

# Fit for harvest

Harvest can be one of the busiest times of the year for arable farmers, ensuring you are physically fit for the season is important for your physical and mental wellbeing to endure this demanding time. Harvest time can involve days sitting on a tractor, so understanding how you can stay healthy while sitting down for long periods of time is essentially for a healthy mind and body.

## Posture

**Posture** -when sitting on a tractor in the same position for a long period of time it is important that you are follow these simple steps to reduce strains in your neck, arms or back.

1. Sitting upright with your shoulders pulled back and relaxed.
2. Sitting into the back of the chair.
3. Sit tall in the chair.
4. Your arms are level and comfortable on the farm vehicle wheel so that they are not being strained from stretching or leaning forward.

## Stationary exercise

It can often be hard to fit exercise into a busy farming life, particularly during harvest when a lot of time is spent sitting on a tractor. You can exercise when sitting in a stationary position such as on a **stationary** tractor to tone your muscles, a few examples can be seen below: (do not attempt on a moving vehicle, only if the vehicle is parked/stationary).

### Toning your calves

Keeping your toes on the ground, lift your heel vertically, this will tense your calf muscle, repeating this step by moving your heels up and down will engage your calves in toning.

### Engaging your core

Engaging your core by tensing your stomach muscles and slowly twisting from side to side, making sure you hold each side for a few seconds will help strengthen your core.

### Ankle stretches

Keeping your toes in a fixed position, raise your heels off the ground and rotate your ankles in a circular motion, this movement will build your ankle strength and reduce the risk of spraining.

Mental exercise and mindfulness – sitting on a farm vehicle all day can be a tedious and lonely job, taking time to become aware of the present moment can help us enjoy the world around us more and understand ourselves better.

## Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a way to prevent depression or to help those who are suffering from mental illness.

There is a mindfulness page on the FarmWell website ([Mindfulness](#)), explaining what mindfulness actually is and how it can be practiced in daily life. For further information check out the 'Focussed Famers initiative' set up by Holly Beckett on mental training ([Focussed Farmers](#)).