



Below are some easy stretches to help you prepare to garden or to stretch out after you garden. Remember, you should never feel any pain, only a gentle stretch. Other things to keep in mind as you garden:

- Avoid prolonged repetitive motions – rotate tasks every 15 minutes.
- Check posture – aim to keep back flat, not hunched over. Think Goddess Pose.
- Consider a counter motion.
- Lift with legs, not back.

All of the following stretches can be done sitting in a chair with feet on the earth for stability. Do each stretch three to five times.

ARM RAISES

- With an extended spine, place your hands at your side, palms facing out
- Inhale and slowly raise your hands while reaching out through finger tips.
- Touch hands together above head, turn hands outward, reach out and slowly push down hands down while exhaling.

SHOULDER RAISES

- With spine extended, pull shoulders forward
- Lift them up toward your ears
- Push them back and down.

HEAD ROLL

- Sitting up straight, tilt your head toward one shoulder
- Slowly roll chin to chest and to the opposite shoulder.
- Raise head, repeat in other direction.
- Do NOT bend the head backward.

THE FINGERS

FINGER & WRIST STRETCHES

- With an extended spine, fold hands like you're praying with fingers interlocked.
- Twist your hands so palms are facing away from you.
- Slowly push your hands away from you as far as comfortable and hold for a few breaths and release.
- Reverse fingers so other thumb is on the outside in prayer position and repeat.

THUMB TO FINGERS

- With arms at side, bent at elbows with palms facing forward
- Stretch fingers out, and then slowly touch each fingertip to your thumb.

THUMB TUCK

- With arm at side, bend at the elbow with palm facing forward
- Tuck your thumb into the palm of your hand and wrap your four fingers around it. You shouldn't see your first knuckle.

- Rotate your hand in a circle, feeling the stretch in the wrist and forearm on the down side of the circle.
- Repeat on other side.

FINGER FLICKING

- Place elbows on knees with hands hanging down.
- Flick your fingers like you're trying to get something off of them.

SIDE BENDS & NECK TRACTION

- With your left hand next to you gripping the chair seat and your right arm at your side, palm facing out,
- Slowly lift the right arm up and to the left, as you bend your left arm until you feel a soft stretch along the side and arm.
- To add the neck traction: remain bent over and move right arm down slowly until you feel a soft stretch in the neck.
- Repeat on other side.

SPINAL TWIST

- Sit up straight – spine lengthened – NEVER twist on a compressed spine
- Place left hand behind you
- Place right hand on left hip
- Inhale and slowly twist to the left as you exhale: abdomen, shoulders, neck, head
- Exhale as you slowly untwist.
- Repeat on other side.

FEET AND ANKLES

- With legs out in front of you
- Point toes and hold
- Flex feet and pull toes back toward you
- Rotate feet in circles to the left and then the right.

SEATED FORWARD BEND

- Sitting up straight, inhale and raise arms overhead, palms forward
- Exhale, slowly stretching arms out and down until you feel a nice stretch

SEATED BACK BEND

- Sit up straight on edge of chair, feet on the earth with toes turned lightly inward.
- Hold on to chair seat.
- While inhaling, lift up chest and bend back slightly so upper spine arches.
- Let shoulders release down away from ears.
- DO NOT tilt head backward.
- Slowly exhale and return upright.

GODDESS POSE – This is an alternative to weeding on your knees.

- From a standing position with feet about 3' apart, and turned out about 45 degrees.
- Bend knees over toes while squatting down.
- Rest forearm on thigh for stability.
- Keep back flat.

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