

Yoga Posture

Sit/Easy Position - Sukhasana

This is a starting position that helps you to focus on awareness of breathing and on relaxation of the body and mind. This position also strengthens the lower back and increases flexibility of the groin and hips.

Sit cross-legged with hands turned face up and resting on knees. Focus on proper breathing technique by taking 5-10 slow, deep breaths. On the final inhale, raise your arms over your head. Exhale and bring your arms down slowly. Repeat 5-7 times.



Dog and Cat

This posture increases the flexibility of the spine and is really two poses flowing into each other.

Begin on your hands and knees in the dog pose. Hands should be in alignment with shoulders and knees hip-width apart. As you inhale, let the spine curve downward, dropping the stomach slowly and slightly elevating the head. As you exhale, move into the cat pose by reversing the bend. Tilt the pelvis up, draw the spine up and pull the chest and stomach in to form an arch. Flow smoothly from the dog to the cat poses.



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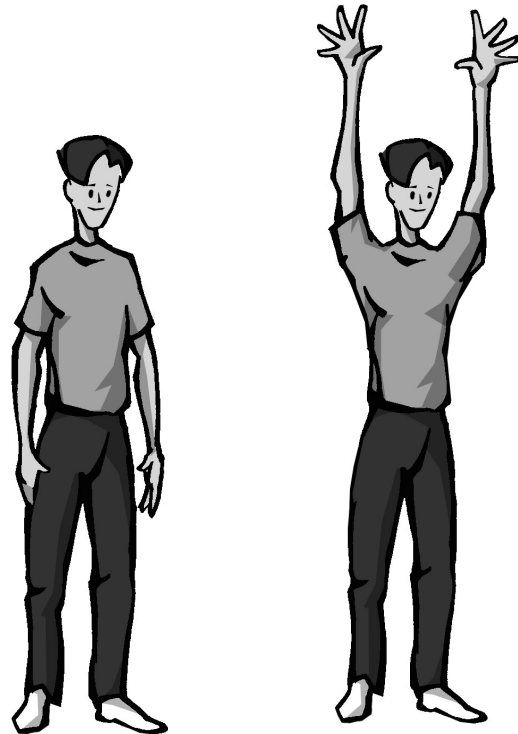
Mountain - Tadasana

This pose improves posture, balance and self-awareness.

Stand with feet together, hands at sides and eyes looking forward. Raise toes and fan them open, then place them back down on the floor. Make sure the heel, the outside of foot, the toes and ball of foot are all in contact with the floor. Tilt pelvic girdle slightly forward. Raise chest up and imagine a string being attached to the top of the head and the string being pulled upward to straighten posture. Lengthen neck by lifting the base of the skull toward the ceiling. Stretch the little finger of each hand downward, then balance that movement by stretching the index finger. Push into the floor with your feet, then contract the calves, then the thighs, as though they were moving upward.

Breathe. Hold the posture, but try not to become tense or rigid. Upon inhale, imagine the breath coming through the floor, rising through the legs and torso, then into the head. Reverse the process on the exhale and feel the breath as it passes down from the head, through the chest and stomach, then to the legs and feet.

Repeat for 5-10 breaths, then relax and repeat. Variation: on the inhale, raise arms over the head and hold for several breaths. Lower arms on an exhale. As a warmup, try coordinating the raising and lowering of arms with breathing: raise - inhale, lower - exhale. Repeat 5 times.

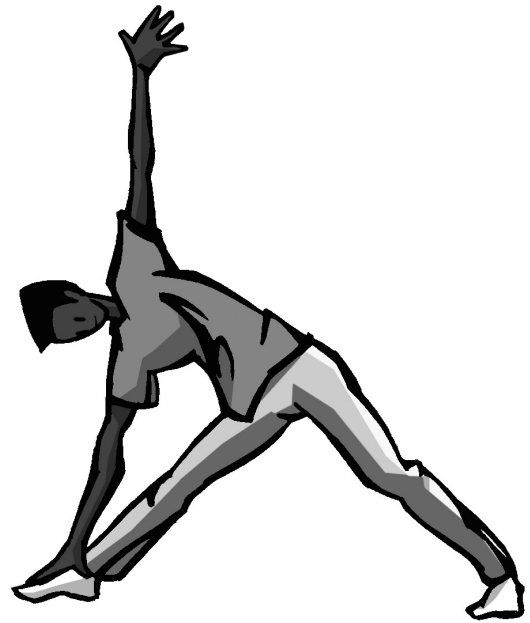


Yoga Posture

Triangle - Trikonasana

This pose stretches the spine and improves balance and concentration.

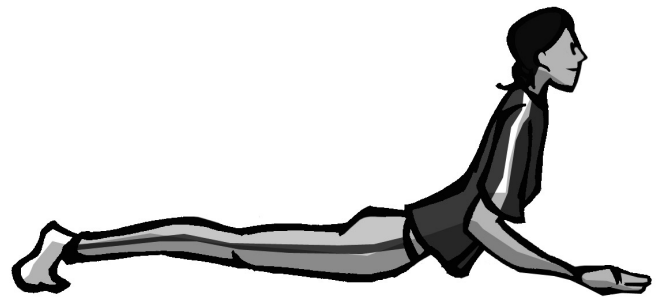
Begin the pose with your feet spread 3-4 feet apart and parallel to each other. Turn the left foot about 90° to the left and the right foot about 45° inward. Inhale and raise both arms so they are shoulder height and parallel to the floor. Upon exhaling, turn head to the left and look down the left arm toward the outstretched fingers of the left hand. Check that the left knee is aligned with the left ankle. Take a deep breath and stretch outward to the left, tilting the left hip down and the right hip up. When the maximum stretch has been reached, bend at the waist, letting the left hand reach down and come to rest against the inside of the calf, while the right arm points straight up. Turn and look at right hand. Breathe deeply for several breaths. Inhale and straighten up. Exhale, lower arms. Put hands on hips and pivot heels, bringing feet to face forward. Repeat posture on the right side.



The Cobra - Bhujangasana

This pose stretches the spine, strengthens the back and arms and opens the chest.

Lay on stomach. Keep legs together, arms at sides, close to the body with hands by the chest. Inhaling, slowly raise head and chest as high as flexibility will allow. Keep buttocks muscles tight to protect the lower back. Keep head up and chest out. Breathe several times and then come back down to starting position. A variation on this move: begin as instructed. When you are raised to a comfortable position, slowly extend your arms to go as far as possible and still remain comfortable. Squeeze buttocks to protect lower back. The pelvis should always remain in contact with the floor. Breathe several times and slowly come back to resting position.



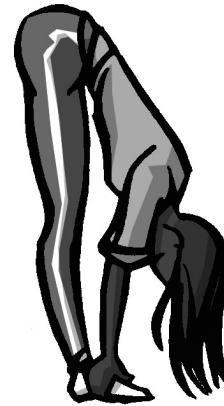
Yoga Posture

Forward Bend or Extension - Uttanasana II

This pose stretches the legs and spine while relaxing the neck, mind and body.

Begin this pose by standing in the Mountain pose. Inhale and raise the arms overhead. Exhale and bend at the hips and bring the arms forward and down until hands are relaxed and as close to the floor as possible. Allow the knees to relax and be slightly bent. Either grasp ankles or leave hands on the floor (dependant upon level of flexibility) and breathe several times. Repeat 3-5 times. On the last bend, hold the position for 5-10 breaths. To come out of the pose, curl upward as if pulling up one vertebra at a time, stacking one on top of the other. The head should hang down until the end and then slowly be brought into upright position.

A variation of this pose is to lower into the curled position on an exhale. On the inhale, extend arms forward as the body is rising until a standing posture (Mountain) is assumed with arms over the head. Repeat the process 5 times. Another variation is to remain in the bending forward position of the pose and hang for as long as comfortable. Come out of this bent position in a slow and controlled manner, imagining each vertebra move.



Yoga Posture

Warrior II - Virabhadrasana II

This pose strengthens legs and arms as well as improves balance and concentration.

Begin in Mountain pose with feet together and hands at side. Step forward with feet 4-5 feet apart and with your left leg in front. Turn the right foot outward to be at a 90° angle so it is pointing straight out to the side. Slowly bend the left knee until the thigh is parallel to the floor. Ensure that the knee is either behind or directly over the ankle. Raise arms over the head. Slowly lower arms until the left arm is pointing straight ahead and the right arm is pointing back. Concentrate on a spot at the front of the room and breathe. Take 4-5 deep breaths. Lower arms and bring legs together. Reverse pose and try with the right foot forward.



Head to Knee - Janu Shirshasana

This pose stretches the hamstrings and improves flexibility.

Sit on the floor with legs extended. Bend one leg, bringing the heel of the foot as close to the groin as possible. Make sure the sitting position is balanced and the spine is straight. Turn body slightly to face the extended leg. Inhale and raise arms over the head. Exhale and begin to move forward slowly. Try to keep the back as straight as possible. Inhale and lengthen and straighten the spine. Exhale and roll forward, however slightly. To get a bit more forward movement, engage the quadriceps (thigh) muscles as you move forward. This releases the hamstrings, and allows for a larger range of motion. When fully stretched, lower the arms and grasp the foot or leg. Hold the position and inhale. Exhaling, gently use arms to pull forward. When done, straighten and repeat on opposite side.



Yoga Posture

Half Shoulder-stand - Ardha Sarvangasana

This pose increases flexibility and strengthens the lower back and abdominal muscles.

Lie on back and lift legs into the air. Place hands on lower back for support, resting elbows and lower arms on the ground. Make sure weight is on the shoulders and mid to upper back – not the neck. Breathe deeply and hold the pose for at least 5-10 breaths. To come down, slowly lower legs, keeping them very straight to provide an opportunity to strengthen abdominal muscles.



The Corpse - Savasana

This pose relaxes and refreshes the body and mind; it relieves stress and anxiety. This pose is also known as the Sponge and often performed at the end of a session. The goal is to experience conscious relaxation.

Begin by lying on back, feet slightly apart, arms at sides with palms facing up. This is best performed in a quiet, softly lit room, on a padded surface; e.g., mats, blankets on the floor of a classroom with the lights dimmed. Background sounds such as the recordings of waves or running water, can often help eliminate some of the noise commonly heard throughout a school venue! Close eyes and take several slow, deep breaths. Allow body to sink into the floor. Try focusing on a specific part of the body, willing it to relax. For example, focus on the feet. To focus attention on the body part, tighten the feet as vigorously as possible. Hold the contracted muscles as long as possible. Now relax and imagine the muscles and skin relaxing, letting go and slowly melting into the floor. Move up the body alternating between contracting and relaxing. Once the head has been reached, focus on total body relaxation.



Activity	
Basic Skills	
Application of Basic Skills	



Benefits Health	
Functional Fitness	
Body Image	
Well-being	



Cooperation	
Communication	
Fair Play	
Leadership	
Teamwork	



Do it Daily...for life	
Effort	
Safety	
Goal Setting	
In the Community	