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Stretching for Music Librarians

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Stretching for Music Librarians

Veronica A. Wells

Setting up

- Make sure you won't be distracted in the next 10-15 minutes. Silence your cell phone.
- Sit in a chair with your feet planted on the floor. Knees are floating over your ankles. Back is straight. Shoulders are relaxed. Hands can be on your lap or on your knees. Chin is parallel to the floor.
- Take a few deep breaths in and out of your nose. As you breathe, try to clear your mind and allow yourself to feel grounded to the earth.

Neck Stretches

- Drop your head to the right and focusing on stretching the left side of your neck. If you want to deepen the stretch, gently use your right hand to pull your head closer to your right shoulder. Hold for about five breaths. Switch to the left side.
- Drop your chin down towards your chest while still keeping your chest lifted. Focus on stretching the back side of your neck.
- Lift your chin up and look up towards the ceiling. Feel a stretch in the front of your throat.
- Gently and slowly do neck circles going clockwise for 2-3 times. Switch to counterclockwise.

Shoulder Stretches

- Reach your right arm up and over to left. Focus on stretching the right side of your body. Hold for a few breaths before switching to the other side.
- Cow Face Arms: Bring your right arm up and over your back like your patting yourself on your back. Your right elbow should be pointed towards the ceiling. With your left hand, either push down on your elbow or reach your left arm around your torso and try grab your right fingers. (http://yoga.about.com/od/yogaposes/ss/usefulposes_2.htm) Hold for a few breaths before switching sides.
- Eagle Arms: Bring your right elbow underneath your left elbow and grab your opposite shoulders and pull down. Check out this great video for how to do this along with ways to make the stretch more intense: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/11/09/office-yoga-eagle-arms_n_1084596.html. Hold for a few breaths before switching sides.

Seated Cat/Cow

- Seated Cat/Cow is a great way to bring movement to the spine. For instructions on how to perform this, check out Yoga Chuck's video:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEEOIXG3Co0>
- Yoga Chuck instructs you to place your hands on your thighs. I like to interlace my hands behind my head and stick my elbows out to the side. This feels safer on my neck.

Back bend

- Stand up with your feet about hip-distance apart. Make sure your back is straight and shoulders are relaxed. Your body weight is even distributed on your feet.
- Bring your arms to your sides with your palms facing out. Gently drop your head back and feel a nice stretch in your neck, collarbones, and sternum.
- Hold for a few breath before coming back up to standing.

Forward Bend

- While keeping your knees soft, hinge at the hips and bend down. Place your hands on the floor or let your arms dangle in front of you.
- In this position, do what feels good for your body. You could sway back and forth, walk out your knees right and left, grab your opposite arms, shake your head yes and no, etc.
- Hold this for five to ten breaths and slowly roll up, vertebrae by vertebrae. Don't be surprised if you get a bit of a head rush as you come out. This is completely normal.

Stretches for Home

- The following slides show you some stretches you can do at home either before or after work.
- Hold each stretch for about 3-5 minutes depending on your comfort level
- If doing this type of practice appeals to you, I suggest you explore a yoga called Yin Yoga:
<http://www.yinyoga.com/>

Child's Pose

A wonderful pose to do right before bed. This stretches our your hips, back, and shoulders. Other variations include widening your knees or bring your arms to your sides.



Photo by yogamama.co.uk

Butterfly Pose

This is a great hip opener. The closer you bring your feet to your pelvis, the more you will feel it in your hips. Experiment with folding forward to find a nice stretch in your lower back.



Photo courtesy of Synergy by Jasmine

Seated Forward Bend



Photo by Joseph Renger