role they play in fitness. The main purpose of your lats, in a simplified manner, is to provide shoulder strength and back strength and to help protect and stabilize your spine. So, the stronger your lats, the stronger you will be at shoulder and back exercises (pressing and pulling) and the more injury resilient you will be at a spinal and shoulder level (two of the most susceptible areas in the human body). Whats more, strength training is also a form of dynamic stretching, so as long as you are using a full range of motion, as you are strengthening your lats, they will also become more flexible and mobile, which in turn will help you to move better. When it comes to lifting, having strong lats means you can deadlift, squat, bench press, overhead press, row and pull with heavier weight and more intensity. This is not just important for the development of your lats, but it is also important for all the muscles we mentioned that work with the lats, which are basically all of the muscles of your back, your deltoids, biceps, forearms, triceps, and pecs. Strong lats = a strong, well-developed, resilient upper body. In terms of aesthetics, the lats are a crucial muscle to have well developed. With well-developed lats (and shoulders and pecs), you will have that V tapered look, which makes your shoulders look wider and your waist more narrow. Ergo, if you want to have an aesthetically impressive body, you need to develop those wings (evocative term for lats). Not only does it look great (on a level so deep that it is basically in our DNA), but it is also a clear sign of power (which is instantly recognizable). Note: Some aspects of aesthetics will come down to genetics, which you cant change, so not everyone will have the same look. Some people have a higher or lower insertion of the lats, which changes how their upper body tapers. But either way, you simply cant go wrong with big lats. Why are my lats so weak? After hearing all of these great things about the lats, you might be thinking, "damn my lats are more like flats...why are they so small and weak?" Well, the latissimus dorsi can be weak and underdeveloped for a few reasons: You dont workout. You dont workout correctly (poor form). Other muscles are overactive during lat exercises. The first one is an easy fix, just start working out and be sure to do a variety of pulling exercises from all angles (horizontal and vertical pulls + shoulder extension exercises). Check out our lat workouts for some additional inspiration. The other two need a little more understanding, which is why we are here. If your form is poor (for example, you use too much traps and/or biceps for pulling exercises), then you need to pay attention to how to do each exercise and use lighter weight until you know how to activate your lats when performing them. If other muscles are overactive during your pulling exercises, and this is not due to poor form, then you need to build that mind-muscle connection, which also starts with lighter weight, and you may also need to try out some different exercises that better target the lats for you. Switching up your grip may help you deactivate other muscles a bit and increase engagement of your lats. For example, switching from overhand to underhand rows will greatly change the dynamics of the muscles worked, allowing you to hone in on your lats a little more. The good news is, your lats can (and will!) grow and get stronger using the exercises we went over above. FAQs Remaining Questions? Lets answer them! IS IT HARD TO MAKE THE LATS BIGGER AND STRONGER? The lats are definitely one of the more problem areas for beginners simply because its hard to engage them properly. It takes time to learn how to hone in on them and build that mind-muscle connection so that they are fully activated when they should be. That said, if you do the right lat muscle exercises, with the right load, the right volume, and use progressive overload, your lats will surely grow. Moreover, you need to eat a lot. The latissimus dorsi is not a muscle like the calves, which are really hard to grow. As long as you are doing things right in the gym, size and strength will come. However, it is a very big muscle, so it takes hard work and time nonetheless. HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR THE LATS TO GROW? If you follow everything below and stick with it, as a beginner, you can see some significant growth in 6 months. The lats are a little slower of a muscle to grow, similar to the legs. Being that the lat is so big, its going to take time to see some results. But if you stick with it and follow the information below, you can expedite the process of growth. HOW TO WARM UP THE LATS BEFORE WORKING OUT? The best way to warm up your lats before working out are with some dynamic lat stretches and by doing lightweight resistance exercises with a full range of motion to get the blood flowing, increase body temperature, and optimize mobility. Some good warm up lat exercises are lightweight pushdowns and seated rows. Resistance bands are also a great way to warm up. You can perform a few different resistance band rows and pulldowns before you get into the weights. Also, if you are doing heavy lifting, then start light and work your way up to your working set. For example, if your workout begins with bent over rows, do a few warm up sets, increasing the load each time until you are at your working weight. What is the best lat exercise? While variety is important for building your lats over time, beginners can really stick to just a few exercises and see some fantastic results. So, if we are to narrow down the best exercises for latissimus dorsi, they would be: Pull Ups/Chin Ups (Weighted if possible) Underhand Bent Over Rows Lat Pushdowns If a beginner cant do pull ups or chin ups, lat pulldowns with the same grip would be the next best thing. With these three exercises, you will be working your lats through all of the main actions, so you can get full development. In terms of muscle activation, pull ups and chin ups and bent over rows are shown to have the highest results with EMG studies, so while other exercises are good, these are the best. As you become more advanced, you will need to add more variety to your training, but if you are looking for somewhere to start, this is it. How can I train my lats without a pull up bar? If you dont have a pull up bar, you obviously cant do pull ups and chin ups. With that, your next best option is inverted rows and grabbing a set of resistance bands. With resistance bands, you can perform lat pulldowns in the same way you do cable pulldowns. Be that as it may, you will still need some anchor point for your bands. There are door anchors for this. All that said, we highly recommend getting a pull up bar or finding one at a park nearby and doing pull ups. Its the best body weight lat exercise you can do. And if you dont have any access to a pull up bar, you probably can find a beam of some sort to do pull ups on. You can get pull up bars on Amazon for as little as \$30. We also have a great list of the 7 Best Outdoor Pull Up Bars for you to check out. Do push ups work latissimus dorsi? Like bench press, push ups will work your lats, particularly the middle lats, as the movement requires horizontal abduction. However, push ups are not going to be enough for the best possible lat development, so we highly recommend adding the above lat specific exercises into your home workouts. Are deadlifts a good lat exercise? Deadlifts are a must and they will do a great job of strengthening your lats as well, especially if you do wide grip variations of the deadlift. We didnt include the deadlift simply because it is more of a total body exercise rather than a lat exercise. Nevertheless, include it in your routine. With the lat exercises above, you will see serious improvements in your deadlifts over time as the lats play an important role in deadlifting. What causes tight latissimus dorsi? Your lats can become tight from overuse or if they become overactive. They can also be tight from certain injuries or simply a lack of stretching and using a full range of motion. Remember, the concentric phase of lifting (squeezing of the muscle) is important, but the eccentric phase (stretching of the muscle) is just as important. By using a full range both on the concentric and eccentric phase, you really shouldnt have an issue with your lats becoming tight as you will be dynamically stretching them as you workout. That said, your lats can still become tight for one reason or another, and if they do, you should know how to stretch them. How do you stretch your latissimus dorsi? There are many different effective lat stretches. Some of my favorites include the hanging bar lat stretch, the bench kneeling lat stretch, and the bent over lat stretch. Foam rolling is also important. Check out our article on the 10 Best Lat Stretches For Before & After Workouts for detailed information on how to perform each of these, along with many others. Exercises For Latissimus Dorsi: Final Takeaways Now that you are armed with everything you need to know about developing your latissimus dorsi, its time to go out there and put your lats and these exercises to the test! A few final pointers: Aim to work your lats twice weekly for muscle hypertrophy, allowing them to rest in between sessions, which is key for muscle recovery. Its also essential that you eat to build muscle, meaning you need to be in a small calorie surplus of 300 to 500 calories. Follow my workout advice and use these exercises for the latissimus dorsi muscle, and massive wings are yours for the taking. Looking for an effective workout featuring many of these exercises? Check out our Best Lat Workouts For A Bigger, Stronger Back! Prepare to maximize your gains with our exclusive 12-week hypertrophy training program. Choose between a 4 or 5 day training split and gain 2-12 pounds of muscle over 90 days... Stretching your lats a few times a week can help you gain flexibility, reduce pain, prevent injuries, and increase your range of motion. The latissimus dorsi muscles, known as the lats, are the large V-shaped muscles that connect your arms to your vertebral column. They help protect and stabilize your spine while providing shoulder and back strength. Your lats also help with shoulder and arm movement and support good posture. Strengthening and stretching your lats is essential in building upper-body strength, improving range of motion, and preventing injury. Here are 10 simple and effective lat stretches you can incorporate into your daily or weekly exercise routine. For maximum benefit, make sure you use proper form and technique while doing these exercises. Stretch only to the point that is comfortable. Never force yourself into a position that causes pain or discomfort. Do these stretches when your muscles are warmed up, either after a short warmup or at the end of a workout. You can repeat each exercise several times or do them throughout the day. For the best results, do these exercises at least three times per week. From a kneeling position, sink your hips back and place your right forearm along the floor. Lean your weight onto your right arm and stretch out through your left arm, reaching out through your fingertips. Youll feel a stretch along the side of your torso. Hold this position for a few seconds. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Repeat on the opposite side. You can maximize the stretch by rounding your lower back. To deepen the stretch, rotate your chest and ribs toward the ceiling as you stretch. Youll need a foam roller for this exercise. Foam rolling can relieve soreness, increase your range of motion, and correct misalignments due to tightness or muscle knots. While rolling, give some extra attention to any tight, tender, or sensitive areas you notice. Engage your opposite arm and lower leg to ensure youre not putting too much pressure on your lat. Lie on your right side with the foam roller under your lat, maintaining a neutral spine. Keep your right leg straight and bend your left knee however is comfortable. Roll back and forth from your lower back up to your underarm, moving as slowly as possible. Roll from side to side. Continue for 1 minute. Repeat on the opposite side. Youll need an exercise ball or a chair for this stretch. This stretch helps lengthen the lats and improve overhead mobility. For a slightly different stretch, place your palm on the ball, facing up or down. Begin on all fours in a tabletop position, in front of an exercise ball. Place your right hand on the ball with your thumb facing the ceiling. Press into your grounded arm for stability and support. Engage your core muscles as you extend your arm straight out, rolling the ball forward. Sink deeper into the stretch as you hold this position for 2030 seconds. Repeat on the opposite side. Do each side 23 times. For a slightly different stretch, you can do this stretch while standing with the ball or the chair in front of you. Position your arm in the same way and hinge at your hips to roll the ball forward. You can do a variation of the ball or chair stretch with your forearms and palms pressing into the wall. Stand about 2 feet from a wall, facing toward it. Hinge at your hips to bend forward. Place the palms of your hands on the wall at about hip height. Hold this position for up to 1 minute. You can do a simple yoga routine that focuses on stretching and strengthening your lats. Pay attention to how your muscles are feeling as you do the poses. Do this routine on its own or as part of a longer workout. These poses can help relieve stress, pain, and tension. Upward Salute (Urdhva Hastasana) is also called Raised Hands Pose or Palm Tree Pose. This pose stretches your lats along with the sides of your body, your spine, your shoulders, and your armpits. Begin in Mountain Pose (Tadasana) with your heels slightly apart and your weight balanced evenly on both feet. Lift both arms up toward the ceiling. Engage your core and tuck in your tailbone slightly, keeping your spine in alignment. If its comfortable for you, bend backward slightly. Eagle Pose (Garudasana) can be done while standing or sitting. This pose can help increase flexibility and range of motion in your shoulders and upper back. Stretch both arms straight forward, parallel to the floor. Cross your arms in front of your upper body so your right arm is above your left arm. Bend your elbows. Tuck your right elbow into the crook of your left elbow and raise both forearms so theyre perpendicular to the floor. Press your palms together and breathe deeply, focusing on releasing tension in your back and shoulders. Reverse your arms and repeat. The spinal rolls of Cat-Cow (Chakravakasana) will help loosen up your lats. Begin on your hands and knees with a neutral spine. Inhale and move into Cow Pose by lifting your seat bones, pressing your chest forward, and allowing your belly to sink toward the floor. As you exhale, move into Cat Pose by rounding your spine outward and tucking in your tailbone. Allow your head to release toward the floor in a relaxed position. Press firmly into your arms throughout both movements and pay attention to how your shoulder blades change position. Downward-Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana) elongates your spine and helps build strength in your lats. Begin on all fours with your wrists under your shoulders and your knees under your hips. Tuck your toes under and lift your hips up off the floor. Straighten your legs and move your heels toward the floor (they do not have to be on the floor). If your hamstrings are tight, its OK to keep your knees slightly bent. You can also walk your hands forward if you need more length. Press firmly through your palms and focus on broadening across your collarbones and shoulders. Allow your chin to tuck into your chest. Upward-Facing Dog (Urdhva Mukha Svanasana) is a backbending pose that can strengthen your lats. Lie on your stomach on the floor. Stretch your legs out behind you and rest the tops of your feet on the floor. Bend your elbows and place your palms on the floor beside your waist. Inhale and straighten your arms while lifting your upper body and your legs a few inches off the floor. Draw your shoulders back and down, away from your ears. Childs Pose (Balasana) is a restorative pose that can help you relax your spine, shoulders, and neck while also stretching your lats. From Downward Dog, take a deep breath and exhale. Release your knees onto the floor while pulling your hips back to your heels. Rest your forehead on the floor. You can also relax in this pose with your knees slightly wider than your hips. To deepen the stretch, walk your fingers as far forward as possible. Walk your fingers to each side before bringing them back to center and resting in this position. Stretching your lats a few times per week can help you gain flexibility, reduce pain, and increase range of motion. This will help prevent injury and will leave you feeling better overall, allowing you to move with strength and ease. Speak with your doctor if you experience pain while doing these exercises.

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