



योग



## YOGA

“Yoga is like music.

The rhythm of the body, the melody of the mind

And the harmony of the soul create the symphony of life”

- B.K.S. Iyengar

The origins of Yoga have been speculated to have been developed around the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. The *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* from first half of 1st millennium CE is one of the key surviving major texts on Yoga. Hatha yoga texts emerged around 11th century CE.

Samskriti believes in a holistic approach to dance and thus the incorporation of Yoga is a key element in the dance curriculum. The beginners are taught the basic and easier *Asanas* and follow the Sivananda style of yoga . The Sivananda school of yoga believes in the 5-point yoga system:

- Proper exercise (Asanas)
- Proper breathing (Pranayama)
- Proper relaxation
- Proper diet
- Positive thinking & meditation

The benefits of yoga are life long and it helps the dancer immensely to maintain balance, posture, control the breathing and helps in improving focus. Yoga not only helps the individual in dance, but extends its benefits in other aspects like work, education, lifestyle, attitude etc.

## Asanas

### Standing poses

1. Surya Namaskar
2. TrikonAsana (Triangle)
3. Parivrtta TrikonAsana (Revolved triangle)
4. ChandrAsana (Crescent moon)
5. Virabhadrasana I (Warrior I)
6. Virabhadrasana II (Warrior II)
7. Virabhadrasana III (Warrior III)
8. Utkatasana I (Chair I)
9. Utkatasana II (Chair II)
10. Uttanasana (Stand forward bend)
11. Adhomukha Svanasana (Downward dog)
12. Parivrtta Parsvakonasana (Revolved Side Angle Pose)
13. Padahasthasana (Standing forward bend)
14. Ardha Chandrasana (Half moon)
15. Vrikshasana (Tree)
16. Garudasana (Eagle pose)
17. Natarajasana (Dancer's pose)
5. Marichyasana (Sage twist)
6. Virasana (Hero)
7. Padmasana (Lotus pose)
8. Paschimotthanasana (Seated forward bend)
9. Balasana (Child's pose)
10. Garland pose
11. Paripurna Navasana (Full boat)
12. Kapotasana (Pigeon pose)
13. Kakasana (Crow pose)
14. Mayurasana (Peacock pose)
15. Inclined plane (variation)

### Supine Poses

1. Pawanmuktasana (Wind relieving)
2. Halasana (Plough)
3. Setubandhasana (Bridge)
4. Chakrasana (Wheel)
5. Bhujangasana (Cobra & King Cobra)
6. Dhanurasana (Bow)
7. Ushtrasana (Camel)
8. Matsyasana (Fish)
9. Dog pose
10. Chakrasana (Cat & Cow)
11. Sarvangasana (Shoulder stand)
12. Shalabhasana (Locust)
13. Kurmasana (Tortoise pose)
14. Makarasana (Crocodile pose)

### Seated Poses

1. Sukhasana (Easy)
2. Janushirasana (Head to knee pose)
3. Upavistha Konasana (Spread leg forward)
4. Ardha Matsyendrasana (Spinal twist)

### **Pranayama breathing & Kapalabhati Pranayama**

**Note: Please perform the Asanas slowly and do only as much as the body allows. Incorrect performance can result in injury.**

*Images and information courtesy [www.abc-of-yoga.com](http://www.abc-of-yoga.com)*

# इतान्दोङ्ग पड्डइ



## SURYANAMASKAR (SUN SALUTATION)

Surya Namaskar or Sun Salutation is a very ancient technique of paying respect or expressing gratitude to the Sun that is the source of all forms of life on the planet.

**Benefits-** Regular practice of the Surya Namaskar is said to enhance one's creativity and intuition

### Surya Namaskar

*Salute to the Sun*

1. Salutation Position

*Normal, restful Breathing*



2. Raised Arms Position

*Inhale*



3. Hand to Foot Position

*Exhale*



4. Equestrian Position

*Inhale*



5. Mountain Position

*Exhale*



6. Eight Limbs Position

*No breathing then...*



7. Cobra Position

*Inhale*



8. Mountain Position

*Exhale*



9. Equestrian Position

*Inhale*



10. Hand to Foot Position

*Exhale*



11. Raised Arms Position

*Inhale*



12. Salutation Position

*Normal, restful Breathing*



### **TRIKONASANA 1+2 (TRIANGLE)**

**Benefits-** Strengthens the legs, stretches the groins, hamstrings, and hips, opens the chest and shoulders. Can help relieve back pain.



Step 1: Start with the Downward Facing Dog Pose (Adho Mukha Svanasana).

Step 2: Move your left foot forward for about 1 meter.

Step 3: Put your left hand beside your foot and carry your weight with the lower back and on the heels of your foot in front. Raise the upper part of your body until the lower back is straight. You can recognize this by a groove in the middle of the lower back. The right foot (the one at the back) rests on the floor.

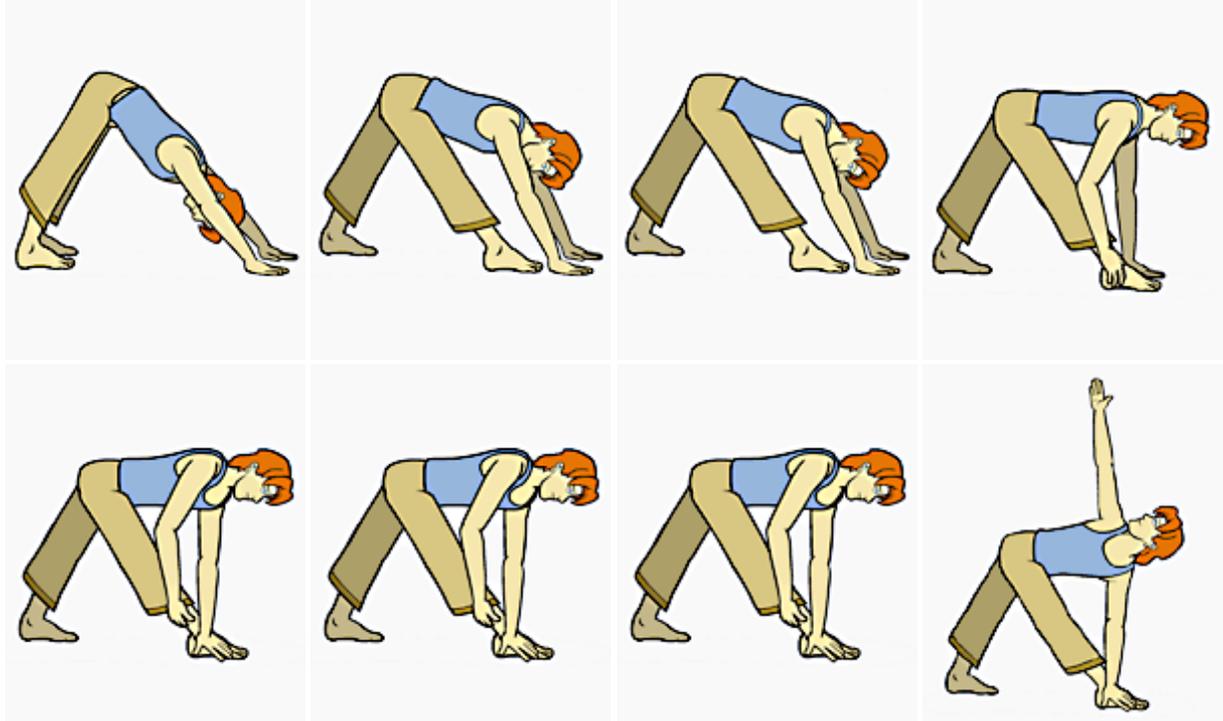
Step 4: Stretch the leg which is in front without bending the back or twisting your body. With your back straight and your right hip stretched backward, look at a point on the ground and breathe in and out quietly. Press your left hand against the heel and twist your chest to the left. Let the twisting motion involve only your upper back while your hip, lower back, legs and head remain stationary. When you cannot twist any further, stretch your right arm upward.

Step 5: Then twist your head to the left, look upward along your outstretched arm and stretch out your neck. When you stand well aligned in this position, it will feel light. The better you do this exercise, the bigger the triangle between your legs, arms and side will be.

Step back towards the Downward Facing Dog Pose and repeat the exercise with your right leg in front.

**PARIVRTTA TRIKONASANA (REVOLVED TRIANGLE)**

**Benefits - makes the back stronger and freer and forms a frontal attack on tensions in the hip-joint. The exercise is good for your sense of coordination and sense of balance. You need a lot of concentration and precision to be able to carry it out correctly.**



Step 1: The Dog pose (Adho Mukha Svanasana) is a good asana to start this exercise with.

Step 2: Start with the Dog position and put your right leg about one meter forward.

Step 3: Put your hands next to your foot and carry your weight with the lower back on the heel of the foot in front. Raise your upper body until your back is straight. You can recognize this by a groove in the middle of the lower back. Without changing your posture and shifting your weight, twist your left foot diagonally with the heel toward the ground.

Step 4: With your right hand, grab your ankle or the under side of your lower leg and you see to it that the lower back carries your weight and that consequently you hardly rest on your right hand. Stretch the leg which is in front without bending the back or twisting your body. With your back straight and your right hip stretched backward, look at a point on the ground and breathe in and out quietly. Press your left hand against the ankle or your lower leg and twist the upper body to the right and upward.

Try to support as much of your weight as possible with your back and to rest as little as possible on your right arm. With a view to the strong straining of your hips and the hamstrings, you should see to it that you are not going to try to compensate for it by twisting your legs outside. Because if you do, you lose the stretching motion in your back, allowing your lower back to sink down or to support yourself too much on your lower arm.

Step 5: If you cannot twist any further, stretch your right hand upward.

Step 6: Then twist your head to the right and upward, look upwards along your arm and stretch out your neck. The better you do this exercise, the bigger will be the triangle between your leg in front, your arm and your side. When you stand well aligned in this position, it will feel light and spacious. Step back towards the Dog and repeat the exercise with your left leg in front.

### **CHANDRASANA (CRESCENT MOON)**

This asana when done correctly resembles a crescent moon. The Crescent Moon Pose strengthens your legs, back, shoulders, and arms, builds stamina and improves balance. This is an excellent exercise to start a number of backbends with. The lower back gets relaxed, the leg muscles are stretched and you build up strength in your legs. You also improve your coordination and concentration.



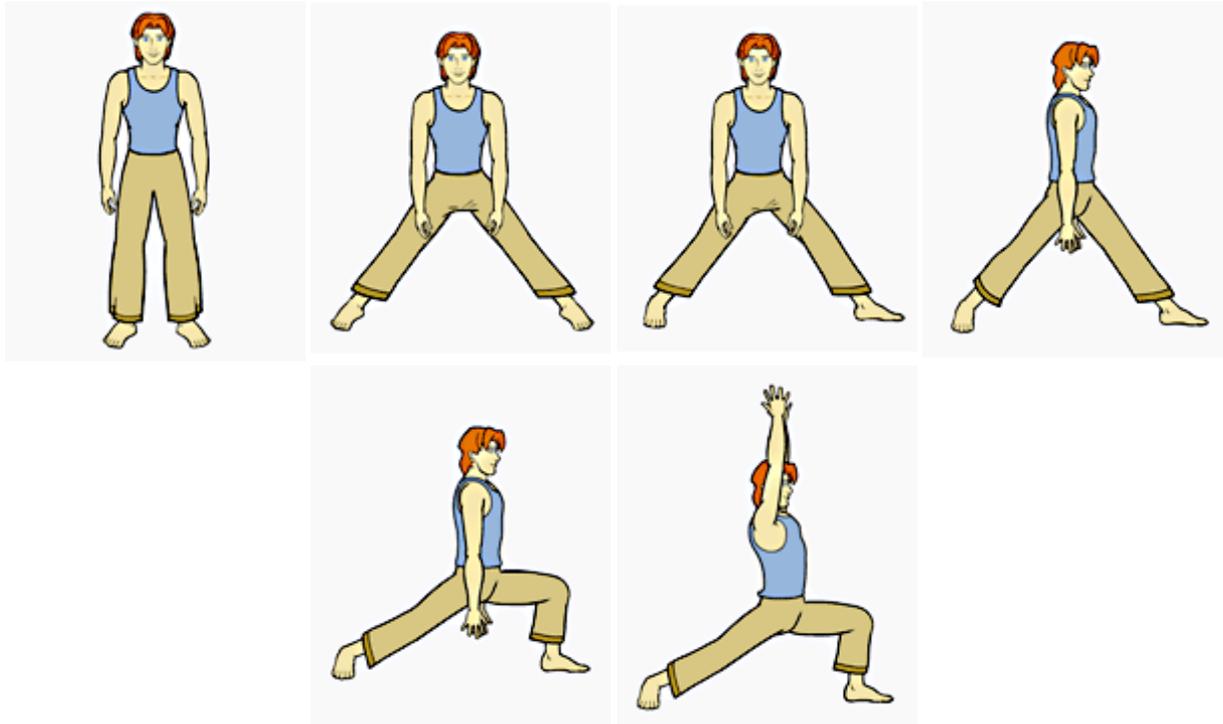
Step 1: Kneel and keep your back straight.

Step 2: Step forward with your right foot until the foot is a little in front of the knee and your upper leg is parallel with the floor. The left foot (the one at the back) rests on the floor with its toes and your lower leg on the mat. You can increase the stretching of your leg muscles in the front part of your left hip by bending your front leg more and more.

Step 3: Raise both arms, and hook both thumbs together. At the same time you stretch your arms upwards and you pull the thumbs slightly apart. Then you raise your knee at the back so that your weight is now equally divided between the leg in front and the leg at the back. Look forward and focus your attention on one point. This helps you to maintain your balance. If you find this easy, you can also look upwards or even backwards instead of looking in front of you.

## VIRABHADRASANA I (WARRIOR POSE - 1)

The Warrior Pose I or Virabhadrasana I improves balance and agility and strengthens your legs, back, and arms. It also targets the chest, shoulders, neck, and abdominal area. Learn how to do the Warrior Pose I in this section.



Step 1: Start with the Mountain Pose.

Step 2: Jump or move your left foot sideways so your feet are about four feet apart.

Step 3: Turn your left foot 90 degrees to the left and position your right foot about 45 degrees to the left.

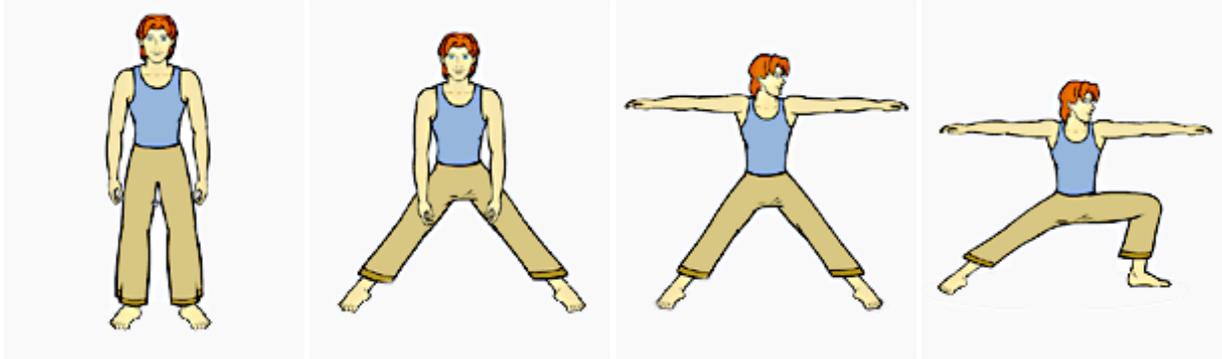
Step 4: Rotate your torso to the left

Step 5: Bend your left knee. Make sure that the knee is directly above your foot. Bending too much may lead to knee injury.

Step 6: Raise both hands - palms should be facing inward and fingers are outstretched.

## **VIRABHADRASANA II (WARRIOR POSE - 2)**

This posture strengthens your legs, back, shoulders, and arms, building stamina. It opens your hips and chest, and improves balance. It is called the Warrior in reference to the fierce warrior, an incarnation of Shiva. Learn how to do the second Warrior Pose in this section.



Step 1: Start with the Mountain Pose.

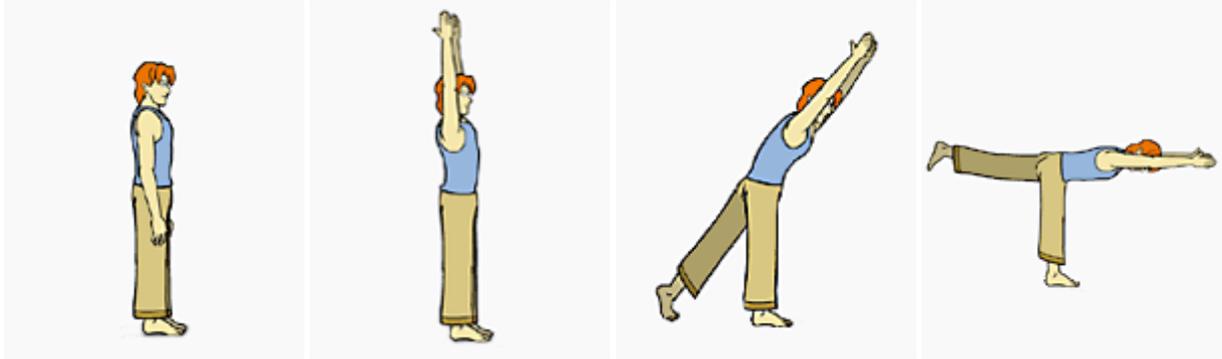
Step 2: Jump so that your feet are around four feet apart.

Step 3: Raise both arms parallel to the floor. Turn your head to the left.

Step 4: Turn your left foot 90 degrees to the left and bend your left knee. Keep the hips in the same angle (180 degrees) as for the arms. Stay in this position for 30 seconds to one minute.

### **VIRABHADRASANA III (WARRIOR POSE - 3)**

This is the third and last variation of the Warrior Pose. Virabhadrasana III improves your balance and stability and strengthens the ankles, legs, and shoulders. Learn how to do the Warrior Pose III in this section.



Step 1: Start with the Mountain Pose.

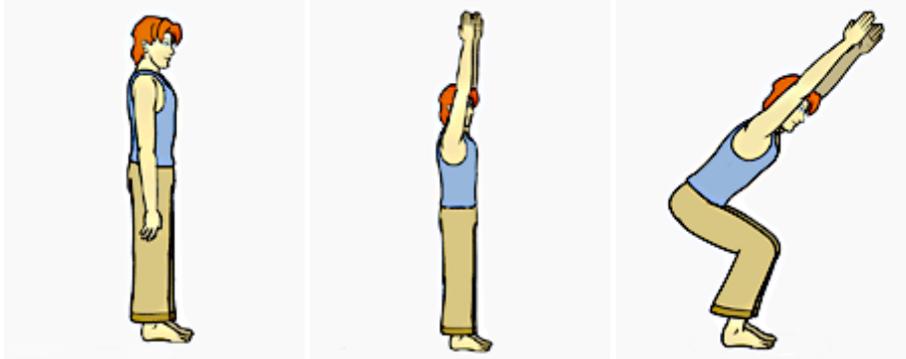
Step 2: Raise both arms overhead, perpendicular to the floor. Your palms should be facing each other.

Step 3: Move your left foot backward. Slightly lean forward, keeping your back straight and your arms stretched overhead. Your left foot, back, and arms should form a diagonal line.

Step 4: Lift your left foot and straighten your right leg simultaneously, keeping your arms parallel to the floor. At this point, your raised leg, upper body and arms should be parallel to the floor. Give length to the entire spine by stretching your arms and your legs. This results in stretching from two sides of the back: stretching from the legs and from the arms. Keep on breathing through the belly and be careful not to bend your lower back.

### **UTKATASANA I (CHAIR POSE- 1)**

A strong, straight lower back is the foundation of every correct position and is consequently important in any Yoga pose. In this exercise, you strengthen the lower back and the legs and by doing so, you create more space in the chest and belly.



Step 1: Start with the Mountain Pose (Tadasana).

Step 2: Inhale and stretch your arms, lengthen the spine, and be careful not to press the lower ribs to the front.

Step 3: Exhale and bend your knees and move your upper body forward at 45 degrees.

See to it that your lower back is straight. You can do this by letting your hand feel whether there is a "groove" in the middle of the lower back. If this is not the case, then stand up straight again, bend your body forward, and feel if the "groove" is there. Let the weight of the upper body sink into the pelvis, relax the calve muscles so that the weight of the body can be most efficiently directed into the ground.

The chest bone is moved slightly towards the belly. The breathing is relaxed and goes through the belly or towards the chest bone. Build up the exercise quietly and remain focused on a correct position of the back, chest, and pelvis.

## **UTKATASANA II (CHAIR POSE- 2)**

This is a variation of the Chair Pose or Awkward Pose. Unlike in the Utkatasana I, the Chair Pose II involves bending the upper body from the hip until it becomes parallel to the floor.



Step 1: Start with the Mountain Pose (Tadasana).

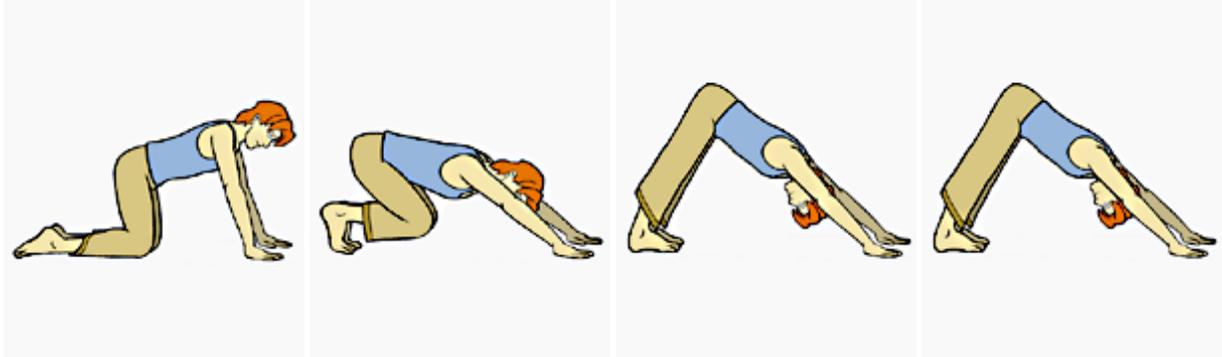
Step 2: Bring your hands together in the prayer position against the chest bone.

Step 3: Bend your upper body from the hip until halfway parallel to the floor. Without causing tension in the chin, stretch out your neck, which causes the back to be lengthened. The chest bone is moved slightly in the direction of the belly. The breathing goes through the belly or towards the chest bone, against which the hands have been placed. Look straight downwards at a spot on the floor.

Build up the exercise quietly and remain focused on a correct position of the back and the chest.

### **ADHO MUKHA SVANASANA (DOWNWARD DOG)**

In the Downward Facing Dog Pose, you build up strength in the upper arms and you give space and opening in the back, neck, chest, hips and shoulders. If you let your ankles sink nicely to the floor in this Asana, you stretch the calves at the same time. In Yoga, this pose is often used as an exercise in between other exercises, but it is in fact an exercise in itself.



Step 1: Come onto the floor on your hands and knees. Stretch the elbows and relax the upper back between the shoulder blades, which gives you the feeling that the arms fall into the shoulder blades.

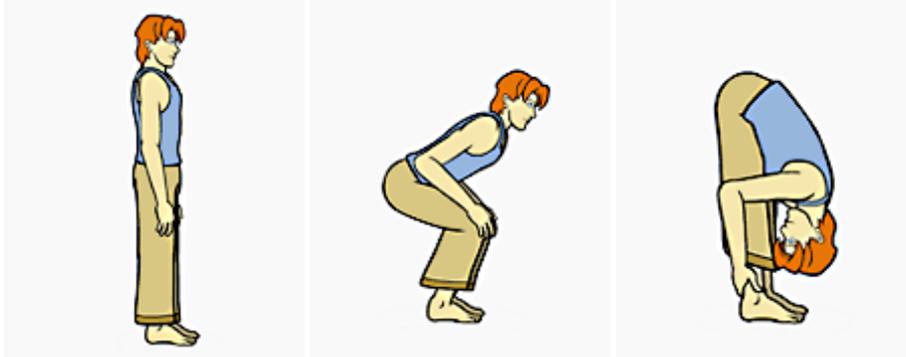
Step 2: Exhale and lift your knees and draw your back backwards from the pelvis, so that your arms and back form one line.

Step 3: Stretch your legs in such a way that you get the feeling that someone behind you is pulling your legs and hips backwards from the top of your upper legs. Let your head hang down in a relaxed sort of way.

Step 4: When you have placed your back and your legs correctly, stretch out your arms. This results in a stretching from two sides of the back: a stretching from the pelvis and a stretching from the arms. When the back and the chest are placed correctly, you will notice that you can quietly breathe in and out through the belly. You should not let your chest hang downwards or make your back extremely sunken. In this Asana, the back should be lengthened along its entire length. Take your time to work out the stretching further and further.

### UTTANASANA (STANDING FORWARD BEND)

This exercise provides you a complete stretch of the upper back and lower back, as well as the leg and calf muscles. In this exercise, you literally stretch stress, tiredness, and stiffness from your body. At the same time, you learn how to rest and relax in case of discomfort and effort. Uttanasana also increases the flow of blood to the brain.



Step 1: Start with the Mountain Pose.

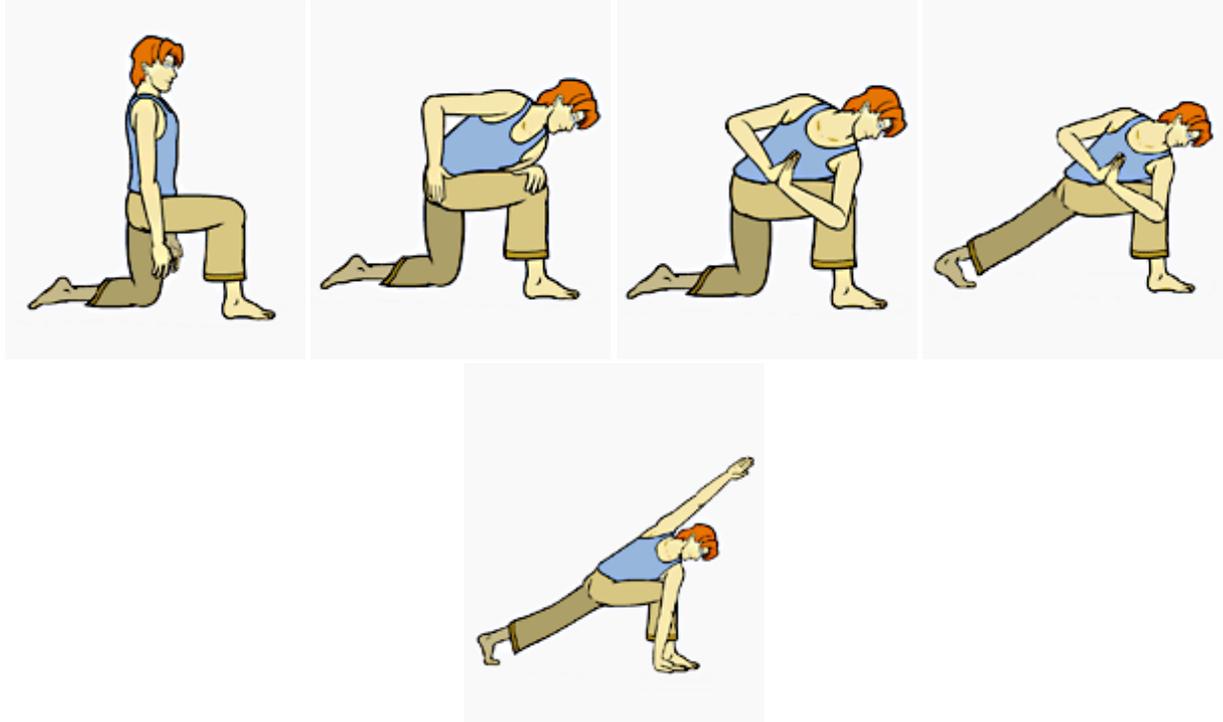
Step 2: Bend your knees, support your upper body with a straight lower back, and slowly bend forward so that your belly touches your upper legs. Maintain the position of your lower back or else your chest will sink. Move your pelvis, taking the back as the starting point, relax your groins, and keep your weight on the front parts of your heels.

Step 3: Keep breathing correctly through your belly and slowly stretch your chest to the knees without losing the support of your lower back. Stretch your legs everytime you exhale. Your pelvis moves upward from the back until your legs are eventually stretched. Touch the ground or grab your ankles. Stretch downward from your crown and when you have grabbed your ankles, use a slight stretching force to lengthen the body.

**Important!** If you lose the supportive power of the lower back during the exercise, you lose a major part of its effect. As a result, your chest will sink, making your breathing irregular. Also, stretching will not be effective. Now, stand up straight again and jump back to Tadasana.

### **PARIVRITA PARSVAKONASANA (REVOLVED SIDE ANGLE POSE)**

The combination of stretching and twisting in this Asana makes the spinal column straighter and freer. It also mobilizes parts of the back and the hip, which in daily life do not move a lot. The twisting motion trains the nerves and the sinews in the spinal column and improves digestion.



Step 1: To start off, put your right foot forward, bend your knee at 90 degrees, and kneel with your left knee.

Step 2: Bring your left elbow or left upper arm over your right knee. Move your right hand close to your hips.

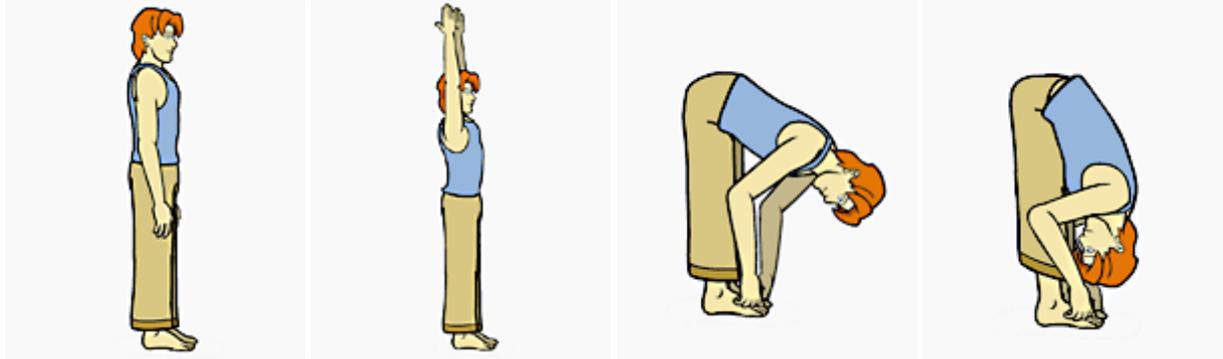
Step 3: Place both palms in the prayer position. Make an upward motion out of the lower back so that the elbow slightly presses upward against your right knee and you no longer lean on your leg.

Step 4: Put some counter pressure with your arm against the knee, stretch your back, move your shoulder blades backwards, and turn to the right with your upper body. Straighten your left leg backwards.

Step 5: Put your left hand on the floor and align your right arm with your left leg. At this point, your right arm and left leg should form a diagonal line. Try to stretch your neck, breathe towards the breast bone and twist from the lower shoulder blade which steers on the twist. Repeat the exercise on the other side.

### **PADAHASTASANA (HANDS TO FEET)**

A variation of the Standing Forward Bend (Uttanasana), the Hands to Feet Pose (Pada Hastasana) improves flexibility of your spine, strengthens your legs, enhances digestion, and aids in blood circulation in your head. Take note that this pose is not advisable for people who have spinal problems.



Step 1: Start with the Mountain Pose.

Step 2: As you inhale, raise your arms above your head.

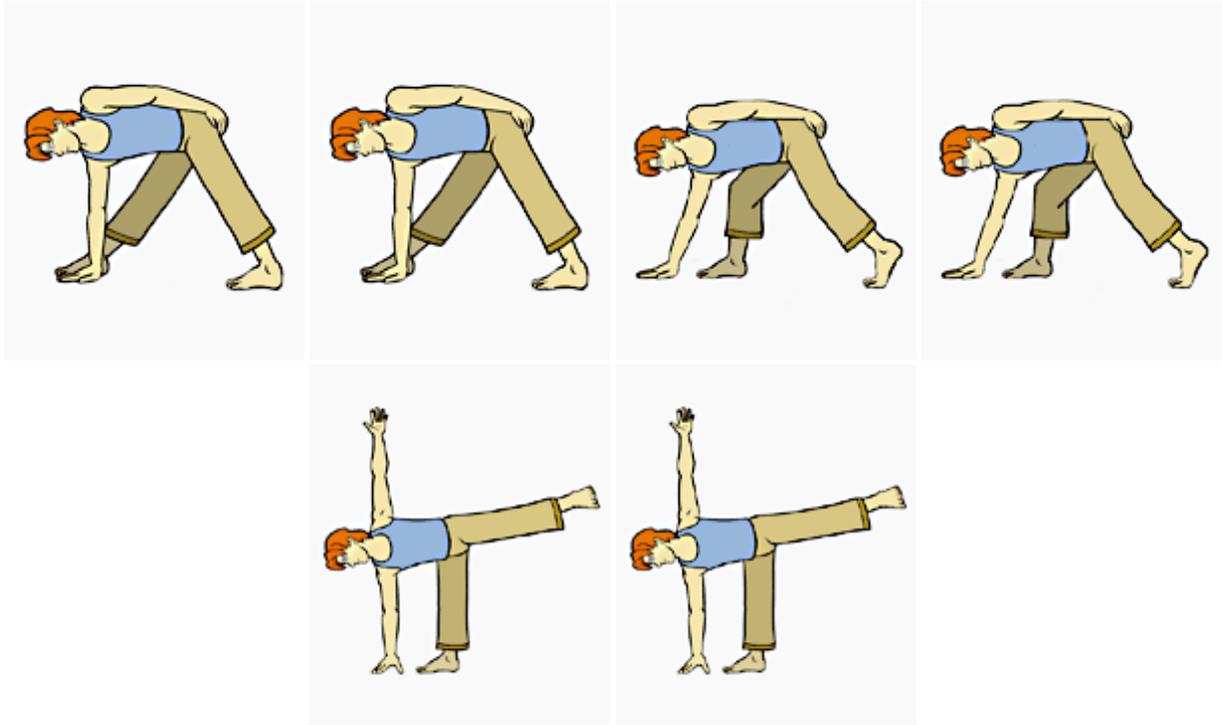
Step 3: Bend forward until your hands touch your feet.

Step 4: Slowly bend further so that your belly is touching your upper legs. Grasp your toes and breathe deeply in the pose.

When you have grabbed your ankles or toes, use a slight stretching force to lengthen the body. With the pull from the hands, move your belly to your upper legs and prevent your chest to sink and lose the supportive power of the lower back during the exercise.

### **ARDHA CHANDRASANA (HALF MOON)**

The Half Moon Pose (Ardha Chandrasana) is a Standing Pose that targets the legs, buttocks, and hips, and improves balance and strength.



Step 1: Start with a Trikonasana, with your left hand resting on your hip.

Step 2: Slightly bend your right knee then move a bit forward.

Step 3: Move your right hand forward - a few inches from the toes of your right leg

Step 4: Exhale and press your right hand and right heel into the floor for balance. Lift your left leg parallel to the floor.

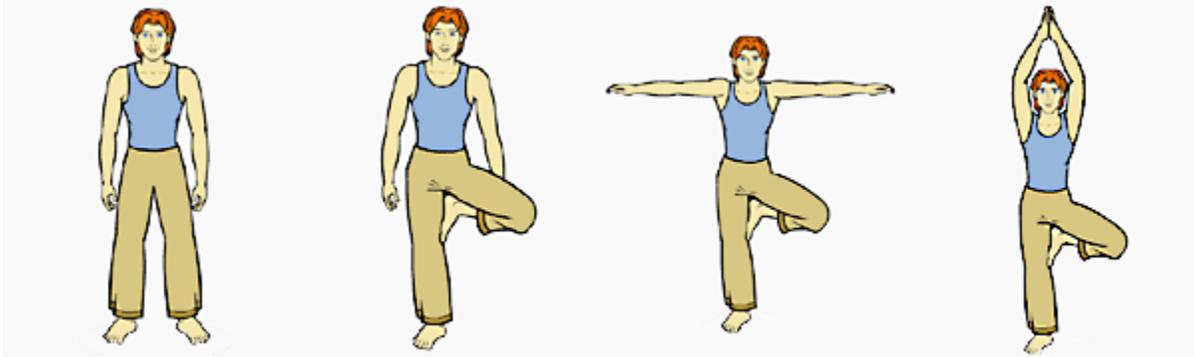
Step 5: Raise your left hand. It should be aligned with your right hand. Bear your weight on the right leg.

Step 6: Look up at your fingers. Stay in this pose for a few seconds.

### **VRIKSHASANA (TREE)**

This asana is performed by balancing on one leg while bending the other against the straight leg.

**Benefits-** strengthens the thighs, calves, ankle and back. Balance and concentration can also be improved with constant practice. Great for people with sciatica and flat feet.



Step 1: Start with the Mountain Pose.

Step 2: As you exhale, place your left foot on the inside part of your right leg, close to the groin area, with the toes pointing downward.

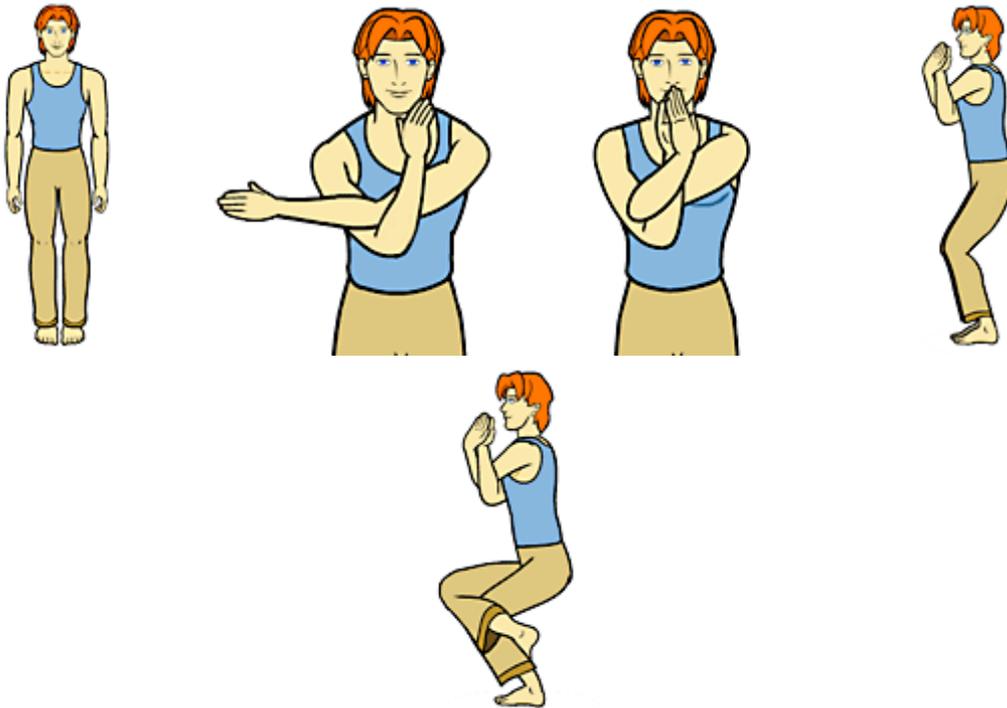
Step 3: As you inhale, stretch your arms sideways to form a T, palms facing down.

Step 4: As you exhale, bring your palms together in prayer position.

Step 5: Raise your arms overhead, keeping your palms in prayer position. To maintain balance, it helps to focus your eyes on one point in front of you and keep on breathing through the belly.

## **GARUDASANA (EAGLE)**

Garudasana or Eagle Pose traces its origin from the Sanskrit word Garuda, which means eagle and from the Hindu mythology as the king of the birds. This yoga exercise is mainly all about standing and balancing, two essential postures that can guarantee improvement on your health, mind and body. It helps in strengthening your legs and improving major joints of your body. Garudasana is just another tough yoga pose to execute since it requires a great deal of balancing. But you'll get the hang of this yoga pose through your regular practice.



Step 1: Do the Tadasana or the Mountain Pose. Stand straight with your feet together and with your arms on your sides.

Step 2: Open your palms. Cross your left arm to your right. Raise your right arm with your hand stretching towards the ceiling.

Step 3: Bring your palms together as close as possible, depending on your flexibility. Your fingers should be pointing upwards.

Step 4: Maintain the position of your arms. Slightly bend your knees without going over your toes.

Step 5: Slowly lift your right leg, cross it to your left thigh as you curve your left foot around your right calf. Inhale and hold it for 15 to 30 seconds before you exhale and return to Tadasana pose then repeat the steps switching your arms and legs.

### **NATARAJASANA (DANCER'S POSE)**

This pose develops concentration and balance. It tones and lengthens the leg and hip muscles. It will stimulate a full range of motion in the shoulders. The chest expands fully. Releases tension in the angle and foot, helping to prevent injury, develops a sense of balance and focus, Opens the chest and lungs, creating more space for the breath, strengthens spine and entire leg, stretches thighs, shoulders.



Step 1: In Tadasana, take a few moments to establish your center. Find a point to gaze at either at eye level or on the floor. Shift your weight onto one leg.

Step 2: Inhale and bend the knee of the other leg, bringing it backwards and grab hold of the ankle or foot with the hand of the same side. Take a moment to balance and then move the knees so they are in alignment with the hip joints. Hold here and breathe into the stretch from the abdominal muscles into the quadriceps.

Step 3: Inhale and extend the arm of opposite side-body directly up from the shoulder, towards the sky. Feel the energy move all the way through the fingertips. Hold here for several breaths. You may want to remain in this phase of the posture and work up to the final pose.

Step 4: To move further, simultaneously lengthen the arm and torso up and forward while the opposite leg lengthens back and up. In the final posture the thigh becomes parallel to the floor and the torso at an angle to the floor.

Step 5: As you hold the pose, breathe into the stretch on the inhalation and relax on the exhalation, creating an equal and opposite stretch forward through the arm and backward through the leg. Allow your gaze to rest slightly above the horizon.

Step 6: Slowly bring the torso back to center. Release the bent knee and stand in Tadasana

# इष्टते पश्य



### **SUKHASANA (EASY)**

The Easy Pose or Sukhasana is a relaxation pose intended for Meditation. It promotes inner calm and straightens the spine, opens the hips, and relieves tiredness. As the name suggests, this pose is very easy to do. In this section, learn how to do the Easy Pose.



Step 1: Sit down on the floor or a Yoga Mat.

Step 2: Cross your legs, placing your feet below your knees.

Step 3: Clasp your hands around your knees.

Step 4: Keep your head and body straight.

### **JANUSHIRASASANA (HEAD TO KNEE FORWARD BEND)**

A restorative pose that reenergizes the body and aids digestion by stretching the ascending and descending colon



Step 1: Sit in Dandasana (Staff Pose) with your legs extended in front of you, toes flexed, quadriceps contracted. Place your hands next to your buttocks on the floor and lift the bottom of your belly and the sides of your waist.

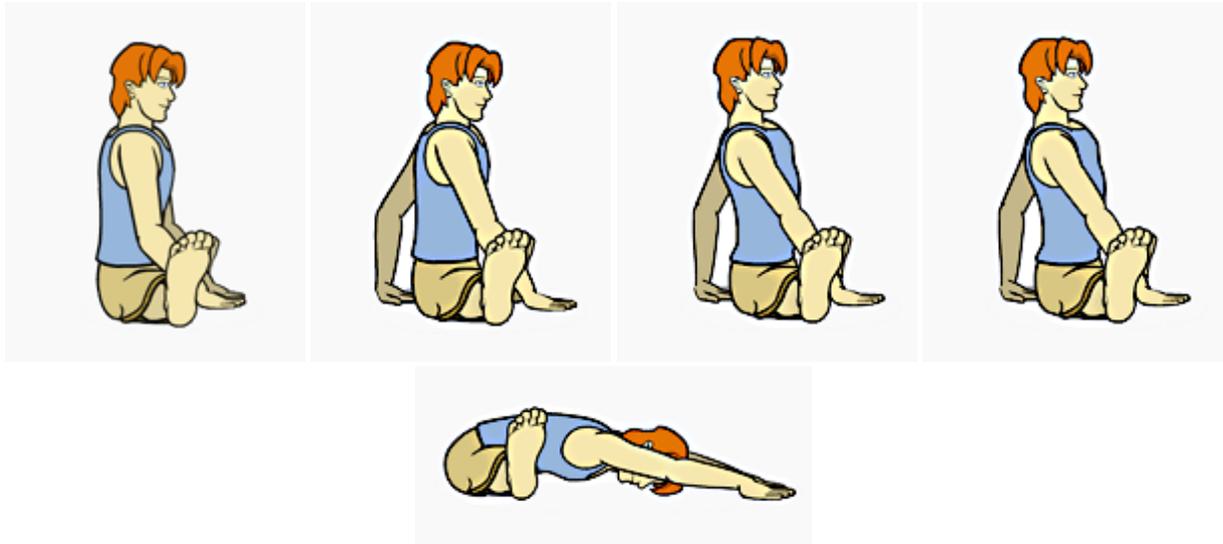
Step 2: Bend your right knee, placing your right foot against your inner left thigh and your right heel close to your perineum, just below your pubic bone. Gently swing the right knee away from the left foot so that the thighs form an angle greater than 90 degrees—preferably an angle of 135 degrees.

Step 3: Fold forward over your left leg from the left hip crease. Reach with your right arm first and hold your left foot from the inside. Contracting your left quadriceps powerfully, use your left hand to grasp the center of the hamstring muscles and—tipping the body to the right—pull toward your left sitting bone to release tension in the tendon that connects your hamstring muscles to your pelvis. Then press your left hand into the floor near your left hip and push, lengthening the left waist. Keep twisting your body toward the left, working to bring your bellybutton over the center of your left thigh.

Step 4: Hold your left foot with your left hand from the outside. Move deeper into the fold by holding your right wrist with your left hand. Make a fist with your right hand. Bending your elbows away from each other, pull your left foot with your arms, lengthening the sides of your waist. Rest your forehead on your shin. Breathe deeply for 9 or more breaths. Inhaling, lift your head and chest, then release your hands to push the floor away and come out of the pose. Change sides.

### **UPAVISTA KONASANA (WIDE ANGLED SEATED FORWARD BEND)**

One of the basic Yoga Exercises is the Spread Leg Forward Fold or Upavista Konasana. With this posture, the hamstrings and adductors are being stretched, resulting to a very calming and yet energizing activity.



Step 1: Sit on the floor with your legs spread wide.

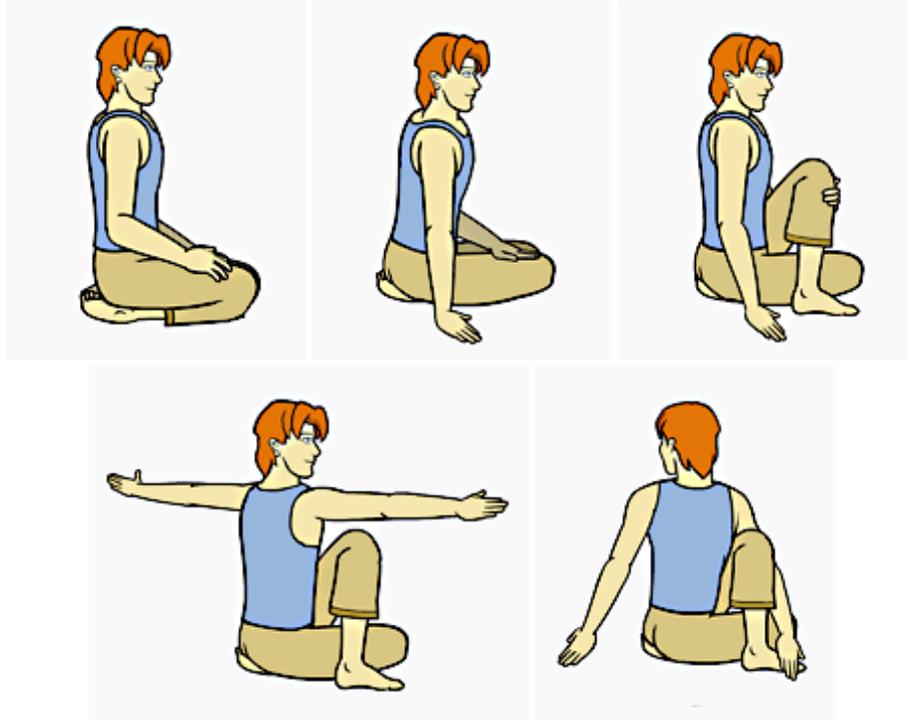
Step 2: Place one hand on the floor in front of you, one hand on the floor behind you, then lift your hips and scoot forward to your comfortable maximum. Then use your hands to pull the buttock flesh backward so your sitting bones can merge with the floor.

Step 3: Sit tall. Establish the leg lines first. Turn the legs in or out until the kneecaps face the ceiling and the inner edges of your feet are vertical. Be on the center of the back of each heel. Press the back of each thigh firmly down into the floor, extending the heels away from you, then spread your toes and press outward through the ball of each foot.

Step 4: Lean forward and place your hands on the floor. Have your hands shoulder-width apart and your fingers spread. Snuggle your palms into the floor. Then wriggle the buttocks backward and position yourself on the frontal edge of the sitting bones, in dog tilt, This will help propel you forward into the pose.

### **ARDHA MATSYENDRASANA(HALF SPINAL TWIST)**

The Spinal Twist Yoga Pose, which takes its Sanskrit name from the great Yogic Sage Matsyendra, is one of the few Yoga Poses in the basic poses that rotates the spine. Most bend the spinal column either backward or forward, but to become truly flexible it must be twisted laterally as well. The movement also tones the spinal nerves and ligaments, and improves digestion. Keep your spine erect and your shoulders leveled in the position. Breathe steadily. Twist a little more each time you exhale. Twist first to the left, as below, then repeat the sequence twisting to the right.



Step 1: Kneel and sit on your feet with your heels pointing outward.

Step 2: Then sit to the right of your feet, as illustrated.

Step 3: Lift your left leg over your right, placing the foot against the outside of the right knee. Bring your right heel in close to your buttocks. Keep the spine erect.

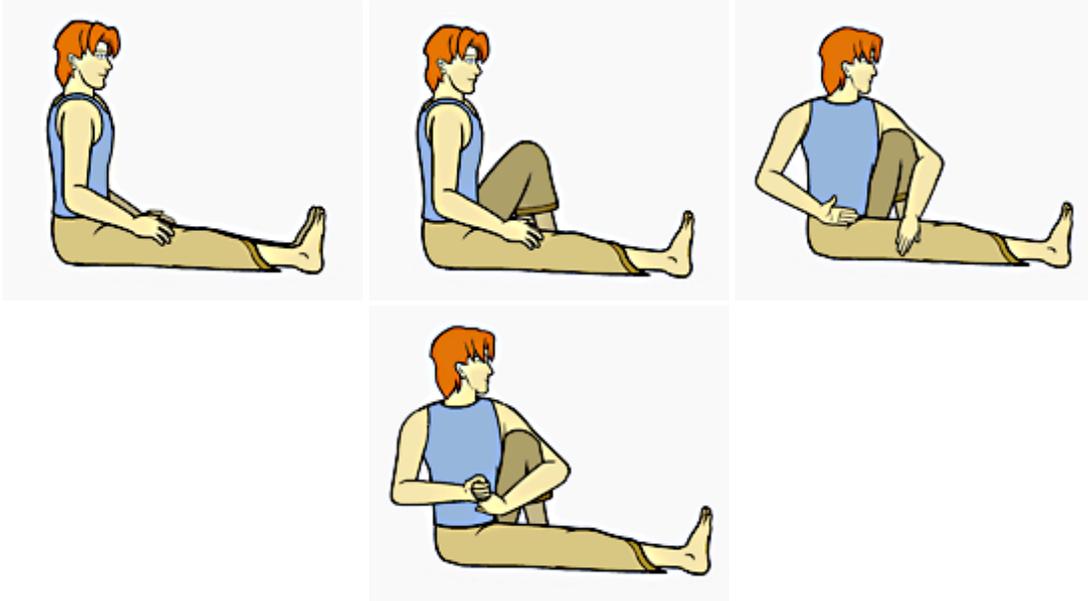
Step 4: Stretch your arms out to the sides at shoulder level, and twist around to the left.

Step 5: Now bring the right arm down on the outside of the left knee and hold your left foot with your right hand, placing your left hand on the floor behind you. As you exhale, twist as far as possible to the left. Look over the left shoulder.

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### **MARICHYASANA (SAGE TWIST)**

The Sage Twist is an important Asana to strengthen the back. It tones and massages the abdominal area, especially liver, spleen, and intestines. It also relieves lower back pain caused by muscular tension.



Step 1: Sit on the floor with both legs straight in front of you.

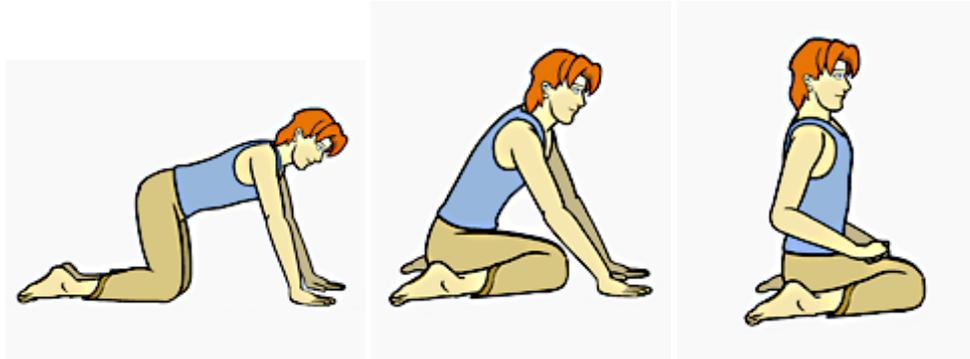
Step 2: Bend your left leg towards your chest.

Step 3: Rotate your torso toward your left knee. Wrap your right arm around the left knee, positioning the knee in the crook of the right elbow.

Step 4: Clasp your hands. Keep your back straight all throughout the pose.

### **VIRASANA (HERO POSE)**

The Hero Pose is one of the basic Seated Postures, also excellent for Meditation. The internal rotation of the upper legs and knees is opposite to the movement involved in the Lotus Pose; as such, it both loosens the hips, knees, and ankles in preparation for the Lotus Pose and acts as a mild counterpose. The Hero Pose is also the starting Yoga position for several forward bends, backward bends, and twists.



Step 1: Start with your hands and knees on the floor as in the Cat Pose. Have your knees hip-width apart so the thighs are parallel with one another, and separate your feet until they are slightly wider than your hips. Check that your feet are pointing directly backward, not turning in or out.

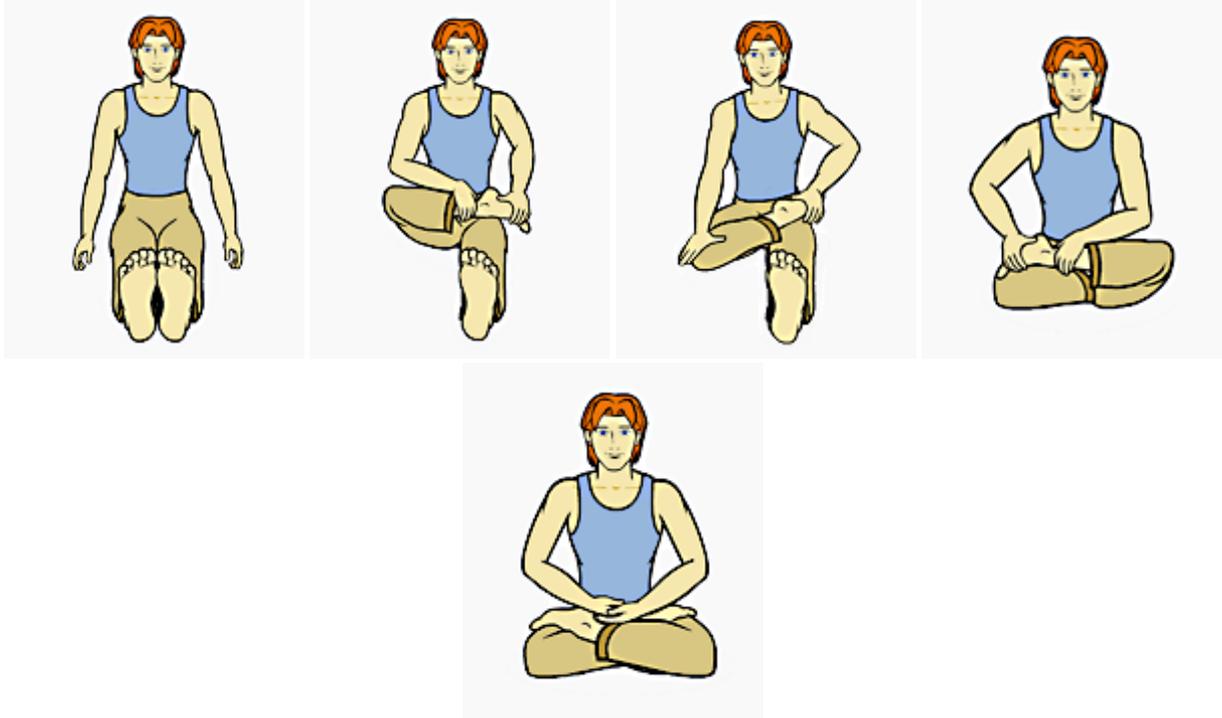
Step 2: Sit between your feet by first supporting yourself with your hands and then slowly lowering your hips to the floor. If you are unable to sit comfortably, or if you feel any pain in your knees, elevate your hips by placing a folded blanket or a cushion beneath you. Use this support until you experience a feeling of ease (this may take several months). Eventually, you will be able to sit between your feet with no discomfort with your buttocks firmly on the ground.

Step 3: Sit tall. Counteract the tendency to slump by adjusting the buttock muscles sideways and back with your hands, and tilting the pelvis slightly forward so you are positioned on the frontal edge of each sitting bone. Then draw the abdomen backward toward the spine and delicately adjust your hips toward cat tilt to establish neutral alignment of your center, your pelvis making a ninety-degree angle with the thighs. You are now on the tips of the sitting bones.

Rest your hands in your lap, on your thighs, or on your ankles, then close your eyes. Elevate and free your chest, relax the shoulders back and down away from your ears, then lift or lower your chin until your head feels perfectly balanced, weightless on top of the spine. Sit quietly for at least a minute.

### **PADMASANA (LOTUS POSE)**

The Lotus Pose or Padmasana in Sanskrit requires crossing the legs while maintaining a straight back, making it ideal for Meditation and concentration. This Yoga Pose has a lot of benefits such as giving a relaxing effect, increasing awareness and attentiveness, stimulating body parts and processes, and keeping or developing a good posture.



Step 1: With your palms down, sit on the floor with your legs fully stretched.

Step 2: Hold your right foot with your hands and put it over your left thigh until it reaches the groin. Your foot's outer edge should reach your hip's crease.

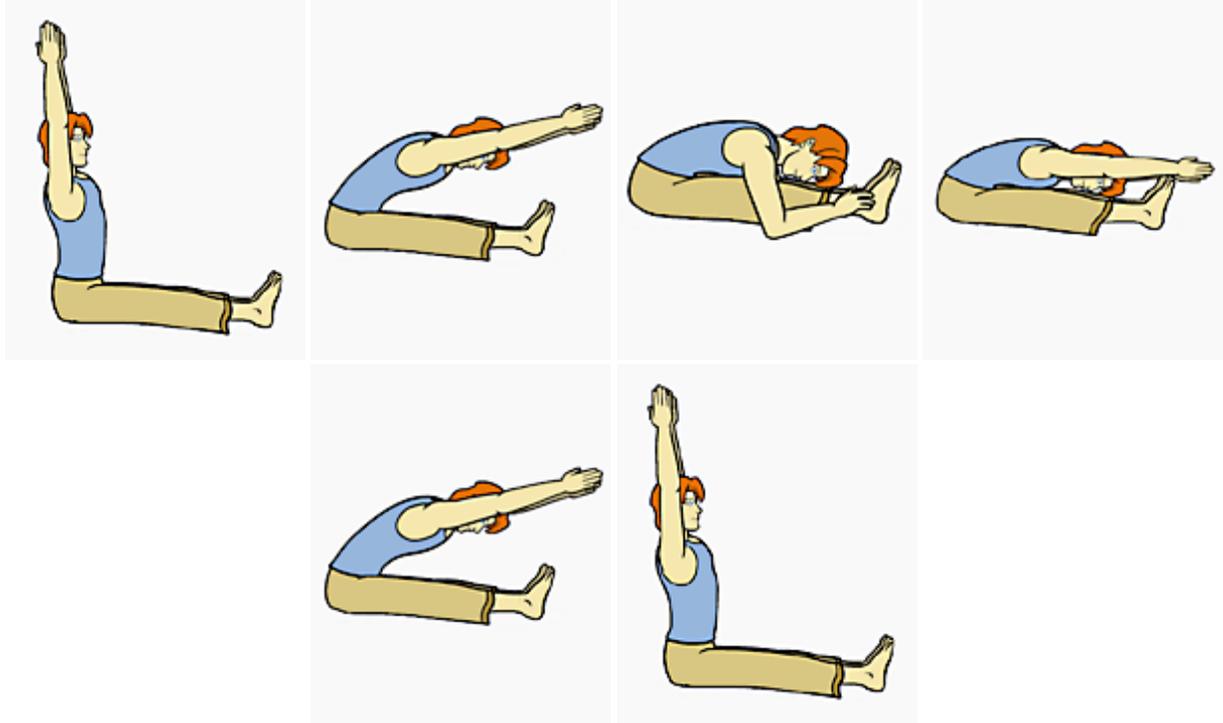
Step 3: Hold your right knee using your right hand while the other hand clasps your right foot.

Step 4: While your right foot is firmly placed over your left thigh, hold your left foot with both hands. Place your left foot over your right thigh. Your foot's outer edge should also reach your hip's crease.

Step 5: You have now achieved a full Lotus Asana. You can have your palms positioned upward, which is energizing or put them down which helps in grounding yourself.

### **PASCHIMOTHANASANA (SEATED FORWARD BEND)**

This forward bend gives a complete stretching to the neck, the back, the hamstrings and calves. At the same time, it directs your attention inward. You stimulate the entire nervous system and learn to find stillness and relaxation during a period of effort or even discomfort when doing this stretching exercise



Step 1: Sit down with your legs stretched. The legs lie side by side and the toes point upwards. Stretch your lower back and raise your arms. Look forward, lengthen your back, and keep the chest and your breathing free.

Step 2: Slowly bend forward, stretch your crown upward and try not to lose the supporting dynamism of the lower back. See to it that your legs do not move or tilt.

Step 3: The moment you notice that you can only bend further by bending the lower back, move your hands to your lower legs, ankles or feet. Lightly pull your legs, ankles or feet and continue stretching. Keep your shoulders down. Breathe in and out across the entire length of your spinal column deeply and in a relaxed way. Everytime you exhale, you should bend further towards your legs without losing the length in your back and the dynamism in the lower back. When you lose the dynamism in the lower back, you will notice that you lose a major part of the stretching and you will have a hard time breathing.

Step 4: Stretch out your arms forward.

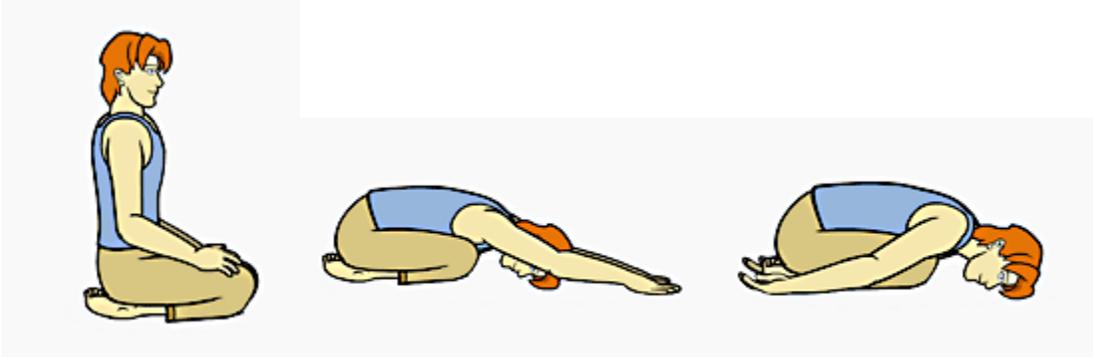
Step 5: Slowly raise your upper body. Keep your legs lying side by side and the toes pointing upwards.

Step 6: Sit straight up again, just like your original position.

**BALASANA (CHILD'S POSE)**

This is a relaxation pose that can be done before or after any pose. This pose stretches the hips, thighs, ankles gently.

**Benefits-** Helps relieve stress and fatigue and calms the brain.



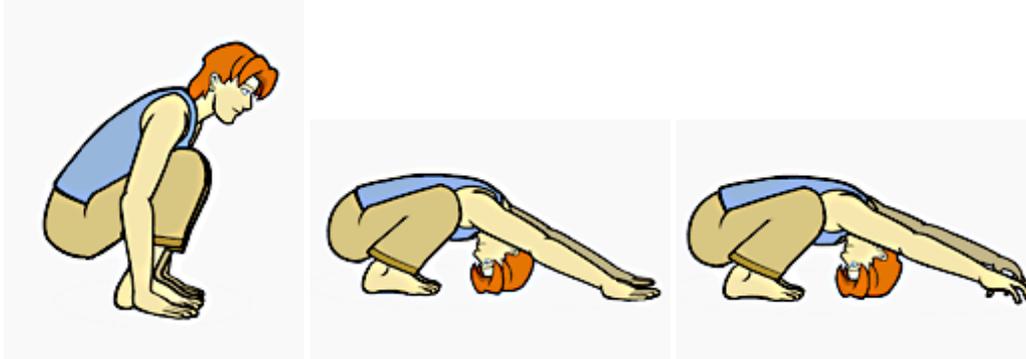
Step 1: Kneel and sit on your feet with your heels pointing outward. Your knees should be separated, about the width of your hips.

Step 2: Place your forehead on the floor, and then swing your arms forward.

Step 3: Rest your forehead on the floor, then bring your arms around and to your sides, palms facing upward.

### **GARLAND POSE (MALASANA)**

This Asana makes the ankles more supple and provides a good stretch to the back of the lower legs, the back, and the neck muscles. Malasana also offers a nice moment of rest for the legs during intense Yoga sessions.



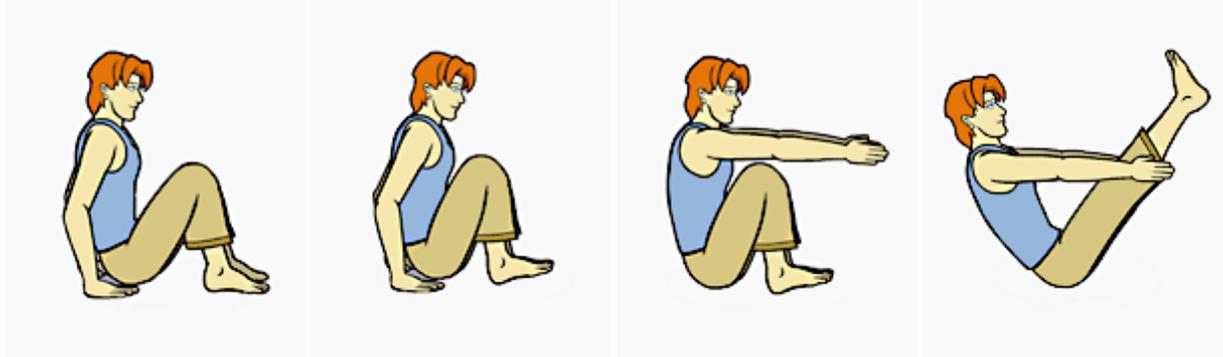
Step 1: Bring your feet together and assume a squatting position. Turn your knees outside.

Step 2: Lengthen your back by stretching your arms forward and bow your head. Try to find your balance in such a way that there is a stretching towards the pelvis and the upper back is stretched lengthwise as a result of the fact that the back is stretched towards the floor. If you lose any of these stretches, it means that your position is not well-balanced. You can regain this subtle balance by changing the height of your heels above the ground.

Step 3: If your back has the right dynamism, it feels as if you can lift your fingers from the ground. This means that you hardly rest on your arms. As your ankles and your back begin to relax more, your heels will move more and more towards the ground. Quietly steer you breath to the stiff parts of your body and let the relaxation do the work.

### **PARIPURNA NAVASANA (FULL BOAT)**

This exercise strengthens the belly muscles, the legs and the lower back. It is also beneficial to those with kidney, thyroid, prostate and intestine problems. The Boat Pose is a great stress reliever and also improves digestion.



Step 1: Sit down on your Yoga Mat. Pull in your legs and grab your upper legs on the back side below the knees. Tilt your upper body backwards so that your lower back carries your weight and the entire upper back is aligned in a straight perpendicular line.

Step 2: Slightly pull your legs with your arms to maintain the posture.

Step 3: Extend your arms forward and parallel to the floor.

Step 4: Stretch your legs and feet together. See to it that your back remains straight. When you find the position easy, you can reduce the stretching power of your arms without changing the position. Eventually bring your arms along the body parallel to the floor and focus on a particular spot for your balance. Quietly breathe in and out through your belly and try to maintain your relaxation during your efforts.

### **EK PADA KAPOTASANA (ONE LEGGED PIGEON)**

This asana literally mimics a pigeon. It is performed with one leg bent and the other leg stretched out behind you.

**Benefits-** stretches the entire lower part of the body, stimulates the abdominal organs and helps relieve the body of Sciatica.



Step 1: Begin by getting into Marjariasana (Cat stretch).

Step 2: Breathe out and bring your right knee forward to touch the right wrist.

Step 3: Bending the knee, bring your ankle near the groin region. Now slide the right foot towards the left hand, till the toes touch the left wrist.

Step 4: Slide the left leg back so that it touches the floor. Keeping the knee straight, ensure that the front of the foot is touching the ground, while the sole faces the ceiling.

Step 5: Lower your right buttock to the floor and press your tailbone forward to lengthen your lower back.

Step 6: You may strengthen the lower back further by pushing your fingertips firmly to the floor.

Step 7: Take a few deep breaths in this position.

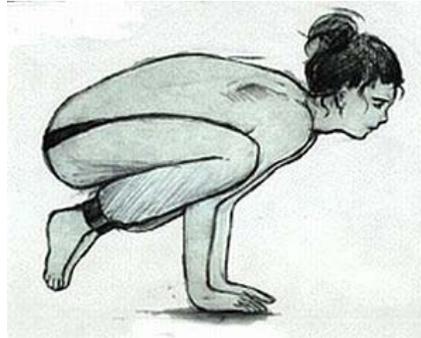
Step 8: Taking support of your hands, slide your left knee forward while exhaling and get back into the Cat stretch.

Step 9: Stay in Cat stretch and take a couple of deep breaths and repeat the process with the other leg.

## **KAKASANA (CROW POSE)**

Kakasana, the crow posture, is tenth in the sequence of 12 basic postures of hatha yoga. The crow is a balancing posture which strengthens the shoulders, arms and wrists.

**Benefits-** This pose helps strengthens the shoulders, arms and wrists, improves balance and most beneficial for repetitive stress injuries like carpal tunnel syndrome, and for people who spend a lot of time on the computer



Step 1: The crow begins by coming to a squatting position on your feet. Place your hands on the floor in front of your feet with the palms down, fingers spread comfortably apart. Be sure the hands are at least shoulder width or a little farther apart. Sometimes turning the finger tips very slightly towards each other with fingers slightly bent can be helpful.

Step 2: Bend your elbows and place your knees on the upper part of your arms above the elbows. The location of the knees varies from person to person depending on your body proportion and what is comfortable. Generally, the closer the knees are to the armpits the harder the crow posture is.

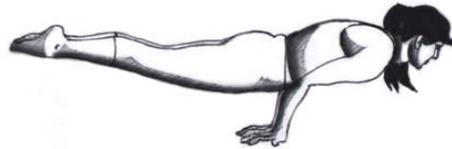
Step 3: Look at the floor 2 to 3 feet in front of your hands. This is very important. Keeping your concentration in front of your hands will prevent you from falling forward and crashing to the floor nose first. Some people like to place a pillow on the floor just in case they lose their balance.

Step 4: Slightly shift your weight forward over your hands until your feet come gradually off the floor. Do not hop into position. When both feet are off the floor comfortably, touch the big toes together. Always keep looking at the floor in front of your hands while holding this position.

Step 5: In the beginning the crow posture can be somewhat painful for the wrists for some people. To make it easier, try shifting the weight forward until you feel some pressure on the wrists, and then practice lifting first one foot and then the other off the ground until the wrists build up sufficient strength to lift both feet off the ground together.

### **MAYURASANA (PEACOCK POSE)**

Mayurasana or Peacock Pose is an asana where the individual assumes a peacock like posture. This asana tones up the abdominal portion of the body. It also strengthens the fore arms, wrists and elbows.



Step 1: The peacock begins in the same way as the crow, by coming to a squatting position on your feet. Place your hands on the floor between the knees with the palms down, fingertips pointing back towards the feet. Keep the hands touching together.

Step 2: Bring your elbows together and place them on the abdomen. Try to keep the elbows close together throughout the pose.

Step 3: Place your forehead on the mat in front of you. Straighten out both legs behind you. The body is now resting on the head, hands and feet.

Step 4: Lift your head. Keep the head up, gradually shift the weight of your body forward and as you do this lift the feet. The body should be parallel to the floor. In the beginning it is easier to lift each foot one at a time until you get the feeling for shifting the body weight forward and build up strength in the arms.

Step 5: To come out of the posture exhale and gradually lower the feet back down to the mat.

### **UPWARD PLANK (PURVATTANASANA)**

The literal meaning of this asana (posture) is to stretch towards the east. However, this has nothing to do with stretching in the east direction. Poorvottanasana specifically refers to the flow of pranaic subtle energies in the "eastern" frontal side.



Step 1: Sit up with the legs stretched out straight in front of you, keeping the feet together and the spine erect.

Step 2: Place the palms on the floor around the waist or at shoulder level, fingertips pointing away from you. Do not bend the arms.

Step 3: Lean back and support the weight of your body with your hands. Breathing in, raise the pelvis up, keeping the whole body straight.

Step 4: Keep your knees straight and bring the feet flat to the floor. Place the toes on the ground and the sole will then tend to be on the ground. Let the head fall back towards the floor.

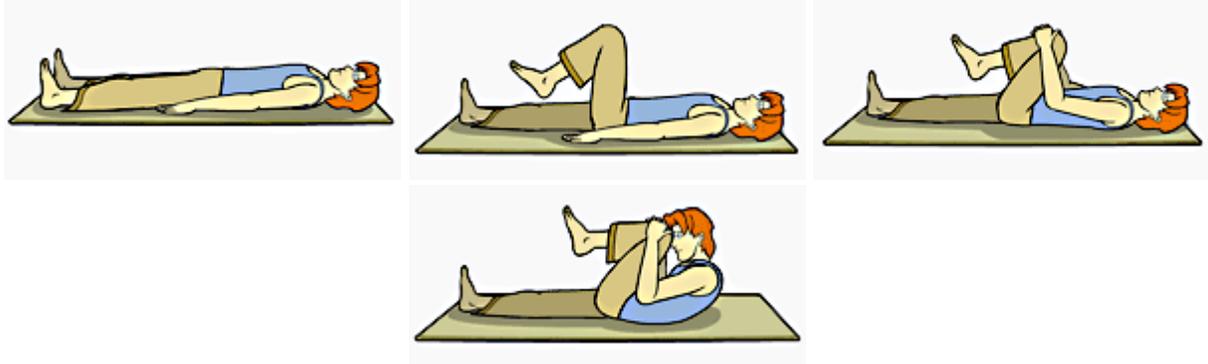
Step 5: Hold the pose and continue breathing. As you exhale, come back to a sitting position and relax.

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**PAVANAMUKTASANA (WIND RELIEVING)**

You may not be aware that a Yoga Exercise can relieve even the unwanted gases from your body. In the Wind Relieving Yoga Pose, the excess gas would be removed from the stomach and intestines, thus improving the digestive system. This Yoga Pose will also tone and stretch your lower back.



Step 1: Lie on the Yoga Mat.

Step 2: Raise your left knee.

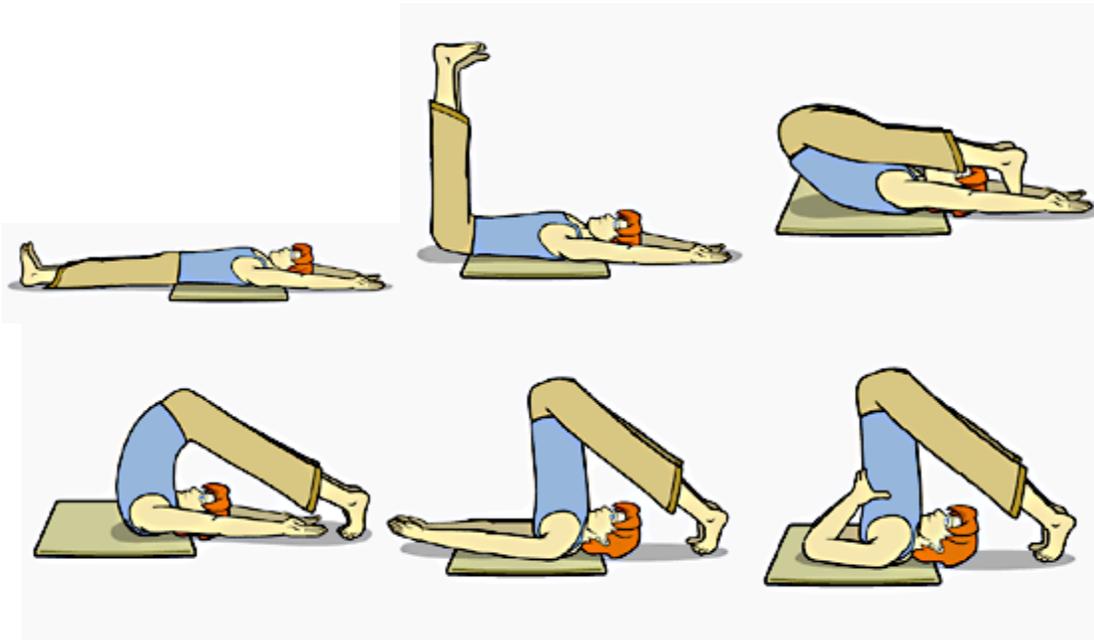
Step 3: Wrap your hands around your left knee.

Step 4: Raise your head towards your knee. Breathe, release. Repeat with the right leg. You can also do the rocking motion slowly with rhythm.

## **HALASANA (PLOUGH)**

Like its namesake, this pose prepares the 'field' of the body and mind for deep rejuvenation.

**Benefits-** Calms the nervous system, reduces stress & fatigue



Step 1: Lie down with your back on a Yoga Mat.

Step 2: Your shoulders should lie on the edge and your head rests on the mat. Your legs are drawn in and still stand on the mat.

Step 3: Lift your hips off the floor and bring your legs up, over and beyond your head.

Step 4: At this point, lift your back and move your legs further beyond your head.

Step 5: Straighten your spine and keep your back straight. Move your hands toward your back.

Step 6: Place your arms against your upper back and try to place your hands as near as possible to the shoulder blades. Try to place your elbows at shoulder-width. If you cannot do this, put them at a somewhat wider distance from each other.

### **SETUBANDASANA ( BRIDGE)**

The pose resembles a bridge, hence the name.

**Benefits-** Improves digestion, therapeutic for asthma, high blood pressure, calms the brain and helps alleviate stress



Step 1: Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet together. Keep your arms on your side, palms on the floor.

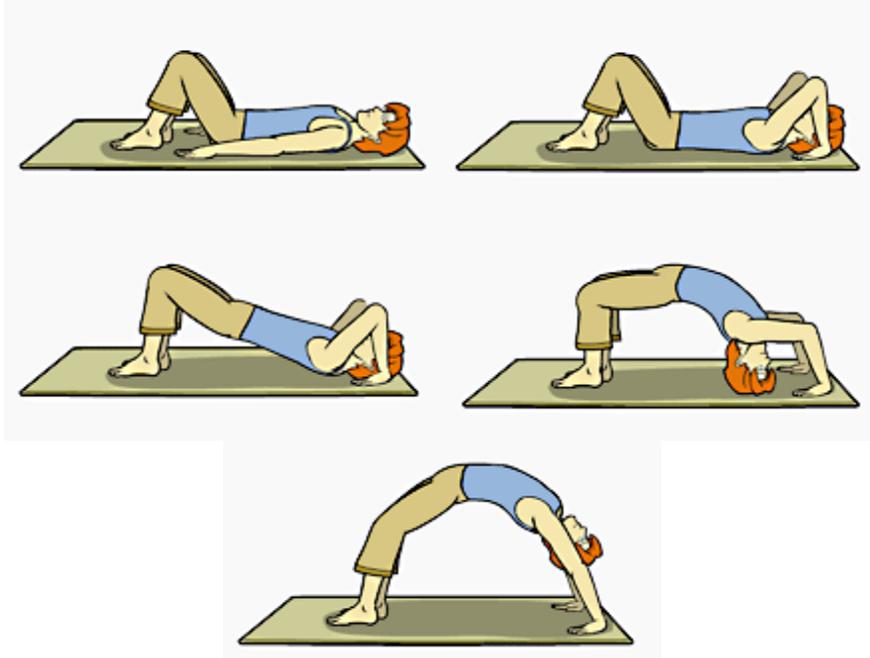
Step 2: Lift the hips towards the ceiling, keeping your feet and palms flat on the floor.

Step 3: Maintain your position in Step 2 and move your arms over your head.

## **CHAKRASANA ( WHEEL)**

This asana is performed with hands and feet on the floor, and the abdomen arched up towards the sky

**Benefits-** Stretches the chest and lungs, strengthens the arms and wrists, legs, abdomen, and spine, stimulates the thyroid and pituitary



Step 1: Lie on your back on your Yoga Mat. Pull in your legs and put your feet, somewhat turned inside, on the mat. However, do not pull them further apart than the distance of one hip end to the other.

Step 2: Move your hands towards your head and spread your palms on the floor beside your head, your fingers placed toward your shoulders.

Step 3: Lift your hips, with your head still on the Yoga Mat.

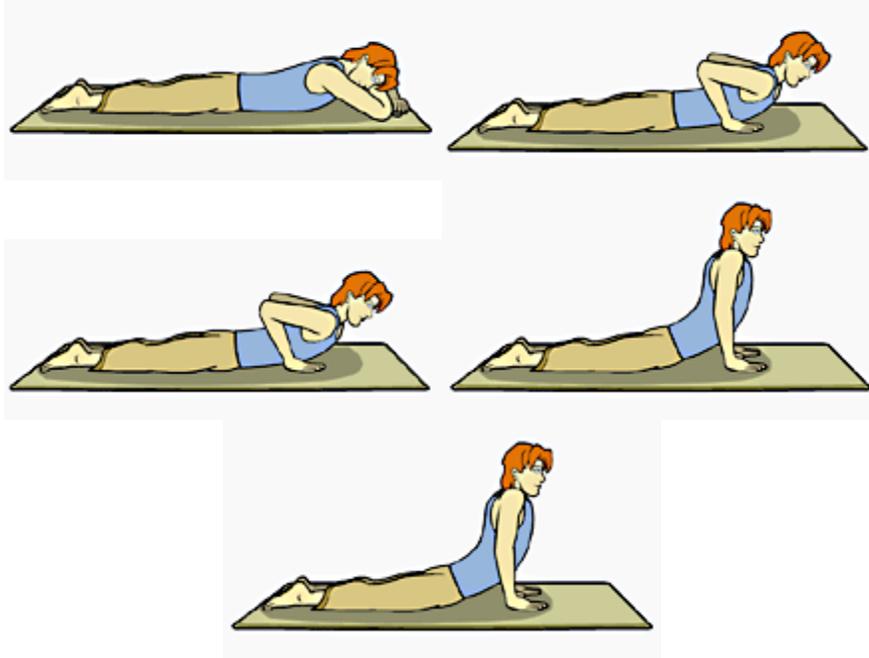
Step 4: Keep your feet and knees parallel as you push yourself up until you stand on the ground with the crown of your head.

Step 5: Stand on your feet and stretch out your arms until you have assumed the complete bridge position. The arms are slightly bent inwards. Let your head fall backwards.

## **BUJANGASANA (COBRA + KING COBRA)**

This asana resembles a serpent with its hood raised.

**Benefits-** strengthens the spine, stimulates abdominal organs, soothes sciatica, therapeutic for asthma



Step 1: Lie on your belly, while your head rests on your lower arms.

Step 2: Raise your forehead, look upwards and stretch your hands backwards. Let your weight rest on your chest.

Step 3: The head falls a little backwards towards your back and the backward movement proceeds from the neck and the chin. Move your belly further backward as if someone is pulling your arms. The weight is more and more shifted towards the belly and the lower back does the real work.

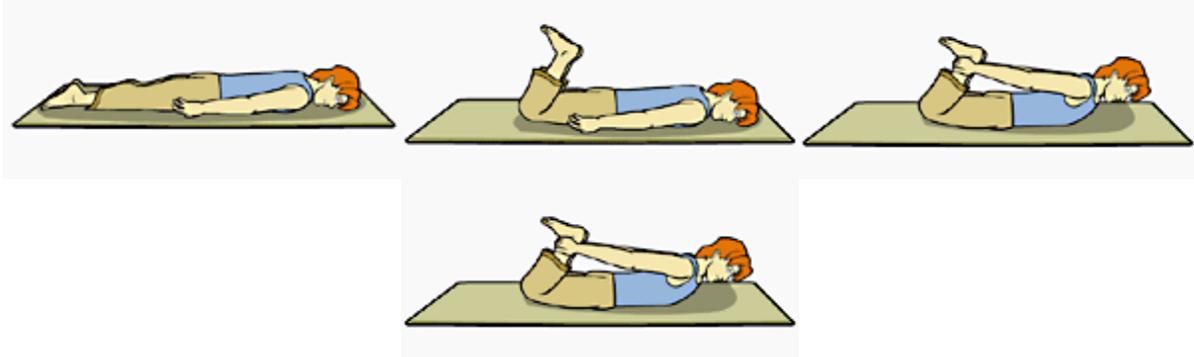
Step 4: If you cannot raise your chest any further, put your hands and arms next to your chest on the mat without losing the bend. Stretch your arms so that they stand perpendicular on the floor and at the same time turn your arms a little inward. Relax your lower back and bear your weight with your arms.

Step 5: The buttock muscles remain relaxed during the exercise. Move your chest further upwards with every breath out. Do this in a relaxed way instead of using force. You can tilt your head back. The shoulders are broad in front and the shoulder blades remain low.

### **DHANURASANA (BOW)**

This yoga posture has been named after the shape it takes – that of a bow.

**Benefits-** Strengthens the back and abdominal muscles, tones leg and arm muscles, adds greater flexibility to the back, good stress and fatigue buster



Step 1: Lie on your stomach, arms on your sides, and palms facing upward.

Step 2: Bend your knees. Bring your heels near your buttocks.

Step 3: Reach back with your arms and grasp your ankles. Let your weight rest on your stomach and not on your pelvis.

Step 4: Raise your knees further by pulling your ankles with your hands.

Continue breathing regularly and try to increase the stretching in the chest and the backward bend for a relaxed body and mind.

### **USHTRASANA (CAMEL)**

It is a very deep backward bend performed in a kneeling position.

**Benefits- improves core strength, spinal, hip and shoulder flexibility and stamina**



Step 1: Kneel on the yoga mat and place your hands on the hips.

Step 2: Your knees should be in line with the shoulders and the sole of your feet should be facing the ceiling. As you inhale, draw in your tail-bone towards the pubis as if being pulled from the navel.

Step 3: Simultaneously, arch your back and slide your palms over your feet till the arms are straight. Do not strain or flex your neck but keep it in a neutral position.

Step 4: Stay in this posture for a couple of breaths. Breathe out and slowly come back to the initial pose. Withdraw your hands and bring them back to your hips as you straighten up.

### **MATSYASANA (FISH POSE)**

The Fish Pose or Matsyasana in Hindi, is the counterpose to the Shoulder Stand and must always be practiced after it. Having stretched the neck and upper spine in the Shoulder Stand, Plough or Bridge, you now compress them as you arch your back. Doing the Fish Pose also relieves the stiffness of your neck and shoulder muscles and corrects any tendency of having rounded shoulders. Holding this Yoga Pose exercises the chest, tones the nerves of the neck and back, and ensures that the thyroid and parathyroid glands obtain the maximum benefits from the Shoulder Stand. Performing the Fish Pose also expands the rib cage fully, increasing your lung capacity and aids in deep breathing. You should remain in this Yoga Posture for at least half the amount of time you spent in the Shoulder Stand in order to balance the stretch.

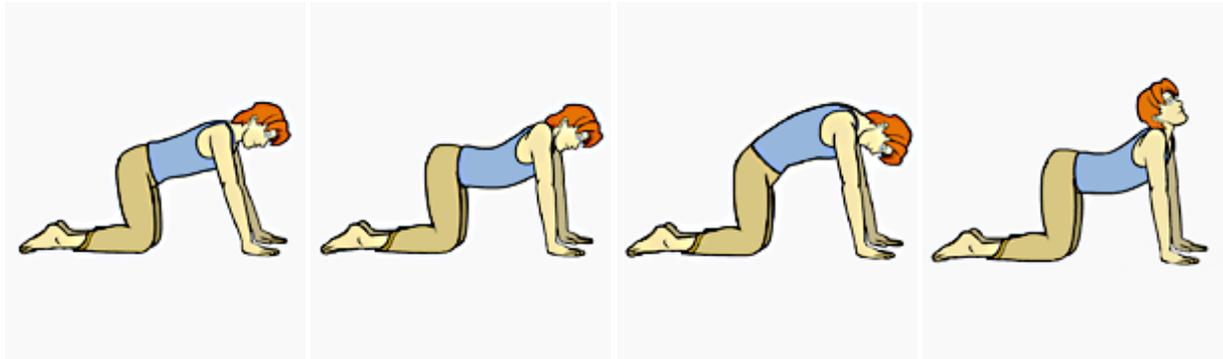


Step 1: Lie down on your back with your legs straight and your feet together. Place your hands, palms down, underneath your thighs.

Step 2: Pressing down on your elbows, inhale and arch your back. Drop your head back so that the top of your head is on the floor, but your weight should rest on your elbows. Exhale. Breathe deeply while in the position, keeping your legs and lower torso relaxed. To come out of the pose, lift your head and place it gently back down, then release the arms.

## **DOG POSE**

The Dog Pose or Dog Tilt has its center on the pelvis. It stretches the back, opens the chest, and builds upper body strength. In addition, it stretches the whole back side of the body, arms, shoulders, hips, heels, and hamstrings. The name itself, Dog Pose, tells what kind this pose is or how it will go about.



Step 1: Start on your hands and knees. Position your hands directly beneath your shoulders and your knees directly beneath the hips. Have your fingers fully spread with the middle fingers pointing straight ahead. Make your back horizontal and flat. Gaze at the floor. This is your "neutral" position. When your pelvis is in neutral, your spine will be at full extension, with both the front and back sides equally long

Step 2: As you wait for the inner cue, do not sag into your shoulders. Instead, create a line of energy through each arm by pressing downward into your hands and lifting your shoulders. Go back and forth like this several times to make sure you understand the movement.

Step 3: When you are ready to begin, breathe in deeply. As you exhale, turn your hips into "Cat Tilt". Do this by gently pulling the abdominal muscles backward toward the spine, tucking the tailbone (coccyx) down and under, and gently contracting the buttocks. Press firmly downward with your hands in order to stay lifted out of the shoulders, and lift the middle of your back toward the ceiling, rounding your spine upward. Curl your head inward. Gaze at the floor between your knees.

Step 4: As you inhale, turn your hips into Dog Tilt. Do this by releasing the grip of the buttocks, reversing the tilt of your pelvis, and curving your spine into a smoothly arched backbend.

### **CHAKRAVAKASANA (CAT & COW)**

These poses are done for a gentle warm-up or a stretching session. It brings a lot of flexibility to the spine. It stretches the back torso and neck, and softly stimulates and strengthens the abdominal organs. It also opens the chest, encouraging the breath to become slow and deep. The spinal movement of the two poses stimulates the kidneys and adrenal glands. Coordinating this movement with your breathing relieves stress and calms the mind.



Step 1: Start on your hands and knees with your wrists directly under your shoulders, and your knees directly under your hips. Point your fingertips to the top of your mat. Place your shins and knees hip-width apart. Center your head in a neutral position and soften your gaze downward.

Step 2: Begin by moving into Cow Pose: Inhale as you drop your belly towards the mat. Lift your chin and chest, and gaze up toward the ceiling.

Step 3: Broaden across your shoulder blades and draw your shoulders away from your ears.

Step 4: Next- move into Cat pose. As you exhale, draw your belly to your spine and round your back toward the ceiling. The pose should look like a cat stretching its back.

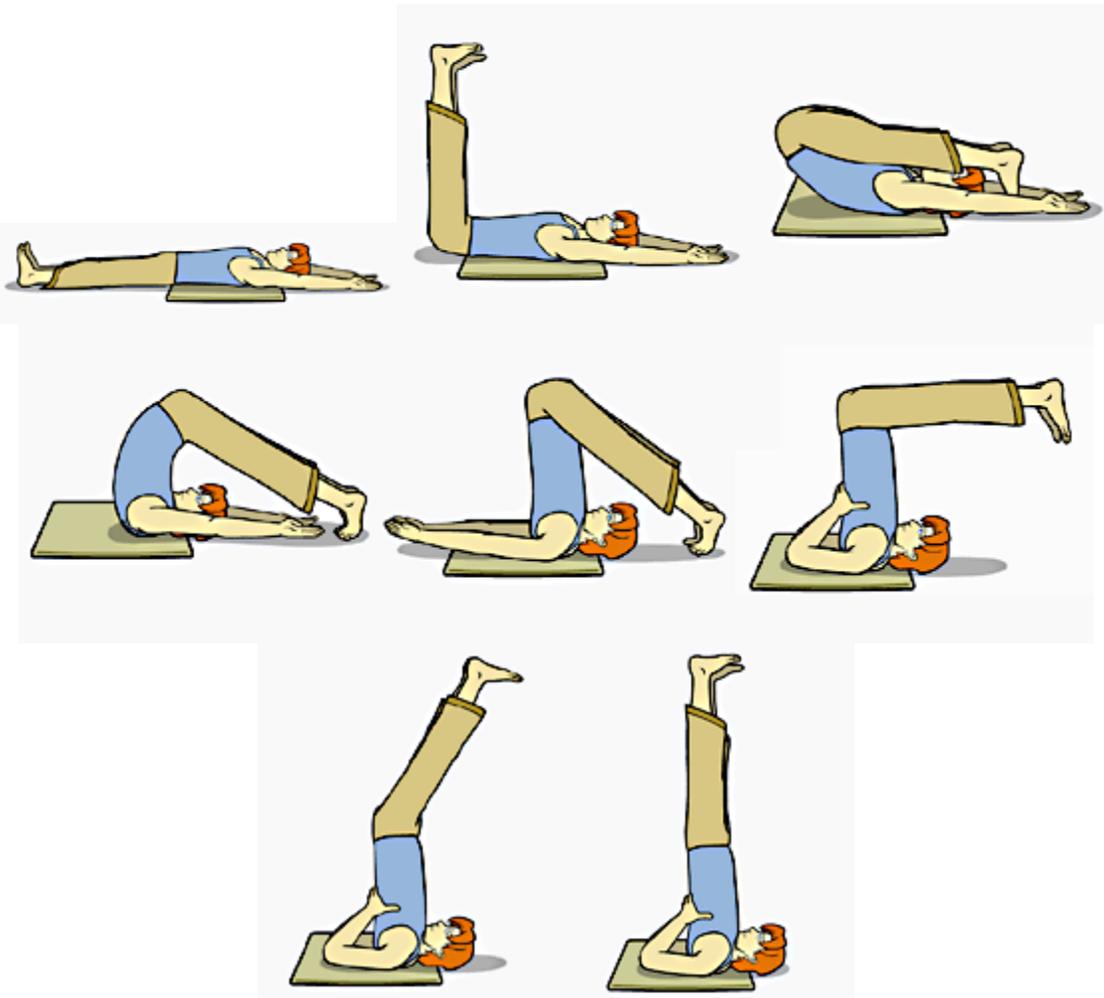
Step 5: Release the crown of your head toward the floor, but don't force your chin to your chest.

Step 6: Inhale coming back to Cow pose, then exhale as you return to Cat pose.

## **SARVANGASANA ( SUPPORTED SHOULDERSTAND)**

The posture is commonly referred to as Shoulderstand because your body weight rests on the top outer edges (the bony parts) of your shoulders.

**Benefits-** Promotes blood circulation, decrease depression and anxiety symptoms, ease fatigue and improve the immune function



Step 1: Lie down with your back on a Yoga Mat.

Step 2: Your shoulders should lie on the edge and your head rests on the mat. Your legs are drawn in and still stand on the mat.

Step 3: Lift your hips off the floor and bring your legs up, over and beyond your head.

Step 4: At this point, lift your back and move your legs further beyond your head.

Step 5: Straighten your spine and keep your back straight. Move your hands toward your back.

Step 6: Place your arms against your upper back and try to place your hands as near as possible to the shoulder blades. Try to place your elbows at shoulder-width. If you cannot do this, put them at a somewhat wider distance from each other. If you want, you can use a belt to keep the arms together.

Step 7: Push your back upwards with your hands. You will get a force upwards coming from the seventh neck-vertebra.

Step 8: Lift up your legs, one at a time, and see to it that the pelvis is placed straight over your back and your hands. Your legs are placed a little forward. Divide the weight of your legs between the hands and the shoulders. Build up strength in the upper lower back and give space to your chest and shoulder muscles.

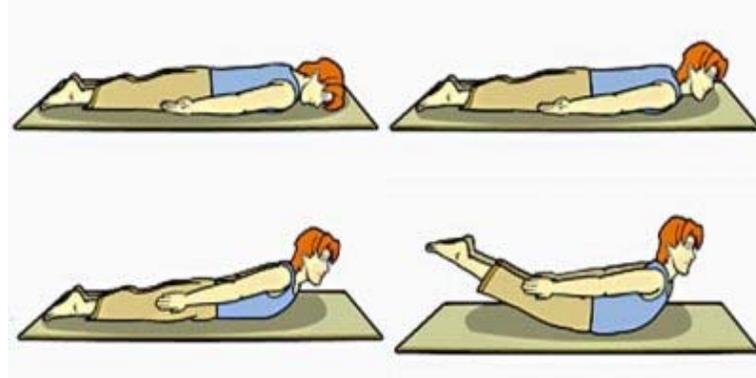
Step 9: After some time, try placing your arms a little lower in the direction of the shoulder blades on your back. See to it that the elbows do not stand too far apart. Breathe in and out quietly and try to find your balance.

### **SHALABHASANA (LOCUST POSE)**

Locust Pose is an intermediate backbend that tones and strengthens the entire back of the body. The Sanskrit name for the pose, “Salabhasana” (shah-lah-BAHS-uh-nuh), comes from two words:

“Salabha,” which means “locust” , “Asana,” which means “pose”.

**Benefits** – *Salabhasana* strengthens and increases flexibility throughout the entire back of the body, including the spine, legs, buttocks, and all of the muscles surrounding your ribs and upper torso. Working the upper back muscles improves posture and helps relieve stress and fatigue caused by slouching forward. This also strengthens the abdominal muscles and the chest. By lifting the front of your torso, you also deeply stretch the front upper torso. This helps to open the lungs, which improves breathing capacity.



Step 1: Begin lying on your stomach with your arms at your sides. Rest your forehead on the mat. Extend your legs straight behind you, hip-width apart. Do not roll your heels inward or outward. Instead, press your weight evenly across the tops of both feet.

Step 2: Inhale and raise your head to look forward. On your exhale, lift your chest and arms. Keep your arms alongside your body with your palms facing down. Lift your upper spine and reach your arms back toward your feet.

Step 3: Use your inner thighs to lift your legs up toward the ceiling. Reach straight back through the balls of your feet. Your weight should rest on your lower ribs, belly, and front pelvis.

Step 4: Keep your chest lifted as you widen across your collarbones. Draw your shoulder blades into your back ribs and extend them away from each other.

Step 5: Gaze at your cheeks. Keep your breath smooth and even.

Step 6: Hold for up to one minute. On an exhalation, slowly release your body to the ground. Place your right ear on the mat and relax your arms at your sides for a few breaths. Repeat the pose for the same amount of time, then rest with your left ear on the mat.

### **KURMASANA (TORTOISE POSE)**

The Tortoise pose is so called because the final position the person to the end of the pose resembles that of a tortoise – the person’s limbs are spread outwards.



Step 1: Sit in Dandasana with your legs straight in front of you and your hands on the floor alongside your hips. Press your thighs into the floor, flex your feet, and lift your chest. Bring your legs to the edges of the mat, with your knees as wide as your shoulders. Take a few breaths here.

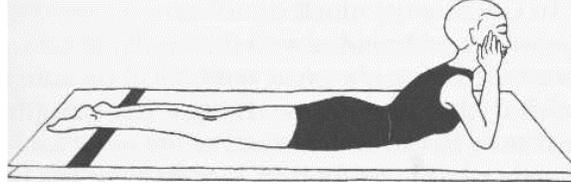
Step 2: Bend your knees, and keeping your feet flexed, bring them closer to your hips. Extend your chest and arms forward and down between your legs.

Step 3: Bend your legs even more, so that you can put your shoulders one by one under your knees. (If this is too difficult, continue to work on forward bends.) Once there, stretch your arms out to the sides. Roll your thighs inward and extend your inner heels, without creating tension in the feet. Spread the front of your chest and collarbones forward and down with the help of the pressure of your thighs on the shoulders or upper arms. Push your inner heels down and forward to stretch and straighten your legs. Your inner thighs should remain in contact with your side ribs.

Step 4: Inhale to continue to stretch your arms and chest out to your sides. Exhale to extend your spine farther forward. Do not force your legs; instead relax and exhale to release as far as you can into the pose. If you feel pain under your knees, take your arms slightly forward. Stay for a few breaths, then slowly come out of the pose. Repeat a few times.

### **MAKARASANA (CROCODILE POSE)**

Makarasana or the Crocodile pose is a yoga asana used for relaxation. In sanskrit, 'Makar' means crocodile and 'Asana' means a pose. Makarasana is a yogic pose useful for people with back and shoulder problems.



Step 1: Lie down on the floor on your stomach with your hands folded under the head.

Step 2: Place the palms on your shoulders in a relaxed way and close your eyes.

Step 3: Stretch the legs as far as possible. The toes should point outwards.

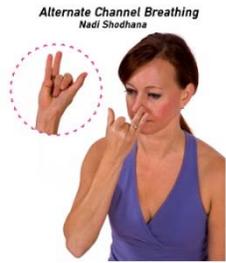
Step 4: Relax the whole body. Breathe normally and slowly. Feel the whole body touching the ground and the deep relaxation in all your muscles.

Step 5: Relax in this posture for 2 – 5 minutes.

## **PRANAYAMA – BREATHING**

"Pranayama is control of Breath". "Prana" is Breath or vital energy in the body. On subtle levels prana represents the pranic energy responsible for life or life force, and "ayama" means control. So Pranayama is "Control of Breath". One can control the rhythms of pranic energy with pranayama and achieve healthy body and mind. Patanjali in his text of Yoga Sutras mentioned pranayama as means of attaining higher states of awareness.

### **Nadi Shodhana Pranayama (Alternate nostril breathing)**



Step 1: Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position such as Easy Pose (Sukhasana).

Step 2: Close the right nostril with your right thumb.

Step 3: Inhale deeply through the left nostril.

Step 3: Close the left nostril with the ring finger of your right hand as you release the right nostril.

Step 4: Exhale slowly through your right nostril.

Step 5: Keeping the left nostril closed, inhale deeply through your right nostril.

Step 6: Seal the right nostril again with your thumb, then release the left nostril.

Step 7: Exhale out of the left nostril. You should now be in the original position, with the thumb sealing the right nostril.

Step 8: Repeat the process ten times, gradually increasing the number of repetitions.

Step 9: Once you gain full breath control during Nadi Shodhana, begin to hold your breath for a moment at the top and bottom of each inhale/exhale cycle. Never strain; let this next stage develop gradually.

## Kapalbhati Pranayama (Light Skull Breathing)

Perfect Pose  
Siddhasana



Step 1: Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position such as Easy Pose (Sukhasana), Hero Pose (Virasana), or Perfect Pose (Siddhasana).

Step 2: Rest your hands on your knees, palms facing upward.

Step 3: Bring your awareness to your lower belly, or place your hand on this area.

Step 4: Inhale through both nostrils deeply.

Step 5: Contract your low belly or use your hand to press this area, forcing out the breath in a short burst.

Step 6: As you quickly release the contraction, your inhalation should be automatic and passive — your focus should be on exhaling.

Step 7: Begin slowly, aiming for 65-70 contractions per minute. Gradually quicken the pace, aiming for 95 to 105 exhalation/inhalation cycles per minute. Always go at your own pace, and stop if you feel faint or dizzy.

Step 8: After one minute of the exercise, inhale deeply through the nostrils, and then exhale slowly through your mouth.

