

Postural Guide

Posture Breakdowns:

The following is a general guide for the most common yoga postures and is to be used as the foundation for teaching asana. At first it will be beneficial to study the photos and information provided and stick to it. Over time your understanding of anatomy will grow and your creativity will flow.

Anatomical Focus

Under the anatomical focus section you will sometimes see required strength and potential strength. The reason for this is because there are a number of yoga postures that require very little strength and are simply created by gravity and held by the tension of the muscular system. However you as the teacher will come to learn that you can use verbal cues to get your students to strengthen particular muscles.

In our training sessions together we will focus first on how we can get students into the general shape of the pose. As you become comfortable with verbal cuing, and sequencing we will add “potential strength” verbal cues.

Contraindications:

Below I have listed some potential reasons to avoid certain postures, however each person is different and it will be up to you to discern what you are comfortable with allowing your students to work with in your classes/privates/workshops. If you don't know it's best to be honest with your student and play it safe - ask students to avoid the postures listed below that correlate with their injury. If a student comes to you with an injury, *ask if they have consulted a medical professional regarding if it is safe to practice yoga*. For private clients I recommend consulting with their doctor prior to and throughout your time together - this will support your growth, and your students healing process. You are not certified to diagnose or heal anyone, but you can do your best to not cause any further harm.

Alignment Points:

There are several potential alignment points for any given posture, here you have a few of the most important ones for the general public. With experience you will learn what your specific clientele requires.

Common Patterns:

Common patterns are based on the general public: they are physical tightnesses and weakness's that tend to show up in humans all over the world. That being said, every individual has their own physical patterns (tight, weak, flexible, strong muscles/ligaments). These common patterns will likely stick out at you right away, and with experience you will be able to make your own list of patterns based on each student or each group of students.

Props/Modifications:

Quite often the fastest way to advancement of body awareness is to meet students where they are at. Rather than putting them into an overwhelming situation where they are simply surviving the posture, look to provide them with a posture that is just at the edge of their comfort zone - challenging them to get stronger, increase body awareness, or gently increase range of motion but at the same time they are able to be present and awake to what is happening. As soon as they go into overwhelm all potential growth is lost. You will see this in their eyes, their face, or hear it in their breath or lack thereof. Offering the use of props in a way that doesn't diminish anyone's feelings of empowerment can be simple if you as the teacher are clear as to the guidelines for when it is appropriate. Giving simple “if this, than that” statements is a useful tactic - “if your low back is rounded, than place blocks under your hands”

Warm Up Syllabus

Balasana Childs Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Erectors, rhomboids, buttocks, tibialis anterior, quads

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy, disc injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Hips to heels, arms along Side the body

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Hips can't sit on heels - quads require stretching - place blankets under hamstrings
- Feet can't plantar flex - place blanket under shins

Utthita Balasana Extended Childs Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: buttocks, QL, Quads, Tibialis anterior, lats, adductors

Potential Strength: Rhomboids, latissimus dorsi, triceps, flexors of the wrist

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Low back disc injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Childs pose, reach arms in front
- Take knees wide
- On fingertips lift shoulders up

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Shoulders drop - activate rhomboids

Salamba Bhujangasana Sphinx Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: abdominals

Required Strength: erectors, rear deltoids

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy, sacral instability

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From prone, place forearms down, lift chest and pull heart through arms.

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Pushing into compression of low back - soften into retraction, then pull elbows toward hips to traction spine

Cat Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Rhomboids, erectors

Required Strength: Serratus, triceps, abdominals

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Knee sensitivity or bursitis or knee injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From all 4's round spine and separate shoulder blades

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Shoulder blades not protracted - activate serratus anterior

Cow Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: abdominals

Required Strength: QL, triceps, spinal erectors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Knee sensitivity (blanket under knees helps)

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From All 4's relax spine downward and lift sit bones upward
- Lift gaze upward

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Little pelvic movement - use QL and erectors to anterior tilt the pelvis

Three Legged Dog



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: latissimus dorsi, hamstrings, hip flexors

Required Strength: Buttocks, hamstrings, erectors of the spine, deltoids, trapezius

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Wrist or hamstring injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From down dog, lift one leg back and up

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Thigh automatically externally rotates - recruit internal rotators
- Chest drops - use serratus and lats to keep shoulders lifted

Salabasana



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Front deltoids, pectorals, abdominals

Required Strength: Buttocks, hamstrings, calves, erectors of the spine, rear deltoids, rhomboids, trapezius

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From prone, interlace hands behind back and lift chest up (feet optional)

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Shoulders not retracted - use rhomboids

Low Lunge Prep “Runners Lunge”



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: buttocks, rhomboids

Potential Strength: Buttocks, hamstrings, hip flexors, adductors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

For Pregnancy - widen front leg outward

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From down dog step one foot forward and come up to fingertips

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Hips sinking - activate buttocks, quads, hip flexors hamstrings and adductors

Uttanasana with Shoulder Opener



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Hamstrings, Pectorals and front deltoids

Required Strength: rear deltoids, rhomboids, triceps

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Disc injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Uttanasana interlace hands behind back, and extend elbows

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Shoulders not pulled back - requires more retraction of scapula before straightening the arms

Standing Postures

Tadasana Mountain Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:
Anatomical neutral

CONTRAINDICATIONS:
back, leg, or foot injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Big toes touch, heels slightly apart
- Greater trochanter in line with ankle bone
- Legs active w/posterior tilt of the pelvis
- Shoulders back in line with hips
- Ears in line with shoulders

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Feet turned out (external rotation at hips)
- Hyper-extended knees
- Head protracted, shoulders rolled forward
- Pelvis leans forward toward toes

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Feet hip width apart
- Feet hip width apart

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Latissimus dorsi, rhomboids, lower/middle trapezius

Required Strength: Serratus anterior, pectoralis major, upper trapezius, deltoids, triceps.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:
Shoulder impingement

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Tadasana, rotate arms outward
- Reach arms upward and allow shoulders to rise
- If possible place palms together

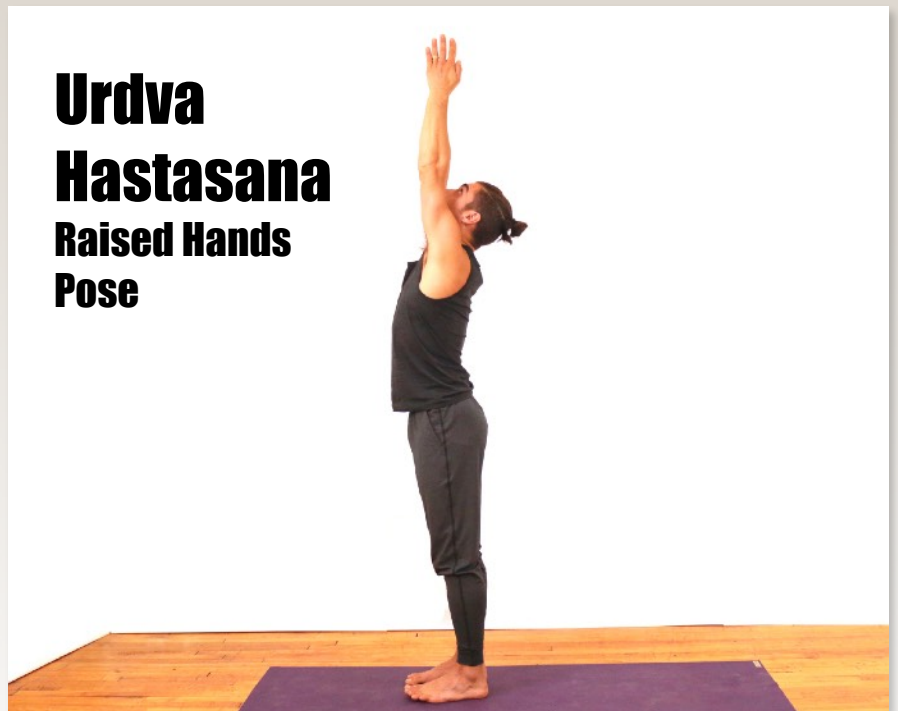
COMMON PATTERNS:

- Elbows bend - recruit triceps and activate upper trapezius more
- Inner shoulders rise - relax levator scapula and use more serratus anterior

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Hands wide

Urdva Hasthasana Raised Hands Pose



Ardha Uttanasana Half Forward Fold



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: hamstrings, calf's, erectors of the spine

Potential Strength: Quads, abductors and/adductor of the hips.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Injury to Intervertebral disk in low back.
Hamstring tear or bursitis of the bursa near sit-bone attachment

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Tadasana feet
Hands in front of feet on fingertips
Half Lift: Lift Chest and sit bones
- Forward Fold: Release head toward floor. Weight centered over toes and finger tips

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Thighs externally rotated
- Pelvis tucked, low back overly rounded
- Pelvis leaning back behind heels
- hyper-extension in knees

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Feet hip width apart

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: hamstrings, calves
Required Strength: QL, erectors of the spine

Potential Strength: Quads, abductors and/adductor of the hips.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Injury to Intervertebral disk in low back.
Hamstring tear or bursitis of the bursa near sit-bone attachment

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Tadasana feet
Hands in front of feet on fingertips
Half Lift: Lift Chest and sit bones
- Forward Fold: Release head toward floor. Weight centered over toes and finger tips

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Thighs externally rotated
- Pelvis tucked, low back overly rounded
- Pelvis leaning back behind heels
- hyper-extension in knees

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:



Uttanasana Forward Fold

Phalakasana Plank Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Strength: triceps, pectorals, serratus, rotator cuff, wrists/forearms, core.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

weak or injured wrists or shoulders.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Same legs & feet set up as plank
- Elbows bent - point straight back
- Forearm perpendicular to the ground.
- Resist gravity by engaging the triceps/shoulder girdle toward plank

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Upward or anterior tilted scapula (shoulder punch forward)
- Elbow winged out (lack of rotator cuff engagement)
- Fingers not active lack of forearm/wrist engagement

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Knees down to floor for half variation
- Come all the way down to belly as you lower until arm strength builds

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Rhomboids, upper erectors of spine, flexors of wrist.

Required Strength: forearm/wrists serratus anterior, pectorals, core muscles

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

shoulders or wrist injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Shoulders and wrists are joint-stacked in one line
- Ankles over the balls of the feet
- Upper back rounded, shoulder blades protracted

COMMON PATTERNS:

- No forearm activation - fingers relaxed
- Serratus anterior not engaged - chest dropped (retracted scapula)
- Belly dropped down - lack of abdominal engagement
- Head drops down below the shoulders

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Knees down until wrist/shoulder/core strength builds
- On forearms for wrist injury

Chaturanga Dandasana Four-Limbed Staff Pose



Urdvha Mukha Svanasana Upward Dog



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Abdominals, hip flexors, pectorals, front intercostals

Required Strength: Spinal Extensors, rhomboids, Trapezius, triceps, rear deltoids

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Abdominal injuries or tightness, sacrum instability

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Finger tips inline with middle chest, elbows bent.
- Pull ribcage away from hips before rising
- To rise up bring the shoulders toward ears and pull the upper body forward, then up
- Chest softens between shoulder blades (retraction of the scapula)
- Gentle depression of scapula at peak of posture

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Shoulders in front of rib cage - not allowing for retraction, usually an indication that the shoulders are not elevating enough for range of motion.
- Pushing instead of pulling - caused compression in lumbar, relax pectoral muscles and activate rhomboids and trapezius
- Abdominals over active - diminishes the spine's ability to go into extension

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: pectorals, abdominals, hip flexors

Required strength: rhomboids, latissimus Dorsi, lower fibers of the trapezius, spinal erectors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Wrist, abdominal injury, or lack of abdominal or hip flexor flexibility

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Shoulders behind chest (retract scapula)
- Shoulder blades down the back (depress scapula)
- Quads active - feet reach back chest pulls forward and up

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Lack of back body engagement (Erectors, rhomboids, trapezius)
- Shoulders rolled forward and down (upper pectoral major and pec minor)

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Roll a blanket under the tops of the thighs
- Hands on blocks - decrease the required extension
- Cobra Pose

Bhujangasana Cobra Pose



PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Start on bolster
- Hands on blocks

Adho Mukha Svanasana Downward Facing Dog



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: latissimus dorsi, hamstrings, calves

Potential Strength: forearms/wrists, triceps, upper trapezius, serratus anterior, deltoids, hip flexors, quads.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Shoulder impingement or weakness
wrist injury, Low back disc Injury, Torn hamstring

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Shoulders toward ears (scapula elevation)
- Arm pits toward face (external rotation)
- Low back arched (neutral) activate hip flexors and low back

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: abdominals & shoulders

Required strength: quads, buttocks, QL And erectors, upper trapezius, serratus anterior deltoids.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

shoulder injuries

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Feet together, heels slightly apart
Knees back over heels
- Lumbar arched
- Arms shoulder distance, palms facing one another - or palms together/elbow straight.
- shoulders Up toward ears
- Lift heart up

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Head drops in front of shoulders
Over-flexion of the lumbar spine
- Too much posterior tilt of the pelvis rounds the thoracic spine and hunches the shoulders

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Feet hip width apart - easier for hips and low back
- hands on thighs, hips or palms together.
- Block between thighs (adductor and pelvic floor strength)

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Rounded upper back - need more scapula elevation and deltoid strength
- Shoulders dropped (hyper flexion)
- Low back rounded (right hamstrings weak low back)
- Stance too short - will inhibit ability to be in natural curves of the spine

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Knees bent to release hamstring tension so low back can arch
- Forearms down - wrist injuries

Utkhatasana Chair Pose



Virabhadrasana I Warrior 1



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: hip flexors, abdominals, latissimus dorsi

Required Strength: Quads, buttocks, obliques, rotators and erectors of the spine, serratus anterior and upper trapezius

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Shoulders injury (can modify), knee or ankle injuries or instability

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Heels hip width apart
- Back foot turned in 45 degrees forward
Hips rotate toward front of mat (not all the way)
- Torso faces forward by rotating the spine,
- Arms reach towards the sky- optional
Gaze forward or up to fingertips

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: hip flexors, abdominals, latissimus dorsi

Potential Strength: Quads, calves, buttocks, erectors of the spine, serratus anterior and upper trapezius

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

shoulder or knee injuries, Balance restrictions

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Feet hip width apart
- Lumbar gently arched
- Arms shoulder distance, palms facing one another - or palms together/elbow straight.
- shoulders Up toward ears
- Lift heart up

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Hips hanging on flexibility - Press into feet lift hips up
- Too much posterior or anterior tilt of pelvis, find neutral low back.

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Back knee down for balance
- hands on front thigh "prep position"

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Back foot - arch dropped
- Back inner knee dropping or twisting
Too much weight in back leg - compresses lumbar
- Lack of upper torso strength - no lift or turn of chest
- Lack of shoulder strength - shoulders dropped elbows bent

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Back heel up for lunge pose (forces strength of the legs and back)
- Hands at hear for shoulder injuries

High Lunge



Virabhadrasana II

Warrior 2



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Adductors

Required Strength: quads, buttocks, hip abductors, Deltoids.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee injury, adductor tears, shoulder impingement, sprained ankle (outer ligaments)

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Front foot parallel to side of mat
- Back foot parallel to back edge of mat
- Front foot bisects arch
- Front knee bent
- Front knee points over 2nd/3rd toe
- Arms approximately shoulder height , gaze over front middle finger

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Adductors, Latissimus dorsi,

Require Strength: Quadriceps, Deltoids, rotators of spine/neck, extensors of the spine

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee injury, adductor/groin tear, shoulder impingement or rotator cuff tear

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Warrior II feet and legs (front heel bisects back arch)
- Hand outside front foot
- Top arm reaches over ear palm facing down (shoulder toward ear)

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Tight adductors or postural patterns causing back thighs to sway forward-align greater trochanter with ankle.
- Hyper extension of back knee
- Front knee winged in - tight adductors, activate gluteus max, min, and medium
- Top arm lack of scapula humeral rhythm - multiple visual indications.

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Front forearm on thighs or hand to a block
- Modify gaze to side wall
- Top Hand on hip, or behind head (press head back into hand)
- Hips on chair

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Back and/or front foot turned out
- Hyper extension of back knee
- Back hip and pelvis pressed forward
- Front Knee Wings in - Abduct and externally rotate
- Back arm behind torso (over horizontally extended)

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Hands to hips if shoulder injury
- Chair under front hip/thigh
- Short stance or wedge under back foot (reduces ankle strain)

Utthita Parsva konasana

Extended Side Angle Pose



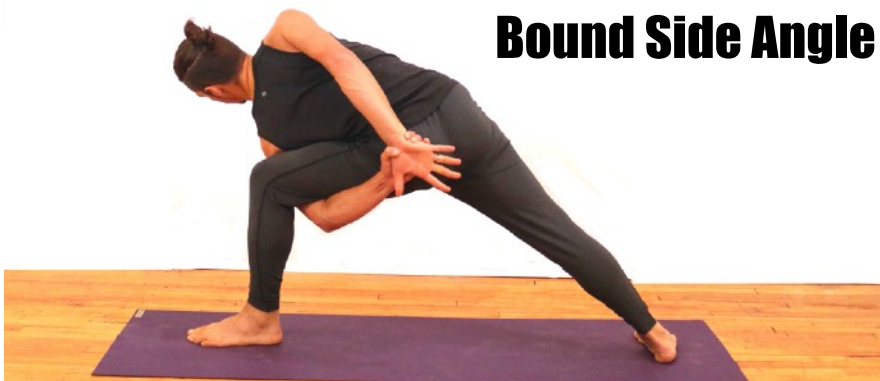
Side Angle Prep



Baddha Parsvakonasana



Bound Side Angle



Variation B Humble Warrior



Variation C Side Angle



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: serratus anterior, pec. major, front deltoids, adductors. external rotators of shoulder

Required Strength: internal rotators of shoulder, pec minor, rotators of spine, rhomboids

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Shoulder, hamstring, adductor injury, Hip impingement. Must be able to do variation B & C comfortably, and evert bottom foot.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Side angle - variation C - bow forward and reach bottom arm under, top arm over.
- With your bottom hand grab top wrist if possible, or clasp fingers
- Turn the pelvis open using your buttock muscles, then turn your chest toward side wall.
- Roll top shoulder back by engaging rhomboid muscles

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Torso not below thigh, if bound this could cause pressure on bottom shoulder - work on hip range of motion first in variation B and C.
- Pelvis not turned upward - lack of glute engagement
- Unable to bind - requires strength of internal rotators and flexibility of external rotators of the shoulder

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Variation B, or C - less flexibility required
- In both full version and variation B you can place your wrists in a looped strap and try to pull it apart - this will help to gain shoulder range of motion.
- Variation C - can use a block under hand for less flexible students, or a block under foot to increase flexibility of the posture.

Trikonasana Triangle Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Adductors, hamstrings

Required Strength: Abductors, Ankle stabilizers (fibularis muscles, and inversion muscle group), flexors of the wrist, deltoids, Quads, spinal erectors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Hip Impingement: labral tears, or bursitis in hip. Hamstring Tendonitis, Sciatica

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From tree pose grab big toe or outer end of foot
- Pull foot up high and kick foot diagonally forward (not directly out to the side)
- Keep pelvis facing forward
- Allow the pelvis to lift on the side of the top leg to avoid compression or impingement

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Standing hip disengaged- sags out to the side causing the opposite hip to drop.
- Lack of internal rotator strength: Pelvis turns away from standing hip.
- Lack of hip flexor strength or tight tibialis anterior: Hips pressed forward toward toes
- Compression or strain of top knee - activate hamstrings

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Bend both knees
- Strap around foot
- Free hand on the wall or to the hip

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: hamstrings, adductors, abductors of back hip

Potential Strength: hamstrings, calf's, adductors. Psoas, obliques, spinal rotators

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Hamstring tendonitis, adductor tear, hip impingement

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Heal to Heal, front leg turned to front of mat
- Back leg and foot slightly turned in Both legs straight
- Front hand on outside of front foot Back/top arm reaches to sky

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Hooked Front foot- Activate fibularis muscles (outer ankle in)
- Hyper-extension or compression of front knee - engage hamstrings or calves - drag front heel back isometrically or lift front heel up to activate calves
- Front thigh bone internally rotated - resulting in inner knee compression or inner hamstring strain near back of inner knee.
- Top arm reaching behind shoulder joint
- Top Hip Too Open - Bottom arm won't reach ground
- Top hip closed - not able to turn the chest

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Block under bottom hand
- Top hand on hip
- Parsvakonasana (side angle pose)

Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana A



Ardha Chandrasana Half Moon



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Adductors, Hamstrings

Required Strength: Abductors, Buttocks, obliques

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Any leg injury that inhibits balance, adductor tear, Hip impingement, low blood pressure

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Support hand on fingertips diagonally forward of and wide of the front foot
- Pelvis is working to open away from the ground
- Lifted leg abducted but no rotation and no extension (keep neutral).

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Adductors, Hamstrings

Potential Strength: Adductors, Abductors, Quads, Hamstrings

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee injuries, sprained ankle

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Feet out the same wingspan as your arms
- Thighs slight internal rotation (feet slight turn in)
- Pelvis tipped forward into hip flexion
- Optional Hand variations - finger tips to the ground, peace fingers to big toes, interlaced hands behind back

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Hips Leaned back behind heels
- Lack of hip flexion - Tight hamstrings resulting in lumbar flexion (rounded low back)

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Blocks under the hands
- Hands on chair or at the wall to work on lumbar extension/hip flexion

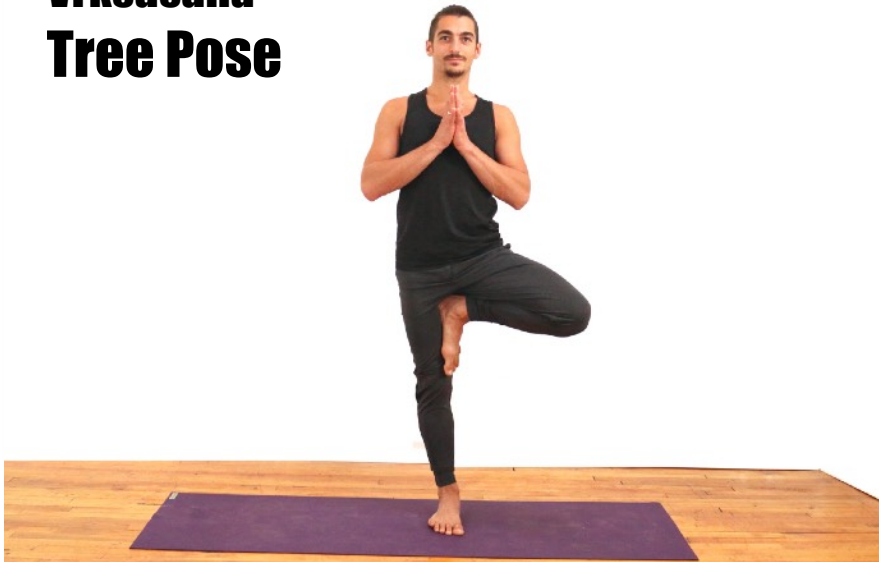
Prasarita Padottanasana Prep



Wide Angle Forward Fold



Vrksasana Tree Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Require flexibility: Adductors, Quads

Required Strength: Abductors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Any injury or condition inhibiting balance on one leg.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Lifted left is to the thigh, calf or ankle (avoid knee)
- Knee is out to side but forward of pelvis
- Hips neutral - greater trochanter in line with ankle bone
- If palms are together relax shoulder blades downward.
- If Arms are lifted, shoulders elevated

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: adductors, obliques, rectus abdominus, pec major, latissimus dorsi

Potential Strength: Abductors, adductors, gluteus max

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee, shoulder or hip, ankle injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From warrior two flip front palm upward
- Turn chest slightly forward
- Lean torso forward and lift rib cage upward
- Reach top arm up and back
- Bottom arm rests gently on back thigh or shin
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COMMON PATTERNS:

- Torso falls down the back of the pose - Keep front ribs above front hip bone (lean forward not back)
- Back inner thigh drops -squeeze feet toward each other and lift inner back thigh.
- Front knee wings in - use glute medius and maximus

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Top hand behind head to support neck

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Outer hip of standing leg sags outward - activate abductors to bring pelvis inward (helps to lift upper hip)
- Pelvis rotating outward: activate TFL, abductors, adductors to turn pelvis straight forward
- Shoulders dropped when arms are over head - Activate serratus anterior and trapezius to lift shoulders

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- One Hand on the wall
- Place ball of upper foot on ground, foot to shin "kickstand"

Reverse Warrior



Parsvottanasana Pyramid Pose



Traditional Variation



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Hamstrings, adductors, hip flexors

Required Strength: Upper hamstrings and glutes, lower leg muscles

Potential Strength: rectus abdominus, adductors and glutes of standing leg

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Hamstring injury, blood pressure, Lumbar disc injury, pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- One foot/leg down, one leg up.
- Keep the lifted leg neutral - requires active internal rotation
- Let the head release down towards the floor or look at naval
- Fingertips to the ground or one hand being ankle

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Top thigh overly externally rotates (a little is ok)
- Bottom hip sags out to the side- requires abductors and glutes
- Leaning back into standing heel - Emphasises stretch of hamstring attachments rather than belly of hamstrings

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Bend both knees
- Hands on blocks

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Require flexibility: Hamstrings, spinal erectors, back calves

Potential Strength: fibulas group, inversion group, calves, hamstrings, glutes, QL

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

lows back or disc injury, high blood pressure, pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Back thigh/foot slightly turned out, heel down
- Flex at hips, fold over the front leg
- finger tips to the ground
- Traditional Variation: Hands come together behind the back

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Weight forward or back (hips uneven).
- Rolling front ankle out: lack of fibulas strength
- Hyperextension in front knee - lack of hamstring activation
- Front leg overly bent: Engage quadriceps
- Top of hamstring over stretches: micro tuck sit bone toward heel to activate attachment point

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Hands on a wall, chair or blocks

Ekapadasana Standing Split



Ardha Hanumanasana Prep



Half Monkey Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Hamstrings, Hip Flexors, Rectus femoris, adductors

Required Strength: Internal Rotators (adductors especially) of back hip, Buttocks (external rotation) of front leg, spinal extensors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

hamstring, groin or hip flexor injury. This is an extreme pose and may not be suitable for most people.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- One Leg Forward, one leg back - knees work toward straight
- Lower back is in extension
- Back Leg requires active internal rotation to maintain neutral

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Pelvis Not Centered - due to the extreme stretch of opposing muscle groups the hips will lean to the right or left in order to avoid the stretch (use blocks under hands to lift hips to a height where they can be even. Activate adductors of back leg, hamstrings of front (pull legs toward each other) to maintain lifted hips.

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Blocks underneath the hands, beside the hips
- Block underneath the front leg buttock
- Chairs under each hand, block under back thigh
- Half Hanuman, back knee bent

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Hamstrings, spinal erectors

Potential Strength: Hamstrings, tibialis anterior, Hip flexors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Hamstring or low back injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Lunge place back knee down
- Straighten front leg with chest lifted
- Bow over front leg
- Draw chin to chest
- Keep front foot flexed to stretch calves

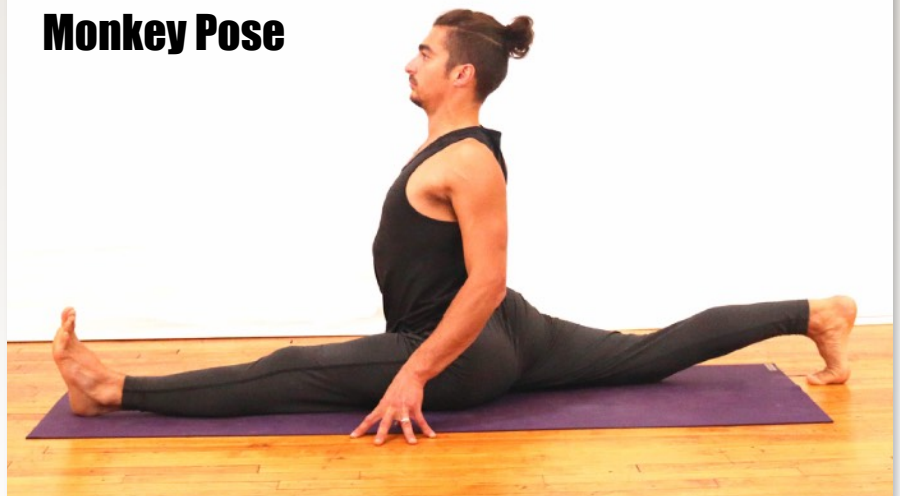
COMMON PATTERNS:

- Front knee not straight - keep chest lifted to minimize risk of injury and activate quadriceps
- Back hip opening outward - turn pelvis forward (try to do so from the adductors of front hip)
- Front knee hyper extends - activate hamstrings by pulling front heel down and back

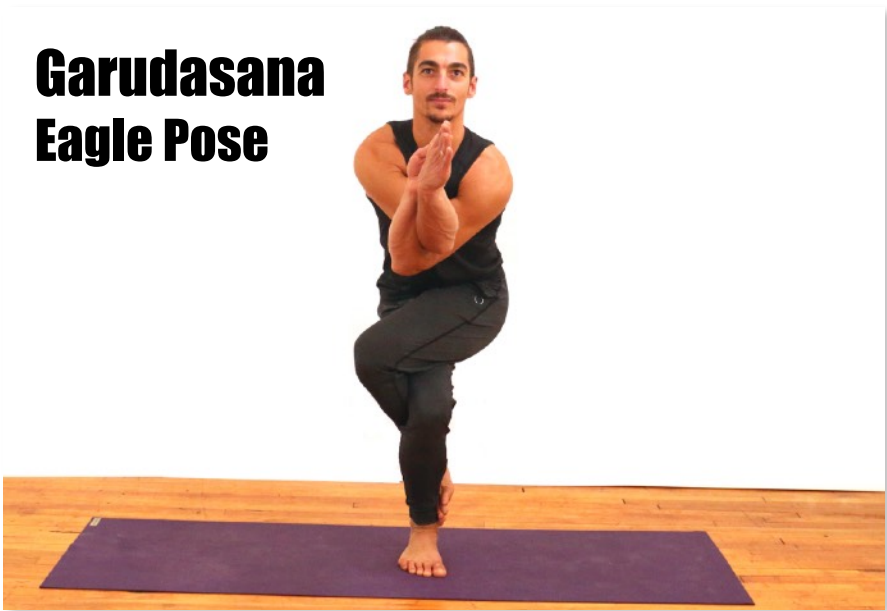
PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Place hands on blocks
- Lift back knee up
- Keep chest lifted in prep position

Hanumanasana Monkey Pose



Garudasana Eagle Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: abductors of hips, glute max, rhomboids, middle trapezius, rear deltoids.

Potential Strength: Abductors/adductors of standing hip, Tibialis anterior and fibulas of bound foot

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee, shoulder or hip injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Cross top one leg over - turn pelvis toward standing leg
- Hook foot if possible behind calf
- Cross one arm under one arm over (if right leg on top, right arm under) and attempt to clasp fingers into wrist/heal of hand. Don't try to match up fingers.

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: obliques, rotators of the spine, QL

Required Strength: Quads, buttocks, obliques, deltoids, spinal rotators, QL, Erectors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy, disc injuries

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Feet together or hip width, take an elbow to opposite knee
- Pull the front ribs in to round the back
- Rotate the abdominals and chest
- Lift the heart up to the thumbs
- Using erectors of the spine, lengthen the heart.

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Chest resting on thighs - recruit QL and obliques
- Not able to place elbow on thighs - usually not sitting low enough at the knees as well as stiff core and back
- One Side of the torso longer than the other - recruit obliques on the longer side

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Block between shins
- Open arms to increase depth of twist

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Standing hip abductors disengaged - harder to wrap top leg and harder to balance
- Knees too far forward (using ankle joint end range to balance) - move hips and knees back toward heels.
- Top Knee Pain: Sit lower to decrease strain on ligaments
- Cant Cross arms: Protract scapula to increase horizontal adduction

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Take a single cross of arms/legs
- Toes to the floor or single cross of legs
- Hand or hands on a wall

Ekapadasana Standing Split



Parvrita

Parsvakonasana

Revolved Side Angle



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Gluteus maximus, abdominals, intercostal muscles in the back ribs

Required Strength: Abductors, Glutes, lower leg muscles, spinal rotators, deltoids

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Knee or low back injury: high/low blood pressure, pregnancy.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- High Lunge or Warrior I feet and leg alignment
- Opposite arm of front leg crosses over for triceps to thigh -spread arms wide
- Variation B - palms together
- Variation C - Hand on inside of foot
- Variation D Back Knee down, hands at Heart

Variation B

Hands to Heart



COMMON PATTERNS:

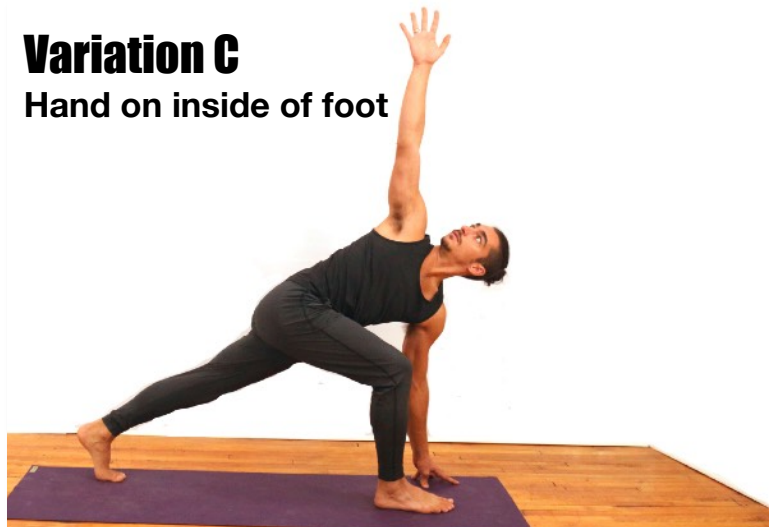
- Back hip dropping in lunge variation - no Gluteus max, min, med engagement.
- Chest laying on thigh - no back engagement
- Lack of oblique engagement, twist coming from shoulders

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Block under bottom hand for Variations A & C
- Blanket or rolled over mat for D
- Top arm over ear for more advanced posture

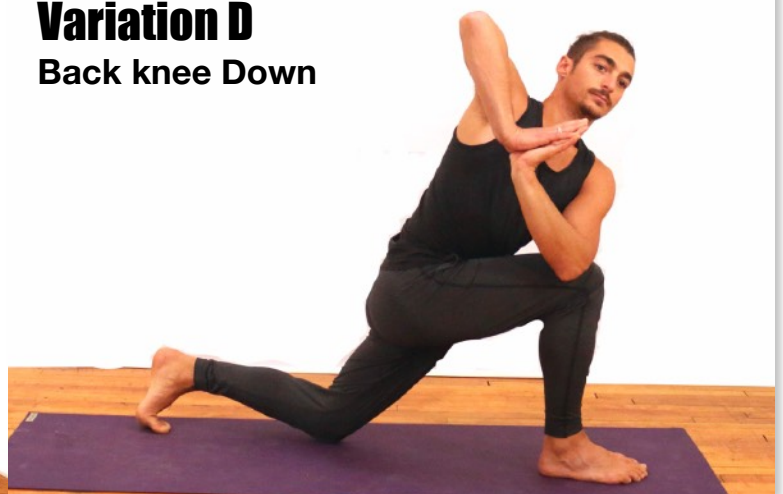
Variation C

Hand on inside of foot



Variation D

Back knee Down





**Uttita Hasta
Padagustasana A**

**Extended Hand to
Big Toe Pose**

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Hamstrings

Required Strength: Standing hamstrings/ glutes, erectors of back, Forearm flexors and deltoids of arm that's holding foot.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

low back, lumbar discs, or hamstring injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From standing with one leg up (knee bent) hand grabs foot or peace fingers to big toe.
- Extend leg forward using quad strength
- Resist with the shoulders -pull back
- Keep Chest Lifted
- Gaze at one point

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Abductors/IT band, hamstrings, QL, buttocks, hamstrings, erectors, rotators, obliques

Potential Strength: r Obliques, rotators of the spine, abductors, adductors, hamstrings, buttocks

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Any back injury, torn hamstring, pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Heels are hip distance wide
- Back foot slightly turned out (lifted as a modification)
- Pelvis level
- Rotate from obliques and rotators of the spine

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Back leg pelvis dropping - activate buttocks/outer hips of front leg
- Top arm overly horizontally flexed - pull shoulder back, hand forward
- Neck struggling as a result of under rotation of the spine - look down or to side wall instead
- Feet too narrow side to side - makes the posture more difficult in regards to flexibility and balance

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Block under bottom hand
- Top hand on hip
- Back heel lifted, square pelvis to front

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Leaning into the outer hip of standing leg - lack of abductor strength
- Hips exaggeratedly forward or back of standing heel.
- Shoulder holding lifted leg is dropped forward and down - activate rhomboids and traps by lifting shoulder up and pulling it back
- Either knee compressed - activate hamstrings to micro bend

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Bend either or both knees
- Hold hands under hamstring - press down into hands and kicking heel forward



**Parvrita Trikonasana
Revolved Triangle**

Uttita Hasta Padagustasana C



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: hamstrings, Gluteus maximus, abdominals, intercostal muscles in the back ribs

Required Strength: lower leg muscles, spinal rotators, deltoids, QL, Erectors of the spine, Buttocks, Hamstrings

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

hamstring, or spine injury, pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Tadasana bring one knee up and grab the outer foot w/opposite hand
- Extend the leg forward and pull shoulder back
- Rotate spine and extend back arm

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: hamstrings, Gluteus maximus, abdominals, intercostal muscles in the back ribs

Required Strength: lower leg muscles, spinal rotators, deltoids, QL, Erectors of the spine, Buttocks, Hamstrings

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

hamstring, or spine injury, pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Ardha Uttanasana extend one leg back, and the opposite hand up on hip
- Turn the chest toward standing leg
- Extend top arm up
- Hips working toward level

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Lifted leg hip drops - lift hip via abductors, and hamstrings (slight tuck of sit bone downward)
- Top arm - hyper horizontally flexed, move shoulder back hand forward
- Inner knee of standing leg compressed- micro bend knee and rotate thigh outward

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Block, or chair under the bottom hand
- Keep upper hand on hip
- Bend standing knee
- Bend upper knee to help activate hamstrings and buttocks

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Straightening leg too soon - work on finding hip flexion before knee extension
- Bound shoulder not resisting - will make it harder on the shoulder joint, and harder to find depth in upper hip.
- Hips Swayed forward - recruit hip flexors of standing hip to help lean weight back over the standing heel

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Keep knee bent with hand on outer knee instead of foot
- Use a strap around upper foot
- Back Hand on a wall

Parvritta Ardha Chandrasana



Vashistasana

Side Plank



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Latissimus Dorsi

Required Strength: Rotator Cuff, Serratus anterior, Abductors of bottom hip, Obliques, triceps, lower fibers of trapezius.

Potential Strength: Flexors of wrist and fingers

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

wrist or shoulder injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Bottom Hand slightly forward of bottom shoulder (not stacked)
- External rotation of bottom shoulder and depress shoulder blade
- Press down through hand and foot to lift hips

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Bottom Shoulder set forward - pull shoulder back behind chest
- Hips sagging down - Keep hips up by activate abductors and obliques

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Variation B, C, or D - easier for shoulder
- Block between legs to increase leg awareness
- Turn pelvis toward sky to recruit buttocks - easier for most people to lift the hips

Variation B

"Kickstand"



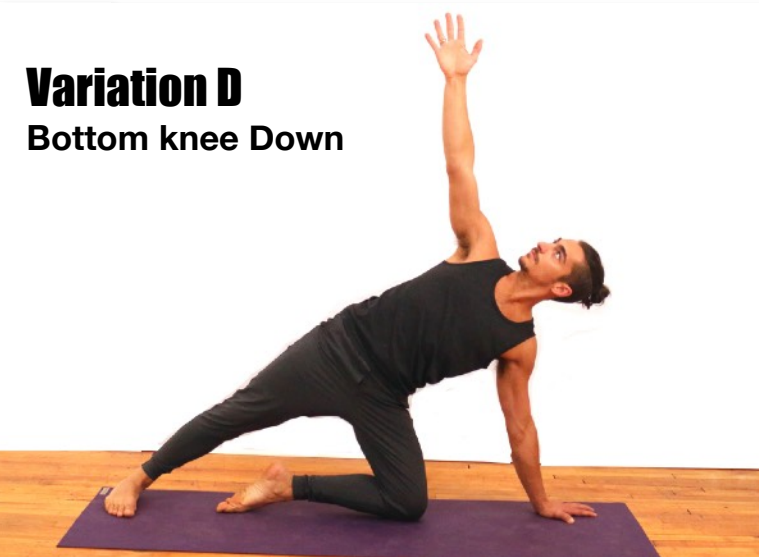
Variation C

Forearm Side Plank



Variation D

Bottom knee Down



Vashistasana B Extended Side Plank



Variation B “Wild Thing”



Variation C Tree Variation



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Latissimus Dorsi, adductors, hamstrings, calves

Required Strength: Rotator Cuff, Serratus anterior, Abductors and buttocks of bottom hip, Obliques, triceps, lower fibers of trapezius, Flexors of wrist/fingers, Fibularis muscles

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

wrist, shoulder, hamstring, adductor injury, Hip or shoulder impingement. Must be able to do variation B & C comfortably, and evert bottom foot.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Bottom Hand slightly forward of bottom shoulder (not stacked)
- External rotation of bottom shoulder and depress shoulder blade
- Press down through hand and foot to lift hips (pelvis faces toward the sky)
- Take Tree pose variation and grab big toe or outer foot
- Press hips up, pull top shoulder back and kick upward into the hand.

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Bottom Shoulder set forward - pull shoulder back behind chest
- Hips sagging down - Keep hips up by turning pelvis more toward the sky and use buttocks and QL to press hips upward
- Bottom foot not everted: hips must be up high enough, press inner edge of the foot down.
- Straightening top leg with hips down - better to keep hips up and top leg bent.

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Variation B, or C - less flexibility required
- Bottom foot against a wall.

Uttita Hasta Padagustasana C



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: hamstrings, Gluteus maximus, abdominals, intercostal muscles in the back ribs

Required Strength: lower leg muscles, spinal rotators, deltoids, QL, Erectors of the spine, Buttocks, Hamstrings

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

hamstring, or spine injury, pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Tadasana bring one knee up and grab the outer foot w/opposite hand
- Extend the leg forward and pull shoulder back
- Rotate spine and extend back arm

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: hamstrings, Gluteus maximus, abdominals, intercostal muscles in the back ribs

Required Strength: lower leg muscles, spinal rotators, deltoids, QL, Erectors of the spine, Buttocks, Hamstrings

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

hamstring, or spine injury, pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Ardha Uttanasana extend one leg back, and the opposite hand up on hip
- Turn the chest toward standing leg
- Extend top arm up
- Hips working toward level

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Lifted leg hip drops - lift hip via abductors, and hamstrings (slight tuck of sit bone downward)
- Top arm - hyper horizontally flexed, move shoulder back hand forward
- Inner knee of standing leg compressed- micro bend knee and rotate thigh outward

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Block, or chair under the bottom hand
- Keep upper hand on hip
- Bend standing knee
- Bend upper knee to help activate hamstrings and buttocks

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Straightening leg too soon - work on finding hip flexion before knee extension
- Bound shoulder not resisting - will make it harder on the shoulder joint, and harder to find depth in upper hip.
- Hips Swayed forward - recruit hip flexors of standing hip to help lean weight back over the standing heel

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Keep knee bent with hand on outer knee instead of foot
- Use a strap around upper foot
- Back Hand on a wall

Parvritta Ardha Chandrasana



Malasana Yogi Squat



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Adductors, buttocks, erectors of lumbar and thoracic, QL, calves, quads

Required Strength: Adductors, abductors, erectors of the spine, posterior deltoids, rhomboids

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee or low back injury, particularly any disc injury.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Legs are slightly wider than the hips
- Feet turned out, knees pressed out
- Palms together, elbows inside knees
- Lift Chest

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Adductors (particularly of adductor magnus of front hip) and back groin, hip flexors, hamstrings, buttock muscles.

Required Strength: Adductors, Glutes, Hamstrings

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Hip impingements or other injury, lumbar disc injuries

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Both hands or forearms to the inside of the front foot
- Back knee down (or up)
- knee faces slightly out
- Front foot faces same direction as knee

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Front knee rolls all the way out - activate adductors unless its on purpose
- Front foot turned in while knee faces out - this could twist the knee

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Block under forearms
- Remain on the palms
- Roll over mat or place blanket below back knee if knee cap is sensitive.

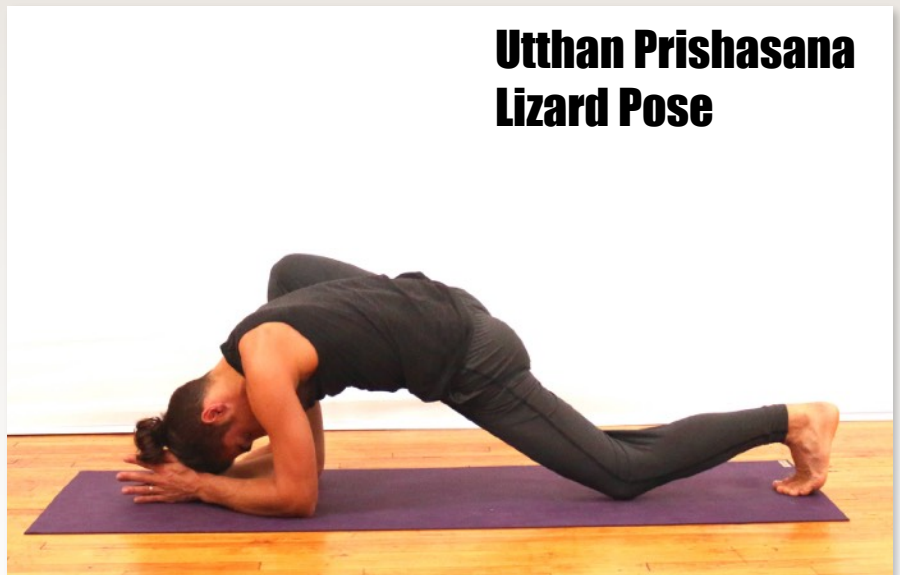
COMMON PATTERNS:

- Tight calves OR ankle structure does not allow for enough dorsi flexion- Lift heels or put a blanket under them.
- Knees collapsing inward- Tight adductors weak abductors, press knees out to engage abductors and external rotators
- Collapsed arches - usually result of tight adductors as well, however pressing the outer edge of the feet down can help

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

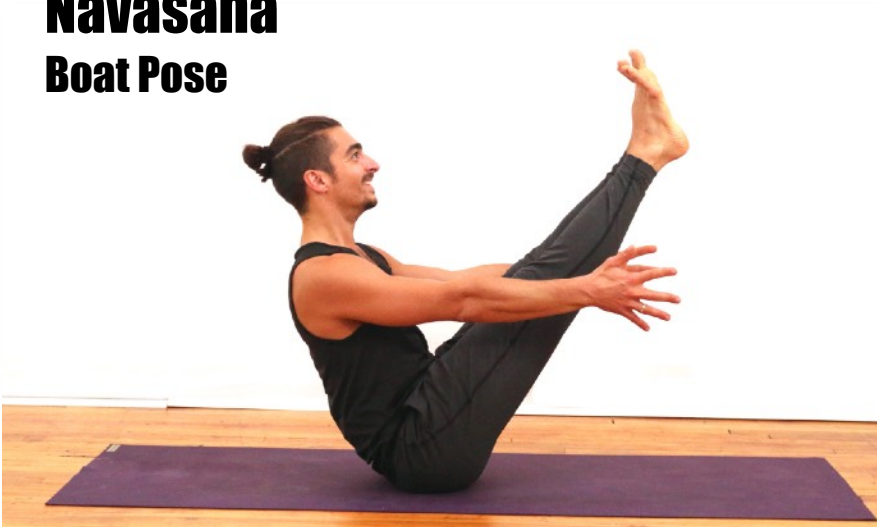
- Block under the seat
- Blanket, wedge, folded mat under the heels

Utthan Prishasana Lizard Pose



Navasana

Boat Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Hamstrings, glutes serratus anterior, calves

Required Strength: Hip Flexors, spinal erectors, QL, Quads deltoids

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

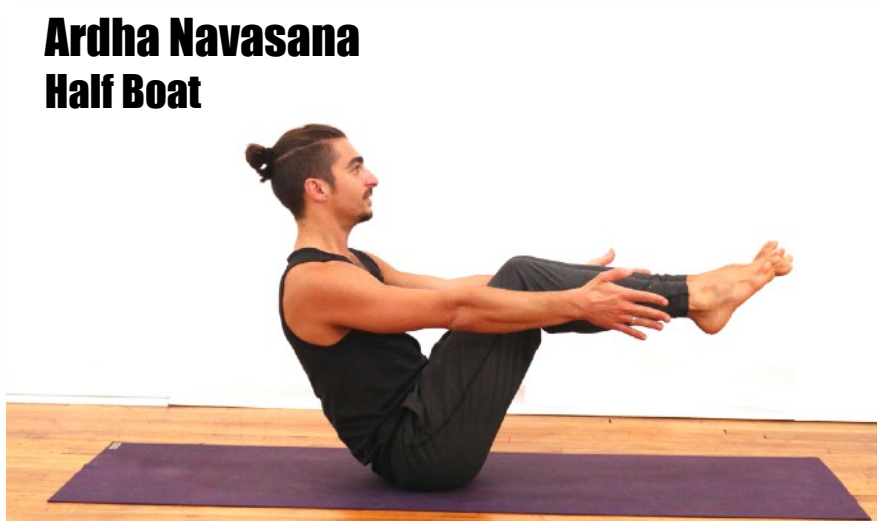
Low back injury or weakness, pregnancy, tailbone structure could cause hyper sensitivity

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From a seated position, lift legs up in front to Half Boat.
- Body creates a V shape at the hip joints (hip flexion)
- Attempt to arch low back muscles
- If appropriate straighten Knees using quadriceps but keep V shape
- Arms parallel to the ground reaching forward
- Flex Feet

Ardha Navasana

Half Boat



COMMON PATTERNS:

- Pelvis overly posterior tilted - activate extensors and QL
- Knees not straight - activate quads
- Rectus Femoris cramps - Actively rotate thighs in to recruit TFL, or rotate thighs all the way out to change the engagement to psoas and adductors.
- Rounding Upper Back - Requires both erectors of upper back and hip flexors to activate more.
- Low Boat - un able to tuck tail bone - requires great activation of rectus abdominals and buttock muscles

Low Boat



PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Variation B, or C - less flexibility required
- Bend Knees - Can relieve rectus femoris from over shortening and make it easier to flex at the hip. Also easier to shift weight of the posture forward.
- Intentionally scoop pelvis and activate rectus abdominals for tail bone sensitivity, or to lesson the intensity of the required hip flexor strength.
- Blanket under pelvis
- Block between shins to activate Adductors

Arm Balances

Bakasana Crow Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Obliques, Glutes, spinal extensors, spinal rotators, rhomboids

Required Strength: Serratus anterior, obliques and spinal rotators, Psoas and hip flexors, triceps, flexors of wrists and fingers, hamstrings, adductors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

wrist, shoulder to low back injury, pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Arms wider than shoulder
- knees on upper outer tricep
- Squeeze legs together and press them into your arm
- Grip the ground
- Lift hips well above elbow height
- Separate shoulder blades

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Arms too narrow, which puts stress on shoulder joint and reduces power
- Hips resting on arm- start with them lifted, and keep them up (abliques/abductors)
- One shoulder dropped - start with knees facing forward and rounding the back (less twist)

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Feet on a block to start
- Block between thighs or shins
- Legs abducted (variation B)

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Adductors, Glutes, spinal extensors, rhomboids

Required Strength: Serratus anterior, abdominals and Psoas, triceps, flexors of wrists and fingers, hamstrings, adductors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

wrist, elbow, shoulder injury
pregnancy, carpal tunnel syndrome, low back or disc injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Knees outside upper arms - squeeze in to stay on arms and activate adductors
- Grip the ground with fingers and lean forward toward them
- Protract shoulder blades by pushing down through the hands

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Falling or fearful of falling : No strength or activation in the Flexors of the wrists and fingers
- Cant lift feet off the ground : not leaning forward
- Knees sliding downward : activate adductors, squeeze in
- Chest dropping down: protract shoulder blades

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Block under the feet to gain height
- Block under the forehead
- Tripod headstand with knees on outer arms
- Supta baksana

Parsva Bakasana Side Crow

Variation B



Eka pada Koundinyasana 1



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Obliques, Glutes, spinal extensors, spinal rotators, rhomboids, hamstrings

Required Strength: Serratus anterior, obliques and spinal rotators, Psoas and hip flexors, triceps, flexors of wrists and fingers, hamstrings, abductors of both hips, Quads.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

wrist or shoulder injury.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Side Crow reach bottom leg forward (quads) top leg back (buttocks and quads)
- Grip the ground

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: adductors, hamstrings, flexors of wrist

Required Strength: Serratus anterior, obliques, QL adductors, glutes, hamstrings, triceps, deltoids, erectors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

wrist, shoulder, adductor injury,

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Down dog bring one knee outside upper arm and lean forward into chaturanga
- Drag the back leg forward then lift up
- Extend front leg

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Arms too narrow - puts stress on shoulder joint and reduces power
- Hips resting on arm- widen hands, use adductors of front leg, push down to lift hips up
- Back Leg heavy - not leaning forward enough

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Back leg on bolsters
- Bolster under head for safety
- Bend both knees

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Arms too narrow, which puts stress on shoulder joint
- Back Leg drops down, will fall to the ground
- Hip resting on elbow - start with hip off the elbow
- Opposite shoulder dropped - allow for retraction of that scapula (whilst actively protracting) and lift shoulder up in order to reduce stress of the anterior capsule of the glena-humeral joint.

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Side Crow Variation B

Eka pada Koundinyasana 2



Bhujapidasana

Shoulder Pressing Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Adductors, hamstrings, calves, spinal extensors and QL, rhomboids

Required Strength: Adductors and abductors (legs turn inward as the extend), Quads, TFL, QL

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

wrist, elbow, disc, hamstring, adductor/groin or shoulder injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Reach arms through legs - lobster claw the palms down behind the heels (thumbs inside heel all other fingers face outward on the outside of heel)
- Walk the feet together and squeeze legs inward
- Once feet lift from squeezing in, then continuously internally rotate thighs and extend at the knee joint using quads

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Hands can't reach to the ground - put hands on blocks and work on hip and back flexibility over time
- Can't straighten legs or hips are low - Turn thigh bones inward significantly and activate quads and spinal extensors/QL

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Bolster under hips - likely to fall on it if new to the posture - danger of tail bone injury
- Blocks under hands

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Glutes, spinal extensors and QL, rhomboids, adductors

Required Strength: Adductors and hamstrings (legs squeeze in on arms), fibularis group and tibialis anterior (ankle lock), triceps, pectorals, serratus anterior,

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

wrist, elbow, disc or shoulder injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Reach arms through legs - lobster claw the palms down behind the heels (thumbs inside heel all other fingers face outward on the outside of heel)
- Walk the feet together and squeeze legs inward
- Ankles cross and feet evert and flex to hold crossing

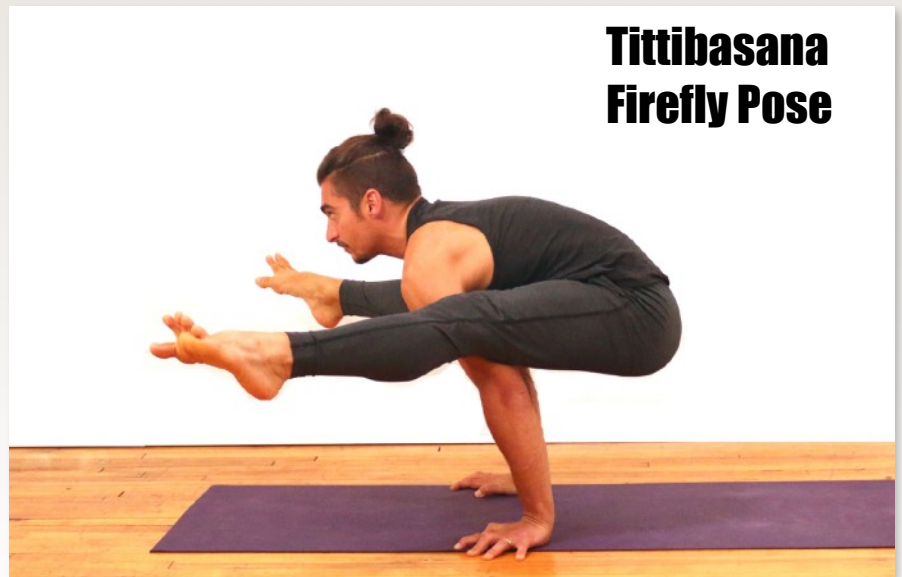
COMMON PATTERNS:

- Hands can't reach to the ground - put hands on blocks and work on hip and back flexibility over time

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Bolster under hips - likely to fall on it if new to the posture - danger of tail bone injury
- Blocks under hands

Tittibasana Firefly Pose



Sirsasana A Head Stand



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Spinal Extensors and QL, buttock and hamstrings (all for the entrance). Latissimus, rhomboids, and lower/middle trapezius (while in the posture)

Required Strength: Triceps, Extensors of the cervical, serratus anterior, adductors of the hand/wrist

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

neck or shoulder injury, shoulder injury, high blood pressure, headache, pregnant

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Clasp hands place forearms on the ground - Prep A
- Bring one knee into chest - Prep B
- Bring Second knee in - Prep C
- Reach Legs straight up, actively pressing down through wrists.

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Arched Spine - rib cage not perpendicular to the ground either due to fear or tight shoulders or proprioception
- All the weight in the head/neck: Push through elbows and wrists to activate the shoulders and arms and decrease weight in neck

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Keep the legs down, but place the head on the floor
- Blocks or chair under feet
- head off the ground - forearm stand

Headstand Prep A



Headstand Prep B



Headstand Prep C



Adho h Vrksasana Handstand



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Lower/middle trapezius, latissimus dorsi, rhomboids, flexors of the wrists

Required Strength: Triceps, serratus anterior, rotator cuff, pectorals, upper trapezius, abdominals, buttocks, quadriceps, adductors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

wrist, elbow, shoulder, neck injuries, high blood pressure, pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Begin in Handstand Prep Position
- Hands are the foundations - grip finger into the ground continuously
- Shoulder blades completely upwardly rotated (outer shoulders toward ears)
- Forearms perpendicular to the floor when balancing (shoulders past wrists when going up)
- Before going up learn to shift weight out of feet and into hands then lift one leg like standing splits with palms on the floor
- Kick one leg Up to L Pose, option to bring second leg up if balanced.
-

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Forearm/wrists/fingers not active (flexors of the wrist) resulting in no balance
- Triceps not active enough - elbows bending, posture becomes heavy and most likely to fall quickly
- Upper trapezius and serratus anterior not active - shoulders are not up by the ears, rib cage will not be able to rotate into the vertical position - handstand will be a backbend at best.

Handstand Prep



Handstand L - Pose



PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Use partners for the entry into handstand (foot on shoulder)
- Use partner for spotting behind handstand
- Block or chair under bottom foot to help shift weight
- Wall for beginner handstands - this will inhibit balance and teach patterns that will make holding a handstand next to impossible. however, it can be empowering, and safer than teaching new yogis how to spot.

Back Bend Prep

Ardha bhekasana



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Quads, hip flexors, abdominals, deltoids, pec major

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Knee injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From sphinx reach back for one foot
- Bring foot toward outer buttocks

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Knee twist - try not to rotate at the knee joint just flexion

Anjaneyasana



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: hip flexors, buttocks
Potential Strength: adductors, hip flexors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Knee or hip flexor injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Childs pose, reach arms in front
- Take knees wide
- On fingertips lift shoulders up

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Shoulders drop - activate rhomboids and latissimus dorsi

Twisted Monkey



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: abdominals, quads, pectorals, hip flexors
Potential Strength: Same as above

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Knee, quad, abdominal or hip flexor injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From anjaneyasana prep place one hand out to the side, and the other reaches back for the foot.

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Hamstring Cramp - use quads - kick foot into hand and pull knees inward.

Salabhasana



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Front deltoids, pectorals, abdominals

Required Strength: Buttocks, hamstrings, calves, erectors of the spine, rear deltoids, rhomboids, trapezius

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From prone, interlace hands behind back and lift chest up (feet optional)

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Shoulders not retracted - use rhomboids

Anahatasana Heart Chakra Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: abdominals, pectorals, latissimus, intercostals

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Shoulder impingement, hyper mobility of upper back

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From all 4's walk hands out in front and relax chest toward the ground

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Pelvis tucked - use buttock and back muscles to anterior tilt

Anjaneyasana Thigh stretch



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Quads, hip flexors, pec major

Potential Strength: Same as above

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Knee, quad or hip flexor injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From anjaneyasana reach back for same side foot
- Track foot toward outer buttocks

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Weight in back knee - lean forward, option to take twisted monkey stretch

Back Bends

Twisted Monkey B



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required flexibility: Pectorals, abdominals, quads, hip flexors

Required Strength: abductors of standing hip, quads of back leg, erectors and rotators of the spine, triceps

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

wrist, elbow, disc or shoulder injury, sacral instability

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From all fours lift one leg up and back behind you
- Reach opposite hand to grab the foot
- Kick back into your hand and lift chest up
- Allow pelvis to open slightly and opposite chest to open as well

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Pectorals, front deltoids, abdominals, hip flexors.

Required Strength: Quadriceps, flexors of the wrists, spinal extensors, buttocks

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy, abdominal injury.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Grab feet with hands - lengthen shoulders and chest away from hips
- Shoulders up toward ears first then kick feet back and up
- Allow shoulder blades to retract

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Shoulders dropped forward and down resulting in lack of range of motion in shoulders, back, and hips.
- Abdominals hyper active - front rib cage locked toward hips
- Abdominal breathing - causes compression in lumbar, breathe into the thoracic instead

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Chest starts on a bolster

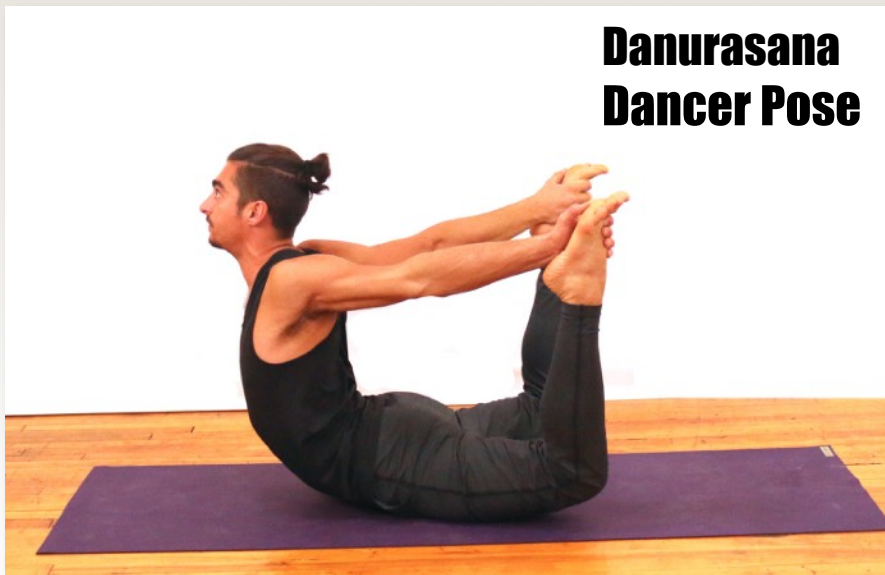
COMMON PATTERNS:

- Bottom hip sags out to the side - activate abductors of standing hip
- Back Compression - activate quads by kicking back and up and lengthen chest forward and up

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Release bind and simply keep one leg up and other arm in cactus shape - activate rhomboids and buttocks

Dhanurasana Dancer Pose



Natarajasana

Dancer Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Hamstrings, Hip flexors, Abdominals, Pectorals

Required Strength: Quadriceps, erectors of the spine

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Hamstring injury, low back injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From chair pose lift one leg up and back behind you
- Hand grabs foot
- Lift shoulder up to allow for range of motion) then kick foot back
- Lift chest upward and tip from the pelvis not the spine

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Hamstrings, adductors, Hip flexors, Abdominals, Pectorals

Required Strength: Quadriceps, erectors of the spine, abductors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Hamstring or adductor injury, low back injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From area uttanasana take one leg up behind
- Hand grabs foot
- Lift shoulder up to allow for range of motion) then kick foot up and back
- Slowly turn pelvis open like ardha chandrasana

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Back Leg externally rotates and abducts : spin thigh inward as you kick back into the hand
- Over active abdominals doesn't allow for spinal extension - breathe thoracic ally and relax superficial abdominals

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Place bottom hand on a block
- Bend standing knee the entire time
- Use a strap around ankle

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Back Leg externally rotates and abducts : spin thigh inward as you kick back into the hand
- Over active abdominals doesn't allow for spinal extension - breathe thoracic ally and relax superficial abdominals

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Place free hand on a wall



Chapasana

Bound Half Moon

Anjaneyasana



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Hip Flexors, Buttocks, abdominals, lower trapezius

Potential Strength: Adductors, Buttocks, Hip Flexors, Erectors of the spine.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Hip, low back injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Front knee past ankle, back knee down
- Lift Chest and abdomen up
- Keep weight forward, take arms up, hands reach back (do not lean body weight back)
- Option to take cactus arms to decrease weight on back and increase strength of rhomboids
- Variation C - take arm that is on front leg side down to a block or fingertips

Variation B Cactus Arms



COMMON PATTERNS:

- Too much weight in back leg (causes pressure in back knee cap)
- Leaning back with upper body - Upper body lifts up, hands go back while lower body and low back stay forward.

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Skip the backbend and reach arms straight up
- blanket or rolled over mat under back knee

Variation C



Ustrasana Camel Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Pectorals, front deltoids, abdominals, hip flexors.

Required Strength: Quadriceps, spinal extensors, buttocks, rear deltoids, rhomboid, trapezius

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy, abdominal injury.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From seated with toes tucked place hands on heels
- Shoulders up toward ears first, then retract the scapula
- Form the arch of the spine by lifting the chest, press down through the hands and lift chest to the sky
- Move Hips forward to the degree that your back allows.

Camel Prep



COMMON PATTERNS:

- Shoulders dropped forward and down resulting in lack of range of motion in shoulders, back, and hips.
- Abdominals hyper active - front rib cage locked toward hips
- Abdominal breathing - causes compression in lumbar, breathe into the thoracic instead

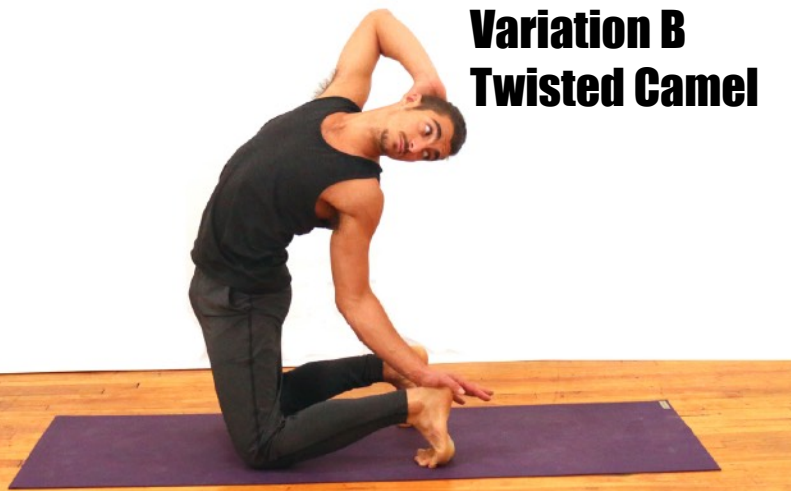
PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Blanket under knees for less stretch of the feet or knee sensitivity

Modification Head Lifted



Variation B Twisted Camel



Set Bandhasana Bridge Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Pectorals, front deltoids, abdominals, hip flexors.

Required Strength: Quadriceps, Glutes, flexors of the wrists, spinal extensors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

abdominal or neck injury.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From supine, bend knees and elbows - press elbows down into the ground and lift hips (Top photo)
- Option to interlace hands under the back
- Press back of head gently into the ground to activate the neck muscles
- Press heels down to increase hip and spinal extension

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Flexors of the wrist, latissimus, lower pectorals, lower trapezius, intercostals, abdominals, hip flexors.

Required Strength: Quadriceps, Glutes, spinal extensors, triceps, upper/middle trapezius, rhomboids

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

abdominal, wrist, shoulder, hip flexor injury.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From bridge pose place hands over head outers shoulder width apart
- Use legs to lift hips and arms to press upper body of the ground
- Keep elbows bend in order to bring the weight into the hands

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Lack of Quad and buttock strength and shoulder range of motion - results in the weight being in the feet, pressure of the back bend will be in the low back, and there will be an extreme wrist extension. Bend Elbows slightly out to the sides and press the pose toward the chest with the strength of the quads and buttocks. Once forearms are vertical then straighten arms while chest is pushing through.

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Hands on blocks (diagonally against the wall)
- Hands on Ankles of a partner or teacher.

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Hips dropped - lack of buttock strength
- Knees splayed outward - under use of internal rotators, press down through inner heels.
- Abdominals hyper active - front rib cage locked toward hips
- Abdominal breathing - causes compression in lumbar, breathe into the thoracic instead

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Block under hips
- Blanket under shoulders to decrease neck flexion

Urdva danurasana Wheel Pose



Cool Down Postures

Eka Pada Kapotasana Pigeon Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Buttocks especially piriformis, adductors, hip flexors

Potential Strength: Buttocks, hip flexors abductors, adductors, fibulas group, tibialis anterior

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Knee injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From down dog, place one shin forward at whatever angle it naturally lands on the mat
- with back toes tucked, reach hips and back heel backward
- Keep back thigh internally rotating
- Keep front hip engaged - press front knee and shin down, lift hips up

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Hips lean to one side or the other - Keep hips up and level using hip muscles
- Front knee pain - there are many solutions depending on where the knee pain is coming from, it usually means there is lack of engagement in one area of the hips or another.

Pigeon Prep



Dandasana Staff Pose



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: hamstrings, Calves, buttocks

Required Strength: Hip flexors, quads, QL, erectors of spine (lumbar in particular), rhomboids, internal rotators of hips.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Low back injuries

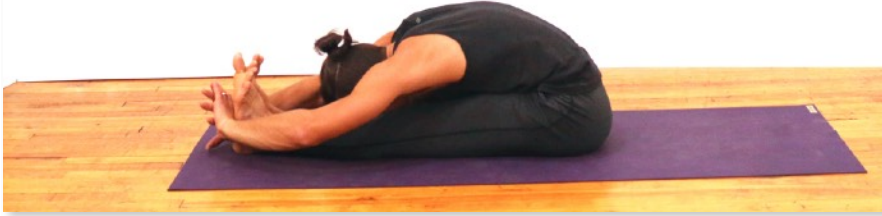
ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Hips completely flexed forming the natural lumbar curve.
- Shoulders slightly back and arms straightening
- Quads active to straighten legs

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Pelvis tucked, thighs externally rotated - use back and internal rotators of hips

Paschimottanasa Seated Forward Fold



Variation B Prep



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: hamstrings, Calves, buttocks, spinal erectors, QL, lower trapezius, back intercostal muscles for breath

Potential Strength: Hip flexors, quads, QL, rhomboids, internal rotators of hips, adductors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

back injury - especially disc issues, asthma, pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Feet flexed, big toes press forward
- Thighs remain neutral - no rotation
- First learn forward with a back bend to assist flexion at hips, then round the upper back over thighs
- Arms reach forward, option to hold feet

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: rotators of the spine, obliques, abductors, glutes

Required Strength: rotators, QL, erectors, triceps, obliques

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Low back injury, Knee injury., Pregnancy

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From seated, cross one leg over the other - top leg foot is firmly planted on the ground
- With support of back hand lift chest and tip pelvis forward
- Turn the belly then the heart then the head.

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Knee pain - helps to extend bottom knee (variation b)
- Lumbar rounded - use back hand and back muscles, best to sit up on a blanket.

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Blanket under hips
- Variation B

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Feet sickle - activate fibulas muscles to evert - press big toe forward, pinky to back
- Thighs roll out - internally rotate back to neutral
- Lacking Hip Flexion - requires blanket under hips, low back and hip flexors strength

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Blanket under hips
- Variation B

Ardha Matsyendrasana Seated Spinal Twist



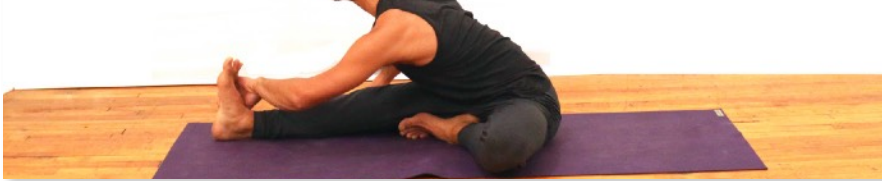
Variation B



Janu Sirsasana Head to Knee Pose



Variation B Prep



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: hamstrings, adductors, QL, latissimus dorsi, lower trapezius

Potential Strength: Adductors, glutes, rotators of the spine, obliques

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee or hip injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From dandasana Bring one foot into the
- inner thigh like tree pose
- Slight twist toward straight leg and forward fold
- Lead with the sternum at first to support the flexion at the hips.

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Obliques, adductors, Latissimus dorsi, hamstrings

Required Strength: Adductors, Abductors, Rotators of the spine, Quads

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Low back injury, Knee injury.

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Janu sirsasana lift upright, and move the bent knee out to the side
- Turn torso and pelvis open
- Side bend toward straight leg

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Knee Lifting Up - tight adductors, try activating abductors and glutes
- Lumbar rounded - sit up on blanket and use erectors and QL

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Blanket under hips
- Variation B, option to place hand behind head

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Flexed lumbar - lacking in flexibility of adductors and hamstrings, and strength of hip flexors and QL and spinal erectors
- Passive external rotation of extended leg - rotate thigh in back to neutral
- No rotation of spine, resulting in a side bend
- Tree knee very high off the ground - tight adductors, weak buttock muscles

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Blanket under hips
- Variation B

Parsva Janu Sirsasana



Variation B Prep



Agnisthambasana Fire Log Pose



Variation B Fire Log Prep



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Adductors, hamstrings, spinal extensors (unless deep hip flexion is present)

Potential Strength: Buttocks -external rotators (required as pelvis tips), Adductors, hip flexors, Abductors, Back extensors, glutes, hamstrings

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

low back injury, torn hamstring, pulled groin

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Feet wide (hips abducted)
Tip the pelvis anteriorly with hand behind hips to initiate
- Thighs/knees/toes face the sky - requires external rotators to activate as pelvis tips anteriorly
- Option to fold forward with forwards on the ground, arms out in front or reach for toes

COMMON PATTERNS:

- For Flexible individuals, Legs tend to roll inward - requires activation of buttocks
- For individuals lacking range of motion in the adductors/hamstrings - thighs tend to roll out pelvis tucked: requires a blanket and activation of abductors and QL/spinal erectors , hip flexors

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Blanket under hips
- Variation B

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Adductors, Abductors and buttocks, QL and erectors,

Potential Strength: adductors, buttocks, hip flexors, fibularis group

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee or hip injury or low back injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Ankles over knees - Both feet are flexed and hanging over things (not on thighs)
- Ankles working toward eversion
- Strongly work the pelvis upright in the prep position before bowing forward
- Option to bow to the right or the left

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Ankles sickled - evert ankles
- Feet on top of thighs - adduct thighs more
- Knees up, low back rounded - add blanket under hips and activate back extensors and TFL

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Blanket under hips
- Variation B -stay lifted
- Blocks under knees
- extend bottom leg forward

Upavista Konasana Wide Angle Pose



Variation B Prep



Baddha Konasana Bound Angle Pose



Variation B Prep



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Adductors, Abductors and buttocks, QL and erectors,
Potential Strength: adductors, buttocks, hip flexors, fibularis group

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee or hip injury or low back injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Tadasana cross one ankle over knee - foot flexed and hanging over things (not on thighs)
- Ankle working toward eversion
- Option to bow forward of on the diagonal as pictured
-

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Ankles sickled - evert ankles
- Foot on top of thighs - adduct thighs more
- Top Hip Dropped - squeeze standing hip in and lift upper hip up to same height as lower hip or higher

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Hands on blocks
- Supine ankle to knee

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Adductors, Abductors and buttocks, QL and erectors,
Potential Strength: adductors, buttocks, hip flexors, fibularis group

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee or hip injury or low back injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Ankles over knees - Both feet are flexed and hanging over things (not on thighs)
- Ankles working toward eversion
- Strongly work the pelvis upright in the prep position before bowing forward
- Option to bow to the right or the left

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Ankles sickled - evert ankles
- Feet on top of thighs - adduct thighs more
- Knees up, low back rounded - add blanket under hips and activate back extensors and TFL

PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

- Blanket under hips
- Variation B -stay lifted
- Blocks under knees
- extend bottom leg forward

Standing Ankle to Knee



Supine Postures

Supine Twist



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: spinal rotators, obliques, abductors, pectorals

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy, disc injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From Savasana cross one knee over and rotate pelvis

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Limited Spinal rotation - helps to recruit back muscles and think of doing a back bend

Ardha Ananda Balasana Half Happy Baby



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: buttocks, Hamstrings, Adductors, QL

Potential Strength: Glutes, Abductors, rhomboids, flexors of the wrists

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

pregnancy, low back hip or knee injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Hands hold outer edges of feet or inner heels
- Widen knees as much as possible, then pull them down toward the ground

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Knees not widening - outer hips or external rotators not engaged enough against the tightness of the adductors
- Upper back rounded/shoulder blades protracted/neck extended - due to lack of hip flexion, use rhomboids to pull shoulders toward the ground resulting in greater hip flexion.

Ananda Balasana Happy Baby



PROPS/MODIFICATIONS:

Half happy baby

Half happy baby with a strap

Supta Upavista Konasana



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Adductors & hamstrings

Required Strength: rear deltoids, quads, abductors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pulled groin, or torn hamstrings

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- From happy baby kick feet into hands and rotate thighs externally to extend the knee joint

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Lack of external rotation

Constructive Rest



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Abductors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy - short lengths of time

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Plane knees together and feet apart
- Various arm positions are optional

Savasana



CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy - short periods of time are ok

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Allow palms to face up and feet to splay out to the sides

Props and Modifications:

- Blanket under the knees
- Blanket under upper back
- Arms in cactus shape
- Blanket under neck if head can't rest on the ground

Seated Closing Postures

Virasana - Heroes Pose



On Block

ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Quads, tibialis anterior

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Knee or ankle injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Knees close together, feet along side outer hips

PROPS AND MODIFICATIONS

- Block under Hips
- Shins on Blanket

Sukhasana Easy Seat



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: buttocks, Adductors, Quads

Required Strength: QL, hip flexors, adductors, erectors of spine

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Low back disc knee injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Cross ankles at mid shi, keep pelvis upright

COMMON PATTERNS:

- Blanket under hips, blocks under knees
- Sit at a wall
- Sit at a wall with block between sacrum and wall

Siddhasana



ANATOMICAL EMPHASIS:

Required Flexibility: Adductors, quads

Required Strength: erectors, QL, hip flexors

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

knee injury

ALIGNMENT POINTS:

- Align heels with pointed feet

PROPS AND MODIFICATIONS:

- Blanket under hips