

THE SCOUT GUIDE

— SCOUTING THE BEST OF LOCAL —

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TSG TIPS

Pearls of wisdom brought to you weekly by our vast network of experts. Stay tuned: you're bound to learn something.



THE POWER OF GOOD POSTURE

As we embark on new fitness plans to fulfill resolutions to be stronger and slimmer in 2015, it helps to remember the power of having good posture. In addition to allowing us to get the most out of our workouts, being properly aligned is one of the key components to looking and feeling good, so we sought out the creators of the acclaimed core-focused *HILLIARD STUDIO METHOD* for some advice; here are their recommendations:

- **Remember that good posture makes you look slimmer and taller in seconds.** In addition to making you appear shorter and heavier, bad posture cuts off oxygen to muscles and reduces flexibility. Opening up your chest by pulling back your shoulder blades and dropping them into a secure position down your back while pulling in your belly and making your neck long will not only make you look slimmer and taller, but will also mean you'll have less tightness and muscle tension in your chest, shoulders, neck and back.
- **Stretch to combat postural problems.** One of our favorite stretches is on a cylindrical foam roller, lying tailbone to cervical spine with the head supported, feet on the floor, bringing arms to the yoga cactus position (with arms at 90 degree angles) and letting gravity pull your hands and elbows as close to the floor as possible. This will improve your posture and open up the chest.
- **Stay aligned while you work.** Follow these steps for a healthy, pain-free posture while you sit in front of a computer:
 - Sit upright. Keep your chin level, head above shoulders, shoulders over hips, and chest open. If your desk is too short to keep a level gaze, stack some books under your monitor or laptop.
 - Sit in a chair that allows your lower back to rest against a lumbar support, or better yet, find an oversized fitness ball to use as your chair. Your body will naturally align, and if you feel like procrastinating, you can always do some crunches or simply bounce around like a child (so fun, and an inner thigh workout too!).
 - Breathe. Inhale deeply, filling up the diaphragm. Then exhale, bringing your navel to your spine, and try to breathe while keeping your lower abdomen contracted. This will allow your core to take the load off the shoulders and neck.

Expert tip from *HILLIARD STUDIO METHOD* in Charlotte, NC.

See complete post here: <http://thescoutguide.com/tsq-tips/>