

*Excerpt*

# The Secret to Using Your Body



A Manual for Looking Better and Feeling  
Younger with the Alexander Technique

Leland Vall

# **The Secret to Using Your Body**

**A Manual for Looking Better and Feeling Younger with the  
Alexander Technique**

**Leland Vall**  
**AmSAT Certified Alexander Technique Instructor**

The Secret to Using Your Body  
A Manual for Looking Better and Feeling Younger with  
the Alexander Technique

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[www.freeyourneck.com](http://www.freeyourneck.com)

[leland@freeyourneck.com](mailto:leland@freeyourneck.com)

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The purpose of this book is to educate, expand thinking about posture as an informational source for readers, and it is not medical advice, nor has it been evaluated by the FDA. The author shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the information and programs contained in this book.

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**This ebook is best viewed as a two-page spread.**

From the **View** menu, choose **Page Display**, and then **Two-Up**.  
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## Introduction

During my freshman year of college, I went to an introductory workshop on the Alexander Technique. I had heard about the Alexander Technique from an older cousin who described it vaguely as a method for finding happiness by improving posture. I didn't have any particular reason to go—my posture seemed fine to me—but I was curious.

When the class started there were about thirty people sitting in chairs in a circle. The instructor spoke for a few minutes about the limits of our self-perception, and then he went fairly quickly from person to person, gently but precisely touching and slightly moving each participant's head. I was sitting on the far end from where the instructor started and, as he worked with each person, it seemed to me that most of them changed a little. They seemed to become more at ease, and they smiled. When the instructor came to me, he gently held my head with both hands while slightly changing its position. The result was nothing short of an epiphany.

Immediately I felt as if I were being introduced to a new body. My head felt lighter and my torso seemed longer and wider. It was as if a pressing force that I hadn't been aware of was suddenly lifted from my body. I thought a secret about myself had been revealed to me and that maybe I was experiencing myself as I had when I was a child.

He had only moved my head a little bit but I knew it was more than that. At that moment I realized that at some point in the distant past, I had made an unconscious decision about how to hold my head that caused a background of discomfort I considered normal. I also realized that if I had made an unconscious decision about something so simple as how I held my head, it was likely that much of how I experienced myself was also based on countless similar decisions. In that one moment I understood that here was a method to help me re-discover my truer self. I was fascinated, and I have benefited from my study of the Alexander Technique ever since.

With this book you too can learn how to look and feel younger for the rest of your life, whether or not you exercise and regardless of your age or almost any physical condition. You can uncover secrets about yourself that will help you gain a renewed feeling of lightness, ease of movement, and improved posture, breathing, poise, and strength.

### **What is the Alexander Technique?**

The Alexander Technique is a proven, 100-year-old method for developing a specific type of self-awareness that allows you to evaluate and improve the way you use your body. F. M. Alexander (1869–1955) recognized that people tend to use their bodies in a haphazard, inefficient way. Alexander developed what can be described as a set of instructions that help you discover how to use your body in a more organized way that takes advantage of our unique upright structure. Alexander's method is different from trying to stand up straight, which is difficult to maintain and tends to increase tension. It is also different from relaxation techniques, which do not address how to remain relaxed during normal activities like reaching, bending, and carrying.

*The Secret to Using Your Body* is a workbook that uses a daily 15–30 minute experiential exercise to teach you the fundamental principles of the Alexander Technique, step by step. Use the book on your own or as a supplement to lessons with a teacher. The book is narrow in scope and I have tried to include only the information

that you need to make progress toward your goal. Step by step, as you learn the exercise, you will gain a clearer understanding of your body that will lead to an improvement in the way you use your body. Your posture will improve, you will feel lighter and taller, and you will move more easily. Once you learn the whole exercise, you can continue to use and benefit from it, and you will also be able to tailor the exercise to suit your needs. Over time, through practicing the full exercise, your understanding of how to use your body will become second nature, making the improvement permanent.

### **How to Benefit from the Exercise**

The exercise is divided into ten major parts and further divided into forty-three short sections. Each section is only a few sentences long. **It is designed to be learned and practiced over time with each new section teaching you more of the Alexander Technique.** To begin, read through Section 1 and then practice it from memory as best you can. Repeat the same procedure every time you practice Section 1 until you feel that you know what you are asked to do. You only need to remember the ideas, you don't need to memorize the exercise word for word.

Learning the rest of the exercise is a process of continuing to practice what you know as you learn each new section. When you are ready to learn Section 2, read through it and then, from memory, practice both Sections 1 and 2 together. Continue practicing what you know and learning new sections until you are practicing the entire exercise. **The repetition of regularly practicing the exercise from the beginning deepens your understanding and helps you to assimilate what you are learning.**

### **Amount of Time Required**

It could take several months or more to learn the whole exercise, but you can benefit from each step beginning today. For best results, spend 15–30 minutes learning and practicing the exercise every day. But even if you are short on time, use whatever time you have to practice as much as you can. It is better to spend even a little time than to skip a day, but you will find that more time is better than less.

When you begin, use the whole 15–30 minutes to read and practice Section 1. **As you add Section 2 and other sections, the amount of time you spend does not need to increase.** As the number of sections increases, you will spend less time with each individual section and the sections will begin to flow together. However, you can spend more time practicing the exercise if you want and you can also practice the exercise more than once per day.

### **Tips for Success**

- Approach the exercise in a simple, enjoyable way. Don't think of it as a burden or something that you have to do.
- Practice the exercise every day, even if you only have a few minutes. For best results, spend 15–30 minutes.
- Avoid trying to get it perfectly right. Simply taking the time every day to practice the exercise is valuable

in itself, and what you are able to learn will change and grow as you consistently take that time.

- The value of any given section may not be clear when you first encounter it, but the exercise will become clearer as you go. Every part and section is designed to help you discover a specific type of self-awareness that, when combined in the full exercise, will give you a new, integrated way of understanding your body.
- Be patient and remain open to new experiences, even if they are slow in coming. An analogy is walking into a quiet area and then noticing after a while that there are lots of little noises and things going on. The more you look and listen, the more you will find.
- Put the book aside while practicing the exercise and practice it as best you can from memory. You can make progress every time you practice the exercise, no matter how many days it takes to learn each new section.
- Follow the instructions to use your imagination or to “think as though” something were true.
- Do not work at applying the instructions to your daily life until you have finished learning the whole exercise. Avoid thinking “this is how I am supposed to” stand or move or bend.

I hope you enjoy the journey.

## Part I

### Lying Down

#### Before You Begin

Your body is more internally spacious than you think, and you can learn to have access to that extra space. People tend to draw their body inward, making the body shorter and narrower. In the exercise you will be asked to focus on allowing your body to be more open. Although this part of the exercise is performed lying down, it will give you insight into finding this same room within your body as you are asked to stand and move. Allowing for more internal space, even a very small increase, can have many benefits. These benefits can include looking taller and more confident, a general feeling of comfort with improved ease of movement, and more room for internal organs, which can lower blood pressure and improve breathing.

In this first part of the exercise you will lie on a mat or rug in a purposeful way. **The goal of this, and all the other parts of the exercise, is to help you develop the skill of allowing for more room within your body.** Perform the exercise by lying on your back with your head on a book as shown below. Leave your knees up and your feet flat on the floor. Leave your legs separate from each other so that they do not touch. Place your hands on your abdomen but do not let your fingers touch.

You can be comfortable, but not so comfortable that you begin to fall asleep. Think of this time you spend as an activity. Leave your eyes open and let your mind stay active and gently focused on the exercise. You will be resting because you will be lying down, so there is no need to work at resting. Don't rush. Give yourself plenty of time to repeat and understand each instruction every time.

Spend 15–30 minutes on the exercise every day. This first part of the exercise has eleven sections which you combine as you learn. As you practice the exercise, you may discover a subtle difference in how you experience your body. Try to remain open to new discoveries every time you do the exercise.

When you are ready to stand up, do it slowly and easily. Be aware of your surroundings and leave the exercise until the next time you practice it.

#### Equipment

You will need a mat or rug to lie on (something comfortable but firm) and a soft-cover book on which to place your head. You can put a towel over the book if you want. A pillow is too soft. If your torso is very thick or bent, you can use a stack of books. Your feet can be bare or you can wear shoes as long as your feet are not able to slide on the floor.





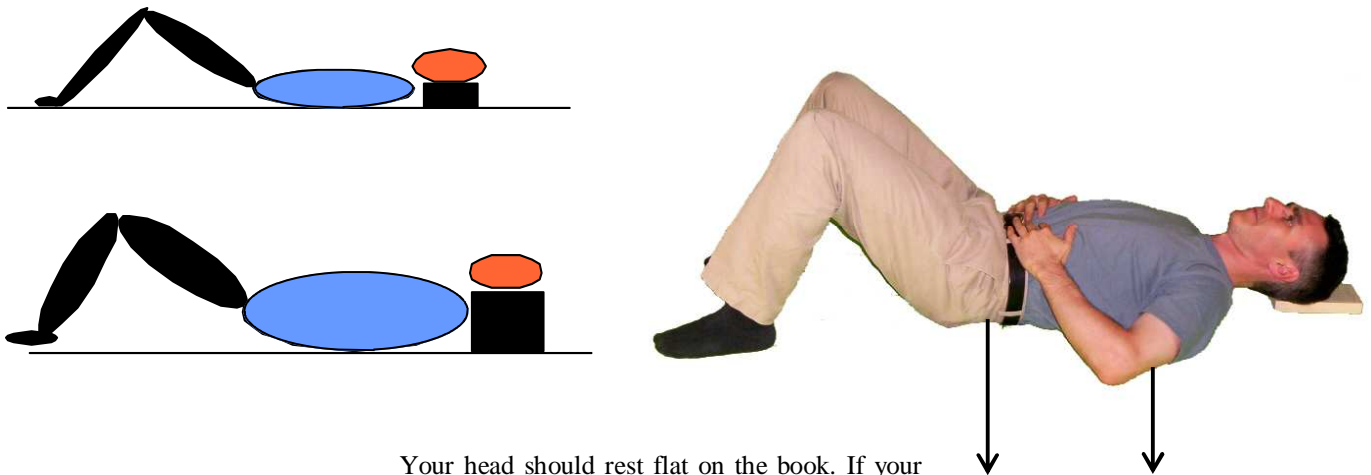


*This is the first section of the first part of the exercise. It may seem simple but it is important because it is the beginning and it sets up the foundation for the whole exercise. Take 15–30 minutes to read through pages 6 and 7 and then practice Section 1 from memory as best you can. Repeat this procedure every day until you feel ready to add Section 2 on page 8. Continue this process throughout the book to learn the whole exercise.*

**Part I, Section 1. Allow Yourself to Settle**

Lie on your back with your head on the book, your feet flat on the floor (knees bent) and your hands on your abdomen. Imagine that you are almost weightless. Keep your hands apart and your knees separate from each other. Avoid moving around in order to look for the best position. Without pushing, allow your whole body to settle toward the floor (there will be some gaps between your back and the floor). Leave your eyes open.

When you are ready to stand up, do it slowly and easily. Be aware of your surroundings and leave the exercise until the next time.



Your head should rest flat on the book. If your torso is thin and your back is straight when you lie down, use a thin book. If your torso is very thick or bent, use a thicker book or even a stack of books.

Remain open to new discoveries every time you practice the exercise.	Don't rush. Give yourself plenty of time to repeat and understand each instruction.	Look for comfort by waiting for your muscles to soften, not through shifting.
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**Sometimes, Doing  
a Little Less**

“Allow” is a word that appears in the exercise many times. It means to continue doing less even when you think there is nothing less you can do.

**Not Moving**

Move if you have to, but try to avoid fidgeting.

**Leaving Your Eyes Open**

Stay awake. During the exercise, as you become more aware of yourself, continue to be aware of your surroundings.

**Imagining Yourself Almost  
Weightless**

You are not lying down just to rest. Imagining that you are effortlessly standing up gives you an objective beyond what you are doing now and will help you later in the exercise.

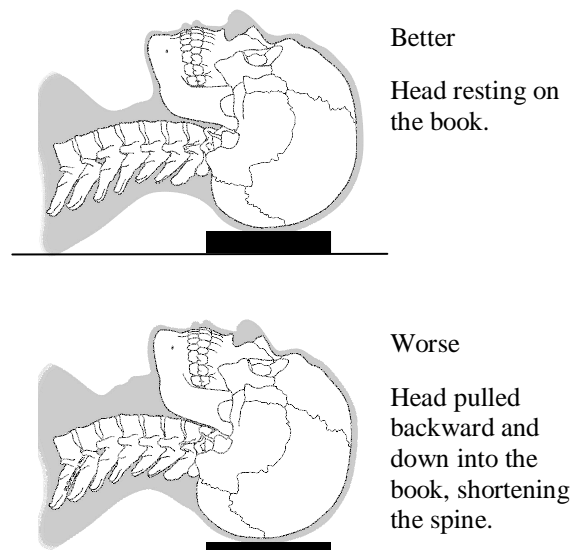
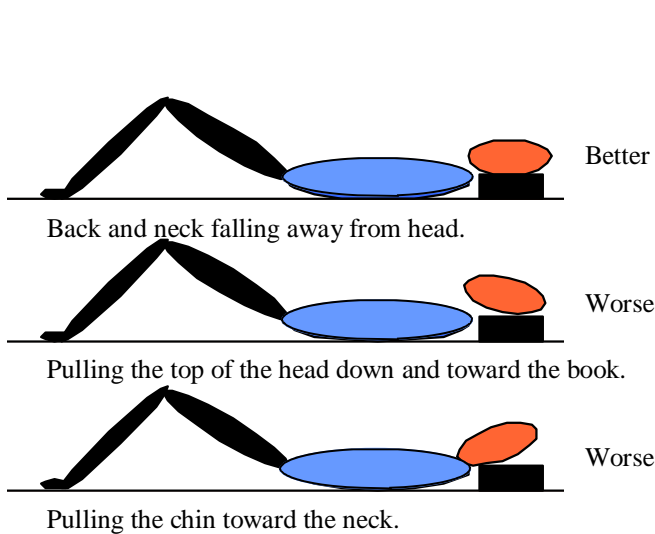
When you have learned Section 1, add the new **bold** section to your practice and work on it just as you worked on the first section. Start from the beginning of the exercise every time and continue this process throughout the book. The amount of time you spend does not need to increase as you add more sections.

**Part I, Section 2. Allow Your Head to Release from the Top of Your Spine**

Lie on your back with your head on the book, your feet flat on the floor (knees bent) and your hands on your abdomen. Imagine that you are almost weightless. Keep your hands apart and your knees separate from each other. Avoid moving around in order to look for the best position. Without pushing, allow your whole body to settle toward the floor (there should be gaps between your back and the floor). Leave your eyes open.

**Rest your head on the book without pushing it into the book as you allow your head to release from the top of your spine. Without pulling your chin down, think of your neck as if it were falling away from your head.**

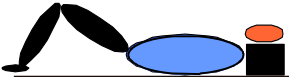
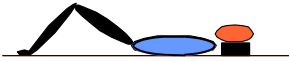
When you are ready to stand up, do it slowly and easily. Be aware of your surroundings and leave the exercise until the next time.



Allow your head to lie level on the book. Avoid pulling the top of your head down toward the book and avoid pulling your chin toward your neck.

Your spine reaches all the way to the level of your ears, higher than the roof of your mouth. As you allow your neck to soften, your head will move a little farther from your shoulders, giving your spine room to reach its full length.

Remain open to new discoveries every time you practice the exercise.	Don't rush. Give yourself plenty of time to repeat and understand each instruction.	Look for comfort by waiting for your muscles to soften, not through shifting.
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10. Your head should rest flat on the book. If your torso is thin and your back is straight when you lie down, use a thin book. If your torso is very thick or bent, use a thicker book or even a stack of books.

**The number next to each caption refers to the page where the image originally appeared. For example, the images on this page originally appeared on page 10.**

### **Head/Neck Relationship**

Your head rests at the top of your spine. Your spine meets your head at about the level of your ears, higher than the roof of your mouth. Excess tension in the back of the neck tends to pull the head back and down, toward the neck/spine. This causes crowding between your head and your neck.

With your head on the book, think of allowing your neck to soften, releasing your head from the top of your spine so that your neck will be able to fall a little bit toward the floor. This subtle separation will leave more room between your head and neck, allowing your neck to approach its true length. The book under your head provides some distance between your neck and the floor so that this can happen.

**Part I, Section 3. Point Your Spine**

Lie on your back with your head on the book, your feet flat on the floor (knees bent) and your hands on your abdomen. Imagine that you are almost weightless. Keep your hands apart and your knees separate from each other. Avoid moving around in order to look for the best position. Without pushing, allow your whole body to settle toward the floor (there should be gaps between your back and the floor). Leave your eyes open.

Rest your head on the book without pushing it into the book as you allow your head to release from the top of your spine. Without pulling your chin down, think of your neck as if it were falling away from your head.

**Continuing to release your head from the top of your spine, gently point the top of your spine as if it were reaching past the back of your head.**

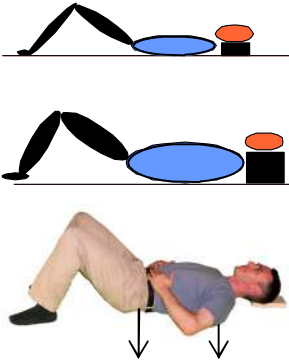
When you are ready to stand up, do it slowly and easily. Be aware of your surroundings and leave the exercise until the next time.



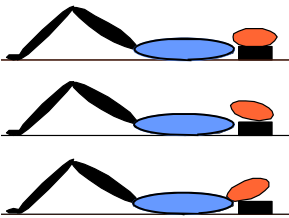
Easily point the top of your spine as if you were pointing your finger. Avoid trying to straighten the curves of the spine. The curves give the spine some of the qualities of a spring.



Remain open to new discoveries every time you practice the exercise.	Don't rush. Give yourself plenty of time to repeat and understand each instruction.	Look for comfort by waiting for your muscles to soften, not through shifting.
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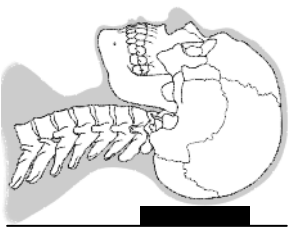


10. Your head should rest flat on the book. If your torso is thin and your back is straight when you lie down, use a thin book. If your torso is very thick or bent, use a thicker book or even a stack of books.



12. Allow your head to lie level on the book. Avoid pulling the top of your head down toward the book and avoid pulling your chin toward your neck.

Better



12. Head resting on the book.

Worse



12. Head pulled backward and down into the book, shortening the spine.

### Sometimes, Doing a *Little More*

Point with the tip of your index finger. *Don't use more effort than you need*, just point. Keeping your finger pointed, push on something like your other hand or a solid object. Try to use as little force as possible to keep your finger straight. Notice that you can keep your finger straight with very little effort, even if you push fairly hard. As you push, imagine your finger getting longer from the tip down, as if the tip of your finger were reaching to where it is pointing.

Your finger is a column of bones and, in that sense, very much like your spine. In this section, as you allow for a softening in the relationship between your head and spine, you will have room to gently point the top of your spine as if it were reaching past the back of your head.

### A Train

Think of your spine as a train with 34 cars, one for each of your vertebrae, with the engine at the top. As you stop pulling your head into your spine, your spine will have some room to lengthen from the top down as it points so that each vertebra gives room for the one below.

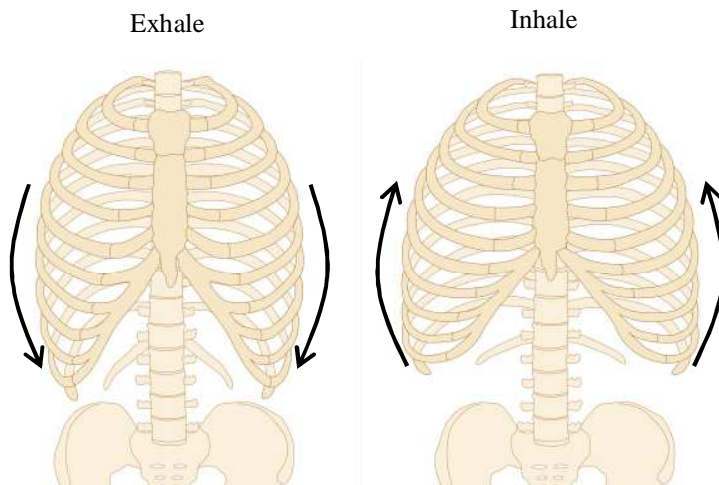
**Part I, Section 4. Allow Your Ribs to Soften**

Lie on your back with your head on the book, your feet flat on the floor (knees bent) and your hands on your abdomen. Imagine that you are almost weightless. Keep your hands apart and your knees separate from each other. Avoid moving around in order to look for the best position. Without pushing, allow your whole body to settle toward the floor (there should be gaps between your back and the floor). Leave your eyes open.

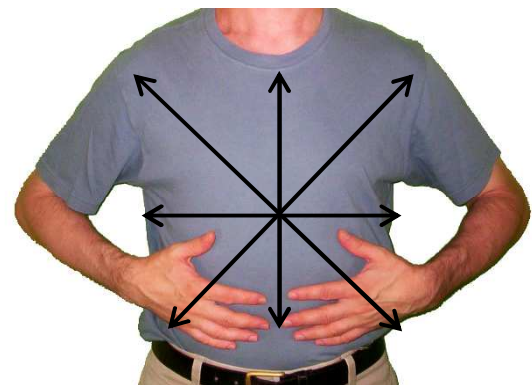
Rest your head on the book without pushing it into the book as you allow your head to release from the top of your spine. Without pulling your chin down, think of your neck as if it were falling away from your head.

Continuing to release your head from the top of your spine, gently point the top of your spine as if it were reaching past the back of your head. **As you continue pointing your spine, allow your ribs to soften as you notice their easy movement in response to your breathing.**

When you are ready to stand up, do it slowly and easily. Be aware of your surroundings and leave the exercise until the next time.



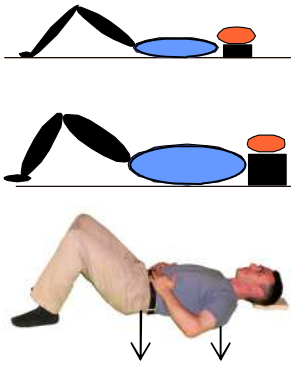
Allow your ribs to swing freely from your pointing spine in response to your breathing. The image demonstrates the maximum amount of movement available. While lying down, your ribs will probably not travel to the extent shown.



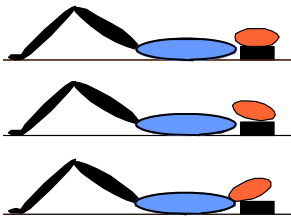
Allow your torso to be open in every direction.

Remain open to new discoveries every time you practice the exercise.	Don't rush. Give yourself plenty of time to repeat and understand each instruction.	Look for comfort by waiting for your muscles to soften, not through shifting.
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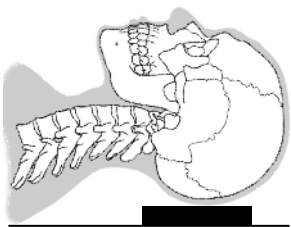


10. Your head should rest flat on the book. If your torso is thin and your back is straight when you lie down, use a thin book. If your torso is very thick or bent, use a thicker book or even a stack of books.



12. Allow your head to lie level on the book. Avoid pulling the top of your head down toward the book and avoid pulling your chin toward your neck.

Better



12. Head resting on the book.

Worse



12. Head pulled backward and down into the book, shortening the spine.



14. Easily point the top of your spine as if you were pointing your finger. Avoid trying to straighten the curves of the spine. The curves give the spine some of the qualities of a spring.

## The Spine Points, the Ribs Hang

Your ribs, like your head, also attach to your spine. There is a joint for each rib where it attaches to your spine. Your ribs extend from those joints and wrap around you, back to front. It is common for people to internally fix the ribs in place, making breathing and moving more difficult. Allow your ribs to soften so that they can easily move all around you (back, sides, and front).

### Openness

You are now about halfway through the first part of the exercise. You may or may not be noticing something different during the exercise. Some people ask, "What am I supposed to be looking for?" It is often described as a feeling of openness or ease. This is not something that you can find by activating your muscles, but only by following the directions: releasing your head from the top of your spine, gently pointing the top of your spine as if it were reaching past the back of your head, and releasing your ribs.

If you are not noticing it, keep waiting and keep looking. Even the slightest difference can be significant.

## Part I, Section 5. Point Your Shoulders

Lie on your back with your head on the book, your feet flat on the floor (knees bent) and your hands on your abdomen. Imagine that you are almost weightless. Keep your hands apart and your knees separate from each other. Avoid moving around in order to look for the best position. Without pushing, allow your whole body to settle toward the floor (there should be gaps between your back and the floor). Leave your eyes open.

Rest your head on the book without pushing it into the book as you allow your head to release from the top of your spine. Without pulling your chin down, think of your neck as if it were falling away from your head.

Continuing to release your head from the top of your spine, gently point the top of your spine as if it were reaching past the back of your head. As you continue pointing your spine, allow your ribs to soften as you notice their easy movement in response to your breathing. **Without pushing, allow your shoulders to fall toward the floor as you gently point them away from each other. Allow for widening across your whole torso, front and back, as you continue to allow your ribs to move effortlessly.**

When you are ready to stand up, do it slowly and easily. Be aware of your surroundings and leave the exercise until the next time.

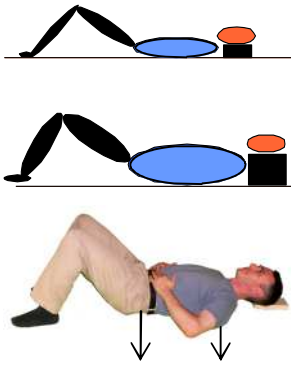


Gently point your shoulders away from each other.

Remain open to new discoveries every time you practice the exercise.	Don't rush. Give yourself plenty of time to repeat and understand each instruction.	Look for comfort by waiting for your muscles to soften, not through shifting.
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### The Shoulders

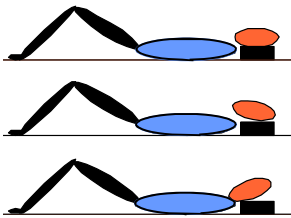
It is very common for people to pull their shoulders forward and together, causing the chest to narrow and the back to round. The answer is not to pull the shoulders back, but to stop pulling them together and forward. Holding your shoulders back can make your chest wider, but it also makes your back narrower and impinges on arm movement. Sometimes people pull their shoulders up. Again, the answer is not to push them down but to stop pulling them up. There is no need to “hold” your shoulders anywhere.



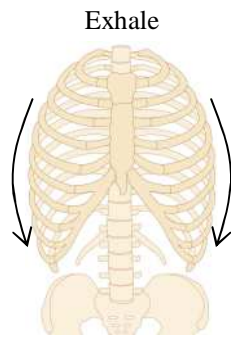
10. Your head should rest flat on the book. If your torso is thin and your back is straight when you lie down, use a thin book. If your torso is very thick or bent, use a thicker book or even a stack of books.



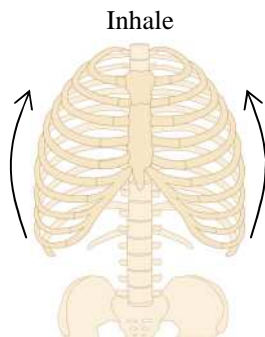
14. Easily point the top of your spine as if you were pointing your finger. Avoid trying to straighten the curves of the spine. The curves give the spine some of the qualities of a spring.



12. Allow your head to lie level on the book. Avoid pulling the top of your head down toward the book and avoid pulling your chin toward your neck.

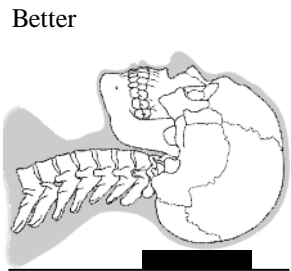


Exhale

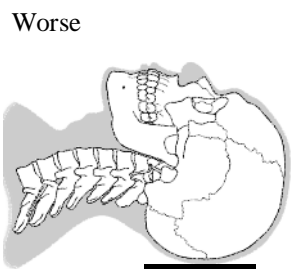


Inhale

16. Allow your ribs to swing freely from your pointing spine in response to your breathing.



Better  
12. Head resting on the book.



Worse  
12. Head pulled backward and down into the book, shortening the spine.

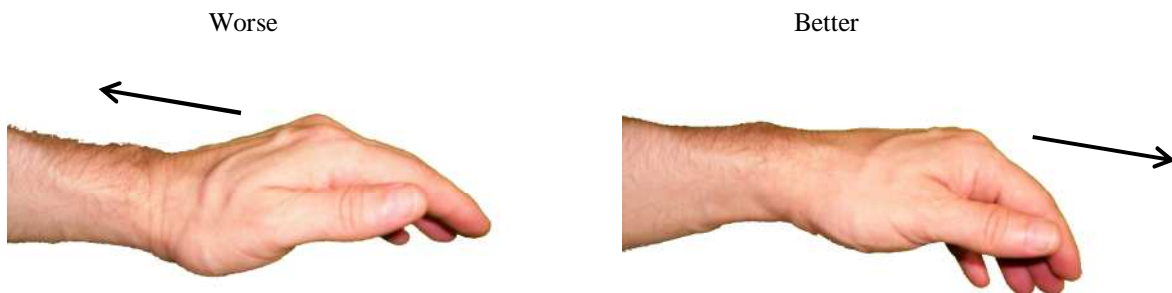
**Part I, Section 6. Allow Your Wrists to Soften So That Your Arms Can Lengthen**

Lie on your back with your head on the book, your feet flat on the floor (knees bent) and your hands on your abdomen. Imagine that you are almost weightless. Keep your hands apart and your knees separate from each other. Avoid moving around in order to look for the best position. Without pushing, allow your whole body to settle toward the floor (there should be gaps between your back and the floor). Leave your eyes open.

Rest your head on the book without pushing it into the book as you allow your head to release from the top of your spine. Without pulling your chin down, think of your neck as if it were falling away from your head.

Continuing to release your head from the top of your spine, gently point the top of your spine as if it were reaching past the back of your head. As you continue pointing your spine, allow your ribs to soften as you notice their easy movement in response to your breathing. Without pushing, allow your shoulders to fall toward the floor as you gently point them away from each other. Allow for widening across your whole torso, front and back, as you continue to allow your ribs to move effortlessly. **Allow your wrists to soften to allow for space between your hands and wrists. Without moving them, think of your arms as lengthening from your hands up to your shoulders.**

When you are ready to stand up, do it slowly and easily. Be aware of your surroundings and leave the exercise until the next time.

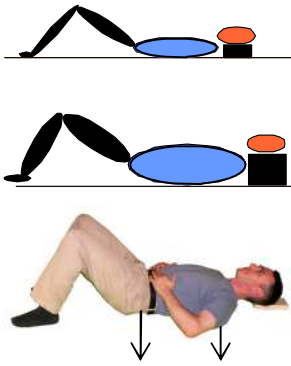


Allow your hands to release from your wrists to allow your arms to lengthen.

Remain open to new discoveries every time you practice the exercise.	Don't rush. Give yourself plenty of time to repeat and understand each instruction.	Look for comfort by waiting for your muscles to soften, not through shifting.
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### The Wrists

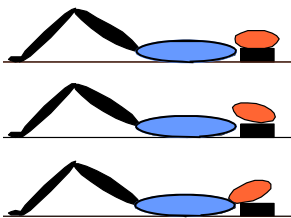
Your wrists are like your neck in the way they move, and because your hands are attached to your wrists, your hands are like your head. They are also similar because they are at an extremity of your body. Your head is at the end of your spine and your hands are at the ends of your arms. And just like your head, neck, and spine, if you allow your wrists to soften you might find a little more space between your wrists and your hands, letting you think of your arms as longer.



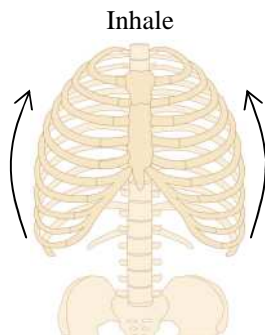
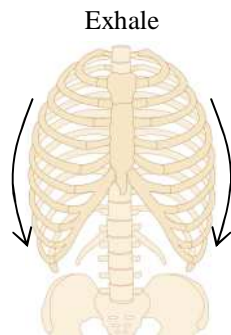
10. Your head should rest flat on the book. If your torso is thin and your back is straight when you lie down, use a thin book. If your torso is very thick or bent, use a thicker book or even a stack of books.



14. Easily point the top of your spine as if you were pointing your finger. Avoid trying to straighten the curves of the spine. The curves give the spine some of the qualities of a spring.



12. Allow your head to lie level on the book. Avoid pulling the top of your head down toward the book and avoid pulling your chin toward your neck.



Better



12. Head resting on the book.

Worse



12. Head pulled backward and down into the book, shortening the spine.

16. Allow your ribs to swing freely from your pointing spine in response to your breathing.

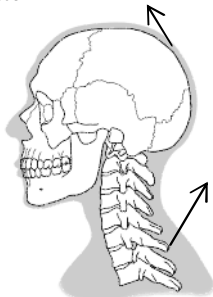


18. Gently point your shoulders away from each other.

Head releasing from pointing spine.

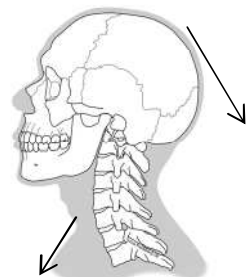


Better



64. Head releasing forward and up.

Worse

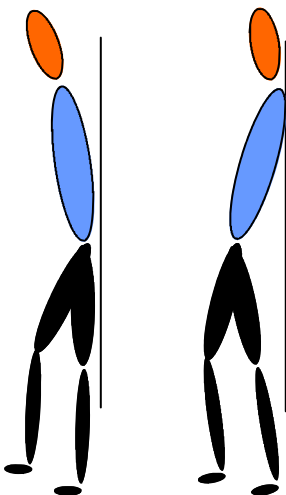


64. Head pulled down and back, shortening the spine.

64. Your spine reaches all the way to the level of your ears, higher than the roof of your mouth. As you allow your neck to soften, your head will rise a little, giving more room to your spine.

Better

Worse



64. Walking away from the wall, let your pelvis be the last part of you touching the wall.

### Leaving Your Neck behind Your Head

As you bend forward, be absolutely certain that you are only bending at the hip joints. You should be able to feel your pelvis rotating on the wall. Leave your torso the same as if it were still leaning against the wall and avoid pulling your head back and down.

64. Continue allowing your head to become free from your pointing spine as you bend your knees.

### Sitting and Not Sitting

The movement that leaves you sitting in a chair or standing from a seated position is very similar to the movement that ends with you touching the floor. The only difference is the horizontal platform (the chair) that blocks your progression toward the floor. As you do this section, keep your mind on observing your pointing spine and the rest of the instructions. Standing in front of the chair, imagine that the chair isn't there. The chair is simply a horizontal plane that gets in your way as you bend your knees. As you bend, always leave your feet flat on the floor and avoid falling into the chair. Once you reach the chair, send your heels into the floor and come right up again.

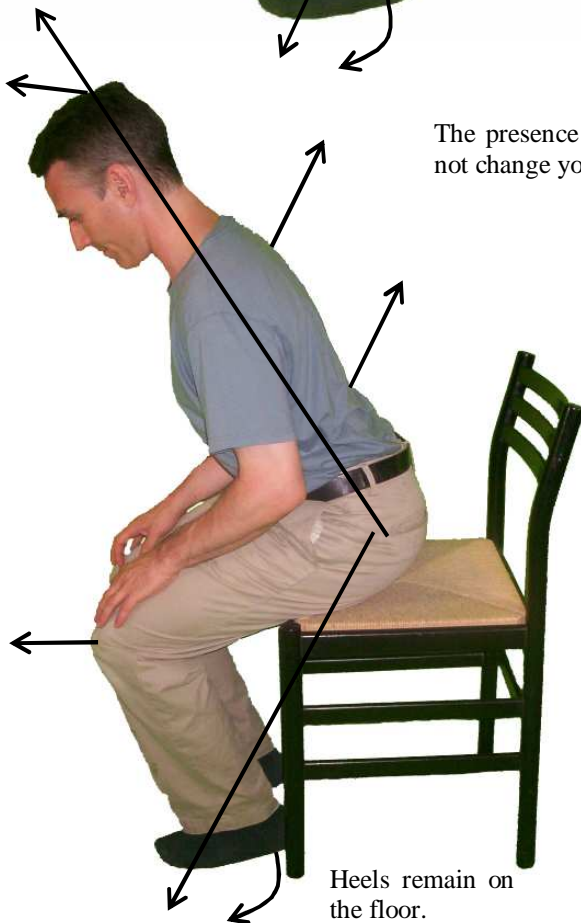
#### Does This Look Weird?

The short answer is "no." It might feel weird because it is a new way to do a familiar thing. But remember, you are just doing an exercise here.



Heels remain on the floor.

The presence of the chair does not change your activity.



Heels remain on the floor.

## Resources

To contact Leland Vall to schedule an Alexander Technique lesson or demonstration, and to find videos and articles on the Alexander Technique, visit [www.freeyourneck.com](http://www.freeyourneck.com).

To find an Alexander Technique teacher in your area, contact the American Society for the Alexander Technique at [www.amsat.ws](http://www.amsat.ws).

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## About the Author

**Leland Vall** received his undergraduate degree from Hampshire College and studied theatrical directing at Trinity Repertory Conservatory with Anne Bogart. He had his first Alexander Technique lesson in 1982 and has been certified to teach the Alexander Technique since 1996. He has a private practice in Manhattan, Queens, and Long Island, and has also taught the Alexander Technique at Chelsea Piers, Crunch Fitness, American Academy of Dramatic Arts, and the School for Film and Television. His students range from healthy people who want to look and feel better, to athletes and performing artists interested in improving performance, to others managing chronic pain, illness, or injury recovery.

Certification to teach the Alexander Technique requires the completion of three years of training. Mr. Vall trained in Boston and is certified to teach the Alexander Technique by the American Society for the Alexander Technique (AmSAT), the largest organization of its kind in the United States. He has a special certification in The Art of Breathing from the American Center for the Alexander Technique (ACAT), and a personal trainer certification from the American Council on Exercise (ACE).

Leland Vall is a former board member of the American Center for the Alexander Technique, the oldest Alexander training facility in the country, and he is a former editor of the *AmSAT News*, the official newsletter of the American Society for the Alexander Technique.