

Yoga for Computer Users: The Side-Angled Stretch

Stand straight against the wall and stretch the feet about three to four feet apart. Inhale and raise arms up to shoulder level, palms down. Point right foot to the right and slightly turn in left foot. Bend right knee to form a right angle, with thigh parallel to the floor and the shin vertical. The knee should be directly above the ankle. Stretch the back leg and tighten the knee.

Exhale and stretch right hand down to rest on floor behind right foot. Turn head to look up and press left hip flat against wall with left hand. A strong pull should be felt all along the left side. When you feel comfortable, stretch the left arm up and press it against your ear so that from left heel to left hand the body is stretched and extended. Hold this position for a slow count of 10, making sure that upper shoulder, hip and bent knee are pressed against the wall. Inhale and return to starting position. Exhale and repeat on left.

Benefits: This posture produces overall health. It tones every muscle, tendon and joint in the body. The heart is revitalized and strengthened, and, if crooked, the spine is stretched and realigned. The hip joints, which can weaken with age, become stronger and more flexible. The neck is stretched and made more flexible, easing the pain of stiff, tense muscles and spondylosis. Thighs, hips and waist are firmed. Even digestion is improved.

Remember to lie down and relax after your yoga practice. Relaxation after exercising helps the body to recover, regulates the flow of blood, and calms and soothes the mind. That way you don't feel tired but refreshed and invigorated.