



20HR TEACHER TRAINING



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The History of Yoga

Yoga has popularly been translated as “union with the divine” and may refer to a number of different spiritual systems. The Bhagavad Gita, for example, discusses a number of practices that have been termed yoga in popular literature: karma-yoga, the path of action; jnana-yoga, the path of knowledge; bhakti-yoga, the path of devotion, dhyana-yoga, the path of silent meditation.

When the word of yoga is used by itself without any qualification, it refers to the path of meditation, particularly as outlined in the Yoga Sutras- the Aphorisms on Yoga- and the term yogi, a practitioner of this type of meditational yoga.

Yoga has tended to focus on the physical aspect of the system of yoga, the asanas, or stretching poses and postures, which most Western adherents of yoga practice in order to stay trim, supple and healthy. Patanjali himself, however, pays minimal attention to the asanas, which are the third stage of the eight states, or limbs, of yoga, and focuses primarily on mediation and various stages of concentration of the mind.

Asanas, Postures, also as a meditative technique leading to samadhi, enlightenment - was popularized in the West by a number of influential Hindu teachers of yoga in the 1960s, most of whom came from two lineages; Sivananda (1887 - 1963) and Krishnamacharya (1888- 1989). Sivananda was a renunciant, and his ashram tradition was transplanted by his disciples Vishnudevananda, Satchidananda, and Chinmayananda. Krishnamacharya’s three principal disciples took his emphasis on the practice of asana in their own direction: K. Pattabhi Jois continued to promote his version of ashtanga-vinyasa yoga; Krishnamacharya’s son, T.K.V. Desikachar, developed viniyoga; and - perhaps most influential - Krishnamacharya’s brother-in-law, B.K.S. Iyengar established the Iyengar method.

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras

It's one of the most important classical texts in Hinduism and thus a classic of Eastern, and therefore world thought. Along with the Bhagavad Gita, it is the text that has received the most attention and interest outside of India.

The Sutras is not an overtly sectarian text in the sense of prioritizing a specific deity or promoting a particular type of worship as is the case with many Hindu scriptures, including the Bhagavad Gita. Therefore, as a template, it can be and has been approval-rated and reconfigured by followers of different schools and traditions throughout Indian religious history and certainly continues to lend itself to such appropriations, most recent in nonreligious contexts of the West.

Bhagavad-Gita

The Bhagavadgita puts a great emphasis on the control of the mind. The mind is likened to the sixth sense and described as fickle and unstable by nature. As an aspect of Nature, the human mind personifies the phenomenal world, its impermanence, and instability.

The Mind Needs to be Stabilized

According to the Bhagavadgita, self-realization is not possible without achieving stability of the mind or the state of "sthithaprajna." Stability of mind means to remain the same in all circumstances and under all conditions.

The following verses give us an idea of what stability of mind is:

"When a person gives up all the desires in his thoughtful state, and when his inner self is satisfied within itself, at that time he is said to be a 'sthithaprajna' (a master in the stability of mind)"

"Undisturbed amidst threefold miseries, immobile in happiness, free from attraction, fear, and anger, is called a sage of stable mind.

"Who is everywhere without affection, who does not praise or loathe auspicious or inauspicious events, his mind is stabilized."

In chapter V, we come across this verse:

"The knower of Brahman, stable of mind, established in the Supreme Brahman, shows no sign of rejoicing when he achieves the objects of his desire nor agitation when unpleasant things happen to him.

"Unattached to external sense objects, immersed in himself, he remains blissful. Establishing his self in Brahman, such a Brahma yogi enjoys unlimited happiness."

What is equanimity of the mind is described again in Chapter VI:

"He who has controlled his self (mind), certainly self is his best relation, but for him, the self is his enemy who has not controlled his self.

"He who has conquered his self is in the company of the Supreme. In cold or heat, happiness or sorrow, respect or disrespect, he is always serene.

"He who is contented with knowledge and wisdom, who is stable and master of his senses and who treats equally gold or pebbles or a piece of stone , such a self-realized soul is fit to be called a Yogi.

"He is superior who maintains the same attitude towards his well-wishers, friends, enemies, non-aligned, arbitrators, haters, relations, saints, and sinners.

Senses Make the Mind Restless

The restlessness of the mind is caused by the activity of the senses which bind the mind to the sense objects through desire. So the mind cannot be stabilized unless the senses are controlled, and the mind is detached

from the sense-objects through the cultivation of detachment or "vairagya." We come across this prescription in the following verses. (Chapter II, Verses 58-64)

"He who can withdraw his senses completely from the sense objects like a tortoise withdraws its limbs , his mastery is established."

Sense objects cease to torment him who practices abstention, although the taste for them still remains in his consciousness. It would completely disappear only when he experiences the transcendental life.

"The sense throw out of balance even the mind of a man who has complete knowledge of discrimination and is attempting to control them."

"Keeping all the sense under his full control he who establishes them in me, his intelligence is stabilized"

"By constantly thinking of sense objects, one develops an attachment with them. From attachment is born desire and from desire comes anger.

"From anger develops delusion, from delusion, comes confusion of memory, from confusion of memory arise loss of intelligence and when intelligence is lost the breath of life is lost."

"Freed from passion and dispassion, by keeping the senses that are acting on the sense objects under firm control and by following the dictates of the inner soul , a person can gain the mercy of God."

Yoga techniques to stabilize the mind

In the following verses the concept is reemphasized and further elaborated, (Chapter VI, Verses 10-19):

"Let the yogi constantly keep his mind concentrated in his self, sitting alone in a secluded place, self-controlled, desireless and without any sense of possessiveness.

"In a clean place placing his firm seat, neither too low nor too high, covered with soft cloth, deerskin, and kusa grass.

"Thereupon, sitting on that seat, with single-pointed concentration, keeping his mind, senses, and activities under firm control, he should practice yoga for self-purification.

"Holding the body, the neck and the head equally firm (straight) and fixed, concentrating his gaze on the tip of his nose and not distracting himself

"With peaceful mind, fearless, practicing brahmacharya (vows of celibacy), mind subdued and established in Me, the Yogi should sit and make Me his ultimate goal.

"Practicing thus, ever established in the Self, with ordained mind the Yogi attains the highest peace and nirvana in My world.

"Yoga is neither for the voracious eater nor for the poor eater. It is neither for the excessive sleeper or for the excessive sleepless.

"He who has appropriately controlled his diet and recreation appropriately performs all his works, appropriately controls his waking and sleeping periods, his yoga reduces his sorrows.

"When the disciplined mind is established in the self, and when one becomes impervious to all the desires, he is said to be established in Yoga.

"A lamp in a windless place is the metaphor that can be used to describe a Yogi whose mind is under control and who is united with his inner Self.

"The state in which the mind ceases its movements restrained by the performance of the yoga, in which the (lower) self-realizes the (Higher) Self and is satisfied in the Self,

"That state in which he finds unlimited happiness, in which the intellect understands the transcendental (that which is beyond the senses) and wherein established he never moves from truth."

Concentrating the Mind on God is the Solution

In the following verses (Chapter XI, 7 & 8) Lord Krishna gives the following assurance to his devotees.

"I rescue them, O Partha, whose minds are set upon Me from the ocean of mortal samsara (worldly life).

"Upon Me fix your mind, in Me operate your intelligence and thereafter, without doubt, you shall live in Me only.

In Chapter 17, Verse 16, we come across the definition of austerity of mind,"

"Mental satisfaction, gentleness, silence, self-control, purification of thoughts, this is called the austerity of mind."

Eight Limbs of Yoga

“8 Limbs” of Yoga originated in the term *Ashtanga*. This is a Sanskrit term that refers to Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi.

Yoga Sutras which is also known as The Eight Limbs (Ashtanga) of Raja (King) Yoga was considered the first and fully recorded system of yoga. It was created around 400 CE by Patanjali. This system has influenced how we practice yoga today. Although most of the sutras that were originally discussed were focused on mindfulness, the West’s version of yoga seems to focus more on the body. And somewhere along the way, many yogis have begun practicing movement of yoga in isolation from the original philosophies.

In order to learn and understand yoga, it is imperative to take the time to read The Eight Limbs of Yoga in its entirety and absorb it. Be sure to reflect on it piece by piece in order to know how to implement and practice the eight limbs in your daily life. Though there are useful summaries available about the basic concepts of The Eight Limbs of Yoga, knowing the philosophy and the history will help your path of mindfulness and self-realization

There is a wonderful lesson in Buddhism that can be applied here.

There was once a very old king that went to see an old hermit who lived on top of a tree in a bird’s nest. He asked the hermit what is the most important Buddhist teaching? The Hermit then answered that it is “*do no evil, do only good. Purify the heart*”. The king expected a long and detailed explanation in which he said that “*even a five-year-old child can understand that!*”. The hermit then replied, “*yes, but even an eighty-year-old man can’t do it.*”

This means that the biggest obstacle to self-realization is yourself. According to the *Bhagavad Gita*, *“The mind is restless and hard to control, but it can be trained by constant practice (abhyasa) and freedom from desire (vairagya).”* It also mentioned that *“a man who cannot control his mind will find it difficult to attain this divine communion, but the self-controlled man can attain it if he tries hard and directs his energy by the right means.”*

Patanjali's Eight Limbs of Yoga will help give you the necessary groundwork and foundation in order to set things on the right track. However, you will have to decide to face your problems and their origins.

It is important to understand that reading and understanding will not suffice. In order to reap the full benefits of yoga, it is important to apply the eight limbs in all areas of your life.

Each limb will be discussed in order for you to have a deeper understanding of what yoga is. The first and second limbs, Yama and Niyama form the foundation of your yoga journey. Here, awareness and your realization are going to be established.

A serious student must be very mindful of every limb since each limb needs constant reflection. Over time, as you commit to each limb, your understanding of each limb will get deeper.

One of the most common mistakes is to go directly into yoga poses while other stick to meditations directly. Given our world that favors instant gratification, people tend to skip the importance of the philosophy as a whole.

It is suggested to start the first two limbs. Here, you will find the fulfillment in your practice. Keep in mind that failure to practice the first two limbs will result in the superficial and less effective execution of the other limbs.

First Limb: Yama (Self-Restraint)

Yama is the first of the eight limbs that translates to self-restraint.

The focus of the first limb focuses mainly on being a person of ethics and of morals. It also aims to help improve your relationship with other individuals and the world as well. Though these values were conceptualized centuries ago, it remains relevant and important in the modern day. In fact, it isn't a coincidence that this is the first limb of yoga. Once you make the necessary transformation in yourself, your outside world becomes a reflection of what you actually do.

There are five different types of yamas. It includes ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truthfulness), asteya (non-stealing), brahmacharya (moderation), and aparigraha (not hoarding).

1. Ahimsa: Non-Violence

Non-violence involves the replacement of harmful thoughts and actions. Instead, it is replaced by acts of kindness to other people.

2. Satya: Truthfulness

Satya involves that you become honest in your words, actions, thoughts, and how you conduct yourself towards other people.

3. Asteya: Non-stealing

Asteya simply means that you don't desire to own things that are not yours. What Asteya teaches is for us to not hoard things as well as thoughts. Instead, it teaches us to share them in order to benefit other individuals.

4. Brahmacharya: Moderation

It is also interpreted as abstinence from sexual acts before marriage and practicing monogamy. It also pertains to not having sexual thoughts about other people other than your spouse. It is believed that celibacy can actually improve your energy and zest for life. Though it sounds an unrealistic goal, this fosters mutual respect, selflessness, and love for couples.

5. Aparigraha: Not hoarding

It is quite problematic these days that people are materialistic. With a “me first” attitude, it can be quite hard to rewire our system to think of sharing and to live with only what we need. Aparigraha teaches us to replace the habit of hoarding and share our blessings instead. It also teaches us to not take without giving back.

It also applies to other areas of life as you can’t just have something without working hard for it. With this, you build appreciation for what you currently have. It helps minimize the need to consume. One great way to describe aparigraha is *“Nothing in excess. All things in moderation”*.

Second limb: Niyama: Self-Restraint/Personal Ethics

Niyama pertains to discipline and self-restraint. If you will read the ancient yoga texts, it describes life being short that we need to make the most of it while we can. The second limb gives yogis the guidance that they need. Here are the five Niyamas

1. Shaucha: Purity of body and mind

Bad thoughts will lead to negative actions. It can lead to foul speech and could even manifest in your health in a negative manner. By practicing shaucha (cleanliness), it becomes possible to clear your body from

sickness. It is believed that purity starts from the mind. Both speech and action simply follow what the mind does.

The second limb directs you towards having not only positive mental stimuli but also eating healthy food to nourish the body. And by doing so, destructive habits can be eliminated.

2. *Santosha: Contentment with what you have*

Once you have achieved santosha, your attachment to the materialistic world is already broken, and you get peace of mind and inner peace. The lack of contentment often times distorts our perception of what we want to have in life. Once you find contentment, you are on your way towards self-realization. You become content regardless if you are wealthy or not.

3. *Tapas: Self-discipline*

Tapas is sometimes referred to as austerity. This pertains to the ability of the body and mind to control urges. Tapas literally means “glow.” This describes the burning desire to finish a particular goal regardless of the challenges. The commitment towards a goal builds character. However, the highest level of tapas is described as to complete a goal without any selfish motivation.

4. *Svadhyaya: Self-study that leads to introspection and awakening of the soul*

Svadhyaya leads towards realizing your truest potential. It is traditionally done by studying the Vedic scriptures.

5. *Ishvara Pranidhana: Surrender to God*

Once you believe and accept the strength of a higher power, pride and egotistic behavior can be reversed towards living a life of humility and devotion. This can help strengthen the how you practice all the limbs that can lead towards *samadhi* (the eight limb of yoga).

The third and fourth limbs are Asana and Pranayama. Both relate to health and longevity that allow the body to have more time to achieve the ultimate goal of yoga which is self-realization or enlightenment.

Third Limb Asana (Posture or Seat)

Both third and fourth limbs are important since it helps prepare the body towards meditation which is key to keeping the mind calm and helping yourself find your true potential.

It doesn't necessarily mean that you will need to reach your toes in order to be considered as a good yogi. Instead, how you approach *asana* practice is a reflection of your dedication and how you approach life in general. Do you keep yourself calm while presented with challenges? Do you break down the tasks in order to methodically commit to each part without missing details? Do you tend to overcome self-perceived limitations?

To understand *asana* better, it is characterized by steadiness (*sthira*) and ease (*sukha*). Concentrating on your breathing pattern can provide steadiness. If you lose your breath, this could mean that you are exerting too much effort. What you can do is to ease off the pose and let the pose and your breath align.

You also have to understand that there is really no such thing as the perfect pose. The poses can be like dance steps. This means that if you are focusing too much on the mechanics, you tend to not enjoy the music at all. Though mechanics can help prevent injuries, you should never forget the bigger picture and the final goal. You can feel the music of life flow through you as you perform each pose and as you learn the moves naturally. The good thing is that there are more than enough number of postures to keep you busy for the rest of your life.

The *asanas* can help the body to prepare during meditation. It can also help relieve tension and protect the body from different disturbances.

Fourth limb: Pranayama (Control of breath)

It is believed that the mind and breathing process are connected. Deep and rhythmic breathing pattern can help energize and calm both the mind and body. On the other hand, rapid and irregular breathing pattern can produce a disturbed mind. A calm mind will allow you to make better decisions in life. It also allows you to take control of your emotions, especially in different situations.

Breathing properly is fundamental to life. Oxygenated blood flows through the brain for every inhalation. It is also important to exhale properly in order to expel carbon dioxide that is a by-product of the body's metabolic processes.

Stress tends to have a negative impact how we breathe. It can, in fact, cause wear and tear to our body's immune system and our nervous system.

Fifth Limb: Pratyahara (Sense Withdrawal)

Sensory experiences can dictate the perception of reality. The things that we feel, touch, see, and hear can all affect what we think is real and how we view things. Pratyahara pertains to the withdrawal of senses from things that provide sensory gratification to our senses. It is a common trend that we hold on to things that we think are desirable. Also, we push away stimuli that we believe is undesirable. What *Pratyahara* teaches us is the ability to see clearly and reflect on what is really important in our life.

Sixth Limb: Dharana (One-Pointed Concentration)

Whenever the mind narrows its thoughts to single one-pointed concentration, it allows itself to absorb the present moment. By practicing *Dharana*, it allows the mind to clear all distractions. This can

be achieved in different ways from breathing to counting and even reciting mantras.

Since we are entangled in past memories, and we anticipate things that will come to us in the future, it is seldom that people stay in the moment. By becoming mindful of the present, it allows the mind to be calm.

Seventh Limb: Dhyana (Meditation)

There are many ways how you can meditate. Meditation, in essence, is a form of contemplation that allows you to be in a state of mind that is free of judgment and pure awareness of the present. All types of meditations lead towards self-awareness.

Self-awareness doesn't discriminate or categorize things. If you take a closer look at judgments, you will realize that many of these beliefs are actually learned behavior that we absorbed over the years. By performing consistent reflection and having an open mind, it is possible to correct biased perceptions and develop a part of you that can be called as "the observer." Once you've grounded regular seated meditation, it is also important to perform moving meditation through your daily life.

Eighth Limb: Samadhi (Total Absorption)

Samadhi is achieved when the analytical mind is absent and is already one with the object of meditation. The object of medication can be anything in your life that is used to achieve one-pointed concentration. The word *om*, a deity, or candle flame are just some examples of objects of meditation.

Total absorption is said to be the feeling of oneness is with all creation. What it does is dissolve the lines between the object of meditation and the act of meditation itself.

Many actually believe that this is the final goal of yoga. However, it is imperative to understand that it is only a temporary state of mind that we enter.

Every moment in your life can give you opportunities in order to practice eight limbs. You can learn at your own pace as you wish. However, you will need to stay focused and be consistent in your journey.

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MODERN YOGA

There is no doubt that yoga has become extremely popular in different parts of the globe. Over the years, yoga has transformed from to what we currently have now. It has morphed into a western version of its own. However, it is imperative for a yogi to still understand the traditional version of this practice.

What exactly is yoga?

The ancients believe that yoga is a complete system. This means that postures are only a small part of yoga. The word yoga in itself refers to the whole and not merely a part. As for its purpose, yoga is spiritual in nature.

In fact, you can classify yoga into four broad categories namely Vedic Yoga, Preclassical Yoga, Classical Yoga, and Post Classical Yoga.

However, keep in mind that despite the popularity of asanas in modern yoga practice, there is no evidence that asanas has ever been the primary aspect of Indian yoga practice tradition.

Traditional Yoga vs. Modern Yoga

For starters, keep in mind that traditional yoga or yoga in its real essence is a spiritual practice. It was aimed with a goal of having a union with the absolute or the divine. Traditional yoga has been historically taught orally and because of this nature, there are subtle nuances depending on the teacher and lineage. In this regard, there really is no agreed upon practice of yoga even in a traditional standpoint.

On the other hand, modern yoga focuses more on the physical aspect of yoga. There are contemporary styles of yoga that are mostly variations of what is called hatha yoga. Hatha yoga is a branch of yoga that focuses more on the physical exercises in order to master both mind and body.

What most people don't know is that postures are only a part of yoga as an entire practice. In fact, Jnana yoga doesn't involve physical postures. Instead, it involves rational self-inquiry and even seeks to get rid of ignorance of one's nature.

Patanjali's Asanas

For any yogi, it is important that they know their history. Asanas weren't even part of yoga until Patanjali wrote Yoga Sutras around 200BCE. He was able to incorporate postures that help discipline the body. The goal is to be able to create a connection between the body and your consciousness.

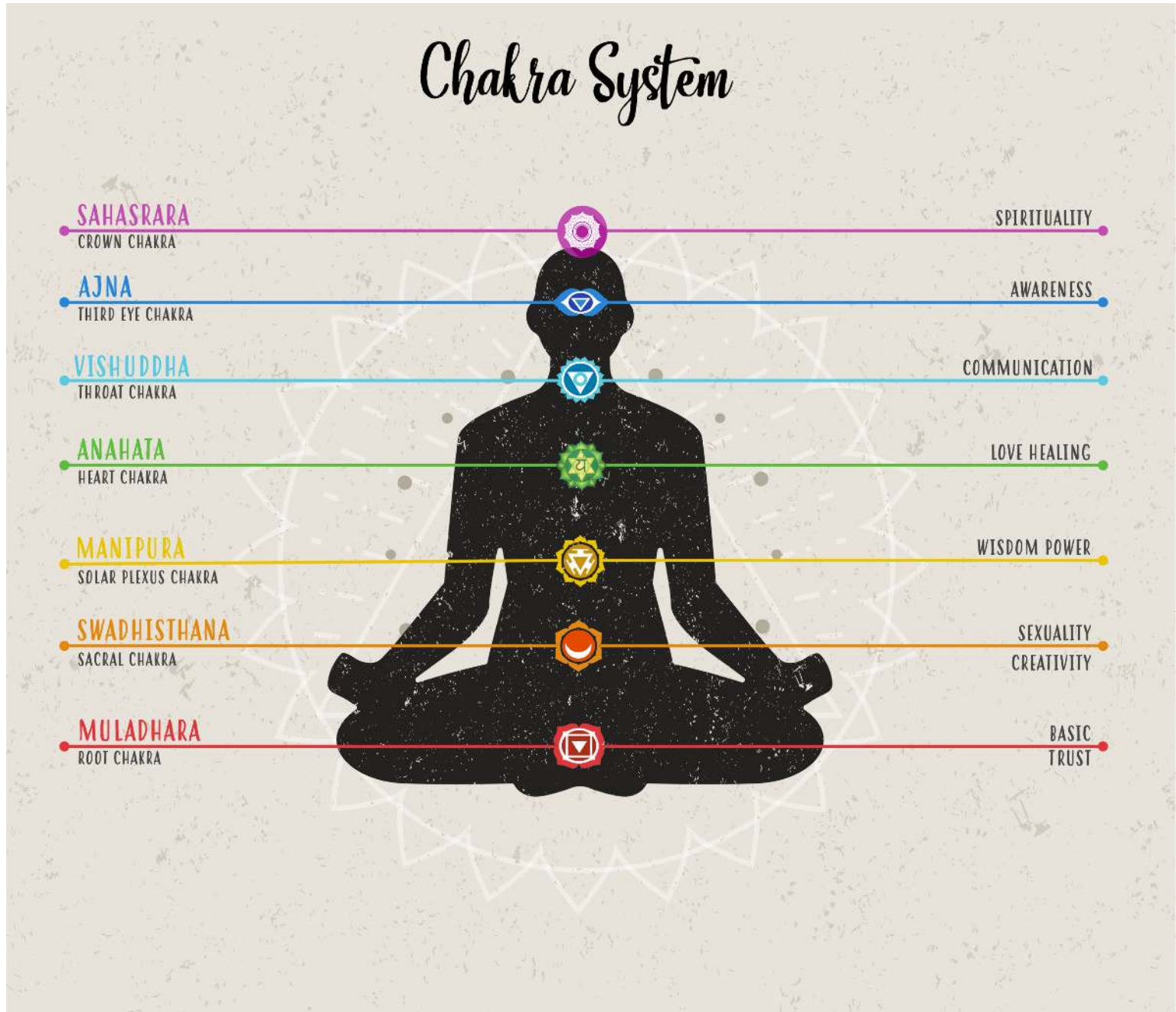
Contemporary yoga practitioners are mostly based on this. Yoga has become popular tremendously in the West mainly because of its ability to promote health benefits ranging from injury prevention to recover and even detoxification of the body. Classes are usually focused on physical fitness or can even be integrated with meditative focus as well.

Unfortunately, most modern yogis don't practice any kind of spiritual awakening. For a lot of yogi purists, why not explore the spiritual

benefits of yoga as well if you are already getting physical benefits from it?

Should you practice traditional yoga or just focus on postures? In reality, there are many benefits of practicing yoga as a whole. You will be able to discover your potentials not just physically but also mentally and spiritually.

The Chakra System



When we speak about *Chakras*, we are translating the Sanskrit word for qualifying the *wheels of the subtle bio-spiritual energy highway of vital life force, or prāna, in the body*. And by subtle, we mean: you will not physically find wheels of this nature in the anatomy, and because of this, so many dismiss them as being imaginary. What Chakras actually symbolize are the energetic resonances of particular physical nervous system ganglions, and major organs in the body. They are where the psycho-emotional material body and the higher spiritual consciousness interact. While these *wheels* are invisible, their influence is not. In yogic practices or the medical system of Ayurveda, these chakras are a description of energy centers in the body, of which there are 7; and they align with the anatomical spine. And stack up as follows, from the sacrum at the bottom to the crown of the head at the top:

Mūlādhāra Chakra

- This is the base or first chakra positioned as a small point in the sacrum or coccyx, or pelvic floor the five fused bones in our tailbone, which gives us words like sacred and sacrifice.
- Now wonder we learn that Mūla means origin, or root essence; whereas, Ādhāra mean foundation. It deals with the Shakti energy that is ever reaching towards Shiva in the infinite and is responsible for your sense of safety. Quite beautiful, when you think about it.
- Mūlādhāra Chakra is the womb our spiritual development. It's the stone upon which the whole body is built and should be seen as the first rung of a ladder ascending upwards.
- This chakra is also associated with impulse, specifically the will to live. It is the grotto of Kundalinī Shakti (spiritual energy) who, until the divinely appointed type, lays coiled, motionless and sleep. Muladhara is considered the foundation of the "energy body".
- Yogic systems stress the importance of stabilizing this chakra.



Swadhishthana

- Svadhishthana resides in the sacral-genital ganglion and, is depicted with six lotus petals the color of a flaming crimson rose.
- This, our second chakra is governs the principle of taste, and the water element. The art rendering the qualities of the second chakra also bears the crescent moon, the first step out of darkness, and newness. And as the moon rules fertility, it is well positioned here.
- This is a two-pronged energy, for generative action can be procreative or it can be creative, *but not both at the same time*.
- Creativity can be children, sure, but also art, and cooking, and finding solutions. Thus, *Svadhishthana* rules creativity and sexual energy. Located just above the pubic bone, below the navel, and encompasses the entire genital region, our second chakra sits in the hypogastric plexus.
- This word, svadhishthana, in Sanskrit reveals itself to be “the dwelling place of the self,” as the waters it rules are about cohesion. When this chakra is balanced and healthy, it manifests itself with great pleasure and joy for life, and unkempt 2nd chakra leads to depression, all manner of addiction, emotional instability, fear of change, and sexual dysfunction.



Manipura

- And then we arrive at the Belly, our Manipūra Chakra, and where we find all our so-called “gut-feelings”. Situated behind the navel, the golden solar plexus, or *the city of jewels* in which we find the pearls of generosity, wisdom and wellbeing.
- It is here where the sometimes-reckless passion of the sacral centers is transmuted in to selfless love.

- This is what the light of wisdom does, like the sun of its comparison, which shines on all things, here prejudice and fear, envy, ignorance, laziness and greed find dissolution and revive into a focused understanding and goodwill, but effort is required here.
- This is like the house of Bethlehem in the body, and so higher self-awareness and confidence are all pearls of the 3rd Chakra. Until we discover these gems within us we live in constant fear of sustenance, generosity, and seek power.
- In fact, many of our fears find their seat of production due to deflections below, or blockages in the Manipūra itself.



Anahata

- Speaking of cities: this is The Emerald city. Green is the color of the heart chakra. Heart is also an anagram for “E-A-R-T-H”: It is all about growth and abundant love.
- It is the color vibration in opposition to all the workings of the heart (red spectrum vs. green spectrum), and blood, and our lungs veins, and limbs. Thus, we can see in our culture when we have the onslaught of health problems associated with the heart, from arteriosclerosis to arrhythmia, blood pressure that is too high or too low; we can see how the 4th chakra may be asking us for some extra help.
- We see here the 6-pointed star identical to Solomon’s shield, the fiery source of male and female conjoined into one light body.
- The upper triangle, with its downward tip symbolizes Shiva; and the other triangle, with its upward apex is Shakti. A balanced heart allows you to experience harmony with yourself, with spirit and with the greater world around you. It literally what moves love into your life. It’s about finding compassion, mission, altruistic desire and wholeness.
- Anahata’s sacred heart is about service and home. This sacred heart is the healing vortex. And through this energy, the heart chakra, allows us to recognize the greater and transcendent qualities of larger love, the interconnected web of being that expands throughout life and the cosmos. The seat of Anahata allows us to touch the sacred truth of

creation. And let's us see that everything is seeking its own "path of the heart".



Vishuddha

- At Vishuddha we arrive at the expression center. Here all the creative energy of self is projected into reality.
- Here is the realm of artists, thinkers, manifestors, orators, singers, and entrepreneurs. Here is the place where much of the world, should they come to this, the first stable level of the chakra's and the kundalini energies, gets stuck, in fact. For this is breadth of the material world.
- Its highest subjectivity, its highest variety of expression. It is the infinite horizontal plane of earthly experience. And powerful gifts arrive here.
- This, the throat chakra is the 5th chakra and is *also the first of the higher or spiritual* centers on the spinal ladder. Its color is an azure blue, and is seated in the region of neck and upper shoulders. It is the realm of grief and gratitude. It is here where one must learn the gift of selfhood in positivity, from here we learn to accept our originality, and authentic voice.
- From here we learn to speak our truth. Unfortunately, without higher insight, this can be a subjective truth riddled with beliefs and egoic perspectives. But this is also where we create our interaction with the world for better or worse. But the energy of this chakra is what ever allows us to seek knowledge that is actually true, to seek life beyond limitations of time and space or conditioning.
- What stands in opposition of this is doubt and negative thoughts. Working with this chakra helps to mediate worries and hesitations to achieve direct experience, whereupon doubt and negativity are dissolved.



Ajna

- Ajna chakra is the location of the third eye, which is awareness and conscience. It is said that the two physical eyes are merely lenses that

are able to look upon the present circumstance, and are the windows to the past, meanwhile our third eye reveals insight, for it can see and not just look. Get it? In-Sight?

- When a yogini has worked to clear the body's lower chakras and is stabilized, one establishes themselves in the place between the eyebrows. The bindu resides here in Indian tradition for a reason. While our desiring personality will move us about, chasing objects to motivate our life in every direction, at Ajna we gain perspective. All experience or ideas come instead to serve clarity of one's perceptions. This is the place of the crossing from one way of living into another. It is said that here, the plane of neutrality exists as a balance between the energy of the two forces of the luminaries in the body: of both solar and lunar quality
- Here is the meeting point to the two rivers, the two hung thieves, the two serpents of Hermes' caduceus: the nadis known as Ida (feminine, lunar) and Pingala (masculine, solar) which are divided from each other at base entrance of the Sushumna nadi at Muladhara, they snake upwards, through all chakras and here again they meet within that plane of neutrality at Sarasvati. It is in their joining that we get Ajna. The mind now becomes one-pointed; higher perspectives lead the knower to become aware of the flow of time: past, present and future.
- It is here we often see this chakra embodied as a deity: the half-male-half-female Shiva-Shakti. Being whole again, we arrive at the state of the witness, or the observer of the Tao. Everything is understood from the perspective of awareness or the pure consciousness, which is always present and witnessing life at every moment behind the eyes, and behind the thoughts of the active ego. This is why when people speak of the method of life from the view of ajna is one of witnessing: it arrives through simply being mindful of every moment just as it is. It requires a steadfast examining of all our self-limiting beliefs in exchange for developing true wisdom. And true wisdom can only come when we stop taking sides, stop judging, and start discerning instead. If we only come from the perspective of duality, of good or

bad, black or white, we will never know true awareness, which is unpolarized. It means seeing and helping others to see the deeper meanings of the situations in their lives. Hence, Ajna when fully activated provides a sort of holistic power whereupon both hemispheres of the brain are synchronistic.

- Ajna, or the seat of the third eye is also about conscience or right action. Con = with, Science= what is known, knowledge (of something) acquired by study. Thus, when Ajna is organic and open, not only can you truthfully see what is going on, you will also know its meaning. Only from a purified STATE can your sense of justice and ethics originate without malice or misunderstanding. When your third eye is open, you not only see but you also understand.



Sahasrara

- And here we arrive at culmination, Sahasrāra Chakra at the crown of the head, placed beneath the Fontanelle, which is easily visible in a newborn child, this we see easily the connection of children to the Divine in their early days and years.
- This is the jewel of great price: the 1000-petalled Lotus, the door to realms of Brahmrandhra and Seat of the Supernal Light which is as bright as the sun, whose spiritual light radiates from the same cosmic source.
- And here we come to understand how In each individual, the Self or Ātmā must come to the realization that it resides with, and at the grace of, the Paramātmā, that is the Supreme Self, which we see manifested into its fulfilled appearance as Shiva, the pinnacle of manifest existence is in the fulfillment of the matter in incarnating the spirit, and this is birthed in the Sahasrāra Chakra.
- In essence Ātmā and Paramātmā are the same. In the Western Tradition, one reads: *I and the father are one*. This is that same principle in action. Even the smaller Self thus also possesses divine

consciousness, like a wave upon a mighty ocean. However, until one has earned and attained his freedom, or liberation, then Self is mistaken as our egoic attachments and identity, linking to a personal “I” and is thus said to be limited or “qualified” as opposed to the Supreme self which is unqualified, unlimited and impersonal – it is the Universal, Supreme Self, and the “Light of Life”. At Sahasrāra Chakra unity occurs.

Mudra Hands

Gyan



Buddhi



Shuni



Phrana



Dhyana



Surya



Apana



Ganesh



Vayu



Rudra



Kali



Anjali



The Bandhas

Bandha translates to “lock.” Bandhas are believed to regulate the flow of *prana* or life energy in the body. However, bandhas have a more practical purpose because these are contractions or “body locks” that can help individuals correct their posture and aid in proper alignment.

There are three major bandhas namely *mula bandha*, *uddiyana bandha*, and *jalandhara bandha*. When combined, the three bandhas are called *maha bandha* or “the great lock.”

Mula Bandha

This refers to the triggering of perineum muscle between the genitals and the anus. *Mula* means “root.” *Mula bandha* basically translates into “root lock.” Whenever this *bandha* is engaged, you will feel a slight pull on the side of the thighs. It’s the same feeling when you are trying to stop the flow of urine.

Uddiyana Bandha

Uddiyana bandha translates to “flying/moving up.” In order to engage this bandha, you will have to place three fingers below the belly button. Then, you will need to pull the lower abdominal muscles slightly in and up. You will feel your pelvis to tilt forward slightly with an upward motion. This protects the lower back and strengthens the lower abdominal muscles.

Mula and *uddiyana bandhas* should be engaged in the entirety of yoga practice. This helps in proper alignment and posture and can help reduce injuries.

Jalandhara Bandha

Last, you have the *Jalandhara bandha*. This is a chin lock. Bring the chin towards the clavicle while you keep the spine in an upright posture. And then, move your shoulder blades down the back. This *bandha* might be rarely used but can be utilized when engaged in *Dandasana* or staff pose.

The Ujjayi Breath

Breath is a basic staple of yoga practice. Focusing on the breath, it becomes possible for the yogi to stay in the moment. The breath in yoga should be neutral. It only means that the yogi shouldn't be avoiding or chasing his breath. Proper continuous breath can help clear the mind, especially of distracting thoughts. This allows the yogi to remain in the moment with one-pointed concentration.

With the use of deep, conscious breathing, this allows a parasympathetic response which then slows down the heartbeat. This has a soothing effect on the nervous system that allows the muscles to relax into stretches while staying strong during the yoga poses.

Ujjayi pranayama is one of the most commonly used breathing techniques during yoga practice. Ujjayi means "victorious" in Sanskrit. When describing this breathing technique, it can be described as "ocean sound" in the back of the throat. This is done by gently squeezing the glottis or the opening between the vocal cords in the throat. The aim is to create a breathy and whispery sound at the back of the throat. In fact, it is often times compared to the sound of Darth Vader whenever he's breathing.

First, you will have to sit in a comfortable position. Next, you will have to inhale through the nose and as you exhale, imagine you are trying to fog up a glass. Try to inhale with the same sound. Once you already developed an understanding of the *ujjayi* breathing technique, seal your

lips in order to prevent the throat from drying out (dry throat can be distracting since you will still need to get some water).

Using breath in order to facilitate poses:

- Maintain your breath to be deep and rhythmic
- If the breathing becomes choppy or restricted, this only means that you are pushing yourself unnecessarily. In this case, ease off the pose and return to a place that promotes the smooth and fluid breathing pattern.
- The body lifts and lengthens on the inhale. For instance, lift up from a forward bend and transition into a mountain pose on the inhale. Then, using the inhale lengthens the limbs of the body and the spine. Use the exhales to go deeper into the pose.

Ayurveda

“Yoga is the settling of the mind into silence. When the mind has settled, we are established in our essential nature, which is unbounded consciousness.” - Patanjali

In the Vedic supreme philosophy about 2500 ago, they see the world in a dual view, part of the world remains the same and part of it is always changing. And the world decides two parts - Purusha and Prakrit. Purusha means Mighty or Self, it is the field of consciousness that is unmanifested, the world of unchanged. Prakrit is the creative potential, the world of change. The process of yoga practice helps us to connect to the unchanging part of the Self, the Purusha is what connects everything and ever, while the world is changing, purusha is bigger and rise above all changing circumstances, it's able to withstand change and not influence by change, that's the real you. Through yoga practice we learn to constantly influence the direction of the changes in the world in a positive way.

Ayurveda - Ayurveda is a science of life (= life, Veda = science or knowledge). While Yoga is the connection between the mind and the body, Ayurveda is the study of maintaining and finding mental and physical balance with the world around you, as the world changes, the seasons, the time of the day and the environment have different nature, using Ayurveda helps us to navigate in the world in a positive way. Traditional, Ayurveda has to studied with yoga hand in hand.

3 Mental Qualities: The Gunas

We are all composed to varying degrees, of the three mental qualities, called Gunas, which are the Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. Allow these unique experience of your gunas come into form with a purpose.

Sattwa -

- Clarity, and purity, higher perception, comprehension, unity, the energy of knowledge and self-awareness. The power of knowledge.
- Sattwa sees and observes the quality that allows us to perceive essence of the Self that connect to the field of consciousness, connect to the Purusha.
- It's characters are light, love, and higher spiritual force, the energy that leads us to evolve and align ourselves with supreme intelligence.
- A state that manifest the higher and more prestige qualities.

Emotional response

See the experience and challenges as life lessons, interested in the self development and growth.

Rajas -

- The energy of action, of change, and of movement. Rajas is responsible for all movement, change, and transforms.
- Passion, agitation, activity. We need rajas to act or to move.
- Too rajasic creates hyperactivity, anxiety and indecisiveness.

Emotional response

Acting out, get angry or even harms others.

Tamas -

- Tamas is passive, little or no sensitivity. The darkness of delusion / not knowing one's self and our true nature. Tamas is also responsible for embodiment, which inherently conceals the higher self (Purusha). Energy of delusional, stagnation and attachment.

- Too tamasic creates depression, self-destructiveness and addictive behaviour.
- In the higher nature, Purusha got deeply buried in our consciousness, it's not perceived. tamas also responsible for embodiment. the whole capacity to move from abstract, ideas and feeling into form is driven from Tamas, when we take form, when we have a body, our soul where we came from is concealed, tamas is usually consider the negative force, what tamas does, the idea we stay stuck in the current state, it's a tamasic quality, a state of non feeling and non-sensitivity. need to step back for a moment to reflect on a sage vision, we're are all supreme self- luminous being.

Emotional response

Indulge in the negative emotion, become stuck or lost in the experience, might even have harmful behaviour.

The five major Vayus (Air)

The movements or functions of Prana

Prana

Location: Head and chest

Governs: Chest, throat and heart.

Movement: Outward

Udana

Location: Chest

Governs: Nose, throat

Movement: Upward

Vyana

Location: Heart and rapidly moves throughout the body.

Governs: All body movements, including walking, opening and closing eyes.

Movement: Disperse

Samana

Location: Near digestive fire

Governs: Assimilation, absorption

Movement: Balance air, equilibrium

Apana

Location: Colon

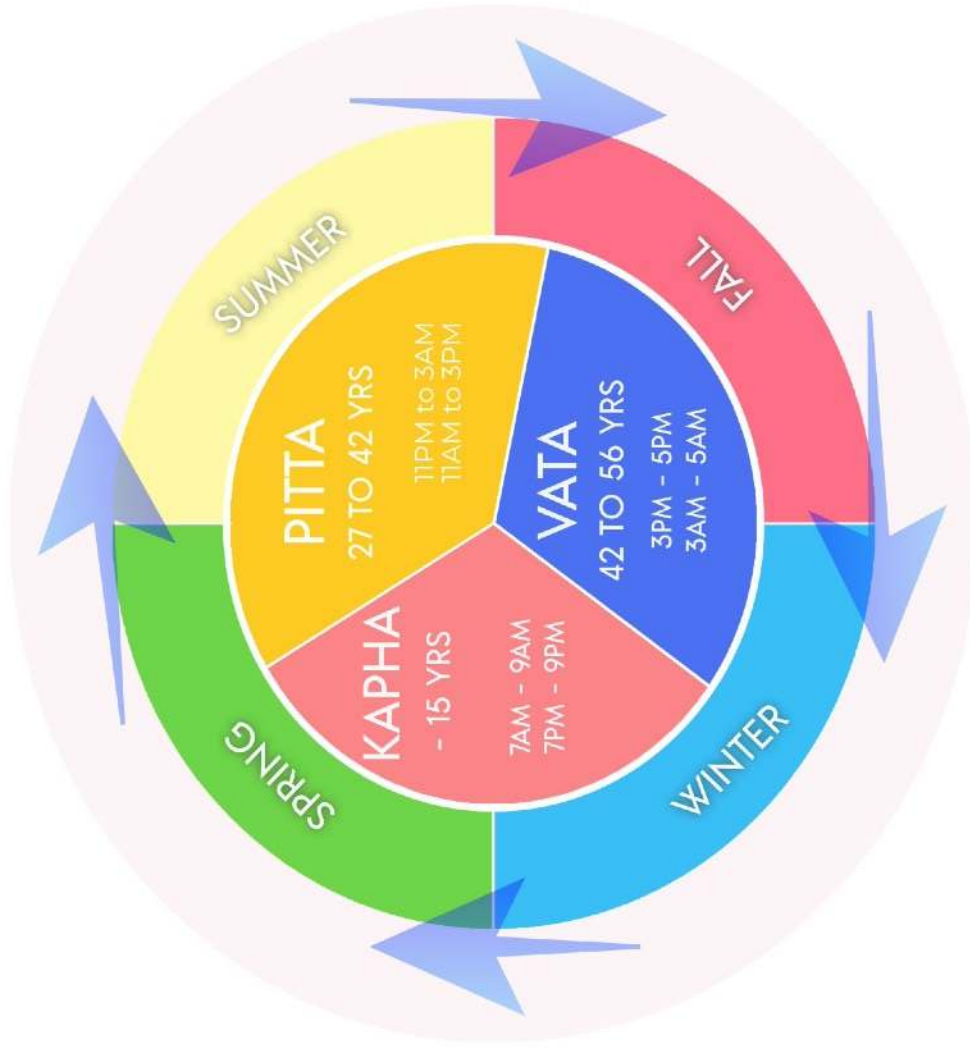
Governs: Elimination, reproductive fluid, bladder

Movement: Downward

Dosha Table

Dosha	Vata (Wind) 	Pitta (Fire) 	Kapha (Water) 
Qualities	Dry, cold, light, subtle, mobile, gas	Hot, sharp, penetrating, a little oily, mobile, active	Wet, soft, fixed, heavy, dull, cold
Governs	Breathe. Movement. Psychological flexibility. Mental and sensory orientation. The joints, the moving part of the body.	Digestions, digestive enzymes. Metabolic transformation and endocrine system.	Body connective tissues include mucus, synovial fluids and tendons. Emotional support.
Balanced	Adaptable, cheerful, flexible, creative,	Warm, clear, penetrating thought, passionate, leadership, responsive	calm, loyal, kind, grounded, lovable, compassion, modesty and patience.
Imbalanced	Unstable, constipation, arthritis, over-analysis, dehydration, dryness, anxiety	Skin rashes or acne, high blood pressure, infection, anger, excess driving force, impatient,	Excess consumption, slowness, swelling, overweight, jealousy, processiveness and sentimental.
Body Type	Thin-framed	Moderate, muscular build.	Big bone and strong.
Relation of the 5 elements	Active Air, medium Ether	Active fire, medium water	Active water , medium of earth
Diet	Cold and raw	Hot and spicy	Heavy and oily
Primary Location	Colon	Small intestine	Stomach
Yoga Poses to Balance the Dosha	Grounding forward bend, Child Pose, Garland/Squad Pose, Restorative poses.	Backbend on belly, Cobra Pose, Bow Pose, lateral and twisting poses, expanding the chest to reduce heat.	Back bend, lateral poses, long hold of active standing poses, with arms raised, Warrior 1, 2, Pranayama, core works and Lunges

Ayurvedic Clock



PITTA



VATA



KAPHA

SEASONS & STAGE OF LIFE

About Pranayama

The moment we are born, we are all given the opportunity to breathe. What we do with this gift depends on us. We can either just leave it underdeveloped, or we can cultivate and enhance its potential. If you choose to give your breath the attention that it needs, it helps increase its power.

The practice of deliberately cultivating our breath is what the practice of pranayama is all about. What pranayama does is balance and expand vital forces or Prana Vayus. What it does is that it can have a deep and lasting effect on our consciousness.

Pranayama has two roots: prana and ayama. Prana translates to “vital energy” or life-force, and ayama means “extension” or “expansion.” When put together, it simply says means that it is the “expansion of life force.”

Pranayama is a practice that helps circulate internal energy in our body in order to create vibrant health as well as a peaceful mind. It is also the medium which our consciousness flows. It is also believed that it is the force which Divine Consciousness moves through us.

Pranayama practice can help individuals to connect with the Mahaprana or the energy of the Divine Consciousness that flows through everything. According to Yogic Lore, prana can help deepen both our psychic and intuitive powers.

Pranayama Practice

In order to further understand pranayama, the following sections will help you understand the foundation ideas behind the practice. This will help you build towards more complex techniques over time. It is advised that you build the practice in this sequence. Be sure to practice the foundational techniques first before you transition towards the advanced ones. Getting fluent in the basic styles can help yield positive results in the long run.

Also, keep in mind that refining your pranayama practice takes both time and effort. But of course, be sure that “effort” means gentle effort. This simply means that you should keep your attention on what you are doing rather than pushing yourself so hard just to rush the results. Be reminded to be gentle with yourself and enjoy the process.

Benefits of Pranayama

Pranayama can help us unblock energy that is stuck in our body. As you are able to refine the process, you will realize the mental, physical, and spiritual potential of pranayama.

On a physical level, pranayama has many different benefits. One, deep breathing can help expand the lungs and ensure its elasticity as well as its full function. Pranayama helps develop the breathing muscle of the diaphragm as well as the secondary breathing muscles found in the upper chest and rib cage. What it does is ensure maximum lung capacity. When the lungs are fully inflated on a regular basis by practicing pranayama, what it does is reduce the risk of developing respiratory conditions from pneumonia to bronchitis. And for this reason, you can develop vibrant health using this practice.

When it comes to your energy or on the pranic level, pranayama helps in recruiting and developing conscious connection on the two vayus that are involved in breathing which are Prana vayu and Apana vayu. Prana vayu is the one that is responsible for inhalation, while Apana vayu is for exhalation. These two vayus interplay with each other and is balanced by Samana vayu. Inhale has an invigorating effect in both mind and body while exhalation gives a more grounding quality.

Three Instructions of the Bandhas

Before discussing pranayama in detail, it is imperative to know the bandhas first. These are three methods used during breathing practice that can help direct and enhance the power of prana. Bandhas, or otherwise known as “locks” are muscular adjustments that can retain or direct prana without the body’s internal energy system.

The bandhas are used together with all breathing techniques. And though pranayama can be done without the bandhas, making use of these techniques can help improve the effectiveness of pranayama practice.

The three types of bandhas that are used in pranayama practice which include: Mula bandha, Uddiyana bandha, and Jalandhara Bandha.

By engaging the bandhas, it helps in improving the strength, extension, and the stability of the poses. In particular, both Mula bandha and Uddiyana bandha are used for this purpose. When brought together, it anchors into the stability and the strength of our foundation and then builds on that grounding in order to create more expansion and freedom.

Mula bandha helps connect us to the power and the grounding of Apana vayu, while Uddiyana bandha connects us to the rising energy of Prana

vayu as well as Udana vayu via Samana vayu. Vyana vayu sparkles its radiant expansion via the body in different directions.

Mula Bandha

Mula bandha or otherwise known as “root lock” is the foundation of a seated posture. This bandha is engaged in the perineum or the floor of the pelvis. What it does is help pranic energy upward through the center of the body. In addition to this, it also prevents its dissipation downward. When engaging Mula bandha, the doer usually experiences a physical sensation that is described as toning, broadening, and “doming” up of the pelvic floor.

It is initiated by aligning the physical body in a specific manner. Here are steps below in order to practice feeling it.

1. While in a seated position, begin by rolling the flesh of the upper, inner and thigh downward. Next, widen them apart and out and away from the center. Once you’ve done this, you will then have to widen the buttocks back and apart using your hands. What it does is set the femur bones deeply into the sockets. What it does is create a broadness at the pelvic floor. With this, it creates a softening that can easily make it easier to sit up straight.
2. Next step is to add a downward “lengthening” of the tailbone. What it does is create a sense of uplift through the center of the body, as it moves up through the lower abdomen towards the diaphragm.
3. Then, you will accentuate the broadening and gently lift the pelvic floor by inhaling fully as if you are drawing your breath up through the floor of the pelvis.
4. While at the top of the inhale, pause your breath briefly then let the breath descend slowly down again towards the floor.

Mula bandha can be practiced as well by holding the breath after the exhale for a few seconds (Bayha kumbhaka or retention after exhale). At first, it is common to feel the bandha more during the exhale.

What Mula bandha does is connect you to the powerful grounding energy of Apana vayu. What it does is govern the lower body with its seat in the core of your pelvis. The solid earth energy of Muladhara chakra will then be accessed in order to allow prana to move upward into higher chakras. Ultimately, Mula bandha is considered a subtle and spacious action and not a hard contractive one as some descriptions would encourage. What it is really is more of a beginning or foundation of a chain of three bandhas which will later work in unison.

Take note: Though women are familiar with kegel exercise that engages the vagina and pelvic floor, Mula bandha isn't doing Kegel exercise. With practice, you will be able to differentiate subtle differences between engagement of muscle in the vagina and anus from the engagement of the pelvic floor.

Uddiyana Bandha

This is the second bandha that can be engaged under the lower rib and upper abdomen area. It can be found from the solar plexus and above the navel. What Uddiyana means is “flying up.” It describes the ability to raise pranic energy up in the body.

In order to activate the Uddiyana bandha, you will first need to lengthen the tailbone gently downward towards the Mula bandha. After this, imagine lifting up the sacrum and your kidneys while you draw back your abdomen towards the direction of the spine as if from the inside. During asana practice, this bandha can be recruited together with Mula bandha in order to move and expand the energy throughout the body.

Uddiyana bandha can influence Prana vayu, which then encourages the upward movement and expansion. As Prana vayu is then stimulated,

what it does is help increase pranic energies of Manipura and Anahata chakra that can inspire determination, compassion, as well as unconditional love.

Uddiyana Bandha While Standing

This particular bandha can be practiced while standing that enables creating a powerful upward movement of prana. This method of practicing Uddiyana bandha standing up can help an individual feel the action in order to develop its power. Another method which this bandha can be done is in a seated position during pranayama in conjunction with the other two other forms of bandha.

1. Stand in a solid stance. Your feet should be hip-width apart while your knees are bent.
2. Place your palms on your thighs somewhere just above the knees. Keep your arms straight during this step.
3. Next, lift your heart and bow forward, looking down at your feet.
4. Roll your inner thighs back and apart and lengthen and tuck your tailbone a bit under in order to create Mula bandha.
5. While keeping that, lift and expand the area of your kidneys while taking a long deep breath. Then exhale strongly to complete through your mouth. Your abdomen will naturally draw in and back as you exhale the air. Pause the breath here at the end of your exhale (Bayha kumbhaka). Close the back of the throat and act as if you are still taking a breath. This will allow the diaphragm up under your rib cage and the front of your belly towards the spine in order to create an internal vacuum.
6. Hold the breath for up to ten seconds.

7. Release the bandha. Breathe in and soften your standing position once again. Take as many breaths as you like, and perform the bandha and breath retention again.

It is suggested that you practice five rounds of consecutive repetitions. You can build the number of rounds and durations as you practice over the course of several months. Retention of five to ten seconds is already enough, and 5-10 rounds will already do.

Jalandhara Bandha

Jalandh translates to “web” or “net.” As for this bandha, it is engaged at the base of the throat that serves to “catch” the prana as it moves up the body before it circulates it back down again. Its seat found in the throat, Jalandhara stimulates Udana vayu and Visuddha chakra. This bandha may also serve to draw Prana vayu up from its seat coming from the solar plexus.

For beginners, here is an easy method of employing the Jalandhara bandha.

1. You will have to sit in Siddhasana or any comfortable seated posture.
2. Next, you will establish a full, natural rhythm to your breath. You will keep the inside of your mouth spacious as you let the tongue rest in the lower jaw. Now, you will soften your eyes under closed lids.
3. Now, you will place your palms down on your knees and establish Mula bandha and Uddiyana bandha.
4. On a deep inhalation, lengthen your torso coming from the pelvis to the shoulders. To help maintain the length of your torso, you

will gently press your hands down to your knees and use very light pressure.

5. While keeping the internal rise of your body, move your shoulder slightly up and then back bringing your shoulder blades more into your back and creating an open. And lifted quality in the area of your heart.
6. While you maintain this lift in the heart, make sure to bring your chin downwards towards the base of the throat. Without creating any strain, have a motion as if looking down on your feet.
7. At the top of your inhale, be sure to pause (Antara kumbhaka)
8. Release the breath, let go of Jalandhara bandha and relax your body.

Repeat the process again from the start and complete with a few rounds.

BASIC BANDHAS PRANAYAMA KRIYAS

ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING (NADI SHODHANA)

Nadi=Channel, Shodhana=Cleaning/Purifying



Fig 4

Entry Diamond (Vajrasana)

- Bring right hand in front of the face, folding pointer and middle fingers into palm, leaving thumb, ring finger, and pinky sticking up
- Bring thumb to the right side of nose and ring finger to the left side.
- Close eyes or gaze down softly, breath in and out through the nose.
- Close right nostril with the right thumb. Inhale through left nostril steadily.
- Close left nostril with ring finger, so both nostrils closed, hold breath.
- Open right nostril and exhale slowly on right nostril, pause briefly at the bottom of exhale.
- Inhale through the right nostril.
- Hold both nostrils closed.
- Open left nostril and exhale through the left nostril. Pause briefly at the bottom of exhale.
- Repeat 5-10 cycles.

Technique

- Focus on the sensation of your breath going thru your nostrils. You should feel cool air as you inhale and warm air as you exhale.
- Keep the breathing consistent, focus on the same counts on the inhales, the holds, and exhales. Start with 5 counts, then increase the count as you are able to breath deeper.
- You can also rest the pointer and middle finger between your eyebrows lightly, using them as an anchor. (fig 4)

Caution

- Sit in any position that's comfortable for you. Or standing.
- If you ever begin to feel light-headed, release both nostrils and breathe normally.

Bikram's Standing Pranayama

Prana=Life force, Yama= Extension



Fig 1



Fig 2

Entry Mountain (Tadasana)

- Clasp hands and place knuckles underneath chin
- Gaze forward.
- Inhale through the nose, and bring elbows up (fig 1)
- Use throat to control air flow, like snoring but quietly.
- Engage buttocks and quads by pulling kneecaps up.
- Fill lungs as keep inhaling for 6 counts.
- Exhale through mouth, open mouth and exhale thru throat, like fogging a mirror. (fig 2)
- Slowly look up and back across ceiling Head back, elbows forward and together.
- Empty lungs.
- Inhale, slowly bring the head down and elbows up, mouth closed and breathe as if saying "so."
- Pull belly in.
- Exhale, gently bring the head back and elbows forward and up away from the chest. Open mouth.
- Keep belly in and keep your spine straight, engage your quads.
- Repeat cycle for 10 times
- Hold and breath.

Technique

- On inhale, pull your belly in and up and ribs expand to the side.
- Make each inhale deeper than the last one, on each exhale, empty your lungs.
- Engaged the legs through the whole breathing exercise.

Caution

- When you bring your head back during exhale, without bobbing your head back, use your chin to guide your head back to keep the back of your neck long, and lift the sternum up, relax the shoulders and down away from ears. That helps to give more space for the back of the neck. As a beginner, you'll find the shoulders are tight, consciously relax the shoulders as you exhale.

CHIN LOCK (JALANDHARA BANDHA)

Jal=Throat, Dharan=Stream, Bandha=Lock



- Inhale deeply and hold breathe.
- Bring hands on knees, press hands down.
- Lower the chin on down to the chest.
- Hold breathe as long as comfortable.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Out of bandha, gently lift the head up, long exhale.

Technique

- Keep the shoulder blades firm, lift the sternum.
- As you lower the chin, lift the sternum to meet the chin.
- Keep the back of your neck long.

Caution

- If the eyes, ears, and brain feel pressure from the retained breath, come out of the bandha.
- Do not force your chin to chest.
- Avoid this bandha if the neck is injured.

LION'S BREATH (SIMHASANA PRANAYAMA)

Simha=Lion, Asana=Posture, Prana=Life force, Yama= Extension



Fig 3

Entry Diamond (Vajrasana)

- Cross ankles under hips.
- Open knees, hands on the floor, fingers facing backward.
- Inhale deeply through the nose.
- Exhale strongly through the mouth, open mouth wide and stretch tongue out, curling its tip down toward to chin, open eyes wide, Gaze up to the eyebrow or down to the tip of the nose.
- Make a "ha" sound or roar.
- Hold and breath

Technique

- Curl the tip of the tongue down towards the chin.
- You can practice Lion's breathe in any position that works for you; I like to do that in Cobra Pose and Downward-Facing Dog Pose. (fig 3)

Caution

- Sit on a yoga block if there's pain in knees.

ROOT LOCK (MULA BANDHA)

Mula=Root, Bandha=Lock



- Relax breathe.
- Squeeze pelvis floor in and up.
- Keep breathing smooth and steady.
- When reached to complete contraction, release it slowly.

Technique

- Through practice, you'll be able to contract the perineum without affecting the breath; other sympathetic muscle tensions are relaxed, then you'll be able to incorporate this bandha in Pranayama and meditation.

Caution

- Sit in an Easy Pose if there's discomfort in knees or hips.

THE ABDOMINAL LOCK (UDDIYANA BANDHA)

Uddiyana=Upward, Bandha=Binding



- Stand with knees slightly bent.
- Lean forward slightly, brace hands against thighs, fingers facing knees.
- Exhale all air out, seal your lips, try to inhale but without actually doing so, helps to lock the airway at the glottis, simultaneously relax belly and lift the chest.
- Hold breathe; the upper abdomen will form deep concavity just underneath the rib cage.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Gently inhale without gasping.

Technique

- Do it with empty stomach and bowels; the best time is in the morning.
- Exhale completely before the lock.
- Relax the abdomen as you lifting it in and up.
- If you get more comfortable in Uddiyana Bandha, practice with Mula Bandha along.

Caution

- Avoid Uddiyana Bandha during any period of pregnancy.

(SURYA NAMASKARA A) ***SUN SALUTATION A***



(Samasthihi)
Equal Standing



EX
(Tadasana)
Mountain



IN
(Urdhva Hastasana)
Upward Salute



EX
(Uttanasana)
Forward Fold



IN
(Ardha Uttanasana)
Halfway Lift



EX
(Chaturanga Dandasana)
Four Limbed Staff



IN
(Bhujangasana)
Cobra



EX
(Adho Mukha Svanasana)
Downward Facing Dog



IN
(Ardha Uttanasana)
Halfway Lift



EX
(Uttanasana)
Forward Fold



IN
(Urdhva Hastasana)
Upward Salute



EX
(Tadasana)
Mountain

(SURYA NAMASKARA B) ***SUN SALUTATION B***



(Samasthihi)
Equal Standing



EX
(Tadasana)
Mountain



IN
(Utkatasana)
Chair Pose



EX
(Uttanasana)
Forward Fold



IN
(Ardha Uttanasana)
Halfway Lift



EX
(Chaturanga Dandasana)
Four Limbed Staff



IN
(Bhujangasana)
Cobra



EX
(Adho Mukha Svanasana)
Downward Facing Dog



IN
(Virabhadrasana 1)
Warrior 1



EX
(Chaturanga Dandasana)
Four Limbed Staff



IN
(Bhujangasana)
Cobra



EX
(Adho Mukha Svanasana)
Downward Facing Dog



IN
(Virabhadrasana 1)
Warrior 1



EX
(Chaturanga Dandasana)
Four Limbed Staff



IN
(Bhujangasana)
Cobra



EX
(Adho Mukha Svanasana)
Downward Facing Dog



IN
(Ardha Uttanasana)
Halfway Lift



EX
(Uttanasana)
Forward Fold



IN
(Utkatasana)
Chair Pose



EX
(Tadasana)
Mountain

(CLASSICAL SURYA NAMASKARA) CLASSICAL SUN SALUTATION



(Samasthihi)
Equal Standing



EX
(Tadasana)
Mountain



IN
(Urdhva Hastasana)
Upward Salute



EX
(Uttanasana)
Forward Fold



IN
(Ardha Uttanasana)
Halfway Lift



EX
(Anjaneyasana)
Step right leg back
into Low Lunge



IN
(Anjaneyasana)
Low Lunge with Arms Up



EX-IN
(Phalakasana)
Plank



EX
(Ashtangasana)
Knee Chest Chin



IN
(Bhujangasana)
Cobra



EX-IN
(Adho Mukha Svanasana)
Downward Facing Dog



EX
(Anjaneyasana)
Step right leg forward
into Low Lunge



IN-EX
(Anjaneyasana)
Low Lunge with Arms Up



IN
(Ardha Uttanasana)
Halfway Lift



EX
(Uttanasana)
Forward Fold



IN
(Urdhva Hastasana)
Upward Salute



EX
(Tadasana)
Mountain

BEGINNERS YOGA POSES

ARM BALANCE

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CHIN STAND POSE (GANDA BHERUNDASANA)

Ganda=Cheek/Face, Bherunda=Terrible, Asana=Posture



Entry *Knees-Chest-Chin Pose (Ashtanga namaskara or ashtangasana)*

- Hands shoulder-width apart, squeeze elbows in.
- Lift one leg up.
- Push ball of bottom foot on floor to straighten bottom leg.
- Actively push both hands down.
- Continuously reaching that top leg up to ceiling, until bottom leg come off floor, or a slight hop on bottom foot.
- Hold and breath.

Technique

- Lower feet down one at a time straighten both arms up in Cobra Pose.

Technique

- Squeeze two legs together and engage core.
- Keep reaching both feet towards ceiling.
- For a more challenging variation, push hands down and lift chin off floor.
- (fig 1.9)
- For a different variation, bend both knees into a Scorpion legs. (fig 1.10)

Caution

- Make sure there's little weight in chin, arms are main support.
- Stretch up from head to toes to avoid collapse on lower back.

CROW POSE (BAKASANA)

Baka=Crane, Asana=Posture

Fig 10.2



Fig 10.3



Fig 10.4



Fig 10.5



Entry Garland (Malasana)

- Place palms on floor, slightly closer than shoulder width, fingers forward.
- Press hands firmly into floor, fingers open wide, bend, bend elbow.
- Stay low, lean forward, come up onto toes.
- Firmly press legs into arms. Stay low and lean forward to come up onto toes. (fig 10.3)
- Place shins near armpits on back of upper arms.
- Balance body weight on hands, find finger tips.
- Heels off then toes off, entire feet off.
- Squeeze inner feet together.
- Hug elbows in so forearms are parallel to each other.
- Pull belly in, round back.
- Exhale, straighten arms. Soften neck.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Lower legs down.

Technique

- Squeeze heels to hips.
- Fingertips and edges of hands into floor evenly.
- Find balance through fingertips.
- Keep gaze forward.

Caution

- For wrist pain, place mat under heels of hands, and bring shoulders over wrists to lessen angle on arms.
- Put blanket or folded up mats in front of hands in case of falling.
- Bend elbows and bring inner thigh on upper arms (fig 10.4)
- If cannot straighten arms, bend elbows (fig 10.5)

DOLPHIN POSE (ARDHA PINCHA MAYURASANA)

Ardha=Half, Pincha=Chin/Feather, Mayura=Peacock, Asana=Posture



Entry Downward-Facing Dog Pose (Adho Mukha Svanasana)

- Bend legs and bring both knees on floor.
- Bend both elbows, place forearms on floor.
- Press forearms and wrists down and forward
- Neck relaxed and gaze between two feet.
- Tone lower belly in.
- Curl toes under and straighten both legs and lift hips up to ceiling.
- Push thigh bones back towards hamstrings and slowly send heels down to floor.
- Press inner feet down, stretch ankle up towards calves, turn inner thighs away from each other.
- Inhale deeply, exhale, push thigh bones straight back to send sit bones up toward ceiling.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Bend both knees on floor and rest in Embryo Pose for a few breathes.

Technique

- Without moving hands, press forearms down to lift shoulders up.
- Hug forearms towards each other and keep them parallel to each other.
- Keep hands active, energetically reach index and middle fingers from forearms.
- Stretch heels down to floor to stretch back of legs.
- Lift sit bones up and tailbone down.

Caution

- If upper back rounds, squeeze shoulder blades towards spine.
- If too intense on shoulders, clasp hands.

EIGHT ANGLE POSE (ASTAVAKRASANA)

Asta=Eight, Vakra=Bent, Asana=Posture

Fig 10.7



Entry *One Hand and Arm pose (Eka Hasta Bhujasana)*

- With right leg bent on right arm.
- Bend left leg and bring it to right side, cross left ankle on right ankle.
- Press ankles onto each other.
- Bend both arms to 90 degree, simultaneously stretch both legs out to right.
- Keep chest forward.
- Hold pose and breathe. Gaze forward.
- To come out, straighten arms and lower hips down, release legs..
- Switch side.

Technique

- Lift shoulders up and pull sternum forward.
- Actively hug elbows in and press hands down.
- Press bottom hip back.
- Engage buttock.
- Pull chest up and forward between arms.

Caution

- For easier variation, from One Hand and Arm pose, lower hips down on floor, cross left ankle on right ankle, straighten both legs, lean forward bend elbows to 90 degree. Squeeze legs as straighten them out to right side. (fig 10.7)

FIREFLY POSE (TITHIBASANA)

Tittibha=Firefly, Asana=Posture



Fig 10.8



Fig 10.9



Entry Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Open legs with mat-width.
- Fold torso forward, bend knees, palms on calves from behind, wrap thumb around, pull calves up with hands and bring shoulders behind knees.
- Bend knees more and bring hands on floor with shoulder-width apart, hands behind heels.
- Spread fingers and keep index fingers facing forward.
- Push hands away from floor and lift feet up, straighten both legs.
- Reaching strong lines of energy through both legs.
- Straighten both arms.
- Hold and breath. Gaze forward.

Technique

- Bend elbows and knees, lower legs and hips down.

Technique

- Push shoulder back, and behind knee as far as possible in set up.
- Engage quads. Roll inner thighs down.
- Squeeze both legs towards arms, keep pushing arms down away from floor.
- Engage core, tone lower belly.
- For easier variation, bring hips down and lift feet up, this requires less core strength. (fig 10.8)

Caution

- For beginners, bend elbows and sit thighs down on upper arms. Can straighten one leg at a time. (fig 10.9)
- Can also practice to sit against wall.

FOUR LIMBED STAFF (CHATURANGA DANDASANA)

Chatur=Four, Anga=Limb, Danda=Staff, Asana=Posture

Fig 11.2



Entry Plank

- Push hands against floor
- Pull lower belly in and tuck tailbone down.
- Exhale, bring chest down and scoop forward. Elbows bent with upper arms parallel to floor and forearms vertical.
- Lift shoulders away from ears, and away from floor.
- Shoulder blades draw back.
- Hold and breathe, Gaze forward.

Technique

- Index fingers pointing forward. Base of index fingers pressing down.
- Pull shoulders away from ears.
- Keep thighs up, legs stay engaged, squeeze ankles together.
- Heels over toe mounds.
- Straight line from heels to head.

Caution

- For beginners, bend knees down on floor before lowering upper body down. (fig 11.2)
- For elbow injury, keep shoulders up directly above elbows.

ONE HAND AND ARM POSE (EKA HASTA BHUJASANA)

Eka=One, Hasta=Hand, Bhujanga=Serpent, Asana=Posture



Entry Staff (Dandasana)

- Bend right knee up, right hand hold on right calf.
- Bring right shoulder behind back of right knee.
- Place both hands floor, left hand just outside of left leg, fingers facing forward.
- Press hands down to left hips and legs up floor.
- Left leg engaged and extend forward, parallel to floor.
- Hold and breathe, gaze forward.

Transition

- Lower legs and hips, release right foot from arm.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Press shoulder into top leg.
- Hug leg to midline and reach inner thigh of bottom leg forward.
- Engage low belly and lift pelvic floor.
- Pull chest up and forward between arms.

Caution

- For beginners, can only lift hips up and lower foot on floor to start with.
- When able to find strength and balance, lower hips down without touching floor, simultaneously left foot of bottom leg up until bottom leg parallel to floor.

ONE-LEGGED SAGE KOUNDINYA'S POSE 1 (EKA PADA KOUNDINYASANA 1)

Eka=One, Pada=Foot, Asana=Posture



Entry *Dwi Pada Koundinyasana (Two-legged Sage Koundinya)*

- Extend left leg back and lower upper body down, keeping chest and head of shoulders lift.
- Continuously take both legs away from each other.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze forward.

Technique

- Bend both knees, lower both feet down or jump back in Chaturanga.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Twist navel away from bottom leg.
- Collarbones broad.
- Change side without touching floor.

Caution

- Push left hand on floor to avoid collapsing.
- Avoid rounding shoulders down. Keep head of shoulders back and up.

ONE-LEGGED SAGE KOUNDINYA'S POSE 2 (EKA PADA KOUNDINYASANA 2)

Eka=One, Pada=Foot, Asana=Posture



Entry Lunge (Anjaneyasana)

- Right leg forward, both hands on floor inside of front foot, lift back inner thigh up.
- Go to deeper lunge.
- Lift right heel up, bring right hand on back of calf, pull calf up, right thigh back to get right shoulder behind right leg.
- Move both hands on either side of front leg, chest stays lifted.
- Lift front foot, extend front leg forward, body lean forward and keep elbows bend, back heel off on tippy toes.
- Back foot off, gaze forward, lift shoulders up.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Lower both feet down or jump back in Chaturanga.

Technique

- Lift inner thigh of back leg up, outer hip of front leg down.
- Engage buttock.

Caution

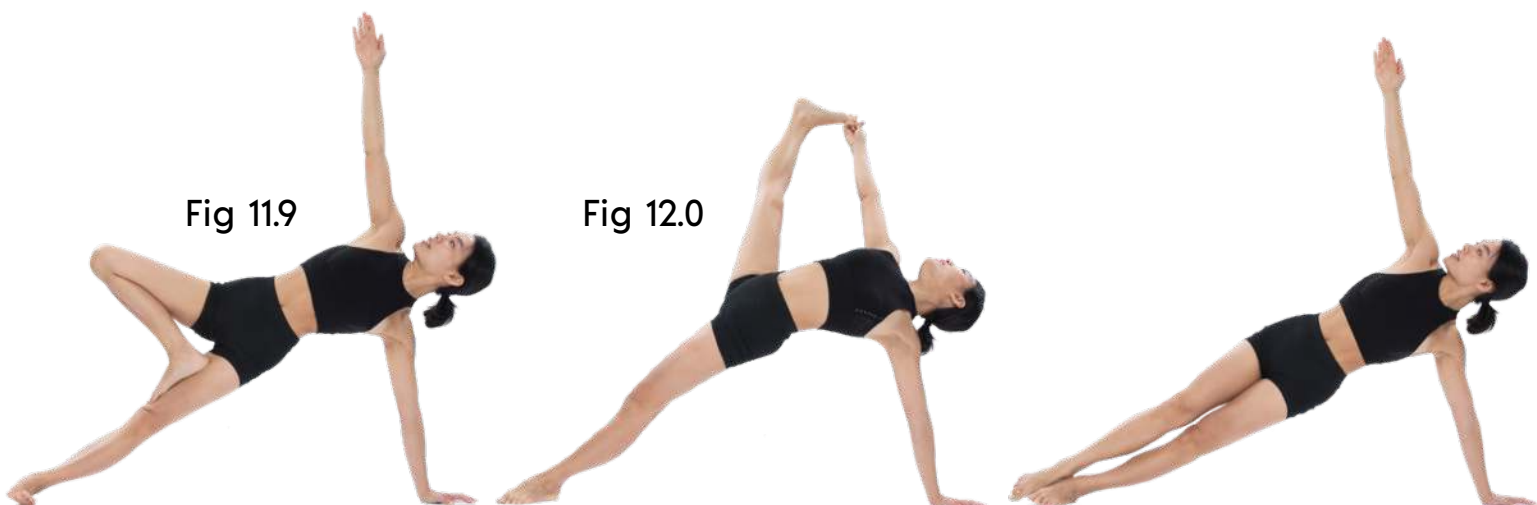
- Push left hand on the floor to avoid collapsing.
- Avoid rounding shoulders down.
- Keep head of shoulders back and up.

SIDE PLANK (VASISTHASANA)

Vasistha=Healthy, Asana=Posture

Fig 11.9

Fig 12.0



Entry Plank (Phalakasana)

- Move right hand forward with one step.
- Roll feet onto outer edge of right foot.
- Squeeze legs towards each other.
- Lift left arm straight up, palms facing forward.
- Hold and breath. Gaze up.

Technique

- Switch side.

Technique

- Wrap bottom shoulder, biceps pointing forward.
- Press bottom hand down and forward.
- Lift hips up and forward.
- Pull low belly in.
- Lengthen spine.
- For variation, bend tip knee, place bottom of foot onto inner thigh of bottom leg. (fig 11.9)
- For more variation, bring top leg up, upper hand grab toes, hands pressed on toes, toes resist on hand, open up chest, keep both hips up and forward. (fig 12.0)

Caution

- Avoid sinking and collapsing on bottom wrist, keep pressing bottom hand down and wrap shoulder.
- If too intense on neck, look down or forward.
- For easier balance, bring top foot in front of bottom foot.

TURBO DOG POSE



Entry *Downward-Facing Dog Pose (Adho Mukha Svanasana)*

- Bend both elbows down without touching floor.
- Hug elbows one another.
- Neck relaxed and gaze between two feet.
- Tone lower belly in.
- Push thigh bones back towards hamstrings and slowly send heels down to floor.
- Press inner feet down, stretch ankle up towards calves, turn inner thighs away from each other.
- Inhale deeply, exhale, push thigh bones straight back to send sit bones up towards ceiling.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Bend both knees on floor and rest in Embryo Pose for a few breathes.

Technique

- Keep arms active by stretching elbows down and hug forearms towards each other.
- Stretch heels down to floor to stretch back of legs.
- Lift sit bones up and tailbone down.

Caution

- If lower back round, bend knees slightly.

TWO-LEGGED SAGE KOUNDINYA POSE **(DWI PADA KOUNDINYASANA)**

Dwi=Two, Pada=Foot, Asana=Posture



Entry Chair (Utkatasana)

- Come into a squat, keep knees and feet together, lift heels and root down with big-toe mounds, hug legs together, hands in prayer.
- Inhale lift left arm up, exhale twist torso to right, left lower ribs across to right thigh.
- Inhale press chest towards thumb, exhale take left upper arm to outside of right thigh.
- Place both hands on floor, left palm on floor outside of right foot, both hands shoulder-width distance, gaze forward, chin in line with center of chest.
- Spread fingers, turn hands slightly out.
- Body shift forward, bring weight to hands until foot become light, draw heels to buttocks.
- Straighten right leg to side.
- Bend elbows 90 degrees, elbows stay hug into midline.
- Straighten left leg, hug inner feet together.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze forward.

Technique

- Bend both knees, lower both feet down or jump back in Chaturanga.
- Switch side.

Technique

- For set up, bring left shoulder as close to outer right thigh as possible.
- Once arm on thigh, maintain skin-to-skin contact.
- Lift chest for slight back bend, front body actively lengthen.

Caution

- Push left hand on floor to avoid collapsing.
- Avoid rounding shoulders down. Keep head of shoulders back and up.

UPWARD-FACING DOG POSE **(URDHVA MUKHA SVANASANA)**

Urdhva=Up, Mukha=Face, Svan=Dog, Asana=Posture



- Lie on belly, feet open with outer hip-width apart, top of feet on floor, toes pointing back.
- Palms flat against floor with outer shoulder-width apart, wrists under elbow, forearms vertical.
- Tuck tailbone down.
- Inhale deeply, lift chest up and bring shoulders back, draw sternum forward and lengthen away from pelvis, neck relaxed.
- Simultaneously, press top feet down and lift knees off floor.
- Arms straight.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze slightly up or forward.

Transition

- Lower upper torso down and push up into Downward Facing Dog.

Technique

- Keep thighs firm and slightly turned inward, arms firm and turned out so front of elbow facing forward.
- Press feet down and towards each other.
- Lifting thru sternum.
- Press hands down and back as a leverage to draw ribs forward.
- Hug inner ankle towards each other, press top feet down
- Locked legs so knees come off floor, kneecaps pointing straight down.
- Keep shoulders back, shoulder blades into upper back.
- Curl head back by lifting with chin without compressing on neck.
- Soften jaw.
- For deeper backbend, stay in Cobra Pose by walk hands back.

Caution

- If too intense on neck, look forward.
- If too intense on low back, bend elbows.

BACK BEND

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BOW POSE (DHANURASANA)

Dhanu=Bow, Asana=Posture



Fig 1.1

- Lie on belly
- Bend knees, grab outer ankle with hands
- Tuck tailbone.
- Keep feet active, kick feet into hands, lift knees up
- Shins back, lift ribs forward and up
- Allow shoulders to relax kick
- Chin up and look up.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Lower legs and upper body down, release hands.

Technique

- Lift inner thighs up, and kick feet with big toe side
- Keep knees outer hip-width apart or slightly wider
- Wrist straight by pressing palms on outer feet
- Rotate shoulders out towards armpits for deep variation (fig 1.1)

Caution

- If knees are tweaky, do Bridge pose instead to stabilize knees

BRIDGE POSE (SETU BANDHA SARVANGASANA)

Setu=Bridge, Bandha=Lock, Sarva=All, Anga=Limb, Asana=Posture



- Lie down on back
- Bend knees and feet on floor, feet slightly wider than hip-width and parallel.
- Feet under knees, reach hands down so fingertips touch heels.
- Slide shoulder blades down.
- Curl pubic bone toward navel, lift hips off floor.
- Neck soften and keep arms passive.
- Move shoulders away from neck.
- Deep breath into chest, widen diaphragm and ribs, lift chest towards chin, chin away from chest, lengthening whole spine, especially lower spine.
- Keep pubic bone curling toward navel, move thighs and knees away from pelvis
- Lift thighs up more.
- Keep neck still.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Slowly, inhale into upper back, exhale lower upper back down. Inhale into middle back, lower middle back down. Inhale into lower back, lower lower back and hips down, straighten both legs.

Technique

- Press inner feet down and outer hips up, activate outer toes.
- Squeeze inner thighs in and down, tailbone towards back of knees.
- For passive quality, put a block across hips under sacrum, keep feet and shoulders active
- For more active quality, place a rolled blanket or block right up against pelvic bones and away from knee, squeeze blanket or yoga block with inner legs, keeping feet active

Caution

- Avoid turning head from side to side

- If shoulders are tight, open hands wider or grab outer edge of mat
- Keep feet parallel, feet tend to turn out and knees open wider than hips and feet.

CAMEL POSE (USTRASANA)

Ustra=Camel, Asana=Posture



Entry Diamond (Vajrasana)

- Stand up on knees, outer knees hip-width apart.
- Shins parallel, toes point straight back.
- Press tops of feet flat down.
- Palm on hips, fingers down.
- Push thighs and pubic bone forward, tuck down buttocks.
- Inhale, stretch rib cage up, lift chest up, keep lengthening lower back.
- Exhale, roll head and shoulders back, curl torso and bring one hand down at a time to grab heels.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Put both hands on lower back, inhale, push to lift upper body upright, lower hips on heels.

Technique

- Move inner thighs back to keep engaging buttocks, hug heels in.
- Create as much arch in upper back, keep lifting out of lower back
- Slowly bring head back as long as chest stays lifted
- For deeper version, press palms on soles of feet

Caution

- If hands are unable to grip heels, curl toes under or keep hands on hips
- If bringing head back is too intense, bring chin to chest and look straight up
- When coming up, keep lower back lengthen and put one hand at a time on sacrum

COBRA POSE (BHUJANGASANA)

Bhujanga=Cobra, Asana=Posture



- Lie on belly, feet open and outer hip-width apart, top of feet on floor, toes pointing back.
- Palms flat against floor outer shoulder-width apart, wrists under elbow, forearms vertical.
- Tuck tailbone down.
- Inhale, lift chest up and bring shoulders back, draw sternum forward and lengthen away from pelvis, neck relaxed.
- Arms straight.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze up.

Transition

- Exhale, lower upper body down.

Technique

- Press hands down and back as leverage to draw ribs forward.
- Hug inner ankles towards each other, press top of feet down.
- Locked legs so knees come off of floor, kneecaps pointing straight down.
- Keep shoulders back, shoulder blades into upper back.
- Curl head back by lifting chin without compressing on neck.
- Soften jaw.

Caution

- If it's too intense for lower back, engage legs and bend elbows to 90 degree angle. (fig 1.4)
- For menstruation, place a bolster underneath front of ribcage to reduce upper back strain.

COW POSE (BITILASANA)

Bitila=Cow, Asana=Posture



Entry Table Top (Bharmanasana)

- Spread fingers wide.
- Inhale, lift sit bones up, drop belly down.
- Without moving hands, pull chest forward. Front of elbows facing forward.
- Lift chin up and look up.
- Hold and breathe

Transition

- Back to natural spine position.

Technique

- Spread collarbones and drawing shoulders down away from ears.
- This pose is often paired with Cat Pose.

Caution

- If too intense for neck, keep gaze forward.
- If knees are sensitive, put extra padding under knees by folding mat.

FISH POSE (MATSYASANA)

Matsya=Fish, Asana=Posture



Fig 1.7



Fig 1.8



Entry Lotus (Padmasana)

- Lie down on back, fold lotus legs towards upper body, knees up to ceiling.
- Hands holding on feet on both sides.
- Inhale fully, exhale, lift chest and arch back, crown of head on floor. At same time, press both knees down to floor.
- Pull on foot with hands to arch back.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Chin to chest, hands out to side, upper body down.

Technique

- Keep knees down and chest up. (fig 1.7)
- Pull elbows to floor.
- Use hands as a leverage to draw head closer to buttocks.

Caution

- If there's pain or too intense on knee, come out of pose.
- If cannot do Lotus, keep both legs straight, with hands underneath buttocks, palms facing down. (fig 1.8)

KNEES-CHEST-CHIN POSE **(ASHTANGA NAMASKARA OR ASHTANGASANA)**

Ashta=Eight, Anga=Part/Limb, Namaskara=Bowing/Greeting



Entry Plank Pose (Phalakasana)

- Inhale, press hands down.
- Exhale, bring knees, chest, and chin to floor.
- Lift hips up.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze forward.

Transition

- Push hands down to lift upper body up to Table Top Pose.

Technique

- Spread fingers and lift the head of the shoulders up.
- Squeeze shoulder blades together on the back.
- Another way Transition in a Vinyasa Flow class - keep hands where they are, pull chest forward into Cobra Pose.

Caution

- An easier entry is to start with lying on the floor, bring hands underneath shoulders, slowly walk the knees forward towards the chest and lift the hips up.
- Do not put weight on chin, without compressing on neck, keep the neck long, continuously push the hands down and lift head of shoulders up.

LOCUST POSE (SALABHASANA)

Salabha=Grasshopper/Locust, Asana=Posture



Fig 2.9



Fig 2.10

- Lie down on belly, arms out by the side, palms facing down, arms and legs straight.
- Keep legs together, toes pointed.
- Inhale, lift head, upper body, both legs, and both arms up. (fig 2.9)
- Legs together.
- Look up and chest up.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Lower upper body, arms and legs down.

Technique

- Arms and legs straight.
- Thighs pointing straight down. Point toes and squeeze inner legs together.
- Engage the buttocks and tailbone down.
- Can also clasp hands behind back (fig. 2.10), exhale, lift legs higher and stretch knuckles back and reach chest forward.

Caution

- For lower back injury, can try one leg up at a time, or both legs on the floor, focus on engaging the buttock and tucking tailbone.

LUNGE WITH EAGLE ARMS POSE **(ANJANEYASANA WITH GARUDASANA ARMS)**

Anjaneyasana= came from Anjani Mother of Hindu God, Garuda=Eagle, Asana=Posture



Fig 3.0

Entry Lunge (Anjaneyasana)

- With right leg bent forward.
- Inhale deeply, arms up over head.
- Exhale, swing left arm under right arm.
- Reach fingertips up and look up. (fig 3.0)
- Curl head and hands back into backward bend.
- Hold pose and breathe. Gaze back.

Transition

- Inhale, lift torso upright and release arms. Place hands on floor and step back into Downward Facing Dog

Technique

- Keep pressing the top of the back foot down to keep back leg engaged, draw the back knee and front heel toward each other.
- Squeeze arms together.

Caution

- If looking up and back is too intense, keep the gaze forward.
- If too intense on the lower back or quads of the back leg, lift the hips up.
- For front knee injury, keep shin perpendicular to floor.
- If too intense on the wrist, release the hands and press back of hands and forearms together.

MELTED HEART POSE (ANAHATASANA)

Anahata=Heart, Asana=Posture



Entry Table Top Pose (Bharmanasana)

- Walk hands forward.
- Press top of feet down.
- Keeping hips above the knees, inhale deeply, exhale, drop the chest down, chin on floor, gaze forward.
- Inhale, side ribs extend forward, exhale, armpits melt towards floor.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Lower hips to heels into Child pose.

Technique

- To intensify the stretch, place two blocks under upper arms, bend elbows and palms on the upper back.

Caution

- For neck sensitivity, relax forehead on the floor.
- If dropping chest down is too intense, place a folded blanket under the chest.
- For lower back sensitivity, walk the knees back to ease out the lower back.

ONE-LEGGED WHEEL 1 **(EKA PADA URDVHA DHANURASANA 1)**

Eka=One, Pada=Foot, Urdhva=Upward, Dhanur=Bow, Asana=Posture



Entry Wheel or Upward-Facing Bow Pose (*Urdhva Dhanurasana*)

- Keep chests open and spread upper back.
- Inhale, exhale, bend right knee up towards the ceiling. (fig 3.1)
- Inhale, slowly extend right leg up until it's vertical.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Bend top leg, lower it down to floor, release hands from ankle, slightly walk feet away from hands, bring chin to chest and bend elbows to lower upper body down.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Press the inner edge of foot and rotate the inner thigh of bottom leg down.
- Widen the upper back.
- Move base of the sternum towards chest.
- Keep engaging the buttocks.

Caution

- If cannot stay in Wheel, start with Bridge pose with one leg up.

PIGEON POSE 1 (RAJAKAPOTASANA 1)

Raja=King, Kapota=Pigeon, Asana=Posture

Fig 3.2



Fig 3.3



Fig 3.4



Entry *Downward Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana)*

- Bring right knee behind right wrist and lower hips down to floor. Bend right knee to bring right foot in front of the left hip.
- Keep both hands in front. Press both hands down and forward like Downward Facing Dog, press right shin down. (fig 3.2)
- Top of left thigh faces down onto floor.
- Tuck back toes and lift left knee up to bring left hip forward to square hips.
- Inhale fully, lift lower belly, stretch spine and chest up, bring palms behind head, fingers facing down, open elbows.
- Exhale, press tailbone down, curl torso and head back, grab the back foot with hands.
- Look back and keep chest up.
- Stretch elbows up, bring them together.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Step front foot back into Downward-Facing Dog pose.
- Switch side.

Technique

- For deeper backward bending, grab the ankle. Bring head to foot, and pull foot towards head, cover the face with bottom foot.
- Keep the hips square.

- For deeper hips stretch, bring front shin parallel to the front edge of the mat. Elbows on the floor (fig 3.3)
- Squeeze knees towards each other.
- For deeper version, bring the back foot towards the floor and straighten both arms. (fig 3.4)

Caution

- If hips are tight, put a block or a rolled blanket under right hip.
- If back and shoulders are tight, can rest on forearms or chest on the front leg.

SPHINX POSE (SALAMBA BHUJANGASANA)

Salamba=Supported, Bhujanga=Cobra, Asana=Posture



- Lie on belly, feet open and outer hip-width apart, top of feet on floor, toes pointing back.
- Bend both elbows, place forearms on the floor, shoulder-width apart, elbows underneath shoulders, upper arms vertical.
- Forearms parallel to each other.
- Tuck tailbone down.
- Press forearms, wrists down and back
- Inhale, lift chest up and bring shoulders back, draw sternum forward, lengthen away from pelvis, neck relaxed.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze up.

Transition

- Exhale, lower the upper body down.

Technique

- Press forearms down and back as leverage to draw ribs forward.
- Hug inner ankles towards each other, press top of feet down.
- Locked legs so knees come off of the floor, kneecaps pointing straight down.
- Keep shoulders back, shoulder blades into the upper back.
- Curl head back by lifting the chin, without compressing the neck.
- Soften jaw.

Caution

- If too intense on lower back, bring the chest down.
- For menstruation, place a bolster underneath the front of the ribcage to reduce the upper back strain.

SPLIT POSE (HANUMANASANA)

Hanuman=Hindu monkey god, Asana=Posture



Fig 3.6



Fig 3.7



Fig 3.8



Entry *Half Split Pose (Adhra Hanumanasana)*

- With right foot forward.
- Push right heel forward, and hips slowly lower to floor.
- Keep kneecap of right leg pointing upward.
- Top of left thigh on floor to square hips.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Keep hands on floor, exhale, lean to right side and allow right leg to turn out right, bend left leg, pull knee forward to front leg. Extend left leg to front.

Technique

- Reach the inner thigh of the front leg to heel.
- Tuck the toes of the back leg, lift the back knee up to square the hip of the back leg forward. (fig 3.6)
- Once found the stability and ease in split, inhale, bring arms up over head, palm together, curl head back into a backward bend. (fig 3.7). For deeper

version, grab the ankle of the back leg, thumbs facing down and wrap towards each other. (fig 3.8)

Caution

- Tuck the back toes to realign the hip if the back leg started to turn out.
- If it's too intense on the hamstrings, put a block underneath the sit bone of the front leg or stay in Half Split Pose.

STANDING BACKWARD BEND POSE **(ANUVITTASANA)**



Entry Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Inhale fully, bring arms over head.
- Clasp hands and release index fingers.
- Exhale, curl head and upper spine backward.
- Inhale, push hips forward.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Inhale, use arms and upper back to lift the torso upright, pause for moment and find eye gaze steady.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Keep engaging the buttocks and legs by pulling the kneecaps up.
- Press the inner edge of foot and rotate the inner thigh of bottom leg down.

- Wrap the armpits towards each other to create more space to bring the head back.
- Press palms together.
- Press elbows towards each other.
- Widen the upper back.
- Move base of the sternum towards chest.

Caution

- For beginner, tendency is to collapse in the lower back, continuously lift the sternum towards chest from the set up throughout the pose.
- Without bobbing the head back nor collapsing in the back of the neck, use chin to guide and bring the head back, keeping the back of the neck long.

WHEEL OR UPWARD-FACING BOW POSE **(URDHVA DHANURASANA)**

Urdhva=Upward, Dhanur=Bow, Asana=Posture



Fig 3.9



Fig 3.10



Fig 4.0



Fig 4.1

Entry *Supta Tadasana (Reclined Mountain Pose)*

- Bend knees with feet on floor with hip-width.
- Bring hands on floor next to head, fingers pointing to hips, thumbs next to ears. Forearm vertical.
- Hands slightly wider than shoulders.
- Inhale fully, without moving hands and feet, press hands and feet on floor, exhale, tuck tailbone and push buttocks up and forward. (fig 3.10)
- Shoulders up and top of head on floor. (fig 4.0)
- Press hands down and forward, move shoulders down and back, to open up the chest and shoulders, simultaneously lift head off floor. (fig 4.1)
- Inhale deeply, exhale to straighten arms.
- Walk feet towards hands until forearm are vertical. Push chest towards armpits.
- Look down on floor.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Bend elbows, push chest to armpits, bend knees to lower body down.
- Slightly walk the feet away from hands, bring chin to chest and bend the elbows to lower upper body down.

Technique

- Slightly turn the upper thighs in and inner edge of the feet down and lift the outer hips firmly.
- Lengthen tailbone to the back of knees and pelvis towards the navel.
- Turn the upper arms outward and keep inner hands down firmly.
- Widen the upper back.
- Move base of the sternum towards chest.
- Keep engaging the buttocks.

Caution

- If arms are not able to straighten, can stay on the top of head, or only lift buttocks up with head shoulders down. (fig 3.10 and 4.0)
- If too intense on lower back, put a yoga block on the sit bone or stay in Bridge Pose.

WHEEL POSE (CHAKRASANA)

Chakra=Wheel, Asana=Posture



Entry Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Open feet about hip-width and bend backward.
- Bend knees and reach fingertips towards floor, without touching floor.
- Open hands, externally rotate shoulders open, palms facing out, bend elbows and reach behind, hold on to ankle, one hand at a time.
- Hold firmly on ankles.
- Slightly turn upper thighs in and inner edge of the feet down and lift outer hips firmly to straighten legs and arms.
- Hold and breath.

Technique

- Slowly let go of hands, inhale, press feet down firmly and lift upper body up.

Technique

- Firmly press inner edge of feet down and inner thighs back.
- Pull on the ankles to engage the legs.
- Slightly turn the upper thighs in and inner edge of the feet down and lift the outer hips firmly.

Caution

- This pose require lots of legs stability to drop back. Can enter from Wheel pose by walking hands towards ankles.

WILD THING POSE (CAMATKARASANA)

Camatkara=Miracle/Surprise, Asana=Posture



Entry *One-legged Dog. (Eka Pada Adho Mukha Svanasana)*

- Bend top right leg, knee pointing up, turn torso to right. Bring right leg on floor to left and bring right arm up.
- Inhale fully, straighten left leg and lift hips and front body up.
- Curl head back and look back.
- Bring right arm towards floor.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Lower top hand to floor, lift right leg up and over to right side, Downward Facing Dog Pose.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Hug shoulder blades in.
- Can enter the pose from Side Plank.
- Engage the buttocks and lift tailbone up.

Caution

- Keep pressing the bottom hand to the floor to avoid sinking on wrist.
- Wrap the bottom shoulder like doing Side Plank.
- Make sure hips and upper torso are lifted to avoid sinking on the bottom shoulder.
- Can look down if neck is sensitive.
- Bring top arm forward if shoulder is sensitive.

CORE

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ABDOMINALS WITH BLOCK/BLANKET



- Get a block or a tightly rolled up blanket about 5" - 8" in diameter.
- Put the block/blanket up against pelvic bone and away from knees. Hug block/blanket with inner thighs.
- Lie on back, clasp hands behind head, hands at bottom of the head.
- Legs up vertical, keep feet active.
- Inhale, hold breathe curl tailbone up, curl pubic bone towards navel.
- Keep legs up towards the ceiling, away from the face.
- Keep holding the breath, squeeze block with inner thighs, lift up through inner feet.
- Exhale, lift shoulders and chest up, keep chin up, neck soft.
- At the end of the exhale, pull lower belly and ribs down.
- Inhale, bring head and pelvis down, keep legs up.
- Repeat for 3 times.
- Hold and breathe.

Technique

- When students get stronger, do this up to 5 times.
- Before relaxing head and shoulders down for the next set, have them squeeze the inner legs to the blocks, curl pelvis, and pull lower belly down one more time.
- For the next step up, put blocks between ankles.

Caution

- For knees, inner leg, groin injuries, skip the block/blanket.
- If back is tweaky, put an extra mat under the spine for padding, and bend knees, or feet flat on the floor.
- For tight hamstrings, keep knees bend to keep back ribs do

ABS WITH EAGLE LEGS



- Lie on back, bend knee and feet off the floor. Knees above hips.
- Cross right thigh over left thigh and right foot under right ankle into Eagle legs position.
- Clasp hands behind the head.
- Inhale, curl upper torso up.
- Exhale, curl tailbone up, and curl pubic bone toward navel, thighs to knees, knees straight up to the ceiling.
- On the end of the exhale, pull low belly in.
- Inhale, hips down, keep upper torso up.

Repeat on the other side. 3 – 5 times.

Technique

- Soften neck, lift upper torso up.
- On the exhale, traction thigh bones skyward even if it does not seem like they move.

Caution

- It's okay if the right foot is not yet able to wrap behind ankle, remind students to keep their inner thigh snug towards each other.
- Keep clasped hands supporting the skull of head to have the neck less involved.

ABS WITH EAGLE LEGS 2



- Lie on back, bend knee and feet off floor. Knees above hips.
- Cross right thigh over left thigh and right foot under right ankle into Eagle legs position.
- Stack both hands on thighs between knees and hips. Upper body stays down.
- Inhale, hold breathe, press hands on thighs, thighs press back on hands to create resistance.
- Exhale, curl tailbone up, curl pubic bone towards navel.
- On the end of the exhale, pull lower belly in.
- Soften shoulders and chest.
- Hold and breathe.

Repeat on the Other side. 3 – 5 times.

Technique

- Traction thigh bones skyward toward knees.
- Keep hands and thighs pressing against each other.
- Shin parallel to the floor.
- To assist students, put hands under their ankles and ask them to push down on hand.

Caution

- For lower back injuries, have them bring both feet on the floor with bent knees.

BOAT POSE (NAVASANA)

Nava=Boat, Asana=Posture



Fig 12.8

- Sit back behind sit bones.
- Curl the top rim of sacrum down toward floor.
- Keep the pelvic tilt through the whole pose.
- Bring feet up and straighten legs, keep curl in lower spine, bring hands up parallel to the floor by the knees.
- At the end of the exhale, pull belly in.
- Hold and breathe.

Technique

- For different variation, lower a few inches into Half Boat Pose. (fig 12.8)

Caution

- For lower back or knee injuries, bend the knees or keep the feet on the floor

CAT POSE (MARJARYASANA)

Marjari=Cat, Asana=Posture



Entry Table Top (Bharmanasana)

- Spread fingers wide.
- Exhale, tuck tailbone, draw navel toward spine, round the spine up.
- Without moving hands, push hands down and forward, front of elbows facing each other.
- Gently, bring chin up to the chest.
- Inhale back to the neutral spine position.
- Hold and breathe.

Technique

- Focus on one segment at a time, then smooth out the movement in a roll.
- This pose is often paired with Cow Pose.

Caution

- If too intense for neck, keep gaze forward.
- If knees are sensitive, put extra padding under knees by folding mat.

ELBOW TO KNEE



- Lie on back, clasp hands behind head, hands right at bottom of the head.
- Bend knees, feet off the floor, knees over thighs, feet active.
- Inhale, curl upper torso up.
- Hold breathe, curl tailbone up, engage lower belly.
- Exhale, left elbow toward right knee, straighten left leg, lift both shoulder blades off the floor. Feet active, curl pubic bone towards navel again.
- At the end of the exhale, pull lower belly and ribs down.
- Inhale, come back to center. Bend both knees, keep upper torso up.
- Hold breathe, curl tailbone up, engaging lower belly.
- Exhale, right elbow toward left knee, straighten right leg, lift both shoulder blades off the floor. Feet active, curl pubic bone towards navel.
- Repeat 5 times on each side.
- Hold and breathe.

Technique

- Bring the shoulder of the side of bend knee up, both shoulders up.
- Move the bent knee away from face, knee over hips.
- At the end of each exhale, tuck tailbone again, and contract sit bone of the extended leg to tailbone.
- Lower back and ribs down towards the floor to keep back from arching up.

Caution

- For tight hamstrings and lower back, keep the extended leg bend, foot on the floor.
- Little involved with neck, keep neck long and soft.

FROG LIFTING THROUGH



- Lie on back, feet off floor, bend knees and open as much as possible, knees coming out from hips, legs at a 90 degree angle.
- Flex feet, traction thigh bones away from pelvis to create more space in hip joints.
- Clasp hands behind head, hands right at the bottom of the head.
- Inhale, curl upper torso up. Reach chest and elbows towards ceiling.
- Exhale, curl pubic bone towards navel.
- At end of the exhale, pull lower belly and ribs down.
- Keep reaching out with thigh bones. Thighs coming out directly from hips.
- Relax pelvis, inhale, curl upper torso up, keep reaching chest and elbows up.

Technique

- Keep knees coming out from hips.
- Allow the upper torso to come down a bit when trying to curl pubic bone towards navel.
- On the next inhale, lift upper torso higher.

Caution

- Feet against the wall for extra support.
- Little involved with neck, keep neck long and soft.

OPPOSITE ARM AND LEG IN TABLE TOP



Entry *Table Top (Bharmanasana)*

- Place hands slightly wider than shoulders, spread fingers.
- Bring top of back foot on the floor, press top of foot down, stretch toes back.
- Inhale, lift left leg up parallel to the floor.
- Press left hand down and lift right arm forward, palm facing inward.
- Stretch lifted arms and legs away from each other.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Switch side.

Technique

- Index fingers pointing forward and keep fingers spreading wide apart, keep inner hands heavy and outer hands light.
- Keep bottom foot and shin pressing down to keep leg engaged.
- Keep engaging the buttock of the lifted leg.
- Inner thigh of the top leg down.
- Stretch the entire spine.
- Tailbone down and lower belly up and in.

Caution

- Keep the core engaged otherwise the belly will drop.
- If knees are sensitive, put extra padding underneath.

PLANK POSE (PHALAKASANA)

Phalaka=Plank/Board/Bench, Asana=Posture



Entry Downward Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana)

- Inhale, shift body forward until shoulder above wrists.
- Lift lower belly and tuck tailbone down.
- Lift thighs up and legs straight.
- Press both hands down and spread fingers, arms straight.
- Hold and breathe, Gaze forward.

Technique

- Index fingers point forward. Base of the index fingers pressing down.
- Pull shoulders away from ears.
- Keep thighs up, legs stay engaged, squeeze ankles together.
- Heels over toe mounds.
- Straight line from heels to head.

Caution

- For beginners, bring knees down on the floor, and keep hips to head one straight line.

PLANK VARIATION KNEE TO NOSE

Fig 12.9



Entry Plank Pose (*Phalakasana*)

- Inhale, press hands on floor.
- Exhale, bend right knee and bring it forward.
- Pull belly in and up, round upper back up.
- Hug knee to nose.
- Hold and breath.

Switch side.

Technique

- Shift shoulders and weight forward on hands. Shoulders can be slightly over wrists. Keep pressing hands down.
- Lift belly up the thigh, and thigh straight up to chest.
- Hug heel closer to sit bone. (fig 12.9)
- Pull the outer hip of the bend knee back, and keep the bent knee up.
- This is often come in from a Three-Legged Dog Pose in a Flow class.

Caution

- If too intense on the wrists and shoulders. Shift body weight back.

FORWARD BEND

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BUTTERFLY POSE (BADDHA KONASANA)

Baddha=Bound, Kona=Angle, Asana=Posture



Entry Staff (Dandasana)

- Bend knees and bring the soles of feet together.
- Bring heels towards pelvic floor.
- Knees down to floor.
- Pull low belly in and sit up straight.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Bring hands outside of the knee, bring the knees together with the hands.

Technique

- Press the feet towards each other and up in order to bring the knees down. (fig 9.5)

Caution

- If the back is rounding and knees are higher than elbows, sit on a block.

CHILD POSE (BALASANA)

Bala = Child, Asana = Posture



Fig 5.6

Entry Diamond (Vajrasana)

- Open knees wider than the torso, top of the feet on floor and big toes touch.
- Inhale deeply, exhale, fold the torso forward between the legs.
- Bring the arms forward and forehead relaxed on floor.
- Relax the arms.
- Close eyes.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Slowly lift torso up.

Technique

- Allow the spine to round naturally.
- For a more active version, stretch the arms forward, lift elbows and wrists off the floor. Press the palms together, turn the biceps up by wrapping the armpits towards each other. (fig 5.6)

Caution

- If the buttocks are not touching the heels, place a folded or rolled blanket between the calves and thighs.
- If it's too intense for the neck, put a block under forehead.

DOWNWARD FACING DOG POSE **(ADHO MUKHA SVANASANA)**

Adhas = Down, Mukha = Face, Svana = Dog, Asana = Posture



Fig 5.7

Entry Child Pose (Balasana)

- Curl toes under. Lift knees and push thighs back to straighten legs.
- Press hands down and forward to create more length on armpits.
- Keep the neck relaxed and gaze between two feet.
- Tone lower belly in.
- Lift hips up to the ceiling.
- Push thigh bones back towards the hamstrings and slowly send heels down to the floor.
- Press inner feet down, stretch ankles up towards calves, turn inner thighs away from each other.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Exhale, push hips back to Childs Pose.

Technique

- Squeeze biceps towards each other, wrap armpits towards chest. (fig 5.7)
- Stretch heels down to the floor to stretch the back of the legs.
- Push thigh bones straight back to send sit bones up toward the ceiling.
- Lift pelvis away from ribs.
- Lift the sit bones up and tailbone down.

Caution

- If the lower back rounds, this means hamstrings are tight, bend the knees and lift sit bones up, stretch the spine.
- For beginners, continuously press the index knuckle down to avoid sinking body weight on the outer hands.

EXTENDED HAND TO BIG TOE 1 **(UTTHITA HASTA PADANGUSTHASANA 1)**

Utthita=Extended, Hasta=Hand, Pada=Foot, Angustha=Bit toe, Asana=Posture



Entry Mountain (*Tadasana*)

- Bring body weight to left foot and press left foot down engage the quads.
- Place left hand on left hip.
- Lift right foot up and grab the big toe with index and middle fingers of the right hand.

Transition

- Lower belly in and up, chest lift and stretch the spine.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Continuously engaging the standing leg, keep it straight, knee cap pulling up and contracting the quads.
- Lift inner upper thighs up.
- Push big toes on fingers.
- Keep reaching the inner foot forward of the lifted leg, outer hip down.
- Draw right shoulder down and lift chest.

Caution

- If too intense on the hamstrings, use strap around the lifted foot, hold the strap closer to foot and keep arm straight.

EXTENDED TORTOISE POSE (UTTHITA KURMASANA)

Utthita=Extended, Kurma=Tortoise, Asana=Posture

Fig 3.1



Entry Staff (Dandasana)

- Open legs, wider than shoulder-width.
- Bend knees up. Flex feet.
- Inhale deeply, exhale, fold upper body forward and down.
- Bring hands under knees, one at a time, to move shoulders underneath knees.
- Bring arms out straight sideways. Palms on floor.
- Stretch both heels forward and press top thighs to floor.
- Chin forward on floor.
- Lift feet then hips off the floor.
- Hold and breath

Transition

- Bend knees, take arms out from legs, lift torso up, feet together.

Technique

- Engage the quads and triceps as legs pressing down on arms.
- Arms and legs straight.
- Pull low belly in and lift hips up.

Caution

- If too intense on the hamstrings, keep the knees bent.
- If too intense on the shoulders, widen the legs.
- If too intense on the triceps, bend the knees and rest heels and hips on the floor (fig 3.1)

FOOT TO HAND POSE (PADAHASTASANA)

Pada = Foot, Hasta = Hand, Asana = Posture



Entry Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Open the feet hip-width apart.
- Full inhale, exhale, fold torso over the legs.
- Slide hands under the feet from the front, palms on the bottom of the feet, top of toes touching wrists.
- Press toes on the hands.
- Bend elbow out to the sides.
- Exhale, pull torso forward and bring the face between the shins.
- Body weight on front foot so the hips are just above the heels.
- At the end of the exhale, pull navel up towards the spine, curl head up to bring the forehead to the knee.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Inhale, exhale release hands, press feet down and stand up in Mountain Pose.

Technique

- Keep stretching the elbows out to the sides and lift shoulders away from ears.
- Engage the legs, push thighs back and lift the kneecaps up.
- Keep the body weight on the front foot and press the front feet down more, hips above the heels.
- Without moving the legs, hug them towards each other.
- Tuck the tailbone and pull low belly in, lift sit bones up higher.

Caution

- If toes are not touching the wrists, bend the knees as much as needed.

FORWARD STRETCHING POSE (PASCHIMOTTANASANA)

Paschima = Back/West, Uttana = Intense Stretch/Straight, Asana = Posture

Fig 5.9



Fig 5.10



Entry Staff (Dandasana)

- Bend knees, hands under buttocks, pull sit bone side to widen the seat.
- Grab toes with index and middle fingers. Walk hips back, one side at a time to straighten legs.
- Inhale deeply, exhale, fold torso over legs.
- Pull toes and stretch spine forward, low belly down on thighs, chest on knees, and top of head reaching towards toes.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Release hands from toes, inhale, lift torso up.

Technique

- Press the thighs down.
- If using the index and middle finger grips (fig 5.9), bring elbows out to the sides.
- Can hold on to wrists with the opposite hand at the bottom foot. (fig 5.10)
- Use arms to pull as leverage to stretch the spine.

Caution

- If too intense on the hamstrings, can open the legs or bend knees.

GARLAND POSE (MALASANA)

Mala = Garland, Asana = Posture



Fig 6.1



Fig 6.2



Entry Staff (Dandasana)

- Bend both knees up, feet on floor. (fig 6.1)
- Hands push against floor to bring hips up at same level of knees.
- Lean forward, bring hands in front, stretch arms forward. (fig. 6.2)
- Inhale, send hips back and chest forward to stretch the spine.
- Exhale, lower hips down into squat.
- Press elbows against inner thighs, knees resist back into elbows.
- Bring hands in Prayer, thumbs into chest.
- Hold and breathe

Transition

- Hand on floor, slowly lift torso up.

Technique

- Press heels down and inner feet down, bring inner thighs closer towards torso
- Press inner thighs inward to engage the outer legs.
- Chest up and lower belly in to stretch the spine up.
- Widen collarbones.
- Focus on the ground and downward-flowing energy.

Caution

- If heels come off the floor, support them with a folded mat, pressing heels down to lengthen inner thighs.

HALF SPLIT POSE (ARDHA HANUMANASANA)

Ardha = Half, Hanuman = Name of Hindu monkey, Svana = Dog, Asana = Posture

Fig 6.3



Entry Table Top Pose (Bharmanasana)

- Bring right foot forward, flex the foot, right toes pointing up, heel on floor, straighten the right leg.
- Left leg 90 degree, shin and top foot on the floor, thigh vertical.
- Place both hands or fingertips next to the right foot.
- Stretch torso forward.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Exhale, bend the right leg, and step back to join left leg.
- Switch sides.

Technique

- Stretch the inner edge of the front foot forward, pull outer hip of the front leg back.
- Pull thigh bone back to hip socket.
- Press top of the back foot to the floor.
- Walk the hands forward to extend torso forward, allow the lower belly to come down on thigh, then lower ribs, upper ribs, chest forward to toes. (fig 6.3)

Caution

- If the bent knee is too sensitive with the pressure on the floor, fold the mat underneath.
- Keep the kneecap of the front leg pointing up.
- If too intense on the hamstring, keep hands on fingertips or place both hands on blocks.

HALFWAY LIFT POSE (ARDHA UTTANASANA)

Ardha = Half, Uttana = Intense stretch, Assana = Posture

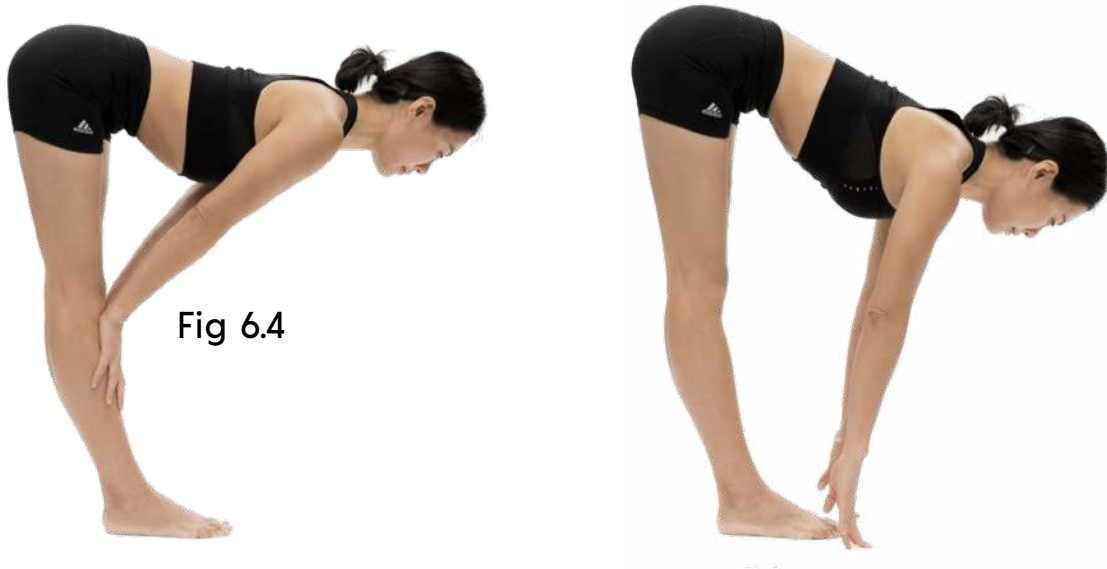


Fig 6.4

Entry Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Full inhale, exhale, fold the torso over legs.
- Fingertips on the floor in front of the toes.
- Lift chest forward, hips back.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Exhale, fold into a Forward Fold.

Technique

- Engage the legs, push the thighs back and lift kneecaps up.
- Body weight on the front foot, press the front feet down.
- Tuck the tailbone and pull low belly in.
- Try to backbend slightly.

Caution

- If hands cannot touch the floor with the straight legs, put the hands below the knees. (fig 6.4)
- If it's too intense on the hamstrings, open the feet.

HAPPY BABY POSE (ANANDA BALASANA)

Ananda=Happiness, Bala=Child, Asana=Posture



Fig 6.5



Fig 6.6



Entry Mountain Pose (*Tadasana*)

- Lie on back.
- Bend knees up to chest, open knees slightly wider than the body.
- Hands hold onto the shin right below the knees.
- Pull the knees towards armpits.
- Flex the feet. Ankles over knees.
- Bring hands to outer edge of feet.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Bring knees together and lower both feet on the floor.

Technique

- Push feet up onto the hand as hands pull the feet down to create resistance.
- If the tailbone is lifted, bring the knees slightly back up and stretch the tailbone down. (fig 6.6)

Caution

- If hands cannot reach knee, stay in the prep (fig 6.5) or use straps on both feet.

HUMBLE WARRIOR POSE (BADDHA VIRABHADRASANA)

Baddha = Bound, Vira = Hero, Bhadra = Friend, Asana = Posture



Entry Warrior 1 (Virabhadrasana 1)

- Clasp hands behind back, bend elbows, squeeze shoulder blades closer.
- Inhale deeply, expand chest, straighten the arms, exhale, gently bow forward to the inner right foot.
- Relaxed neck. Reach arms up overhead.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Inhale, lift upper body up, exhale bring both hands on floor, slowly straighten right leg and back leg grounded as you rise up.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Press the outer foot of the back leg down.
- Pull the hip of the extended leg forward, and hip of the bent knee back.

Caution

- If it's too intense on hip or knee, you can modify by starting in a Lunge.
- If too intense on the shoulders, bend the elbows. If still too intense, put both hands on the floor.

LIZARD POSE (UTTHAN PRISTHASANA)

Utthan = Stretched out, Pristha = The Back, Asana = Posture

Fig 6.7



Fig 6.8



Fig 6.9



Fig 6.10



Entry *Downward Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana)*

- Exhale, step right foot forward to outside of right hand.
- Place both hands on floor to left of right foot.
- Turn right toes out to right slightly, kneecap pointing in same direction.
- Press base of right big toe down.
- Lower left knee down, top of left foot on the floor, left toes pointing backward. (fig. 6.7)
- Hips down and forearms on floor. Chin lifted, chest open.
- Feel comfortable, curl left toes under, press up into ball of the foot, lift the hips slightly. (fig. 6.8)
- Gaze forward.
- Hold and breathe

Transition

- Lower back knee down, step front foot back into Downward Facing Dog Pose.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Engage the left buttocks.
- Lift the inner left thigh up and press the left heel back and reaching the chest forward.
- Tuck tailbone down and lift lower belly up.
- Press forearms down.
- Can keep right knee pointing forward.
- For deeper version, hands pull on the front edge of the mat to bring chest down to the floor, stretch arms out to the side behind the front heel. (fig. 6.9).
- Still feel comfortable, curl left toes under and press up into the ball of the foot (fig. 6.10).

Caution

- Right knee stays above or behind the ankle, but not in front.
- If the stretch is too intense put blocks under forearm or stay on hands with straight arms.

ONE-LEGGED DOWNWARD DOG POSE **(EKA PADA ADHO MUKHA SVANASANA)**

Eka=One, Pada=Foot, Adho=Downwards, Mukha=Face, Svana=Dog, Asana=Posture



Entry *Downward Facing Dog Pose (Adho Mukha Svanasana)*

- Keep sit bones lifted.
- Inhale, lift right leg up and reaching thru heel.
- Press both hands down and forward, lengthen the spine.
- Hold and breathe.

Technique

- Lower top leg down on floor.

Technique

- Keep shoulders and hips square. Take top leg high up without tilting the pelvis sideways nor twisting the torso.

- Use both hands and the bottom leg engaged to maintain the length on the spine.
- Reach the top leg up through inner thigh.

Caution

- Tendency is lifting the top leg too high that hips started to tilt to the side. Keep them square.
- Lower the leg down if the torso started to collapse.

OSTRICH POSE



Entry *Warrior 2 (Virabhadrasana 2)*

- Clasp hands behind back, bend elbows, squeeze shoulder blades closer.
- Inhale deeply, expand chest and straighten arms, exhale, gently bow forward and fold torso between legs.
- Relaxed neck. Reach arms up overhead.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Inhale, lift upper body up, exhale bring both hands on floor, slowly straighten right leg and back leg grounded and rise up.

Technique

- Push right knee towards pinky toe side of foot.
- Engage the back leg by pulling kneecap up.
- For deeper stretch on shoulders, press palms together.
- Press the extend foot down.
- Squeeze the feet towards each other.

Caution

- Do not let the bent knee collapse inward, squeeze the bent knee towards the buttock.
- If too intense on the shoulders, bend the elbows. If still too intense, put both hands on the floor.
- If too intense on hips, bring torso to the side of the bent knee. Or ease the torso on the thigh of the bent knee.

PYRAMID POSE (PARSVOTTANASANA)

Parsva = Side, Uttana = Intense Stretch/Straight, Asana = Posture



Entry Lunge (Anjaneyasana)

- With right leg bent forward, slightly shorten stance.
- Pivot back heel down 60 degree, straighten front leg.
- Keep hips square.
- Fold torso over front leg, stretch spine down and forward.
- Press fingertips or flat palms to floor on either side of front foot.
- Keep torso on thighs without rounding the spine.
- Hold and e.
- Gaze down.

Transition

- Bring both hands on hips, inhale, lift torso upright. Feet together.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Press front inner foot down and back outer hip back to square the hips.
- Lift back inner thigh up.
- Hold opposite elbows behind the back, or come into hands in prayer behind the back.

Caution

- If hands cannot touch the floor, can rest hands on hips or put hands on blocks.
- If cannot balance, move the back foot out to widen the stance.

RAG DOLL POSE **(UTTANASANA VARIATION HANDS TO ELBOW)**

Uttana=Intense Stretch, Asana=Posture

Fig 7.1



Entry Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Open feet hip width apart.
- Inhale deeply, exhale, fold torso forward at hips over legs
- Body weight on feet.
- Cross arms and grab opposite elbows.
- Allow to dangle with slightly bend on knees.
- Neck long.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Release hands back on floor and slowly rise up torso.

Technique

- Traditionally this pose is done by slightly bent knee to stretch the muscle around the spine. For more hamstrings stretch, can slowly straighten the legs by pushing thighs back to hamstrings, on exhale, hands pull elbow down and front to the top of mat. (fig 7.1)

Caution

- If suffering from back injury, move very slowly and consciously in any forward fold, place hands on thighs for support or avoid the pose if needed.

STANDING FORWARD FOLD POSE (UTTANASANA)

Uttana = Intense stretch, Assana = Posture



Fig 7.3



Fig 7.4



Fig 7.5



Entry Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Full inhale, then exhale, fold the torso over legs.
- Fingertips on floor in front of the toes, bend elbow out to the sides.
- Exhale, forehead to shin.
- Body weight towards the front of the feet.
- On the end of the exhale, pull the navel up to the spine and curl the head up to bring the forehead to the knee.
- Can also grab the back of the ankle (fig 7.4) or underneath heels (fig 7.5) for leverage to stretch the spine down, pull with the hands.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Inhale, press feet down and stand up into Mountain Pose.

Technique

- Try to straighten the arms. (fig 7.3)
- Engage the legs, push the thighs back and lift kneecaps up.

- Press body weight on the front foot and press the front feet down, hips above the heels.
- Tuck the tailbone and pull low belly in, lift sit bones up.

Caution

- If hands cannot touch the floor with the straight legs, bend the knees as much as need to, or place hands on the blocks.

WIDE-LEGGED FORWARD BEND POSE **(PRASARITA PADOTTANASANA)**

Prasarita = Extended, Pada = Foot, Uttā = Intense, Asana = Posture



Fig 7.9



Fig 8.0



Fig 8.1



Entry Mountain (Tadasana)

- Bring arms over head, palms together.
- Inhale, shift body weight on left foot, exhale, step right foot out with big step, bring arms down, arms parallel to floor, palms facing down, both feet about distance of wrists.
- Engage quads, pull low belly in. Gaze forward.
- Exhale, fold upper body down from hips.
- Keep chest forward, chin up on the way down.
- Grab outer foot, brace forearms on shinbones, elbows facing up. Grip tight.
- Bring weight forward to front foot.
- Chin away from chest, spread collarbones.

- Pull shoulders away from ears, neck soft.
- Hands pull on feet, stretch entire spine down, top of head to the floor.
- Gaze on floor between feet.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Inhale, slowly lift torso upright.

Technique

- Engage the quads before folding forward.
- Engage the buttocks.
- Hips over heels. (fig 8.1)
- For prep for Tripod Headstand, both palms on the floor in front, elbows towards the floor, if elbows are touching the floor, walk hands back between feet until elbows off the floor, this action strengthen the shoulder girdle.
- (fig 8.0)

Caution

- If knees are bending, place hands in front, keep legs straight and quads engaged.
- If hands cannot reach to outer foot, grab big toes. (fig 7.9)

INVERSION

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HEADSTAND 1 (SIRSASANA 1)

Sirsa=Head, Asana=Posture

Fig 12.2



Entry Table Top (*Bharmanasana*)

- Bring elbows to floor in a shoulder-width distance.
- Interlock fingers, thumbs facing up, open palms so they form cup.
- Place crown of head on floor, back of head touches cupped palms.
- Walk knees and toes closer elbows.
- Curl toes under and lift knees off floor.
- Shift bodyweight on head and forearms.
- Hips above head. Balancing on toes mounds.
- Bend knees one at a time, hug knees to chest, heels to buttocks. (fig 12.2)
- Squeeze legs towards each other.
- Bring the knees up until thighs vertical.
- Stretch toes up until both legs fully extended.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Bend knees and lower feet back to floor. Rest in Child Pose for a few breathe.

Technique

- Keep the fingers tightly locked.
- Press side of wrists and forearm to the floor lift the shoulders up.
- Engage the abdomen and legs.
- Tuck tailbone forward.
- Stretch toes up through the inner thighs.

Caution

- Do not rest back of head nor forehead on the floor.
- Do not let elbows go wider than the shoulders.
- If there's pain on neck or cervical spine, keep the feet on the floor and put very little weight on head.
- If upper back is rounded, likely compressing on the neck, keep the feet on the floor.

PLOW POSE (HALASANA)

Hala= Plough, Asana=Posture



- Lie down on back, arms by side, palms facing up.
- Bend knees slightly and roll back, bring feet on floor behind head, open feet about shoulder-width. Straighten legs.
- Walk feet away from head, push ball of foot down to lift hips up above shoulders.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Hands on lower back, bend knees and lower hips and legs down.

Technique

- Chin away from chest without crunching in.
- Bring the feet together. Engage the legs.
- Press shoulders down and in towards each other.

Caution

- Keep the neck long without turning the head nor look to the side, as putting pressure on the neck.
- If feet do not touch the floor, use the wall.
- If the bony part of the neck is touching the floor, place a folded mat or blanket underneath the shoulders.

SHOULDER STAND (SARVANGASANA)

Sarva=All, Anga=Limb, Asana=Posture



Entry Plow (Halasana)

- Move shoulders down away from neck
- Inhale deeply, exhale, roll legs and torso up.
- Put hands on low back, fingers facing up.
- Keep legs together and extend both legs up.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Exhale, bend the knees to chest, slowly roll back down and lower both legs down.

Technique

- Keep shoulders and neck soft.
- Lift buttocks toward heels and lengthen inner thighs and reach up through the balls of big toes.
- Bring shoulder blades toward the spine and elbows toward each other.
- Chest, hips and feet should be in one vertical line.
- Keep shoulders, upper arms and elbows firmly on the floor.

Caution

- Keep the neck long without turning the head nor look to the side, as putting pressure on the neck.
- If the bony part of the neck is touching the floor, place a folded mat or blanket underneath the shoulders.
- For easier version, come into Legs-Up-the-Wall Pose (Viparita Karani), allow the weight of hips rest into hands (fig 12.5) or put a yoga block or put legs up on the wall with a bolster on a lower back.

TRIPOD OR HEADSTAND 2 (SIRSASANA 2)

Sirsa=Head, Asana=Posture

Fig 12.3



Fig 12.4



Entry Plank Pose (Phalakasana)

- Bring knees down and place palms flat on floor with slightly wider than shoulder-width.
- Bend elbows and lower the head down, place top of head on floor, just in front of hands.
- Keep forearm vertical, elbows over wrists.
- Curl toes under, walk towards head slowly straighten legs. (fig 12.3)
- Bend knees and place it on the triceps, one leg at a time.
- Squeeze heels to sit bones. (fig 12.4)
- Hips stack on top of shoulders.
- Slowly bring the knees off the arms and extend both legs up.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Bend both knees and lower the feet down, rest in Child pose for a few breathes or keep the legs strong to drop into Chaturanga.

Technique

- Actively hugging elbows towards each other.
- Keep the heels and big toes together as the legs reaching up, reach thru the inner thigh towards toes.
- Engage the legs, abdomen and buttocks.

Caution

- Actively lifting the shoulders to avoid collapse on neck and head.

LATERAL

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BOUND SIDE ANGLE POSE (BADDHA PARSVAKONASANA)

Baddha = Bound, Parsva= Side/Flank, Kona=Angle, Asana=Posture



Entry Warrior 2 (Virabhadrasana 1)

- Bend the left knee.
- Bring the left shoulder behind the left knee and press back of the left hand on the left buttock to press left shoulder back.
- Right arm up, then release it back behind.
- Left hand under the left thigh, grab the right wrist, pull to straighten the right arm.
- Roll right shoulder back.
- Turn abdomen up and spread the collarbones.
- Look up.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- exhale look down, release the bind, hands down to the mat.
- Switch sides.

Technique

- Press right foot down, keep right leg as involved as the left leg.
- Tuck tailbone down and pull low belly in.
- Stretch the top of head away from hips.

Caution

- If the hands cannot reach each other, use a strap or hold onto clothing.
- If the neck is sensitive, look down or forward.

DANCER POSE (NATARAJASANA)

Nata = Dancer, Raja = King, Asana = Posture



Entry Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Bring right hand out to the right, palm facing up, elbow touching the side body.
- Reach the right hand back, bend the right knee, right hand grips the right inner ankle.
- Keep all the fingers together to keep the grip strong.
- Keep knees together.
- Bring left arm up.
- Chin up and gaze forward.
- Lift the right knee cap up to engage the quads.
- Inhale deeply, stretch fingertips towards the ceiling.
- Kick right leg back and up, right toes pointing up.
- Bring the upper body down until abdomen is parallel to the floor.
- Keep the hand grip strong, press the right foot on the right hand, shin bone back.
- Right shoulder stretching back, left shoulder coming forward towards left fingertips, left fingertips away from the shoulders.
- Keep left arm parallel to the floor.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Exhale lift the torso up and release the foot back to Mountain Pose.
- Switch sides.

Technique

- The kick of the legs and stretch of the arms should be an equal effort and simultaneous.
- Two shoulders are stretching in opposite directions.
- Standing leg stays engaged.
- Allow the back shoulder to relax and stretch back, as the back foot kicks back and up.

Caution

- Keep right kneecap pointing straight down to start with, kick higher, keep kneecap pointing straight back.
- Keep the standing foot pointing forward.

EXTENDED SIDE ANGLE POSE (BADDHA PARSVAKONASANA)

Baddha = Bound, Parsva= Side/Flank, Kona=Angle, Asana=Posture



Entry Warrior 2 (Virabhadrasana 1)

- With the right leg bent.
- Inhale deeply, exhale, bring the right hand on the floor next to the outer right foot.
- Inhale, reach and extend the left arm up and over towards the top of the head.
- Turn abdomen up and spread the collarbones.
- Look up.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Look down and release the left hand down to the floor.
- Switch sides.

Technique

- Press the right foot down, keep the right leg as involved as the left leg.
- Tuck the tailbone down and pull the low belly in.
- Stretch the top of head away from hips.

Caution

- If the neck is sensitive, look down or forward.

HALF MOON POSE (ARDHA CHANDRASANA)

Ardha = Half, Chandra = Moon, Asana = Posture



Entry Warrior 2 (Virabhadrasana 2)

- Keep the right knee bent. Shift the body weight to the right foot, place right fingertips on the floor about 12" in front and 6" to the right of the right foot.
- Left hand on left hip and look down.
- Lift the left foot up slightly higher than the hip, keep left foot flexed. Keep right hand under the shoulder, balancing on the fingertips.
- Roll the left hip over the right hip, exhale, straighten the right leg.
- Slowly, bring the left arm up.
- Look up if still balancing.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Exhale look down, slowly bend the right knee, carefully step back to Warrior 2.
- Switch sides.

Technique

- Keep squeezing two sit bones towards each other to roll the top hip over the bottom hip.
- Keep kicking the back foot away from the hips and engage the top buttock.
- Lift the knee cap up of the standing leg to engage the quads for stability.
- Rotate the ribs and abdomen up.

Caution

- Turn the thigh of the standing leg out until the kneecap points straight ahead.
- If it's too intense on the hamstring, or if the upper body starts to collapse, bring the floor closer by placing a block under front hand.
- If it's too intense on the neck, look down.

STANDING SIDE BEND



Entry Mountain (Tadasana)

- Bring arms up over head.
- Clasp hands, release index fingers. Arms straight, biceps by ears. Press palms together.
- Low belly in, spine straight.
- Engage quads, kneecaps up.
- Push hips slightly forward, arms and upper body back.

- Chin away from chest.
- Inhale fully, stretch up from core.
- Exhale, bend upper body to the right and push hips to the left.
- Body weight to heels.
- Arms and upper body back.
- Lift sternum up to the chin, chin away from the chest.
- Gaze forward, head in between arms.
- Pull low belly in.
- Hold and breathe

Transition

- Inhale, upper body back to center.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Press palms into each other without squeezing the fingers out of alignment.
- Use the bottom hand to pull upper hand, bottom arm stays straight.
- Tone the low belly in and keep the chest lifted.
- Engage the quads, legs strong and grounded.
- Right shoulder forward to get two shoulders in one line.
- Left hip forward to get two hips in one line.
- Arms back to open up the shoulders.
- Lengthen the side of the body that bending over.

Caution

- Keep fingers reaching out to the side, if fingers are pointing down, likely collapsing

TRIANGLE POSE (TRIKONASANA)

Trikona = Three corners/Triangle, Asana = Posture



Entry *Warrior 2 (Virabhadrasana 2)*

- With the right knee bent, extend the right leg straight.
- Inhale, stretch both arms across the horizon to either side.
- Exhale, windmill the hands to bring right hand down, right palm on the floor outside of the right foot. Fingers facing forward.
- Straighten both legs.
- Turn abdomen and ribs to the left and up to the ceiling.
- Stack left shoulder above the right shoulder.
- Extend the left arm up.
- Gaze up to the left thumb.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Exhale look down, inhale, press left foot down and use the left arm to pull torso up and center.
- Switch sides.

Technique

- Keep the kneecap of the front leg pointing forward, if not, slightly bend the inner knee and extend the outer knee to bring the kneecap forward.
- Press inner front foot down.
- Without moving feet, pull both feet towards each other.
- Squeeze sit bones towards each other to open up the hips.
- Stretch top of head away from hips to lengthen the spine.

- B.K.S. Iyengar said that in Triangle Pose, Need to "entwine the muscles to the bone," that explains actively engaging the buttocks, quads, and calves muscles.

Caution

- If the palm cannot reach the floor or if it's too intense on the front hamstrings, bring the hand next to the inner foot, or bring the fingertips on the floor, or put hand on a block.
- If the upper torso collapses, place the top hand on the hip and use the hand to guide the top hip over bottom hip.
- Look forward or down for easier balance.

RECLINED

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CORPSE POSE (SAVASANA)

Sava=Corpse Asana=Posture



- Lie down on floor.
- Open feet hip-width apart.
- Let feet turn out naturally
- Open and relax arms next to body, palms facing up.
- Close eyes.
- Take a keep slow breathe, exhale as release whole body. Allow slow breath carry into deep relaxation.
- Enjoy in this magic place of Savasana.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Very slowly, bend knees up, one at a time, roll on the side, hands push upper body up.

Technique

- Allow the arms to open slightly wider.
- Always end with this pose in asana practice.
- Stay in this for at least 2 minutes.

Caution

- For the last trimester of pregnancy, can lie on the side.

EYE OF THE NEEDLE POSE OR SUPINE THREAD **THE NEEDLE POSE (SUCIRANDHRASANA)**

Suci=Needle, Randhra=Loop, Asana=Posture

Fig 5.8



- Lie on back.
- Bend both knees, feet on floor close to sit bones.
- Bring the outer right foot on left thigh just below the knee. Right knee pointing out to the side.
- Flex right foot.
- Bring both legs towards the chest.
- Reach hands between both legs, clasp hands on top of the shin.
- Inhale deeply, use hands to pull left shin towards the chest, elbows bent to the side.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Release hand grip, lower both feet on the floor.
- Other side.

Technique

- Keep the right foot flexed, reach inner foot out, engage the thigh to maintain the stability on the knee.
- Use the right elbow to press the right thigh, simultaneously pull both legs closer to the chest.
- Pull low belly in and allow the lower back to round.
- For a deeper stretch, bring right shin parallel to the top of mat and pull it close to chest.

Caution

- Grab the left thigh for less of a stretch or during warm up. (fig 5.8)

RECLINE BIG TOE POSE 1 (SUPTA PADANGUSTHASANA 1)

Supta=Recline, Pada=Foot, Angustha=Big Toe, Asana=Posture



- Lie on the back.
- Bend the right knee towards upper body.
- Lift right foot and grab big toe with the index finger, middle finger, and thumb of right hand.
- Place left hand on the left thigh.
- Inhale fully, exhale, straighten right arm and right leg.
- Press left shoulder down to the floor.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze up.

Transition

- Release the hand on the foot, lower lifted leg down.
- Other side.

Technique

- Bottom hand on thigh and guide the sit bone down to the floor.
- Engage both legs by pulling kneecaps up towards quads.
- Turn inner thigh of the bottom leg down to the floor and actively reach inner foot of the bottom leg forward.
- Roll the inner thigh of the top leg down.
- Top foot pushing into the hand, hand pulls the foot to create resistance.
- Keep chin slightly lifted.
- Spread collarbones.

Caution

- If it's too intense on the hamstrings, lift the shoulder of the top leg up or use a strap. If using strap, hold the strap as close to foot as possible.

RECLINE BIG TOE POSE 2 (SUPTA PADANGUSTHASANA 2)

Supta=Recline, Pada=Foot, Angustha=Big Toe, Asana=Posture



Entry Recline Big Toe Pose 1 (Supta Padangusthasana 1)

- With right leg up.
- Inhale deeply, exhale, lower the right foot and arm to right.
- Keep arms and legs straight.
- Stretch left arm out to the left.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze up.

Transition

- Bring lifted leg in towards the center, release hand from the foot, lower lifted leg down.
- Other side.

Technique

- Engage both legs by pulling kneecaps up towards the quads.
- Turn inner thigh of the bottom leg down to the floor and actively reach inner foot of the bottom leg forward.
- Press the buttock of the lifted leg down and roll the inner thigh out.
- Lifted foot pushing on the hand, and the hand pulling on the foot to create resistance.
- Keep chin slightly lifted.
- Spread collarbones.

Caution

- If it's too intense on the hamstrings, hold the top leg with a strap, hold the strap as close to the foot as possible.
- If it's still too intense, put the lifted leg on the wall or put a yoga block underneath.
- If the bottom leg lifts off of the floor, bring the lifted leg up and bring the bottom leg down.

RECLINE BUTTERFLY POSE WITH BACK TRACTION POSE **(SUPTA BADDHA KONASANA)**

Supta=Reclining, Baddha=Bound, Kona=Angle, Asana=Posture



- Lie down on the floor.
- Bend knees and bring the soles of the feet together.
- Place hands on thighs, fingers facing knees, heels of hands on the hip crease.
- Straighten arms.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Bring hands outside of the knees, bring knees together, straighten legs.

Technique

- Use the heels of the hands to traction the thighs away from hips to create more space in the hip joints.
- Straighten the arms to traction the spine.
- Press feet towards each other as widen the knees away from one another.

Caution

- If it's too intense on the hips, bring feet forward away from the hips.

RECLINE COW FACE POSE (SUPTA GOMUKHASANA)

Supta=Recline, Go=Cow, Mukha=Face, Asana=Posture



- Lie on back.
- Bend both knees up toward chest, and cross knees, stack them on top of one another. Feet out to side.
- Hug inner thighs together.
- Grab outer foot or ankle with both hands on either side.
- Pull legs towards the chest.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Release hands from the feet, and the lower legs down.
- Other side.

Technique

- Flex feet.
- Lengthen the tailbone.
- Keep chin slightly lifted.
- Spread collarbones.

Caution

- Hold the shins or back of thighs if it's more comfortable.

RECLINED SPINAL TWIST (JATHARA PARIVARTANASANA)

Jathar=Abdomen, Parivarta=Turning, Asana=Posture



- Lie on back.
- Bend right knee, foot on the floor.
- Press right foot down to move hips one step to the right.
- Bring right leg over to the left, lean to left, so outer left hip, thigh and foot roll down on floor.
- Keep right shoulder on the floor.
- Lower right knee to floor on left side.
- Reach arms out to the side. Palms facing up.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze to the right side.

Transition

- Bring right leg back to center, extend both legs.
- Other side.

Technique

- Keep both shoulders on the floor.
- Turn abdomen to right.

Caution

- If the top leg doesn't touch the floor, put a yoga block or rolled blanket under the knee on the floor.

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COW FACE (GOMUKHASANA)

Go=Cow, Mukha=Face, Asana=Posture



Entry Staff (Dandasana)

- Bend left the knee on the floor and bring the heel to the outer right hip.
- Bend right knee and place it on top of the left knee, right heel on outer left hip.
- Lean forward, left hand and forearm bracing the right leg, left hand on the outer hip, forearm on thigh, pull right leg to center, right knee stack directly on top of the left knee.
- Lift left arm up vertical, wrap shoulder in, bend arms, palm on the upper back.
- Right arm behind, bend the arm, reach the back of the hand on back, move up as much.
- Clasp hands behind.
- Hold and breathe. Look forward.

Transition

- Release hand and straighten both legs.
- Other side.

Technique

- Squeeze shoulder blades towards each other.
- Keep upper arms vertical.
- Hug heels towards the outer hips.
- Press outer edge of foot on the floor to keep the feet engaged.
- For deeper grip, hold onto the wrist with the other hand.

Caution

- If the upper arm is pushing the head down, release the hand grip and keep head straight without pressure on the neck.
- If the hands cannot clasp, use a strap or hold on to the clothes

DIAMOND (VAJRASANA)

Vajra=Diamond, Asana=Posture



Entry Staff (Dandasana)

- Bend knees and sit on legs. Knees close to each other.
- Form a bowl with bottom of the feet, outer part of the sit bone on heels.
- Rest hands on knees.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Lean hips to right, swing legs forward and straighten legs.

Technique

- Diamond pose is a steady, firm, and meditative pose, sit firm in truth.
- Be still and clear the mind like a diamond.

Caution

- If pregnant, separate the knees to avoid pressure on the belly.
- Roll a blanket between the calves and hamstrings to alleviate the tightness or pain on knees.
- If too intense on ankles, place a blanket under shins and ankles.

DOUBLE PIGEON OR FIRE LOG POSE (AGNISTAMBHASANA)

Agni=Fire, Stambh=Log, Asana=Posture



Fig 9.6



Fig 9.7



Entry Staff (Dandasana)

- Bend right knee, shin parallel to the top of mat, outer edge of the foot on mat, flex foot.
- Bend the left knee and bring it on top of the right ankle, shin parallel to the top of the mat, outer edge of the left foot on right knee, flex foot.
- Hands by outer hips, palms flat or fingertips on floor. (fig 9.6)
- Inhale deeply, exhale, fold torso over legs, forearms on floor.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Lift torso up and extend both legs.
- Other side.

Technique

- Press outer foot down and inner foot out to keep the legs engaged.
- Sit bone out and back to widen seat.
- Both feet flexed.
- Pull low belly in.

Caution

- If the top knee is up higher than waist, put a rolled blanket underneath the top knee.
- If the chest doesn't touch the legs when fold forward, put a folded blanket between legs and chest or put a block underneath forehead, or put forearms on the floor. (fig 9.7)

EASY POSE (SUKHASANA)

Sukham=Easy, Asana=Posture



Entry Staff (Dandasana)

- Cross on shins, knees out to the side.
- Inner arches of feet underneath shins of opposite legs.
- Sit with torso upright.
- Rest hands on knees, palms up or palms down.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze forward or down.

Transition

- Put hands on floor and straighten both legs.

Technique

- Lengthen tailbone to the floor, keep shoulder blades firm.
- Pull low belly in.
- If sitting for an extended period of time, alternate the crossing of the legs.

Caution

- For a more comfortable position, sit on a folded blanket or yoga block.
- For beginners, can sit against the wall.

NECK RELEASE IN DOUBLE PIGEON



Entry *Double Pigeon or Fire Log Pose (Agnistambhasana)*

- Right leg on top.
- Place right hand on floor, fingers facing out, slightly bend the elbow.
- Inhale, lift the left arm up,
- Relax right ear toward the right shoulder.
- Inhale, lift the chest.
- Breathe into the stretch on left side of the neck and relax into the stretch.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Stretch left hand to left to pull torso back to center, right hand cradle right side of head to bring head up to center, do not use strength of neck to bring head up since stretched out nicely.
- Other side.

Technique

- Relax the neck.
- Lower the right shoulder down, and allow the head to come closer to the right shoulder, not shoulder to head.
- Move the chin slightly toward chest for a different stretch.
- Reach the right arm up over head and wrap the fingers lightly down.
- For a second stage of this stretch, lower the top hand down, about 6 inches off the floor. (fig 9.8)

Caution

- Do not pull on the neck, allow the weight of head to increase the stretch on the neck.
- if have a neck injury, leave top arm down.
- If too intense on knees or hips, cross-legged instead.

STAFF (DANDASANA)

Danda=Stick/Staff, Asana=Posture



- Seated with both legs straight out. Legs together.
- Right hand pull right sit bone back, and left hand pull left sit bone back, widen seat.
- Place hands by outer hips, palms flat on the floor.
- Kneecaps pointing straight up.
- Pull belly in and sit upright.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze forward.

Technique

- Press inner edge of the feet together and reach them forward.
- Press thighs to the floor.

Caution

- If it's too intense on the hamstrings, open the feet wider.
- If palms are not on the floor, you can either come up on fingertips or place hands on blocks.
- If lower back rounds, put folded mat under the sit bones.

THE MOUNTAIN POSE (PARVATASANA)

Parvata=Mountain, Asana=Posture



Fig 10.0



Fig 10.1

Entry Lotus Pose (Padmasana)

- Inhale deeply, bring arms over head.
- Stretch the arms up from upper back and shoulder blades.
- Interlock fingers and flip the palms up.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Release fingers and bring arms down.
- Use hands to release Lotus legs, extend both legs forward.

Technique

- Keep the torso upright.
- Lengthen the tailbone to the floor.
- Keep shoulder blades firm.
- Pull low belly in.
- Reach the palms up through middle fingers.
- For different variation, curl the toes under for an ankle stretch. (fig 10.0)

Caution

- If there's knee pain, sit in Half Lotus or Easy pose. (fig 10.1)

STANDING

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CHAIR POSE (UTKATASANA)

Utkāṭa = fierce, Asana = posture



Fig 4.2



Fig 4.3



Entry Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Inhale fully, exhale, bend the knees, send hips back like sitting on a chair.
- Press legs together.
- Inhale, reach arms up over head, palms facing each other.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Press feet down firmly to extend both legs straight.

Technique

- Spread the upper back.
- Draw low ribs in and lift the upper ribs towards chest.
- For variation, lift the heels up and balance on the base of the toes. Draw the low belly in and up, tuck tailbone, keep the shoulders above the hips. (fig 4.2)

Caution

- If too intense on the knees, open the legs hip-width, feet and knees parallel to each other.
- If upper torso is leaning forward, straighten the legs a little, then re-engage the low belly and chest up.
- If it's too intense to bring the arms up, bring arms forward, palms facing down.
- (fig 4.3)

LOW LUNGE POSE (ANJANEYASANA)

Asana named after Anjani, mother of the Hindu god, Hanuman.



- Bring back knee and top of the back foot to the floor.
- Lower hips down and forward. Right knee above the ankle.
- Inhale fully, press tailbone down, lift lower belly, lift chest bone and stretch entire spine up.
- Bring arms over head, hands over the shoulders. Palms together.
- Exhale, tuck tailbone and curl head and torso back.

Transition

- Switch side.
- Step back Down Dog

Technique

- Keep pressing the top of the back foot down to keep the back leg engaged, draw the back knee and front heel towards each other.
- For deeper backward bending, keep reaching hands towards the back foot. Curl the toes of the back foot under to bring the ankle closer towards the hands, try to reach towards ankles.
- Once able to grab ankles, flatten the back foot again.

Caution

- If looking up and back is too intense, keep the gaze forward.
- If it's too intense on the lower back or quads of the back leg, lift the hips up.
- For front knee injuries, keep shin perpendicular to floor.
- For back knee injuries, put extra padding under knee and shin, or lift the knee off the floor.

LUNGE POSE (ANJANEYASANA)

Asana named after Anjani, Mother of the Hindu god, Hanuman.



Entry Downward Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana)

- Step right foot forward next to right thumb. Right knee above the ankle.
- Left leg straight, lift left thigh up, keep leg straight.
- Pull left hip forward and right hip back, both hips hug to the midline.
- Gaze forward.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Step back to Downward-Facing Dog.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Front knee pointing straight forward, right thigh towards the same direction of knee.
- Lift inner thigh up on the back leg, thigh and kneecap pointing straight down the floor.
- Stretch back heel away from hips and simultaneously pull both feet towards each other.
- Spread the collarbones, stretch spine forward.
- Tuck tailbone down and pull low belly in.
- Bring arms up over head for High Lunge / Crescent Lunge (fig 4.8)

Caution

- Avoid the front knee collapsing inward.
- If hips are higher than the front knee, move back leg back for bigger stance.

MOUNTAIN POSE (TADASANA)

tāḍa = mountain, āsana = posture



- Feet together, stand upright. Toes and heels touch.
- Distribute body weight evenly over feet.
- Engage quads, pull kneecaps up.
- Engage buttocks.
- Pull belly in, lift chest and stretch entire spine up.
- Hold and breathe.

Technique

- Stand firm, unmoved and upright like a mountain.
- Arms by the side with palms facing the body or arms over the head.

Caution

- Do not lean weight to toes or heels.
- B.K.S. Iyengar said "If we stand with body weight thrown only on the heels, we feel the gravity changing; the hip become loose, the abdomen protrudes, the body hangs back and the spine feels the strain and consequently we soon feel fatigued and the mind becomes dull."

TREE POSE (VRKSASANA)

Vṛkṣa = Tree, Asana = Posture



Entry *Mountain Pose (Tadasana)*

- Bend right knee and place bottom of the right foot on the base of left thigh. Right heel pointing up.
- Keep the left leg straight, engage the quads and press the base of the big toe down on the floor.
- Bring hands in front of the chest, palms together.
- Gaze forward.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- lower the right foot down on floor.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Engage the buttocks and tone the abdomen.
- Engage the quads by pulling the standing kneecap up.
- Bring arms over head if can still balance nicely. (fig 5.5)

Caution

- Do not place foot on the inner knee of the standing leg, either above or below the knee, or even place the foot of the bent leg on the floor next to the standing foot.
- If cannot balance, bring arms out to the side like a balancing beam.

WARRIOR 1 (VIRABHADRASANA 1)

Vīrabhadra = Warrior, Asana = Posture



Entry Downward Facing Dog Pose (Adho Mukha Svanasana)

- Step Right foot forward, bend the Right knee to 90 degrees, pivot left foot down to 60 degrees.
- Bring arms up above the head, arms straight, hands over the shoulders. Palms together.
- Look up towards the thumbs.
- Hold the pose and breathe.

Transition

- Bring both hands down and step right foot back in Downward Facing Dog.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Firmly press the outer back foot down.
- Front thigh parallel to the floor.
- Tuck tailbone down and pull low belly in and up away from front thigh.
- Engage the back buttock and pull it forward.

Caution

- If it's too intense on shoulders, separate hands shoulder-width.
- If looking up is too intense, gaze forward.
- If back hip cannot square to the front hip, step the front foot half-step out to the side. Or bring the back heel off of the floor.
- Keep tucking the tailbone to contain the energy.

WARRIOR 2 (VIRABHADRASANA 2)

Virabhadra = Warrior, Asana = Posture



Entry Mountain Pose (*Tadasana*)

- Inhale fully, exhale, open the feet wide, turn right foot out to the side 90 degrees.
- Left foot in 30 degrees.
- Bring arms out to the side, parallel to the floor, palms facing down.
- Inhale, look over the right shoulder, exhale, bend right knee until the knee is above the ankle and the thigh is parallel to floor.
- Actively press left foot down.
- Hold and breathe, gaze over right hand.

Transition

- Inhale, straighten right leg, turn right foot in, bring feet together.
- Switch side.

Technique

- To keep the shoulder engaged, turn the palms and biceps up, without moving the biceps, turn the palms down.
- Isometrically squeeze the buttocks towards each other to open the hips.
- Engage the sit bone of the back leg and stretch it diagonally towards the ankle of the bent knee to allow the hips lower to the floor.
- Keep the back leg active and press the back foot on the floor, keep back leg as involved as the front leg.

Caution

- If the front knee is collapsing in, turn the knee to the pinky toe side of the front foot, or bring the opposite hip down and forward.
- Keep shin vertical and thigh parallel to the floor.

WARRIOR 3 (VIRABHADRASANA 3)

Viparita= Reverse, Vira= Hero, Bhadra=Friend, Asana=Posture



Entry Mountain (Tadasana)

- Inhale, bring the arms overhead, arms straight, press the palms together.
- Exhale, right foot steps forward, left foot on the floor, point the toes.
- Left hip forward, right hip back.
- Inhale fully, exhale, bring the upper body down and back leg up until they're parallel to the floor.
- Chin up and gaze forward.
- Hold and breathe.
- Lift the torso, step the left foot back, right foot back.

Transition

- Switch side.

Technique

- Press the palms together, biceps with the ears.
- Pull the arms up against gravity.
- Pull the low belly in.
- Keep the back leg parallel to the floor.
- Pull the right hip back and inner thigh forward.
- Bring the hip of the top leg down, thigh and kneecap pointing straight down.
- Cross thumbs or interlace fingers with index finger released to have more strength in shoulders and arms.

Caution

- If it's too intense on the shoulders, separate the hands.
- If it's too intense on the lower back, bring arms back to the side.

TWIST

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HALF SPINAL TWIST POSE (ARDHA MATSYENDRASANA)

Ardha = Half, Matsya = Fish, Indra = King, Asana = Posture



Entry Staff (Dandasana)

- Bend right knee and point right foot.
- Bend left knee up and bring left heel in front of right knee.
- Keep left sit bone down more.
- Lift right arm up, right elbow against left knee, right hand on right knee.
- Right foot over the left knee.
- Left palm on the floor, heel of the hand close to tailbone, fingers facing out more.
- Press hand on the floor.
- Belly in, chest up, look over the left shoulder.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Release hands, bring torso back to center and straighten both legs in front.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Left hand reach towards the right inner thigh.

Caution

- If right hip come up, straighten the right leg.
- If low back rounds, move left foot forward.

Counterposes

- Wind Removing, Forward Stretching, Child, Reclined Butterfly, Happy Baby, Staff, Head to Knee.

REVOLVED CHAIR POSE (PARIVRTTA UTKATASANA)

Parivrtta = Revolved, Utkata = Fierce, Asana = Posture



Entry Chair Pose (Utkatasana)

- Inhale deeply, exhale, twist to right and place right hand on outer right knee.
- Keep knees in center.
- Hands in prayer in front of the chest.
- Roll the right shoulder on top of the left shoulder.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze up.

Transition

- Inhale, lift torso back to center and upright.
- Switch sides.

Technique

- Turn the abdomen up and tone the low belly in.
- Press sternum towards the thumbs, widen the collarbones.
- Turn the back down to the floor and chest up to the ceiling.
- Press elbow onto the leg and leg presses back to create resistance.
- Square the hips, keep the right hip forward and down.

Caution

- If the twist is too intense, keep the left hand on the outer right hip, forearm on right outer thigh, right hand on the waist. (fig 8.10)
- If it's too intense on the knees and hips, open feet hips-width apart.

Counterposes

- Child, Forward Fold, Child, Down Dog.

REVOLVED EXTENDED SIDE ANGLE POSE **(PARIVRTTA PARSVAKONASANA)**

Parivrtta=To turn around or Revolve, Parsva=Side or Flank, Kona=Angle, Asana=Posture



Fig 9.2



Fig 9.3



Entry Warrior 1 (Virabhadrasana 1)

- Right leg forward.
- Inhale, lift lower belly up, stretch the entire spine.
- Exhale, turn the torso to the right.
- Left forearm pressing into the outer right thigh, left palm on outer right hip, put right hand on outer right hip crease to guide the right hip back.
- Inhale, exhale, turn abdomen up and to the right, turn right shoulder over the left shoulder.
- Extend left arm down and place palm on the floor, fingers facing forward.
- Bring right arm up and extend towards the top of head.
- Right bicep by the ear. Palm facing down.
- Look up and turn the chin towards the left armpit. Twist.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- exhale look down, right hand down to the mat, left hand to the big toe side of the right foot.
- Switch sides.

Technique

- Keep inner left foot parallel to the inner right foot.
- Low belly in and tuck tailbone down.
- Press left upper arm on the right knee, right knee resists the upper arm to even twist deeper.

Caution

- If it's too intense on the back leg, lift the back heel up, back thigh pointing down.
- If the upper body is collapsing, bring hands in prayer in front of the chest. (fig 9.2)
- If the neck is sensitive, look forward. (fig. 9.3)

REVOLVED HALF MOON POSE **(PARIVRTTA ARDHA CHANDRASANA)**

Parivrtta = Revolved, Ardha = Half = Moon, Asana = Posture



Entry Warrior 1 (Virabhadrasana 1)

- Right foot forward and bend the right knee.
- Windmill left hand down and place the fingertips on the floor below the shoulders, right hand on the right hip.
- Lift the left leg up and kick the left foot back.

- Lift right knee cap up to engage the quads, keep the right hip up.
- Roll chest and right shoulder up over the left shoulder.
- Keep turning torso to the right.
- Keep the hips where they are, lift the right arm up.
- Look up if still balancing.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Exhale look down, release both hand down, step back to Warrior 1.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Lift the knee cap up of the standing leg to engage the quads for stability.
- Keep kicking the back foot back away from the hips and engage the top buttock and bring it down.
- Bring outer left hip down.
- Stretch the top of the head away from the hips.

Caution

- If it's too intense on the hamstring, or if upper body starts to collapse, bring the floor closer by placing a block under front hand.
- If it's too intense on the neck, look down.

REVOLVED HAND TO BIG TOE **(PARIVRTTA HASTA PADANGUSTHASANA)**

Parivrtta = Revolved, Hasta = Hand, Pada = Foot, Angusta = Big Toe, Asana = Posture



Fig 9.0



Fig 9.1



Entry Mountain (Tadasana)

- Bring the body weight to left foot and press the left foot down, engage the quads.
- Bend the right knee up towards chest, left hand holding the outer right foot.
- Place right hand on the right hip. Stretch inner right leg forward.
- Twist upper body to the right, right shoulder behind the left shoulder, extend the right arm straight and back, look back.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Exhale look forward, carefully release the leg, back to Mountain Pose.

Technique

- Engage the quads on the standing leg.
- Reach inner right foot forward, left hand pulls right foot back.
- Outer right hip back and down.
- Pull lower belly in and stretch the entire spine.
- Engage the top leg.

Caution

- If the hamstrings are tight, keep the right knee bent, front hand can grab the outer right knee, the back hand can hold onto the outer hip of the bent knee to guide the hip back (fig 9.0), if can still balance, extend the back arm. (fig 9.1)
- If it's too intense on the neck or cannot balance, keep the gaze forward.

REVOLVED WIDE-LEGGED STANDING FORWARD FOLD POSE **(PARIVRTT PRASARITA PADOTTANASANA)**

*Prarivrtt = To turn around or Revolved, Prasarita = Wide stance, Pada = Foot
Utta = Intense, Asana = Posture*



Entry Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Bring arms over head, palms together.
- Inhale, shift body weight onto the left foot, exhale, step the right foot out with a bigger step, bring arms down, parallel to the floor.
- Palms face down, both feet about the distance of the wrists.
- Engage quads, pull low belly in. Gaze forward.
- Place left hand on the floor fingers facing out.
- Place right hand on the sacrum to keep the hips in one line.
- Inhale, press left hand onto the floor, exhale, turn abdomen to the right.
- Lift and extend the right arm up vertical, palm facing right, fingers facing up.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Bring both hands onto the waist, keep the legs engaged and lift the torso up, step the feet together.

Technique

- Keep both legs engaged, knee caps pulling up towards the quads.
- Initiate the twist from the torso.

Caution

- If bottom hand cannot reach the floor, place it on a yoga block.
- If it's too intense on the neck, keep looking down.

SAGE BHARADVAJA'S POSE 1 (BHARADVAJASANA 1)

Named after the Hindu guru Bharadvaja



Entry Diamond (Vajrasana)

- Place top of the left foot in the arch of the right foot.
- Bring both hips to the outside of the right foot.
- Point right foot to left side.
- Right arm behind and hold left inner thigh.
- Inhale engage the abdominals, exhale twist torso to right, left hand holds onto the right knee.
- Turn back to the left and chest to right.
- Look over right shoulder.
- Hold and breathe.

Transition

- Bring torso back to center and straighten both legs in front.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Swing right arm behind to hold left biceps.
- Lengthen left side of torso.

Caution

- Keep low belly in, lift base of sternum back and lift chest to avoid collapsing.

Counterposes

- Wind Removing, Forward Stretching, Child, Reclined Butterfly, Happy Baby.

SIDE CRANE POSE (PARSVA BAKASANA)

Parsva=Side, Baka=Crow, Asana=Posture

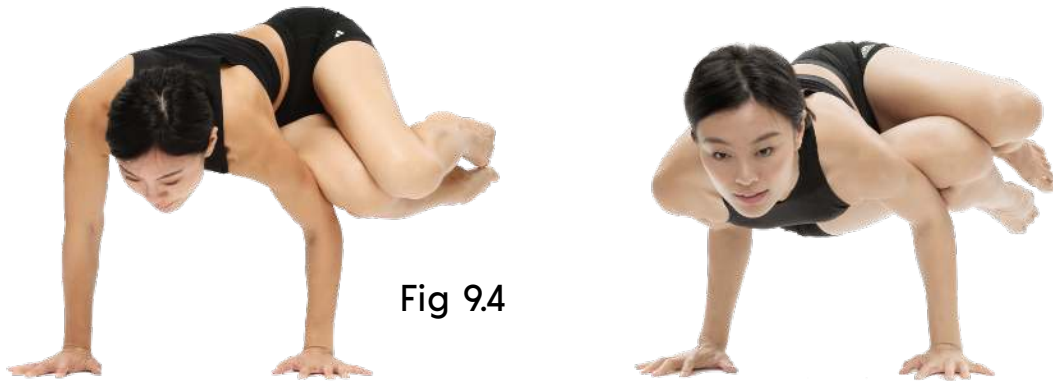


Fig 9.4

Entry Chair (Utkatasana)

- Come into a squat, keep knees and feet together, lift heels and root down with big-toe mounds, hug legs together, hands in prayer.
- Inhale lift left arm up, exhale twist torso to right, left lower ribs across the right thigh.
- Place both hands on the floor, left palm outside the right foot, right palm outside right hip.
- Both hands shoulder-width distance, gaze forward, chin in line with center of chest.
- Spread fingers, turn hands slightly out.
- Shift body weight forward, bring weight to hands until feet become light, draw heels towards buttocks.
- Hold and breathe. Gaze forward.

Transition

- Lower both feet down or jump back in Chaturanga.
- Switch side.

Technique

- For set up, bring left shoulder as close to outer right thigh.
- Once arm is on the thigh, maintain skin-to-skin contact.
- Lift chest for a slight backward bend, actively lengthen front body.
- Once able to hold the pose with stability, push the right arm down and straighten, lift the hips higher. (fig 9.4)

Caution

- Push left hand on the floor to avoid collapsing.
- Avoid rounding the shoulders down. Keep head of shoulders back and up.

THREAD THE NEEDLE POSE (PARSVA BALASANA)

Parsva=Revolved, Bala=Child, Asana=Posture



Entry Table Top Pose (Bharmanasana)

- Inhale, lift right arm up, open chest towards right shoulder.
- Exhale, slide right arm underneath to left side, palm facing up. Right shoulder on floor underneath left shoulder.
- Left hand on floor for support, press left hand down to open chest and left shoulder.
- Keep neck long and hips up.
- Widen upper back.
- Left arm lift up and behind, back of left hand on sacrum. Press hand on sacrum to open up left shoulder. Slowly, extend left arm up then back.
- Hold and breath.

Transition

- Lower top hand on floor, take bottom arm out and place hand on floor to Table Top Pose.
- Switch side.

Technique

- Put little weight on the head. Neck stays long.
- Keep collarbones broad, upper shoulder back.
- Press top of the feet and shins down, equal weight on both shins.

Caution

- Do not strain the neck and shoulders.
- If knees are sensitive, put extra padding underneath.
- Can keep left hand on the floor for extra support.

Counterposes

- Down Dog, Cobra, Child Pose

How Yoga Restores You:

Recovering From Injury or Illness

Deep breathing effects the whole body in profoundly positive ways. It's one of the specifically most important aspects to healing injuries. Attention, and focus into the area. And focusing the breath and expansion into the tissues is to accept the concept that injuries need room to heal.

If you are practicing poses and you're experiencing pain, very gradually, carefully, ease yourself out of the pose until you reach a place of lesser resistance to work from. Stay there. Do not push yourself if you are experiencing pain. Injuries new or from further damage happen in yoga practice when the practitioner is not working with awareness to the balance required between strength and flexibility. Warm rooms can often limber us up, and allow participants to stretch more deeply, but building strength is necessary so we don't stress the muscles, nerves, or joints. Yoga is all about cultivating supportive strength. Encourage your students to move wisely. Especially those who are coming to practice with past injury or muscle damage that is unfamiliar to your skills or experience.

This is a good opportunity to observe your students and learn how the body's intuition may lead you into supportive information. Always gather as much medical information as possible, or any advice they've received from their health team practitioners. And you might even find you highly disagree with her healthcare providers recommendations, and so it's an important to have a discerning approach to help students gain skills for integrating their own body truths. You might be surprised what kind of health beliefs are being harbored in the student's language. So, while it's not wise to openly oppose the doctors' orders, it is important to support the student in their healing quest. Because the emotional and verbal messages they give about their injury indicates the energy that needs to be healed in the spirit and psychology as well.

Spinal injuries may show up in the language as: "I just don't feel supported in my life," etc.

When Dealing With Illnesses

Asthma: Some may recommend avoiding the use of Ujjayi breath for asthmatics, but this is oppositional and silly: it is truly one of the most healing things, and may even help soothe or prevent attacks. While there have been several studies about how slow breathing increases cardiac vagal baroreflex sensitivity, Ujjayi creates strength. It also improves oxygen saturation, lowers blood pressure, and reduces anxiety.

What IS necessary to do with someone suffering asthma is to keep the flow in equilibrium, as slow **breathing with equal inspiration and expiration** seems the best technique for improving baroreflex sensitivity. Instruct them to breathe from their belly, not their chest. Put emphasis on expanding the ribs. This works with the diaphragm and the opening of the back. And this will help even in the onset of an attack. The lower lobes of the lungs are where we will tap into all the anti-stress hormones that help restore stillness and repose. Adding pressure to the sides with your hands will help the student gauge how their breath moves into the body and where, and so educates their awareness. In time it's made known, not just intellectually but through experience that baroreflex sensitivity is not about an attack due to muscle spasms, but suffocation. This is why it's essential to include chest opener poses, which will be so cathartic for a body that has been starved of oxygen and breath.

Pranayama, Ujjayi and belly breathing will begin healing the emotional damage and help to also delay or prevent their frequency of onset. Much of the experience around asthma and lack of ability to achieve oxygen creates a huge stone of fear in the somatic complex.

Vinyasa flow, i.e., Surya Namaskar A. Maintain full breath in and a completed exhale, as this is where most asthma attacks begin: on the exhale. Don't pause; don't let the student get stuck there, the breath must be continuous.

Good poses for opening the ribs: camel and supported camel, sidebend, laying down twists, Baddha Kosana, dolphin, downward dog.

Mastectomy: First find out if where tissue was removed and how much. This is usually a very delicate, personal topic, and could trigger emotional reactions, fear and sadness. And it's important that the student feel safe enough to transition the emotions and give them expression. It's ok for them to be angry, or sad, or feel betrayed. Working through the feelings will help to move them from repression. The

way out is always through. And it's very important that we do give them space to work with the emotions, as there is always a chemical component to our emotions and these can add to the toxic somatic load. We can create our bodies with our thoughts, and we can unmake them too. A mastectomy can lead to a heart chakra shut down for various reasons.

Interestingly enough, the student may express negative feelings about her breasts. Or had issues with her children or breastfeeding, or was often teased for them during adolescence, or difficulties nursing (if she has children). Therapy may be very useful.

Good Poses: Chest openers will help break up scar tissue. Cobra, backbends, handstand, dolphin, downward dog, and Chatarunga. Teach them to breathe into their back. And *asanas* that open the armpits, and pectoral muscles.

Hernia: This indicates something is where it shouldn't be. As these occur on rigid and fragile tissues instead of the flexible ones, to see this in a student is to know immediately where their body is stagnating in energy and requires flow, and healthy vitality. The best way to support the healing process is to get blood and oxygen to the area and rejuvenate the tissues. Building strength and flexibility in these places is very important.

With these types of injuries, it's essential to build the abdominal wall. The bridge is a beautiful energy mover. Note: lunges can aggravate the injury, but are an important part of the healing process, just make sure to spot the student to do all lunge movements using their hands for support.

Pneumonia: If anyone shows up to class under this condition (chances are very strong that they won't) send them home. Further, no one should practice when ill. They need rest. Recovery from pneumonia can be slow and long. Pneumonia destroys the immune system, it truly bashes their defenses and the student will need to conserve energy for their personal restoration. It can take a couple of years to rectify proper immunity in the body. When this much damage occurs to the muscle tissue, like the lungs, the tissue become devitalized, weak and fragile.

Helpful Poses: Energizing the lung tissue, chest openers, ujjayi breath, making sure to equalize the inhale and exhale: NO HOLDS or BREATH RETENTION on EXHALE. Gentle flow is to be preferred over the more dynamic series (B). Whenever an illness

aspects the lungs, you're going to find a person whose tissues will suffer from the lack of oxygenation. Sweating is good.

Good Suggestions: Don't allow them to get chilled. Even in savasana, cover with a blanket those who are recovery from fevers, colds, and like illnesses, as definitely the recently pneumonic. Have them bring a clean pair of clothes to change into after practice. Encourage them to consume Vitamin C and other immune boosters. Lobelia may be helpful. Suggest plenty of sleep. Keep them in easy restorative flows to avoid triggering energy exhaustion. NO competition. No pushing.

What follows are the more sensitive subjects to broach with students:

Addicts, Alcoholics, Bulimics + Smokers:

When a student comes to class that shows signs of any of these three afflictions, it will be important to discover (first through observation, and second, gentle confrontation and inquiry) whether they wish to heal themselves of these behaviors.

For instance, those who are even in counseling or remission from the behavior itself, but have not taken the time or effort to explore the root reasons for their compulsions or harmful behavior in their lives will be prone to triggering and relapses.

As a teacher, you need to decide if this is even an energy or topic you wish to deal with. Establishing your own boundaries, and those of what you will allow in the studio, or even individual instruction; what you are willing to do or not so, or who you are willing to work within your class, and those you won't is an important journey you have to make. You must choose to create your environment for your class and your craft. We often get into this line of work to help people. But note: this is a great possibility of heart and energy draining due to over-involvement.

Dr. Gabor Maté (from his book *The Realm of the Hungry Ghosts*) turns to the neurobiological roots of addiction, and presents an astonishing array of scientific evidence showing conclusively how:

1. addictive tendencies arise in the parts of our brains governing some of our most basic and life-sustaining needs and functions: incentive and motivation,

physical and emotional pain relief, the regulation of stress, and the capacity to feel and receive love;

2. these brain circuits develop, or don't develop, largely under the influence of the nurturing environment in early life, and that therefore addiction represents a failure of these crucial systems to mature in the way nature intended; and
3. the human brain continues to develop new circuitry throughout the lifespan, including well into adulthood, giving new hope for people mired in addictive patterns. Dr. Maté then examines the current mainstream.

Is this something that you feel capable of taking on? And even if you are capable, do you want to?

Bulimia: This is a hard addiction to perceive at first. And unlike other abused substances, the bulimic can't just stop eating... They are usually dealing with issues of guilt, secrecy, trust, and neediness. The way a bulimic finds growth is through a crucible of fire and it happens at every meal. With most eating disorders, there is often a history of sexual abuse, even if the person doesn't currently recall. The mind does incredible things to try to protect the psychology. They might find deeper Jungian or Buddhist therapy / counseling very helpful, and would be worthy of you to suggest it to them.

Smokers: These folks are in need of deep breathing, lung restoration, and detoxification of blood and tissues. And they're going to need to make use of their pores by sweating. A lot. Vitamin C intake is going to be crucial. The biggest question the student needs to ask themselves are about self-sabotage and their fascination for healing: obviously they're in a yoga class: so what's the contradiction at work. Body Intelligence is part of their growth. Smokers are usually under a lot of pressure, and so it's not about confrontation or harassment, it's about helping them to trust themselves and make positive decisions. Ujjayi is recommended if used with a soft breath.

Types of Injuries

All injuries usually come about from a lack of listening. The body is always talking. Make sure students knows about delayed pain, and that should they experience it hours after class, to have them speak to you, but make sure you're keeping an eye out on them in class, and support them in learning the red flag signals their body is sending. It's important to work with the joint within its own range of movement, so

long as it can extend and bend without pain. Always be observant of how all your students (but especially the injurious) walks, and moves, how they settle into the hips and use their entire legs, or any large joint. Is it loose and easy? Is the body tight or rigid?

What other activities do they do which may be aggravating the injury? Sports? Desk job?

The Joy Road

The divinely good thing about pain is that it cuts through all the bull. It requires you to be instantly present. Nothing gets your attention faster than pain. So, with that said, one of the best ways to use that present moment is to use pleasure in it; this is a great exit point. Creating flows that provide ease, pleasure, strength and confidence will help the student trust in the respite of the flow, and also create space.

Concussions + Head Injuries

First thing: let the student know it's going to be about going slow: and going slow it ok. A concussion isn't going to be a quick fix.

AVOID: inverted poses. No bending over in Surya Namaskar A or B series. They need to focus more on standing poses and forward bends. We are going to recommend only those postures that do not put pressure on the brain.

Breathing is Key: focus on breathing through the nose but without putting pressure into the skull.

Brain swelling is a big deal. And if that came about as part of an accident, or even a competitive sports "collision," as teachers, we will need to be aware of how to best open the passageways to allow proper draining. Arnica Montana 30c can be helpful for bruising, pain, facilitates faster healing, and trauma.

Good Poses: Spinal twists are wonderful for cerebral spinal healing and encouraging the movement of vital fluids. Standing and seated forward bend, unless the injury occurred on the forehead. And so, anything close to an inversion needs to keep the head above the torso horizon.

Note: there may be PTSD involved. Reliving accidents of this nature are common and may trigger nausea or fear. Have them return to their breath to keep a more grounded hold on the present moment. And bring them to their feet if needed to keep them out of shock. Always keep them breathing.

Lower Back Issues

These are some of the most consistent issues we see today. If they're suffering from disc injury, whatever motion caused the disc to dislocate will find with it tender and strained musculature. Disc problems in particular need plenty of space and length in the spine. For, not only have they the muscles and vertebrae damaged because of the disc infraction, they will be trying to compensate for it, or "splinting" the area by trying to support it. Another way to support them correctly is to encourage the students to sleep on the back, with a pillow under their knees to nudge the spine into this natural sway, or on their stomachs. This is extremely helpful with disc injury.

You're going to have to be patient and work slowly to rehabilitate the muscles gently enough that the split can release its purpose, which means, it holds a certain rigid pressure and is not responsive to the re-education at first. It's not used to maintaining its normal length; it has become accustomed to holding space severely.

First things first: have the student re-associate themselves with their breath and their natural length in their spinal column. They can begin with simple movements that length and curl the pelvis while lifting the chest. It's important for them to re-engage their energy, and let it move through the legs, almost to siphon off the contraction and rigidity that forces the energy to pool into the back. Engaging this way will expedite the healing process. So finding poses to get the energy flowing again is key. Forward bends, pigeon, back release poses, side bends, and twists. But make sure they make the twist all the way into the sacrum, vs. trying to engage from the upper back. And it is also equally important for the student to know how to gently and properly unwind from a twist or backbend, and safely exit the pose. **We don't recommend forward bends for disc injuries!** We don't want to create a situation where an opportunity for the disc dislocate itself again becomes realized. Here, we want to avoid "openness." Here, Baddha Konasana is well worth introducing.

Returning briefly to the topic of disc injuries, when a disc blows, it pushes the spine out and away from the belly. Backbends use gravity to help bring the disc back into the place where it belongs.

So are backbends, half-boat, and cobra, or boat pose in order to get the student used to what it feels like to engage gently in extending and creating length. Cobra and boat specifically stimulate the release and dissolution of old scar tissue. We don't recommend other backbends at this time; it's better to wait for more healing to occur and more strength returns. Camel against the wall is okay too. These all strengthen the back.

Cobra pose and similar plank-like push-ups will pump the fluids out which may have become stagnant in the area. Injuries accumulate dead blood and tissue and contracted energy, and movement encourages flow and vitality. When this de-stagnation first begins, it's not unheard of

Returning to the education of the spine, standing poses are also good for cultivating that ability to curl the pubic bones and lift the ribs up and away, creating space around the injury.

They are really helpful to invite strength back into the physiology. They're also known as a "unplug and drain" pose.

We want to avoid then, the common mistakes of over tucking in standing poses. It's important to encourage the student to be aware of their tailbone moving under and forward and not simply tucking straight down).

As you work with the student, really aim to discern the types of forces that are caught up or blocked, that continue to strain or promote the conditions for injury. Be aware of twisting motions. The last stages of a healing injury are the most timid and tremulous, and so the student should careful begin working towards the same motions of approach that created the injury initially.

Note: We only recommend backbends be returned into the practice once in the final stages of healing.

Modifications & Decompressions for Upper Body or Healing Poses for Spinal Injuries (SI).

Aggravations: Pigeon lunges, over-tucking in a standing pose, sidebend arm turning over ear into Forward bends. *Useful:* Telescoping ribs, relaxing sphincter muscles, contracting sit bones, traction, and shallow Uddiyana, Half Lotus and Lotus inversions. Cobra with foot over ankle. Windblown Cypress. Virasana, Cobra push-up. Lounge lizard, with a roll or lifting bottom hip off the floor. Boat. Bridge with roll, or series with folded mat. Low cobra, with roll, tucked toes. *Standing poses:* Line up hipbones with ankle of straight leg, not arch of foot. Warrior II: move hips slightly forward toward bent knee. *Inversions:* tucking tailbone towards heels is essential to strengthen the back, and uplift body weight out of the sacrum.

Hamstring + Sciatic Injuries

The issues here are going to be very familiar with the Lower Back injuries recommendations.

Both conditions will find tractions to be immensely helpful. Make sure they keep their attention and awareness of entering and exiting postures. It's worthwhile to work with *asanas* and poses that will protect, wrap, and support the muscles in their healing process.

Basic recommendation: stop the student carrying things in their back pocket: phones, wallets, etc. Encourage regular movement; sedentary lifestyles exacerbate these conditions.

Sciatica injuries will mean working with people experiencing a deep and consistent pain: usually in the back, hips, thighs, buttock, and legs. Sometimes the pain sensation wraps around the front.

Good Poses: While it's true that there will need to be individual work on both the hamstring and sciatic nerves in order to get full restoration of the muscles and nerves. Extension work can be added after healing. First focus on Bridge, Cobra, Boat. *After healing* you can add Warrior II, Pyramid, Lunges and Camel. But make sure the student keeps their tailbone tucked. Bridge with sciatica must be done properly: curl the tailbone towards the navel, and lifting-opening the ribs, paying special attention to where the nerve enters the sacrum.

Avoid: Twists, although twisting warrior is all right or hamstrings.

Keep forward bends for last: tuck the tailbone, right angle, and tighten the buttocks to stabilize. Push the ball of the foot forward and contract the heel. Really, really have them ground down!

Surya Namaskar B Series is all right if it can be done with modifications.

Wrists

If there are injuries here: arm-strengthening poses are going to be of primary importance. But cease any of those, which rely on pressure on the wrists. That means Downward Dog, and Headstands as well as Chaturanga, are all "out". However, alternatives and modifications here, such as padding the heels in certain poses, say, if the students are advanced enough to keep the weight in their feet, and heels, Downward Dog can still be performed. Use wrists braces whenever necessary in any

weight bearing postures. You can also use the wall to help pin the wrist stretch the joint.

Instead focus on creating space in between the bones and across the palm, flattening the hand through massage, and purposefully spreading the fingers. Pushing down on exercise balls can help stretch and strengthen the inner wrist. This is important to begin with for anyone with weak or injured wrists and encourage wrist tractions out of class.

Also, incorporate Dolphin (on the wall) and Forearm Balance for best results.

Knees

Lunges or knee dips should be done daily in small doses at a time, no more than 3 or 5. The lunge should be performed with the front leg at a softer angle than 90 degrees, with the knee kept directly over the heel. If not, the pressure of pulling the foot in can be too much. Better to keep the knee off the floor, or add cushion under the injured joint. Right angle poses are helpful, as is the bridge.

Shoulders

If your students come into the studio with shoulder pain, ask them the following series of questions:

1. Do they carry heavy loads, like shoulder bags, backpacks or purse?
2. Do they play sports, what kind and how often?
3. Do they engage in repetitive actions, working seated, construction, typing, even buckling seatbelts?
4. Do they sleep on their side?

This way you, you can focus on what activities are aggravating the injury and how best to support the healing process.

And then choose from poses that strengthen (the scapula, rhomboid, pectoral, trapezius) accordingly, working up to handstands, forearm balance:

- Dolphin
- Downward Dog (with bent elbows)
- Shoulder Shrugs
- Shower Pose (unweight the shoulder joints, lean back into sits, and move the weight down through the chest. Avoid grinding down into the should joints)
- Sun Salutations – but avoid Series B, or jumping back to Chatarunga.

Neck

The best way to support a student with neck injuries is relaxation techniques, and teaching them to create suppleness and release in many different poses. To instruct them to avoid strain in the cervical vertebrae. Head rolls, side to side, all while maintaining rounded breathing cycles, in and out through the nose. Breath is key here, and if the student cannot breathe deeply without supporting the head, have them focus on expanding the ribs with their breath. Even with chest openers, relaxing facial and shoulder tension, by keeping attention on the crown of the head, imagining the line of breath moving up and out like a thread.

Downward dog and Dolphin for neck injuries: this is great for re-educating alignment, because it requires the proper use of the shoulder blades sliding along the upper back towards the ribs and hips to encourage use of chest versus relying on the neck. This can be used as a great prolonged stretch. So can Bridge, but using a wall or swiss/exercise balls, might be better, unless the student is more advanced. Figure 8's with their jaw, and Lion are also good stretches.

As we mentioned pleasure earlier, this pleasure-relief can be achieved through *tractioning* (especially for neck injuries). This is easily accomplished for the student on their own (or against the wall) with Standing Forward Bend; whereby they grab their own neck or hair (if appropriate), or simply by letting the neck hang open, the muscles in their faces relaxed, and let gravity do the rest. In Sidebends however, it's recommended to use a hand to support the cervical curve so the neck can relax.

Breathing techniques will help get the student to open the chest and oxygenate the cranial spaces, as well as their lungs. When we tap into the lower lobes of the lungs, this is how we activate all the anti-stress hormones that the body produces for us. So, with neck injuries, it's important that we bypass the urge to breathe shallowly in the neck or throat.

Yogic massage is a great way to let the student release out of pain, by having them lay down, and rubbing the neck, while firmly holding the back of the occiput; gently pull the head away from the shoulders, ever so slightly, lengthening the vertebrae. And be sure to release the neck back slowly.

Using shoulder shrugs is a similar if more passive way of releasing the neck. Find a wall-corner where you can sit with the spine erect, and crush-cuddle against the vertices. If they choose, they can further employ a rolled mat in that corner, and use

it to squeeze back some alignment into the skull-spine foramen location, letting the other vertebrae follow suit.

NO: Shoulder stands or Head Stands. This should be obvious.

Other Diseases:

High Blood Pressure (HBP): As an emotional issue, HBP usually indicates anger issues, or repressed anger and other emotions challenges in general. Breath is going to be their salvation, because it ties into our emotional body. You will be able to pick them out in class. If a student has high blood pressure, they're not going to breathe through the flow: they're going to pant. Sun Salutes are the limit of vigorous pacing. Make sure the student is testing their pressure regularly.

Absolutely NO inversions, backbends or headstands or anything that makes the blood course and pound. Folks with this issue need all the help they can get in relaxing their core, and their structures: spine, neck, lungs. They need to learn to breathe openly and steadily. Savasana will be a place they can learn to let go, not that it will be easy, necessarily. Guiding them into a soft meditative space here will be very helpful to them.

Immune System (CFD, Auto-Immunity, AIDS):

Start off with the basics: what are they (or aren't they) putting into their bodies? What does their lifestyle look like? Do they eat well; drink water; are their minerals replete? Are they dealing with a backlog of toxins: pharmaceuticals, heavy metals, drugs, cigarettes, alcohol.... Even caffeine addictions can lay waste to a system. In each of these cases, the protocol will be similar: detox. Clean up the blood. If they're not willing to even discuss these topics, chances are the teacher is not going to be able to provide support here. But you can always gently encourage them to up their water, swap their bread carbs with water-rich fruits and vegetables: cucumber, celery, zucchini, and juicy fruit.

In the direst of Auto-Immunity diagnoses or Chronic Fatigue or CFD: these are people who most likely deny themselves pleasure and purpose in their lives. Finding their heart and mission will restore their will and vitality. Encourage them to seek out their bliss, as Joseph Campbell would say. And make daily decisions that help take a step towards achieving it.

AIDS: Students need to have their own mats out of concern for others.

Chronic Fatigue: These students need to be aware of their need for balance, nourishment and rest. They need to be a bit stricter with themselves regarding what kinds of indulgences they allow themselves. Chances are they suffer from poor vitality because somewhere they are not truthful with themselves (not to mention others). But it can be very draining and exhausting keeping secrets or telling lies to oneself.

To those with these types of patterns, we implore: find your heart. What inspires you? What Lights you up? Do that! Stop delaying.

Pose Groups

Forward Bends

Recline - Hamstring Focus

- Recline Big Toe Pose 1
- Recline Big Toe Pose 2

Recline - Hip Focus

- Recline Butterfly Pose with Back Traction Pose
- Recline Cow Face Pose
- Eye of the Needle Pose or Supine Thread the Needle Pose
- Half Wind Removing Pose
- Wind Removing Pose
- Happy Baby Pose
- Yogic Sleep Pose
- Recline Destroyer Of The Universe Pose

Seated - Hamstring Focus

- Head to Knee Pose
- Half Split Pose
- Split Pose
- Forward Stretching Pose
- Revolved Stretching Pose
- Upward Facing Stretching Pose
- Compass Pose
- Tortoise Pose
- Wide-Angle Seated Forward Bend Pose

Seated - Hip Focus

- Child Pose
- Easy Embryo Pose
- Easy Pose
- Double Pigeon Pose
- Cow Face
- Butterfly Pose
- Reclined Tortoise Pose
- Rock the Baby Pose

- One Leg Behind the Head Pose
- War God Pose
- Frog Pose
- Lotus in Sphinx Pose
- Half Lotus Pose
- Embryo Pose
- Lotus Pose
- Boud Lotus Pose
- The Psychic Union Pose
- Embryo Pose
- Yogi Staff Pose
- Recline Destroyer Of The Universe Pose

Standing - Hamstring Focus

- Standing forward fold Pose
- Extended Hand to Big Toe Pose 1
- Wide-Legged Forward Bend Pose
- Wide-Legged Standing Forward Fold Pose
- Pyramid Pose
- Bound Firefly Pose
- Rag Doll Pose
- Halfway Lift Pose
- Foot to Hand Pose
- Downward Facing Dog Pose
- One-Legged Downward Dog Pose
- One-legged Standing Forward Fold Pose 1
- One-legged Standing Forward Fold Pose 2
- Extended Hand to Big Toe 1
- Extended Hand to Big Toe 2
- Humble Flamingo Pose
- Bird of Paradise Pose
- Revolved Bird of Paradise Pose
- Standing Head to Knee Pose
- Standing Split Pose

Standing - Hip Focus

- Lunge Pose
- Low Lunge Pose
- Half Lotus in Tree Pose
- Half Bound Lotus Stretched Out Pose
- Warrior 2
- Reverse Warrior Pose

- Revolved Side Angle Pose
- Garland Pose
- Humble Warrior Pose
- Bond Side Angle Pose
- Eagle Pose
- Extended Triangle Pose
- Mermaid Pose 1
- Mermaid Pose 2
- Pigeon Pose
- Horse Stance with Back Traction Pose
- Sage Durvasas Pose
- Half Moon Pose
- Half Moon Bow Pose
- Revolved Half Moon Pose
- Lotus Mountain Pose
- Horse Power Pose

Backward Bends

Backward Bend - Recline

- Recline Hero Pose
- Fish Pose
- Bridge Pose

Backward Bend - Prone

- Locust Pose
- Half Locust Pose 1
- Half Locust Pose 2
- Melted Heart Pose
- Sphinx Pose
- Cobra Pose
- Knees-Chest-Chin Pose
- Upward-Facing Dog Pose
- King Cobra Pose
- Bow Pose
- Big Toe Bow Pose or Bow Pose 2

Backbend - Standing / Kneeling

- Cow Pose
- Camel Pose
- Pigeon Pose
- Mermaid Pose 1
- Mermaid Pose 2
- Standing Backbend Pose
- Wild Thing Pose
- Split Pose
- Wheel or Upward-Facing Bow Pose
- Full Camel Pose 1
- Full Camel Pose 2
- One-Legged Wheel 1
- One-Legged Wheel 2
- Split Arms and Legs Pose
- Wheel Pose
- Dancer Pose 2
- Dancer Pose 3

Twisting

Twisting - Recline

- Reclined Spinal Twist
- Reclined Eagle Spinal Twist Pose

Twisting - Sitting

- Revolved Head to Knee Pose
- Revolved Stretching Pose
- Compass Pose
- Half Spine Twist Pose
- Half Lord of the Fishes Pose 2
- Sage Bharadvaja's pose 1
- Revolved Sage Marichi's Pose 1
- Revolved Lotus Pose
- Yogi Staff Pose

Twisting - Standing / Kneeling

- Thread the Needle Pose
- Revolved Wide-Legged Standing Forward Fold Pose
- Revolved Side Angle Pose
- Bond Side Angle Pose
- Extended Hand to Big Toe 2

- Revolved Bird of Paradise Pose
- Revolved Half Moon Bow Pose
- Pigeon Pose with a Twist Pose
- Revolved Chair Pose

Arm Balancing

Arms extended out to the side

- Side Plank Pose
- Side Plank in Tree Pose
- Side Plank in Half Lotus Pose
- Side Plank in Hand to Big Toes Pose
- Visvamitra's Pose
- Destroyer Of The Universe Pose

Arms extended forward like Plank or Chaturanga

- Crow Pose
- Side Crane Pose
- Fallen Angel Pose
- Eight Angle Pose
- Two-legged Sage Koundinya Pose
- One-legged Sage Koundinya Pose 1
- One-legged Sage Koundinya Pose 2
- Flying Pigeon Pose
- Dragonfly 1
- Dragonfly 2
- Chin Stand Pose

Arms reaching overhead

- Dolphin Pose
- Flash Prep Pose
- Handstand
- Forearm Stand

Arms reaching down

- One Hand and Arm pose
- Finger Stand
- Firefly Pose 1
- Firefly Pose 2

- Peacock Pose
- Lotus in Peacock Pose
- One Arm Lotus in Peacock Pose
- Moon Bird Yoga Pose
- Om Pose

Inversion

- Downward-Facing Dog Pose
- Dolphin Pose
- Turbo Dog Pose
- Flesh Prep Pose
- Legs-Up-The-Wall Pose
- Melted Heart Pose
- Handstand
- Forearm Stand
- Headstand
- Shoulder Stand

VINYASA SEQUENCE 1

(BEGINNER)

Opening - (3 mins)

- Seated Meditation

Warm Up (5 mins)

- Cat & Cow
- Cat & Cow one arm one leg (core activation)
- Cat & Cow elbow to knee 3x
- Downdog & Plank 3x
- Reclined Hand to Big Toe, Up, Over and Across

Stability / Awareness (5 mins)

- Abs with blocks
- Nirvasana

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

- Classical Sun 2x
- Sun A 2x
- Mountain —> Tree —> Warrior 2 —> Reverse Warrior —> Extended Side Angle —> Sun A —> Repeat other side —> Child

Apex (10 mins)

- Mountain —> Eagle —> High Lunge —> Down Dog —> Sun A —> Other side
- Half Locust —> Locust —> Bridge

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

- Recline Butterfly
- Knee to Chest
- Dandasana
- Seated Forward Fold
- Seated Spine Twist
- Butterfly

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins)

- Savasana
- Meditation

BACK BEND FOCUSED SEQUENCE

(BEGINNER)

Opening (3 mins)

- Sit in Vajrasana meditation

Warm Up (5 mins)

- Vajrasana
 - Eagles arms
 - Cow Face arms
 - Arms crossed behind back
 - Arms up over head, clasp hands, stretch up, back and side bend, big circle
- All Fours
- Thread the Needle with arms back 5x
- Anahatasana then press back
- Cobra + Child 5x

Stability / Awareness (5 mins)

- Abs with block
- Bridge

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

- Classical Surya Namaskar 3x with Low Lunge
- Surya Namaskar A

Apex (10 mins)

- One-Legged Dog —> High Lunge with Eagle arms —> Warrior 3 > Eagle —> High Lunge with Eagle arms —> Revolved Wide-Legged Standing Forward Fold —> Half Split —> Dancer 1 —> 1/2 Surya Namaskar —> Repeat the other side.
- Cobra x 3 —> Locust —> Bow —> Child
- Bridge —> Wheel

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

- Reclined Butterfly
- Knee to chest with knees circle
- Seated Spine Twist
- Seated Forward Stretching

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins)

- Savasana
- Meditation

ARM BALANCE FOCUSED SEQUENCE

W/ SIDE PLANK POSE (BEGINNER)

Opening - (3 mins)

- Vajrasana Meditation

Warm Up (5 mins)

- Vajrasana
- Arms out to the side shoulder rotation then wrist warm up with fingers facing up
- Recline Hands to Big Toes Prep —> Recline Hand to Big Toe 1
- All Fours with one arm one leg —> Down Dog / High Plank 3x

Stability / Awareness (5 mins)

- Abs with block
- Nirvasana

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

- Classical Sun 2x
- Sun A 2x
- Child
- One-Legged Dog —> Knee to Nose —> Warrior 2 —> Extended Side Angle —> Sun A —> Repeat on the other side. 2x

Apex (10 mins)

- Down Dog —> High Plank —> Side Plank —> Repeat on the other side.

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

- Hand to Feet wrist stretch
- Reclined Butterfly
- Reclined Spine Twist

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins)

- Savasana
- Meditation

ARM BALANCE FOCUSED SEQUENCE W/ SIDE CRANE POSE (INTERMEDIATE)

Opening - (3 mins)

- Child

Warm Up (5 mins)

- Cat & Cow —> Wrist warm up —> Open & Close Hands 50x —> All Fours Elbow to Knee 3 —> Down Dog / High Plank 3x

Stability / Awareness (5 mins)

- Recline Gomukasana —> Reclined Crow
- Abs: Elbow to Knee 3x

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

- Classical Sun 2x
- Sun A 2x
- Child
- One-Legged Dog —> Knee to Nose —> Revolved High Lunge —> Sun A —> Chair —> Repeat on the other side.
- One-Legged Dog —> Knee to Nose —> Twisted High Lunge —> Sun A —> Revolved Chair —> Repeat on the other side.

Apex (10 mins)

- One-Legged Dog —> Knee to opposite elbow —> Vinyasa Flow —> Revolved Chair —> Side Crane —> Repeat on the other side.

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

- Hand to Feet wrist stretch
- Reclined Butterfly
- Reclined Spine Twist

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins)

- Savasana
- Meditation

FORWARD BENDING FOCUSED SEQUENCE W/ OSTRICH POSE (BEGINNER)

Opening - (3 mins)

- Child

Warm Up (5 mins)

- Cat & Cow
- Down Dog warm up (focus on the back of legs and hips)
- Pigeon rock both sides
- Recline Big Toe Prep —> Recline Big Toe 1 —> Recline Big Toe 2 —> Half Happy Baby —> Reclined Cow Face —> Other side.

Stability / Awareness (5 mins) Abs, Prep Poses

- Navasana
- Eagle Abs 2x

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

- Classical Sun 2x
- Sun A 2x
- Child
- One-legged Dog with Hips opening —> Warrior 2 —> Triangle —> Half Moon —> Extended Side angle —> Prasarita Padottanasana with hands clasp behind —> Repeat on the other side.

Apex (10 mins)

- One-legged Dog with Hips opening —> Warrior 2 —> Ostrich —> Pyramid —> Eagle —> Sun A —> Repeat on the other side.

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

- Child
- Head to Knee
- Seated Forward Fold
- Knee to chest
- Reclined Spine Twist

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins)

- Savasana
- Meditation

TWISTING FOCUSED SEQUENCE W/ HAND TO BIG TOE 2 POSE (BEGINNER)

Opening (3 mins)

- Child

Warm Up (5 mins)

- Cat & Cow
- Thread the Needle in All Four
- Cat & Cow one arm one leg
- Cow Face with twist or Cross-legged with twist
- Reclined Hand to Big Toe, Up, Over and Across

Stability / Awareness (5 mins) Abs, Prep Poses

- Navasana
- Elbow to Knee 2x

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

- Classical Sun 2x
- Sun A 2x
- Child
- One-Legged Dog —> Revolved High Lunge —> Chair —> Hand to Big Toe 1—> Repeat on the other side.

Apex (10 mins)

- One-Legged Dog —> Twisted High Lunge —> Revolved Chair —> Hand to Big Toe 2—> Repeat on the other side.

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

- Child
- Half Spine Twist
- Parivrtta Marichyasana
- Bridge
- Knee to chest
- Reclined Spine Twist

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins)

- Savasana
- Meditation

TWISTING FOCUSED SEQUENCE W/ REVOLVED BIRD OF PARADISE POSE (INTERMEDIATE)

Opening (3 mins)

- Child

Warm Up (5 mins)

- Cat & Cow
- Thread the Needle in All Four
- Cat & Cow one arm one leg
- Cow Face with twist or Cross-legged with twist
- Reclined Hand to Big Toe, Up, Over and Across

Stability / Awareness (5 mins) Abs, Prep Poses

- Navasana with Twist
- Elbow to Knee 2x

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

- Classical Sun 2x
- Sun A 2x
- Child
- One-Legged Dog —> Revolved High Lunge —> Hand to Big Toe 1—> Repeat on the other side.
- One-Legged Dog —> Twisted High Lunge —> Hand to Big Toe 2—> Repeat on the other side.

Apex (10 mins)

- One-Legged Dog —> Bounded Twisted High Lunge —> Hand to Big Toe 2—> Revolved Bird of Paradise —> Repeat on the other side.

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

- Child
- Half Spine Twist
- Parivrtta Marichyasana
- Bridge
- Knee to chest
- Reclined Spine Twist

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins)

- Savasana
- Meditation

HATHA YOGA SEQUENCE 1 (BEGINNER)

Opening - (3 mins)

Seated Meditation

Warm Up (5 mins)

- Cat & Cow
- Cow / Child 3x
- Cow / Down Dog 3x

Stability / Awareness (5 mins)

- Cat & Cow one arm one leg (core activation)
- Tiger
- Reclined Hand to Big Toe, Up, Over and Across
- Rag Doll.
- Uttanasana with clasp hands behind

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

- Mountain
- Warrior 2
- Extended Side Angle
- Reverse Warrior
- Triangle
- High Lunge
- Revolved High Lunge

Apex (10 mins)

- Tree
- Tree with Side Bend
- Hand to Big Toe 1, Hand to Big toe 2
- Dancer 1
- Down Dog
- Half Locust
- Locust
- Bridge

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

- Recline Butterfly
- Knee to Chest
- Dandasana
- Seated Forward Fold
- Seated Spine Twist
- Butterfly

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins)

- Savasana
- Meditation

BACK BEND FOCUSED SEQUENCE

Opening (3 mins)

- Vajrasana meditation

Warm Up (5 mins)

- Vajrasana
 - Arms out rotation
 - Arms crossed behind back
 - Arms up over head, clasp hands, stretch up, back and side bend, big circle
- Cow + Child 5x
- Cow + Down Dog 5x (Bring awareness to the open chest and length on spine)
- Thread the Needle with arms back 5x

Stability / Awareness (5 mins)

- Anahatasana
- Cobra + Child 3x

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

- Down Dog
- Low Lunge (right leg forward)
 - Clasp hands on right knee
 - Left arm back for back bend
- Down Dog —> Other side (left foot forward and repeat the above)
- Down Dog
- Low Lunge (right leg forward)
 - Clasp hands on right knee
 - Left arm back for quad stretch
 - Open twist
- Down Dog —> Other side (left foot forward and repeat the above)

Apex (10 mins)

- High Lunge with Eagle arms
- Eagle
- Revolved Wide-Legged Standing Forward Fold
- Dancer 1
- Cobra
- Locust
- Camel
- Bridge

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

- Reclined Butterfly
- Knee to chest with knees circle
- Happy Baby
- Recline Spine Twist

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins)

- Savasana
- Meditation

TWISTING FOCUSED SEQUENCE (BEGINNER)

Opening (3 mins)

- Child

Warm Up (5 mins)

- Cat & Cow 5x
- Thread the Needle in All Four
- Cat & Cow one arm one leg
- Sage Bharadvaja's pose 1
- Cow Face with twist or Cross-legged with twist

Stability / Awareness (5 mins) Abs, Prep Poses

- Standing Side Bend
- Chair
- Down Dog
- Revolved Down Dog

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

- Revolved Wide-Legged Standing Forward Fold
- Revolved Chair
- Revolved High Lunge
- Eagle

Apex (10 mins)

- Twisted High Lunge
- Hand to Big Toe 2
- Down Dog
- Pigeon with Twist

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

- Down Dog
- Half Spine Twist
- Revolved Marichyasana
- Bridge
- Revolved Sage Marichi's Pose
- Half Spine twist
- Seated Forward Stretch
- Knee to chest

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins)

- Savasana
- Meditation

The Rules of Yoga During Pregnancy

It's very important that Mothers cultivate some good self-awareness of her changing body and it's shifts of accommodation for this new being she is nourishing and growing within her. This is a very specific kind of listening that needs to be brought into the practice. If you are supporting a pregnant yogini, it's essential that you encourage her to be aware of her limitations and intuitions, let her express when she's feels she can't perform a certain asana or pose, or if a position intuitively feels strange. Remind her what else she's still able to do, not what she cannot do anymore. Her inward focus and natural feedback are what need to guide her practice.

Early things to focus on, before her belly gets too big, include chest openers and breathing focus into her back; for women actually have access to extra breathing/ lung capacity as part of the biological accommodation to pregnancy. So it will be very helpful for her to establish patterns of full oxygenation, which will help her to feel connect, calm, and nourished of mind during the duration of gestation. If this expansion doesn't engage, then you, as her teacher must help her accomplish this.

That said: NO *uddiyana*, *navli*, withholding her exhale or locks, or *agni sara*. What she can do instead is alternative nostril *pranyamas* with soft 8-10 inhale-exhale cycle. But to repeat: NO breath contractions or holding. None. Zero. Breath in, breath deep, use all your thoughts and intentions to expand and open. *Contractions of all kinds will come later (*wink).*

Another thing she is not allowed to contest is that she MUST NOT DO ABDOMINAL WORK after conception. *While women are in the process of readying or preparing to conceive, abdominal work is wonderful, essential and highly recommended: this is a great way to purify the energies here and clean our old energetic and physical "gunk" in the solar plexus. We invite in new energies and beginnings in the womb this way, including new life.*

When it comes to her belly, she is merely allowed to control her exhale, or perhaps perform abdominal-less work on the mat. Good practices for her to maintain and try are: sidebends and frog, with special emphasis on rib and hip openers. This is an especially helpful alternative to offer mothers in-group classes, when the rest of the participants are focusing on ab work.

8 Asana Adaptations For Pregnancy

Surya Namaskar Series B

This is a great series, and has great variations and requires a strong tuck through the tailbone, which strengthens the buttocks and takes stress from the abdomen. Even Plank can be adjusted as a push up, so long as belly stays elevated off the floor. But overall, the more dynamic poses should be approached more gently, and while she can join the class for standing poses and lunges, there should be greater focus on chest openers and lung expansion, some *Camel* and more *Cobra*.

Twists/Spinal Twists/Warrior Variations: Gentle twists are wonderful to release lower back stress or pain. But there must be some consideration to not push the leg into the babe, so make sure to twist away from the belly: if right leg is up, right arm pushes; we are be used to twisting towards the upward leg. Cross-legged twists can be good. Warrior twists require alteration because we don't want to create internal pressure the babe in any way. Try it like this: Right foot forward, left hand on floor about 18" to the inside of the foot. Stretch right arm up until you feel the engagement of the stretch by arching the back just a bit. Makes sure to always assist standing twists this way. If this "twisting warrior" is a bust, try variations of *Extended Warrior*. And same rules for Lunges.

The Abdominal-Less Mat: This is where we go when we feel the need to open hips and release for the purposes of sciatic nerve adjustments, or pain. With absolutely no Abdominals until after birth, it is important instead to cultivate a daily practice (yes! Use it throughout the whole pregnancy), where rolled blanket is held between the thighs, knees bent and feet on the floor. And using buttocks, squeeze sit bones towards each other. Release and repeat.

Backward Bend Poses, Bridges, and Forward Bends: Forward bends are great as long as you are putting no pressure on the belly; just get the legs out of the way. If you're doing standing or backbends, the first step is to make her comfortable with her center of gravity and drilling her sense of balance into the soles of her feet upon the ground. All balance poses can be done against the wall. If she's familiar with these postures, and has good balance, assist her in keeping alert to her abilities and encourage her to listen to her body. Camel is good so long as you keep your hands on your hips. Some women, especially long time yoga mothers can do wheel too.

Knee Squats, Horse, Straddles and Frogs: Letting the mother work on hip openers like pigeon or frog can be done sitting or on her back. With frog in particular, if she is already at the point where the belly is touching the floor, place her on her back, shin-distance from the wall and put her feet up.

Inversions: Handstands, headstands, even downward dog can feel like too much. Such poses can be returned to 90 days after giving birth. If she isn't familiar with yoga, this is not something for her to try and begin mastering now.

Downward Dogs and Dolphins: requires a wall if they're going to be used, but usually feels amazing, because it shifts the weight away from the common pressure on the bladder, etc. As with inversions these are to be done with greater care.

Savasana: This is where all yoga classes end. Encourage her to place a hand on her belly and heart and experience a soft reciprocal love wave transmitting between her babe and her own body. A lovely meditative practice to reconnect anytime. If the mother is in the last trimester, she may lie on her side for Savasana.



Yoga doesn't Separate or Unite—We do. ~ ChauKei Ngai



Via ChauKei Ngai on May 16, 2014

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Anyone who has done much yoga has heard that the meaning of the word *yoga* is *union*.

Like most beginning yogis, I first understood this to be the union of body and mind. My own life is built on separations that yoga has helped me to bridge. This understanding has been critical in the year since I achieved the *International Yoga Sports Federation Championship*.

As I have traveled around the world on the "*Champion Tour*," my mission has been to use yoga to share these lessons to bridge separations and bring unity to all that I reach.

My first separation began when I was 14 and my family moved from Hong Kong to Canada. Since then I have moved between Canada, Hong Kong, the United States, Singapore, Taiwan and have traveled extensively in Europe.

While I have in some ways transcended the East/West cultural division, I always have been aware of the two worlds I bridge—the collective communal in the East and the individualism in the West. Within the yoga community, however, I began to realize that these categories were not as meaningful (the power of yoga to erase artificial boundaries and to unite).

I recognized separations within the yoga community itself. Yoga was brought from East to the West, and many different brands have developed. Yoga is not an idea or a name. I observed many black-and-white separations across different yoga schools and teachers.

When we live in a box that creates separation, there's constantly a comparison to find a better box than the one we're in currently. The territorial protection creates insecurity from the sense of lack and takes us to a scary place.

My practice began with **Bikram Yoga**. For many years it has been the best practice for me and for many others. It is simple, accessible, intense, emotional and challenging.

The postures are founded on compression and extension and opposite reactions. It also leads to a profound meditative state. In the last couple years I started to dedicate myself into various kinds of yoga.

Every yogi experiences their own sort of unity and divine connection through their own practice. This can be through chanting, meditating, fasting or selfless service.

Over time my trans-cultural experience began to take shape, especially in the past year of my travels. An image began forming in my mind of yoga acting as a means in which individuals were like so many soybeans going through a funnel.

When we practice yoga—age, family, religion, sexuality, type of yoga, society, class, status—and all the other boxes we inhabit begin to melt away. Like those soybeans going through the funnel, yoga unites us all, without judgment, to take us to the same transcendent space.

Practicing yoga in so many different places helped me to see how the world is interconnected, through news, media, technology and the arts. Let's not forget how our connection, the high wave and the low wave, is constantly changing.

Our present limitation is a delusion. I practice yoga to expand our consciousness to infinity; many others practice yoga for health and beauty, or simply for focus. Yoga is a tool—it's okay for people to have different ideas of what it is.

We don't need to do the same thing, or be the same way—that's how the Universe is supposed to be. The Universe consists of opposite forces, contraction and expansion, positive and negative, yin and yang, North Pole and South Pole, separation and unification.

We are all co-existing, the unity is within ourselves. Then we develop the capacity of kindness, acceptance and mutual understanding of others. Everyone is an extension of ourselves, and each yoga is an extension of others.

We all lead from one to another, and yoga provides the path.

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Editor: Travis May

Photo: Provided by author

Sources: www.elephantjournal.com/2014/05/yoga-doesnt-separate-or-unite-we-do-chaukei-ngai
www.Chaukei.com/single-post/Yoga-doesnt-Separate-or-Unite-us---We-do

Finding Joy & Stillness in Competitive Yoga. ~ ChauKei Ngai



Via ChauKei Ngai on May 26, 2014



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People are often confused about the idea of how one competes in yoga.

We've grown up learning that if we want to win in a competition, we cannot wish our opponents the best; we have to keep our training secrets, or hope a strong opponent gets injured before they get on stage.

It's all ego and fear-based. That doesn't sound anything like yoga to me.

To me, the word *competition* is just a set-up.

Imagine you're walking through a forest. You are calm, joyful and peaceful.

You are enjoying the scenery when suddenly you see a tiger walk out from behind a bush. As soon as the tiger appears, you lose your sense of calm, even though the tiger may just be looking without attacking. We react with fear to the tiger.

Yoga helps to change our habitual thought and action.

When competing in yoga, how will we conquer our fear-based, competitive mind?

In the middle of chaos, how are we going to find our breath and stillness?

I've seen many who can demonstrate perfect yoga poses in front of hundreds, even thousands of people, but as soon as you tell them it's a competition, they often lose their stillness right away.

With the fear of judgment and their attachment to the result, they lose control of their nervous system.

How far they can bend backward or how long they can stand on their hands has nothing to do with the performance.

If they lose the peaceful feeling because of the fear of judgment, and worry about winning or losing, they will also lose their breathing, the stillness and the balance.

They will lose everything that makes it yoga.

Yoga is a science.

Yoga Asana practice and mediation balance our nervous systems.

When we're on stage competing, our adrenaline flows and our nervous system is in its Sympathetic state (called "fight or flight" mode). In a Sympathetic state, the blood rushes to our fists to prepare us to punch harder, and to our feet so we can run faster.

While we're in a yoga pose, we're in a Parasympathetic state.

I call it healing, or house keeping mode.

Our heart rate slows down, blood pressure is lowered; blood circulation goes to our digestive system, skeletal system, and so on. Our bodies are in homeostasis and balanced, which calms the body.

During a yoga competition, we learn to control our nervous system instead of allowing the adrenaline and emotions to take over.

We learn these skills during yoga class.

The first thing we need to apply is our will to use our body as a medium. If we learn to control our thoughts, then we can control the nervous system.

A yoga competitor might spend many hours a day on a single yoga pose. They train for years to change their bodies.

On stage, there's only the breathing, the conscious movement, **the conscious stillness.**

The mind needs to be at peace before the body can be at ease. Demonstration of stillness lies underneath the mind and body union.

A friend of mine, who is an actress and has even performed on stage in the nude, has competed in a yoga competition. She shared with me that the yoga competition was more frightening than being on stage fully naked.

When she's on stage as an actress, she is not herself. When she is on stage competing in yoga, her heart and soul is laid bare and she feels vulnerable, exposing who she is—her weaknesses, her strengths and her fears.

When I watch a yoga routine, I do not pay attention to how the inner thighs rotate, nor to the dazzling transition from one pose to another.

What I pay attention to is everything else—the joy, the love, the breathing, the grace, the stillness. It's about the decision, the moment of accepting the fear.

It is about being present.

Being the World Champion only means I won in that particular moment of truth. In that present moment, there's no regret of the past, nor fear of the future.

If I compete again today, I might not even place 10th because things change. Each moment is different.

What I learned is being a champion is not something others give you. It's a state of being, and that being is timeless and unbeatable.

It's a conscious infinity.

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Apprentice Editor: Carrie Marzo/Editor: Travis May

Photo: [Siuman Photography](#)

Sources: www.elephantjournal.com/2014/05/finding-joy-stillness-in-competitive-yoga-chaukei-ngai/
www.chaukei.com/single-post/Finding-Joy-Stillness-in-Competitive-Yoga

7 ways to stay flexible



People often ask me how do I stay flexible, what do I eat, what do I do? Here you are!!

1. An alkaline body is a flexible body. Pack yourself with an alkaline diet: fresh fruits and dark leafy greens, legumes, unsalted nuts.
2. Raw apple cider vinegar and green tea are highly alkaline for my body.
3. Stay away from any form of sugar, red meat and dairy products. These foods cause an inflammatory response that contributes to muscle pain and stiffness in the joints. Our body intelligence is trying to fight off these irritating foods by creating an inflammatory response. For example, if you get bitten by a snake on your leg, the leg swells. It's a sign your body is fighting the venom, the swelling that is the inflammation. So imagine you're eating all these irritating foods that are resulting in swelling in your cells all over the body? It's painful to bend a swollen body!
4. Kick off your coffee habits. Coffee is extremely acidic. Also, it's dehydrating and that causes stiffness.
5. Low sodium diet is important. With elevated sodium levels, our bodies hold on to fluid and again that's causing the swelling in our joints.
6. Bikram yoga, the original hot yoga keeps me hot and bendy!!!
7. In Yoga, it's about mind and body connection. In order for us to have a flexible body, it's very important we have a flexible mind in terms of our dietary intake. If you're nervous or frustrated about body is being a bit tight that day, guess what's gonna happen?

Source: <https://www.chaukei.com/single-post/2017/07/16/7-ways-to-stay-flexible>

A teachers role

Authenticity

- Be able to teach in an honest, responsible and authentic manner.
- Be able to examine the truth of what you both say and teach, and also be clear about the reason why you teach the way you do.
- Use an authentic voice: always be aware of the monotone voice and commonly repeated words.
- Be able to speak, touch, and demonstrate techniques clearly. Be able to communicate verbally and non-verbally using touch and demonstration that is congruent with your intentions.
- Always teach with passion and from your experience and love of yoga.
- As a teacher, you should be acting as a leader of the entire class. Always be reminded that you should hold yourself to a high standard and act accordingly in front of students.
- You also need to be flexible and also have a backup plan. And also, be sure to determine what your limit is in any situation.

Communication

- Speak and touch clearly and be able to communicate both verbally and non-verbally.
- Be able to use the right tone of voice and class dialogue in an effective manner in order to deliver the message that you want to send across.
- Always maintain complete and clean communication
- Avoid using slang terms
- Be wary of repetitive sounds, words, and fillers such (i.e. ok, ummmm, we're gonna)
- If there is any doubt on your students, be sure to make an extra step towards making sure that they understand.
- Always teach with passion from your love of yoga

What I look for in a Teacher

- Authenticity
- Knowledgeable of using safe and effective hands-on adjustments in order to tailor lessons that can improve students
- Be sure to be self-aware and professional. Don't bring your own drama into the classroom before, during, or after class.
- Capacity to teach students in order for them to strengthen their entire body, embody the spirit, connect to the core, heal physically and emotionally, and live authentically. Be able to set a good example for the students.
- Be able to teach students in order to awaken their inner fire and be able to differentiate the voice of their spirit from the voice of their current condition.
- Have the ability to find out with the students what their truth is at the moment in order to help them hone their skills in order to live and grow their truth.
- Have the ability to guide students towards embodying spirit and strive to free themselves from whatever it is that may restrict that.
- Be able to promote emotional healing. Give permission and create the space for each student in order to release their emotional backlog (ie. rage, laughter, shaking). And have the ability to educate the students that this type of release is the road towards freedom.

Code of Ethics & Best Practices for Yoga Teachers

As a *Certified Yoga Alliance Registered Yoga teacher under YogaUP*, it is my duty to provide physical, mental and spiritual support to my students, and promote the dignity and integrity of Yoga teachings. Therefore, I take the responsibility to respect the following Code of Ethics:

Yoga Centre's Code of Ethics:

- I will only provide services that I am qualified for
- I will not give medical advice to students regarding their eventual medical conditions, treatments and medical appointments
- I will not give my personal opinion regarding other Yoga teachers and their practices
- I will provide clear instructions based on my education, training and experience
- As a teacher, I will continue my Yoga education
- Business will be managed honestly, straightforward and correctly
- I will respect the best practices regarding my business finances

Commitment to my students and the community

- I will state the realistic benefits of practicing Yoga
- I will respect my student's personal values and beliefs
- I will teach Yoga to all individuals regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, color, religion, ancestry, nationality, physical/mental disability, age, marital status, medical condition or political affiliation.
- Any action that will affect the highest interest of my students will be excluded
- I will get not involved romantically or sexually with my students
- I will not take financial, romantic or sexual advantage of my students
- I will provide solutions for continuation of Yoga teaching in case of any disruption. I will not cancel or stop my activity without providing it

Promoting my services

My advertising materials will reflect the real and unexaggerated benefits of Yoga. My classes will be described clearly and unambiguously in my brochures, advertising and other channels of communication. I will not state any false sponsors or false implication of any organization.

I understand that breaching the code of ethics and any report will be investigated by..... and could lead to losing my Yoga certification

Student signature:_____

Teacher signature:_____

Date:_____

Worksheets

Class Sequence Guideline (60 mins)

Type of Class:_____ ***Peak***
Pose:_____

Which body parts needs to open?

Which body parts needs awareness and stability?

Class Theme:

Opening - (3 mins) *Introduction of the theme, Meditation or Pranayama*

Dynamic Warm Up (5 mins)

Stability / Awareness (5 mins) *Abs, Prep Poses*

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

Apex (10 mins)

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins) Savasana

Class Sequence Guideline (60 mins)

Type of Class: _____ **Peak**
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Apex (10 mins)

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins) Savasana

Class Sequence Guideline (60 mins)

Type of Class:_____ ***Peak***
Pose:_____

Which body parts needs to open?

Which body parts needs awareness and stability?

Class Theme:

Opening - (3 mins) *Introduction of the theme, Meditation or Pranayama*

Dynamic Warm Up (5 mins)

Stability / Awareness (5 mins) *Abs, Prep Poses*

Pathway to Apex (25 mins)

Apex (10 mins)

Counter Pose and Integration (7 mins)

Deeper Release and Cool Down (5 mins) *Savasana*