



Garden Exercise: How Many Calories Does Gardening Burn?

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According to the experts a few hours hard gardening can work wonders for your health and wellbeing - as well as burn calories fast. Gardening can be a good way of burning calories. Here are just some of the benefits you can hope to reap from your garden.

Gardening burns fat

When it comes to burning calories digging and shovelling come top of the list with mowing and weeding not far behind. Spend half an hour doing any of the following activities and expect to use up:

- Digging and shovelling: 250 calories
- Lawn mowing: 195 calories
- Weeding: 105 calories
- Raking: 100 calories

Gardening tones you up

Wielding the hoe and strimming the edges are also great alternatives to a sweaty tone-up class in the gym.

Hedge trimming helps shape your biceps while raking, forking and mowing will all help to strengthen the arms and shoulders as well as toning the abdominal muscles.

Digging and squatting down to move or lift objects can help tone thighs and buttocks.

Gardening protects your heart

Any activity that is energetic enough to leave you slightly out of breath and raise the heartbeat counts as moderate intensity exercise, which, according to the experts, can help protect against heart disease.

Get moving for just half an hour three times a week and you can expect some benefit, so if the sun is shining what better incentive do you need for venturing into the garden and pulling up those weeds?

Gardening relieves stress

It's not just your body that will benefit. The psychological benefits of being outdoors, working in the sunshine and fresh air, are also clear.

Studies have shown that just looking at trees and plants reduces stress, lowers blood pressure and relieves tension in muscles.

In much the same way as a beautiful painting lifts the mood, looking at a summer garden, soaking up the colours, smells and sounds can help overall wellbeing.

Gardening stimulates the senses

Horticultural therapists have found that, for elderly patients in particular, gardening can stimulate all the senses - providing interesting sights, sounds, textures, tastes and scents - and stimulate memories and connection with the past.

Gardening builds confidence

Watching things grow from a tiny seed instils a sense of achievement and self-esteem. It gives an opportunity for the gardener to take care of and responsibility for another living thing. It also keeps the brain busy by providing new plants, new flowers and new techniques that need to be learnt and absorbed.