

Sample Sequenced Yoga Class (2005)

Let's begin in Vajrasana, thunder bolt pose

- So you want to kneel on the floor
- Sitting in this asana directly after meals, for at least five to ten minutes to enhance the digestive function.
- Your big toes should be together and you want to separate your heels.
- Lower the buttocks Lower the buttocks onto the inside surface of the feet with the heels touching the sides of the hips.
- Make sure to place your both hands on the knees, palms facing down.
- Your back and head should be straight but not tense.
- Avoid excessive backward arching of the spine.
- Close the eyes, relax the arms and the whole body
- Take 3 deep breaths at your own pace.

Neck warm up

- Now lift your chest and roll your shoulders back
- We are going to warm up the neck,
- Slowly and mindfully move your chin to your chest (5)
- Ear to shoulder, Nose to shoulder (right side then left 5 times each)
- Sweep your head in a circle towards your left, don't close your eyes
- Circle your head towards your right

Tadasana

- Depending on what is most comfortable to you place your feet together or place them hips distance apart.
- Gradually place your feet down spreading your toes.
- The inner sides of your feet should be parallel, make sure your feet are not pointing inwards or outwards.
- Your three centers, your head heart and pelvis should be stacked.
- Center of forehead and chin are in a straight line with your treasure chest, bhaga marma.
- Your chin should be parallel to the floor.
- Tuck your sacrum under so there is a bit of open space between the lumbar and sacrum.
- Roll your shoulders up to your ears and spread them down and outwards and make sure your shoulder blades are spread.
- Your fingers should be gently touching each other, don't separate them and don't strain them together to hard.
- Lift up through your sternum...(demonstrate by using hand to pull) you should be lifting from the crown as if being pulled up by a string.
- At the same time create a space between each vertebrae as you elongate your spine, try and take the arch out of your spine.
- Your heels should be connected to the earth.
- Make sure there is a space between your inner arm and the sides of your body to allow for radial breathing.
- Your gaze should be soft and straight ahead.
- Breathe deeply through your nostrils and feel the sensations in your body.

- (After a few minutes) Check your palms to see if there are purple blotches, this signals that your channels are open and oxygen is flowing through your body.

Tiryaka Tadasana (Swaying Palm Tree Pose)

- Stand in Open Gate
- Your feet can either be together or apart. If you want more balance keep them apart.
- Clasp your hand in front of you interlocking your fingers, make sure your thumbs don't stick.
- Look down at your palms.
- Inhale and move your hands up with your breath, keeping your gaze focused on your hands.
- At eye level flip your hands and then your gaze should be forward.
- Drop your shoulders into your sockets.
- Make sure your pinky's are still interlocked and push your hands toward the ceiling.
- Your arms should be straight.
- As you pull up and reach towards the ceiling make sure your tailbone and feet reach towards the ground.
- You want to feel an upwards and downward stretch.
- Check your three centers to make sure they are aligned.
- Inhale deeply and exhale to your right.
- You want to feel your left side channel open.
- As you turn to the right push the weight down into your left foot and feel the stretch from your fingers to your toes including your armpit and hip.
- REACH for the wall, don't bend.
- Do not arch your back as if you are in between two panes of glass.
- Your right side should be supporting your left. You are not collapsing into your right.
- Be careful to keep your head back and in between your shoulders.
- Keep your arms straight and work on keeping them in line with your ears.
- Inhale deeply. Don't forget to breathe.
- A subtle rotation of your hip and torso will allow you to go further into the pose but do not push yourself.
- Inhale up slowly
- Your right leg should be active as you come up.
- Come back to your center and exhale as you bring your hands down.
- Check your sensations.
- *For beginners try this posture against the wall and keep BOTH shoulders against the wall to bring awareness to spine rotation.

BENEFITS: massages and loosens and exercises sides of the waist. It balances the left and right groups of postural muscles.

Virabhadrasana II (auspicious hero pose)

- From open gate spread your legs about a legs length apart.
- Inhale, lift your toe and pivot your right foot.
- Exhale, bring your foot down spreading your toes.
- Pick up your back foot and turn it slightly inward.
- Make sure you roll your back foot in to make sure you do not strain your knee.

- Align your three centers.
- Inhale your arms up.
- Make sure your fingers are together and straight. (effort not exertion)
- Drop your shoulders down or away from your ears.
- Make sure your shoulders are spread, don't pinch back.
- You should feel a sensation from the tips of your fingers through your heart all the way across.
- Align your centers
- Exhale and turn your head to the right.
- The weight in your back foot needs to be on the outer edge of that foot so you do not collapse into your ankle.
- Your back leg is strong from your hip to your toe as if a spear has been placed in the earth. Make sure it is not locked it should be a few degrees off lock.
- Engage your thighs, legs should be active as if you could pull apart your mat with your feet.
- Exhale as you slide your pelvis down (sink pelvis down from the crown) and your knee glides towards the wall.
- Tuck your tailbone.
- If your back foot starts lifting up then you need to shorten your stance.
- Your knee should be in line with your foot and reaching for the wall.
- Look down at your feet. You should only see your big toe, if you see your other toes then you are putting stress on your knee.
- You should feel a weight pulling down from the pelvis like a sack of potatoes.
- Your core should stay upright, don't slant forward or back.
- Invoke a 6 way stretch. Feel as though pressing against resistance which is coming from the front, back, sides, top and bottom.
- Breathe deeply and feel the sensations. Feel the prana in your body.
- Inhale up from the crown, not from the knee. Pull yourself up from your crown.
- Exhale as you bring your hands down and place your right foot forward.
- Check your sensations.

EFFECTS: though this pose the leg muscles become shapely and stronger. It relieves cramps in the calf and thigh muscles, brings elasticity to the leg and back muscles and also tones the abdominal organs. Mastery of the standing poses prepares the pupil for the advanced poses in forward bending which can be acquired with ease.

Virabhadrasana I (auspicious hero pose)

- From open gate spread your legs about a legs length apart.
- Inhale, lift your toe and pivot your right foot.
- Exhale, bring your foot down spreading your toes.
- Pick up your back leg and spiral your hips forward.
- The hips should be even and if not move your back foot so that it turns more towards the front.
- Your hips and shoulders should be squared and your three centers should be aligned.
- Inhale as you lift your arms up, palms facing up.
- Lift elbows to the ceiling feeling the sensations from your fingertips through your heart all the way across. This opens up the heart nadi which can relieve stress and helps

prevent heart attacks.

- Inhale your arms up alongside your ears. Keep your arms straight but drop your shoulders and make sure they are relaxed.
- If there is strength in your arms to keep them up and straight then you can bring your palms together without any pressure.
- Your hands can be together or apart in this posture as long as there is no arch in your lower back.
- Your gaze should be at the joined palms or at the ceiling if your hands are not joined.
- Sink your pelvis down as your knee glides towards the wall.
- Don't let your back knee collapse and do not lock your knees either.
- Inhale up from the crown, not from the knee. Pull yourself up from your crown.
- Exhale as you bring your hands down and place your right foot forward.
- Check your sensations.

EFFECTS: In this pose the chest is fully expanded and this helps deep breathing. It relieves stiffness in the shoulders and back, tones up the ankles and knees and cures stiffness of the neck. It also reduces fat around the hips.

Samokanasana (Same angle asana)

- Stand in Open Gate (reminder that your centers should be aligned) with your feet together or keep feet apart if your back and hamstrings are weak.
- Inhale and raise your hands straight above the head with your palms facing each other.
- Drop your shoulders down and spread your shoulder blades.
- Arch your back slightly pushing your buttocks out a little.
- Exhale and slowly bend forward at the hips until your torso is parallel to the floor.
- As you bend forward rotate your groin area back in order to open your sit bones to avoid lower back pain. Feel your sitbones opening as you come down and spread them open so that you can let the pelvis sink down.
- Keep your legs and buttocks active/engaged. Don't lock your knees, engage your thighs.
- Push weight into backs of heels
- Make sure your head, neck and spine are in a straight line.
- Elongate your neck
- Don't kick your elbows out, make sure your arms are straight.
- Your head should be lifted up a bit.
- When your torso is completely parallel to the earth and your legs are engaged drop your hands at the wrists (limp)
- Your gaze should be on the ground, breathe between your ribs.
- Stay connected to the earth
- Inhale, slowly return to the upright position with your arms, head and back in a straight line.
- Exhale, lower your arms and bring your hands into your heart center in anjali mudra.
- Check for sensations.

AWARENESS: Physical, on the movement, keeping the spine straight and maintaining balance. **Spiritual** on anahata chakra. **BENEFITS:** This asana works specifically on the upper back directly behind the chest. It rectifies spinal curvature tension and poor posture.

Uttanasana (Deliberate intense stretch, lengthening in pose, Ut is a particle indicating deliberation, intensity. The verb tan means to stretch, extend, lengthen out. In this asana the spine is given a deliberate and intense stretch.)

- Stand in Open Gate (reminder that your centers should be aligned) with your feet together
- Inhale and raise your hands straight above the head with your palms facing each other.
- Arch your back slightly pushing your buttocks out a little.
- Tuck your tailbone
- Exhale and slowly bend forward at the hips until your torso is parallel to the floor.
- Keep your legs and buttocks active/engaged.
- Push weight forward into your toes.
- Make sure your head, neck and spine are in a straight line.
- Elongate your neck
- Don't kick your elbows out, make sure your arms are straight.
- Your head should be lifted up a bit.
- When your torso is completely parallel to the earth inhale.
- Make sure your legs are engaged check your alignment, your 3 centers should be stacked upon each other
- After you are aligned well inhale as you keep reaching forward while you bend from the pelvis
- The crown of your head should move towards the floor as your tailbone reaches up towards the sky.
- Bring your stomach over your thigh. Exhale.
- Lift your ribs, you should feel as if you are lessening the space between your belly button and spine.
- Place your hands close to your feet, whatever feels most comfortable for you. Do not push yourself. Breathe
- Your gaze should be on the ground.
- Stay connected to the earth
- Inhale, slowly return to the upright position with your arms, head and back in a straight line. (Easier option, hands on sit bones as you come up).
- Exhale, lower your arms and bring your hands into your heart center in anjali mudra.
- Check for sensations.

EFFECTS: This asana cures stomach pains and tones the liver, the spleen and the kidneys. It also relieves stomach pain during menstrual periods. The heart beats are slowed down and the spinal nerves rejuvenated. Any depression felt in the mind is removed if one holds this pose for more than two minutes. The posture is a boon to people who get excited quickly as it soothes the brain cells. After finishing the asana one feels calm and cool, the eyes start to glow and the mind feels at peace.

Padangusthasana (pada means foot, angustha is the big toe)

- Stand in Open Gate. Spread your feet sit bone width apart. The inside of your feet should be parallel to each other. Check your alignment.
- Inhale and raise your hands straight above the head with your palms facing each other.
- Arch your back slightly pushing your buttocks out a little.
- Tuck your tailbone
- Consciously bring your upper body down. Keep reaching the crown of your head

toward the floor.

- Elongate your spine, tuck your chin.
- Stomach should be hollow.
- Your shoulders should be away from your ear.
- Hold the big toes in between the thumbs and the first two fingers, making a mudra, so that the palms face each other.
- Knees can be bent in order to grab toes.
- Hold them tight. Inhale and look up with your gaze towards the tip of your nose.
- Keep your head up and stretch the diaphragm towards the chest and make the back as concave as possible.
- Lift from the heart, pull the heart forward.
- Your elbows should be spread out as you hands pull on your toes.
- As the same time your feet is pressing into the ground. Feel these opposing forces.
- Make sure your head, neck and spine are in a straight line.
- Elongate your neck. Breathe and feel your sit bones spreading.
- Lift up your ribs as if the space in between your belly button and spine is lessening.
- Stay connected to the earth
- Inhale, slowly return to the upright position with your arms, head and back in a straight line. (Easier option, hands on sit bone)
- Exhale, lower your arms and bring your hands into your heart center in anjala mudra.
- Check for sensations.

EFFECTS: abdominal organs are toned and digestive juices increase while the liver and spleen are activated. Persons suffering from a bloating sensation in the abdomen or from gastric troubles will benefit by practicing these two asanas. (padahasthasana, hand variation)

Utkatasana (Fierce Pose)

- Stand in Open Gate. Move your feet together or sit bone with apart, depending on balance.
- The inside of your feet should be parallel to each other, weight should be evenly distributed on both feet. If feet are apart put weight on outer edges of feet to engage inner thighs
- Inhale bring your arms up.
- Exhale, bend your knees and tilt forward.
- Push your butt back, then bring your butt under and tuck your tailbone down further.
- Lift your upper torso from the middle of your spine.
- The inside of your legs are parallel and your feet are pressing into the ground. Your legs are active.
- Do not shrug your shoulders.
- Lift up the ribs, breathe
- Your tailbone should drop down, sit bones are spread wide
- Lift up your heart
- Your gaze should be straight ahead as if you are burning a hole in the wall.
- Invoke the feeling of a warrior. Your face should be concentrated.
- Inhale as you slowly come up, do not lose your connection.
- Raise your arms and bring them back to anjali mudra.

EFFECTS: The pose removes stiffness in the shoulders and corrects any minor

deformities in the legs. The ankles become strong and the leg muscles develop evenly. The diaphragm is lifted up and this gives a gentle massage to the heart. The abdominal organs

Uttihita Trikonasana (Uttihita means extended, stretched. Trikona, tri = three; kona = angle)

- Stand in Open Gate
- Inhale deeply as you spread apart your legs sideways about a legs length. Do what feels comfortable for you. Exhale.
- Inhale raise your arms sideways in line with your shoulders, palms facing down. Keep the arms parallel to the floor.
- Turn the right foot sideways about 90 degrees to the right.
- Pick up your left foot slightly inward
- Check your alignment, make sure your three centers, head, heart and pelvis are stacked on top of each other.
- Turn your head to right and gaze at your middle finger. Feel the connection through your heart from hand to hand.
- Push your hip out towards the left
- Exhale and bend your torso sideways to the right, bringing the right palm near the right ankle.
- Bring the back arm towards the ceiling and reach up.
- Reach arms away from each other, spread the shoulder blades.
- Imagine you are one-dimensional as if you are stuck in between two panes of glass.
- The left arm should be in line with the right shoulder as you extend your torso.
- The back of the legs, the back of the chest and the hips should be in a line.
- The left side of your torso should be flat. Do not collapse into the pose.
- Make sure you legs active, press into the outer edge of the back foot.
- Gaze at the thumb of the outstretched left hand.
- Exhale, slowly come up.
- Lower your hands, bring your feet together into open gate, check for sensations.

EFFECTS: This asana tones up the leg muscles, removed stiffness in the legs and hips, and corrects any minor deformity in the legs and allows them to develop evenly. It relieves backaches and neck sprains strengthens the ankles and develops the chest.

Vrkshasana (Tree Pose)

- Stand in Open gate
- Shift your weight slightly off the left foot, keeping the right foot very firm to the floor.
- Bend your right knee and slowly raise your foot with the assistance of your right hand.
- Your right heel should be placed close to your groin.
- The right sole of your foot is pressing firmly into the left thigh and toes should be pointing downwards.
- The right knee should be to the side and your hips should be squared.
- Your foot should be pressing into your inner thigh and your knee should be pointing outwards simultaneously in order to open the hips.
- Your spine in straight.
- Once you maintain balance place your hands in Anjali Mudra. Breathe.
- Slowly raise your hands up over your head. Do not lose your connection. Breathe

deeply

- Fix your gaze straight ahead, not very intense. This is a peaceful posture.
- Lengthen your tailbone toward the floor. Breathe
- Lower your arms and slowly release your leg and check for sensations.

Gaurudasana (Eagle Pose) Gauruda is a vehicle for Vishnu. Imitation of Pingala and Ida nadis merging at the third eye point.

- Open Gate
- Sit down
- Bend your right leg and twist it around your left leg.
- Do not force the twist at the cost of your knees.
- The right thigh should be in front of the left thigh and the top of the right foot should rest on the calf of the left leg.
- Bend the elbows and bring them in front of the chest.
- Twist the forearms around each other with the left elbow remaining below.
- Place the palms together to resemble an eagle's beak.
- Slowly bend the left knee and lower the body until the tip of the right big toe touches the floor.
- Make sure you lift your torso up. And lift your elbows up
- Keep the eyes focused on a fixed point.
- Hold the final position for as long as possible.
- Raise the body and release the legs and arms.
- Look at the junction of the hands.
- Lift elbows off the heart, arms should not collapse into the chest.
- Concentrate on opening your shoulder blades.
- Gaze at your palms holding shambavi mudra
- Straighten up to release arms and legs from the pose

BENEFITS: strengthens muscles, tones the nerves and loosens the joints of the legs and arms. It relieves rheumatism.

Natarajasana (Lord Shiva's dance)

- Stand upright with the feet slightly apart.
- Pivot your right foot at a 45 degree angle
- Lift up your left leg and bring it over so your left knee is facing right
- Bring your left hand across your chest leaving your hand loose with the palm and fingers facing down
- Your elbow should be just behind your left wrist and place your right hand into gynana mudra.
- Release out of the pose

SURYA NAMASKAR (3 rounds)

SURYA NAMASKAR

The Sanskrit name Surya (Sun) here refers to the Sun and Namaskara means 'Salutations'. Surya Namaskara has been handed down from the enlightened sages of the Vedic Age. The sun symbolizes spiritual consciousness and, in ancient times, was worshipped on a daily basis. In Yoga the sun is represented by a channel of energy, the channel which carries the vital life-giving force. This dynamic group of Asanas is not

regarded as being a traditional part of Hatha Yoga practices as it was added to the original Asana group at a later time. However, it is an effective way of loosening up, stretching, massaging and toning all the joints, muscles and internal organs of the body. It's versatility and application make it one of the most useful methods of inducing a healthy, vigorous and active life while, at the same time, preparing for spiritual awakening and the resulting expansion of awareness.

Surya Namaskara is a complete Sadhana, spiritual practice, in itself for it includes Asana, Pranayama, Mantra and Meditation techniques. It is an excellent group of Asanas with which to start morning practice. Surya Namaskara has a direct vitalizing effect on the solar energy of the body which flows through important part of your body. Surya Namaskara is composed of three elements which are Form, Energy and Rhythm. The twelve Asanas are the physical matrix around which the form of the practice. These Asanas generate Prana, the subtle energy which activates the psychic body. Their performance, in a steady, rhythmic sequence, reflects the rhythms of the universe; the twenty-four hours of the day, the twelve zodiac phases of the year and the biorhythms of the body. The application of this form and rhythm to the body/mind complex generates the transforming force which produces a fuller and more dynamic life

The ideal time to practice Surya Namaskara is at sunrise, the most peaceful time of day. Whenever possible, practice in the open air, facing the rising sun. Sunset is also a good time to practice as it stimulates the digestive fire. Surya Namaskara, however, may be practiced at any time provided the stomach is empty .

Before commencing the practice, stand with the feet together or slightly apart, and the arms hanging loosely by the side of the body. Close the eyes gently and become aware of the whole physical body as one homogeneous unit. In this position the body may sway from side to side or backward and forward. Try to minimize this oscillation and balance the body weight equally on both feet. Bring the awareness inside the body and mentally begin to relax it. Starting from the top of the head, take the awareness systematically through all the parts, releasing any tension. Intensify , once more, the awareness of the whole physical body and feel in harmony with it. Take the awareness to the soles of the feet in contact with the floor. Feel that the whole body is being pulled downwards by gravity and that any tensions are being pulled down, through the body and into the ground. At the same time, experience the vital force surging up from the earth and flooding the whole being.

The practice of Surya Namaskara as a whole gives a great number of benefits. It stimulates and balances all the systems of the body, including the endocrine, circulatory, respiratory and digestive systems. Its influence on the pineal gland and the hypothalamus helps to prevent pineal degeneration and calcification. This balances the transition period between childhood and adolescence in growing children. Synchronizing the breath with the physical movements of Surya Namaskara ensures that the practitioner, at least for a few minutes daily, breathes as deeply and rhythmically as possible. This removes carbon dioxide from the lungs and replaces it with fresh oxygen, increasing mental clarity by

bringing fresh, oxygenated blood to the brain. Surya Namaskara is the ideal practice to increase awareness and bestow good health and well being.

Dharmanidhi's comments:

Surya Namaskar open us up to greater cosmology. It is a scientifically produced, efficient way of harmonizing on a cosmic energy level (ashtanga surya namaskar loses cosmic intent) It is a body prayer, most ancient form of yoga, the asana makes a mudra of the sun through this cycle, we can experience death and rebirth every time we perform it

We are enacting a cosmological cycle in space and can actively run off karma when we perform Surya Namaskar (when we say we burn karma that signifies we are still attached to it) 12 constellations go with 12 zodiac signs, right and left represents full cycle (light and dark) We must focus on the 2nd and 3rd chakra when we perform this. Signifies water coming under fire, symbolizes alchemy, which is how we can transform ourselves We are all energy manifestations

DO NOT CONSTRICT AIRFLOW IN THE THROAT! You destroy the fruition of the poses when you perform ujay, it changes the flow of the energy channels

MOVEMENT FROM EACH POSTURE ORIGINATES FROM THE HIP/PELVIS

Position One: Pranamasana (prayer pose with elements of Open Gate)

- Remain standing upright with the feet together
- Slowly bend the elbows and place the palms together in front of the chest in namaskara mudra, mentally offering homage to the sun, the source of all life.
- Relax the whole body

Gaze: Eyes should be open without dualistic engagement (not taking in stimuli). If you are feeling heavy or dull look up. If you feel too active look down. When you are balanced look straight ahead.

Breathing: breathe normally

Awareness: Physical – on chest area, Spiritual – on anahata chakra

Mantra: Om Mitraya Namaha – Salutations to the friend of all

Beeja: Hram

Benefits: This pose establishes a state of concentration and calmness in preparation for the practice to be performed.

Position 2: Hasta Uttahanasana

- Raise and stretch both arms above the head
- Keep the arms separated, shoulder width apart
- Bend the head, arms and upper trunk backward
- Tuck the tailbone in

Gaze: Follow your thumbs up invoking shambavi mudra

Breathing: Inhale while raising the arms.

Awareness: Physical – on the stretch of the abdomen and expansion of the lungs,

Spiritual – on vishuddhi chakra

Mantra: Om Ravaye Namaha = salutations to the shining one

Beeja: Hraim

Benefits: This pose stretches all the abdominal organs and improves digestion. It exercises the arm and shoulder muscles, tones the spinal nerves, opens the lungs and removes excess weight.

Position 3: Padahastasana (hand to foot pose)

- Bend forward until the fingers or palms of the hands touch the floor on either side of the feet
- Try to touch the knees with the forehead
- Do not strain
- Keep the knees straight

Gaze: Groin/Navel

Breathing: Exhale while bending forward. Try to contract the abdomen in the final position to expel the maximum amount of air from the lungs.

Awareness: Physical – on pelvic region, Spiritual – on swadhistana chakra

Mantra: Om Suryaya Namaha = salutations to he who induces activity

Beeja: Hrum

Contra-indications: People with back conditions should not bend forward fully. Bend from the hips, keeping the spine straight, until the bend forms a ninety degree angle with the legs, or bend only as far as comfortable

Benefits: This pose is useful in eliminating or preventing stomach or abdominal ailments. It reduces excess weight in the abdominal region, improves digestion and helps to remove constipation. It improves blood circulation, makes the spine supple and tones the spinal nerves.

Position 4: Ashwa Sanchalanasana (equestrian pose)

- Place the palms of the hands flat on the floor beside the feet.
- Stretch the right leg back as far as possible, rest the knee on the ground
- At the same time, bend the left knee, keeping the left foot on the floor in the same position. Keep the arms straight. In the final position, the weight of the body should be supported on both hands, the left foot, right knee and toes of the right foot. The head should be tilted backward, the back arched and the inner gaze directed upward to the eyebrow center.
- Movement should be fluid

Gaze: Shambavi, look at the tips of your nose

Breathing: Inhale while stretching the right leg back.

Awareness: Physical – on the stretch from the thigh to the chest or on the eyebrow center.

Spiritual – on the ajna chakra

Mantra: Om Bhanave Namaha = salutations to he who illumines

Beeja: Hraim

Benefits: This pose massages the abdominal organs and improves their functioning, strengthening the leg muscles and induces balance in the nervous system.

Practice note: In the final pose the palms of the hands should be flat on the floor initially. Later on, more advanced practitioners can come up on their fingertips.

Position 5: Parvatasana (mountain pose)

- Take the left foot back beside the right foot
- Simultaneously, raise the buttocks and lower the head between the arms, so that the back and legs form two sides of a triangle
- The legs and arms should be straight in the final position
- Try to keep the heels on the floor in the final pose and bring the head towards the knees.

- Do not strain.

Gaze: Navel

Breathing: Exhale while taking the left leg back

Awareness: Physical – on relaxing the hips or on the throat region, Spiritual – on vishuddhi chakra

Mantra: Om Khagaya Namaha = salutations to he who moves quickly in the sky

Beeja: Hraum

Benefits: This pose strengthens the nerves and muscles in the arms and legs. The spinal nerves are toned and circulation is stimulated especially in the upper spine, between the shoulder blades.

Position 6: Ashtanga Namaskara (salute with eight parts or points)

- Turn elbows inwards as you come down

- Lower knees, chest and chin to the floor

- In the final position only the toes, knees, hand and chin touch the floor simultaneously.

If this is not possible, first lower the knees, then the chest, and finally the chin.

- The buttocks, hips and abdomen should be raised.

- (At the more advanced level you want to float into this pose)

Gaze: Shambavi or tips of your nose

Breathing: The breath is held outside in this pose. There is no respiration.

Awareness: Physical – on abdominal region. Spiritual – on manipura chakra

Mantra: Om Pushne Namaha = salutations to the giver of strength.

Beeja: Hraha

Benefits: This pose strengthens the leg and arm muscles, develops the chest and exercises the region of the spine between the shoulder blades.

Position 7: Bhujangasana

Float up from position 7 to 8, you want to tuck your stomach up and keep your groin on the floor

- You need to lower the buttocks and hips to the floor, Straightening the elbows, arch your back and push your chest forward into the cobra pose.

- Bend the head back and direct the gaze upward to the eyebrow center.

- The thighs and hips remain on the floor and the arm support the trunk.

- Unless the spine is very flexible the arms will remain slightly bent.

- Inhale while raising the torso and arching the back.

Gaze: Shambavi or up

Breathing: Inhale

Mantra: Om Hiranya Garbhaya Namaha

Beeja: Hram

Benefits: This pose keeps the spine supple, improving circulation in the back region and toning the spinal nerves. It tones the reproductive organs, stimulates digestion and relieves constipation. It also tones the liver and massage the kidneys and adrenal glands.

Position 8: Parvatasana (mountain pose)

Breathing: Exhale

Mantra: Om Marichaye Namaha
Beeja: Hrim

Position 9: Ashwa Sanchalanasana (equestrian pose)
Breathing: Inhale
Mantra: Om Adityaya Namaha
Beeja: Hrum

Position 10: Padahastanasana (hand to foot pose)
Breathing: Exhale
Mantra: Om Savitre Namaha
Beeja: Hraim

Position 11: Hasta Utthanasana (raised arms pose)
Breathing: Inhale
Mantra: Om Arkaya Namaha
Beeja: Hraum

Position 12: Pranamasana (prayer pose)
Breathing: Exhale
Mantra: Om Bhaskaraya Namaha
Beeja: Hraha

Santolasana

- Sit in Vajrasana
- Stand up on the knees and place the palms of the hand on the floor beneath the shoulders
- Raise the buttocks and straighten the knees
- Move the shoulders forward and drop the buttocks until the body is straight, the arms should be vertical
- Focus the gaze on a fixed point in front at eye level
- Bring your right hand into the center
- Roll onto the right side so your chest is facing forward and you really want to squeeze your legs together
- Lift your pelvis up and bring your shoulders back
- You should be balancing on the outer edge of your right leg
- Either leave your hand on the side of your body or raise it up and gaze at your left fingertips

Bhujangasana (small muscle engagement)

- Lay flat on the ground on your stomach with your heels flopping outwards and relaxed.
- Your forehead is on the floor and your arms are alongside your body with your palms facing up.
- Relax your butt
- Slowly begin to lift your nose off the ground, then your chin and then gradually lift upper body.

- When your shoulders begin to lift up bring your hands alongside your chest.
- Almost no weight in your hands.
- Focus on using the small muscles between your vertebrae to lift
- As soon as you feel your but is getting tight consciously let it go

TWISTING COBRA POSE (TIRYAKA BHUJANGASANA)

- First assume the final position of Cobra Pose (Bhujangasana) with the legs separated about little.
- The toes should be tucked under and the heels raised, so that the foot rests on the ball of the foot.
- The head should be facing forward instead of bending backward as in Bhujangasana.
- Twist the head and upper portion of the trunk, and look over the left shoulder and try to see your heel of the right foot.
- Make sure that in the final position, the arms remain straight or slightly bent as the shoulders and trunk are twisted.
- In this position you will try to feel a diagonal stretch of the abdomen.
- Relax the back and keep the navel as close to the floor as possible and stay in the final position for a few seconds.
- Face forward again and repeat the twist on the other side without lowering the trunk.
- Return to the center and lower the body to the floor and this completes the practice round one.
- Make sure to inhale while raising your body.
- Retain the breath inside while twisting to both sides.
- Exhale while lowering to the floor.
- Make sure to at least complete four to five rounds at a stretch.
- As for Bhujangasana, with increased influence on the intestines.

The word Tiryaka means ‘Diagonal’ or ‘Triangular’ and is used because the gaze is directed over the shoulder diagonally across the back of the body to the opposite heel. The direction of the gaze also forms two sides of a triangle, while the width between the shoulders forms the base or third side. In this asana, when performed the breath is exhaled when twisting to the side.

Dandasana (Staff Pose)

- Sit on the floor with legs stretched straight in front of you.
- Place palms on the floor by your hips with fingers pointing towards the feet
- Keep back erect
- Press your hands into the floor but do not lift up
- Push chest forward and roll your shoulders back

Paschimottanasana (Seated Forward Bend)

- Sit on the floor with your buttocks supported on a folded blanket and your legs straight in front of you. Press actively through your heels. Rock slightly onto your left buttock, and pull your right sitting bone away from the heel with your right hand. Repeat on the other side. Turn the top thighs in slightly and press them down into the floor. Press through your palms or finger tips on the floor beside your hips and lift the top of the sternum toward the ceiling as the top thighs descend.

- Draw the inner groins deep into the pelvis. Inhale, and keeping the front torso long, lean forward from the hip joints, not the waist. Lengthen the tailbone away from the back of your pelvis. If possible take the sides of the feet with your hands, thumbs on the soles, elbows fully extended; if this isn't possible, loop a strap around the foot soles, and hold the strap firmly. Be sure your elbows are straight, not bent.
- When you are ready to go further, don't forcefully pull yourself into the forward bend, whether your hands are on the feet or holding the strap. Always lengthen the front torso into the pose, keeping your head raised. If you are holding the feet, bend the elbows out to the sides and lift them away from the floor; if holding the strap, lighten your grip and walk the hands forward, keeping the arms long. The lower belly should touch the thighs first, then the upper belly, then the ribs, and the head last.
- With each inhalation, lift and lengthen the front torso just slightly; with each exhalation release a little more fully into the forward bend. In this way the torso oscillates and lengthens almost imperceptibly with the breath. Eventually you may be able to stretch the arms out beyond the feet on the floor.

Mountain to Pigeon?

HALF SPINAL TWIST POSE (ARDHA MATSYENDRASANA)

- You should sit with the legs stretched out in front of the body.
- Bend the right leg and place the right foot flat on the floor on the outside of the left knee.
- The toes of the right foot should face forward.
- Bend the left leg and bring the foot around to the right buttock.
- The outside edge of the foot should be in contact with the floor.
- Hug your right knee into your left armpit and move your belly out of the way. Now hold the right foot or ankle with the left hand, so that the right knee is close to the left armpit.
- Sit up as straight as possible. Raise the right arm in front of the body and gaze at the fingertips.
- Slowly twist to the right, simultaneously moving the arm, trunk and head.
- Take short breaths in the upper chest
- Use the left arm as a lever against the right leg to twist the torso as far as possible without using the back muscles.
- Follow the tips of the fingers of the right hand with the gaze and look over the right shoulder and make sure not to strain the back.
- Bend the right elbow and place the arm around the back of the waist.
- The back of the right hand should wrap around the left side of the waist.
- Alternatively, it can be placed as high as possible between the shoulder blades with the fingers pointing up.
- This arm position enforces the straightness of the spine.
- Reverse the movements to come out of the posture and repeat on the other side.
- Inhale in the forward position.
- Exhale while twisting the torso.
- Breathe deeply and slowly without strain in the final position.
- Inhale while returning to the starting position.
- Practice once on each side, gradually increasing the holding time to one to two minutes on each side of the body or up to thirty five breaths.

This Asana should be performed after completing a series of forward and backward bending Asanas. It should be done towards the end of a practice because it can bring up the kundalini. Women more than two or three months pregnant should avoid this practice. People suffering from peptic ulcer, hernia or hyperthyroidism should only practice this pose under expert guidance. People with sciatica or slipped disc may benefit from this Asana, but great care should be taken.

This Asana simultaneously stretches the muscles on one side of the back and abdomen while contracting the muscles on the other side. It tones the nerves of the spine, makes the back muscles supple, relieves lumbago and muscular spasms, and reduces the tendency of adjoining vertebrae to develop Osteophytes. When practiced with care, it has proved beneficial for mild cases of slipped disc. Half Spinal Twist massages the abdominal organs, alleviating digestive ailments. It regulates the secretion of adrenaline and bile and is recommended in the yogic management of diabetes. Under special guidance it is used for the yogic management of sinusitis, hay fever, bronchitis, constipation, colitis, menstrual disorders, urinary tract disorders and cervical spondylitis, as long as it can be performed without any discomfort.

For beginners and those with stiff bodies the following adjustments to the position may be made. The leg that is placed by the side of the buttock should remain straight and the hand holding the ankle may be wrapped around the opposite thigh, hugging the knee to the chest.

Matsyendra Natha is the most famous and important of the gurus belonging to the sampradaya natha or Kampata yoga, he was born in Bengal at the end of the dwapara yuga (the third of the four cosmic ages (eras)). The legend says that as soon as he was born, he was thrown into the sea by his parents, because he was born under the influence of an extremely unfortunate nakshatra. Matsyendra was swallowed by a big fish that, while swimming nearby the shore, came closer to the place where Siva was imparting the most secret teachings about yoga to Parvati. The child from the inside of the fish listened to the precious words of Siva, who, when he noticed his presence, was very pleased by his devotion and initiated him to the mysteries of yoga.

MERU VAKRASANA

- You should sit with both of your legs outstretched.
- Turn the torso slightly to the right and place the right hand behind the body, close to the left buttock, with the fingers pointing backward.
- Now place the left hand behind and slightly to the side of the right buttock, as close as possible to the right hand.
- Bend the left knee and place the foot outside the right knee.
- Twist the head and trunk as far to the right as is comfortable, using the arms as levers, while keeping the spine upright and straight.
- The buttocks should remain on the floor.
- The right elbow may bend a little.
- Hold yourself in the final position, relaxing the back.
- Look over the right shoulder as far as possible.

- Re-center the trunk, relax for a few seconds and then twist again.
- Practice up to six times and then repeat on the other side.
- Inhale before twisting. Retain the breath inside while twisting.
- Exhale while re-centering.

Use a folded blanket if your hands do not reach the floor. This is an isolated spinal twist, good for people with tight hips. Spinal Twist is a preparatory Asana for Ardha Matsyendrasana and may be practiced after forward and backward bending Asanas and before inverted Asanas. People with severe back conditions, ulcers, hernias or other complaints of this nature, should not perform this Asana. Spinal Twist stretches the spine, loosening the vertebrae and toning the nerves. It alleviates backache, neck pain, lumbago and mild forms of sciatica. It is a good Asana for beginners, preparing the back for the more difficult spinal twists.

Pranamasana (Bowling Pose)

- Sit in Vajrasana.
- Grasp the lower calves just above the ankles, keeping the thumbs uppermost. Slowly bend forward and place the crown of the head on the floor in front of the knees. In case you need, you can place a small folded blanket under the head.
- Raise the buttocks as high as possible, allowing the chin to press against the chest, until the thighs are as vertical as comfortable.
- Make sure to remain in this position for seven to twenty seconds.
- Lower the buttocks and come back into ShashankAsana for a short time before returning to Vajrasana. Practice this Asana seven times.
- Inhale in Vajrasana and while raising the buttocks.
- Exhale while lowering the head to the floor. Hold the breath in the final position or breathe normally if remaining in the position for more than a few seconds.

This Asana should not be performed by people with vertigo, weak neck or high blood pressure. This asana increases the blood supply to the head. As a preparatory practice for Sirshasana, the headstand pose, it allows the brain to gradually adapt to the extra blood flow and pressure in the head when the body is inverted. It gives many of the benefits of Sirshasana but to a lesser degree. Pranamasana is especially beneficial for the management of Asthma. It promotes drainage of the lungs and chest and helps to open the air passages. It also decompresses the lower cervical and upper thoracic vertebrae and nerve roots which are often the seat of psycho-emotional tension in an asthma attack. It should be performed at the immediate onset of an asthma attack to obtain full benefits.

Bhumi padaa mastakasana (Half Head Stand Pose)

- Assume yourself in Marjari Asana (Cat Stretch Pose).
- Turn the toes under.
- Place the crown of the head on the floor between the hands. Straighten the knees and raise the buttocks, balancing on the head and feet. Now bring the heels together and separate the toes.
- Raise your arms and clasp the hands or take hold of one wrist behind the back.
- Come up onto the toes as high as possible.
- Hold yourself in this final position as long as it is comfortable.
- Now lower the arms and place the hands beside the head.

- Slowly return to Marjari Asana and then lower into ShashankAsana for a few moments. After completing the practice, lie in ShavAsana before continuing. Make sure to breath normally. Practice up to two to four rounds, gradually extending the period in the asana. Tadasana should follow this Asana.

People with high blood pressure, heart conditions, inflammation of the ear, weak eye capillaries, severe near-sightedness, organically defective pituitary or thyroid glands, arteriosclerosis, cerebral or other thrombosis, severe asthma, tuberculosis, cold or sinusitis, excessively impure blood, slipped disc, weak spine or vertigo should not practice this Asana. This Asana helps in cases of low blood pressure. It balances the nervous system, strengthens the neck and head muscles and brings a rich supply of blood to the brain. As a preliminary pose to SirshAsana it accustoms the brain to the increased influx of blood and the crown to supporting the weight of the body.

Shavasana (Corpse Pose)

- Lie fiat on the back with the arms about twenty centimeters away from the body, palms facing upward. A thin pillow or folded cloth may be placed behind the head to prevent discomfort, Let the fingers of both hands curl up slightly.

- Move both the feet slightly apart to a comfortable position and close the eyes. Make sure that the head and spine should be in a straight line and also be sure the head does not fall to one side or the other.

- Relax the whole body and stop all physical movement. Breathe naturally and allow it to become rhythmic and relaxed. Begin to count the breaths from number thirty backward to zero.

- Inside your mind, Please repeat, "I am breathing in thirty, I am breathing out thirty, I am breathing in twenty nine, I am breathing out twenty nine", and so on, until you have reached back to zero. If the mind wanders and the next number is forgotten, bring it back to the counting and start again at thirty. If the mind can be kept on the breath for a few minutes the body will relax.

- In general the Asana should be done for the longer time although a minute or two is sufficient between Asana practices. This Asana will help first on relaxing the whole body, then on the breath and counting. This Asana relaxes the whole psycho-physiological system. It should ideally be practiced before sleep. During and after asana practice, particularly after dynamic exercises such as Surya Namaskara, and when the practitioner feels physically and mentally tired. It develops body awareness.

- Try not to move the body at all during the practice as even the slightest movement will create muscular contraction. A personal mantra may be repeated with every inhalation and exhalation. While lying in ShavAsana, become aware of the right hand and relax it. Slowly become aware of the right wrist, elbow, armpit, right side of the waist, right buttock, right thigh, right knee, calf, heel, sole of the foot, and relax them one by one. Repeat this process with the left side of the body and all the parts of the head and trunk. Make sure that each part of the body is relaxed, feel each part merging into the floor. Repeat this process a few times and all the tensions will be removed.

For maximum benefit, this technique should be performed after a hard day's work or just before sleep. This Asana is also known as MritAsana, the dead Man's pose.