

Upper Body Length Sequence



Note: Remember, no part of MELT should ever hurt. Pain is your signal to ease back pressure!



REST ASSESS

Lie on the floor with your arms and legs straight and relaxed, palms face up. Take a breath and allow your body to relax into the floor. Remember, if all your upper back weight is on your shoulder blades, if your mid-back is arched off the floor, if your tailbone is more weighted than your butt cheeks, or if the backs of your thighs feel off the floor on one or both sides, you have identified stuck stress in your body. Close your eyes and, using your Body Sense, notice what you feel. Turn your head left and right. Do you feel pain or limited range? Assess your Autopilot. Imagine dividing yourself into right and left sides. Notice if one side of your body feels more on the floor than the other. Does the right or the left side feel heavier or longer, or do they feel even? Finally, breathe and notice if there are any restrictions as you take a full breath.



GENTLE ROCKING

Lie along the length of the roller. Place your forearms on the floor and take a focused breath. Allow your head, chest, and pelvis to slowly tip toward the floor on one side.

Then come back through the center and slowly tip toward the other side. You want to get a sense of gently falling and catching yourself with your forearm, while keeping the back of your head, your spine, and the center of your pelvis aligned and heavy on the roller at all times. Continue to gently rock from left to right for about 30 seconds.



SHOULDER BLADE REACH

Place your hands on the sides of your ribs with your elbows on the floor. Straighten out your arms and extend them toward the ceiling, palms facing in, with your shoulder blades weighted and heavy around the roller. Your hands should remain over your lower ribs, not directly above your shoulders. Breathe in, keep your arms straight and energized, and without shrugging your shoulders, reach your fingertips toward the ceiling. On the exhale, allow the weight of your arms to slowly sink your shoulder blades down around the roller without bending your elbows. Breathe in and reach your arms up again without shrugging. Repeat this 5–10 times.





SINGLE ARM REACH

Lie lengthwise on the roller. Extend your arms up, shoulder-width apart, palms facing each other. Breathe in. On the exhale, allow the weight of your arms to sink your shoulder blades around the roller. Move your arms in front of your body in a scissor-like motion. Repeat 3 times. Then repeat 4 times with the back of your hand leading the movement. Repeat 4 times with your pinky fingers leading the movement. Arms do not go below your cheekbone or outer hip.



DOUBLE ARM REACH

Place your hands on the sides of your ribs, elbows on the floor. Open your forearms away from your torso to make a letter W. Lift your elbows off the floor as you reach your fingertips away from the center of your chest without shrugging your shoulders, locking your elbows, or lifting your ribs off the roller. Your hands are just above your body. Your arms are in line with your ribs, rather than straight out from your shoulders. Keeping your palms face up, slowly extend one wrist and point your fingertips toward the floor as you flex the other wrist and point your fingertips toward the ceiling. Switch sides. Take focused breaths into your chest as you slowly flex and extend your wrists in opposition 6–10 times. Notice the pull across the front of your upper body, from fingertip to fingertip. Try this same motion while making fists. You can also open your hands again and try turning your palms face down to flex and extend the wrists with open palms and then closed fists. Put your hands on the floor and slowly come off the roller by straightening out one leg and sliding off that side, first with your pelvis, and then your ribs and head.



NECK TURN

Lie lengthwise on the roller. Place your fingertips on the floor, straighten out your arms, and gently press your fingers into the floor. Breathe in. On the exhale, keep your chin slightly tipped upward and slowly turn your head to the right without lifting your head off of the roller or allowing your hair to slide on the roller. Sense the increase of tension to your left arm. Take 2 focused breaths. Bring your head back to the center and repeat on the other side. Turn your palms face up or slide your hands away from your body and repeat. Notice which side feels more intense and restricted. You can repeat on that side.



REST REASSESS

Lie on the floor with your arms and legs straight and relaxed, palms face up. Breathe and allow your body to relax into the floor. Close your eyes and take a moment to reassess. Remember the four common imbalances. Did you make changes? Do your ribs feel more weighted to the floor? Is your low back curve more relaxed and closer to your pelvis? Is your pelvis more weighted on your butt cheeks than on your tailbone? Have the backs of your thighs settled to the floor? Turn your head slowly from left to right. Do you have more range of motion? Is there less pain or stiffness in your neck? Assess your Autopilot. When you divide yourself into right and left sides, do the sides feel more even? Does it feel like there's less of a distinction between your left and right halves? Finally, take a full breath and notice what areas of your torso expand when your lungs fill with air. Do you sense greater movement? Is it easier to take a deep breath?