

## MANUAL ASANA EXPANSION YOGA CARDS EXPANSION DECK 2.0

*PlayPauseBe is a deck of cards that allows you to create yoga sequences like a pro. It is a system specifically developed to practice yoga mindfully, disconnecting from everything. Practice anywhere, any time, at your own speed, with your breath!*

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*The cards and their manual have been developed, elaborated, and designed by Tine Tvinnereim Horn in cooperation with Umberto Mezzadra for Strumpi LTD  
Illustrations are by Giulia Rosa for Strumpi LTD*

**Important!** Before you PLAY the cards: check the list of 'Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have' to check if any of the precautions apply to you, checking so forth if you can do the posture. The lists include the most common precautions and contradictions. However, this is not a comprehensive or complete list; this manual is meant to be a guide and it is your responsibility to **clarify with your healthcare professionals whether you can:**

1. Do yoga at all
2. Do the position at hand
3. How you should adapt the position for your individual body

Our points include general recommendations, and every individual is different. Furthermore, the deck is not particularly adapted for pre-and postnatal. Please consult a yoga teacher or healthcare professional before you do any of the postures in the deck if you fall into these categories.

## Positions one by one

### Category 1. WARM UP

This category is composed of gentle warm up positions that are ideal to begin your practice with. They allow you to open your body and prepare for what's to come. However, some of these positions can also be used during your practice for an instant tension release between the shoulderblades after a position that is intense on this joint. Lastly, if you want a quick and gentle practice you can also use the warm up and the slow down cards together and create a full practice.

#### 83 Seated cat cow pose - Upavistha Bitilasana Marjaryasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Neck injury (adapt by keeping your neck neutral instead of looking up and down).
- If you have a knee or hip injury that makes a seated position uncomfortable, you can do this asana sitting on a chair, or standing.

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a cross-legged seated position with hands on the knees. As you inhale, gently pull your shoulders back, press your chest forwards and look up to arch your spine. As you exhale, draw your belly button in to round the spine, bringing your chin to your chest. Repeat for at least five times, connecting the movement to the breath.

For a deeper stretch, do the movement with your arms out to your sides, elbows bent, and palms facing forwards. As you inhale, draw the elbows back. As you exhale, bring them to touch. If your hips are tight, do this pose in Virasana (Hero's Pose) instead.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 5. Hip Waves (YIN deck)
- 3. Seated Side Stretch

FAST FORWARD to

- 34. Puppy pose / Melting heart (YIN deck)
- 107. Sphinx Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Stretches and strengthens the breathing muscles.
- Heart: Increases blood circulation. It may lower heart rate when done slowly and restoratively.
- Digestion: Stimulates digestion.
- Flexibility: Improves mobility of the spine, stretches the hips and abdomen.
- Organs: Stimulates abdominal organs and massages the reproductive organs; can help ease menstrual symptoms.
- Posture: Helps alignment of the spine.

- Brain: Can ease anxiety and depression.

## 84 Balancing Table Pose With Knee To Nose Flow - Dandayamana Bharmanasana Knee To Nose Vinyasa

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Chronic or recent injury to knees. (If you have discomfort in the knees or a recent injury here, you can fold your mat for additional support under your knees to gradually strengthen them. If you have chronic knee pain, consult your doctor before practicing these positions.
- Neck injury (adapt by keeping your neck neutral instead of looking up and down).
- Pregnancy: avoid after week 36

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a tabletop position with your shoulders in line with your wrists and hips stacked over your ankles. Slowly extend one leg with only the toes touching the ground. Engage your core then float the leg off the ground, bringing it in line with your body.

As you inhale, look up, gently arching the spine. As you exhale, round your spine as you bend the knee, bringing it towards your nose and the chin to your chest. Inhale to re-extend the leg and spine, exhale to round the spine, and tap the knee to the nose. Repeat this at least five times, keeping the core engaged to maintain balance. Remember to repeat on the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 83. Seated Cat Cow Pose
- 48. Downward Facing Dog

FAST FORWARD to

- 85. Downward Facing Dog - Plank Pose Flow
- 87. Moon Salutation
- 122. Tiger Pose Variation

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: Stimulates the digestive system.
- Strength: Engages and strengthens the abdominal muscles.
- Flexibility: Stretches the spine, intercostal muscles, shoulders, hips, and hamstrings. Opens the sides of the torso.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal organs and reproductive system.
- Brain: Promotes focus and awareness.

## 85 Downward Facing Dog - Plank Pose Flow - Adho Mukha Svanasana to Phalakasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Shoulder injury / prone to dislocation in the shoulders
- Wrist injury
- Carpal tunnel syndrome

- Pregnancy: avoid after week 36

#### **How to PLAY the pose:**

Find a 48. Downward Facing Dog position with a straight spine. Engage your core and as you inhale, lift your heels and slowly shift your hips forwards until your shoulders stack over your wrists in a 51. Plank Pose. Look forwards, ensure the hips are in line with the body and the spine is straight, not rounded. On the exhale, slowly lift your hips and round your spine to push back into 48. Downward Facing Dog. Once you arrive, straighten the spine and press the heels down. Repeat up to 5 times.

#### **Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 84. Balancing Table Pose With Knee To Nose Flow
- 1. Cat Cow

FAST FORWARD to

- 86. Revolved Downward Facing Dog Pose
- 87. Moon Salutation
- 120. Forearm Plank

#### **The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Improves lung capacity.
- Heart: Stimulates the heart which increases the flow of oxygen-rich blood in the brain.
- Strength: Arms, shoulders, core, and spine.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hamstrings and spine, Improves range of motion in the arms and shoulders and wrists.
- Immune system: Creates an inner fire that helps boost your immune system.
- Organs and hormones: stimulates abdominal organs including the liver and kidney. May help relieve symptoms of menstrual discomfort and menopause. Stimulates pituitary and pineal gland (increased blood flow to the brain).
- Posture: Helps alignment of the body and particularly the spine.
- Brain: Promotes presence and clarity when practiced mindfully.

## **86 Revolved Downward Facing Dog Pose - Parivrtta Adho Mukha Svanasana**

#### **Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Shoulder injury / prone to dislocation in the shoulders
- Wrist injury
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Pregnancy: avoid after week 36
- HBP

#### **How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a 48. Downward Facing Dog with a straight spine and the feet hip distance apart. As you inhale, reach your right hand towards the left ankle, gently twisting the spine. Gaze to the left as you try to grab the left ankle or lower leg. Hold for 30 seconds breathing deeply and fully. Release back into 48. Downward Facing Dog to neutralize the spine, then repeat on the other side.

Keep your neck and head relaxed as you do this pose. Press firmly into the grounded hand and try to keep the legs straight as you twist. If you find it difficult, shorten the distance between the hands and the feet.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 4. Seated Gentle Twist
- 132. Gate Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 14. Standing Forward Fold
- 96. Revolved Low Lunge pose
- 28. 3 Legged Dog

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Heart: Stimulates the heart which increases the flow of oxygen-rich blood in the brain.
- Digestion: Stimulates digestion, enhancing detoxification.
- Strength: Strengthens arms and shoulders and wrists.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hamstrings, spine and side body.
- Organs and hormones: Abdominal organs and nervous system. May help relieve symptoms of menstrual discomfort and menopause. Stimulates pituitary and pineal gland (increased blood flow to the brain).
- Posture: Improves balance.
- Brain: Can relieve headaches and mental fatigue.

## 87 Moon Salutation - Chandra Namaskara

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Back problems including lower back injury
- Heart problems
- HBP
- Injury to rib cage, spine, knees, or hips

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Follow the sequence on the card clockwise. Chandra Namaskara is a standard sequence composed of 17 positions.

Start in 13. Mountain Pose (Tadasana). Inhale to reach your arms overhead, exhale to 95. Palm Tree Side Bend to the right side. Inhale to step your feet out wide with toes pointing outwards. Exhale to bend your knees, sink your hips and bend your elbows to cactus arms for 92. Goddess Pose (Utkata Konasana). Inhale to straighten your legs and arms to Star Pose, arms in line with the shoulders. As you exhale, pivot your right toes out and left toes in, extend your right arm forward and tilt the hips down for 18. Triangle Pose (Trikonasana).

From Trikonasana, release your top arm to the ground and turn your hips and torso towards the floor into 42. Pyramid Pose (Parsvottanasana). Inhale to bend your front knee, reach both arms up and drop your back knee to the ground in 62. Low Lunge (Anjaneyasana). From here, bring your hands to the heart center, lift your back knee and turn your hips and torso sideways into 90. Wide Leg Squat Over One Leg. Right knee is bent, the left leg is straight, sink the hips lower.

Inhale to shift your weight to the center with both knees bent and hips close to the floor in 88. Garland Pose (Malasana). Exhale to 90. Wide Leg Squat Over One Leg on the other side, left knee bent this time. Inhale to 62. Low Lunge on this side, turning the hips forward and reaching the arms up. Exhale to straighten the leg and release the arms to the front leg in 42. Pyramid Pose. Inhale to open your chest to the side and reach the right arm up in Triangle Pose (Trikonasana) and exhale here. Inhale to lift the torso, pivot the feet and reach both arms out to Star Pose. Exhale to bend the knees and cactus the arms to 92. Goddess Pose. Inhale to

straighten the legs and arms and step the feet together, exhale to 95. Palm Tree Side Bend to the left side. Inhale to straighten the spine and exhale to 13. Mountain Pose (Tadasana).

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 83. Seated Cat Cow
- 95. Palm Tree Pose Side Bend

FAST FORWARD to

- 88. Garland Pose
- 90. Wide Legged Squat over one leg
- 17. Crescent Lunge - High Lunge

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Improves breath awareness and increases lung capacity.
- Heart: The backbends stimulate the heart and improve blood flow.
- Strength: Core, legs, and back.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hamstrings, thighs, groin, hips, spine and side body.
- Organs and hormones: Respiratory, circulatory, digestive, reproductive and nervous system.
- Posture: Strengthens and stretches the muscles around the back and the core, and opens the chest.
- Brain: Reduces stress and anxiety.
- Sleep: Soothes the nervous system to promote sleep and may improve insomnia.

## Category 2. STANDING POSTURES

In all standing postures you should generally hold for five breaths if you want to do a hatha yoga practice. However, if you prefer a dynamic flow and know how to create that, you can adapt and move in and out of the postures as you wish. Yogis choice.

Note that equal distribution of weight on the sole of the foot is vital for all standing and balance postures. You have three main points on the sole of your foot: one on the heel and two on each corner on the ball of the foot, creating a triangle. Aim to have equal weight distribution between these three points. Try to avoid collapsing the arches and having the weight too far forward or backward.

For all standing postures it is important to have an active standing leg. Do not hyperextend your knee, rather work on a micro bend, engaging your quadriceps and pulling the kneecap up to protect your knee joint.

### 88 Garland pose - Malasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Hip injury or recent hip replacement surgery
- Knee injury or chronic knee pain
- Ankle injury such as ligament tear
- Chronic lower back pain such as sciatica

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From Mountain Pose, bring your feet to mat width and turn the toes out and heels in. Bend your knees and lower your hips into a squat position. Bring your hands into a prayer position at the heart center, placing the elbows inside the knees. Gaze forwards and keep your spine straight, trying to touch your thumbs to your sternum. If you want more sensation, you can gently press the knees apart with the elbows.

Keep the soles of the feet on the ground. If this proves difficult or you feel tension in your hips, place blocks under the heels. You may also find it beneficial to rock gently side to side to loosen the hip joints. Hold for five to ten breaths. Engage the core and press into the feet to rise back up to mountain pose.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 87. Moon Salutation
- 6. Butterfly

FAST FORWARD to

- 90. Wide Legged Squat over one leg
- 14. Standing Forward Fold
- 54. Crow Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: The namaste mudra broadens the chest and shoulders, which improves functioning of the lungs.
- Strength: Strengthens the feet and ankles, tones the belly.
- Flexibility: Stretches the thighs, groin and hips.
- Organs and hormones: Massages the abdominal muscles and stimulates the reproductive system. Can help to balance hormones.
- Posture: Counteracts long hours of sitting in chairs and improves spinal posture.

## **89      Noose Pose**

### **Noose Pose - Pashasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Lower back, hips, or neck injury
- Recent abdominal surgery
- Hernia, or IBD
- Pregnancy - avoid

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in Mountain Pose, with your feet together, toes touching. Bend your knees and sink your hips into a squat. Keep your knees together and bring the heels slightly apart, so that your sitting bones are resting on your heels. Shift your knees slightly to the left as you twist your torso to the right on an exhale.

Lean your torso towards your thigh, closing the gap between the two body parts. The back of your left arm and shoulder should be by the outside of your right knee. Press your right knee in towards your left arm and use this pressure to twist your torso deeper. Bend your left arm and wrap it under your shins towards your left hip. Reach your right arm behind your lower back, trying to clasp the opposite wrist.

Hold for five breaths then come out slowly on an exhale. Remember to do the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 88. Garland Pose
- 4. Seated Gentle Twist

FAST FORWARD to

- 35. Upward Facing Dog
- 131. Heron Pose
- 57. Side Crow

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: The twisting motion contracts the intercostal muscles that calls for deep, conscious breathing. Thus, when done mindfully, the lungs strengthen.
- Heart: The twisting motions expand the diaphragm to open the heart and improve blood circulation.
- Digestion: Releases the tension in the muscles of the abdomen and improves digestion.
- Strength: Strengthens the core and thigh muscles as well as the ankle and knee joints.
- Flexibility: Stretches your shoulders, back, quadriceps, and ankles. Improves range of motion in the lower body joints and the spine.
- Organs & Hormones: Digestive organs and nervous system are stimulated.

## 90 Wide-Legged Squat Over One Leg - Skandasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Hip injury or recent hip replacement surgery
- Knee injury or chronic knee pain
- Ankle injury such as ligament tear

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Begin in a Standing Wide-Legged Forward Fold (Prasarita Padottanasana) with the hands to the ground. Bend your right knee and sink your hips towards the right side into a half squat. Root your right foot firmly into the ground as you straighten the left leg, lifting the toes to flex the foot towards you.

If you cannot bring the heel of the bent leg to the ground, stay up higher on the ball of the foot or place a block or rolled up blanket under the heel. Keep your upper body lifted with a straight spine; don't fold forwards.

Keep your arms out in front of you with the fingertips on the ground or blocks for support. Or, for an extra challenge, bring your hands into a prayer position at the heart center.

Hold for five to ten breaths then bring your hands onto the ground for support as you shift your weight to the other side, bending the left knee and straightening the right leg. You can also practice this as a dynamic flow, going side to side with each breath.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 92. Goddess Pose



- 87. Moon Salutation

FAST FORWARD to

- 62. Low Lunge Pose
- 88. Garland Pose
- 96. Revolved Low Lunge Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Strength: Core, knee and ankle joints.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hamstrings and hip adductors.
- Organs: Stimulates the reproductive system.
- Posture: Improves balance.

## 91 Lizard Pose - Utthan Pristhasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury/ chronic pain to the ankles, knees, or hips,
- Pain or injury to the wrists, elbows, or shoulders,

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From 48. Downward Facing Dog or 51. Plank Pose pose, bend the right knee into the chest. Place the right foot to the outside of the right hand and lower the hips. Ensure the knee does not move past the ankle or open too far out to the side. Keep the sole of the foot on the ground. For a gentler variation, drop the back knee. For a challenge, keep the knee lifted with the leg straight.

Either stay on the hands or lower down on your forearms. If the forearms do not quite reach the ground, place blocks underneath. Stay for five to ten breaths, breathing deeply into the hips. To come out, push back to 48. Downward Facing Dog. Peddle the legs a few times to release any tension then repeat on the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 62. Low Lunge Pose
- 17. Crescent Lunge - High Lunge

FAST FORWARD to

- 63. Pigeon Pose
- 48. Downward Facing Dog
- 96. Revolved Low Lunge Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Strength: Strengthens the thigh muscles, hip, knee, ankles, and calves. Can also tone the chest and shoulders.
- Flexibility: Stretches thighs and hips flexors (hip opener).

- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the reproductive system.
- Brain: Improves focus and energizes creativity.
- Sleep: Can improve sleep, when done restoratively.

## 92 Goddess pose - Utkata Konasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Hip injury
- Knee injury or chronic knee pain
- Shoulder injury - keep the hands on the hips instead

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a wide legged standing position with the legs 3–4 feet apart. Turn the toes out to 45 degrees, then bend your knees until they stack over your ankles; thighs should be parallel to the floor. Spread your weight evenly between all four corners of the feet, engaging your upper and lower legs.

Bring your arms out to the side and bend the elbows, palms facing forwards. Relax your shoulders away from the ears and press the chest forwards. Keep your arms active and gaze forwards, chin parallel to the floor. Hold for five breaths then inhale to straighten the legs and release.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 87. Moon Salutation
- Five Pointed Star Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 90. Wide Legged Squat over one Leg
- 22. Wide-Legged Forward Fold
- 88. Garlands Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Cactus arms open the chest to improve lung functioning.
- Strength: Strengthens the legs, calves, abs, knees, and shoulders. Also strengthens the pelvic floor muscles .
- Flexibility: Stretches the hips, legs, and chest.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the pelvis and genitals.
- Posture: Counteracts the negative effects of prolonged sitting.

## 93 Extended Mountain - Urdhva Hastasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Spinal or shoulder injury
- Severe back pain
- Pregnancy - Avoid after third trimester

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Find Mountain Pose by standing with your feet together or slightly apart (whatever is OK for your knees). Press into the soles of the feet, spreading weight equally between the four corners of each foot to feel grounded. Energetically pull your kneecaps up to activate your quads then suck your belly button in to engage your core.

On an inhale, reach your arms up overhead, arms in line with the shoulders and palms facing each other. Exhale to lean back, extending the chest forwards as you draw your shoulders away from your ears. Keep pressing firmly into your feet with legs engaged for stability. Ensure your pelvis stays neutral and that you are not pushing your hips forwards. Hold for five breaths, if it is comfortable for your neck, you can look up.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 13. Mountain Pose
- 95. Palm Tree Pose Side Bend

FAST FORWARD to

- 87. Moon Salutation
- 14. Standing Forward Fold
- 94. Half Lift

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Reaching the arms overhead expands the diaphragm and encourages deep breathing, increasing lung capacity.
- Heart: The backbend stimulates the heart and improves functioning of the respiratory system.
- Flexibility: Stretches the spine, shoulders, armpits, arms, and quads.
- Immune System: Stimulates and strengthens the immune system.
- Posture: Increases strength and flexibility in the spine, improves circulation and releases compression between the vertebrae, making it easier to correct posture.
- Brain - The backbend increases flow of blood to the head, which results in improved focus and more clarity in the mind.

## 94 Half Lift - Ardha Uttanasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- HBP
- Pulled hamstring
- Lower back injury or herniated disc
- Weak ankles or knees

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in 14. Standing Forward Fold, with the torso folded over the thighs, arms and head hanging and the feet slightly apart. Bring your fingertips to your shins or the floor, straighten your legs, and on an inhale, raise your torso, straightening the spine. Lift your head to look forwards, draw your shoulder blades together behind you, and energetically press your chest forwards. Take a few breaths here and when you are ready, bend the knees and exhale back to Uttanasana, softening the spine.

If it is difficult to do this pose with straight legs, keep the knees microbent. If your hips feel tight, bring the feet further apart.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 48. Downward Facing Dog
- 93. Extended Mountain

- 14. Standing Forward Fold

FAST FORWARD to

- 14. Standing Forward Fold
- 51. Plank Pose
- 52. Plank to Four-Limbed Staff Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Expansion and contraction of the chest and the rib cage improve lung capacity.
- Heart: Enhances blood circulation to the heart.
- Flexibility: Stretches the spine, chest and muscles along the back of the legs.
- Immune system: Stimulates the immune system.
- Organs & Hormones: Can provide relief for menstruation and help fertility-related issues.
- Posture: Relieves stiffness of the back muscles and aligns the spine for better posture.
- Brain: This pose balances the nervous system, which calms the mind, helping to release mental chatter.

## 95 Palm tree pose side bend - Parsva Bhanga

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury to the ribcage
- Spinal or back injuries
- Shoulder injury - A gentler variation for the shoulders is to bend the elbows with the opposite hand coming to the opposite elbow.

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in the mountain pose, lengthening the spine and pressing firmly into the feet; feet can be together or hip distance apart. Engage the core and as you inhale, sweep your arms overhead, bringing the palms together in prayer position. Exhale to bend to the right side, keeping the arms straight, spine elongated and chest forwards. Try to touch the left bicep to the left ear.

Hold for 3 to 5 breaths, going slightly deeper with each exhale. Your gaze can be up or straight ahead. Release back to neutral on an inhale then go straight to the other side on the next exhale

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 87. Moon Salutation
- 93. Extended Mountain

FAST FORWARD to

- 18. Triangle Pose
- 14. Standing Forward Fold
- 30. Tree Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: The expansion of the side chest and rib cage contracts the diaphragm and encourages deep breathing
- Digestion: Stimulation of abdominal organs aids digestion.
- Flexibility: Stretches the intercostal muscles, shoulders, armpits, and arms.

- Organs: The abdominal organs are stimulated on the side of the body that is compressed, including the stomach, small intestine and pancreas, liver, and large intestine.
- Posture: Increases strength and flexibility in the spine, improves circulation and releases compression between the vertebrae, making it easier to correct posture.

## 96 Revolved Low Lunge pose - Parivrtta Anjaneyasana Knee On The Floor

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Spinal or rib cage injury
- Hip or knee injury
- Knee pain - Can place a blanket under the back knee

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Begin in a lunge with your right foot forward, knee above the ankle. Place the back knee on the ground and bring your hands to a prayer position at the heart center. On an inhale, lengthen the spine, as you exhale twist to the right. Take another inhale, then exhale to twist deeper while leaning forwards so you can hook the left elbow to the outside of the right knee. Pull the right shoulder back to open the chest to the right side as you gently press the left elbow into the knee.

Option to open up the arms by bringing the left hand to the inside of the front foot. Place the hand on a block if needed. Reach the right arm up to the sky and turn your gaze up to your top hand. If there is any neck pain, turn your gaze down. Hold for five breaths, lengthening the spine with each inhale and twisting deeper on each exhale. Remember to do the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 86. Revolved Downward Facing Dog Pose
- 91. Lizard Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 17. Crescent Lunge - High Lunge Pose
- 48. Downward Facing Dog
- 61. Half Split of Split

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Engages the chest muscles to enhance deep breathing.
- Digestion: Twisting motion promotes digestion.
- Strength: Strengthens the spine, arms, shoulders, and knees.
- Flexibility: Stretches the quads, shoulders, upper arms, neck, and abdominal muscles.
- Organs: Abdominal organs.
- Posture: Improves upper body posture and balance.

## 97 Revolved High Lunge pose - Parivrtta Anjaneyasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Spinal or rib cage injury
- Hip or knee injury

### How to PLAY the pose:

Find a high lunge position (right leg forwards) with hips and both feet facing forwards. Front knee is bent, stacked over the ankle, and the back leg is straight with the heel lifted. Bring your hands to a prayer position at the heart center. On an inhale, lengthen the spine, as you exhale and twist to the right. Take another inhale, then exhale to twist deeper while leaning forwards so you can hook the left elbow to the outside of the right knee. Pull the right shoulder back to open the chest to the right side as you gently press the left elbow into the knee. Keep the back leg strong.

Option to open up the arms by bringing the left hand to the inside of the front foot. Place the hand on a block if needed. For a deeper twist, bring your left hand to the outside of the front foot. Reach the right arm up to the sky and turn your gaze up to your top hand. If there is any neck pain, turn your gaze down.

Hold for five breaths, lengthening the spine with each inhale and twisting deeper on each exhale. Remember to do the other side.

### Where to PLAY the pose:

REWIND and find

- 19. Warrior 1
- 86. Revolved Downward Facing Dog Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 98. Twisted Reverse Warrior Pose
- 19. Warrior 1
- 20. Warrior 2

### The benefits of PLAYING the pose:

- Lungs: Encourages efficient use of the chest and the diaphragm.
- Strength: Strengthens the legs, back and shoulders.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hips, thighs, and chest.
- Organs and hormones: Activates the thyroid gland and abdominal organs.
- Posture: Releases tension in the upper back to promote posture and improves balance.

## 98 Twisted Reverse Warrior Pose - Parivrtta Viparita Virabhadrasana

### Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:

- Rib cage injury
- Back pain or injury
- Neck pain - Keep gaze forwards instead of looking up
- Hip or knee injury
- Pregnancy - avoid

### How to PLAY the pose:

Start in 20. Warrior 2 position (right foot forward) with the hips facing out to the side and the back toes pointing out to 90 degrees. Bring your arms out straight like in 20. Warrior 2. Take and inhale as you lengthen the spine. As you exhale, twist your spine to the right, turn your torso and your arms with you.

Bring your right hand behind you and rest it on the back thigh. Inhale to reach your left arm up, following with your gaze. Lean back, arching the spine into a backbend. Keep the front knee bent and continue sinking the right hip down. Hold for 3 to 5 breaths. Release the backbend then the twist, coming back into 20. Warrior 2. Rotate the feet to repeat on the other side

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 21. Reverse Warrior 2
- 97. Revolved High Lunge Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 19. Warrior 1
- 23. Extended Side Angle Pose
- 106. Revolved Half Moon Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Engages the chest muscles to enhance deep breathing.
- Heart: Improves circulation and blood flow.
- Digestion: Twisting motion promotes digestion.
- Strength: Builds lower body strength.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hips, thighs, arms, chest, and torso.
- Organs and hormones: Engages and stretches the abdominal organs.
- Posture: Improves spinal mobility.

## 99 Revolved triangle - Parivrtta Trikonasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Ankle, shoulder or spinal injury
- Recent abdominal or knee surgery
- Spinal ailments like scoliosis , herniated discs and kyphosis - Avoid
- HBP, migraine or vertigo - Keep gaze down instead of looking up
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From a 19. Warrior 1 position with front toes pointing forwards and back foot out to 45 degrees, extend the front leg (right leg forwards, left leg back). On an exhale, fold forward from your hips while twisting your body to the right. Bring your left hand to a block or the floor to the outside of the front foot. Draw your top shoulder back to deepen the twist and turn the torso to the right side then reach the right arm up, fully extended.

Keep the spine and both legs straight and press into your back heel to stabilize the pose. Gaze up to your top hand if it is comfortable for your neck. Hold for 5 breaths then gently release the twist before rising back up to standing. Switch legs and repeat on the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 18. Triangle Pose
- 42. Pyramid Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 23. Extended Side Angle Pose

- 106. Revolved Half Moon Pose
- 100. Reverse Triangle

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: The deep twist opens the intercostal muscles and enhances the rib cage cavity, helping the breathing muscles work more efficiently.
- Digestion: Squeezes the abdominal muscles to help increase metabolism and release toxins. Can help with constipation, lack of appetite, and IBS (irritable bowel syndrome).
- Strength: Strengthens the core and leg muscles.
- Flexibility: Improves range of motion in the hips, spine and pelvis.
- Organs & Hormones: Internal visceral organs of the abdomen and chest are stimulated such as the stomach, liver, and colon. The circulatory and nervous systems are also stimulated.

## 100 Reverse triangle - Viparita Trikonasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Spinal injuries like slipped disc, disc bulge, or herniated disc.
- Injury or recent surgery to the neck, shoulders, hips, ankles, or lower back.
- High or low blood pressure.
- Neck injury or pain - Look down rather than up.
- Problems with balance like vertigo or dizziness.

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From a 19. Warrior 1 position with front toes pointing forwards and back foot out to 45 degrees, extend the front leg (right leg forwards, left leg back). Bring your left hand to the back of your left thigh and reach your right arm up to the sky. Take an inhale to lengthen your spine and lean back, arching the spine and opening the chest.

Keep equal weight in both legs, firmly pressing the feet down to keep the lower body stable. Look up to your top hand and take five deep breaths. On each inhale, lengthen the spine, and on each exhale, move deeper into the backbend. To release, slowly straighten the spine with an engaged core. Switch legs and repeat on the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 19. Warrior 1
- 21. Reverse Warrior 2

FAST FORWARD to

- 42. Pyramid Pose
- 100. Reverse Triangle
- 23. Extended Side Angle Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Engages the diaphragm for deep breathing, improving the functioning of the respiratory system.
- Heart: The stimulation of the heart from the backbend improves blood circulation and functioning of the cardiovascular system.
- Flexibility: Stretches the spine, side body, core, and quads. Also improves range of motion in the shoulders and arms.



- Organs & Hormones: Cardiovascular, nervous, and respiratory systems.
- Posture: Improves spinal mobility. Can also reduce stiffness in the neck and shoulders, and relieve lower back pain.
- Brain: Stimulates the sympathetic nervous system and sends fresh blood to the brain to help reduce mental fatigue.

## 101 Humble Warrior - Baddha Virabhadrasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Shoulder injury - Skip this pose
- Hip pain or injury - Skip if injury, go halfway down only if pain in hips
- Chronic knee pain
- Spinal injury - Skip this pose
- Back pain - don't lean too far back

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Begin in a 19. Warrior 1 position (right foot forward) with hips facing forwards, back foot turned out to 45 degrees, and heel on the ground. Bring your arms behind you, interlacing the fingers behind the lower back, palms facing the body. Straighten the arms and draw the shoulders back while maintaining the clasp. Press your weight evenly between both feet and engage your leg muscles.

As you inhale, pull your clasped hands away from you, opening the chest and leaning back. As you exhale, tilt forwards from the hips, turning slightly to the left to fold to the inside of the right knee. Relax your head and neck towards the ground, try to bring your right shoulder close to the right knee, and reach your clasped hands up and over until you feel a good stretch in the shoulders.

Stay for 3 to 5 breaths. To come out, engage your core and legs, slowly lift your upper body on an inhale, and release your hands. Remember to do the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 19. Warrior 1
- 1. Cat Cow

FAST FORWARD to

- 29. Dancer Pose
- 42. Pyramid Pose
- 32. Warrior 3

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: The forward bend with clasped hands opens the chest and stimulates the respiratory system.
- Heart: The forward bend brings the heart above the head which brings a supply of fresh blood to the neck, face and head and improves cardiac functioning.
- Strength: Strengthens the leg and arm muscles,
- Flexibility: Deep stretch for the hips and shoulders.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the endocrine glands and the digestive organs.
- Brain: Calms the mind and improves self-confidence.

## 102 Revolved Wide-Legged Forward Bend Pose - Parivrtta Prasrita Padottanasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Ribcage or spinal injury
- Hamstring injury
- HBP
- Pregnancy - avoid

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From a wide leg forward fold, bring your hands together directly under your head, planting the palms on the ground or on blocks. As you inhale, reach the right arm up, draw the shoulder back and twist the spine to the right side. Look up to the top hand and hold for five breaths, twisting deeper on each exhale.

Option to bring your left hand to the outside of your right ankle. From here, you can bend the elbow to bring your chest closer to the leg, deepening both the twist and the hamstring stretch. Remember to do the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 97. Revolved High Lunge Pose
- 4. Seated Gentle Twists

FAST FORWARD to

- 106. Revolved Half Moon Pose
- 22. Wide-Legged Forward Bend

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Stretches the muscles around the ribs and chest to promote better breathing.
- Heart: The forward bend brings the heart above the head which brings a supply of fresh blood to the neck, face and head and improves cardiac functioning.
- Digestion: Twisting motion promotes digestion.
- Strength: Strengthens the arms, shoulders, chest, abdomen, hips, and back.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hamstrings, calves, hips, low back, and spine.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal organs.
- Brain: Relieves anxiety and promotes feelings of calmness.

## **Category 3. BALANCES**

See introduction on standing postures for information about weight distribution on your feet. In balance postures, it is important to always keep the standing leg strongly engaged. Therefore, do not collapse in your arches, or hyperextend the knee (it is better to have a micro bend in the knee than hang on your joint), but engage the quadriceps pulling the kneecaps up and engaging your glutes keeping your hips square. Do not worry if you fall out of balance; simply bring yourself back up and smile! No judgement. Wiggling is perfectly fine; it will just strengthen your stability muscles more. With time, you will find stillness and ease in the postures. Balances are great for confidence and to feel grounded. Remember to always do both legs and do not wait too long after practicing balances to do counter poses.

Late term pregnancy: because of increased relaxing hormones you might experience weaker ankles and knees, fallen arches, and problems with your balance. If so, find additional support from a chair or wall.

Be mindful if you suffer from vertigo or medical conditions that affect balance. Talk to your doctor before attempting these postures and find support from a wall.

## 103 Shiva Squat

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Knee injuries or pain
- Pregnancy, especially later stages, may put too much strain on the hips and lower back
- Lower back issues, injury or pain
- Ankle injuries or restricted mobility

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From a 32. Warrior 3 pose, lower your hands down on your mat in front of you. Start to bend both legs bringing the thigh of the floating leg towards the back shin of the standing leg. Sink your hips to lower down, with the floating leg hovering off the mat. Inhale to come back up without releasing the back foot.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 32. Warrior 3
- 104. Airplane Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 69. Standing Split
- 32. Warrior 3

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs:
- Digestion:
- Strength:
- Flexibility:
- Immune system:
- Posture: Improves balance
- Brain:

## 104 Airplane Pose - Dekasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Recent or chronic ankle or knee injuries
- Pregnancy, particularly in the second and third trimesters
- Low bone density or osteoporosis
- High blood pressure

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Begin in 13. Mountain Pose at the top of your mat with your feet hip-width apart and arms by your sides. Shift your weight onto your left foot, and lift your right leg behind you, balancing on your left foot. Keep your hips level and your right leg straight, engaging your quadriceps muscles. Begin to hinge forward at your hips, bringing your torso parallel to the ground and extending

your right leg back behind you. Keep your gaze focused on the ground, a few feet in front of you, to help maintain your balance. Draw your shoulder blades down your back, engaging your core muscles to help stabilize your body. Hold the pose for several breaths, then release by lowering your right leg. Repeat the pose on the other side, balancing on your right foot and extending your left leg behind you.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 12. Sun Salutation B
- 32. Warrior 3

FAST FORWARD to

- 13. Mountain Pose
- 14. Standing Forward Fold
- 17. Crescent Lunge - High Lunge
- 69. Standing Split

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Stretches and strengthens the breathing muscles
- Digestion: Stimulates the abdominal organs via the strong engagement of the core muscles
- Strength: Strengthens the ankles, legs, buttocks (one of the best asanas for your glutes), shoulders, back, and core
- Flexibility: Opens the hips and hamstrings
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system
- Posture: Strengthens the back, hips, and shoulders
- Brain: Improves concentration and focus

## **105 Standing balance one leg raised - Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana C & D**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury to the foot ankle or leg - avoid
- Back injury - omit the forward fold

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From Mountain pose, shift your weight onto your right foot then slowly raise your left leg, drawing the knee up to the chest. Hug the knee into your chest with your fingers interlaced around the shin and take a few moments to find your balance. Engage your core and thigh muscles and press into the inner side of your standing foot to avoid falling.

Option to stay here for 5 breaths. Or option to extend the raised leg, holding either side of the foot. If this is not possible, you can use a strap instead. Inhale to straighten the spine, exhale to pull the raised leg towards you, bringing your torso to the thigh and forehead to the shin. Keep both legs straight and maintain balance for five breaths.

Next, straighten the spine and release your grip but keep the leg lifted in an extended position. Place your hands on your hips, look forwards, and strongly engage your leg muscles. If it is too difficult to keep the leg straight, bend to a 90-degree angle. Release after five breaths and repeat on the other side

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 31. Extended Hand to Big Toe Pose

- 87. Moon Salutation
- 102. Revolved Wide Legged Forward Bend

FAST FORWARD to

- 29. Dancer Pose
- 73. Bird of Paradise
- 32. Warrior 3

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Strength: Strengthens the quad of the raised leg and multiple muscles in the standing leg.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hips, hamstrings, and quadriceps. Folding over the leg also stretches the spine.
- Posture: Improves balance.
- Brain: Reduces mental activity and improves concentration as the pose requires full awareness and focus.

## 106 Revolved Half Moon pose - Parivrtta Ardha Chandrasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Rib cage injury
- Ankle or leg injury
- Neck pain - keep gaze down
- Pregnancy - avoid

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Begin in 18. Triangle Pose with the right foot forwards. Release your left hand to the ground or a block, turning your torso towards the floor. Bring your right hand to your right hip. As you inhale, draw the right shoulder back to twist the spine and open the chest to the right side.

Keeping the twist, bend your front knee slightly and walk your left hand one foot forwards, allowing you to shift your weight into the front foot. Slowly float the back foot off the ground and raise the leg until it is parallel to the floor. Finally, reach your right arm up to the sky, following with your gaze. Keep the right shoulder drawing back and the chest open, as you hold for 3 to 5 breaths.

To release, bend into the front knee to release the back leg to the ground. Untwist the spine and come up to standing to repeat on the other side.

If the fingertips of your bottom arm do not touch the floor, use a block to create extra height. Keep the core engaged for balance and stay strong in the front leg. If the balance is a challenge, keep your right hand on the hip and gaze down.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 96. Revolved Low Lunge Pose
- 102. Revolved Wide Legged Forward Bend Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 18. Triangle Pose
- 42. Pyramid Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: Twisting motion promotes digestion.
- Strength: Strengthens the quads.
- Flexibility: Stretches the spine, torso, hips, hamstrings, glutes, and calves.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal organs.
- Posture: Improves balance.
- Brain: Encourages focus and builds mental strength.

## **4. BACKBENDS (Heart Openers)**

We recommend including Cat Cow in the warmup if you are including backbends within your sequence.

After these postures, always stay in a neutral spine with the spine straight for at least three long breaths before you go into a counter pose. If you have picked several backbends, remember to generally do them chronologically, that is one bar poses before two, and two bar poses before three, etc. You may choose to stay in a neutral spine in between backbends, saving the counterpose until the end of your backbend series (if doing multiple). Neutralize the spine with forwards fold as counter poses after backbends.

If you have a back injury, consult your doctor for the appropriate adaptation for your individual case or refrain from doing them at all.

Backbends are called heart openers for a reason: opening the chest and heart space can be exposing for us. This action of opening the heart space is also connected to the nervous system and brain. It can release emotional tension, leading to a liberating sensation. However, if you struggle with suppressed emotions or trauma, it can also have the opposite effect and be emotionally difficult. If this is your situation and it feels overwhelming to go into deep backbends, start with the more gentle heart openers and take them only as far as you feel comfortable doing.

### **107     Sphinx pose - Salamba Bhujangasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Back or shoulder injury or chronic pain
- Pregnancy or recent abdominal surgery

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a prone position. Bring both elbows underneath your chest, in line, with the shoulders. Press into the forearms as you lift your chest and press the heart forwards. Gaze between the thumbs to keep the neck in elongation of the spine or look up for an additional stretch to the neck and throat. Keep your upper arms engaged by pressing the forearms down and don't let the chest collapse. Option to bring the big toes together. Option to bend the knees and lift the feet up. Hold for five to ten breaths then take a few breaths in 148. Crocodile Pose.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 83. Seated Cat Cow
- 7. Open Chest
- 34. Puppy Pose / Melting Heart (YIN deck)

FAST FORWARD to

- 40. Camel Pose
- 59. Child's Pose
- 35. Upward Facing Dog

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Stretching of the chest improves lung capacity.
- Heart: Improves oxygen levels in the blood and circulation.
- Digestion: Stimulates digestion system.
- Strength: Builds strength and muscle tone in the shoulders and upper arms.
- Flexibility: Stretches the chest and spine.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal organs, adrenal glands and kidneys.
- Posture: Improves spinal posture when held for longer periods of time.

## 108 Camel pose variation 1 - Ustrasana Variation 1

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Chronic back pain, sciatica, or back injury (particularly lower back)
- HBP
- LBP
- Pregnancy
- Migraine
- Neck pain - don't drop the head back, keep the chin to the chest

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a kneeling position on your shins with knees hip distance apart. Tuck your toes under, squeeze your buttocks and place your hands on your lower back with fingers pointing down and thumbs facing outwards. Squeeze the elbows towards each other. Inhale to lift and extend your spine. Exhale, pull your shoulder blades back and open your chest as you press your hips forward.

Option to bring your hands to your heels or to blocks on the outsides of your feet. Either release your neck, tilting it backwards totally relaxed, or keep your chin towards your chest. Breathe into your heart center for five breaths. To come out, first bring your hands to your lower back, tuck your chin to the chest, then slowly rise up. Rest in 59. Child's Pose for at least five breaths.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 107. Sphinx Pose
- 93 Extended Mountain
- 34. Puppy Pose / Melting Heart (YIN deck)

FAST FORWARD to

- 59. Child's Pose
- 128. Thunderbolt Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Stretches the muscles (intercostals) between the ribs, and increases lung capacity. It may be therapeutic for asthma.

- Digestion: Stimulates digestion, may relieve mild constipation.
- Strength: Strengthens the muscles of the back and the neck.
- Flexibility: Stretches the deep hip flexors (psoas), the belly, and the front of the neck.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal organs and the glands of the throat and head (thyroid, parathyroid, pineal, and pituitary).
- Posture: Helps correct rounded shoulders. Improves spinal flexibility and strength.
- Brain: Calms the mind and nervous system, and may help relieve anxiety and stress.

## 109 Fish Pose Lotus Variation - Matsyasana Variation Lotus

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- HBP or LBP
- Migraine
- Neck, spinal, hip, or knee injury

**How to PLAY the pose:**

First, bring your legs into the 152. Lotus Pose from a seated position. To do this, start in an easy crossed leg position and take hold of the foot of the leg furthest away from your body. Lift the foot and place it close to the crease of the other knee. Now, walk the bottom foot forwards, press the top knee down and lift the bottom foot, trying to place it on top of your bent knee.

Once you have a lotus position, bring your hands behind your hips, bend the elbows and lower your spine onto the ground. Place your hands under your sitting bones and draw the knees down as you press into your forearms to peel your spine off the mat. Lift your chest up to the sky, arching the spine. Relax your neck and if it feels comfortable allow the head to move back, gently place the crown of the head on the ground. Breathe here and notice how much air you can get into your lungs in this position, when you are opening your chest like this. To come out, roll your spine down, lift your knees up and release your legs. Do 78. Knees to Chest for five or more breaths as a counter pose.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 45. Plow Pose
- 117. Embryo Pose
- 116. Upward Lotus Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 41. Fish Pose
- 78. Knees to Chest

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Stretches the muscles (intercostals) between the ribs, and increases lung capacity. It may be therapeutic for asthma.
- Digestion: Stimulates digestion, may relieve mild constipation.
- Strength: Strengthens the muscles of the back and the neck.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hips, torso, ankles, and the front of the neck.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.



- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal organs and the glands of the throat and head (thyroid, parathyroid, pineal, and pituitary).
- Posture: Helps correct rounded shoulders. Improves spinal flexibility and strength.
- Brain: Calms the mind and nervous system, and may help relieve anxiety and stress.

## 110 Downward Facing Dog Dancer - Tri Pada Adho Mukha Svanasana Variation

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury to the shoulder, hip or knee
- Chronic back pain or injury

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Begin in 48. Downward Facing Dog with equal weight between the hands and feet. Lift your right leg up behind you like in a 3-legged dog. Bend the right knee, shift your weight into your left hand and engage your core, then raise your right hand and reach behind to grab the foot. Once you have a clasp, kick your foot into your hand to arch the spine and open the chest. Hold for five breaths then release the hand followed by the foot, coming back to a 48. Downward Facing Dog. Repeat on the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 85. Downward Facing Dog Plank Pose Flow
- 84. Balancing Table Pose With Knee To Nose Flow

FAST FORWARD to

- 29. Dancer Pose
- 40. Camel Pose
- 48. Downward Facing Dog

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Expands the ribcage and lungs to improve breathing abilities.
- Heart: Opens the heart center and increases blood circulation.
- Strength: Strengthens the arms, shoulders, and core.
- Flexibility: Stretches the chest, spine, shoulder, and quad.
- Organs and hormones: Requires core engagement, which stimulates the abdominal organs.
- Posture: Improves balance.
- Brain: Improves concentration as requires total focus.

## 111 Two-legged Inverted Staff pose - Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- HBP
- LBP
- Pregnancy
- Migraine
- Back injury (particularly lower back) or chronic back pain
- Neck injury

### How to PLAY the pose:

Start in a reclined position. Bend your knees, place your feet on the ground hip distance apart and about one hand's length away from the buttocks. Bend your elbows and place your hands just behind the shoulders. Inhale and press into the hands and feet coming into full 39. Upward Bow (Wheel) Pose. Press the hips and heart center up towards the sky.

Take a few breaths here then slowly bend the elbows to come down onto the forearms. Interlace the fingers behind your head and press the elbows, forearms, and side of the wrists into the ground to find stability. Next, tuck the chin into the chest and slowly walk the feet away from you. Engage the quads and press into your feet to straighten the legs.

Hold for up to five breaths. To release, walk your feet back in towards your hips, press into your palms to release the head then slowly roll your spine back onto the mat.

### Where to PLAY the pose:

REWIND and find

- 38. Bridge Pose
- 37. Bow Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 78. Knees to Chest

### The benefits of PLAYING the pose:

- Lungs: Stretches the muscles (intercostals) between the ribs, and increases lung capacity.
- Heart: The deep backbend stimulates the heart and improves circulation.
- Strength: Builds strength in the shoulders, arms, quads and hamstrings.
- Flexibility: Stretches the entire front body, improves spinal flexibility, and opens the chest and shoulders.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates thyroid, pineal and pituitary glands. Stimulates abdominal organs including the kidney, pancreas, liver and reproductive organs. Can be beneficial for boosting fertility.
- Posture: Improves posture by enhancing flexibility and elasticity.
- Brain: Bringing the heart above the head relaxes the nervous system, which in turn, calms the mind. Also boosts concentration and focus.

## Category 5. INVERSIONS

Inversions stimulate the lymphatic system, the abdominal organs and nervous system, thereby boosting the immune system. They can be preventative for cold and relieve symptoms of sinusitis and bronchitis because of increased blood flow to the head and the way gravity works with your lungs during inversions.

Many will say that you should not do inversions when you are menstruating. There is no medical/scientific reason for this. It is a myth that for some reason is stuck in the yoga community. However, if you struggle with pain, bloating or severe issues related to your menstruation, as always, listen to your body and make adaptations according to what feels ok. Be aware that some might have less control over the core muscles, so in your full inversions keep this in mind.

## 112 One legged shoulderstand pose - Eka Pada Sarvangasana

Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:

- Neck pain or injury

- Severe back pain or spinal injury
- Headache
- High blood pressure

#### **How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a reclined position with your knees bent towards your chest. Press your hands into the ground to lift your lower back off the mat. Bring your hands to your lower back (fingers facing upwards) and press your forearms into the mat (elbows should be in line with shoulders). Slowly extend your legs up to shoulder stand pose, ensuring the weight stays on your shoulders and not your neck.

Keeping your hands supporting your lower back, slowly lower one leg behind you without bending the knee. Try to bring the toes to touch the ground or a block. Hold for five to ten breaths then lift the leg and lower the opposite one, repeating on the other side.

#### **Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 9. Thread the Needle Pose
- 38. Bridge Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 45. Plow Pose
- 115. Ear Pressure Pose
- 41. Fish Pose

#### **The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Can be therapeutic for asthma. The inverted position with compression in the chest strengthens and stretches the diaphragm and breathing muscles in the back that are often tight.
- Digestion: Stimulates the digestive system. This is one of the most effective positions to help you go to the bathroom, therefore it can be therapeutic for constipation.
- Strength: Tones the legs, buttocks, and core. Strengthens the neck, upper back, and shoulders.
- Flexibility: Stretches the shoulders, neck, spine, and hamstring of the lowered leg.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system e.g increases lymphatic flow.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the thyroid, prostate glands, and abdominal organs including the liver, kidneys, and bladder. Stimulates reproductive organs. Helps relieve symptoms of menopause.
- Posture: Reduces tension in the neck and shoulders. Helps with healthy alignment and strengthens the core.
- Brain: Calms the brain and nervous system. Can help relieve stress, mild depression, and reduce fatigue. Can relieve headaches and symptoms of sinusitis.
- Sleep: Can help battle insomnia. Option to build up under your shoulders with blankets or pillows so there is not such a deep stretch in your neck as you lift the legs, but ensure your head is resting on the ground and there is space under the neck.

## **113 Reclining Angle Pose - Supta Konasana**

#### **Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Groin, back, or neck injury
- Sciatica, slipped disc, or chronic lower back pain
- Pulled hamstring

#### **How to PLAY the pose:**

From a reclined position, bend the knees, bring your hands to your lower back, and gently swing your legs over your head, coming into 45. Plow Pose. Extend your legs fully, bringing the toes to touch the ground, feet flexed. Keeping your hands on your lower back for support, open your legs as wide as feels comfortable.

Next, bring your right hand to the right foot, looping the peace fingers around the big toe. Do the same with the left hand and left foot. Keep the arms and legs extended and chin tucked to the chest as you hold for five to ten breaths. To release, bring your hands back to your lower back, bring your feet together, then slowly roll the spine back onto the mat.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 64. Wide Legged Forward Fold
- 115. Ear Pressure Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 45. Plow Pose
- 136. Upward Seated Straddle Pose
- 41. Fish Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Heart: Stimulates the heart and improves general circulation.
- Flexibility: Stretches the inner thighs, groins, spine, and neck.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates abdominal and reproductive organs including the ovaries and prostate gland, bladder, and kidneys. May help relieve the symptoms of menstruation discomfort and menopause.
- Brain: Calms the brain and nervous system. It may help alleviate stress and mild depression.
- Sleep: The deep forward fold may help improve sleep and reduce insomnia.

## **114 Rabbit pose - Sasangasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Spinal or neck injury
- Knee injury
- Headache
- HBP

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From a 59. Child's Pose, tuck your chin towards your chest so that the crown of the head is touching the mat. Bring your hands by your feet, grab your heels, and on an inhale, slowly lift the hips with a curved spine. Stop when the hips are stacking directly over the knees. Ensure your weight is on the crown of the head and your forehead is as close to your knees as possible.

If you feel pressure under your knees or head when you lift up into this pose, place a folded blanket under this body part. Stay for five breaths then slowly roll down, bringing your hips back to your heels and forehead to the floor. Rest here in 59. Child's Pose for another five breaths.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 40. Camel Pose
- 1. Cat Cow
- 34. Puppy Pose / Melting Heart (YIN deck)

FAST FORWARD to

- 59. Child's Pose
- 128. Thunderbolt Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: The compression in the chest strengthens and stretches the breathing muscles in the back. Helps improve conditions of the sinus, common cold and chronic tonsillitis.
- Digestion: Stimulates the digestive system and can relieve constipation, regulates the metabolism.
- Strength: Strengthens the neck, upper back, and shoulders.
- Flexibility: Stretches the entire spine and stimulates the intervertebral discs. Stretches the shoulders, neck and arms.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system e.g increases lymphatic flow.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the thyroid glands, immune and endocrine systems.
- Posture: Improves spinal mobility.
- Brain: Calms the brain and nervous system. Can help relieve stress, and mild depression, and reduce fatigue. Can relieve headache and symptoms of sinusitis.
- Sleep: Can help battle insomnia.

## **115 Ear pressure pose - Karnapidasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Neck pain or injury
- Severe back pain or spinal injury
- Headache
- High blood pressure
- Knee injury

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a reclined position with your knees bent towards your chest. Press your hands into the ground to lift your lower back off the mat. Bring your hands to your lower back (fingers facing upwards) and press your forearms into the mat. Slowly extend your legs up to shoulder stand pose, ensuring the weight stays on your shoulders and not your neck.

Keeping your hands supporting your lower back, slowly lower both your legs behind you, aiming to touch the floor with your toes. Once you can lower your legs no more, bend the knees, bringing them close to your ears. Press the hips up and back to stretch the upper back further and bring the knees and shins to touch the floor.

Release your arms out straight onto the mat with palms facing down. To deepen the sensation you can clasp the hands. Stay for five to 10 breaths. To come out, bring your hands to your lower back for support and slowly roll the spine onto the mat.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 112. One Legged Shoulderstand Pose
- 45. Plow Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 41. Fish Pose
- 75. Supine Twist

- 78. Knees to Chest

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: Stimulates the abdominal organs.
- Flexibility: Stretches the neck, shoulders, back, glutes, and hamstrings.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system e.g increases lymphatic flow.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the thyroid glands, digestive, immune and endocrine systems.
- Posture: Improves spinal mobility, therapeutic for backaches.
- Brain: Quiets and calms the mind.
- Sleep: Deep forward fold helps to prepare for sleep, can help battle insomnia.

## 116 Upward Lotus Pose - Urdhva Padmasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Avoid if you have a recent surgery or injury anywhere in the body
- IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease), glaucoma, ear infections, fibromyalgia, or weak joints.

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in 45. Plow Pose or Ear Pressure Pose with knees bent, close to your ears. Keep one hand on your lower back as you bind your legs into 152. Lotus Pose. Once you have the leg position, lift the knees up to hip level, bring your hands to your knees with arms extended and hold for five to ten breaths. To keep your balance, press your shoulders down.

If you cannot get into 152. Lotus Pose from 45. Plow Pose, enter the pose via a seated position first. Then bring your hands behind you and lean back. With some momentum, roll back onto your spine and lift your hips. Bring your hands to your lower back to flex the spine further, bring the binded legs to hip level, then move your hands to your knees and extend the arms.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 44. Shoulderstand
- 45. Plow Pose
- Ear Pressure Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 117. Embryo Pose
- 109. Fish Pose Variation Lotus
- 113. Reclining Angle Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Strength: Builds strength in the shoulders, back, and abdominal muscles.
- Flexibility: Improves mobility in the spine, stretches the muscles in the back, hips and ankles.
- Immune System: Stimulates the immune system.
- Organs & Hormones: Calms the nervous system and the fresh supply of blood stimulates all the organs and cells.
- Posture: Improves balance and can reduce shoulder sagging.
- Brain: The inversion sends blood flow in the opposite direction, bringing clarity to the mind and an energy boost.

## 117 Embryo Pose - Pindasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Avoid if you have a recent surgery or injury anywhere in the body
- IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease), glaucoma, ear infections, fibromyalgia, or weak joints.

**How to PLAY the pose:**

To practice 117. Embryo Pose, enter 116. Upward Lotus Pose as described above. From here, gently pull your knees down towards your ears, rounding your spine further and maintaining the bind in the legs. Wrap your hands around your thighs to hug the knees closer to your ears as you tuck your chin to your chest to create the Throat Lock (Jalandhara Bandha).

Keep your gaze to your nose and ensure the weight is on your shoulders rather than your neck. Hold for five to ten breaths. Come out slowly by rolling the spine onto the floor and releasing the bind of the legs.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 44. Shoulderstand
- 45. Plow Pose
- 116. Upward Lotus Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 109. Fish Pose Lotus Variation
- 113. Reclining Angle Pose
- 76. Reclining Bound Angle

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Compresses the chest to promote deep abdominal breathing, which can improve breath awareness and lung capacity.
- Digestion: Can help digestion related issues like, gas, acidity, indigestion.
- Strength: Builds strength in the shoulders and back.
- Flexibility: Deeply stretches the back muscles and improves mobility in the spine. Also stretches the hips, groin, knees, and ankles.
- Immune System: Stimulates the immune system.
- Organs & Hormones: Calms the nervous system. Padmasana suspends the circulation in the legs, which improves supply of blood to the upper body, stimulating all the organs and cells.
- Posture: Improves balance and can reduce shoulder sagging.
- Brain: The inversion sends blood flow in the opposite direction, bringing clarity to the mind and an energy boost.

## 118 Headstand pose bound angle legs - Salamba Sirsasana Baddha Konasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Back or neck injury
- Headache
- Heart conditions
- HBP
- LBP
- Pregnancy
- Glaucoma/eye disorders

### How to PLAY the pose:

Start seated on your heels with your buttocks, feet, and knees together. Place your elbows down on the ground in front of you, quite close to your knees, and take hold of your elbows from the inside. Make sure your elbows are kept here in this position without moving. Open the forearms to create a triangle and interlace your fingers to create a nest with your hands. This must stay firmly on the ground. Make sure that the interlaced fingers (the nest) are strong and not wobbly to create a firm foundation with your hands and arms for your head to rest into. Now place the back of your head into that nest and the crown of the head on the floor. Cupping the back of the head strongly, tuck your toes under and begin to lift your buttocks up towards the ceiling. Start to walk your feet in towards your face to feel your spine lengthening and hips lifting.

Push the ground away from you by engaging your shoulders and pressing your forearms into the mat. Aim to press evenly through all parts of your forearms with equal pressure, this is the base for your headstand so it must be strong. You should push so much that ideally, you should be able to slide a piece of paper underneath your head here. But don't worry if this is not happening, this is what we are imagining to understand how much we should work with our arms and shoulders in this position.

Engage your core and from here, pull your thighs towards your belly and one heel towards your buttocks. If this feels OK, you can also lift the other leg in the same way creating a tuck position with the legs. If you feel stable here, with your coccyx lifted up to the ceiling, try to extend one leg at a time or both at the same time up into a straight Headstand. See if you can find a straight line engaging your core and avoid swaying your back.

Once you feel stable and balanced, slowly bend both knees out to the sides. Bring the soles of the feet together into bound angle legs. Maintain correct alignment with the hips directly over the head and stay for 10 to 20 breaths. To release, slowly re-extend the legs and with control, lower one leg down at a time, the same way you came up. Rest in 59. Child's Pose.

### Where to PLAY the pose:

REWIND and find

- 6. Butterfly
- 44. Shoulderstand

FAST FORWARD to

- 59. Child's Pose
- 48. Downward Facing Dog
- 75. Supine Twist

### The benefits of PLAYING the pose:

- Lungs: Can be therapeutic for asthma. Strengthens and stretches the intercostal breathing muscles and diaphragm.
- Digestion: Improves the function of the digestive system.
- Strength: Strengthens the arms, shoulders, neck, spine, core, and legs.
- Flexibility: Opens and stretches the hips and groin.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs and hormones: Tones the abdominal organs, including the liver, kidneys, and bladder, and stimulates the reproductive organs. Therapeutic for diabetics. Helps relieve the symptoms of menopause and helps infertility. Stimulates the pituitary, prostate, and pineal glands.
- Posture: Improves alignment. Strengthens the spine, neck, shoulders, and core.
- Brain: Calms the brain and nervous system and helps relieve stress and mild depression. Increases focus. Can relieve headache, migraine, and symptoms of sinusitis.
- Sleep: Can be therapeutic for insomnia.



**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Back injury
- Headache
- Neck injury, consult your doctor and avoid if you are unsure.
- Heart conditions
- HBP
- LBP
- Pregnancy
- Glaucoma/eye disorders

**How to PLAY the pose:**

The easiest way to get into this pose is to lower the legs from 46. Headstand.

Start seated on your heels with your buttocks, feet, and knees together. Place your elbows down on the ground in front of you, quite close to your knees, and take hold of your elbows from the inside. Make sure your elbows are kept here in this position without moving. Open the forearms to create a triangle and interlace your fingers to create a nest with your hands. This must stay firmly on the ground. Make sure that the interlaced fingers (the nest) are strong and not wobbly to create a firm foundation with your hands and arms for your head to rest into. Now place the back of your head into that nest and the crown of the head on the floor. Cupping the back of the head strongly, tuck your toes under and begin to lift your buttocks up towards the ceiling. Start to walk your feet in towards your face to feel your spine lengthening and hips lifting.

Push the ground away from you by engaging your shoulders and pressing your forearms into the mat. Aim to press evenly through all parts of your forearms with equal pressure, this is the base for your headstand so it must be strong. You should push so much that ideally, you should be able to slide a piece of paper underneath your head here. But don't worry if this is not happening, this is what we are imagining to understand how much we should work with our arms and shoulders in this position. Engage your core and from here, pull your thighs towards your belly and one heel towards your buttocks. If this feels OK, you can also lift the other leg in the same way creating a tuck position with the legs.

If you feel stable here, with your coccyx lifted up to the ceiling, extend one leg at a time into a straight Headstand with your body in one straight line with the feet directly over the heels. Take a moment to find balance here; engage your core and buttocks, squeeze your legs firmly together and breathe.

When you are ready, engage your abdominal and leg muscles and pull your navel upwards to lower your legs halfway down. Aim for a 90-degree angle, not more, as if you lower them too low you may lose the engagement. Keep your legs extended, engaged, and hugging tightly together. Don't forget about the engagement in your shoulders. Hold for as long as you can then slowly release the feet to the ground and come to seated or 59. Child's Pose for at least five breaths.

If you're an advanced practitioner with a strong Headstand practice, you can challenge yourself to enter this pose by raising your legs directly from the floor from Headstand prep to the parallel position, rather than coming up to 46. Headstand first. This entry requires strong core engagement and balance.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 49. Dolphin Pose
- 65. Boat Pose
- 46. Headstand

FAST FORWARD to

- 59. Child's Pose
- 129. Hero Pose

#### The benefits of PLAYING the pose:

- Lungs: Can be therapeutic for asthma. Strengthens and stretches the intercostal breathing muscles and diaphragm.
- Strength: Strengthens the arms, shoulders, neck, back, core, and legs.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs and hormones: Tones the abdominal organs, including the liver, kidneys, and bladder, and stimulates the reproductive organs. Therapeutic for diabetics. Helps relieve the symptoms of menopause and helps infertility. Stimulates the pituitary, prostate, and pineal glands.
- Posture: Improves alignment and balance. Strengthens spine, neck, shoulders, and core.
- Brain: Calms the brain and nervous system and helps relieve stress and mild depression. Increases focus. Can relieve headache, migraine, and symptoms of sinusitis.
- Sleep: Can be therapeutic for insomnia.

## 6. ARM BALANCES

For all of these postures your wrists need to be thoroughly warmed up using '5. Wrist Warm Up'. You can also warm up your wrists additionally in poses such as '1. Cat Cow', tabletop etc. When you include more advanced arm balances it is important that you warm up your wrists by gradually adding more weight to them through the practice, starting with one bar positions, then two bars, and finally, attempting three bars. For instance: move from '1. Cat Cow', to '51. Plank Pose', 48. Downward Facing Dog', or '11. Sun Salutation' before two and three bar poses.

Make sure to shakeout your wrists after you do an arm balance, and stretch out your shoulder blades. '9. Thread the Needle' or '22. Wide Legged Forward Bend', with hands interlaced behind back are helpful to release tension in your shoulders. It is also beneficial to do any core related poses before arm balances to help you activate core engagement and make it easier for you to manage these postures as the lift comes from core strength.

Arm balances are a great way to introduce some fun into your practice. Learn to laugh at yourself if you fall and try again without judgement. A great lesson/practice to transfer into life off the mat as well.

After arm balances, '59. Child's Pose' is a good option for a counter pose, with arms alongside the body. Or alternatively you could move through a Sun Salutation. Another good counter pose for all arm balances is a '75. Supine Twist'.

### 120 Forearm plank - Phalakasana Forearm Variation

#### Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:

- Arm, back, or shoulder injury
- Neck pain - place a block under your forehead for support

#### How to PLAY the pose:

Start in 48. Downward Facing Dog. Lift your heels and roll your hips forward until you arrive in a plank position with hips in line with the body and shoulders stacked over the wrists. Engage the core and lower down onto one forearm first and then the other, stacking the shoulders over the elbows.

Check your hips are still in line with the body. Palms should be facing down or you can clasp your hands. Press into the forearms to firm your shoulder blades into your back. Press your heels back and away from you to elongate the body and gaze towards your hands. Hold for five to ten breaths. To release, drop your knees and press back.

Focus on pressing the forearms down as this makes the body become lighter. Keep your core engaged throughout to protect your lower back. You can also squeeze a block between your thighs to keep your legs active. A gentler variation is to do it with the knees on the ground.

An alternative way to enter the 120. Forearm Plank is from a tabletop position. This allows you to set up the positioning of the arms and shoulders before bearing weight.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 85. Downward Facing Dog to Plank Pose Flow
- 107. Sphinx Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 49. Dolphin Pose
- 59. Child's Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: The core activation stimulates digestion.
- Strength: Strengthens the shoulders, upper arms, core and thighs.
- Organs: Stimulates the abdominal organs.
- Posture: Strengthens the back and spine. Improves posture and may reduce back pain.
- Brain: Boosts mental energy, confidence and motivation.

## 121 Half Moon Variation (Knee on the Floor) - Ardha Chandrasana Knee on the Floor

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Wrist injury
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Knee or rib cage injury
- Neck pain - Keep gaze down

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start from a tabletop position with hips over knees and shoulders over wrists. Shift your hips to the right side to lift the left knee. Swing the right foot to the right side so it is aligned with the knee. Turn your body and open your hips to the left side. Press into your right hand as you extend and lift the left leg until parallel to the floor. Roll the left shoulder back to open the chest, reach the left arm up to the sky and look up to the top hand.

Hold for five to 10 breaths and then release back to a tabletop position to repeat on the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 1. Cat Cow
- 132. Gate Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 53. Side Plank
- 68. Half Moon
- 126. Side Plank Starfish

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Opens the chest and strengthens the breathing muscles.

- Strength: Strengthens the abdomen, ankles, thighs, buttocks and spine.
- Flexibility: Stretches the groins, hamstrings and calves, shoulders, chest, and spine.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal organs, and may relieve menstrual discomfort.
- Posture: Stretches and strengthens the shoulders and spine and opens the chest.
- Brain: Improves coordination and may help relieve stress. Improves sense of balance.

## 122 Tiger Pose Variation - Vyaghrasana Variation 1

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Knee injury - Avoid
- Knee pain - Place a blanket under the knees
- Wrist injury
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Severe back pain or spinal injury
- Shoulder injury

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start from a tabletop position with a straight spine, hips over knees and shoulders over wrists. Slowly extend one leg with only the toes touching the ground. Engage your core then float the leg off the ground, bringing it in line with your body. Lift and extend the opposite arm, gazing straight ahead.

Slowly bend the lifted leg as you reach behind with the opposite hand to grab the ankle or the outside of the foot. Draw your shoulders back and as you inhale and kick the foot back like in 29. Dancer Pose to open the chest. Hold for five to ten breaths then release the foot to lower the knee and hand on the floor. Repeat the posture on the opposite leg and arm.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 83. Seated Cat Cow
- 107. Sphinx Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 29. Dancer Pose
- 40. Camel Pose
- 48. Downward Facing Dog

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Stretches the muscles around the chest and may help relieve asthma.
- Digestion: Massages the internal organs to improve digestion.
- Flexibility: Stretches the quads, hips, shoulders, groin, chest and abdomen.
- Posture: Stretches the chest and shoulders and can relieve stiffness in the upper back.
- Brain: Improves focus and mind-body coordination.

## 123 Scale Pose - Tolasana / Utpluthih

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury or recent surgery to the wrist, arm, shoulder, hips, knees, ankle, or abdominal area.
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Tight hips or thighs - Bring legs into half lotus or easy pose instead.

**How to PLAY the pose:**

It is recommended to use blocks when learning this pose. Start in a seated position and enter full 152. Lotus Pose. Cross the legs and take hold of the foot of the leg furthest away from your body. Lift the foot and place it close to the crease of the other knee. Now, walk the bottom foot forwards, press the top knee down and lift the bottom foot, trying to place it on top of your bent knee.

Place blocks either side of your hips, close to your thighs. Place your hands on the blocks. Engage your core and as you exhale, push your hands against the blocks, contracting your shoulder and arms muscles and lifting the buttocks off the floor. Draw your inner groins up into the core and keep the spine straight and body still, trying not to rock forwards and back.

Hold for five breaths or as long as you can then bend your elbows to release your buttocks on an exhale. Release your legs, cross them the other way and repeat once more.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 65. Boat Pose
- 124. Celibate Pose Prep
- 152. Lotus Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 54. Crow Pose
- 60. Seated Forward Fold
- 80. Savasana

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Strength: Strengthens the arms, shoulders, and core.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hips, ankles, and knees.
- Organs & Hormones: Stimulates the digestive system and sends fresh blood to the sacral nerves.
- Posture: Improves body awareness and balance.
- Brain: Evokes focus, confidence, and determination and brings steadiness to the mind.

## **124 Celibates Pose Prep - Brahmacharyasana Prep**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Wrist injury
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Recent abdominal surgery or hernia

**How to PLAY the pose:**

It is recommended to try this pose first using blocks. Start in 133. Staff Pose (stick pose) with legs straight. Place a block either side of your hips, and bring your hands onto the blocks. Suck the belly in to engage the core, tilt the chest slightly forwards and send the hips back and up and as you press your hands down and lift the buttocks off the floor. Flex the toes towards you to engage the leg muscles, extending the legs. The legs should come off the floor with only the heels touching the mat. Hold for five to ten breaths.

An alternative way to practice this pose is from the reverse tabletop. Use your core and arm muscles to lower your hips down and back, passing through your hands without letting your seat touch the ground. As you do this, your legs will straighten. Flex the toes towards you, keeping the legs off the mat.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 85. Downward Facing Dog to Plank Pose Flow
- 133. Staff Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 125. Celibates Pose
- 60. Seated Forward Fold
- 50. Upward Table or Upward Plank Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Heart: Opens the chest muscles and helps improve blood circulation.
- Digestion: Applies gentle pressure to stomach and inner intestines to stimulate and improve digestion.
- Strength: Builds strength and muscle tone in the shoulders, core, wrists, and arm muscles.
- Posture: Improves alignment of the spine to reduce hunching or rounding forwards.
- Brain: Boosts blood circulation to the brain to help reduce stress and anxiety.

## **125 Celibates pose - Brahmacharyasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Wrist injury
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Recent abdominal surgery or hernia

**How to PLAY the pose:**

It is recommended to try this pose first using blocks. Start in 133. Staff Pose (stick pose) with legs straight. Place a block either side of your hips, and bring your hands onto the blocks. With a straight spine and engaged core, slowly and firmly press your hands into the blocks to lift the buttocks off the floor. Flex the toes towards you to engage the leg muscles, lifting the feet and legs off the floor. Hold for five to ten breaths.

If it is difficult to lift both the hips and legs, try just lifting the hips only, releasing, and then repeat lifting the legs only. Advanced practitioners can do this pose without the blocks.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 85. Downward Facing Dog to Plank Pose Flow
- 133. Staff Pose
- 124. Celibates Pose Prep

FAST FORWARD to

- 60. Seated Forward Fold

- 50. Upward Table or Upward Plank Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Heart: Opens the chest muscles and helps improve the blood circulation.
- Digestion: Applies gentle pressure to stomach and inner intestines to stimulate and improve digestion.
- Strength: Builds strength and muscle tone in the shoulders, core, wrists, and arm muscles.
- Posture: Improves alignment of the spine to reduce hunching or rounding forwards.
- Brain: Boosts blood circulation to the brain to help reduce stress and anxiety.

## 126 Side plank starfish - Vasisthasana Starfish

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Wrist, shoulder, and elbow injury
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Recent abdominal surgery or rib cage injury
- Neck pain - keep gaze down

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From a 51. Plank Pose Pose, shift your weight onto your right hand and the side of your right foot, turning the body towards the left side. Ensure your right hand is still underneath your shoulder. Push the ground away from you through your right hand and extend the left arm towards the sky, stacking the left shoulder over the right. Keep your body as straight as possible, engage your glutes, and elongate your spine and neck.

Feet are flexed and legs are active. Stack your feet on top of each other, so the left is on top of your right. Next, with control, slowly raise your left leg up, keeping it straight and the foot flexed. Lift the leg as high as possible and look up to your top hand. Hold for five to ten breaths, lower the left leg and rotate back to plank. Repeat on the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 85. Downward Facing Dog to Plank Pose Flow
- 121. Half Moon Variation (Knee on the Floor)

FAST FORWARD to

- 127. Side Plank Toe Hold
- 59. Child's Pose
- 27. Wild Thing

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: The core activation stimulates digestion.
- Strength: Strengthens the arms, hands, wrists, muscles around the shoulders blades and shoulders, upper back, and neck. Increases core strength, particularly the obliques. Strengthens inner ankles, thighs, buttocks, and back of the legs.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs: Stimulates the abdominal organs.
- Posture: Strengthens the back muscles and spine. Improves posture and helps to find a neutral alignment of the spine.
- Brain: Helps focus and improves a sense of balance.

## 127 Side Plank Toe Hold - Vasisthasana Toe Hold

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Wrist, shoulder, and elbow injury
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Recent abdominal surgery or rib cage injury
- Pulled Hamstring
- Neck pain - keep gaze down

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From a 51. Plank Pose, shift your weight onto your right hand and the side of your right foot, turning the body towards the left side. Ensure your right hand is still underneath your shoulder. Push the ground away from you through your right hand and extend the left arm towards the sky, stacking the left shoulder over the right. Keep your body as straight as possible, engage your glutes, and elongate your spine and neck.

Stack your feet on top of each other, so the left is on top of your right. Next, with control, slowly raise your left leg up, keeping it straight and the foot flexed. Hold for a couple of breaths to find your balance and stability. Then, externally rotate your left hip, bend your left knee, and take hold of your big toe with your peace fingers. Slowly, extend the leg as much as possible, pulling the foot towards your head, while keeping your side body in a straight diagonal line (hip in line with the shoulder and ankle).

If you have the balance, look up towards your top foot. Hold for five breaths as you continue to externally rotate the bottom shoulder. Draw the sides of your waist in, and lift your lower belly in and up. When you are ready to come out, bend the knee to release the leg and rotate back to plank. Repeat on the other side. If you cannot grab your big toe or fully extend the leg, use a strap instead.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 96. Revolved Low Lunge Pose
- 97. Revolved High Lunge
- 53. Side Plank
- 126. Side Plank Starfish

FAST FORWARD to

- 59. Child's Pose
- 27. Wild Thing
- 48. Downward Facing Dog

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: The core activation stimulates digestion.
- Strength: Strengthens the arms, hands, wrists, muscles around the shoulders blades and shoulders, upper back, and neck. Increases core strength, particularly the obliques. Strengthens inner ankles, thighs, buttocks, and back of the legs.
- Flexibility: Deep stretch to the hamstring of the lifted leg and the ribcage.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs: Stimulates the abdominal organs.
- Posture: Strengthens the back muscles and spine. Improves posture and helps to find a neutral alignment of the spine.
- Brain: Helps focus and improves a sense of balance.



## Category 7. SEATED POSTURES

Seated postures are good for tuning in and centering yourself. And can therefore be used towards the end of your practice, before your slow down. However, you can also use some of these positions to open your body in the beginning of the practice (choose the more gentle variations if you are not yet properly warmed up). Or you can include seated postures in between Vinyasas or Flows if you want to maintain the heat in between stretches, and create a more dynamic practice. Many of these positions can be seated alternatives to standing postures, for instance, as counterposes to backbends.

### 128 Thunderbolt pose - Vajrasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Knee injury
- Ankle or foot pain or injury

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Begin in a kneeling position with your hips lifted over your knees. Untuck your toes and press the tops of your feet into the ground. Sit back onto your heels, resting your buttocks on the soles of your feet. Sit up straight, gaze straight ahead, and rest your hands on your thighs, palms facing down.

Keep your feet and thighs touching and do not let the feet splay open or turn inwards. If this feels uncomfortable, place a cushion or folded blanket between your sitting bones and heels. If the knees cause pain, place a folded blanket underneath.

Keep the spine straight and positioned directly over the hips, lengthening your tailbone toward the floor. Drop your shoulders away from your ears and take 10 to 20 deep breaths. To release, press your palms into the floor to lift your buttocks and swing your legs out to the side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 59. Child's Pose
- 6. Butterfly

FAST FORWARD to

- 150. Reclined Thunderbolt Pose
- 60. Seated Forward Fold
- 133. Staff Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: Massages the abdominal organs, relieving digestive ailments and constipation. It is also one of the few poses that can be practiced after a meal.
- Flexibility: Deep stretch to the quads, knees, feet, and ankles. The reclined variation also creates a backbend, improving flexibility in the spine.
- Organs: Activation of digestive, reproductive, and nervous systems.
- Posture: Improves posture and reduces slouching.
- Brain: Evokes body-mind connection and mental clarity, controls the flow of blood and calms the entire body after challenging poses
- Sleep: Has a relaxing effect on the nervous system which can help prepare you for sleep.

## 129 Hero Pose - Virasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Knee injuries or pain
- Ankle or foot pain or injury

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Begin in a kneeling position with your hips lifted over your knees. Untuck your toes, bring the feet out to just wider than hip-width, and press the tops of your feet into the ground. Sit back in between your heels, resting your buttocks on the mat. If this is difficult or feels uncomfortable, sit on a block or cushion instead.

Ensure the knees are together, don't let them splay out to the sides. Sit up straight, gaze straight ahead, and rest your hands on your thighs, palms facing down. Drop your shoulders away from your ears and take 10 to 20 deep breaths. To release, press your palms into the floor to lift your buttocks and swing your legs out to one side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 59. Child's Pose
- 6. Butterfly

FAST FORWARD to

- 150. Reclined Thunderbolt Pose
- 60. Seated Forward Fold
- 133. Staff Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: May relieve digestive ailments and constipation. It is also one of the few poses that can be practiced after a meal.
- Flexibility: Stretches the quads and ankles, helping build flexibility in the knees, ankles, and thighs.
- Organs: Activation of digestive, reproductive, and nervous systems.
- Posture: Improves posture and reduces slouching.
- Brain: Evokes body-mind connection and mental clarity, controls the flow of blood and calms the entire body after challenging poses
- Sleep: Has a relaxing effect on the nervous system which can help prepare you for sleep.

## 130 Bowing Yoga Mudra seated - Balasana Bowing Yoga Mudra

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Neck, wrist or shoulder issues
- Knee injury
- Knee pain - Place folded blankets under the knees to reduce strain
- HBP
- Pregnancy - Avoid

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Sit in 128 Thunderbolt pose with the sitting bones on the heels. Place a folded blanket under the hips or knees if needed. Bring your hands behind the lower back and interlace the fingers. Extend the arms out behind you, maintaining the clasp. Pull the shoulders back and open the chest as you inhale. As you exhale, tilt forward from the hips, lowering your torso to your thighs and forehead to the floor. Keep the hands interlaced and arms straight, reaching them as far over as your shoulders allow.

Relax your forehead to the ground. If it does not reach, rest your forehead on a block instead. Hold for five to ten breaths, going deeper into the shoulder stretch with each exhale. To come out, lift the chest, straighten the spine fully, then release the hands.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 59. Child's Pose
- 128. Thunderbolt Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 114. Rabbit Pose
- 133. Staff Pose
- 101. Humble Warrior

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Enhances your breathing capacity.
- Digestion: Massages the abdominal organs to stimulate and improve digestion.
- Strength: Strengthens the shoulders.
- Flexibility: Stretches the entire spine and opens the shoulders.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs and hormones: Digestive and reproductive organs, can also stimulate the thyroid gland.
- Posture: Can relieve mid-back stiffness which creates hunching.
- Sleep: Calms the nervous system and mind to prepare for sleep.

## 131 Heron Pose - Krounchasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury or recent surgery to the spine, rib cage, abdomen, hips, shoulders, knees, and ankles.
- Severe knee or ankle pain
- Pregnancy or menstruation

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in 133. Staff Pose with both legs extended and the spine straight. Bend your right knee and bring the foot to the outside of the right buttock, in a half 129. Hero Pose. The knee of the bent leg should be hugging towards the midline and the toes should be pointing straight back. Ensure both sitting bones are in contact with the ground; if one hip lifts, sit on a pillow or folded blanket.

Next, bend your left knee, bringing the foot to the floor close to you. Take hold of the left foot with both hands and slowly lift it off the floor, extending the leg. As you do this, lean your torso back slightly and draw your shoulder blades down. Keep your spine long and avoid hunching forward as you straighten your leg.

Ideally, your extended leg and torso should make a narrow V shape. If you are unable to fully straighten the leg, use a strap instead. If bending the knee into Virasana is painful, keep the leg forward instead, with the knee bent out to the side in a one-legged Sukhasana. Hold for five breaths, release and do the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 60. Head To Knee Forward Bend
- 129. Hero Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 133. Staff Pose
- 60. Seated Forward Fold

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: Stimulates the digestive system.
- Strength: Strengthens the core and back muscles.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hamstring of the raised leg, and the quadriceps and ankle of the bent leg. Improves hip flexibility and range of motion.
- Organs & Hormones: Engages the abdominal and pelvic floor muscles, stimulating the digestive and reproductive system, and also various glands. Also improves functioning of the lymphatic organs.
- Posture: Promotes lengthening the spine and stretches the hip flexors, which improves posture.

## 132 Gate Pose - Parighasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury to the ribcage
- Knee pain - You can place a blanket under the bent knee for support
- Shoulder injury

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a kneeling position with knees together and hips facing forwards. Extend the right leg out to the side, placing the sole of the foot on the ground and toes facing forwards. Bring your right hand to your right leg and as you inhale, sweep the left arm overhead, palm facing to the right side. Exhale to stretch to the right side, letting your right hand move down the right leg and the left arm reaching up and over.

Gently turn your chest to the sky and keep the hips facing forwards; don't twist the spine. Look up to your extended arm, or if neck pain, keep the gaze straight ahead. Hold for 3 to 5 breaths, extending your spine on the inhales and going deeper with each exhale. Release on an inhale by coming back up to neutral, then switch sides, extending the other leg.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 83. Seated Cat Cow
- 84. Balancing Table Pose With Knee To Nose Flow

FAST FORWARD to

- 18. Triangle Pose
- 100. Reverse Triangle
- 23. Extended Side Angle Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Expansion of chest stimulates the respiratory system.
- Digestion: Stimulation of abdominal organs aids digestion.
- Strength: Strengthens the glutes, pelvic floor, and obliques.
- Flexibility: Stretches the intercostal muscles, shoulders, arms, hamstrings, calves, thigh, and hip flexors. Increases range of motion of the spinal muscles.
- Immune system: Stimulation of respiratory and lymphatic systems increase the immunity of the body.
- Organs: The abdominal organs are stimulated on the side of the body that is compressed, including the stomach, small intestine and pancreas, liver, and large intestine.

## **133 Staff Pose - Dandasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Severe knee and ankle injuries
- Recent spinal surgery

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Find a seated position with your legs extended out in front of you. Place your hands by your hips (arms extended) with palms flat on the floor. Sit upright with shoulders stacked directly above your hips. To ensure a straight spine, pull the flesh of the buttocks out or sit on a pillow or folded blanket. Draw your shoulders away from your ears, engage your thighs and flex your feet as you hold for five to 10 breaths. With your feet engaged, keep the heels rooting into the ground. Focus on slowing and deepening your breathing.

Senior citizens, pregnant women, and people with very tight hamstrings can do this pose with wall support to support the back and avoid slouching. If fully extending the legs compromises the spinal posture, micro bend the knees instead.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 59. Child's Pose
- 129. Hero Pose
- 131. Heron Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 60. Head To Knee Forward Bend
- 60. Seated Forward Fold
- 125. Celibates Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Strength: Requires active engagement in the legs and hips, strengthens the hip and leg muscles and knee joints.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hamstrings and back of the knees and improves flexibility in the hips, pelvis, and lower back.
- Posture: Involves lengthening the spine, so repeated practice can improve posture. Can also help sciatica.
- Brain: Promotes mental stillness and calms the mind due to its grounding properties.
- Sleep: The calming sensation this pose evokes can relax the body and mind, preparing it for sleep.

## **134 Revolved Head to Knee Pose - Parivrtta Janu Sirsasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury to the rib cage, groin, or shoulder

- Slipped disc or hernia
- Severe sciatica
- Knee pain - keep the leg straight like in Parivrtta Upavistha Konasana

#### **How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a wide-legged seated position with a straight spine and flexed feet. Sit on a block if the spine is rounding. Bend the right knee, bringing the sole of the foot towards the left thigh. On an inhale, lengthen the spine, on an exhale turn towards the right knee (the bent leg). On an exhale, bend your torso laterally to the left, with your left shoulder towards the inside of your left knee. Rotate your torso to the sky as you try to lower the left elbow to the ground and grab the left foot.

Reach your right arm up and over towards the left side as you go deeper into the side bend, moving the left rib cage closer to the left thigh. Keep reaching over with the right arm aiming to grab the foot. Ensure the chest is open and the spine is not rounding forwards. You can gently press the elbow into the leg to open the chest more and gaze up.

If you cannot grab the foot, stay at your maximum. Hold for up to 10 breaths then release slowly out of the deep stretch, switch legs, and repeat on the other side.

#### **Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 132. Gate Pose
- 135. Revolved Seated Angle Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 135. Revolved Seated Angle Pose
- 64. Wide Legged Forward Fold
- 6. Butterfly

#### **The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Opens the ribcage to improve breathing.
- Digestion: Stimulates digestion.
- Flexibility: Stretches and opens the calf muscles, hamstrings, rib cage, and hips, opens the chest, shoulder, and upper back.
- Organs and hormones: Tones and massages the abdomen and internal organs, stimulates the reproductive system, and increases circulation to the liver and kidneys.
- Posture: Promotes spinal flexibility and strengthens the lower back, relieving back pain.
- Brain: Improves circulation to your brain, enhances your cognitive functioning, and relieves headaches.

## **135 Revolved Seated Angle Pose - Parivrtta Upavistha Konasana**

#### **Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury to rib cage, groin, or shoulder
- Slipped disc or Hernia
- Severe sciatica

#### **How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a wide legged seated position with a straight spine and flexed feet. Sit on a block if the spine is rounding. On an inhale, lengthen the spine, on an exhale turn towards the right foot. Inhale to reach your right arm up, exhale to bend and reach your arm

towards the left as you walk the left hand down the leg towards the foot. With your left hand, try to grab hold of the left foot from the top or outside.

Inhale to lengthen the spine and exhale to go deeper into the side bend, moving the left rib cage closer to the left thigh. Keep reaching over with the right arm aiming to grab the foot. Ensure the chest is open and the spine is not rounding forwards. Pull the right shoulder back to find correct alignment.

If you cannot grab the foot, stay at your maximum. Hold for up to 10 breaths then release slowly out of the deep stretch and repeat on the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 132. Gate Pose
- 135. Revolved Seated Angle Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 64. Wide Legged Forward Fold
- 6. Butterfly
- 134. Revolved Head to Knee Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: Stimulates digestion.
- Flexibility: Stretches and opens the calf muscles, hamstrings, rib cage, and hips, opens the chest, shoulder, and upper back.
- Organs and hormones: Tones and massages the abdomen and internal organs, stimulates the reproductive system and increases circulation to the liver and kidneys.
- Posture: Promotes spinal flexibility and strengthens the lower back, relieving back pain.
- Brain: Improves circulation to your brain and enhances your cognitive functioning.

## **136 Upward seated straddle pose - Urdhva Upavistha Konasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Knee, hip, or shoulder injury
- Hernia or slipped disc
- Severe back pain or sciatica
- Pulled hamstring or groin

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in 6. Butterfly. Take hold of your big toes with your first two fingers and with an engaged core, slowly tilt back so your feet lift off the ground and you are balancing on your sit bones. Maintaining core engagement, slowly straighten one leg and then the other as much as possible. Keep the legs active, chest lifted, shoulders down and spine extended. Hold for five to ten breaths.

Pull the shoulders back and simultaneously press the chest forwards to avoid falling back. If you cannot straighten your legs fully, keep the knees bent or loop a strap around each foot. For lower back pain, place a rolled blanket just behind your lower back. This will also help you maintain balance.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 6. Butterfly
- 77. Happy Baby

FAST FORWARD to

- 64. Wide Legged Forward Fold
- 65. Boat Pose
- 45. Plow Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Opens the chest and improves the respiration process.
- Digestion: Can help relieve constipation.
- Strength: Strengthens the core and tones the muscles of the legs, arms, and shoulders.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hamstrings, calves, hips, and chest.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal organs and reproductive system.
- Posture: Improves balance and spinal alignment.
- Brain: Improves focus and concentration.

## Category 8. ADVANCED

This category is an additional category meant for experienced practitioners. You can totally skip this category and still create an infinite number of sequences using the other categories of the deck that already cover all of the major asana groups. If you want to try and play with these positions, and have never done them before: we advise you to try them first under the supervision of your teacher.

We do not recommend any of these positions for pregnant practitioners, unless you already are an advanced practitioner and are familiar with these positions from before your pregnancy, and know how to adapt.

### 137 Mermaid pose - Eka Pada Rajakapotasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Back pain, spinal injury, or sciatica
- Hip, knee, shoulder, or groin injury
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From 48. Downward Facing Dog, step your right foot forwards in between the hands. Walk the foot to the left side, dropping the knee to the right side in 63. Pigeon Pose. Sink the hips low, placing a block or cushion under the right hip if needed. Walk your hands close to your body, straightening the spine.

Bend the back knee, lifting the foot, and reach behind with your left hand to grab the foot. Pull your left shoulder back to open the chest to the left side. Slowly slide the back toes down your forearm, aiming to bring them to the inner elbow. If you can hook them here, bend the arm and reach up and over with your right arm trying to grab the left fingers. Press the chest forwards, arching the spine deeper and continue to sink the hips.

Hold here for five to ten breaths. To come out, release your hands, turn your torso back to the top of the mat, press your hands into the floor and carefully make your way back to a 48. Downward Facing Dog. Take a few breaths here before repeating on the other side.



If the Mermaid pose is not accessible, use a strap to build up to the posture. Place a looped strap around the top of the back foot. Reach your right arm up and over so you are grabbing the strap with both hands. Focus on opening the chest and shoulders and walk your hands as far down the strap as possible. If you feel any sharp, stabbing sensations in the back, back away and find a gentler version of the pose.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 151. Needle Pose
- 107. Sphinx Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 63. Pigeon Pose
- 48. Downward Facing Dog
- 39. Upward Bow (Wheel) Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Chest expansion stimulates the lungs, which improves breathing and can help with asthma related problems.
- Heart: Stretching of the chest muscles promotes proper functioning of the heart.
- Digestion: Stimulates and improves digestive functioning.
- Flexibility: Stretches the lower back, hip, thighs, psoas, abdomen, chest, shoulders, neck, hamstring, pelvic, and calves.
- Immune system: Strengthens immunity.
- Organs and hormones: The abdominal organs including the pancreas, liver and kidney are stimulated and massaged. The reproductive organs and thyroid glands are also stimulated.
- Posture: Can relieve lower back pain or nervous imbalances in the spine.

## **148 Turtle pose - Kurmasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Knee, hip, shoulder or spinal injury
- Herniated Discs, Sciatica, back pain, or tight back muscles
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in 133. Staff Pose with your legs extended out in front of you and your hands on the floor alongside your hips. Press your thighs into the floor and flex your feet to engage your legs. Open your legs as wide as comfortable, then bend your knees. With your feet still flexed, reach your chest forward by tilting from your hips and walking your hands as far forwards as possible, in between your legs.

Bend your knees further until you can place your shoulders under your knees, then fully extend your arms to the sides. Roll your thighs inwards as you start to straighten the legs, pressing the thighs into your upper arms to help you fold your torso deeper. Go as far as you can, aiming to bring the forehead or chin to touch the mat. Don't force it or push through pain. Stay for five breaths and then release by bending the knees and lifting the torso.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 64. Wide Leg Forward Fold
- 22. Wide-Legged Forward Bend

- 149. Reclining Hand-to-Big-Toe Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 80. Savasana
- 133. Staff Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Contracts the diaphragm, chest, and lungs to improve the functioning of the respiratory organs.
- Heart: As the heart is towards the floor and the spine is elongated, circulation of blood flow is improved.
- Digestion: Improves digestion and can reduce problems in the kidney or liver.
- Flexibility: Deeply stretches the legs, lengthens your spine, and opens your shoulders.
- Immune system: Stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, which improves immunity.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal and respiratory organs.
- Posture: Improves the flexibility of the spine, massages the lumbar region and reduces back pain and sciatica.
- Brain: Helps you withdraw your senses and shift your awareness from the external world to the internal world.
- Sleep: Deep forward fold calms the mind and nervous system to prepare you for sleep and heals insomnia.

## 139 Peacock pose - Mayurasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Shoulder, arm, elbow, or wrist injury
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Recent abdominal surgery or hernia
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From 128. Thunderbolt pose, open your knees out to the sides. Bring your hands together and rotate them so the fingers are facing your body but slightly out to the side. Your outer wrists should be almost touching. Place your hands on the mat in the space between your thighs, fingers facing towards you. Round your back, elbows coming in towards your torso. Shift your body weight forwards, ensuring your elbows come to your side body so as you lean forwards, your torso presses into your upper arms.

As you lean forwards, bring your head towards the ground and straighten the legs behind you. Engage your core as you shift the weight of your lower body to your upper body. Squeeze your thighs together then lift one foot at a time. If both feet come off the ground, lift your legs until they are parallel to the ground, keeping them straight. Lift your head and look forward, hold for five to ten breaths, keeping your core and thighs engaged.

Practice small stepping stones towards the full expression of this pose. You may try a bound angle variation with the legs, keeping them bent, soles of the feet touching, then lifting them keeping your torso and legs parallel to the floor.

To lower, release your feet then your knees and sit back in a kneeling position. If you find this pose difficult, lift one leg at a time in the half Peacock variation. Alternatively, keep both feet on the ground and practice rocking back and forth to find the right weight distribution. You can also practice with a block under your pelvis. This will help you stabilize your form and find lift in the legs without losing your balance.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 52. Plank to Four-Limbed Staff Pose
- 49. Dolphin Pose

- 140. Scorpion Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 59. Child's Pose
- 60. Seated Forward Fold
- 71. Forearm Stand

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Heart: Improved circulation of blood.
- Digestion: The pressing of the belly and abdominal muscles against the elbows gives a gentle massage to the internal organs, improving digestion and metabolism.
- Strength: Strengthens the forearms, shoulders, chest, and core muscles.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the stomach and digestive organs.
- Brain: Promotes awareness and focus to help still the mind.

## 140 Scorpion pose - Vrischikasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Shoulder, elbow, spinal or knee injury
- HBP, vertigo, cerebral thrombosis, chronic catarrh, or heart disease
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

It is recommended to practice this pose with a wall or chair to avoid injury. From a tabletop position, bring your forearms to the ground, palms facing down. Tuck your toes and lift your hips into 49. Dolphin Pose then walk your feet towards your hands until your shoulders are stacked directly above your elbows; ideally, your hips will stack over your shoulders. Lift your dominant leg then on an exhale, bend the knee of the other leg and kick off the floor.

Once both legs are lifted, bring both feet to the wall. Slowly bend your knees, bring your feet off the wall, and curve your spine as you look slightly forward to lift your head, be careful not to compress the back of your neck. Drop your hips and pelvis forward to bring your toes close to your head. Bring both big toes to touch as you open the knees. Keep your core and upper body engaged as you hold for five to ten breaths.

To come out, first straighten your spine into a 71. Forearm Stand then lower one leg followed by the other. To avoid injury, spend 10 minutes or so warming up the joints with simple rotations of the ankles, knees, hips, shoulders, elbows, wrists, and neck. If your backbend is not strong enough to hold away from the wall, stay with your feet on the wall, walking the feet down the wall to create a supported backbend.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 120. Forearm Plank
- 46. Headstand
- 71. Forearm Stand

FAST FORWARD to

- 59. Child's Pose

- 128. Thunderbolt Pose
- 139. Peacock Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Opens and expands the chest cavity, along with the diaphragm muscles.
- Heart: Stimulates the heart to increase blood flow to the head and brain.
- Strength: Strengthens the shoulders, upper arms, and core.
- Flexibility: Improves the flexibility of the shoulder, neck and upper arm muscles in their range of motion. Improves the flexibility of the various back muscles.
- Organs and hormones: Reproductive organs, pituitary glands, endocrine glands.
- Posture: Reduces tension in the neck and back and strengthens the tendons and ligaments in the spine. Improves balance and coordination.

## 141 Sage Visvamisana - Visvamisana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury to the wrist, elbow, shoulder, knee or rib cage
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Recent abdominal surgery or hernia
- Hamstring injury
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in 48. Downward Facing Dog. On an inhale, reach your right leg up to the sky into a 3-legged dog. As you exhale, bend the right knee and draw it towards your nose, curving your back slightly. Hold this position, keeping the leg off the floor. Engage your core and slowly shift your weight into your right hand. Slowly lift your left hand, bringing it to your right knee and hugging it to the upper chest as you open your body towards the left side.

Move your left hand to the foot, trying to catch it from the outside. Keeping your core engaged and body balanced, slowly extend the right leg as much as possible. Turn your torso and chest up toward the sky as you pull your leg towards your head so that it is pointing to the front of your mat. If stable, turn your head to gaze up to the sky and bend your left elbow to pull your head closer to your shin.

Hold for five breaths then pivot your body to the floor and reach the right leg back up to a 3-legged dog. Release and repeat on the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 85. Downward Facing Dog to Plank Pose Flow
- 134. Revolved Head to Knee Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 61. Half Split or Split
- 59. Child's Pose
- 144. Flying Splits Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: Stimulates abdominal organs.
- Strength: Strengthens the arms, legs and core. Also strengthens the bones by increasing the absorption of more calcium from the blood.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hips, hamstrings, side body, and shoulders.
- Organs and hormones: Massages and nourishes the abdominal organs including the kidney, pancreas, gallbladder, stomach, small and large intestines, and liver.
- Brain: Promotes mental focus and energizes the body and mind.

## **142 Dragonfly Pose - Maksikanagasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Wrist, elbow, shoulder or neck injury
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Hip, back or knee injury or pain
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From a 58. Figure Four with the right leg on top, twist your torso towards the left. Place the right upper arm in the hollow part of your right foot. Squat down so you are sitting on your left heel. Place your hands on the mat, slightly in front of you - giving you space to shift your weight forward. Gaze forward as you create a shelf with your upper arms, shifting your weight onto your arms. Start by playing with picking up your left leg, and move towards extending it completely. Remember to keep your gaze and focus forward. Engage your abdominals.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 52. Plank to Four-Limbed Staff Pose
- 63. Pigeon Pose
- 58. Figure Four
- 16. Twisted Chair

FAST FORWARD to

- 141. Sage Visvamitrasana
- 14. Standing Forward Fold
- 51. Plank Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: The abdominal twist stimulates the digestive system and enhances metabolism.
- Strength: Strengthens the core, forearms, shoulders, chest, hips, spine and hamstrings.
- Flexibility: The twisting action stretches the muscles of the hips and spine.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal and reproductive organs, pituitary and hypothalamus glands.
- Brain: Balances both hemispheres of the brain and improves focus, concentration, and memory.

## **143 Twisted One Legged Arm Balance Pose I - Eka Pada Koundinyasana I**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Wrist, elbow, shoulder or neck injury
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Hip, back or knee injury or pain
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Starting in mountain pose, bring your feet together and bend your knees into chair pose. Bring your hands together at the heart center and twist your torso to the right into a 16. Twisted Chair. Lean your chest forwards to hook the left elbow to the outside of the right knee. Gently press the elbow into the knee and twist deeper on an exhale.

From here, sink your hips lower to bring your palms to the ground on the right side, shoulder distance apart. Bend your elbows into a 52. Pose to Four-Limbed Staff Pose position as you lift your hips and shift your weight forwards so that your right hip rests on your upper right arm and your right knee rests on the upper left arm. Keep rocking your weight forwards until your feet lift off the ground. Engage the quads, look forwards, and when you're ready, slowly extend the right leg forwards while extending the left leg back.

Hold for five breaths then bend the knees to bring the legs back together and the feet onto the ground. Release into 14. Standing Forward Fold before trying on the other side.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 54. Crow Pose
- 57. Side Crow

FAST FORWARD to

- 52. Plank to Four-Limbed Staff Pose
- 48. Downward Facing Dog
- 14. Standing Forward Fold

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Strength: Strengthens the core, shoulders, arms and legs, particularly the deltoids, triceps and biceps, and trapezius.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hamstrings, quads, and hip flexors
- Immune system: Helps with detoxification.
- Organs and hormones: Abdominal organs.
- Posture: Improves awareness and balance.
- Brain: Boosts energy and confidence.

## **144 Flying splits pose - Eka Pada Koundinyasa II**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Wrist, elbow, shoulder or neck injury
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Hip, back or knee injury or pain
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a low lunge with the right foot forwards. Bring both hands to the inside of the right foot, like in 91. Lizard Pose. Sink your front thigh down and lift your back thigh up. Next, lift your front heel and bring your right hand to the back of the calf. Push the calf muscle up as you nestle your right shoulder under the thigh.

Once the shoulder is under the leg, release the front heel back down, plant both hands onto the ground and bend the elbows into 52. Plank to Four-Limbed Staff Pose arms, hugging the elbows into the ribcage. Broaden your collar bones then walk your front foot forwards, extending the leg. Lift the front heel off the floor, followed by the toes until the foot is floating.

Keep your gaze forwards, shift your weight a little more forwards to come up onto your back toes. Shift your shoulders and chest forward slightly more to try to float the back foot off the mat without releasing the front foot. You might have to shift your weight back and forth a bit to find the optimum balancing point where both feet are floating. Spread the toes of both feet to stretch and extend both legs and hold for as long as possible.

To release, return the back foot to the floor and step to a 48. Downward Facing Dog. Give it a go on the over side!

#### **Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 52. Plank to Four-Limbed Staff Pose
- 91. Lizard Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 143. Twisted One Legged Arm Balance Pose 1
- 52. Plank to Four-Limbed Staff Pose
- 48. Downward Facing Dog

#### **The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Strength: Strengthens the arms, shoulders, chest, abdomen, core, hips, spine and hamstrings.
- Flexibility: Deep hip opener.
- Immune system: Helps with detoxification.
- Organs and hormones: Activates the abdominal organs.
- Posture: Improves awareness and balance.
- Brain: Boosts energy and confidence.
- Sleep: Releasing the tension and tightness, you may experience physical relaxation that can support a more restful sleep.

## **Category 9. SLOW DOWN**

This category is composed of typical poses to help you slow down, release tension, and end with some calm, tuning in. All the cards can be used together in number sequence as a longer slowdown. But you can also just choose some of them.

Additionally the positions of slowdown can be used as counterposes after more challenging postures like backbends, or to take a moment of pause during your practice. Lastly these positions themselves are quite powerful, and can be used to create a slow and restorative complete practice to e.g. calm the brain and nervous system, boost your immune system and improve your sleep.

### **145 Frog Pose - Bhekasana / Mandukasana**

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Pulled hamstrings or adductors
- Knee injury
- Hips injury

- Lumbar operation

#### **How to PLAY the pose:**

From a seated position on your heels (Thunderbolt), open your knees wide as far as feels comfortable. Lift your hips to stack them over your knees and place your hands on the floor. Bring your feet behind your knees and if possible, open the knees a little wider.. Option to stay on your hands or to release onto the elbows, bringing them in line with your shoulders.

To keep the stretch in the groin, ensure your hips stay over your knees and you do not press your pelvis forward or backwards. Hold for up to 10 breaths then when ready, slowly press the hips back to your knees and bring your knees together.

Recommended to do this stretch facing the side of your mat so there is padding under your knees and ankles. If it is still uncomfortable, place blankets underneath. Option to rest the forearms on a blanket or blocks. In case of neck pain, rest the forehead on a block.

#### **Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 146. Wide Leg Child's Pose
- 91. Lizard Pose
- 6. Butterfly

FAST FORWARD to

- 59. Child's Pose
- 128. Thunderbolt Pose
- 60. Seated Forward Fold

#### **The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Flexibility: Stretches the hips and groin, improving flexibility of the muscles and mobility of the hip joint.
- Organs and hormones: Can improve pancreatic function.
- Posture: Improves hip mobility, strengthens the back, and may ease back pain. Counteracts long hours of sitting.
- Brain: Can alleviate stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Sleep: Has a calming effect on the body and mind, which can help you prepare for sleep.

## **146 Wide Legged Child's pose - Prasarita Balasana**

#### **Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Ankle, knee, or hip injury
- For knee or hip pain that is not severe, adapt by placing a pillow under your buttocks.

#### **How to PLAY the pose:**

From a Thunderbolt position sitting on your heels, open your knees as wide as feels comfortable. Press the sitting bones to the heels and allow your upper body to fall forward in between your thighs. Walk your hands forwards until the arms are extended. Option to rest the elbows and forearms on the ground to make the stretch passive or keep them lifted and engaged for an active stretch. Rest your forehead on the floor.



If needed, place a cushion under the sitting bones. You can also place blankets under the knees or ankles for additional support.. Option to have your arms alongside your body instead of stretched out in front of you. Hold for 10 breaths.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 1. Cat Cow Pose
- 48. Downward Facing Dog

FAST FORWARD to

- 145. Frog Pose
- 148. Crocodile Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Heart: increases blood flow to the head and has a calming effect on the nervous system slowing down the heart rate. This posture can be therapeutic for hypertension coming from stress.
- Flexibility: Stretches the hips, groin, thighs, knees, and ankles.
- Immune system: Boosts the immune system.
- Organs and hormones: Stimulates the abdominal organs, including kidneys, gallbladder, and pancreas.
- Posture: Alleviates back and neck pain.
- Brain: Calms the brain and nervous system. Can help relieve stress and fatigue.
- Sleep: Helps battle insomnia and calms the body and mind to prepare you for sleep.

## 147 Half Frog Pose - Ardha Bhikasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Knee, shoulder, or spine injury
- Pulled quad or groin muscle
- Recent abdominal surgery or hernia
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

From a prone position, come up onto the forearms like you are coming into a 107. Sphinx Pose. Keep your left forearm pressing into the ground with the shoulder stacked over the elbow as you bend your right knee and reach your right arm behind you to catch the foot. Press your hand into the top of the foot, keeping the elbow bent at 90 degrees. Keep both hips on the floor and the chest open as you press your foot down to the outside of the right buttock.

Hold for five to ten breaths, then release and repeat with the other leg. For a deeper stretch, try it with the supporting hand on the floor instead of the forearm. Press into the hand to extend the arm, lifting the chest and torso higher. If the hips also lift, walk the hands forward until the hips touch the ground.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 107. Sphinx Pose
- 36. Locust Pose
- 35. Upward Facing Dog

FAST FORWARD to

- 148. Crocodile Pose
- 59. Child's Pose
- 37. Bow Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: The backbending action engages the chest and rib cage, encourages deep breathing with the use of the intercostal muscles, and improves lung capacity. This isometric contraction opens the front of the body, giving the lungs more space to breathe in.
- Digestion: The prone position stimulates digestion.
- Flexibility: Deeply stretches the quadriceps and the sides of the abdominal muscles.
- Organs and hormones: Abdominal organs, adrenal gland, thyroid gland. Can ease menstrual cramps.
- Posture: Reduces neck stiffness caused by long hours of sitting at a desk. Can also ease sciatica.

## 148 Crocodile pose - Makarasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Recent abdominal surgery or hernia
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a prone position. For variation 1; cross the arms under your head with palms on top of each other. Rest your forehead on your hands, close your eyes, and relax the whole body. Hold for up to 10 breaths, pressing the belly to the floor with each inhalation.

For variation 2; cross the arms bringing opposite hand to opposite elbow. Press the forearms into the ground to raise the torso and allow the head to hang towards the floor. Omit this variation if your neck feels uncomfortable.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 107. Sphinx Pose
- 36. Locust Pose
- 37. Bow Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 59. Child's Pose
- 37. Bow Pose
- 80. Savasana

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: Has a relaxing effect on the respiratory system and reduces oxygen intake.
- Heart: Has a relaxing effect on the circulatory system and reduces blood pressure.
- Digestion: The gentle massage of the abdominal area improves digestion and can help constipation.
- Immune system: Stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, which improves immunity.
- Organs and hormones: The stimulation of the abdominal organs improves the functioning of the spleen, urinary bladder, liver, pancreas, and intestines. Can also help with symptoms related to PMS due to stimulation of reproductive organs.

- Posture: Stimulates the sacrum and can help with lower back stiffness.
- Brain: The restorative posture reduces anxiety and calms the mind.
- Sleep: Relaxes the entire muscular system, which slows the heart rate and calms the body and mind.

## 149 Reclining Hand-to-Big Toe Pose - Supta Padangusthasana A, B, C

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury to the shoulder, hip, spine, knee, or ankle
- Pulled hamstring or quadriceps

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start in a reclined position with both legs extended. Bend the right knee and hug it towards your chest. Move your hands to the back of the thigh and slowly extend the leg. Gently pull the thigh towards you as you walk your hands up the back of the leg towards the foot. If you can bring your hands to your foot, hook the peace fingers of your right hand around the big toe and release your left hand to the hip.

If you cannot reach your foot or clasp the big toe, use a strap instead. Loop the strap around the middle of the sole of the foot and walk your hands up the strap until you reach your maximum. Ensure your head, shoulders, spine, and hips all stay on the ground. Keep your right leg engaged and extended by pressing the sole of the foot to the ceiling. Flex your left foot as you actively engage the muscles of that leg to keep it grounded.

Hold here in Supta Padangusthasana A for five to 10 breaths, using each exhale to stretch deeper into the hamstring. Next, keeping hold of your big toe (or strap), slowly open the right hip by lowering the right leg towards the right side. Keep your left hand on your left hip and press the buttock down as you do this to stop the hip from lifting. Lower the leg as far as you can, keeping the leg extended. Hold for five to 10 breaths here in Supta Padangusthasana B.

Next, raise the leg back up into Supta Padangusthasana A. Switch your grip so that your left fingers wrap around the big toe with the arm crossing your torso. If using a strap, switch hands and extend your right arm out to the side in line with your shoulders. Slowly pull your right leg across your body and lower it towards the left side, keeping both the leg and the arm extended. Press your right shoulder into the mat, ensuring both shoulders and the entire back do not lift up. Once you find your maximum, hold for five to 10 breaths here in Supta Padangusthasana C, twisting deeper with each exhale.

To release, bring your right leg back up, bend the knee and release it to the ground. Repeat with your left leg.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 14. Standing Forward Fold
- 76. Reclining Bound Angle
- 78. Knees to Chest

FAST FORWARD to

- 77. Happy Baby
- 80. Savasana

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Digestion: Supta Padangusthasana C stimulates the digestive system and may help constipation.
- Strength: Tones the core and back muscles.
- Flexibility: Deep stretch to the hamstring, hip flexor, groin, shoulder, and arm.
- Organs & Hormones: Stimulates the reproductive system and brings fresh blood to the rectum, prostate gland, and urinary bladder. Can be therapeutic for menstrual pain and reproductive ailments.

- Posture: Can relieve lower back pain and Sciatica.
- Brain: Calms the mind and can help to relieve headaches.
- Sleep: Calms the mind and body to prepare you for sleep. Can help with insomnia.

## 150 Reclined Thunderbolt Pose - Supta Vajrasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Back pain or sciatica - If mild, lean onto your forearms only, if severe, stay upright
- Foot, ankle or knee injury - Avoid this pose
- Hip pain

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Start by sitting in Vajrasana with the knees together and the heels just outside of the hips. Bring your hands behind you and lean back, bending the elbows. First, come down onto the forearms. If you can go deeper, release all the way down, bringing your head to rest on the mat. Ensure your knees don't lift off the ground. If that happens, come back onto your forearms.

If doing the full variation, place your arms by your sides, on top of your thighs, or reach them overhead, bending the elbows and bringing the opposite hand to the opposite elbow. Hold for up to 10 breaths, then slowly come back up.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 107. Sphinx Pose
- 59. Child's Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 40. Camel Pose
- 60. Seated Forward Fold
- 133. Staff Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Lungs: The opening of the chest and diaphragm increases lung capacity.
- Heart: Backbending aspect stimulates the heart and improves circulation.
- Digestion: Massages the abdominal organs relieving digestive ailments and constipation.
- Flexibility: Deep stretch to the quads, knees, feet, and ankles. The reclined variation also creates a backbend, improving flexibility in the spine.
- Organs and hormones: Activation of digestive system, reproductive system, circulatory and respiratory system, and nervous system.
- Sleep: Has a relaxing effect on the nervous system which can help prepare you for sleep.

## 151 Needle pose - Supta Kapotasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Hip, knees, or lower back injury
- Recent surgery to the abdomen
- Pregnancy: refrain from this asana after the second trimester

### How to PLAY the pose:

Find a reclined position with both knees bent and feet on the mat. Lift the left foot and open the hip by turning the knee out to the side. Place the ankle over the right knee, then with your hand, gently press the left knee towards the ground, stretching into the glutes. If this is enough, stay here. Otherwise, lift the right foot and interlace your fingers behind the thigh. Slowly pull the right thigh closer towards you until you feel a good stretch in the left glute.

Keep your head, shoulders and lower back on the ground and relax your shoulders as you hold for five to ten breaths. If you cannot interlace your fingers without lifting your head or lower back, use a strap instead. For a deeper stretch, you can clasp the front of the shin instead of the thigh.

### Where to PLAY the pose:

REWIND and find

- 78. Knees to Chest
- 38. Bridge Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 75. Supine Twist
- 77. Happy Baby
- 80. Savasana

### The benefits of PLAYING the pose:

- Flexibility: Deep stretch to the outer hip, gluteus maximus and hamstrings. Holding for a longer time also improves range of motion in the hip joint.
- Immune system: Stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, which improves immunity.
- Organs and hormones: A great pose for reducing PMS symptoms.
- Posture: The reclined position decompresses the spine to help reduce sciatica and back pain. Also reduces the stiffness in the outer hip to improve posture.
- Sleep: Calms the body and mind and reduces stress and anxiety to improve sleep.

## 152 Lotus Pose - Padmasana

### Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:

- Injury or severe hip, knee, or ankle pain
- Severe lower back pain or sciatica

### How to PLAY the pose:

Start in an easy cross legged seated position. Take hold of the foot of the leg furthest away from your body. Lift the foot and place it close to the crease of the other knee. Now, walk the bottom foot forwards, press the top knee down and lift the bottom foot, trying to place it on top of your bent knee.

Once you have the positioning of your legs, elongate your spine (sit on a block or folded blanket if needed). Place your hands on your knees with arms extended and palms facing up, and keep your gaze straight ahead so your neck is straight. Take 10 full and long breaths here.

Note that this position is very difficult for a lot of people and not everyone will have the body structure to achieve the full position. You can do half padmasana by just placing one leg on the opposite thigh. Or, omit the pose altogether if it causes pain.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 82. Namaste
- 6. Butterfly
- 151. Needle Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 123. Scale Pose
- 153. Locked Lotus
- 133. Staff Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Heart: Increases blood circulation in the upper body and may help lower or regulate blood pressure.
- Flexibility: Deep stretch to the hips, thighs (quadriceps), groin, and ankles.
- Organs & Hormones: Restricts blood flow in the lower body to send fresh blood to the spine and abdominal organs.
- Posture: Keeps the spine straight and helps develop good posture.
- Brain: Reduces stress and increases body-mind connection, helping with meditation.
- Sleep: Activates the parasympathetic nervous system which calms the body and mind for better sleep.

## 153 Locked Lotus Pose - Baddha Padmasana

**Take precautions (or skip) PLAYING if you have:**

- Injury or severe hip, knee, or ankle pain
- Severe lower back pain or sciatica
- Shoulder or elbow injury
- Pregnancy - Avoid

**How to PLAY the pose:**

Come into 152. Lotus Pose as explained above. Reach your right arm behind your back, trying to bring the fingers close to the left hip. Lean forwards slightly as you twist a bit to the right side and try to grasp the big toe of the right foot. Straighten the spine and reach your left arm behind your back, crossing your right arm and reaching for the right hip. Lean slightly forwards again, and this time, twist to the left, drawing your shoulder blades together as you try to grasp the big toe of the left foot.

Once you are holding both toes, straighten the spine, press the knees down and breathe slowly and deeply for five breaths with the arms and legs locked. Keep your head down with the chin to the chest in the chin lock (Jalandhara Bandha). To come out, release the arms first, followed by the legs. Change the cross of the legs and repeat, crossing the arms in the opposite way.

**Where to PLAY the pose:**

REWIND and find

- 82. Namaste
- 152. Lotus Pose

FAST FORWARD to

- 123. Scale Pose

- 116. Upward Lotus Pose
- 133. Staff Pose

**The benefits of PLAYING the pose:**

- Heart: Increases blood circulation in the upper body and may help lower or regulate blood pressure.
- Flexibility: Deep stretch to the hips, thighs (quadriceps), groin, ankles, shoulders, wrists, back, and arms. Also increased mobility in the shoulder joints.
- Organs & Hormones: Restricts blood flow in the lower body to send fresh blood to the spine and abdominal organs.
- Posture: Can relieve shoulder and back pain and help develop good posture.
- Brain: Increases the flow of pranic currents to the brain, calming the mind and preparing you for introversion and meditation.
- Sleep: Activates the parasympathetic nervous system which calms the body and mind for better sleep.

Abbreviations:

LBP – low blood pressure

HBP – high blood pressure

## Bhastrika Pranayama - Bellow's Breath

Bhastrika means bellows breath. Why? Because the sound is very similar to a bellows! (A bellows is the “accordion-like” device used to pump air into a fire.) This is a great breathing exercise for cleaning stale energy from the lungs, helping the digestive system, and giving the whole system an energy boost.

**Technique:** Start with a few natural breaths. Then focus on one deep, passive inhale. Release the air to a comfortable, neutral lung capacity. Then make sharp, active inhales followed immediately with sharp, active exhales. Do this 30-40 times. Focus on the breathing muscles — again, you are working them to make them stronger. Follow these breaths with 2-3 long, natural breaths and notice the euphoria and energy you feel.

**Benefits:**

- Drains excess phlegm from the lungs
- Oxygenates the blood
- Increases the vitality of all the organs and tissues
- Strengthens and tones the abdominal region
- Energizes the whole body and mind

**Tips:** Better to avoid this practice when pregnant. Check with your doctor if you have cardiac issues or high blood pressure.

## Kapalbhati - Frontal Brain Cleansing Technique

Kapalabhati derives from *kapala* (skull, light). It can also be translated as “technique of the shining skull.” It oxygenates and stimulates the whole body.

This practice is considered to be more of a kriya (detoxification) as it purifies the respiratory system. But it also purifies the central area of the brain, increasing neuroplasticity.

**Technique:** Start with a few natural breaths. Then focus on one deep, passive inhale. Once your lungs are full, begin actively contracting your diaphragm and abs to exhale in short, sharp bursts. Aim for at least 30 of these active exhales. Keep the throat open the whole time. Focus on bringing the navel inward to the spine. You want to work the breathing muscles to make them stronger. After the active exhaling phase, take 2-3 normal breaths. Repeat this 3 times.

**Benefits:**

- Relaxes the eyes (can help reduce dark circles and premature signs of aging)
- Improves blood circulation
- Improves digestion
- Reinforces the abdominal muscles
- Stimulates weight loss
- Stimulates the production of brain cells

**Tips:** Do not practice when pregnant, or if you have or suspect cardiac issues or high blood pressure.

## Nadi Sodhana / Anuloma Viloma - Alternate Nostril Breathing

‘Nadi’ means energetic channels. ‘Shodhana’ means purification.

Nadi Shodhana is therefore the purification of the energy channels, in particular Ida and Pingala Nadi.

Ida Nadi is the “lunar” channel, stimulating the parasympathetic nervous system. That means it’s associated with calm, healing, and “rest and digest.” It is connected to the left nostril and right hemisphere of the brain.

Pingala Nadi is the “solar” channel and stimulates the sympathetic nervous system. So it’s associated with heat, excitement, and sometimes “fight or flight” (stress). It is connected to the right nostril and left hemisphere of the brain.

With Nadi Shodhana pranayama we breathe with alternating nostrils. This balances the flow of those two channels and creates equilibrium between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.

**Technique:** Sit in a comfortable position, with chin or jnana mudra in the left hand and Vishnu mudra in the right. Start by inhaling with the left nostril – finish by exhaling with your left nostril. This is one cycle. Repeat for at least 3-5 minutes.

### Benefits:

- Balances the physical body and the mind
- Induces a state of stillness, concentration, clarity of thought and harmony
- Improves circulation by oxygenating the blood
- Balances the nervous system and the two cerebral hemispheres (perfect for people who are very mentally active)
- Regulates mood

**Tips:** When you have a headache lay on your right side — aim to breathe more with your left to cool down the inflammation. This can be practiced when pregnant. It’s good for cooling down intense feelings (e.g. anger, sadness, tiredness).

## Sama Vritti - Square Breathing

In Sanskrit, “*sama vritti*” combines *sama* (meaning identical) and *vritti* (referring to the fluctuations of the mind). During this pranayama you will keep the same duration for each phase of the breath (inhale, retain, exhale, pause).

**Technique:** Sit comfortably in an upright posture. Start with counts of 4: count 4 to breathe in, 4 to hold after inhaling, 4 to breathe out, and 4 to pause after exhaling.

This chart gives an example of a Sama Vritti Pranayama progression:

### IN R\* EX R\* REPEAT

|    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| 8" | 0" | 8" | 0" | 2  |
| 8  | 4  | 8  | 4  | 2  |
| 8  | 8  | 8  | 4  | 4  |
| 8  | 8  | 8  | 6  | 4  |
| 8  | 8  | 8  | 8  | 12 |
| 8  | 0  | 8  | 0  | 4  |

\*R means retention. After inhale the retention is full, after exhale the retention is empty.



**Benefits:**

- Cultivates mindfulness
- Calms the nervous system
- Regulates the breath
- Oxygenates the body
- Detoxifies efficiently
- Builds a sense of peace within oneself

**Tips:** Sama vritti can be practiced when pregnant. It's helpful in getting the body to start falling asleep. Krisnamacharya — the father of modern yoga — invites us not to struggle. A long breath will have a deeper effect but we should never push this into discomfort.

## Ujjayi Breathing - Ocean Breath

Ujjayi is the only pranayama that can be practiced in any position and it can be practiced dynamically. It helps to warm the body, maintain concentration and relax the mind.

**Technique:** Consciously close down the throat bandha and cultivate breathe with the lock engaged. This will create the sound of an ocean wave. It's an active breath — the more you cultivate it, the more it feels natural to do. A perfect accompany to your yoga flow.

**Benefits:**

- Burns away impurities
- Boosts immune function
- Cultivates mindfulness
- Activates the throat chakra

**Tips:** Ujjayi pranayama can be practiced when pregnant. Please check with your doctor if you have or suspect throat issues or thyroid problems. Breathing should be long, deep, effortless, and should not generate breathlessness or discomfort.

## Yogic Breathing - Three-part Breath

Also called “complete yogic breathing,” this technique provides maximum capillary stimulation and oxygenation of the cells. It eliminates maximum carbon dioxide from the body through exhalation. It also creates the greatest flow of prana.

Complete yogic breathing is the essential basis for practice and progress in pranayama. It is the sum of three breaths: abdominal, thoracic, and clavicular.

**Technique:** Lay on your back and use your hands to move with your awareness. Place a hand on the part of the body you're focusing on breathing with. Once you are familiar with all 3 parts, start inhaling from the bottom up and exhaling from the top down.

**Benefits:**

- Improves breathing capacity
- Invigorates the nervous system
- Increases the resistance of your organs
- Awakens a feeling of energy
- Stimulates concentration
- Makes you more aware of all body parts that can be used to breathe
- Provides a calming effect on the mind and body.

**Tips:** The three part breath can be practiced when pregnant and it's good for everyone at anytime (except when you need to pay attention, e.g. when driving).

And now, it is time to: Log off and tune in!

Let's play!

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