

Unity Bank Digest

September 19th, 2025

Finance

Economic News

Lifestyle



The Naira consistently appreciates as FX inflows rise in the 1st half of September

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Burning Issues

Nigeria's Inflation Rate Moderates to 20.12% in August 2025

Nigeria's inflation rate eased to 20.12% in August 2025, down from 21.88% in July, marking the fifth consecutive monthly decline, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). This slowdown reflects a modest cooling of the general price level, driven largely by reduced pressures in the food sector, which accounts for the largest portion of household expenditure. Food inflation dropped to 21.87%, supported by price declines in staples like imported and local rice, maize flour, guinea corn, millet, and soy milk. The seasonal harvest boost, along with relative foreign exchange stability, helped ease import costs and improve food availability. However, high inflation still persists in certain regions such as Borno and Kano, where food prices remain elevated, signaling uneven regional impacts. While headline inflation showed improvement, core inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy prices, remained at a still-elevated 20.3%, indicating ongoing price pressures in housing, utilities, transport, and other essential services.

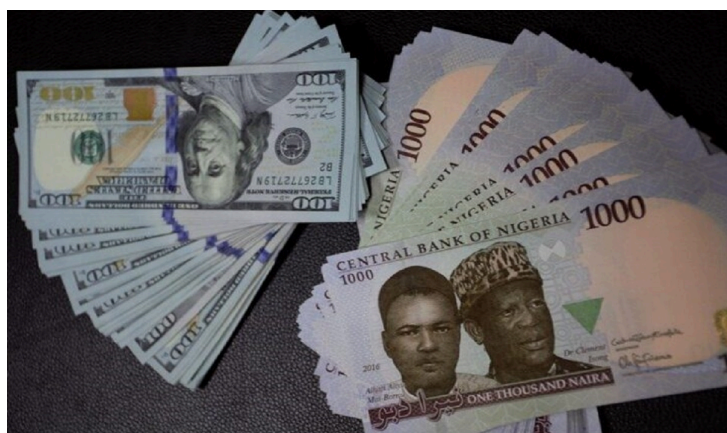
The easing of inflation offers a partial reprieve that could help sustain purchasing power and ease operational costs across the economy, albeit with continued caution due to persistent price pressures in non-food sectors. Interest rates remain high, with commercial lending rates averaging between 32% and 36%, reinforcing a cautious credit environment. However, sustained inflation moderation, supported by tighter money supply controls and improved foreign exchange inflows, could create room for monetary policy adjustments that encourage economic growth. Policymakers are expected to monitor inflation dynamics closely, recognizing that further structural reforms in supply chains and food security are crucial for lasting stability and more inclusive economic recovery. The current trends represent progress, but underscore the need for continued vigilance and strategic interventions.

Naira records gains as forex inflows surge by 26% year-on-year

The naira continues to experience gains, trading at ₦1,529/\$ on September 12, 2025, up from ₦1,533/\$ the previous day at the Nigerian foreign exchange market. The appreciation was supported by a 26% year-on-year increase in foreign exchange inflows and the CBN's contractionary monetary policy stance. In the parallel market, the naira remained stable at ₦1535/\$. The forex outflows increased at a faster pace, rising by 14% quarterly and 33% on a yearly basis to \$13.8 billion in Q1 '25, up from \$10.34 billion (₦119.81 billion).

The country's reserves also experienced growth, which amounted to ₦41 billion in August 2025, up from \$39.27 billion in July 2025. This improvement in the forex position was due to the increase in non-oil exports, which rose by 19.59% to \$3.2 billion in H1'25 from \$2.69 billion in H1'24. This reflects a reduction on the dependence of oil revenues and increased value addition, helping the naira to be more stable.

In the near term, we expect the improved forex market conditions to be sustained, which could boost the foreign portfolio investment inflows, and in turn increase external reserves. For consumers and businesses, the steady recovery in the naira can help ease importation costs of raw materials, operational uncertainties, and production expenses.



Does Drinking Milk Actually Make Your Bones Stronger?

Culled from The New York Times¹

Q: I've always heard that you need to drink milk to keep your bones healthy. Is that true?

For generations, Americans have been told — through school nutrition programs and advertising campaigns — that milk is an essential part of a healthy diet.

Key to that narrative was that milk builds strong bones. Your bones are made of calcium, and one cup of whole milk contains about 300 milligrams of this nutrient. So drinking three cups per day, the thinking went, must make them resilient. But that message was built on short-term studies and pushed by the dairy industry, said Dr. Walter Willett, a professor of epidemiology and nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

With over a third of people in the United States having trouble digesting lactose, nobody needs to drink cow's milk, said Christopher Gardner, a nutrition scientist and professor of medicine at Stanford University. Getting enough calcium is still important, especially for some high-risk groups, but there may be better sources.

What does milk do to bones?

Calcium is an essential nutrient, critical for nerve, muscle and heart function, as well as bone and tooth health.

However, as with most nutrients, your body needs only a certain amount. The U.S. dietary guidelines recommend that adults consume 1,000 to 1,200 milligrams of calcium per day, but this threshold is debated among experts — and other countries, like the United Kingdom, recommend only 700 milligrams.

Past clinical trials have found that when children and adults who weren't eating enough calcium increased their consumption, whether via dairy foods or supplements, their bone densities increased by up to 3 percent. But those gains were too small to meaningfully reduce fracture risk, Dr. Willett said. And other studies have found that people must consume extra calcium every day to maintain those gains, which may not be worth the investment, he added.

"The idea that we need lot of calcium is based primarily on very short-term studies looking at calcium balance over a few weeks," Dr. Willett said. And an analysis of 79 milk papers published between 1999 and 2003 found that over a third received funding from the dairy industry.

There's even evidence that people can have strong bones without drinking milk. According to one review published in 2020, people who live in countries with the lowest rates of hip fractures also tend to drink the least milk. And

1. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/12/well/eat/calcium-bone-health.html>

analyses of multiple studies have found that drinking more milk was not associated with lower fracture risk.

Of course, studies like these can't prove any link between milk consumption and bone health, said Dr. René Rizzoli, the former head of the bone diseases department at the University Hospitals of Geneva. To show that milk consumption prevents fractures, for instance, you would need clinical trials on the topic, which have not been done.

Ultimately, your exercise and broader diet may have more influence over your bone health. So don't count on milk alone to eliminate your fracture risk, Dr. Rizzoli said.

Do some people need milk more than others?

MExperts say that children ages 9 to 18 need more calcium than any other age group to support their growth; as do older adults, since bone density tends to decrease after age 50.

When a person's calcium levels are low, the body can adapt by pulling more calcium from food and rejecting less as waste, Dr. Gardner said. But these mechanisms decline with age, and when the body isn't getting enough, it pulls more calcium from bones, he added, weakening them.

In a 2021 clinical trial, researchers assigned more than 7,000 older adults living in assisted care facilities in Australia to either maintain their usual two servings of dairy per day or increase their consumption to 3.5 servings per day. Over the two-year study, the higher-dairy group

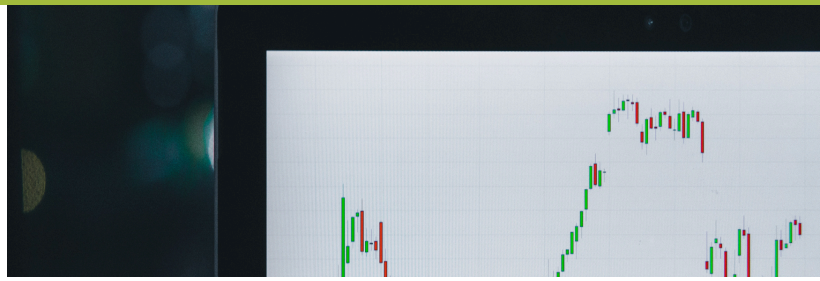
had an 11 percent reduced risk of falls and a 33 percent reduced risk of fractures. The researchers also found that they maintained more weight, muscle mass and bone density than the lower-dairy group, though the team couldn't determine whether their lower risk of falls and fractures were because of stronger bones or something else, said Sandra Iuliano, a nutritionist at the University of Melbourne.

Regardless, milk can be one of the most convenient sources of calcium, along with other nutrients like protein, potassium and phosphorus, said Jeri Nieves, a nutritional epidemiologist at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York City. Other foods — like tofu, bony fish, leafy vegetables and fortified orange juice or plant-based milks — are good sources too, Dr. Nieves said, even if they have less calcium per serving.

The best option for calcium, however, might be fermented dairy products like yogurt and cheese. They support the gut microbiome, tend to be better tolerated by people sensitive to lactose and are more strongly tied to lower fracture risk than milk, Dr. Rizzoli said. They're also packed with calcium — a 1.5-ounce serving of Cheddar cheese, for example, has the same amount as a cup of whole milk.

"If you like milk, drink it. If you don't like milk, or if you can't tolerate it, use some other source," Dr. Nieves said.

The Macro



Nigeria's private sector growth hikes for four months consecutively

In August 2025, Nigeria's private sector recorded its highest growth in four months. This was driven by improved consumer demand and downward inflationary pressure. According to Stanbic IBTC Bank purchasing managers' index report, the headline purchasing managers' index saw increases to 54.2 in August, up from 54.0 in July. This marked the ninth consecutive month above the 50.0 benchmark that differentiates growth from contraction. It further highlights a sustained expansion as business conditions continue to improve. This was supported by sharper rises in output and new orders.

Notably, output expanded across services, construction, and agriculture, while the manufacturing sector lagged behind. The increase in Nigeria's private sector activity comes at a time when the economy is gradually recovering from the pressures of high inflation and volatility in exchange rates. The positive gains have contributed to the downward inflationary pressures seen in the marginal decline in prices of goods and services and stronger demand. An improvement in economic activity could lead to an increase in opportunities which would not put a strain on household budgets, lower input costs, and create a more supportive environment for business expansion.

Nigeria's non-oil revenue experiences 40.5% surge in eight months

Between January and August 2025, Nigeria saw a 40.5% increase in government revenue, reaching N20.59 trillion, up from N14.6 trillion during the same period in 2024. Non-oil sources contributed N15.69 trillion, showing a move away from reliance on oil exports. This growth resulted from reforms like customs automation, digitized tax filing, stricter enforcement, and better compliance which addresses leakages and enhanced government collections.

The rise in non-oil revenue has led to a better fiscal position, with monthly federal allocations to states and local governments surpassing N2 trillion for the first time in July 2025. This will eventually translate into more resources for infrastructure, social services, and food security.

Overall, the rise in non-oil inflows is expected to benefit consumers and small businesses through increased government spending on lucrative projects. With this, economic activities could stimulate provision of social services and infrastructure which in turn improves livelihoods. For small businesses, stronger fiscal health could translate into more favorable operating conditions, potentially making them feel less impact of taxes and a better environment for growth.



China grants \$1 million to aid Nigeria's flood relief

As we enter this new month of September, Nigeria has been enduring heavy rainfall, particularly in 14 states across the nation, in which 43 communities have been affected by flooding. Notably, farmlands essential to the nation's food supply have been adversely affected, key regions such as Benue, Ebonyi, Taraba and Zamfara. Consequently, the availability of food and food security in these significant regions is undermined. According to the National Emergency Management Agency and agricultural groups, over 100,000 hectares of cropland have been submerged or eroded during this flooding season.

Staple crop outputs including maize, rice, yams, and cassava are at risk of being under threat, with an estimation of a 12% and 21% year-on-year decline in maize and rice respectively, according to agricultural analysts. This loss only further intensifies inflationary pressures as food prices, already over 35%, are triggered by constrained supply and dysfunctional supply systems adding upward pressure. Rural roads and markets hindered by infrastructural damage complicates access to inputs and extends the delivery of goods to urban areas, aggravating costs and economic strain on many communities dependent on constant food supply. The Potato Farmers Association of Nigeria claim that these interruptions will dent incomes in rural areas and could cause millions of people to be even more food insecure.

At the heart of relief efforts the Chinese government has granted \$1 million, signed off by the Minister of Budget and Economic Planning, Abubakar Bagudu. Aimed to mitigate and provide relief to victims in the northern states, assisting livelihood rehabilitation programs and the provision of emergency supplies are provided. A transparent framework has been put in place for fund management, alongside the Chinese embassy ensuring accountability and efficiency in a collaborative monitoring system. While prompt support is crucial to mitigate flooding impacts, it is stressed that this aid should be accompanied by strategic investments to curb flooding disasters and manage climate adaptation infrastructure to ensure long-term food security and agricultural productivity in Nigeria.

High loan rates weigh on Nigerian businesses

Nigerian businesses are struggling with high commercial lending rates, even at its lowest in 2025 averaging around 29.31% during the month of July according to the CBN. With the monetary policy rate firmly fixed at 27.5% through the year, in place to combat inflation and steady the naira. This has provoked banks to add risk and operational premiums of roughly 3-5 percentage points on top of the monetary policy rate, contributing to the heavy burden on borrowers stemming from loan rates lingering between 29% and 36%.

The strict monetary policy position tightened liquidity and lending capacity due to a 50% Cash Reserve Ratio, requiring banks to hold half their deposits at the CBN. This makes it easier for banks to uphold high margins, while limiting credit flow to businesses by broadening the gap between deposit rates of 5-7% and lending rates nearing 30%.

Inadequate credit duration and high lending costs impair investment and job creation, ultimately slowing our fragile economic recovery. These conditions curb productive growth by bolstering financial strain and offsetting capital expenditure projects. As cries for a more structured monetary and fiscal measure get louder to ease constraints, they must encourage longer-term loans, and harmonise inflation control with support for sustainable business development.



\$5 billion superhighway set to transform Abuja–Lagos travel

A superhighway project from Abuja to Lagos is set to be a groundbreaking piece of infrastructure for Nigeria. As announced earlier this month construction is expected to be underway before the end of 2025 pending the approval from the Federal Executive Council. This \$5 billion modern highway will span across 470 km, significantly reducing travel duration between the FCT, Abuja and economic hub, Lagos to an estimated 4 hours, bridging connectivity and economic inclusion across a range of key states along the corridor. Solar powered street lighting and service terminals, as well as other advanced safety features to be implemented ensuring it will be amongst if not the most sophisticated road projects in the country.

In addition to aiding a potential extension connecting to Baro Port for enhanced commerce and logistics, the project seeks to substantially limit the strain on existing road networks, promoting regional trade, and open up the doors to rural villages in states like Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ekiti, Kwara and Niger. The financing strategy, which reflects an innovative shift in infrastructure funding, particularly avoids raising Nigeria's government debt load by using a hybrid guarantee structure that instills trust in lenders.

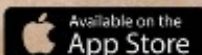
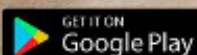
A cornerstone of President Bola Tinubu's infrastructure itinerary, this superhighway indicates a resurgence of the country's connectivity and economic growth as a whole. Its successful execution is expected to be complete in four years time, critical in lowering transportation costs, fostering sustainable growth and encouraging regional development in the nation long-term.



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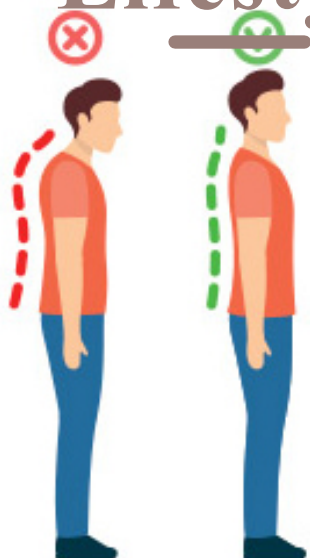
Social Story

GITEX Nigeria Tech Summit 2025

- The GITEX Nigeria Tech Summit 2025 took place from September 1 to 4, 2025, in two cities: Abuja and Lagos.
- It showcased Nigeria's rapid digital transformation and innovation ecosystem through a blend of government-led forums, technology expos, and conferences.
- The event opened with the Government Leadership & AI Summit in Abuja on September 1–2, focusing on policy frameworks for digital governance and artificial intelligence.
- The Lagos segment from September 3–4 featured the Tech Expo and Future Economy Conference, attracting over 1,000 startups and scale-ups from across Nigeria and Africa.
- Major global tech companies such as IBM, MTN, and Cisco participated, presenting cutting-edge technologies and solutions tailored for the Nigerian market.
- The summit served as a high-level platform for dialogue between policymakers, investors, entrepreneurs, and technology innovators.
- Key discussions centered on fostering an enabling environment for startup growth, digital infrastructure, and investment opportunities.
- Innovations in fintech, agritech, healthtech, and e-commerce were displayed, reflecting Nigeria's diverse technology ecosystem.
- The event included workshops, pitch competitions, and networking sessions, helping startups gain visibility and secure funding.
- Media coverage highlighted the summit's role in positioning Nigeria as a leading tech hub in Africa.
- The summit also emphasized inclusivity with programs aimed at women and youth empowerment in tech.
- GITEX Nigeria Tech Summit 2025 signaled the country's ambition to harness technology for economic growth and social development.



Lifestyle



These 12 Exercises Will Help You Reap the Health Benefits of Good Posture

Culled from Healthline

From our pain levels to our self-confidence, our posture impacts more than we think.

Putting in the effort to improve your posture has huge payoffs.

But what is good posture really?

“Good posture is also known as neutral spine. When we have good posture, the muscles surrounding the spine are balanced and supporting the body equally,” explains Nina Strang, physical therapist and certified strengthening and conditioning specialist at the University of Michigan.

Here’s a quick posture check-in: When sitting, your feet should rest flat on the floor, with even weight on both hips. Your back should be mostly straight (you’ll have natural curves in your lumbar, thoracic, and cervical areas). Your shoulders should be back but relaxed and your ears should line up over your collarbones.

When standing, your legs should have a slight knee bend so you’re not hyperextending or locking your knee joints, says Kara Griffith, exercise physiologist at Colorado Canyons Hospital & Medical Center.

Now that we know what good posture is, here are 12 key benefits along with tips to achieve them.

1. Reduced low back pain

Sitting or standing in a slouched position for prolonged periods of time stresses your lower back. More specifically, it puts pressure on the posterior structures of the spine, including the intervertebral discs, facet points, ligaments, and muscles, explains Strang.

Do bridges to strengthen your lower back

Bridges strengthen and engage your gluteal and abdominal muscles, so your body relies on them instead of stressing your lower back.

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor, instructs Strang. Tighten your core without changing your back position. “Lift your hips and lower torso off of the ground by contracting your gluteus maximus muscles.” Slowly lower your hips back down.

Posture tip: Move around frequently—every 20 to 30 minutes is recommended

• “No one is able to sit with perfect posture all of the time; it takes a lot of strength to do so. When you feel your

1. <https://www.healthline.com/health/fitness-exercise/posture-benefits#6-Increased-lung-capacity>

muscles tiring, or yourself slowly slouching, get up and move around,” encourages Strang.

What to look for: Don’t anticipate a decrease in lower back pain on your first day. “Posture is something that you should expect to work at your whole life,” says Strang.

By stretching your chest, and strengthening your core and upper back muscles, you’ll see gradual but noticeable pain reduction.

2. Fewer headaches

“Poor posture can contribute to tension headaches, due to increased muscle tension in the back of the neck. Often if we correct our posture, we can reduce muscle tension and improve our headaches,” says Strang.

Stretch your neck muscles with a head retraction exercise

This exercise strengthens the neck muscles that are often weak and stretched out.

Lie on the floor on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Pull your chin back toward the floor like you’re trying to make a double chin. Hold for 10 to 15 seconds and repeat 10 times.

Posture tip: Check in with your body often. “Awareness is essential to good posture. We get busy working at our computers or eating a good meal, and we compress into poor posture,” says Griffith. Post a note on your computer screen to remind you to get yourself in proper alignment.

What to look for: Headache prevention will differ from person to person. If you’re not experiencing the progress you want, incorporate more core exercises and pectoral stretches into your routine.

3. Increased energy levels

When your bones and joints are in correct alignment, it allows the muscles to be used as they’re intended, so you’ll have less fatigue and more energy, explains Griffith. In other words, “the muscles don’t have to work so hard to do what they’re supposed to do.”

Twist your torso to activate your side abs

Strengthen your obliques so the right muscles are activated when you’re sitting or standing.

Start by sitting on the floor with your knees bent. Lift your feet off of the floor about 6 inches. Tighten your core as you rotate your upper body and elbows from side to side.

Posture tip: To keep your energy levels high, remember it’s okay to relax from time to time. “Give your postural muscles a break once in a while. They can get overworked and cause pain as well,” explains Strang.

What to look for: Noticing a spike in your energy levels is variable. It depends on how poor your posture is, how strong you are, and how aware you remain of your posture.

“You should notice improvement within a week, but if you want to make it habit, it may take a month for good posture to become natural,” says Griffith.

4. Less tension in your shoulders and neck

A forward head posture puts strain on the upper back, shoulder, and neck areas. With proper alignment, the joints and ligaments are less stressed and less subject to chronic overuse, explains Griffith.

Look in the mirror and perform this neck stretch

Stretch out your neck to relieve pressure and correct tension.

Stand with a straight spine and neck. Slightly tuck your chin backward. You should feel a slight tensioning of your clavicle muscles and a lengthening of the posterior part of your neck. Hold for 3 seconds and complete 15 repetitions.

Posture tip: Set reminders on your calendar to check in with yourself several times throughout the day. Ensure your ears are above your shoulders and that you’re using

your front neck muscles — not just your posterior muscles — to hold your head up.

What to look for: You'll likely notice reduced tension in your shoulders and neck within the first week or two. Applying heat or ice may provide additional relief.

5. Decreased risk of abnormal wearing of the joint surfaces

Crooked sitting and standing, such as resting on one leg or side of your body, leads to hip strain. "Your joints wear down naturally over time. If your posture is even, not many problems arise. But if you're uneven, more pain and issues tend to occur," states Griffith.

Strengthen your core and lower back with this hip flexor stretch

This exercise strengthens your core and lower back at the same time while stretching your hip flexors.

Start in a lunge position with one knee on the floor and your leg extended backward. The other leg should be at a 90-degree angle in front of you with your foot planted on the floor. Engage your core by pulling in slightly.

Posture tip: When sitting, "utilize a lumbar roll or rolled towel to support your natural lumbar curve," suggests Strang. That way, you'll have support for a straighter posture, allowing it to be more sustainable.

What to look for: The longer you work at strengthening your core and straightening your posture, the more natural and less challenging it will be.

6. Increased lung capacity

"If you're slouching, you're compressing your lungs,"

explains Griffith. "If you're sitting and standing taller, your lungs have more space to expand." In other words, good posture improves your breathing.

Push out the pecs to relieve your lungs

Stand with your feet hip-width distance apart. Interlock your hands behind your back. Hold for 20 seconds to stretch your chest and pectoral muscles.

As an alternative, place your forearms along a door frame at shoulder height. "With one foot in front of the other, begin to shift your weight forward until you feel a stretch in your chest. Hold for 30 to 60 seconds," recommends Strang.

Posture tip: "In a sitting position, rock your pelvis back and forth to determine how much available motion you have in your spine. Your ideal spinal posture will be in the middle of those ranges," says Strang.

Another easy trick is to make sure most of the pressure is on your "sit bones" not your tailbone or the back of your thighs.

What to look for: "If we're sitting slouched, it's difficult for our diaphragm to fully contract and our lungs to fully expand," Strang describes. For faster improvement, lengthen your seated position and open your lungs with three deep breaths several times a day.

7. Improved circulation and digestion

Griffith explains: "If you're compressing vital organs, your circulation is poor, and those organs aren't going to work as well." Healthy blood flow requires proper alignment and avoiding positions which cramp circulation, like crossing your legs.

Roll out your spine with a thoracic foam roll

Lie on your back on the ground and place a firm foam roller in a horizontal position underneath you at the bottom of your rib cage. Support your neck with your arms.

Slowly extend your spine over the roller. Hold for 5 seconds and take a deep breath. Slowly move up 1 to 2 inches at a time.

Strang suggests performing this exercise daily.

Posture tip: “When sitting, scoot your hips all the way back into the chair. Your feet must be on the ground to improve support. You may use a lumbar roll along your low back to assist with maintaining this posture. Shoulders should be back and your neck muscles relaxed,” offers Strang.

8. Reduced TMJ (temporomandibular joint) pain

When we have a forward head position, our mandibular joint and jaw muscles experience stress and tension. “This can contribute to pain with eating, talking, yawning, as well as clicking with opening, and headaches,” says Strang.

Loosen your jaw

With your head and neck in a neutral position and your eyes looking forward, turn your head slowly from one side to the other to stretch your neck muscles.

Posture tip: Adjust the ergonomics at work and home to support a better posture. Find a more supportive chair, use a sit-to-stand desk, and purchase a lumbar roll that you can take wherever you go, suggests Strang.

What to look for: Releasing the tension in your neck and upper shoulders should reduce the effects of TMJ pain. Focus on relaxing your jaw throughout the day, especially in high-stress situations like driving during rush hour or focusing on a difficult work project.

9. Improved core and scapular strength

As Strang describes, muscular effort is required to maintain good posture. If you’re holding a good posture, your core and upper back muscles will remain active and engaged.

Engage your back muscles with the overhead arm raise

Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the ground with even weight on both hips. Engage your core by slightly tucking in and flattening your lower back. Let your arms fall to your sides comfortably. Raise them both up at the same time over your head and bring them back to the starting position.

Posture tip: “In a standing posture, keep your shoulders back and aligned. Engage your abdominals and keep a tiny knee bend so you’re not hyperextending or locking your knee joints,” explains Griffith.

Over time, your core strength will improve — helping to support the rest of your body.

What to look for: Your core will continue to strengthen every day if you engage it while you sit and stand properly.

10. Better form during your workouts

Our posture doesn’t just affect us when we’re sitting and standing, but when we’re exercising, too. For example, having an engaged core and neutral spine during a squat will help prevent injury.

Try the tree pose

Stand upright with your feet firmly planted on the ground. Bring your hands to meet in the middle of your chest with palms and fingers touching. Pull your shoulder blades back with your ears resting above your shoulders.

Lift one leg up to your thigh or shin (not your knee), and press the sole of your foot into your leg for stability. Both legs should be engaged, and your core should be tucked slightly as you maintain a neutral spine.

Posture tip: “Most of the environments we live and work in encourage us to do things in front of us, leading to more of a forward posture,” explains Strang. By focusing our attention on proper alignment, we improve our workout results and prevent injury.

What to look for: Focus on your core strength and pay attention to your balance. Over time, you’ll notice this position come with more easily and become a center for calm.

11. Appear taller

While it’s icing on the cake, good posture can make us more attractive. “People look taller and slimmer when they have good posture,” admits Griffith. Sometimes it can even make our abdominals appear more defined.

Flex with the forearm plank

Lie on the floor with your frontside down. Keep your forearms parallel and your feet hip-width apart.

“Tighten your core and lift your torso off of the ground. Make sure you’re looking down between your elbows, your shoulder blades are pulled back, and your core muscles are tight. Don’t stick your hips in the air,” says Strang.

Hold your plank for up to 30 seconds, but stop sooner if your form starts to decline. Complete 3 sets.

Posture tip: Stand in front of a mirror with your normal posture. Look at yourself from all angles. Then, straighten

your posture and notice the difference in how you look.

What to look for: Your appearance is one of the first aspects that will change when you practice good posture. It can be almost immediate. To make good posture a habit, continue to build the amount of time you stay in an aligned position throughout the day.

12. Increased self-confidence

Not only can good posture boost your energy levels and reduce your pain, it can also increase your self-esteem. One 2009 study says good posture gives you more confidence in your own thoughts.

Practice the shoulder pull back

Sit or stand with a neutral spine. Shift your shoulder blades to the back. Lift both forearms to a 90-degree angle at your sides. Pull your shoulder blades closer together, as if you’re squeezing them, while your arms naturally extend backward. Complete three sets of 12 reps.

Posture tip: Before a meeting, presentation, or job interview, make sure your shoulders are relaxed, your spine is in alignment, and your ears are resting over your shoulders.

What to look for: Feeling more confident in yourself can start from day one. Simply pay attention to your posture as you enter a room, sit down to a meal, or work on a project at your computer.

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