

RECOVERY PROTOCOL

7-Day Desk Reset

A Low-Cost Recovery Protocol for Programmers & Remote Workers

"Ancient Qi. Modern Burnout."

QiHackers

What You'll Get

- A daily 10-15 minute recovery routine you can execute consistently
- Relief support for common desk-work patterns: neck/shoulder tension, hip tightness, jaw clenching, afternoon brain fog, and eye strain
- A minimum viable habit you can keep after Day 7 (under 10 minutes/day)

How to Use This Guide

Who This Is For

- You spend 6+ hours a day in front of screens
- Your body feels chronically tight rather than acutely injured
- You want a short, structured protocol, not a full training plan

How to Execute

- One theme module per day, 10-15 minutes
- Intensity target: mild to moderate discomfort
- Never push into sharp pain
- Consistency matters more than intensity

When to Do It

- **Morning:** activate before screen work
 - **Afternoon:** interrupt fatigue build-up
 - **Evening:** decompress and transition out of work mode
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Day 1 - Neck & Shoulder Decompression

Today's Goal: Reduce cervical load and restore more comfortable head-neck range.

Forward-head screen posture can significantly increase neck tissue load over time. By the end of a workday, posterior neck and upper shoulder muscles may stay in prolonged low-grade tension. Day 1 targets that pattern directly.

Full Protocol (10-12 min)

1. **Chin tucks x 8** - Draw chin straight back, no up/down tilt. Hold 3 seconds.
2. **Scapular retraction + thoracic extension (2 min)** - Open chest, shoulders back/down, breathe slowly.
3. **Upper trapezius stretch (30 sec x 2 each side)** - Use gentle gravity, no aggressive pulling.
4. **4-6 breathing (3 min)** - Inhale 4, exhale 6. Useful for downshifting tension.

Low-Friction Version (4 min)

- Chin tucks x 6
- Shoulder circles backward (1 min)
- 4-6 breathing (2 min)

Track Today

- Neck/shoulder tension now (0-10): _____
- End of day "heavy head" reduced? (Y / N)

Day 2 - Post-Lunch Brain Fog Reset

Today's Goal: Reduce afternoon cognitive lag and lower re-entry friction.

Post-lunch dip is often a mix of circadian rhythm, meal effects, and accumulated cognitive load. This reset is designed to make task re-entry easier.

Full Protocol (10 min)

1. **Light movement activation (2 min)** - March in place + shoulder circles.
2. **Eye reset (2 min)** - Near-far focus alternation + gentle eye mobility.
3. **Breath cadence reset (3 min)** - Inhale 4, exhale 6-8.
4. **Focus re-entry (3 min)** - Write one concrete next action and start immediately.

Low-Friction Version (3 min)

- Walk in place (1 min)
- 4-6 breath reset (1 min)
- Write one next action and execute (1 min)

Track Today

- Re-entry time this afternoon (minutes): _____
- "Staring but not starting" happened? (Y / N)

Day 3 - Screen Fatigue Eye-Neck Recovery

Today's Goal: Relieve eye strain and anterior neck tension together.

In desk work, eye and neck load often reinforce each other. A combined protocol is usually more effective than treating either in isolation.

Full Protocol (10-12 min)

1. **Anterior neck release (2 min)** - Chin tucks + clavicle opening.
2. **Near-far cycling + peripheral sweep (2 min)** - Controlled visual reset.
3. **Arm swing + lateral sway (2 min)** - Gentle oscillatory movement.
4. **5-6 breathing (3 min)** - Inhale 5, exhale 6.
5. **Close tabs + reorder tasks (2 min)** - Prevent immediate re-overload.

Low-Friction Version (4 min)

- Near-far cycling (1 min)
- Arm swing (1 min)
- 5-6 breathing (2 min)

Track Today

- Eye strain level (0-10): _____
- Neck "locked" sensation (0-10): _____

Day 4 - Hip Unlock (Desk Flow)

Today's Goal: Reduce hip flexor and lateral hip tightness from prolonged sitting.

Long sitting commonly keeps hips in limited angles for extended periods. Over time, this can reduce movement comfort and increase compensation elsewhere.

Full Protocol (8-10 min)

1. Half-kneeling hip flexor stretch + contract-relax (2 min)

Front-of-hip stretch, tailbone gently tucked, switch sides.

2. Seated figure-4 + hip circles (2 min)

45 sec each side + controlled standing circles.

3. Glute bridge + wall side-press (2 min)

Reactivate glute contribution.

4. World's greatest stretch + slow squat (2-3 min)

Integrate mobility into usable movement.

Low-Friction Version (4 min)

- Figure-4 (45 sec each side)
- Hip circles (1 min)
- Slow squats x 5

Track Today

- Standing-up stiffness after sitting (0-10): _____
- Squat easier at end vs start? (Y / N)

Day 5 - Jaw Release (Evening Decompression)

Today's Goal: Reduce jaw/temple tension and support evening downshift.

Jaw clenching is common under sustained cognitive load. Evening release can help reduce carryover tension into sleep.

Full Protocol (8-10 min)

1. Masseter release (2 min)

Gentle circular pressure, mild/moderate discomfort only, then controlled jaw opening.

2. Temporalis + scalp release (2 min)

Slow temple circles + light scalp mobilization.

3. Suboccipital decompression + tongue reset (2 min)

Passive base-of-skull contact + tongue-on-palate, teeth slightly apart.

4. Breath anchor (2 min)

Preferred: inhale 4, exhale 6-8.

Optional: 4-7-8 if comfortable. If dizzy or strained, return to 4-6.

Low-Friction Version (3 min)

- Masseter light pressure (1 min)
- 4-6 breathing (2 min)

Track Today

- Evening jaw-clenching urge (0-10): _____
- Pre-sleep facial tension (0-10): _____

Day 6 - Full-Chain Integration

Today's Goal: Integrate gains from Days 1-5 into one practical working state.

Today combines neck reset, hip mobility, and breath consolidation in one sequence.

Full Protocol (12-15 min)

1. Neck/shoulder reset (3 min)
2. Condensed hip flow (4 min)
3. Breath + focus re-entry (3 min)
4. Review (2-3 min): pick your top 2 effective moves

Low-Friction Version (5 min)

- Neck/shoulder (2 min)
- Hip quick set (2 min)
- 4-6 breathing (1 min)

Track Today

- Overall movement readiness (0-10): _____
- Most effective movement this week: _____

Day 7 - Consolidation & Maintenance Plan

Today's Goal: Build a realistic weekly rhythm you can sustain.

Day 7 is about reducing friction and locking in what worked for your body.

Full Protocol (10-12 min)

1. **Top 3 moves from the week** - 2 min each (6 min total)
2. **Breath close (2 min)** - 4-6 daytime / 5-6 mid-session / 4-7-8 evening (optional)
3. **Maintenance plan (2-3 min)** - Define exact time, trigger, and 6-8 minute daily version

Low-Friction Version (4 min)

- Top 2 moves (1.5 min each)
- Breath close (1 min)

Track Today

- Symptom changed most across 7 days: _____
- 3 moves you'll keep: _____ / _____ / _____

After Day 7

- **Maintenance mode:** 6-10 min daily with your top 3 moves

- **Weekly integration:** one full 15-minute session (Day 6 format)
- **Site progression:** Desk Damage -> Nervous System -> Cheap Longevity

Subscribe to **The Qi Reset Letter:** /newsletter

Safety

This guide is for daily recovery management. It does not replace medical diagnosis or treatment.

Stop and seek professional evaluation if you have sharp/radiating pain, progressive numbness/weakness, or joint locking during movements.

Work in controllable range. Target mild-to-moderate tension, never pain.

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