Stretching Routine for Gardeners

Practice this stretching routine each week to prepare your body for gardening or any other physical activity you plan to enjoy!

STRETCH #1: TOUCH THE SKY!
Deep breath with arms raised, repeat 5 times

- SET-UP:
  - Begin in a standing upright position with feet hip-width apart.
- MOVEMENT:
  - Bend your knees and as you inhale, stand up.
  - Lifting your arms up, out to your side, and then over your head allowing your rib cage to expand with your breath.
  - Try to stretch your whole body as you reach for the sky.
  - Exhale fully as you slowly lower your arms back down.
- TIP: Make sure to only lift your arms through a pain-free range of motion.

STRETCH #2: STANDING MARCH
Practice for two minutes continuously.

- SET-UP:
  - Begin in a standing upright position holding on to a stable object if needed for support.
- MOVEMENT:
  - Lift one knee up to waist height, then slowly lower it back down.
  - Repeat with your other leg.
  - Continue alternating between each leg.
- TIP: Make sure to keep your back straight and maintain your balance during the exercise. If too easy, step up and reverse, alternating legs onto a step, bench or ledge.
STRETCH #3: SQUATS TO HEEL RAISE
Continue in a controlled, fluid manner for 1 minute.

SET-UP:
- Begin standing upright with your feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart.

MOVEMENT:
- Bending at your knees and hips, squat down until your knees are close to a 90 degree angle.
- Straighten your legs and rise up onto your toes.

TIP: Keep your back straight. Do not let your knees bend forward past your toes.

STRETCH #4: SHOULDER ROLLS
Repeat for 10 reps

SET-UP:
- Begin in a standing upright position with your arms at your sides.

MOVEMENT:
- Move your shoulders up towards your ears, backward, and down.
- Repeat, continuing to move your shoulders backwards in a circular motion.

TIP: Make sure to maintain good posture during the exercise.
STRETCH #5: FLOPPY HEAD
Head circles, 5 reps each direction for 1 1/2 to 2 minutes

SET-UP:
- Begin standing with your feet shoulder width apart and your arms straight in front of your with your palms facing each other.

MOVEMENT:
- Bend forward at the waist so that your arms and chest are parallel to the floor.
- Hold briefly
- Keeping your back straight, return to the starting position
- Repeat 5 times.

TIP: You should feel the stretch in the back of your upper leg when you bend forward. Avoid locking your knees during this exercise.

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STRETCH #6: GOOD MORNINGS
Repeat for 5 reps, approximately 5 minutes

SET-UP:
- Begin in a standing upright position.

MOVEMENT:
- Tilt your head sideways toward one shoulder, then gently roll your head backwards and over to your other side.
- Continue to roll your head slowly back and forth.

TIP: Make sure to keep your back straight during the exercise. Move only through a comfortable range of motion.
STRETCH #7: DYNAMIC HAMSTRING MARCH
Practice for approximately 1 1/2 minutes.

Alternate positions for Stretch #7:
Repeat for 5 reps, approximately 5 minutes

STRETCH #8: SHAKE IT OUT!
Give your whole body a good shake! Swing your arms, kick your feet, lift your shoulders up and down, roll your wrists. Now you’re ready to go!