

## MANUAL YIN DECK

*Breathe deeply. Connect within. Release ALL.*

*The YIN deck is a deck of cards that allows you to create yin yoga sequences. It is specifically developed to help you 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 for Strumpi LTD  
Yoga expertise has been provided by Illona Tschopp  
Illustrations are by Giulia Rosa for Strumpi LTD**

**Important! Before you use the cards: consult the list ' Take precautions (or skip) if you have' to check if any of the precautions apply to you, checking so forth if you can do the posture. The list includes 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.

## Introduction to YIN

Taoism teaches us how to live in harmony from within and without. The style is based on the differentiation between the yin and yang energy. The yin yoga activity is slow, steady, and most of the time stationary, with a sense of softness and surrender. While studying yin yoga principles, you can learn more about the science of traditional Chinese medicine which is highly valuable in this type of practice, as we aim to liberate space in the body to allow our chi to flow freely. (Chi: Our life energy is also known as Qi or Prana (in Yoga)). There are three main principles to a yin yoga practice; the first is the physical postures, as they target particular meridian pathways. The second, where we place our intention “where the attention goes, the energy flows” and finally, the length of time we stay in the pose. It is recommended to stay for 3-5 minutes depending on the pose and your aim. Staying in a pose without moving permits the autonomic nervous system to cool down and release the muscle so we can get into the deeper tissues of our body - where mobility and flexibility lie.

The practice of yin yoga targets your deep connective tissues, like your fascia, ligaments, joints, and bones. It's a slower and more meditative practice, creating space to turn inward. It is proven to be very beneficial for people suffering from anxiety, insomnia, and stress and even helps with circulatory problems and digestive issues.

“When your body wants to get out of a pose, it's actually a sign that it is exactly where you need to be”. This practice can be challenging as it requires you to stay in a pose without fidgeting around and staying present to what is happening inside, at one point one will feel a sort of ‘release’ from the body - it is the signal that your body has shifted from being engaged to being relaxed, enjoy this space.

Recommendation to drink a lot of water after this practice.

### Notes

\*Most inversion poses are not recommended while on the menstrual cycle - yet this is very subjective to all. So feel free to listen to yourself and your body

\*\* In case of pain :

**Sharp pain means: Get out of the pose!**

**Needling pain means: Get out of the pose!**

**Electric pain: Get out of the pose and go back into it focusing on alignment.**

Muscle pain you can stay in the pose.

Tissue opening pain, it is recommended to stay in the pose and focus the breathing on the particular area that is opening.

In case of any recent operation, limitations in the body, and/or mental sickness please consult your doctor prior to performing the poses. See contraindications under “Take precautions (or skip) if you have:” below.

## Breakdown of the cards

### Categories

The deck is broken down into 3 categories, from warm-up to slow down. The categories have different colors, to make it easy to distinguish them from each other. The categories are chronologically sorted according to the most standard way of building a practice, however, you can, of course, mix and match in creative ways.

### Warm-Up

The warm-up poses that are included are bonus poses to develop a presence in the body prior to getting into static holds. It is not necessary to start with a warm-up to get into the practice of Yin Yoga. But it is recommended, as it opens and fluidifies the body enabling you to get into deeper areas of one's body.

### The poses

Yin yoga targets mainly the lower part of the body because as we age, this is the area that normally gets more rigid and tight. But the benefits will overflow the whole body. However, although a principle, it is not always the case. You will find poses in this deck that are beneficial for your shoulders, wrist, neck, and so on.

## Restore

The “restore” poses in this deck offer nourishing ways to end the practice, in deep integration of the work-in that has been practiced. Each of these poses should feel very comfortable, holding the body beautifully. Invitation to use some props.

## Bonus cards

In addition to the 60 asana cards in this deck you will find 8 bonus cards. Seven of these have an illustration of a chakra, including information and affirmation on that particular chakra. These can be used in your sequencing for setting an intention and a focus, or just to learn about the different chakras. The last card will show you the meridians and their pathways. Use this card together with the manual to get a better understanding of these energy channels and pressure points.

## Front of the cards

**Top left number:** this is the number of the card, ranging from 1 to 60. We will refer to the cards both by number and English name in this manual.

**Chakras:** after the card number you will find the chakras. When a chakra is colored, it means that this card’s posture will work on cultivating energy in that particular chakra.

	ROOT	SACRAL	SOLAR	HEART	THROAT	THIRD	CROWN
Involved							
Not involved							

**Drawing:** under the card number you see the drawing of the pose.

**Headline 1:** the English name of the pose.

**Headline 2:** the name of the pose in Sanskrit.

**Text under headline 2:** a simple phrase (or phrases) that helps you set your focus during the position, like a cue from your yoga teacher.

In Yin Yoga, it is important to find the correct alignment in your body and asana before releasing into it for a few minutes. This is why in this manual we have added longer cues, focusing on alignment and tips that may help you to ease yourself deeper into the pose. We recommend that you read the manual if you wish to understand the pose better and therefore understand your bodily sensation better.

## Chakra

Chakra (cakra) meaning wheel, is a circular vortex of energy that is placed at seven different points in a vertical line from the perineum to the top of the head. The seven chakras are connected to various organs and glands within the body and have the loving responsibility of taking in, incorporating, and emanating energy to keep us functioning at optimal levels.

To find the precise locations of your chakras - use the distance of YOUR hand. The width between your thumb and your pinky (when the palm of the hand is open wide) finger is approximately the distance between each chakra. Start from the navel, place your pinky on your navel and open your hand wide allowing the thumb to arrive on your heart chakra. Bring pinky to your thumb, and open your hand wide once again to get to your throat chakra. Use this measurement to find all of their location in your body. Remember, these are energy points, they cannot be seen, but they can be felt. For this reason, depending on where you get your information, what is shown on the cards *may* differ from other sources. Trust yourself in the process.



### Root Chakra - Muladhara

Located at the base of the spine, the Muladhara chakra, the first chakra, can be “felt” by lifting the pelvic floor.

This chakra is linked to the earth element and is responsible for your sense of safety and grounding. Work with this energy center if you feel the need to ground, or simply if you’re working toward creating a stronger base.

Affirmation: I AM SAFE AND GROUNDED

Food: Root vegetables such as beetroot, carrots, radish, potatoes, and ginger but also red-colored food such as strawberries. It's also recommended to add beans and rice to your diet while working on this chakra and avoid fatty food.



### **Sacral Chakra**

The second chakra, Svadhisthana, is associated with our creativity, sensuality, and emotional body. It is linked to the water element. The function of the sacral chakra is impacted by our ability to experience pleasure (and not only through our sexuality but in all senses of the word.)

Affirmation: I EMBRACE PLEASURE, ABUNDANCE, AND CREATIVITY

Food: Food of the color orange is great to integrate into your diet while working on this chakra. Such as oranges, turmeric, papaya, orange peppers, sweet potatoes, and squash but also honey, and almonds are recommended. Meditating on this chakra has a positive influence on all physical ailments linked to our body fat including problems with cholesterol and blockages in the arteries.



### **Solar Plexus Chakra**

The Manipura chakra, the third chakra is linked to how we show up in the world. Characterized by the expression of will, personal power, and personal freedom. It has much to do with being motivated, having willpower, being self-confident, and simply showing up in the world. Its element is fire and you can actually feel a warm sensation when placing your attention and intention on this chakra.

Affirmation: I LOVE AND ACCEPT MYSELF, I AM FREE TO BE ME

Food: While meditating or working with this chakra, eat light food, freshly cooked or raw and nourishing. It is recommended to add foods of the color yellow to your diet, such as bananas, lemons, pineapple, turmeric, corn, and yellow bell pepper. Keep it light and tasty.



### **Heart Chakra**

The Anahata chakra, the heart chakra, colors our life with compassion, love, and beauty. Driven by the principle of inclusion and integration, this energy center helps us to connect to ourselves and others, through harmonious relationships, and by being non-judgemental and respectful. Its element is air and can be linked to the fact of creating spaciousness for love. Working on/with this energy center can correct blood disorders.

Affirmation: I ALLOW MY LOVE TO GUIDE ME AND TO FILL ME UP

Food: It is recommended to stay on a gluten-free diet when working on this energy center. As well as adding some food of the color green - broccoli, green tea, spinach, kiwi, all leafy dark greens.



### **Throat Chakra**

The throat chakra, also known as Vishuddha chakra, is represented by the element of ether, also known as "space". It is driven by the principle of expression and communication. When this chakra is imbalanced you might experience throat soreness, thyroid challenges, and even be highly critical of yourself.

Affirmation: I EXPRESS MY TRUTH CLEARLY AND HONESTLY

Food: The throat chakra is a sensitive area, which is why it is recommended to avoid too much salt, spices, beans, grains, and lentils while working on this chakra. Consuming natural sugar is recommended - all fruits, such as blueberries, elderberries, blackberries, raisins, grapes, figs, plums, and prunes.



### **Third Eye Chakra**

Ajna chakra is the 6th chakra of this chakra system, also represented by the ether element. It is connected to "our inner vision" and linked to the ability to perceive the more subtle qualities of reality. Tapping and following your intuition will help you to activate this energy center.

Affirmation: I TRUST AND FOLLOW MY INTUITION

Food: While meditating on this chakra, consume delicious but healthy food. It's also great to add turmeric to the savory items. It's recommended to consume purple-colored food, such as eggplants, purple cabbage, radish, and purple potato. Feel into what is actually needed in terms of the density of the food. It's also a good idea to consume a lot of liquid (infusions, teas) since it's much lighter than the food itself.



### **Crown Chakra**

The crown chakra, located at the top of our head is said to be a point of connection with the Source / the Divine (however we want to call it). Its element being ether as well, it gives us access to higher states of consciousness and enables us to connect with the 'non-physical', astral world. Simply applying pressure of the Sahasrara chakra can influence our state of consciousness and our ability to receive information. This is why it is recommended in some yogic traditions to practice the headstand pose (Sirasana).

Affirmation: I AM A LIGHT BEING, I HONOR THE DIVINE IN ME

Food: It is recommended to eat very lightly, or even fast during this time. Focusing on connecting directly to the prana that nourishes us.

## **Back of the cards Meridians:**

The meridian system of the human body is an intricate web of interconnecting energy lines. The lines are the channels by which our energy flows, thus transporting said energy throughout the body. Along the meridians lie acupuncture points or acupoints, which are stimulated by needling, pressure, or heat to resolve a clinical problem. Also known as channels.

Acupuncture point: Acupuncture points are found along meridians, these acupuncture points affect various organs, areas, or body systems. Acupuncture is done by stimulating the acupuncture points, with a needle or by applying gentle pressure with the finger, to correct imbalances or blockages in the flow of energy.

### **Heart Meridian**

The heart channel begins with two internal pathways starting at the heart, one runs down to the diaphragm and small intestine, and the other runs up to the throat and eye. The primary pathway starts at the armpit and travels down the midline of the upper arm until it reaches the inner point located in between the pinkie and ring finger. Find the heart shenmen point at the crease of the wrist. Press gently on the point, to calm the mind and nourish your heart. It can help with insomnia and anxiety.

The organ of the heart controls the circulation and distribution of blood. Poor heart chi manifests as extreme emotions, which in turn suppresses the immune system and the ability to communicate clearly.

### **Large Intestine Meridian**

The large intestine channel begins at the radial tip of the index finger and travels down the finger and between the thumb and index finger. You can find the acupuncture point Hegu there. Press gently on this point in the case of headaches, toothaches, and menstrual pain...

The large intestine organ is responsible for the transformation of digestive waste. Poor large intestine chi manifests as digestive issues.

### **Small Intestine Meridian**

The small intestine channel begins on the outer edge of the pinkie finger, crosses the edge of the palm, and travels up to the elbow. It climbs up your arm to the upper back down to the throat and back up to the front of the ear. Find the point Houxi located at the end of the transverse crease and the junction of the red and white skin. It can help to free some neck pain by applying gentle pressure on the point.

The small intestine organ refines digested food. Poor chi in the small intestine manifests in metabolism, sexuality, and the entire endocrine system.

### **Lung Meridian**

The lung meridian internal pathway begins in the middle of the body cavity. It runs downward to connect to the large intestine, goes back up, and passes through the diaphragm, lungs, and throat, emerging on the chest under the clavicle. Find the points of Zhongfu and Yunmen that help in the case of lung congestion, breathing trouble, asthma cough, and excess grief.

The meridian then runs down from the clavicle to the thumb.

The Lungs are responsible for cellular respiration, and the quality of the blood. Poor lung chi manifests in respiratory problems.

### **Liver Meridian**

The liver meridian begins on the inner side of the big toe traveling up to the ankle and then ascending the leg (inner side of the leg). From here it encircles the genitals and then rises to the abdomen. This meridian also connects to the gallbladder and the lungs. You can find the liver 3 points located between the big toe and the second toe. Slide your finger along the space between the first and second toe to the tip of the joint. This point can address issues like headache, dizziness, and facial paralysis.

The liver's function corresponds to filtering the blood that comes from the digestive tract. It also detoxifies chemicals and metabolizes drugs.

### **Gall Bladder Meridian**

The gallbladder meridian begins at the outer corner of the eye and travels to the front of the ear. It zig-zags the head, then descends to the trapezius muscle, and then down the lateral side of the torso. Find the point Zulinqi (GB41) by sliding your finger between the fourth and fifth toes, crossing over the tendon, and dropping into the hollow space between these bones. This point helps to release anger and frustration.

The gallbladder is a reservoir for the bile created by the liver when it's not being used. The bile helps to break down the food in the intestine.

### **Spleen Meridian**

The spleen meridian starts at the medial corner of the big toenail and travels along the medial aspect of the foot to the ankle bone, going up the medial aspect of the leg to the groin. The meridian then internalizes into the spleen and stomach, goes up through the chest, and ends just beneath the armpit. In the case of weak digestion, and loose stools, find the point Sanyinjiao, which is four fingers above the inner ankle behind the posterior edge of the tibia. Pressing this point is helpful when feeling weighed down due to digestive disturbance.

The spleen organ is responsible for the extraction of nutrients. Poor spleen chi manifests in weak limbs, muscular atrophy, and moodiness.

### **Kidney Meridian**

The kidney meridian starts at the base of the foot and travels along the arch of the foot to the heel, circulates around the malleolus bone, and then travels up to the inner knee and to the groins. It then travels internally to the kidney, the bladder, the liver, diaphragm, and lungs. The primary pathway ascends the abdomen close to the midline all the way to the clavicle.

Find the point Taixi, midway between the tip of the medial malleolus and the attachment of the Achilles tendon. Great for asthma, emphysema, and ear issues. The kidneys are the filters of our body's blood. Removing toxins, wastes, and extra water from the blood, but keeping the vitamins, amino acids, glucose, and hormones in the bloodstream.

### **Bladder Meridian**

The bladder meridian runs down alongside the spine and onwards down the back of the leg, passing behind the knee, traveling down to the heel, and finishing on the outer edge of the pinky toe. The points Bach Shu are a multitude of points you can find approximately 4cm from the midline of the spine. You can use a tennis ball and lay on top to feel these points, as it's not accessible by hand for many of us. These points are connected to a variety of organs, therefore just applying pressure alongside these points can create a feeling of overall relief.

The role of the bladder is to collect and store the urine made from the kidneys.

### **Stomach Meridian**

The stomach meridian starts on the upper cheek and descends beneath the cheekbone, curves around the mouth, and travels down to the middle of the clavicle. It then runs down the midline to the lower abdomen and the lateral side of the leg to the lateral tip of the second toe. Find the point Zusanli, located at the lateral outside side of the leg. Measure 4 finger widths below the kneecap and 1 finger width out lateral from the crest of the tibia. This point supports the stomach and digestive functions, great for stomach pain or digestive difficulties.

The stomach manages bulk foods and fluids. Poor stomach chi manifests as bloating, loss of appetite, and lethargy.

### **Pericardium Meridian**

The pericardium meridian can be translated into the "heart protector" meridian. It starts on the chest near the nipple and descends through the inner arm to the elbow crease, carrying on its descent all the way to the outer edge of the middle finger. Find the point Nei guan at the inner aspect of the hand, a four-finger space above the wrist. This point is commonly used to help relieve nausea, upset stomach, and headache. The pericardium protects the heart from emotional trauma and constricts the chest to protect the Heart. It regulates circulation in the major blood vessels running in and out of the heart.

### **The Triple Burner Meridian (San Jiao)**

The san jiao meridian starts at the ring finger and travels along the back of the hand to the center of the wrist crease, goes up the arm to the elbow then ascends to the upper arm and the shoulder. An internal pathway enters the chest and goes through the diaphragm. From there it travels down through the triple burner. The primary pathway continues from the neck to the ear and ends at the outer side of the eye. Find the point Wai guan, four fingers above the wrist following the midline. Press gently on this point to relieve fever, chills, and sweating.

The main function of the triple burner is to separate food and drink waste with the reabsorption of useful fluids and eliminate the rest of the bladder.

## Asanas one by one

### 1. Ankle Stretch

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Ankle injury
- Broken toes

**How to PLAY the pose:** Find a sitting position on your heels, with your toes untucked. Allow the weight of the body to shift back, pressing on the back of the feet to open the ankle. Option to lift your knees. Option to use your hands as extra support behind you. Be gentle as the ankle is a sensitive area.

### 2. Body Waves

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Can be difficult to practice if you suffer from dizziness or vertigo.
- Spinal injury

**How to PLAY the pose:** Best to use a wall for this exercise. Start by pushing your nose towards the wall, then the chin lifts towards the wall, and the chest, upper belly, lower belly, and hips follow. Inevitably your upper body will restructure to keep the balance. Give it a go in both directions. From the head down and from the hips up. Recommendation to start practicing with a wall and then do it without when you feel comfortable.

### 3. Cat-Cow

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Neck injury (adapt by keeping your neck neutral instead of looking up and down).
- Weak or injured wrists.
- Chronic or recent injury to knees. (If you have discomfort in the knees or a recent injury when you are on your knees, 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).

**How to PLAY the pose:** From an all four position, on the inhale tilt the pelvis backward, arching the lower back, middle back, and upper back. Press chest forward and gaze up with shoulders pressing back. On the exhale, tilt the pelvis forward, round the lower, middle, and upper back, create space in between shoulder blades, chin to chest, and gaze towards the navel. Use your breath to repeat these movements as much as it feels good and comfortable for you.

### 4. Chest Waves

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- If you just had an osteopathic treatment, it is not recommended to practice this exercise.
- Injury to the thoracic spine.

**How to PLAY the pose:** Create waves with your chest without moving the head and hips

### 5. Head Waves

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- If you just had an osteopathic treatment, it is not recommended to practice this exercise.
- Injury to the cervical spine

**How to PLAY the pose:** Create head waves without moving the chest or/and the hips

### 6. Hips Waves

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- If you just had an osteopathic treatment, it is not recommended to practice this exercise.
- Injury to the lower spine

**How to PLAY the pose:** Create hips waves without moving the chest or/and the head. Keep the lower back flat as much as possible - not a hula hoop movement.

## 7. Spine Roll Up

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- If you just had an osteopathic treatment, it is not recommended to practice this exercise.
- Lower back or neck injuries, such as disc herniation.
- If you suffer from high or low blood pressure, go slowly when rolling up to standing to avoid dizziness.

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a standing forward fold position (bent into 2) micro bend the knee, and roll the spine up vertebra by vertebra. Recommendation to go both ways, from standing to bent, to bent from standing. Close your eyes for more awareness.

## 8. Wrist Warm-Up

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Wrist injury

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a tabletop position, open the wrist by pressing the back of the hand on the mat, fingers facing towards the knee. Option to bend the elbows on the exhale and to extend on the inhale. From the same position, allow the back of the hands to press on the mat, this time fingers facing inwards, start with a little distance in between the hands and slowly increase the space in between the hands. Lastly, staying on the back of the hands, turn the fingers to face outwards. This time start with a bigger distance and work towards bringing the wrists closer together without lifting the hands off the mat. Be gentle, the wrist is a very sensitive part of the body.

## 9. Banana Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Pain or injury to the lower back, and neck
- Dislocated hip

**How to PLAY the pose:** Laying on your back, bring your right hip to the right side of the mat. Bring your left foot to the left side of your mat, then cross the right ankle over the left. Shift your torso to the left, recreating the shape of a banana with the body. Ensure your shoulders and hips stay grounded. Option to grab the opposite elbows or your right wrist with the left hand.

## 10. Belly Twist Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- SI joint or back injury or pain (choose gentle variation with both legs bent, and support with pillows if you need to)
- Shoulder injury (adjust your arm and shoulder position according to what feels OK for you)
- Neck injury (keep a neutral neck looking up)
- Pregnancy: avoid

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lay on your back, both knees to one side. Keep both shoulders grounded. Option to open your arms wide, creating a T shape. Option to use a block to rest your knees on if they do not touch the floor.

## 11. Broken Wings Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Knee, back, arm, or elbow injury
- Shoulder injury
- Heavy body weight (don't stay too long)

**How to PLAY the pose:** From the Sphinx pose, allow your right hand to come to your left elbow, and your left hand to your right elbow. Walk your hands in the opposite direction until you feel the stretch happening between your shoulder blades. Use a block/cushion for head support and relax. Keep your arms directly underneath your chest, not higher.

## 12. Butterfly Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Groin or knee injury
- Pregnancy - use pillows under your knees, because of the relaxing hormones in the pelvic area, especially in the third trimester



**How to PLAY the pose:** Keeping both sitting bones grounded, bring the sole of the feet to touch. Pull your heels close to your pelvis as much as feels comfortable and turn the soles of the feet up towards the ceiling. Option to grab your ankles with your hands. Lengthen the spine and from your hip joint, and fold forward. Option to use props as support if needed.

### 13. Cat Pulling its Tail

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Pain or injury to the lower back
- Suffer from sciatica

**How to PLAY the pose:** Come into an easy reclined twist. Bend the leg that is underneath and bring the heel towards your tailbone (grab the foot if possible, without crossing your arms over your chest). Option to extend your other arm and top leg, and grab the toes of the other foot for a deeper stretch (if this is too difficult, keep the top knee bent and place your hand on the knee).

### 14. Caterpillar Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Hip, hamstring, or groin injury
- Pregnancy (legs wider to give space for your belly and go no more than 80% into the stretch)

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a seated position with the legs long, ensure both sitting bones are grounded. Lengthen the spine, then fold forwards moving from the hip joint. If your hamstrings are tight, place a cushion under your knees. Option to use a cushion on top of your thighs for support.

### 15. Child's Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Diarrhea
- Pregnancy (adapt with wide legs to make space for your belly, add bolsters and pillows as your belly grows)
- Ankle, knee, or hip injury (if you are cleared by your doctor, you can adapt with pillows under your buttocks, (perhaps also hugging a bolster in the front) until your knees and hips are comfortable).

**How to PLAY the pose:** Sit on your heels with your knees open or together (as you wish). Press the sitting bones to the heels and allow your upper body to fall forward. Use a cushion under the knees for knee support, under your ankles for ankle support, and/or a prop to support your forehead. Option to have your arms alongside your body or stretched out in front of you.

### 16. Child's Pose Side Stretch

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Shoulder injury
- Broken ribs
- Pregnancy
- Ankle or knee injury

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a child pose position, walk your left hand towards the left side of the mat, and place your right hand on top of your left hand. Keep the sitting bones pressing down and consciously breathe through the right side body. Don't forget to do both sides. Recommended to come into a neutral child pose before opening to the other side.

### 17. Constructive Rest Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Acute back pain

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lay on your back, with knees bent and feet planted on the ground. Open your feet to the width of your mat, and allow the knees to fall towards one another. Bring the feet closer than mat width if your knees can't touch. Keep your feet flat and parallel.

### 18. Deer Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Any knee problems. Remember to rotate the front leg from the hip, if it is too deep a stretch move your front foot closer to the groin.
- Dislocated hip

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a seated position, swing one leg behind you to form two 90-degree angles with your knees. The front foot should be close to the back knee, but if you cannot reach 90-degrees, adjust to where it feels comfortable for you. Option to fold forward from the hips and lay over your front leg.

## 19. Diamond Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Injuries to ankles, knees, or hips

**How to PLAY the pose:** Both sitting bones are grounded. Bring the sole of the feet to touch and move them away from you (aiming to stretch the outer thighs). Lengthen the spine. From your hip joint, fall forward, using props as support if needed.

## 20. Dragonfly Pose/ Straddle

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- May aggravate sciatica
- For any issues with your back that don't allow flexion - keep the spine straight.
- Pulled adductors or hamstrings

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a seated position, open your legs wide. Fold forward from your hips, walking the hands out in front of you. Flex the feet (for knee protection) when you fold forwards, then release when you find your pose. Aim to bring the navel to the floor. Option to sit on a block or a cushion if you feel like you're being pulled back from the lower back or your back is rounded.

## 21. Fire Log Pose / Square Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Injury or issues with ankles, knees, or hips.

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a seated position, stack one shin on top of the other to create a square shape. Your knees and feet should be in line but if this is not possible, adjust as needed. Option to use a block to sit on, to place under your feet or under your knees. Make sure that you do both sides. This pose is quite challenging for most of us. Be gentle with yourself.

## 22. Forward Fall (Standing)

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Spinal disc disorder or back injury
- LBP and dizziness: legs slightly apart and come up slowly
- Acidity: keep your chest in line with your hips, not lower, creating a flat back (Standing half forward bend)
- Hamstring strain or injury: bend knees and do not go beyond 80% into the stretch
- Headache (depending on the type of headache).

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a standing position, micro bend the knees. Bend forward, folding the upper body over the leg. Press into the heels and toes to balance the weight of the body. Release any tensions in the neck area, by swinging the head from left to right.

## 23. Frog Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Pulled hamstrings or adductors
- Knee injuries/operation
- Hips injuries/operation
- Lumbar operation

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a seated position on your heels, open your knees wide (to what feels comfortable). Keep them in line with your hips and your feet in line with the knees. Option to stay on your hands or to release onto the elbows, in line with your shoulders. Refrain from pressing the pelvis forward or backward to keep the stretch in the groin.

## 24. Half Shoelace Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Pulled your IT band
- Spinal disc pain

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a seated position with the legs extended, bend the right knee, stacking it over the left knee, and place the outer edge of the right foot next to the left glute. The right knee is facing toward the left foot. Option to sit tall with a straight spine, or to elongate and then fall forward.

## 25. Half Split Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Pulled your hamstrings
- Hip operation

**How to PLAY the pose:** From an all four position, bring the right heel in between hands (toes looking up). Press the hips back, keeping them squared. Straighten the front leg as much as possible. The left knee is in line with the hips. Press navel to thigh to deepen the stretch.

## 26. Happy Baby Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Knee or hip injury
- Pregnancy: when laying on your back for an extended period of time, pay attention to numbness in the legs, or if you experience any dizziness then move onto your side (particularly towards the middle of the second trimester and onwards.) Or move from side to side in your happy baby pose rather than staying in a static pose.

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lay on your back, hug the knees into the chest, take hold of the outer edges of the feet with your hands and lift your feet up. Allow your elbows to press into the interior side of your knees. Press your lower back and knees in the direction of the earth, turning the soles of the feet to face upwards. Option to grab your ankles for an easier version of the pose.

## 27. Head to Knee Forward Bend

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Spinal disc pain
- Pulled hamstrings

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a sitting position, extend one leg forward, and bring the sole of the other foot to the inner thigh. With a straight spine, bend forward from the hips and press the lower belly into the upper thigh. For an easier option, place the foot to the inner calf instead.

## 28. Hero Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Knee injury
- Ankle pain or injury

**How to PLAY the pose:** Sit on the floor or a block/cushion with the knees together (looking towards one another) and the heels outside of the hips. Option to lean back, resting on a bolster or directly on the floor. The knees should NOT lift off the ground. If that happens, release slightly out of the pose.

## 29. Knees to Chest Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Pregnancy: Avoid this pose after the first trimester
- Recent abdominal surgery
- A hernia
- Knee or spinal injuries

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lay on your back. Hug the knees into the chest either with the hands or with the arms holding the opposite forearm/elbow. Relax shoulders and lower back to the earth. The entire spine should be in contact with the ground.

### 30. Legs up the Wall

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Heart condition: consult your doctor
- Pregnancy: when laying on your back for an extended period of time, pay attention to numbness in the legs, or if you experience dizziness then move over to your side (particularly towards the middle of the second trimester and onwards).
- Eye conditions such as glaucoma and detached retina

**How to PLAY the pose:** Come close to a wall with your hips (decide the distance that feels good for you), then raise your legs, leaning them against the wall, and relax. Option to support the lower back by placing a cushion under the hips.

### 31. Lizard Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Injury to ankles, knees, hips, spine, rib cage, wrists, elbows, shoulders, or neck.

**How to PLAY the pose:** From plank pose, bend the right knee into the chest. Place the right foot at the outer edge of the right hand. Press right knee forward and left heel back. Option to drop the back knee and relax onto the forearms or blocks to deepen the pose.

### 32. Open Wing Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Shoulder or hip injury
- Recent surgery to the knees, elbow, arm, waist, shoulder, or back

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a lying position on the stomach, extend the right arm in line with the right shoulder. Press the left hand into the ground to slowly push the body onto its right side. Option to deepen the stretch by bending the left knee and placing the left foot down behind the right leg. You have the option to go deeper by bending both knees and having both feet rooted and/or placing the left hand on the lower back. Caution: be gentle with your shoulder and remember that less is more in these types of poses.

### 33. Plough Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Any injury in the back or spine, such as slipped discs
- Neck injury or fragile neck (not recommended)
- Pregnancy
- Eye conditions such as glaucoma and detached retina

**How to PLAY the pose:** From shoulder stand position, allow the legs to fall back behind you. Bring the weight of the body on the shoulder, and support the lower back with your hands by bending the elbows. Slowly start to lower the feet back behind you, aiming to plant the toes on the floor. Or option to bend knees to ear (like headphones).

### 34. Puppy Pose / Melting Heart

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Shoulder, hip, or knee pain or injury
- Pregnancy, particularly the later stages

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a tabletop position, walk both hands forward then bend the elbows, resting the forearms on the ground. (Open your elbows wide so they don't limit your descent). Keep your hips in line with the knees. Allow the heart to melt to the ground. Option to use a block under your head if needed, or to plant the chin on the mat to go deeper.

### 35. Reclining Butterfly

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Groin and knee injuries (only do this pose with support under the knees and thighs)

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a lying down position, bend the knees, and place the soles of the feet together. Use support under your knees if necessary. (Recommended if you stay longer than 5 minutes in this pose).

### 36. Reclining Pigeon

Take precautions (or skip) 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:** From lying on your back, bend the right knee placing the right foot down. Bend left knee to chest. Allow the ankle of the left leg to come on top of the right knee. Press the left knee toward the front of the mat, aiming to get into the glutes. Option to lift the right foot and grab either behind the right thigh or behind the right shin.

### 37. Reclining Tree Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Knee injury or surgery

**How to PLAY the pose:** From lying on your back, bend your right knee to the chest, open the knee to the right side and bring the sole of the foot to the inner thigh or to the calf (not the knee). Option to support the opening of the hip by placing a block/cushion under your right knee.

### 38. Revolved Head-of-the-Knee Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Knee, hip, or rib injury (for a knee injury, can keep both legs straight)
- Neck pain or injury

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a seated position, open the legs wide. Bend the right knee and bring the sole of the right foot to the left inner thigh. With your upper body fall forward to the left side, keeping the upper body facing forwards. Option to place a block close to the left knee (either outside or inside the knee) to bring the floor higher and rest with the elbow on the block. Breathe from the hips, into the sides of your body all the way up to the armpit of the extended side.

### 39. Seal Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Acute back pain (try Sphinx instead)
- Shoulder or neck pain or injury
- Pregnancy: use bolsters under the pelvis and the forearms to avoid pressing the belly into the ground

**How to PLAY the pose:** From Sphinx pose, open the hands in diagonal directions (looking at the outer edge of the mat). Slowly press into the hands lifting the chest and belly off the mat. Keep the neck in line with the spine, and allow your shoulders to drop away from your ears. Press your heart forward. Relax the lower back. Option to place a bolster/cushion under your hips.

### 40. Seated Head Stretch 1

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Neck or cervical spine injury

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a seated position, allow the right ear to come to the right shoulder, and keep the shoulders relaxed. Press the left shoulder down aiming to deepen the stretch. Option to massage the left trapezes if the sensations are really intense. Relax the jaw and don't forget to do both sides. Recommended transition with seated head stretch 2 prior to doing the other side.

### 41. Seated Head Stretch 2

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Neck or cervical spine injury

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a seated position, allow the chin to come to the chest. Option to place the hands on the back of your head to deepen the stretch (do not press your head down). Allow gravity to do the work and simply relax the jaw.

### 42. Seated Twist Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Injury or acute pain in the lower back, sacrum, or spine
- Neck, hip, or knee injury

- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a seated position, bend the knees so the soles of the feet touch the ground. From here, bring the left heel to the outside of the right glute (not under the glute). Next, cross your right knee over your left leg, and place the right foot on the outside of the left knee. Place your left hand on the right knee. Elongate your spine upwards and start twisting towards the right with your upper body (from the middle of your spine) to the right. Don't let your right knee fall towards the left, but let your knee push softly towards your hand and hand towards the knee, creating opposite forces. Gaze towards the back, or wherever is comfortable. Option to extend the left leg if the sensations in the glute are too intense.

#### 43. Shoelace Pose/ Cows Face Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Knee or pelvis pain or injury
- Sciatica or injury in the lower back: Do not lean forward. Stay sitting upright on a block or cushion.
- Pregnancy: Do not fold forward after the first trimester.

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a tabletop position, allow the right knee to come behind the left knee, create space in between the feet (right foot to the left side, left foot to the right side) sit back either on the mat or on a block. Stacking the knees on each other. Option to fall forward or to grab your hands behind your back by having the elbows pressing in opposite directions (earth and sky). For a gentler variation, extend the bottom leg.

#### 44. Sleeping Swan

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Knee or hip pain or injury

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a tabletop position, bring the right knee to the outside of the right wrist, looking in a diagonal direction. Bring the right foot in line with your knee and shift the heel towards the left hand, externally rotating the thigh. If you experience pain in the knee, bring the heel towards the midline to what feels comfortable. Extend the left leg behind you by pressing the left heel back aiming to lower the glutes towards the floor. Fall forward with the upper body, either resting on the forearms or all the way down to the floor. Don't forget to do both sides. Place a block or cushion under the right sitting bone to support the hips.

#### 45. Sleeping Vishnu Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Neck, shoulder, or rib injury
- Spinal injuries like sciatica or slipped discs

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lie on the right side, bend the right elbow to support the head, or lie flat on the right arm. Extend the left leg up. Grab a hold of the left foot or leg. Option to bend the right knee a little to find balance and/or to use a strap to catch the foot. Don't forget to do both sides.

#### 46. Snail

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Acute back or knee pain
- Neck or spinal injuries like sciatica or slipped discs
- Pregnancy

**How to PLAY the pose:** From lying on your back, lift the hips, bringing the legs overhead. Support the lower back with your hands by bending the elbows. Allow the back to round and slowly bend knees to ears. Option to extend the arms or to keep the support on the lower back.

#### 47. Sphinx

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

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

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lie on the belly, bring both elbows underneath, in line, with the shoulders. Press into the forearms as you press the heart forward. Option to bring chin to chest or look between the thumbs to keep the neck in elongation of the spine. Option to bring big toes together.

## 48 Squat Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Knee pain or injury
- Chronic lower back or severe sciatica
- Hip injury or recent surgery

**How to PLAY the pose:** Open the feet a little wider than hip-width apart. Toes in line with the knees (facing the same direction). If the heels are lifting, you can choose to use a blanket to elevate the floor for the heels. Press into the knees with the elbows, allowing the hands to come together in a prayer position in front of the heart. If needed, release tension in the neck by bringing the chin to the chest and relaxing the jaw.

## 49 Supported Banana

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Injury or recent surgery to the ribs

**How to PLAY the pose:** Use a thick cushion or a bolster for this pose (block and cushion can also work). Lie on your bolster, sideways, placing it just above the hips and below the rib cage. Reach both hands overhead, aiming to deepen your side body stretch. Option to have the feet together or the legs open in a scissors-like shape.

## 50. Supported Bridge

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Hip, lower back, knee, or neck injury
- Eye conditions such as glaucoma and detached retina

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lie on your back and bend your knees bringing the feet flat on the floor. Lift the hips and slide a block or bolster under the sacrum. Be careful not to place the block under the lower back - the pose should feel comfortable, readjust if necessary. Option to keep the knees bent or to extend your legs long.

## 51. Supine Spinal Twist

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- SI joint or back injury or pain
- Shoulder injury (adjust your arm and shoulder position according to what feels OK for you)
- Neck injury (keep a neutral neck looking up)
- Pregnancy: avoid

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lie on the back, and bring the hips a little to the right. Bring the right knee to the chest, grab the right knee with the left hand, open the right hand in line with the shoulder, or in a diagonal direction going up from the shoulder. Gently bring the right knee towards the left side. Keep both shoulders grounded. Option to use a block to rest the right knee on. Recommendation to gaze in the opposite direction of the bent knee.

## 52. Thread the Needle

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Chronic back, ribcage, neck, shoulder, or knee pain or injury

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a tabletop position, inhale the right arm up towards the sky, Exhale, bring the right arm underneath the left armpit, and bring the right shoulder on the mat. Once the shoulder is down, place the head down (more weight on the shoulder than the head), gazing to the left. Keep your hips in line with your knees. Option to extend the left arm overhead or grab the inner right thigh with the left hand passing by the lower back. Option to place a folded blanket under the knees to reduce pain in this area.

## 53. Toe Squat

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Foot, ankle, or knee pain: avoid if current injury or recent surgery to these areas

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a tabletop position, tuck your toes planting them on the mat (all toes looking forward), and gently sit back on the heels. The further back you go with the upper body the more intense the pose gets. Option to place both hands on

blocks in front of you and lean a little forward to find a bit of relief, or to go deeper, lift the knees off the ground and work on your balance.

## 54. Tortoise Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Severe back pain or spinal injuries, such as herniated discs or sciatica
- Shoulder, arm, or hip injury
- Pregnancy: avoid

**How to PLAY the pose:** Start in a seated position, both knees are bent and feet flat open wide on the mat. Internally rotate the shoulders to bring the arms under the inner knees, fingers pointing behind the back of the room. Slowly walk the heels forward, aiming to extend the legs and lower the upper body in the direction of the earth, (keep the back flat). Come out of this pose the same way you came in. Be gentle.

## 55. Twisted Dragon

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Knee, hip, or ankle injury (can support the back knee with a blanket if needed)
- If injury to the spine or rib cage, avoid twisting and keep the chest facing forwards instead

**How to PLAY the pose:** From a tabletop position, bring the right foot to the outer edge of your right palm. Keep the knee in line with the ankle. Right hand comes on right knee, press the knee forward (be mindful not to arch the lower back). Keep the left hand on the floor or on a block for support and gaze back over the right shoulder, twisting the spine and turning the chest upwards.

## 56. Twisted Roots

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Back, spinal, or rib cage injury or pain
- Neck injury (keep a neutral neck looking up)
- Pregnancy: avoid

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lie on the back. Bend the knees, feet are flat on the mat. Allow the right leg to come over the left leg, both legs fall towards the left side. Shoulders stay grounded. Gaze to the right, option to open arms wide or keep arms alongside the body.

## 57. Corpse Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Pregnancy: During the second and third trimesters, do not stay in this pose for too long. Recommended doing this pose on your side instead.
- Respiratory conditions: Place a cushion or bolster under your head and chest.

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lie on the back, and allow the feet to fall to the sides. Release any tension or muscular activation in the body. Invitation to take three breaths, inhaling through the nose, exhaling through the mouth to rest deeper in this pose. This pose is amazing to restore energy as it brings balance and harmony to the nervous system.

## 58. Reverse Corpse Pose

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Pregnancy, recent abdominal surgery, or hernia: Avoid this variation
- Neck injury

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lie on the stomach. Option to have the hands overhead, alongside the body or elbows bent and hands on top of one another to create a pillow for the forehead. Make sure to turn your head halfway through if your head is resting towards one side, to balance the two sides.

## 59. Supported Reclined Butterfly

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Groin, pelvis, or hip injury
- Knee pain: place cushions under the knees or straighten the legs



**How to PLAY the pose:** Soles of the feet together, knees open to the sides. Place a bolster or cushion under the spine (long ways) and allow the shoulders to drop in the direction of the earth. The head is supported and the chin is tucked. Option to support the knees with cushions as well.

## 60. Supported Savasana

Take precautions (or skip) if you have:

- Respiratory conditions: Place a cushion or bolster under your head and chest.

**How to PLAY the pose:** Lie on your back, and create space in between your shoulder blades. Place a bolster, blocks, or pillows under the knees for support, allowing the thighs to roll outwards. Relax the face, shoulders, and hips. A great variation of the Corpse pose to release pressure on the lower back.

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## Bibliography

The references used to work on the poses are the following:

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