



## Tips for Pain- Free Gardening

Spring is in the air, and it is a great time to get back in the garden. Gardening requires a diverse range of movements that can cause muscle strain to the involved areas. Commonly, the lower back, shoulders, knees, and arms can become sore while gardening, especially if you are out of shape or have reduced joint mobility. The following tips will help you get the most out of the gardening season without taxing your body.



### 1. Warm-up and stretch

- Gardening, like sports, requires physical exertion and it is a good idea to include warm-up exercises in both. Stretch your major muscle groups for 15 minutes before gardening (see bottom for suggested exercises).

### 2. Maintain good posture while raking, hoeing, and weeding.

- Keep your back straight and your feet shoulder-width apart.
- Keep garden tools close to your body and avoid reaching by moving your feet closer to the work area.

### 3. When working on the ground or kneeling, use a low stool, bend your knees (squat) and use knee pads

### 4. Turn your feet and entire body instead of twisting or turning back

- Alternate which side of the body you use.
- For example: Pull a weed with your right hand, then pull the next one with your left hand.

### 5. Lift objects by bending at the knees, not the waist

### 6. Take regular breaks

- Stretch and stand up every 15-20 mins
- Alternate activities or locations in your garden

### 7. Do not push through pain

- When your muscles feel sore and tired, stop and take a rest

### 8. Contact Body Works Sports Physiotherapy if your muscle or joint pain does not settle

- Many of the aches and pains gardeners experience can be prevented.

NECK

SHOULDERS

LOWER BACK AND LEGS

WRISTS



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