



ACTIVITY

BREAK

GUIDE

Yoga

Energizing Breath

- These three inhales, exhales, and arm movements combine for a quick & detoxifying effect.

Spine Flex

- Take an afternoon stretch break with this movement that stretches both arms and the spine for an energy boost that calms and relaxes.

Breath Coordinated Toe Touches

- Reach for the toes for a mental boost! Inhale deeply, then reach with one hand to the opposite foot, exhaling through mouth. Repeat on opposite side.

Arm Stretches

- This quick and simple exercise works in three parts to give you an invigorating full arm stretch.

Limited Space

Zero In

- Warm up your brain & heart with an interactive guessing game that incorporates jumping jacks and squats.

True or False

- Challenge your co-workers with true & false statements by requiring them to march in place if answer is true and perform jumping jacks if answer is false.

Pat Says

- Lead co-workers in this interactive spinoff of “Simon Says”, giving a series of commands that starts with “Pat Says” and a series of commands that don’t.

Wright Family

- Get moving in this team-building exercise that emphasizes communication and teamwork with your fellow co-workers.

Open Space

Team Quiz Hustle:

- Burn a few calories by playing this game after lunch. Teams of 3-4 people will go to designated stations and perform different physical activities & answer questions.

Ask Somebody

- Get to know your colleagues better by power walking around with a list of “Getting to know you” questions.

Toe-to-Toe

- For a quick icebreaker, find another colleague, and get “toe-to-toe” with them. Share an interesting, personal fact, then march in place, and repeat with another person.

2x2

- Grab a colleague and try to complete as many physical activities as possible that are on the 2x2 Fitness Card in a short amount of time.

Activity Break Guide Appendix

Yoga

Energizing Breath

Minimum Time Needed for Activity: 2-3 minutes

Equipment: None

Organization: Stand at desk

Description: Three quick inhales are each paired with a specific arm movement, while the deep exhales are paired with a forward fold, for a detoxifying effect.

1. Start by standing with arms comfortably hanging at the side; legs are hip distance apart with knees slightly bent, allowing the lower body to slightly bounce with each of the three inhalations.
2. On the first quick inhale, the arms rise straight in front of the body and parallel to the ground.
3. On the second quick inhale, the arms swing out to the side (T-position).
4. On the third quick inhale, the arms swing straight up to the ceiling, framing the head.
5. Finally, bend at waist and bring arms forward to sweep the ground with your fingertips, as you forcefully exhale through your mouth.
6. Repeat as needed.

Now try this:

1. To demonstrate how breathing rate influences heart rate and the connection between body systems, check your pulse before and after the breathing exercise.

Spine Flex

Minimum Time Needed for Activity: 5 minutes

Equipment: None

Organization: You can sit or stand at your desk

Description:

1. Start by sitting on the edge of your desk (or standing by your desk), feet planted firmly on the ground.
2. Inhale deeply, rounding your back (like a cat) while clasping their hands together palms out and placing your arms directly in front of you.
3. Exhale fully through the mouth, arching your back, while now bringing your arms behind your backs, clasping their hands together and extending their arms behind them.
4. Inhale fully one more time, maintaining the latter position.
5. Finally, stretch forward as you exhale through your mouth.
6. Repeat as needed.

Now try this:

1. For a more energizing version with heart rate elevation, try this: seated in a comfortable cross-legged pose, do the spine flex with a more rapid motion without the paired arm movements. Inhales and exhales would happen more forcefully, both through the nostrils, at a rate of about one inhale/exhale breath cycle per second. Do for one minute. Pause for 15-30 seconds and observe and normalize your breathing. Then go into a second set for another minute.

Breath-Coordinated Toe Touches

Minimum Time Needed for Activity: 3 minutes

Equipment: None

Organization: Stand by desk, with plenty of room to move

Description:

1. Start by standing with legs approximately three feet apart, bringing arms up to a T-position.
2. Inhale deeply through the nostrils
3. Twisting at the hips, reach with one hand to the opposite foot (i.e. left hand touches the right foot), while exhaling through the mouth.
4. Inhale deeply while going back to standing T-position.
5. Repeat on the opposite side (i.e. right hand touches left foot, while exhaling).
6. Guide yourself through a series of repetitions, as time allows (the key here is to coordinate the movement with the breath. You should move at the pace that your breath naturally establishes for you).

Now try this:

1. Turn on slower music to help set a slow breathing pace.

Arm Stretches

Minimum Time Needed for Activity: 1-2 minutes

Equipment: None

Organization: Sit or stand by your desk

Description: This is a three-part stretch. You can choose to do only one part, or implement all 3 as a full arm stretch.

1. Start by crossing your right arm across your chest.
2. Use your left arm to slowly stretch your right arm further by placing it over the right arm's elbow and pulling your right arm closer to your chest. Hold this pose for 10 seconds.
3. Repeat on the opposite side and hold for 10 seconds (i.e. left arm over chest, right arm pulling it closer to the chest).
4. Then place your right arm over your shoulder, palm towards your back.
5. Again, using their left arm, place your left hand on their right elbow and slowly push your right elbow down to help further extend your right tricep. Hold this pose for 10 seconds.
6. Repeat on the opposite side and hold for 10 seconds (i.e. left arm over shoulder, right hand on elbow and slowly pushing their left elbow down).
7. Finally, extend your right arm out in front of you, hand up so that your fingers are pointing up.
8. Using your left hand, slowly pull your right hands' fingers towards you. Hold this pose for 10 seconds.
9. On the same arm, then turn your right hand down, so that your fingers are pointing down.
10. Again, using your left hand, students slowly pull your right hands' fingers towards you. (You should feel a slight stretch in your forearm). Hold this pose for 10 seconds.
11. Repeat on the opposite arm and hold for 10 seconds each (i.e. left hand down, right hand pulls toward body, left hand up, right hand pulls towards body).

Source: Modified from CATCH Grades 6-8 Activity Box: Card # 312 and #319

Limited Space

Zero In

Minimum Time Needed for Activity: 10 minutes

Equipment: Card stock/piece of paper with a number or equation

Organization:

1. Participants stand
2. Someone prepares several cards/pieces of paper with a number or equation (e.g., 283; 50×7).

Description:

1. The object of this activity is for 1 person to correctly guess a number with the aid of his or her co-workers.
2. The designated person does this by receiving movement clues from co-workers until she or he has “zeroed in” on the correct number.
3. Have the person come to the front and stand facing everyone
4. Another person stands behind the student and holds up the equation/number card for everyone to see (without the person in the front of everyone seeing the card).
5. Direct the person to call out a number between 1 and 500 (or an alternative range based on the identified number or equation answer).
6. Everybody helps the person “zero in” to guess the number on the card by squatting if the he/she needs to guess lower or jumping up and down if he/she needs to guess higher.
7. Based on these responses from everyone, the person continues to call out numbers until he or she correctly guesses the number.

Source: Modified from CATCHy Ideas Kit: Middle School Activity Breaks. CATCH Facilitators, 2008.

True or False

Equipment: None

Description:

1. Call out a series of statements such as:
 - a. Your heart is a muscle. (True)
 - b. White bread is more nutritious than whole-wheat bread. (False)
 - c. Exercise makes your heart stronger. (True)
 - d. The main function of the heart is to supply oxygen to your body. (True)
 - e. Blood does not transport the oxygen from the heart to other parts of the body. (False)
 - f. The main sources of protein are meat, fish, and beans. (True)
 - g. You have muscles that move even when you don't think to tell them to. (True)
2. Others respond to each of these statements by marching in place if the answer is false and doing jumping jacks if the answer is true (set time limit of 10 seconds for the physical activity).
3. Instruct everyone to make larger movements—such as jogging in place or doing lunges—to increase the intensity for true or false statements.

Now try this:

1. Choose different movements for true and false answers.
2. Have a brief discussion as to why each statement was true or false.

Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

Pat Says

Equipment: None

Organization: Participants are in a scattered, safe area to perform physical activity

Description:

1. Inform the participants that they are going to play a game similar to “Simon Says”. However, they will not be eliminated if they mess up, and the name is changed to “Pat Says” because it is more gender-neutral.
2. Ask the participants to stand up. If anyone does not stand up, praise them for following directions.
3. Ask them to sit back down. If anyone does not sit back down, praise them for following directions.
4. Next, lead them through a series of commands, some starting with “Pat Says” and others that don't.
5. If they mess up when “Pat Says” is not called, simply encourage them to do better the next time.

SUGGESTIONS:

1. Stretch different muscles. Start with the legs and back, and move to the arms and neck.
2. Call out “Pat Says” a few times in a row so they are thrown off when it is not called.

Source: Modified Icebreaker, original source unknown

Wright Family

When facilitating the "Wright Family" activity, be sure to follow these procedures:

1. Have participants form a large circle. Pass out different items (i.e. scarves, balls, bean bags, etc.). Tell participants that you are going to teach them two simple tasks – passing their scarf to the right and passing it to the left. Tell them that you are going to practice these two simple tasks. Have participants hold their scarf while in the circle, and instruct them to pass their scarf one time to the right when you give them the command to do so. Call out pass to the right about two times to let them practice. Next, call out pass your scarf to the left about two times to let them practice. Now, announce that you are going to read a story and whenever they hear the word "left" they are to pass the scarf one time to the "left" and when they hear the word "right" they are to pass the scarf one time to the "right."
2. Begin reading the story in a somewhat fast-paced manner allowing chaos to reign and folks to get mixed up. Once you have finished reading the first paragraph stop and assess their progress. You will probably find that some participants have multiple scarves while others don't have any! Allow the participants to re-distribute the scarves so each person has one scarf.
3. Next, ask the participants: "What can I do to make this process go smoother or help you to be more successful?" The first thing they will more than likely call out is SLOW DOWN! Then ask the participants: "What can YOU do to make this process go smoother?" Their responses might include one of the following: listen, stop talking, focus, etc.
4. Begin reading the story again, adhering to their suggestions. Stop after the second and third paragraph and see how they are doing. Ask for more suggestions for you (response might include: talk louder, emphasize/annunciate the word "right" and "left", etc.) as well as for themselves (e.g., concentrate, work together, etc.).
5. Read the last paragraph and make sure you are following all their suggestions for everyone to succeed at the end of the story! To summarize the activity, ask the participants: "What are the lessons learned from this activity?" Their responses may include: communication, going slow, listening, teamwork, cooperation, etc. You then highlight that all of those things are essential when creating a healthy work environment. Mention that (typically) one of the first things that come up in this activity is "slow down"! Emphasize the need for them to slow down when they are at work and slow down, build on what's already happening at work, and work to communicate & coordinate those efforts with fellow co-workers.

Source: CATCH Group Facilitators

Life with the Wright Family

One day the Wright family decided to take a vacation. The first thing they had to decide was who would be left at home since there was not enough room in the Wright family car for all of them. Mr. Wright decided that Aunt Linda Wright would be the one left at home. Of course this made Aunt Linda Wright so mad that she left the house immediately yelling, "It will be a right cold day before I return."

The Wright family now bundled up the children, Tommy Wright, Susan Wright, Timmy Wright, and Shelly Wright and got in the car and left. Unfortunately, as they turned right out of the driveway someone had left a trash can in the street so they had to turn right around and stop the car. They told Timmy Wright to get out of the car and move the trash can so they could get going. Tommy Wright took so long that they almost left him in the street. Once the Wright family got on the road, Mother Wright wondered if she had left the stove on. Father Wright told her not to worry he had checked the stove and she had not left it on. As they turned right at the corner, everyone started to think about other things that they might have left undone.

No need to worry now, they were off on a right fine vacation. When they arrived at the gas station, Father Wright put gas in the car and then discovered that he had left his wallet at home. So Timmy Wright ran home to get the money that was left behind. After Timmy had left, Susan Wright started to feel sick. She left the car saying that she had to throw up. This of course got Mother Wright's attention and she left the car in a hurry. Shelly Wright wanted to watch Susan get sick so she left the car too. Father Wright was left with Tommy Wright who was playing a game in the backseat.

With all of this going on Father Wright decided that this was not the right time to take a vacation, so he gathered up all of the family and left the gas station as quickly as he could. When he arrived home, he turned left into the driveway and said "I wish the Wright family had never left the house today!"

Open Space

Team Quiz Hustle

Minimum Time Needed for Activity: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 designated stations in the office/conference area (no equipment is needed), 4 Quiz/Physical Activity cards (pieces of paper/card stock for quiz question and activity)

Organization:

1. Create 4 quiz/physical activity cards (1 card per station). Write a quiz question on 1 side of the card and a physical activity on the other side of the card (e.g., 20 jumping jacks, jog in place for 30 seconds, imaginary jump rope for 25 seconds).
2. Place a quiz question/physical activity card at each numbered station. The card should be placed with the quiz question face down and the physical activity face up.
3. Divide the group into teams of 3 to 4, with each team starting at a different exercise station (the number of stations may vary).
4. Write the answers to the questions on separate pieces of paper that are numbered according to the station and taped to a white board/wall face down.

Description:

1. On signal, the team performs the physical activity and then turns the card over to read the question. As a team, they decide on the answer, and 1 person walks to the chalkboard to determine if the group has the correct answer.
2. If their answer is correct, they proceed to the next station.
3. If their answer is incorrect, they go back to the station and repeat the activity. They then move to the next station and repeat the sequence.
4. The first team to complete all stations is the winner.

Source: Modified from CATCH Grades 6-8 Activity Box: Card #78

Ask Somebody

Minimum Time Needed for Activity: 5 minutes

Equipment: Each student should have a copy of the Ask Somebody Activity Sheet and a writing utensil.

Organization: Participants should be scattered throughout the office/conference room

Description:

1. Create a list of questions to ask colleagues. (i.e. What city were you born in? What is your favorite physical activity? What is your favorite fruit/vegetable?)
2. Give participants 3 minutes to walk around and write down answers.
3. Signal the group to stop and ask a few volunteers to share their findings.

Source: Modified Icebreaker, original source unknown.

Toe-to-Toe

Minimum Time Needed for Activity: 5 minutes

Equipment: None

Organization: Participants are scattered in a 20 x 20 yard area, or in a big office/conference room. This activity can be used as an introduction to a conference to get everyone mentally and physically “warmed up.”

Description:

1. As people enter the room, greet them at the door and ask them to put their belongings down, and begin to walk around the room, in no particular pattern.
2. When everyone is in the room, tell them to quickly find someone and get “toe-to-toe” with that person.
3. Instruct everyone to greet their toe-to-toe partner and exchange names.
4. Ask everyone to share with their partner something they learned the day before, and then march in place.
5. Once everyone is marching, instruct the everyone to march to another partner and get elbow-to-elbow with that person.
6. Instruct participants to greet their elbow-to-elbow partner and exchange names.
7. Ask them to share with their new partner a question about what they learned yesterday, and then do 10 jumping jacks.
8. Everyone should continue exchanging partners and sharing different types of information until the class is sufficiently “warmed up.”
9. Everyone may return to their seats.

Now try this:

1. Conclude every meeting/conference with this activity, summarizing what they learned that day.
2. Possible “partner” commands: knees, pinkies, thumbs, shoulders, backs, hips, heels, etc.
4. Possible activity commands: walk, march, touch an object in the classroom, perform a set of wall push-ups, jumping jacks, etc.
5. Possible “share with your partner” commands: a physical activity you did with your family over the weekend, what you did at the gym, your plans for the weekend, etc.

Source: Adapted from CATCH Grades 6-8 Activity Box: Card #8

Two-by-Two Fitness

Minimum Time Needed for Activity: 5 minutes

Equipment: Copies of the Two-x-Two Fitness cards, and writing utensils.

Organization:

1. Each card should have a list of activities that each participant is to complete with a partner.

(Note: the number of activities listed should be determined by the amount of time allotted for this activity.)

2. Participants can find a new partner for each task or perform all tasks with the same partner. This is determined by the leader of the group.

3. The leader should be in a central location during the activity and face everyone so that they can hear the commands.

4. Provide a box of pencils if the participants are to record their work.

Description:

1. Participants are given a Two-x-Two Fitness card and are asked to find a partner.

2. The leader establishes start and stop signals for each activity (e.g., clapping once, twice, or 3 times).

3. Signal the group to begin completing their fitness card.

4. Signal the group to stop. Ask everyone how many activities they were able to complete.

Source: Adapted from CATCH Grades 6-8 Activity Box: Card #9

Two-by-Two Fitness (Continued)

Name: _____ Date: _____

You will need a partner for these activities. You do not have to do the activities in the order they are

presented. Sign your partner's card after you have performed the task.

You and a partner:	Partner Initials
Do 15 wall push-ups	
Name a physical activity that you enjoy	
Name your favorite healthy snack	
Do 15 toe-touches	
Stand on your tip toes for 10 seconds	
Name 5 healthy foods you enjoy	
Jog in place for 30 seconds	

Name a physical activity you do with your family	
Do a 30-second dance	
Shake your partner's hand	

Source: Adapted from CATCH Grades 6-8 Activity Box: Card # 9.