

The *Viniyoga* of Yoga

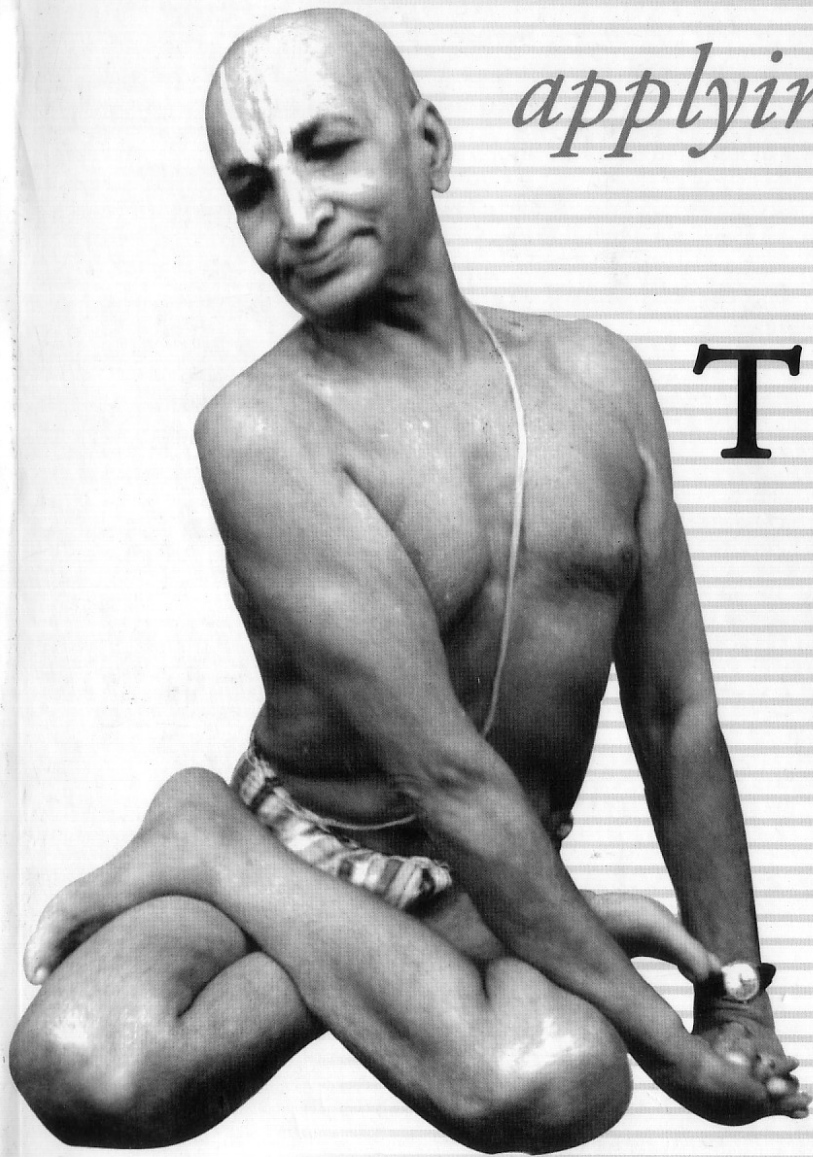
applying yoga for healthy living

TKV Desikachar

with

Kausthub Desikachar

and Frans Moors



Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram

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Dedicated to

*Nathamuni the ninth century yogi whose
contribution to applying yoga is invaluable.*

Acknowledgements

Any work on yoga must represent the spirit of yoga. The word yoga is derived from the word "yuj" which means a union, to join. Take the case of asana or the practise of postures for example - It is a union of body and mind. Take the case of pranayama or breath regulation, it is a union of breath and mind. Similar is the case with all other yoga practices.

While working on this project it was no different. It was a union of minds and hearts of the many people who willingly came forward to help us. The amazing thing about the help rendered was that people offered their services with no expectation of anything in return. Some of their services need to be mentioned.

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The list would be incomplete if we forget to mention the generous contribution of S Sridharan, the executive trustee of the Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, who gave us the moral support and resources to go ahead with this project. Without his help, this project would never have been completed.

**T K V Desikachar
Kausthub Desikachar
Frans Moors**

Table of Contents

Preface.....	1
--------------	---

Introduction.....	5
-------------------	---

Section 1

Asana.....	19
------------	----

Chapter 1

Classification of Asanas.....	23
-------------------------------	----

Chapter 2

Techniques of Asanas.....	43
---------------------------	----

I. SAMASTHITI

1. Samasthiti	49
2. Savasana	50
3. Sukhasana	51
4. Brahmasana	52
5. Siddhasana	53
6. Padmasana	54
7. Vajrasana	55
8. Baddhakonasana	56
9. Dandasana	57

II. PASCIMATANA

10. Parsva uttanasana	61
-----------------------	----

11. Uttanasana	65
12. Utkatasana	68
13. Adhomukha svanasana	70
14. Tadakamudra	73
15. Apanasana	76
16. Urdhva prasrta padasana	79
17. Janusirsasana	81
18. Pascimatanasana	85
19. Upavistakonasana	88
20. Navasana	94

III. PURVATANA

21. Tadasana	99
22. Ardha uttanasana	100
23. Ardha utkatasana	103
24. Virabhadrasana	106
25. Supta baddhakonasana	108
26. Dvipadapitham	111
27. Bhujangasana	113
28. Ardha salabhasana	115
29. Salabhasana	117
30. Dhanurasana	119
31. Ustrasana	122
32. Cakravakasana	125

IV. PARVA

33. Utthita trikonasana (parsva)	131
----------------------------------	-----

34. Utthita parsvakonasana (parsva)	134
35. Jathara parivrtti (parsva)	137
36. Mahamudra	140
V. PARIVRTTI	
37. Utthita trikonasana (parivrtti)	145
38. Utthita parsvakonasana (parivrtti)	148
39. Jathara parivrtti	151
40. Jathara parivrtti (ekapada)	156
41. Ardha matsyendrasana	161
VI. VIPARITA	
42. Sirsasana	165
43. Sarvangasana	169
44. Viparitakarani	172

Chapter 3

Modifications of Asanas 183

I. SAMASTHITI

1. Samasthiti	191
2. Savasana	194
3. Dandasana	196
4. Vajrasana	200

II. PASCIMATANA

5. Uttanasana	203
6. Parsva uttanasana	208
7. Utkatasana	211

8. Pascimatanasana	214
9. Vajrasana	219
10. Adhomukha svanasana	222
11. Urdhva prasrta padasana	224
12. Apanasana	227
III. PURVATANA	
13. Ardha uttanasana	231
14. Virabhadrasana	236
15. Dvipadapitham	241
16. Bhujangasana	245
17. Salabhasana	249
18. Dhanurasana	252
19. Ustrasana	254
20. Cakravakasana	257
IV. PARSVA	
21. Utthita trikonasana (parsva)	263
22. Jathara parivrtti (parsva)	267
23. Samasthiti	269
24. Mahamudra	270
V. PARIVRTTI	
25. Utthita trikonasana (parivrtti)	275
26. Jathara parivrtti (parivrtti)	278
27. Jathara parivrtti (ekapada)	282
28. Padmasana	283
29. Dandasana	285

30. Ardha matsyendrasana	287
--------------------------	-----

VI. VIPARITA

31. Sirsasana	291
---------------	-----

32. Viparitakarani	293
--------------------	-----

Chapter 4

Planning an Asana Sequence.....	303
---------------------------------	-----

Section 2

Pranayama.....	335
----------------	-----

Chapter 5

Pranayama - Overview and concepts.....	337
--	-----

Chapter 6

Techniques of Pranayama.....	353
------------------------------	-----

Chapter 7

Modifications of Pranayama.....	365
---------------------------------	-----

Chapter 8

Planning for Pranayama.....	381
-----------------------------	-----

Epilogue.....	385
---------------	-----

Glossary of Asana Names.....	389
------------------------------	-----

Applications

Application of Asana and Pranayama 13

Application 1 15

Mark is 23 years old and is in good health. He is a student, interested in yoga practice. He wants to keep up his good health and also learn some relaxation techniques before going to University.

Application 2 35

Jim is 34 years old and a sports educator by profession. He has a slight back problem and would like to get rid of it.

Application 3 39

Sarah is a 10 year old girl. She is generally fit.

Application 4 175

Jennifer is an 18 year old college student. She is a classical dancer and has been practicing yoga for a long time.

Application 5 179

George is a 35 year old software professional. He is obese and stiff, and has a family history of heart problems.

Application 6 295

Lisa is a 71 year old housewife, with shoulder pain and chronic hypertension.

Application 7 299

Michael is a 54 year old man, who works in a high profile company. He has neck pain, heart problem (Ischemia), depression and is on medication.

Application 8 327

Mathias is a 19 year old student. He has had jaundice twice, and typhoid once. He also has a weak constitution.

Application 9 331

Jaya is a 53 year old housewife. She is under medication for hypertension.

Application 10 345

Vanilla is a 43 year old mother, belonging to a very rich and outgoing family.

Application 11 349

Faridah is a 56 year old woman, on a part time job. She has low back pain.

Application 12 357

Ganesh is a 34 year old clinical psychologist. He has chronic anxiety, for which he is on medication. He also has constipation.

Application 13 361

Rachael is a 71 year old grandmother. She has had a by-pass surgery and is on maintenance medication. She has difficulty in walking for more than 5 meters. She lives alone and is on sleeping pills.

Application 14 375

Pamela is a 48 year old executive in a company. She has difficulty in speaking. She also has weak abdomen muscles, and low back pain even after surgery to correct her prolapsed disc.

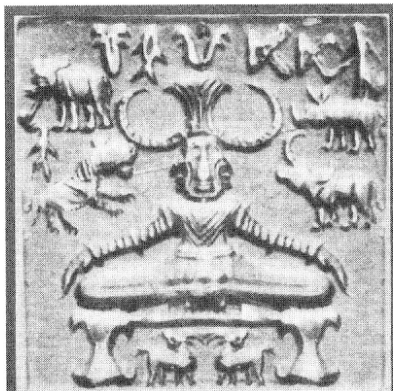
Application 15 377

Laura is 33 years old and in the 7th month of pregnancy. She has a tender stomach and stiff low back.

Preface

Yoga is as old as mankind. The seals of Mohenjadaró depict practice of postures such as mulabandhasana. It is a great credit to the value of this timeless system that it did not die over the centuries of change, destruction and reconstruction.

At the same time, the morphology of man has changed so much over time. Today, even Indians living in the traditional style of ancient sages are unable to follow in exactness the lifestyle of their ancestors. How many Indians can squat or sit in padmasana (the lotus posture) for hours today? Children have difficulty sitting on the floor and eating; in part, due to the changes that have happened because of rapid advances in science and technology and man's participation in exploiting these for good life and comfort.



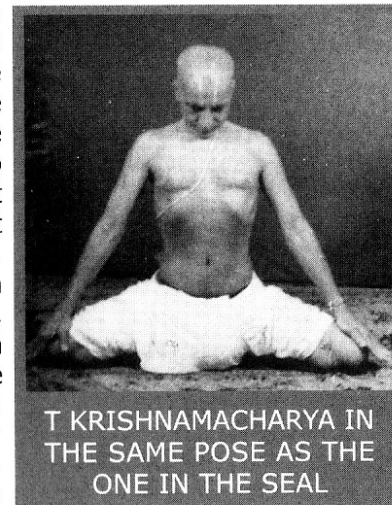
A SEAL OF MOHANJADARÓ
DEPICTING YOGA PRACTICE

How then, can such an ancient and timeless discipline of yoga continue to be valuable? The choice is to discard or adapt.

Our ancient masters were aware of changes and even foresaw them. They proposed tools to validate what is no more valid because of changing times and context. For instance, they classified rituals into two types - prakrti and vikrti. Prakrti rituals conform to the moment they evolved. Vikrti rituals are modified according to the time of application.

Yoga has withstood the vagaries of time because of this system of modifications developed by masters of every century.

When my father practiced asana in Tibet (1914-1922), his teacher insisted on disciplines that will not be believed today - three hours of pranayama in padmasana three times a day, for example. But when my father taught me in 1960's, he limited my practice to three hours of asana and pranayama, once a day. When the great yoga teacher Indira Devi started her lessons in 1937, he did insist she become vegetarian, but when she was unable to do pascimatanasana with straight legs, he suggested that she bend her knees. When she could not sit in padmasana for pranayama, he let her do it in sukhasana. Later she was able to do them perfectly through her practice. When my grandmother had an eye problem, he taught her simple breathing exercises and prepared a herbal tonic to cure her.



T KRISHNAMACHARYA IN
THE SAME POSE AS THE
ONE IN THE SEAL

Thus there is always the possibility of beginning where the individual is and moving towards what he/she needs. It is to represent this possibility of leading a person from where he/she is to where he/she aspires to be, that this project is conceived and presented.

TKV DESIKACHAR

The fact that yoga has found increased acceptance all over the world today can be seen through the number of people practising this discipline all over the world. Outside India, where it originated first, there are close to a hundred million people all over the world, for whom some form of yoga is part of their life.

Once thought to be the domain of mystic saints in the Himalayas only, today barring Antarctica, yoga has found practitioners in all the other continents. The amazing thing is that the demography of people practising this discipline today is hardly homogenous. From children in Schools, retired people in France, celebrities in Hollywood, pregnant mothers in hospitals, criminals in prisons, philosophers in retreat centers and artistes of various forms from across the continents - all of them have found something relevant in this discipline and have made it part of their lives.

What has made this possible? It is the openness and the universality of its teachings that makes yoga so appealing and relevant to all kinds of people. There are no prerequisites to begin yoga practice. There is something in it for everyone. Whether one is flexible or stiff, fat or lean, old or young, a faith follower or not, yoga does not prevent anyone from beginning its practice. In fact if these different parameters are known, it is possible to utilize them to bring out the best tools from yoga, to suit our needs.

The teachings of yoga are very clearly expounded in the Yoga Sutra. Composed by an ancient sage Patanjali, this master piece is the first complete and systematic work on yoga. Considered to be composed around two thousand years ago, this work is still considered the final authority on yoga. So much so that many well known yogi-s have proclaimed *"What is not mentioned in the yoga sutra is either not yoga at all, or totally unimportant."*

In its journey from antiquity to modernity, yoga techniques have undergone an organic evolution. The

yoga masters of yore, as well as the more recent ones, have tried to interpret the core yoga teachings and have represented them in their teachings, to make it more relevant to contemporary times. As a result, many different schools of yoga techniques have evolved based on the interpretations of their founding masters - but sadly not all of them have sustained.

The current reality of the situation today is also that there are a number of new "styles" that have mushroomed today all over the world. Teachers today, are using their own understanding of the world and their interpretation of the yoga teachings to evolve their own teaching methodologies.

While this has its own benefits, there is a growing tendency to standardize these techniques and apply for trademarks. These are considered "styles" and when I want to fit in a certain style, I am put through the same regime of practices as everyone else. When I have mastered all these practices, I become a certified teacher of that particular style. Here I have to adapt to the "style" of teaching.

Unfortunately this is not consistent with the spirit of yoga, which was conceived to be a discipline that suited everyone irrespective of their needs and abilities. It is not that "I must conform to the yoga practice, but rather that yoga practice must be tailor made for me." Today I might be young and full of energy. Tomorrow I become old and weak. Can I do the same practices that I was doing while I was younger?

This is similar to daily life. Am I today wearing the same clothes I was wearing when I was a child. No. I have grown and so have my dimensions. Hence I have to change my clothes. There are also instances in life which force us to change certain practices. Let's assume I am a sportswoman and have been competing at the highest level. I am put through a rigorous discipline to stay at the top of the game. Today I realize that I am pregnant and am excited to have my first child. At this point I cannot continue my training with the same vigour as I have to protect the growing child. To maintain my health and to contribute to the health of the child, I might have to practice a new set of routines. I have to choose different tools based on my changing life situations.

The same is true for yoga practice. As I change in physique, intellectual capacity, health status, profession and other parameters, I must re-evaluate the relevance of my current yoga practice and change it if necessary. This is what has been expounded by Patanjali in the yoga sutra as "Viniyoga of yoga." We need to choose the most appropriate tools of yoga and adapt it to our current situation.

The Viniyoga of Yoga.

"Viniyoga" means proper application based on the situation, and is a word that is relevant not only in the context of yoga, but in other life situations as well. For example consider how they teach Language in school. In the beginning, the child is taught only the alphabet of

the language. Once this has been learnt, simple words corresponding to each language are taught. "A for apple... B for ball..." etc. Slowly simple sentences are introduced. And finally, grammar and style are taught. Why are they not teaching grammar first, then sentences and then alphabet in the end? This is because the capacity of the child, when young is such that it can comprehend only simple things. Also the first steps act as foundations for the next. This is also an example of *Viniyoga*.

Viniyoga is not a style of yoga, but rather an approach to utilizing its tools. Patanjali and other great masters recognized the differences in people, and even for the same person, the changes imposed by life. This is why they proposed a wealth of tools and left the teachers to apply the appropriate ones to suit the context. The teacher would fully consider the needs and abilities of the student and only then would decide the right yoga practice. This is the "Viniyoga of Yoga," which is emphasised in the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali, and has been accepted by other great yogi-s who followed.

tasya bhūmiṣu viniyogaḥ

Based on the level of the student, yoga must be applied.

Yoga Sūtra III.6

Why Viniyoga of Yoga?

The reason why people come to yoga are very different. While the athlete might come to use yoga as a preparation for sport, the pregnant mother might take to it to have an easy delivery. The young child might benefit from its ability to make her more focused and energetic, while an old person might want to use it to refresh and energize himself. Yoga provides something for everyone and what each receives from it is different.

Since the purpose people come to yoga is different, we cannot have the same approach. The right tools have to be chosen and applied based on the goal of each individual.

Also, even among people with the same interest in yoga, they cannot be given exactly the same courses. This is because the starting point for each is not the same. While one lady can be having her first pregnancy, and another could be carrying her third child. The experiences they are going through are very different. Also there may be differences in age, the place they live, the time they can spare for practice and other such factors that will make them unique.

It is not like a running race everyone starts at the same point and the finishing line is already known, and the one who gets there first is the best. Here the starting point is not the same, and so is the finishing line. Hence each person's situation must be respected and then the right tools of yoga should be chosen and taught. The following verse from Nathamuni's Yoga Rahasya sums it all up.

**sthūlaḥ kṛṣastathā śuṣkaḥ vakraḥ paṅguḥ śarīritāḥ |
atasteṣāṃ na sarvāṇi vihitānyāsanāni vai ||**

Owing to the differences in body structure, all the tools of yoga are not meant for everyone. For in reality some are stout, some lean, some crooked and some others lame.

Yoga Rahasya of Nāthamuni I.31

Beware of Yoga.

Nathamuni, a great yoga master of the ninth century, understood the teachings of Patanjali very correctly and presented a doctrine known as Yoga Rahasya, meaning "secrets of yoga." This work is a valuable resource to the right application of yoga for

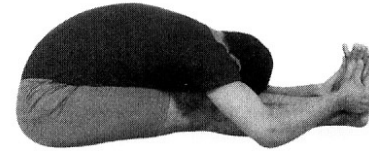
different needs. He suggests special practices for children, for those running a family, for retired persons, pregnant women, and many other such focussed groups. Even among these he says that we need to apply correctly, otherwise yoga itself might become a source of disease.

**yogenāpakvayogasya yuñjataḥ kāya uttitaḥ |
upasargaiḥ vihanyeta tatrāyaṃ vihito vidhiḥ ||**

Wrong yoga practice will create disease in the body. However, these diseases can be removed through correct application of yoga practice.

Yoga Rahasya of Nāthamuni IV.38

Through such a stern warning, Nathamuni presents the spirit of Patanjali's message to apply yoga appropriately. Imagine what will happen if we force a pregnant lady to do pascimatanasana (pictured below), correctly.



IDEAL PASCIMATANASANA

She must keep the legs straight, feet together and her head must be on the knee. Although this posture is a tool of yoga, if she is pushed, it will harm the baby, and thereby create disease in her, at least emotionally, if

not otherwise. Hence we need to allow her some freedom to do what is possible for her. She can spread the legs a bit, not bend completely and maybe even bend the knees.

The bottomline is that yoga must promote health, and not cause illness. Wrong yoga application can be



PASCIMATANASANA DONE BY A PREGNANT WOMAN

very dangerous. This is mainly because the tools of yoga are very subtle, yet very powerful, and care must taken when applying them. Thus care needs to be taken to utilize yoga to promote healthy living. The very concept of "viniyoga of yoga" is to apply yoga to promote healthy living.

How Viniyoga of Yoga?

To be able to apply the tools of yoga correctly, we need to understand at least two things - why we have come to yoga, and what are our abilities.

Why we have come for yoga? It could be because we want to stay fit and healthy, to aid in a healing process, a progress toward spirituality, in ensuring a smooth pregnancy, to prepare for a sport, for better focusing in academics, to correct body alignment or a host of other reasons. Once this is clear, then the choice of tools

become more narrowed down. What we need for preparing a sport will be very different from what is necessary to prepare us in a journey of spirituality. Once this is clear, we can more or less narrow down the tools to a selected few, and maybe eliminate a few others.

A point to be noted is that this goal might not necessarily be permanent, throughout our life. These might change. For example pregnancy will last only for nine months. After this I might stop my yoga practice, as it has fulfilled my need, or continue with a different focus for example to stay healthy as a mother. When this changes, the tools also changes. Still later in life, I might want to being a spiritual journey and once again I need to re-evaluate my yoga practices.

What are our abilities? When take to yoga we have to evaluate our abilities also, before applying the tools. We are constrained by different parameters that dictate our life and we need to respect each of these very carefully. To help us understand this we take inspiration from the following verse quoted by Nathamuni in the Yoga Rahasya.

**kāla deśa vayo vrttiḥ śaktirvikṣya vicāraṇāt |
yogaprayogaṁ kurvīta jñānī maunī jītātmavān |**

The teacher who is learned, reflective and disciplined, should apply yoga appropriately, only after considering the time, place, age, activity and strength of the student.

Yoga Rahasya of Nāthamuni I.30

We need to respect these parameters carefully before planning out a practice. For example a busy executive in a company might be able to spare only a half hour for a practice, while a home maker might be able to afford an hour and quarter. So we need to have two different practices for to suit these different time parameters. We cannot reject the executive saying "you have too little time for practice." Similarly the place of

practice is also very important. If I am in south India, where the weather is hot and humid, my practice will be in one way. While if I live in Sweden where it is cold throughout the year, it will have to change. The warm weather in India will keep my joints more flexible, while the cold weather will make it more stiff.

Age is another parameter which needs to be looked into. While we can give energetic and dynamic practices for a youngster, we cannot do the same for someone over seventy. For such elders the practice must be more calming and refreshing. The kind of job or occupation is also another parameter. If I am a wall street broker, the practice at the end of the day should be to relax my mind and my voice, while if I was a computer analyst, it would be to rest my eyes after long hours of programming so that I don't lose vision.

Strength is another parameter which needs to be considered carefully. One might be strong, while another weak. This difference needs to be respected as well before structuring a practice. Strength is not just physical, but also includes the power of breath, the intellectual capacity etc. We need to teach according to these differing capacities. Consider this example. A couple of years ago, we had a situation to teach yoga to children with special needs. The intellectual capacities of these children were very limited. One of the postures we had great difficulty to teach was *trikonasana* (pictured below).

Many of the children could not co-ordinate the instruction "the right hand must touch the left foot." This was too complicated for them. They continued to take the right hand to the right foot. Can we stop teaching them? No we can't. We have to use our intellectual capacity to educate them to do it. We tied a red band on their right hand and left foot, and a blue band on the left hand and right foot. Then we gave the instruction "bring the red bands together." Voila... They did it. This is the "*Viniyoga of Yoga*." To apply according to the different parameters.



TRIKONASANA

Far from being a "style," *Viniyoga* is the approach suggested by Patanjali in the Yoga Sutra and accepted by many great yoga masters who followed him. It is the reason why such masters spoke about so many different tools in yoga that makes it relevant and appealing for everyone. There is always something for everyone.

There are many tools that yoga offers. These include attitudes in our social interaction, personal discipline, dietary indications, practice of postures, regulation of breathing, meditation and a host of other tools that can be decided by a competent teacher. While the tools of yoga are many, this book will primarily focus on asana and pranayama, and even among them, only some of the most commonly practiced ones.

Why this book and how to use it?

There are so many asanas and pranayama techniques. Each has been well defined by the

ancient yogis-s. These techniques have a great relevance in the practice of yoga and they need to be respected. At the same time, the question arises as to what to do when someone is not able to do the postures perfectly or is able to do it rightly but would like to be challenged further. This is where the application of asana and pranayama come in especially in the area of promoting healthy living. This will be the domain of this book.

This book will aim at introducing two of the most popular tools of yoga, asana and pranayama - how they are done usually, how they can be adapted to suit different needs, examples of their application, and how to plan a practice of asana and pranayama.

This book is organized into two sections - the first one on asana and the second one on pranayama. Each of these sections are further divided into three parts each. The first one presents the technique of doing them correctly. The second takes each of these asana or pranayama and explores the various adaptations of modifications that are possible to suit different purposes. The final part deals with the planning of an asana or pranayama program. The asana chapter also provides the classical classification of the different asanas, which is based on the intended function. This is very useful to understand what kind of asanas are most appropriate for a particular need.

This apart there is another section in this book, which is the application of asana and pranayama, and their variations to different situations. These are provided as chapter separators, and we urge the reader to go

through them after they have read the book completely. This is mainly because we are using certain conventions in these courses, which may not be defined in the course, but form part of the book at a later stage.

The applications presented in the book are real life examples, although the names have been altered. The models for these cases are only representative of the actual person. The applications presented are not the first course given to each of the student, but the course that has evolved over a time period of examination, interaction and experience, that is consistent with the suggested strategy. The courses given in each class was a development over the previous one, and sometimes as more information was revealed, the direction was altered.

Finally, but most importantly, this book is not a "do-it-yourself" book. The best way to use this book would be to do so with the help and guidance of a caring teacher. Only such a teacher would be able to direct us more precisely based on our needs and context.

Welcome to the *"Viniyoga of Yoga."*

Two reminders to the readers.

- 1) Although we recommend the use of a carpet/mat for all asanas except standing postures, we have not shown it in all places in the book. This is because of design reasons rather than cases of exceptions. So please use a carpet/mat while doing these postures.
- 2) We have indicated the need to rest before and after pranayama practice. In certain practice courses, you will find them missing. These exceptions have been taken made having carefully considered the evolution of the student. As we mention in the book, these are real life examples.

Application of Asana and Pranayama

When a person is not able to do the ideal asana and pranayama or when it is contra-indicative, instead of completely giving up the practice, it is desirable to suggest a modified practice. This not only provides certain benefits but also avoids the risks that may arise when practised without respecting our limitations.

Many modifications are possible. There is also a choice among many asanas that are similar in character. For instance, there are many asanas belonging to the pascimatana type. So if we want to choose a practice that focuses on the abdomen region, a choice can be made from this group of postures.

In choosing the appropriate course with modifications, the principles of planning must be respected.

The choice must consider the following points.

1. The course starts from what is possible for the practitioner, without causing pain.
2. It gives the person confidence to practice at home regularly, without the presence of a teacher, except in extreme situations such as mental retardation or serious physical handicap.
3. The course helps the person to function better than before taking up the yoga practice, so that the person feels well and confident to continue the practice.
4. The evolution of the practice leads one from a course with more modifications to one with fewer modifications. Perhaps even towards the classical asanas and pranayama.
5. Symptoms of the health problems for which one took up the practice are reduced, which may generally encourage medical professionals to wean away the medicines.

Before we present a few examples, it is important to remind the reader that applications of asanas and pranayama must be highly individualized. It is unique to each practitioner, and depends on a wide set of parameters such as age, sex, occupation, illness (if any), interest and more importantly the capacity or ability.

Application 1

APPLICATION 1

History - Mark is 23 years old and is in good health. He is a student, interested in yoga practice. He wants to keep up his good health and also learn some relaxation techniques before going to University.

Observation - He is slightly overweight.

Strategy - To focus on the lower abdomen and use extended exhalation.

1



EX
↑↓
IN

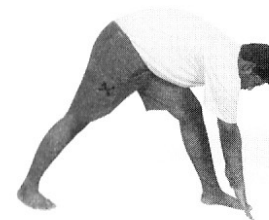


Repeat 8 times

2



EX
↑↓
IN



Repeat 4 times on one side, and stay 4 breaths, Repeat the same on other side.

16

3



IN
↑↓
EX



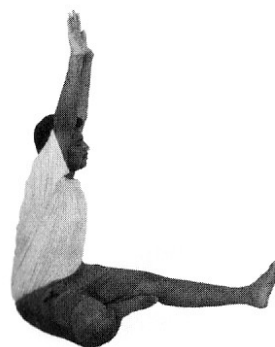
Repeat 8 times

4

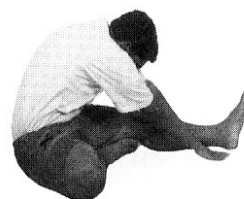


Rest

5

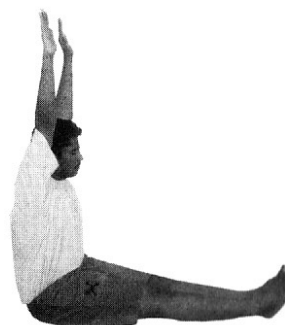


EX
↑
IN



4 times on one side,
then on the other side.

6



EX
↑
IN



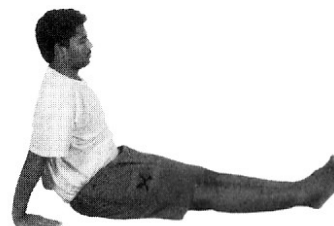
Repeat 4 times

7

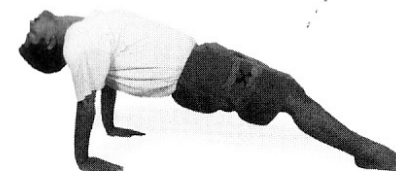


Stay 8 Breaths

8

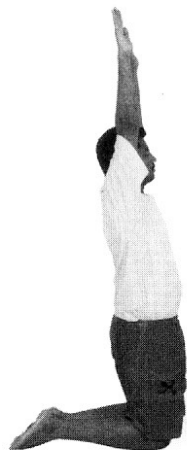


IN
↑
EX



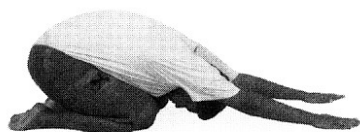
Repeat 4 times

9



EX
↑
IN

4 times



10

Rest

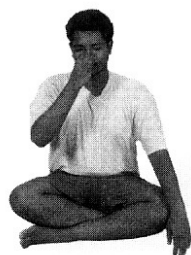


18

11

anuloma ujjayi pranayama

12 breaths



Section 1

Asana

Asana is one of the tools of yoga, which helps keep the body strong, supple and healthy.

What is Asana?

Asana is derived from the Sanskrit term "upavesane," which means "to sit" or "to stay." The first yoga master, Patanjali, extends this definition to include two qualities : sthira and sukha. Sthira is alertness and stability, while sukha is being comfortable. Thus asana is a position that is both stable and comfortable.

Another definition of asana is "sarira anga vinyasa." "Sarira anga" means "parts of the body", and "vinyasa" means "placing in a particular way." Thus asana means an alignment of the parts of the body in different ways.

How many Asanas?

An ancient text called Dhyana Bindu Upanisad, relates a conversation between Siva, the Dancing God, and his consort Parvati. Siva says that there are as many asanas as there are species of living beings in this world.

Among these infinite number of asanas, only a few have been chosen for this book.

Breath Regulation In Asana Practice

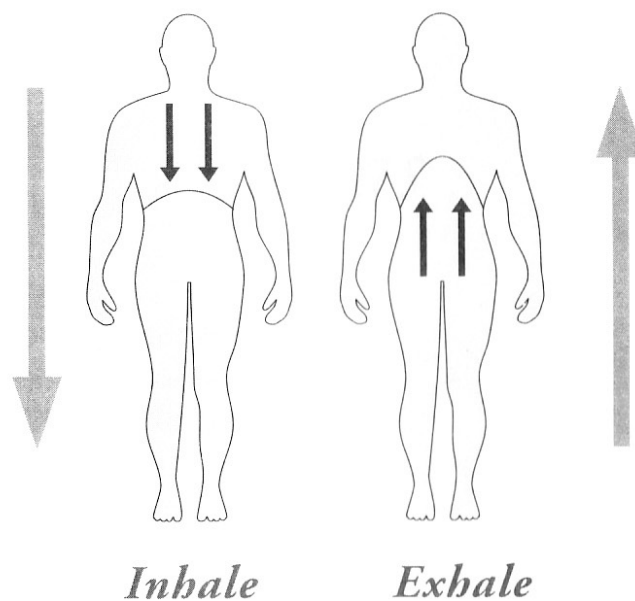
The most important aspect of asana practice is the inclusion of specific breath regulation.

The question arises as to how to breathe in asana - Is there a specific way to breathe while practicing asana? What are the components of breath? Is it the same as in pranayama or can it be done any other way?

Breathing consists of three components: exhale, inhale, and retention of breath. Retention of breath can be both after exhale and inhale.

Exhalation is done by contracting the abdomen, while during inhalation the chest is expanded first and then the abdomen. Both exhale and inhale must be long and smooth. A short pause is given after every inhale and exhale.

This is the breathing technique that must be followed during the practice of both asana and pranayama.



Chapter 1

Classification of Asanas

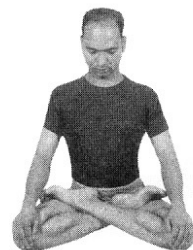
- ✓ The basis for classification of asanas.
- ✓ The different classifications of asanas.
- ✓ List of asanas under each classification.

The classification takes the spine as a reference point. It is not only based on the position of the spine, but also the effects each asana has on it. It also takes into account the influence of breath on the spine.

The asanas that are included in this book are listed and classified at the end of this chapter.

1. SAMASTHITI

Asanas are classified as samasthiti based on the correct alignment of the spine; that is the back is vertical. These asanas usually serve as a preparation for pranayama and meditation.



Padmasana



Savasana

There is an asana where the back is not vertical, but is still classified under samasthiti. This asana is savasana.

2. PASCIMATANA

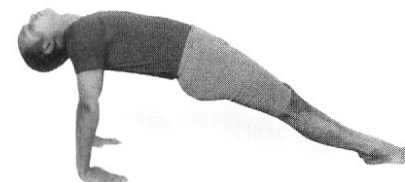
Asanas are classified as pascimatana when the trunk moves forward towards the legs. These asanas are done on exhalation. The focus is on the abdominal region.



Pascimatanasana

3. PURVATANA

Asanas are classified as purvatana when the back arches away from the leg. These asanas are done on inhalation. The focus is on the chest region/upper body. Because of wrong position of the spine due to work or lifestyle patterns such as long hours before a computer etc., the upper torso tends to stoop. Asanas of the purvatana type are suggested to rectify this defect.



Purvatanasana

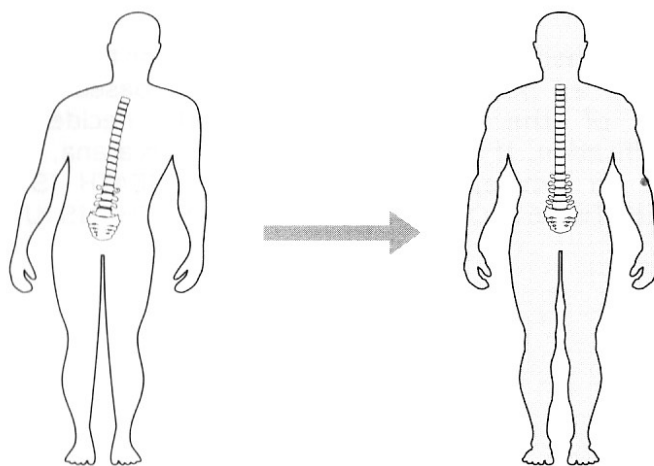
NOTE: When there is a dispute on whether to classify a posture as purvatana or pascimatana based on the form of the posture, the breath decides the classification. If done on inhale, it is purvatana, and if done on exhale, it is pascimatana. BREATH IS THE ULTIMATE METHOD TO RESOLVE ANY SUCH DISPUTES.

4. PAROVA

Asanas are classified as parova when the spine moves laterally, either to the left or to the right. Asanas of the parova type are suggested to rectify weakness or/and stiffness on one side of the body.



Parsvakonasana



Purpose of parova - lateral correction of the body

5. PARIVRTTI

Asanas are classified as parivrtti when the spine twists, with one point fixed (usually around the hips). The purpose of parivrtti is to rectify defects such as a twisted trunk. The focus here is also on the abdominal region.



Trikonasana Parivrtti

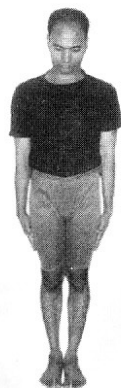
6. VIPARITA

Asanas are classified as viparita when the trunk is inverted with the head down and the legs up.



Sirsasana

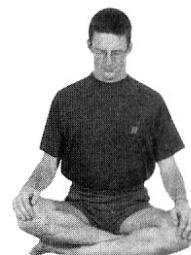
I. Samasthiti Type Asanas



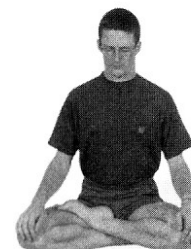
1. SAMASTHITI



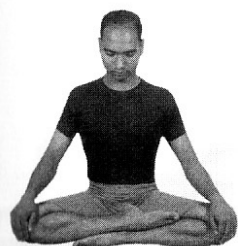
2. SAVASANA



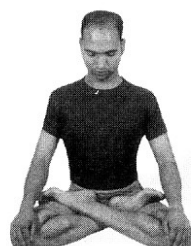
3. SUKHASANA



4. BRAHMASANA



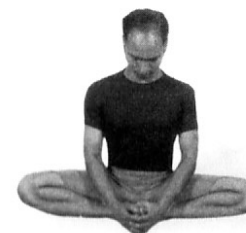
5. SIDDHASANA



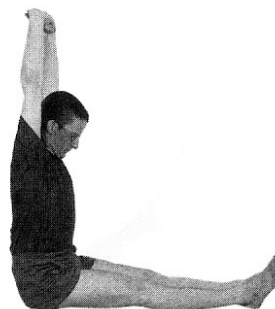
6. PADMASANA



7. VAJRASANA



8. BADDHAKONASANA



9. DANDASANA

II. Pascimatana Type Asanas



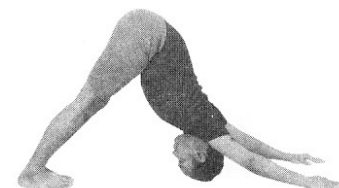
**10. PARSVA
UTTANASANA**



11. UTTANASANA



12. UTKATASANA



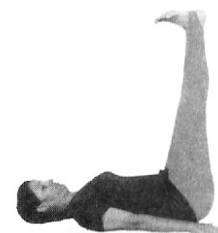
**13. ADHO MUKHA
SVANASANA**



14. TADAKA MUDRA



15. APANASANA



**16. URDHVA PRASRTA
PADASANA**



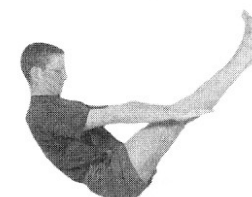
17. JANUSIRSASANA



18. PASCIMATANASANA



19. UPAVISTAKONASANA

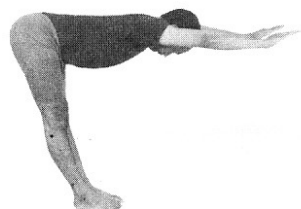


20. NAVASANA

III. Purvatana Type Asanas



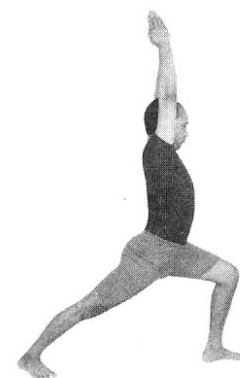
21. TADASANA



22. ARDHA UTTANASANA



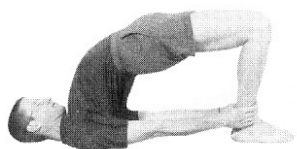
23. ARDHA UTKATASANA



24. VIRABHADRASANA



25. SUPTA BADDHA KONASANA



26. DVIPADAPITHAM



27. BHUJANGASANA

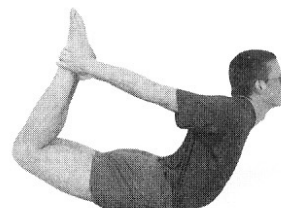


28. ARDHA SALABHASANA

III. Purvatana Type Asanas



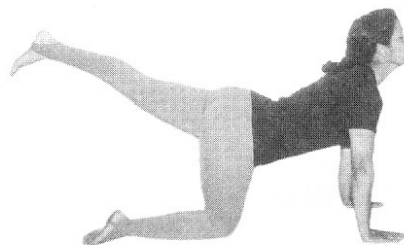
29. SALABHASANA



30. DHANURASANA



31. USTRASANA

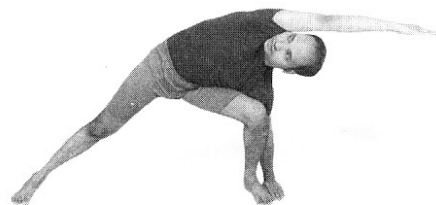


32. CAKRAVAKASANA

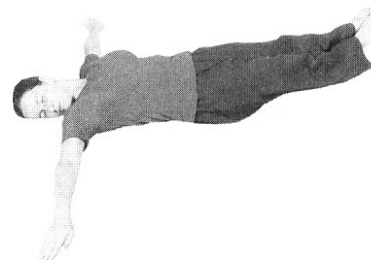
IV. Parsva Type Asanas



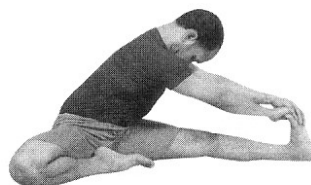
33. UTTHITA TRIKONASANA



34. UTTHITA PARSHA KONASANA



35. JATHARA PARIVRTTI (PARSHA)



36. MAHA MUDRA*

*Though mahamudra is classified under parsha, it has some characteristics of parivrtti, purvatana and pascimatana also. It is a special asana.

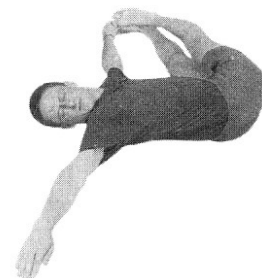
V. Parivrtti Type Asanas



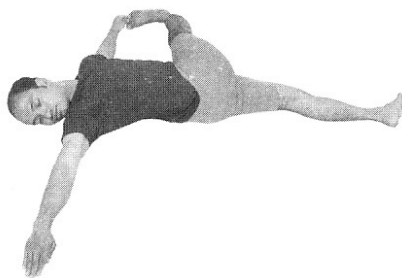
37. UTTHITA TRIKONASANA



38. UTTHITA PAROVA KONASANA



**39. JATHARA PARIVRTTI
(PARIVRTTI)**



**40. JATHARA PARIVRTTI
(EKAPADA)**

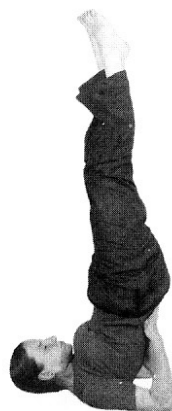


**41. ARDHA
MATSYENDRASANA**

VI. Viparita Type Asanas



42. SIRSASANA



43. SARVANGASANA



44. VIPARITA KARANI

Application 2

APPLICATION 2

History - Jim is 34 years old and a sports educator by profession. He has a slight back problem and would like to get rid of it.

Observation - He has a slight stoop. He often flexes the back. He is very fit and active.

Strategy - To improve the posture by stretching the back.

1

Repeat 8 times

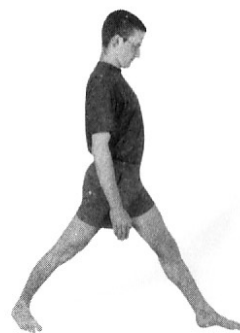


EX
↑
IN



2

Repeat 8 times
and stay 4
breaths, then
repeat the same
on the other side



IN
↑
EX



3

8 times



EX
↑
IN

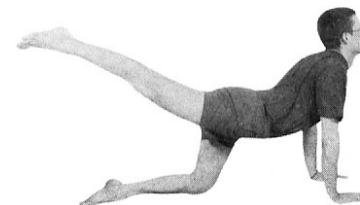


4

Repeat 4 times
and stay 4 breaths,
then repeat the same
on the other side



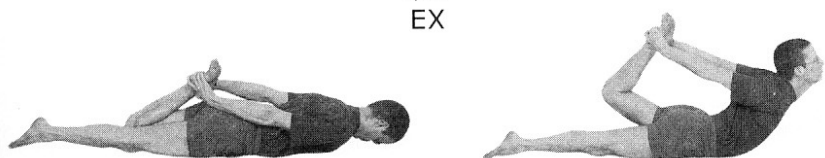
IN
↑
EX



5

4 times on one side, then repeat on other side

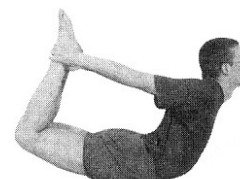
IN
⇕
EX



6

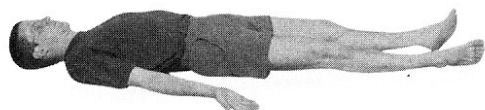
Stay 8 breaths

IN = EX



7

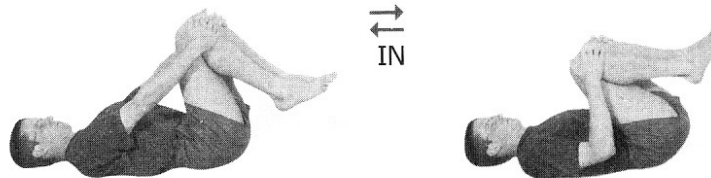
Rest



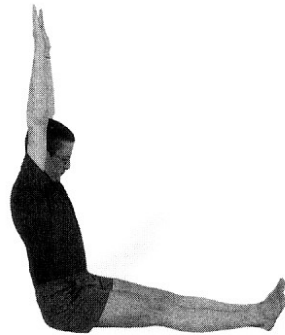
8

Repeat 8 times

EX
⇕
IN



9

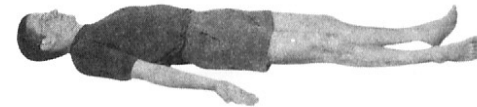


EX
↓
IN



8 times

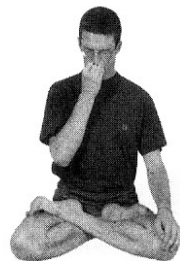
10



Rest

38

11



Viloma Ujjayi
10.10.10.0

12 Breaths

Application 3

APPLICATION 3

39

History – Sarah is a 10 year old girl. She is generally fit.

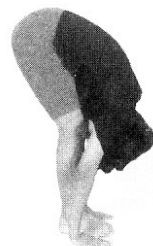
Observation – She is not strong. She has stiff legs and hips but is interested in learning all the asanas. She wants to do ardha matsyendrasana.

Strategy – To teach her as many asanas as possible.

1

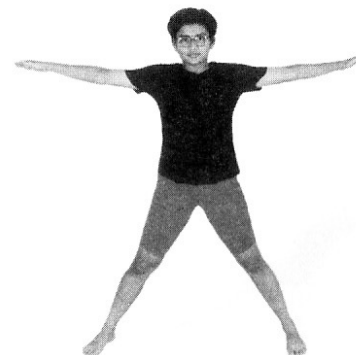


Count
↑
↓



Repeat 10 times
Count to 5 while
bending forward
(Loudly)

2



EX
↑
IN



5 times on each side
done alternatively

3



EX
↑
IN



10 times

4



Stay and Count 20
each side

5



Stay and Count 20
each side

6



10 times

EX
↑
IN



Chapter 2

Techniques of Asanas

- ✓ Certain guidelines regarding the practice of asanas.
- ✓ The techniques of how to do the asanas that have been classified in the previous chapter.
- ✓ The final posture is highlighted with a box.

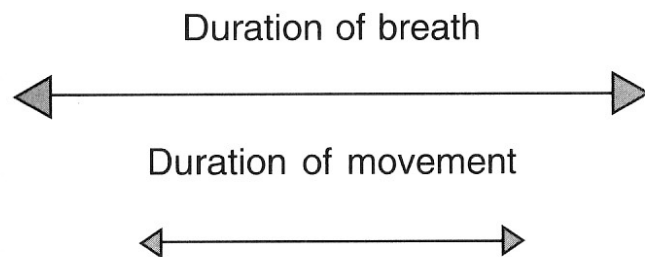
*T*his chapter presents the techniques of a few important asanas. We urge the reader to keep in mind the following, while going through this chapter.

1. While practicing, if there is either trembling of the body or pain, it is safer not to force yourself into the posture. Asana must have the dual qualities of sthira (stability) and sukha (comfort).

2. The breathing technique that must be followed during asana practice is the same one as discussed earlier in this book. Exhale is an upward movement that begins in the abdominal region, while inhale is a downward movement that begins in the chest region.

3. Asana movements must start where the breath begins. When it is an exhale movement, it must start from the abdomen, while if it is an inhale movement, it should begin from the chest.

4. The length of the breath decides the duration of each movement. The length of the movement must be within that of the breath. The breath begins first, followed by the movement. The movement terminates first, followed by the breath. This is the case for all movements whether done on inhale or exhale.



5. Those asanas that are repeated a number of times are called dynamic asanas, while those where one stays for a few breaths are called static asanas. All dynamic asanas can be done static, but the contrary is not always true.

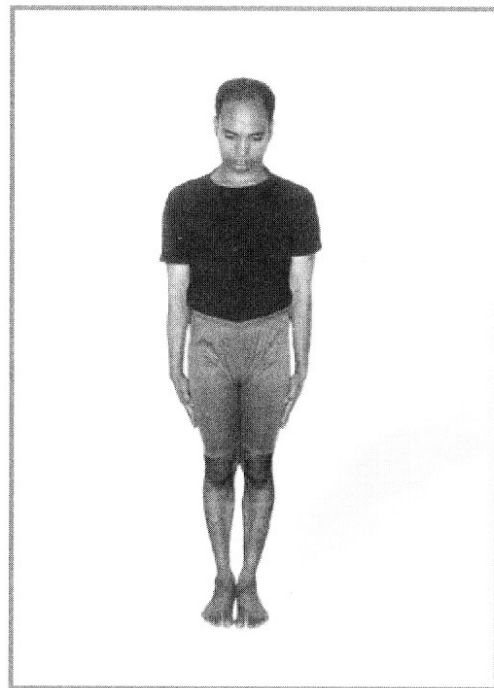
6. Asanas that are asymmetrical are usually begun with the left side. It is however very important to do the same on the right side as well. The number of times repeated / number of breaths stayed on either side should generally be equal.

7. It is advisable to do all standing asanas on a non slippery floor, with eyes open. While all other asanas must be done on a carpet with eyes closed.

I. SAMASTHITI

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. Samasthiti | 6. Padmasana |
| 2. Savasana | 7. Vajrasana |
| 3. Sukhasana | 8. Baddhakonasana |
| 4. Brahmasana | 9. Dandasana |
| 5. Siddhasana | |

1. Stand with feet together, back straight, arms alongside the body, chin down.

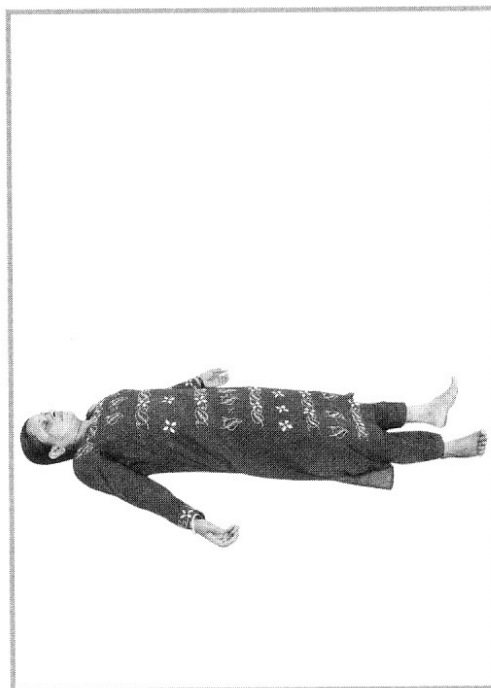


Feet together, back straight, legs straight, palms touching the sides of the legs, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed and eyes open.

I.1

Samasthiti

1. Lie down on the back.

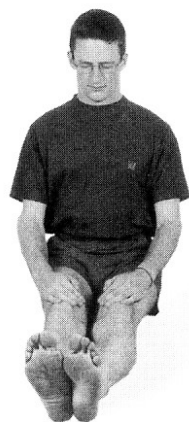


Feet slightly apart, feet relaxed, arms slightly apart, palms turned up, eyes closed, entire body relaxed and the mind alert.

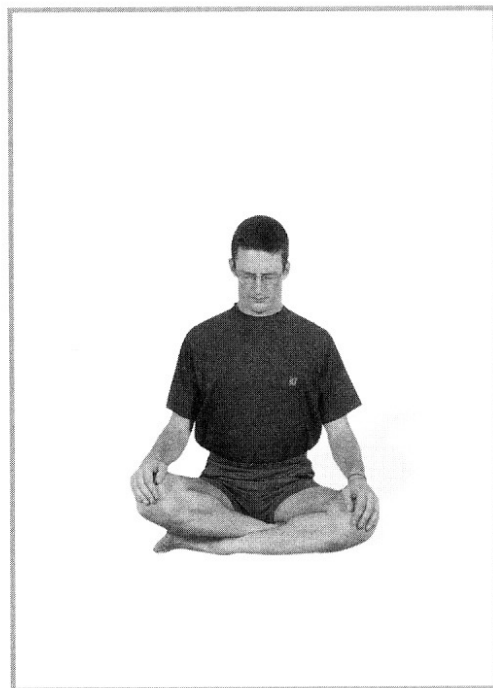
I.2

Savasana

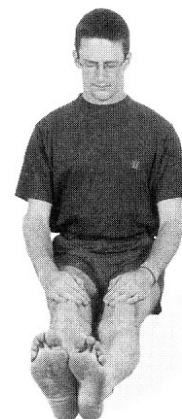
1. Sit with legs extended forward.
2. Cross legs and place palms on knees.
3. Extend legs forward.



Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.



Arms relaxed. Back erect.

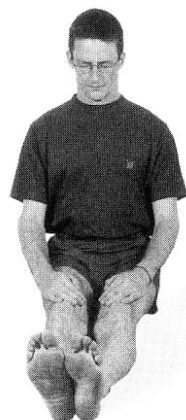


Note - Different hand positions are possible in this posture.

I.3

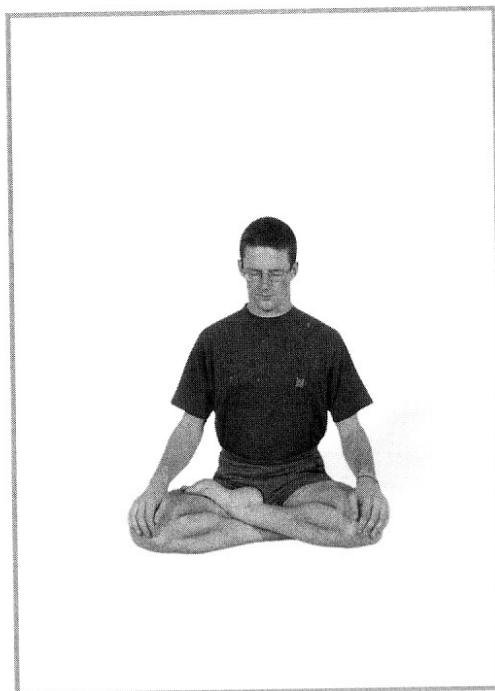
Sukhasana

1. Sit with legs extended forward.



Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.

2. Place left ankle on the right thigh, and right foot under the left thigh, place palms on the knees.



Arms relaxed. Back erect.

3. Extend legs forward.

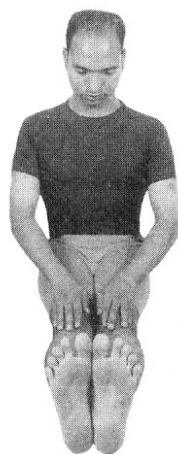


I.4

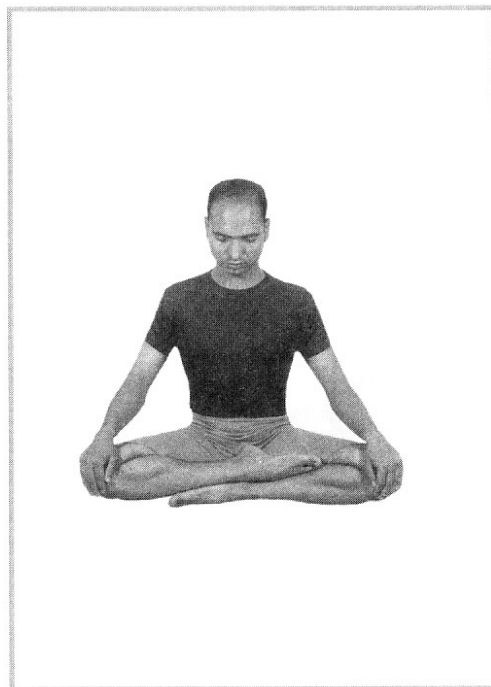
Brahmasana

Note - Different hand positions are possible in this posture.

1. Sit with legs extended forward.
2. Bend knees and press the groin with left heel, place right ankle exactly on the left one, place palms on the knees.
3. Extend legs forward.



Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.



Knees on the floor, arms relaxed. Trunk erect.



Note - Different hand positions are possible in this posture.

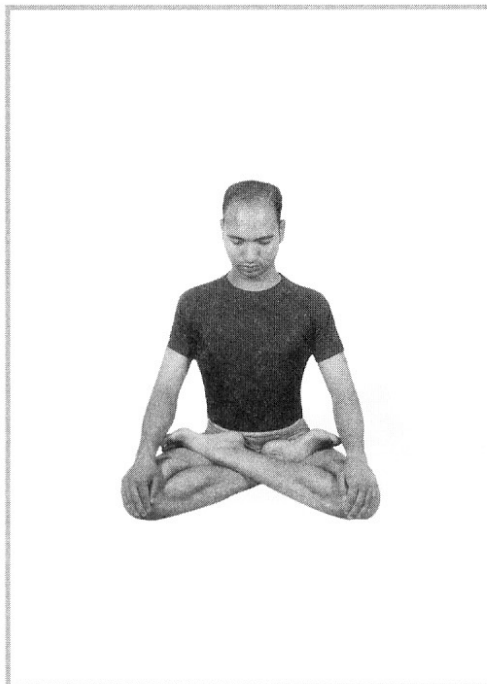
I.5

Siddhasana

1. Sit with legs extended forward.



2. Bend the knees, place left heel over base of right thigh and right heel over base of left thigh near the hip, place palms on the knees.



3. Extend legs forward.



Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.

Knees on the floor, arms relaxed.

Note - Different hand positions are possible in this posture.

I.6

Padmasana

1. Kneel down and sit on closed heels.

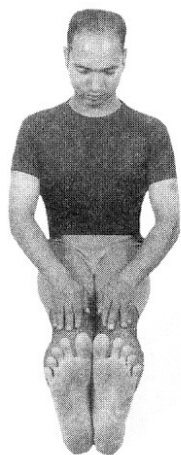


Knees together, toes turned out, back straight, heels together, palms on the knees, chin down, eyes closed.

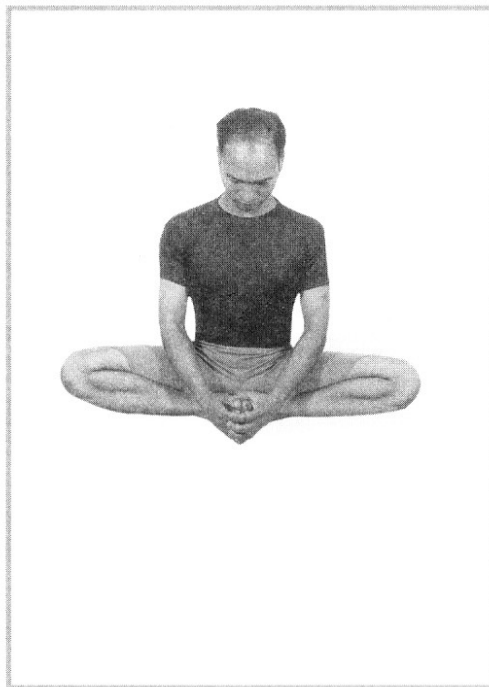
I.7

Vajrasana

1. Sit with legs extended forward.



2. Bend knees and place soles of the feet against one another, hold feet with hands.



3. Release hands from feet and extend legs forward.



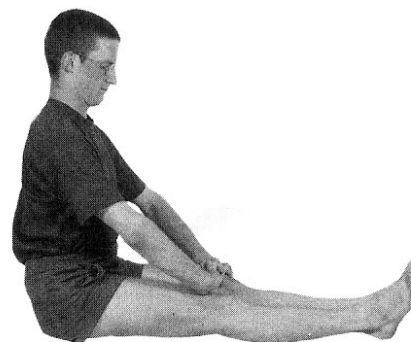
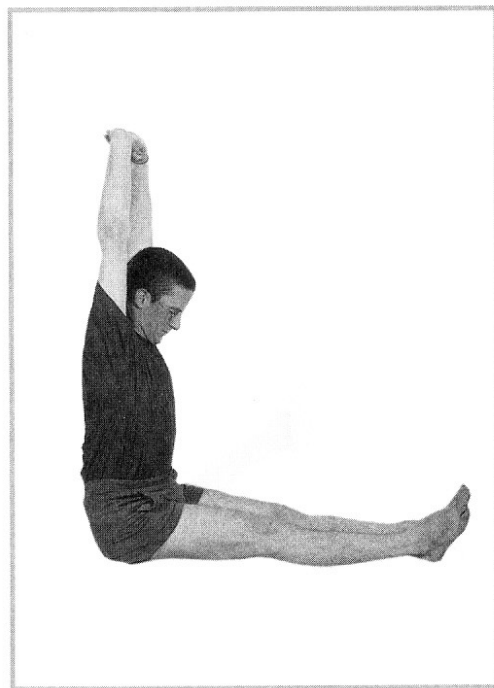
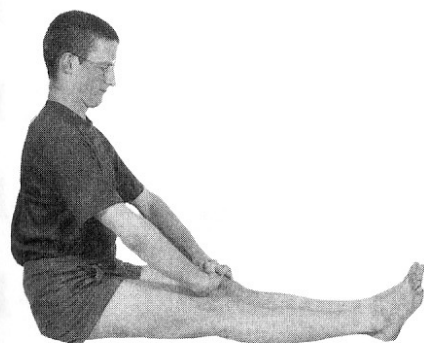
Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.

Knees on the floor, heels touching the groin, shoulders relaxed, back straight.

I.8

Baddhakonasana

1. Sit with legs extended forward, lock fingers, and turn them out.
2. On inhale, raise arms above head.
3. On exhale, lower arms.



Legs together and straight, back straight, elbows straight, palms on the laps, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.

Arms straight across ears.

I.9

Dandasana

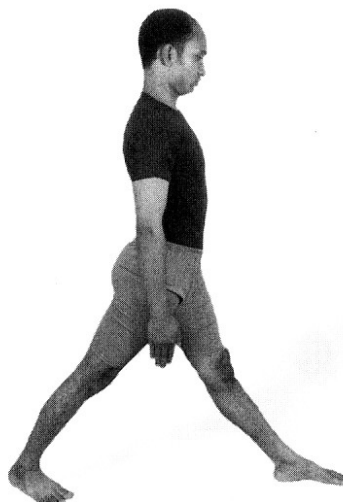
II. PASCIMATANA

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 10. Parsva uttanasana | 16. Urdhva prasrta padasana |
| 11. Uttanasana | 17. Janusirsasana |
| 12. Utkatasana | 18. Pascimatanasana |
| 13. Adhomukha svanasana | 19. Upavistakonasana |
| 14. Tadakamudra | 20. Navasana |
| 15. Apanasana | |

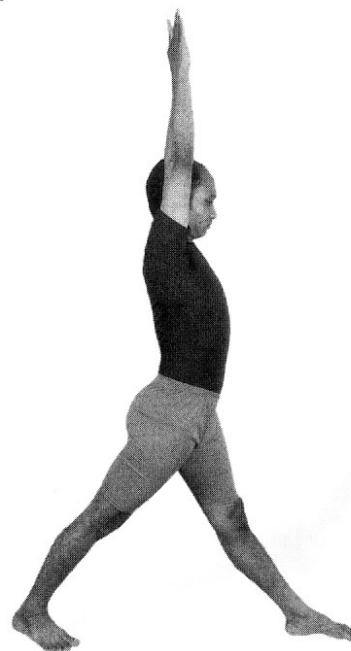
1. Stand in samasthiti.



2. Take a stride forward with the left leg. Face the front.



3. On inhale, raise arms from the front.



Feet together, legs straight, back straight, palms touching the sides of the legs, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

Legs straight, back foot slightly turned out.

Arms straight across ears, palms facing front.

II.10

Parsva Uttanasana

4. On exhale, bend forward and place palms by the sides of the front foot.



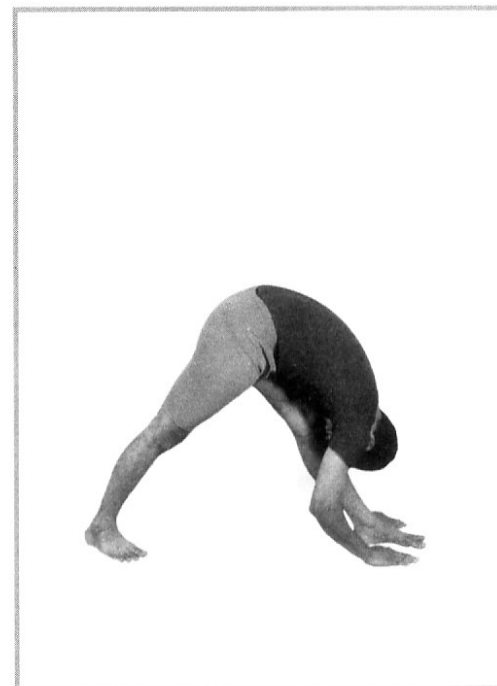
Weight only on the legs, arms relaxed.

5. Inhale in this posture.



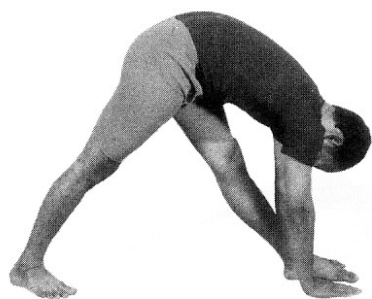
With hands on the floor, allow the back to arch maintaining chin down position.

6. On exhale, bend further towards the legs.



Weight still on the legs, forehead on the leg.

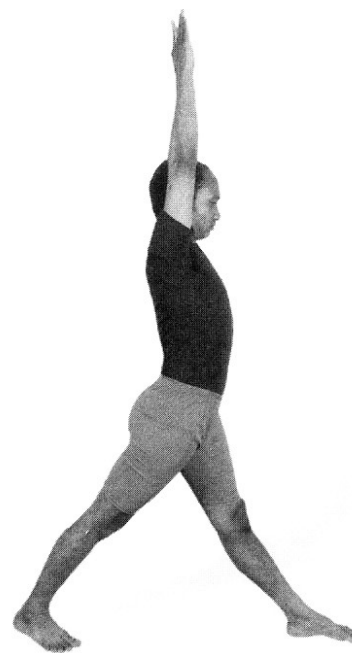
7. On inhale, move trunk away from legs without lifting palms.



8. Exhale in this posture.



9. On inhale, come up.



Arms must lead the trunk.

10. On exhale, lower arms from the front.

11. Take back the front leg, and come back to samasthiti.



Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

1. Stand in samasthiti.



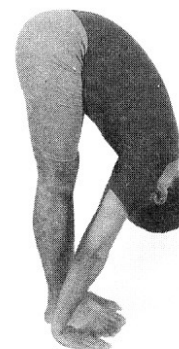
Feet together, legs straight, back straight, palms touching the sides of the legs, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

2. On inhale, raise arms from the front.



Arms straight across ears, palms facing front.

3. On exhale, bend forward and place palms by the sides of the feet.

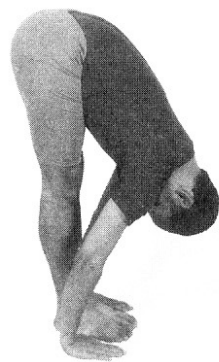


Weight only on the legs, arms relaxed.

II.11

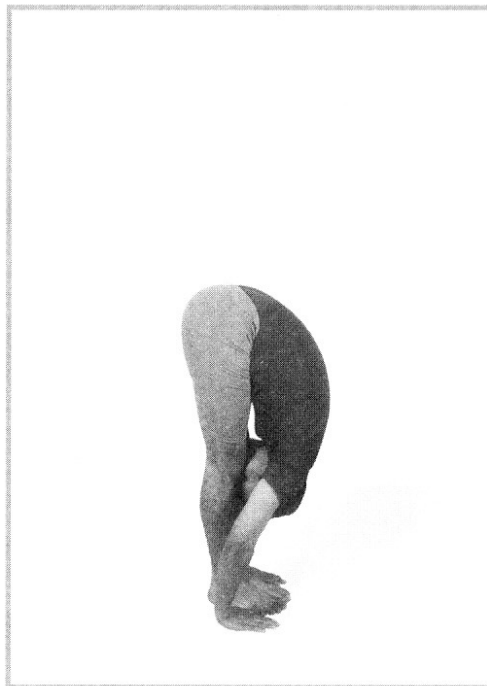
Uttanasana

4. Inhale in this posture.



With hands on the floor, allow the back to arch.

5. On exhale, bend further towards the legs.

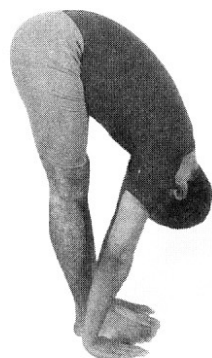


Weight still on the legs. Forehead on the legs

6. On inhale, move trunk away from legs without lifting palms.



7. Exhale in this posture.



8. On inhale, come up.



9. On exhale, lower arms from the front, back to samasthiti.

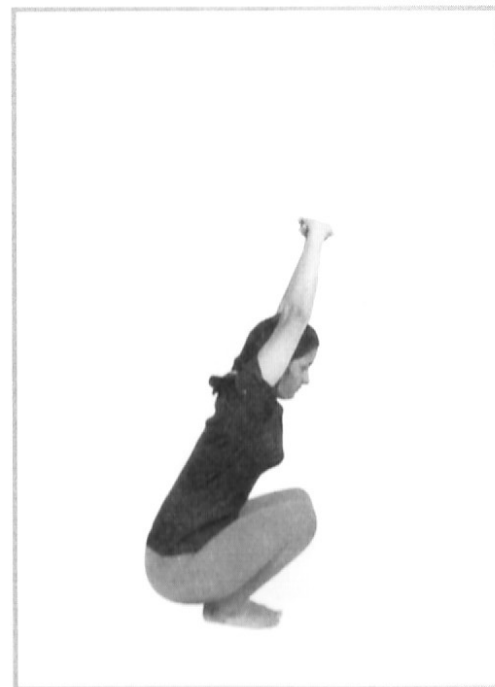


Arms must lead the trunk.

1. Stand in samasthiti. Lock fingers and turn out.

2. On inhale, raise arms from the front.

3. On exhale, squat.



Feet together, legs straight, back straight, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

Arms straight across ears, elbows straight, palms turned out.

Back as straight as possible during movement and in position, knees together.

II.12

Utkatasana

4. On inhale, come up.



5. On exhale, lower arms from the front.

Unlock fingers and release hands and come back to samasthiti.



Movement must begin from the arms.

1. Stand in samasthiti.



Feet together, legs straight, back straight, palms touching the sides of the legs, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

2. On inhale, raise arms from the front.



Arms straight across ears, palms facing front.

3. On exhale, bend forward and place palms by the sides of the feet, head touching leg.



Legs straight and together, forehead on the legs, palms on the floor facing forward, weight on the legs only, chin down, eyes open.

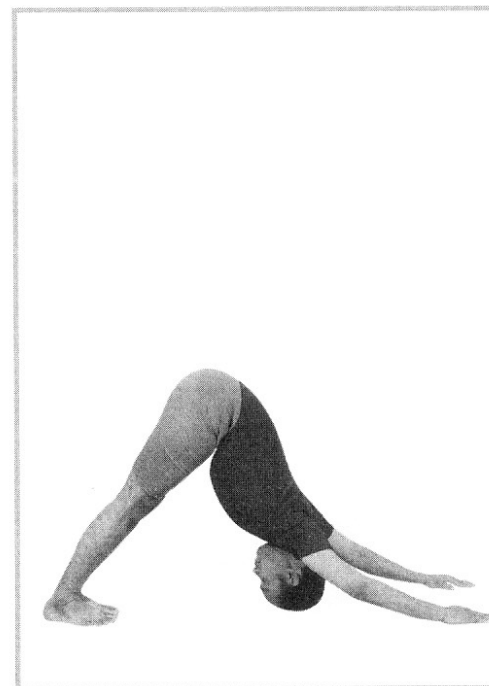
II.13

Adhomukha svanasana

4. While holding breath shift weight onto the hands and throw legs back.

5. On inhale, lift chest up, while straightening elbows.

6. On exhale, lift hip up, while lowering head and chest.



Body horizontal and balancing only on the palms and toes. Knees, chest and stomach off the floor, elbows bent, feet together, chin not tucked down.

Body balanced only on the palms and toes, chest forward, legs straight, shoulders relaxed.

Legs straight, crown of the head on the floor, weight only on legs and hands, heels near the floor, chin down.

7. While holding breath, shift weight onto the hands and throw legs forward and place feet in between palms.

8. On inhale, raise arms and come up.

9. On exhale, lower arms from the front, back to samasthiti.



Arms must lead the trunk.

1. Lie down on the back.

2. Lock fingers and turn them out.

3. On inhale, raise arms and place them on the floor above the head.



Legs together and straight, palms on the floor along the body, elbows straight, chin down, eyes closed.

Arms relaxed.

Arms straight across the ears.

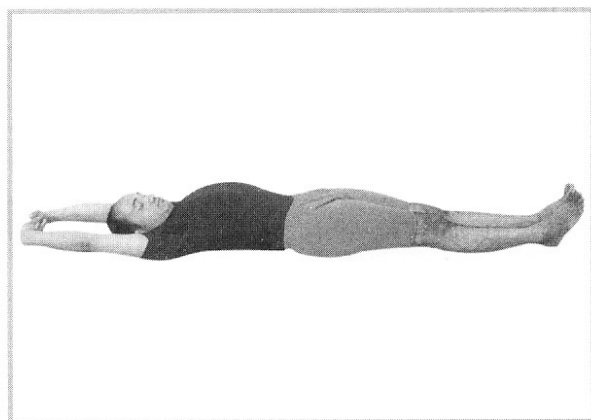
II.14

Tadakamudra

4. Exhale, and while holding after exhale, contract the abdomen.

5. Relax the abdomen, and then inhale.

6. On exhale, lower the hands.



7. Release fingers and place palms
on the floor.

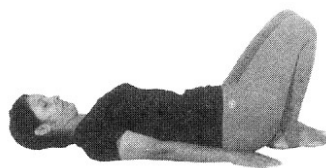


1. Lie down on the back.



Legs together and straight, palms on the floor along the body, elbows straight, chin down, eyes closed.

2. Bend knees and place feet on the floor, close to the buttocks.



3. Lift feet off the floor, and place palms on the knees from the side.



Knees and feet together, shoulders relaxed.

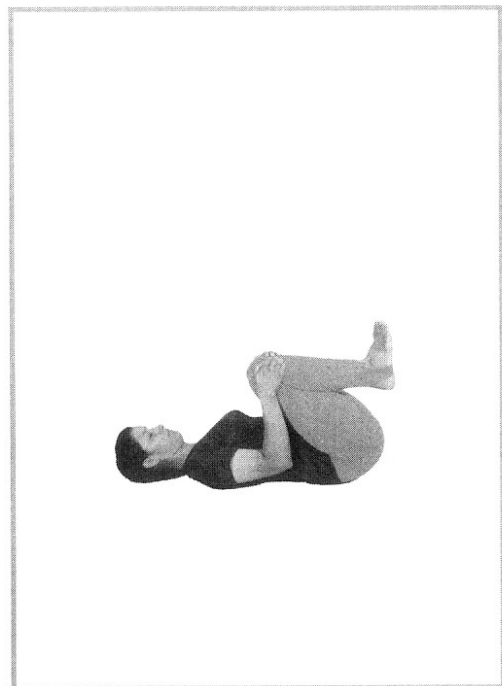
II.15

Apanasana

4. On exhale, contract abdomen and bring knees closer to the chest.

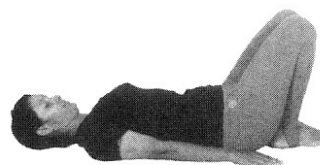
5. On inhale, move knees away from the chest.

6. Place feet and hands on the floor along the body.



Elbows bent, hips still on the floor.

Arms must not pull the legs.



7. Extend legs.



1. Lie down on the back.



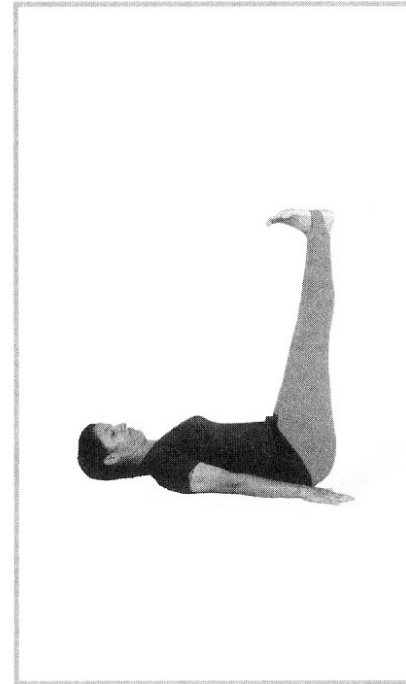
Legs together and straight, palms on the floor along the body, elbows straight, chin down, eyes closed.

2. On inhale, raise arms from the front and place on the floor above the head.



Palms turned up, arms straight on the floor.

3. On exhale, while lowering arms, lift to vertical position without bending knees.



Legs together and vertical, hips on the floor, arms alongside the body, palms on the floor.

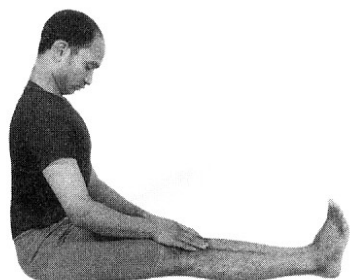
II.16

Urdhva Prasrta Padasana

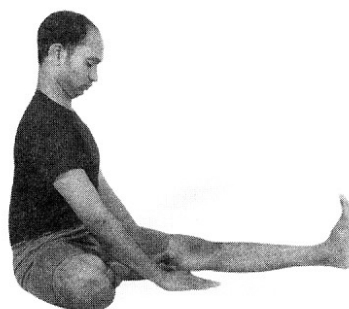
4. On inhale, while raising arms above the head, lower legs to the floor without bending the knees.
5. On exhale, lower arms to the floor and place alongside the body.



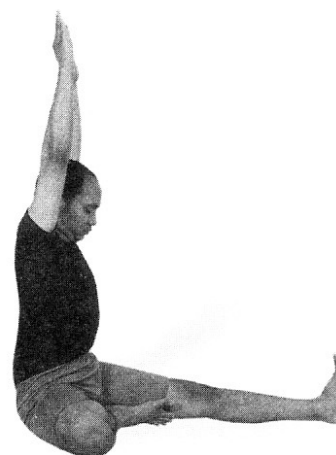
1. Sit with legs extended forward.



2. Bend right leg and place sole against the left thigh.



3. On inhale, raise arms above the head.



Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.

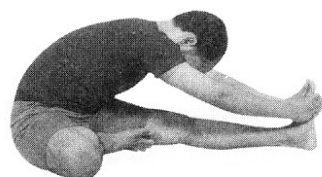
Body facing left leg, right knee on the floor, right heel touching groin, palms on either side of the left leg.

Arms straight across ears, palms facing front.

II.17

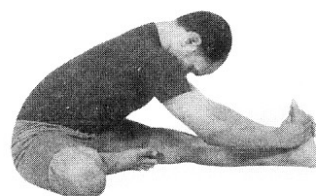
Janusirsasana

4. On exhale, bend forward and hold left foot.



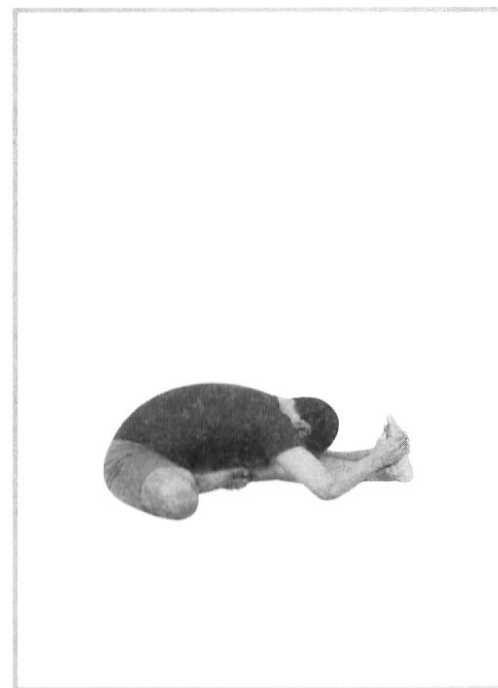
Arms relaxed.

5. Inhale in this position.



With hands in position, allow back to arch.

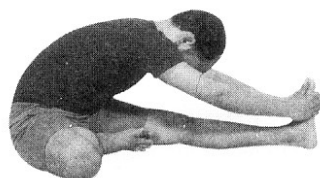
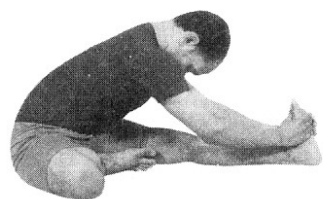
6. On exhale, bend further towards the left leg.



Forehead on the leg.

Don't use arms to pull trunk to leg.

7. On inhale move trunk away from leg, while continuing to hold foot. 8. Exhale in this position.

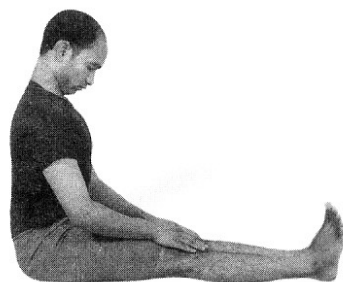
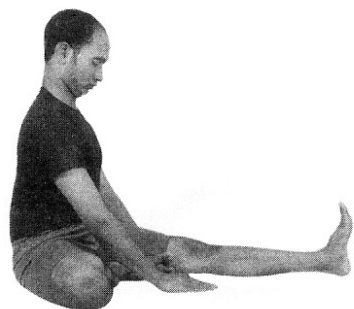


9. On inhale, raise arms and come up.



Arms must lead the trunk.

10. On exhale lower arms from the front.
11. Extend right leg forward.

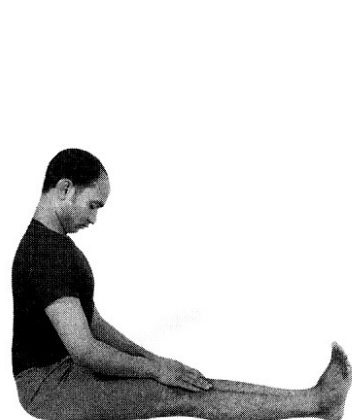


Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

1. Sit with legs extended forward.

2. On inhale, raise arms from the front, above the head.

3. On exhale, bend forward and hold feet.



Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.

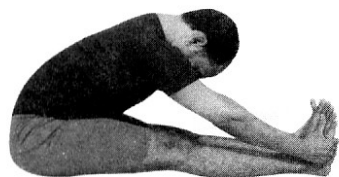
Arms straight across ears, palms facing front.

Arms relaxed.

II.18

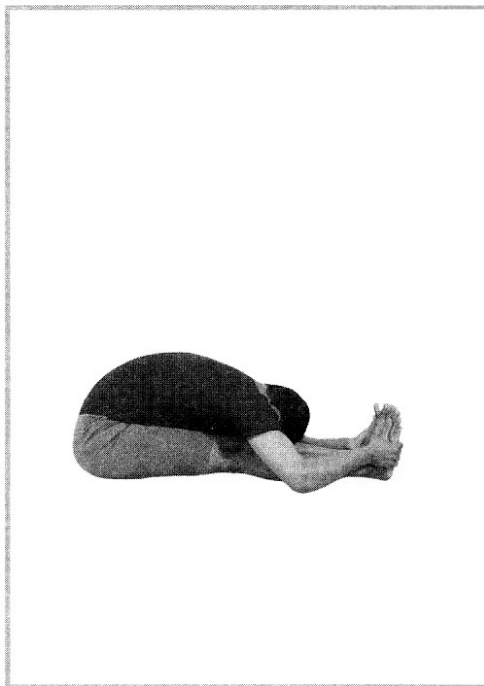
Pascimatanasana

4. Inhale in this position.



With hands in this position, allow back to arch.

5. On exhale, bend further towards straight legs.



Forehead on the legs.

Don't use arms to pull trunk to legs.

6. On inhale, move trunk away from legs, while continuing to hold feet.



Knees and feet together, shoulders relaxed.

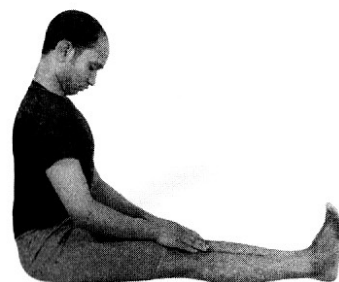
7. Exhale in this position.



8. On inhale, raise arms and come up.



9. On exhale, lower arms from the front.



Arms must lead the trunk.

1. Sit with legs extended forward.



Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.

2. Spread the legs.

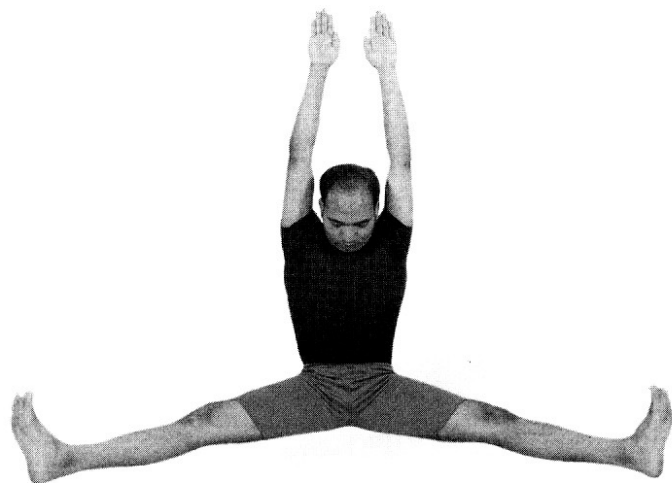


Place palms on the floor, inbetween the legs.

II.19

Upavistakonasana

3. On inhale, raise arms from the front, above the head. 4. On exhale, bend forward.



Arms straight across ears, palms facing front.



Palms on the floor, arms relaxed.

5. Inhale in this position, arching the back.

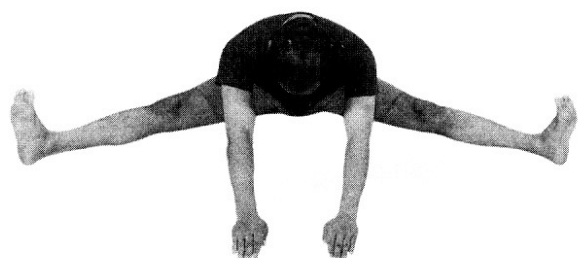


6. On exhale, bend further towards the floor.



Forehead on the floor.

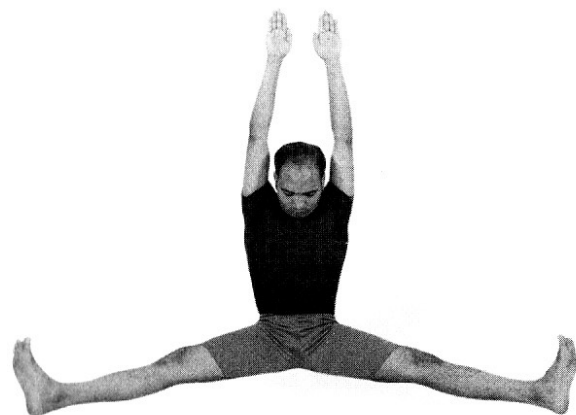
7. On inhale, move head and trunk away from floor.



8. Exhale in this position.



9. On inhale, raise arms and come up.

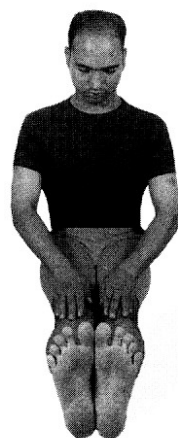


10. On exhale, lower arms from the front.

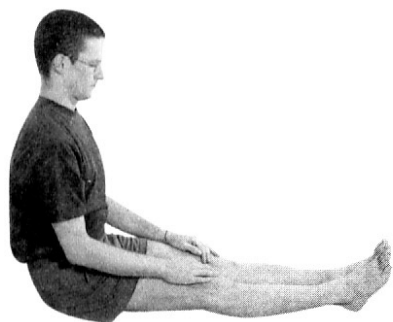


Arms must lead the trunk.

11. Bring legs together.



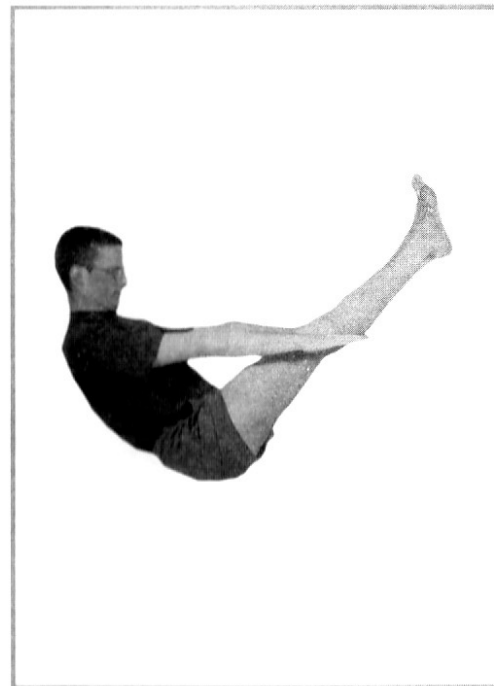
1. Sit with legs extended forward.



2. On inhale, raise arms from the front, above the head.



3. On exhale, while lowering straight arms to shoulder level, lean back and lift straight legs.



Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.

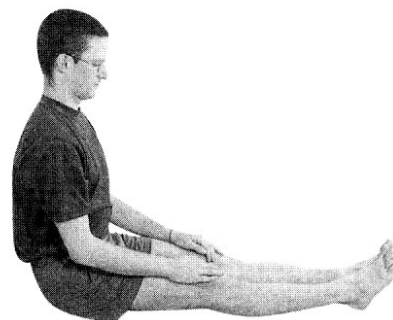
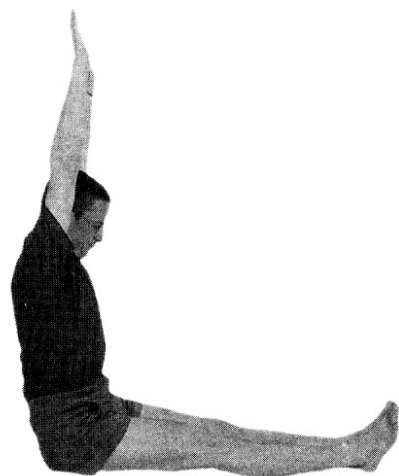
Arms straight across ears, palms facing front.

Legs and arms straight, palms across legs (but not holding them) and turned downwards, body balanced on the buttocks.

II.20

Navasasana

4. On inhale, lower legs to the floor while raising arms.
5. On exhale, lower arms from the front.



III. PURVATANA

21. Tadasana

22. Ardha uttanasana

23. Ardha utkatasana

24. Virabhadrasana

25. Supta baddhakonasana

26. Dvipadapitham

27. Bhujangasana

28. Ardha salabhasana

29. Salabhasana

30. Dhanurasana

31. Ustrasana

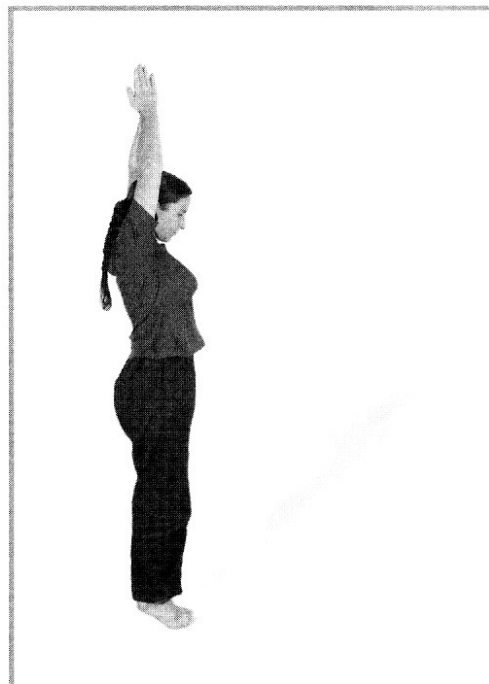
32. Cakravakasana

1. Stand in samasthiti.



Feet together, legs straight, back straight, arms by the sides of the body, palms facing inwards, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

2. On inhale, raise arms from the side while raising heels.



Balance on the balls of the feet, arms across the ears, elbows straight, palms together.

3. On exhale, lower arms from the side, simultaneously lowering heels to the floor, to samasthiti.



III.21

Tadasana

1. Stand in samasthiti.



Feet together, legs straight, back straight, arms by the sides of the body, palms facing inwards, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

2. On inhale, raise arms from the front.



Arms across ears, palms facing front.

3. On exhale, bend forward half way.



Palms facing down.

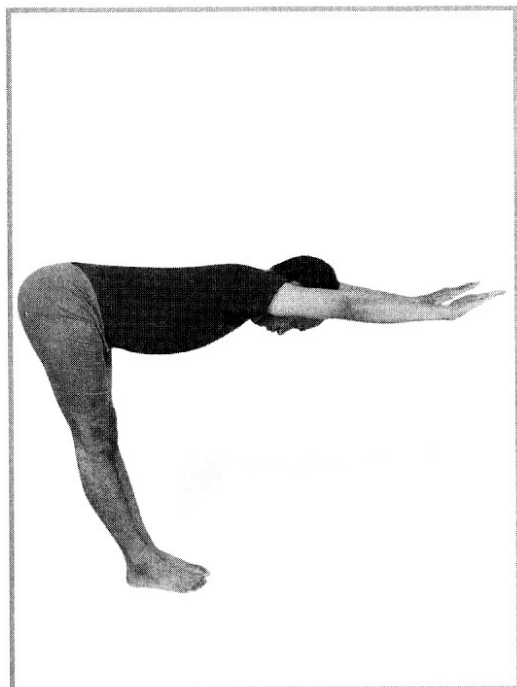
III.22

Ardha Uttanasana

4. On inhale, arch the back.

5. On exhale, relax the back.

6. On inhale, come up.



Arms and trunk in horizontal position.



Arms leading the trunk.

7. On exhale, lower arms from the front, returning to samasthiti.



1. Stand in samasthiti.
Lock fingers and turn them out.

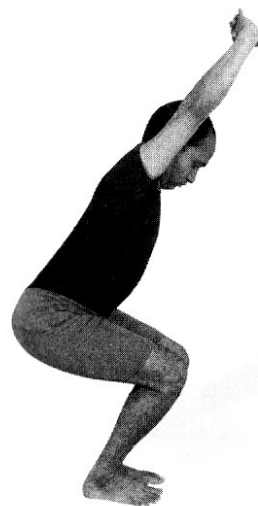


Feet together, legs straight, back straight, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

2. On inhale, raise arms above the head.
3. On exhale, squat half way.



Arms straight across ears.

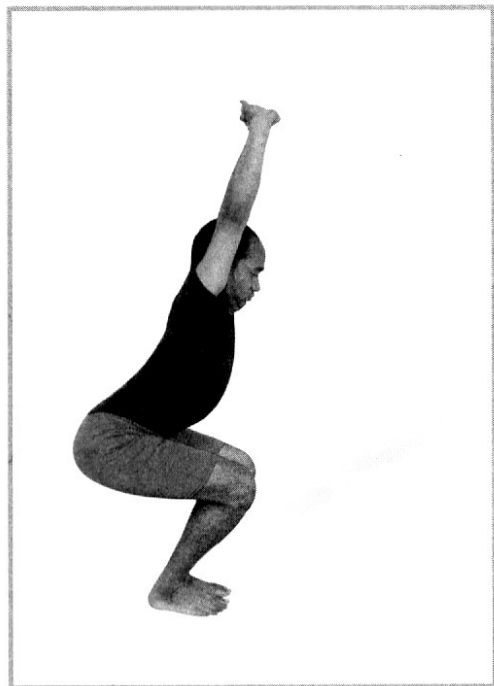


Knees together, thighs nearly horizontal, back relaxed.

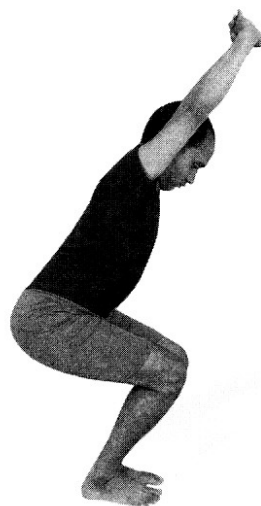
III.23

Ardha Utkatasana

4. On inhale, arch the back.



5. On exhale, relax the back.



6. On inhale, come up.



Movement to begin from the arms.

7. On exhale, lower arms, unlock fingers and release hands, returning to samasthiti.

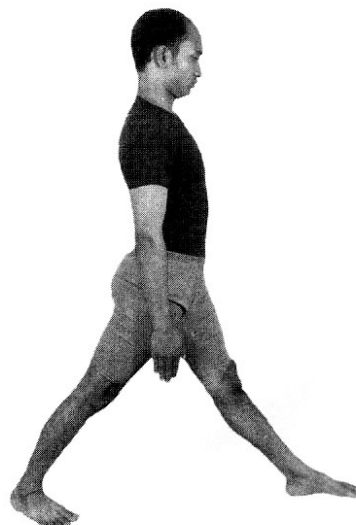


1. Stand in samasthiti.



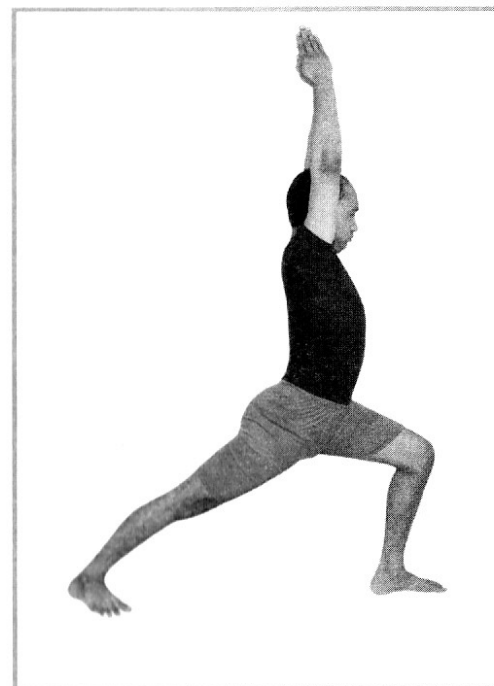
Feet together, legs straight, back straight, arms by the sides of the body, palms turned inwards, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, eyes open.

2. Take a big stride forward with the left leg. Face the front.



Legs straight, back foot slightly turned out.

3. On inhale, raise arms from the front, while bending the front knee and maintaining the vertical axis of the spine.



Back arched. Front knee bent. Weight on both legs. Arms straight across the ears, palms together, eyes open and focused directly in front.

III.24

Virabhadrasana

4. On exhale, lower arms from the front, while straightening the front leg.
5. Bring back the front foot, to samasthiti.



Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

1. Lie down on the back.



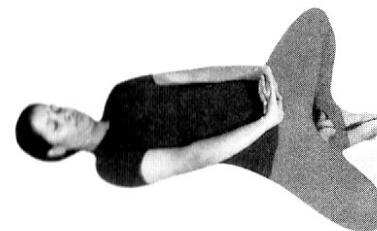
Legs together and straight, arms on the floor alongside the body, palms turned down, elbows straight, chin down, eyes closed.

2. Bend knees and place feet close to the buttocks.



Knees together, feet together.

3. Open knees and place soles of the feet against each other, lock fingers and turn them out.

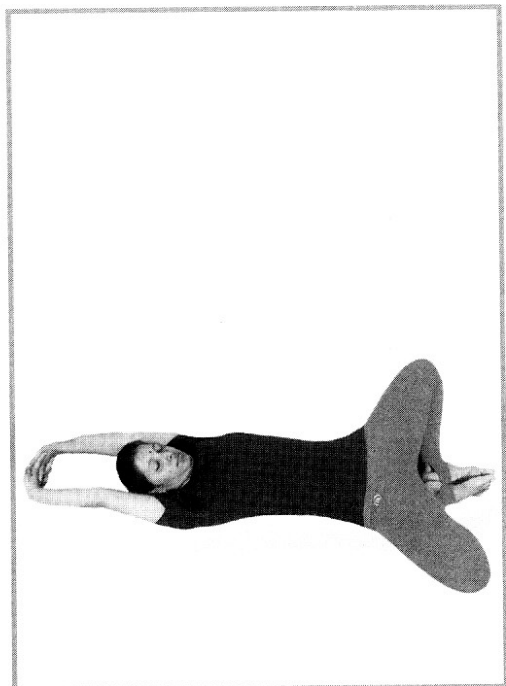


Heels close to the groin, knees on the floor.

III.25

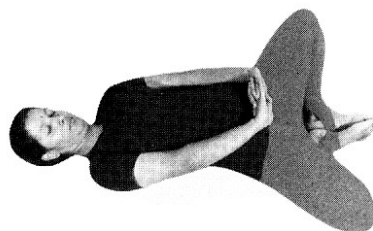
Supta Baddhakonasana

4. On inhale, raise arms and place them on the floor above the head.

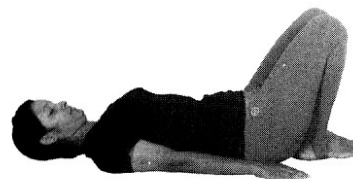


Arms straight and across the ears.

5. On exhale, lower arms.



6. Bring knees together, unlock fingers and place arms on the floor alongside the body, palms facing down.



7. Extend Legs.

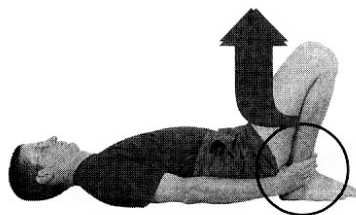
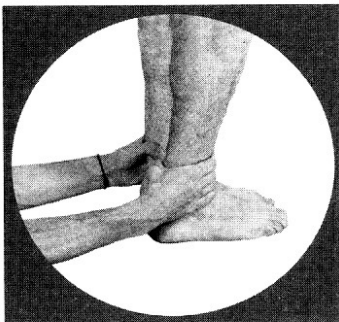


1. Lie down on the back.



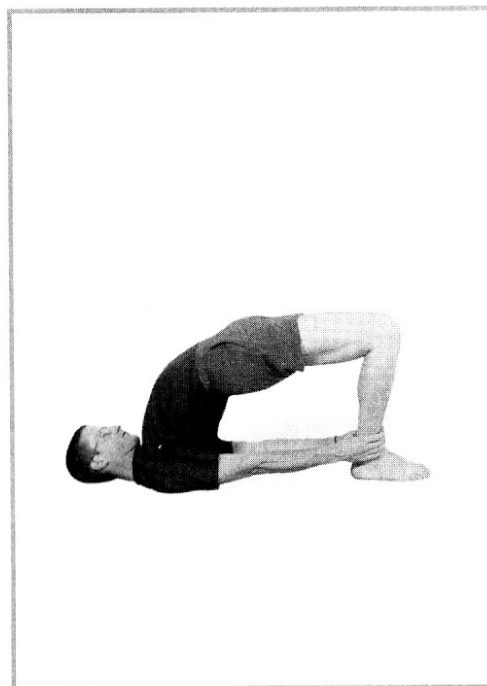
Legs together and straight, arms on the floor alongside the body, palms turned down, elbows straight, chin down, eyes closed.

2. Bend knees, place feet close to the buttocks and hold ankles.



Knees together, feet together, palms clasping ankles.

3. On inhale, raise hips.



4. On exhale, lower hips to the floor. 5. Release ankles and extend legs.



1. Lie down on the stomach.

2. Bend elbows and place palms on the floor, near the navel.

3. On inhale, lift chest and then head.



Forehead on the floor, legs together and straight, toes turned out, arms straight alongside the body, palms turned up, eyes closed.

Elbows parallel, fingers pointing forward.

No weight on the palms, head up.

III.27

Bhujangasana

4. On exhale, lower head and then chest to the floor keeping the shoulders relaxed.
5. Place arms alongside the body.

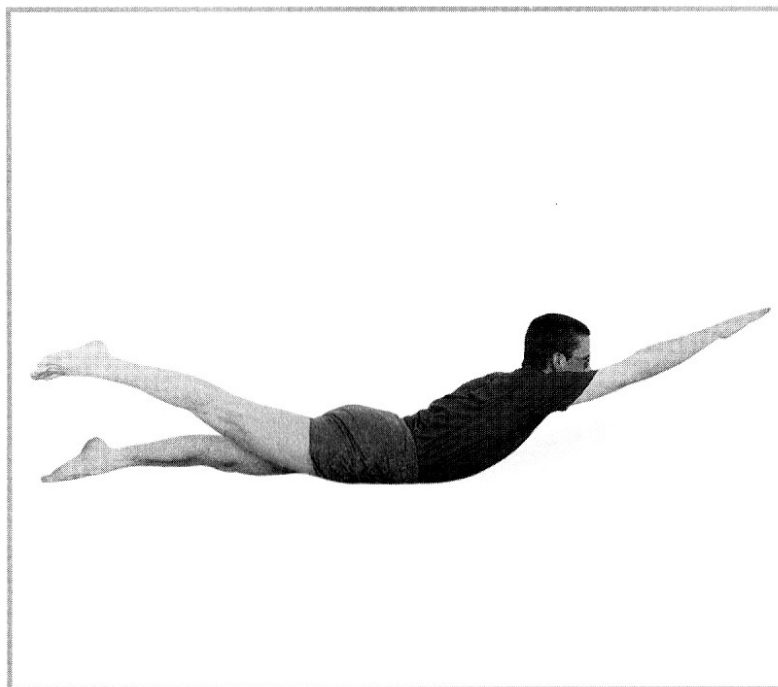


1. Lie down on the stomach.



Forehead on the floor, legs together and straight, toes turned out, arms straight alongside the body, palms turned up, eyes closed.

2. On inhale, sweep right arm above the head, while raising chest, head and right leg.



Legs and arms straight, right arm across ear, head up, right knee off the floor. Left arm straight on the floor alongside the body, palm turned up. Left leg on the floor.

III.28

Ardha salabhasana

3. On exhale, sweep the right arm back to the floor alongside the body, simultaneously lowering head, chest and right leg to the floor.



Relax shoulders.

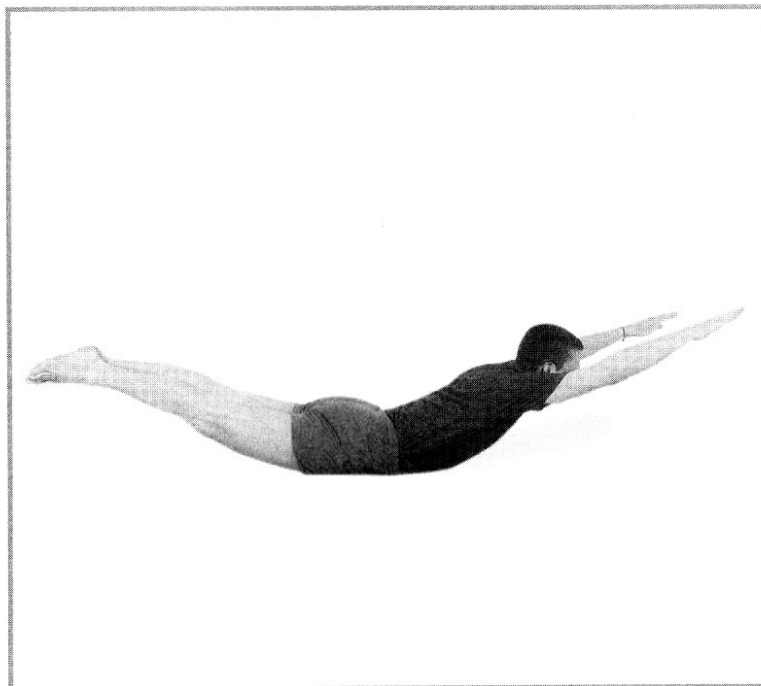
Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

1. Lie down on the stomach.



Forehead on the floor, legs together and straight, toes turned out, arms straight alongside the body, palms turned up, eyes closed.

2. On inhale, sweep both arms above the head, while raising chest, head, and both legs.



Legs and arms straight, arms across ear, head up, knees off the floor.

III.29

Salabhasana

3. On exhale, sweep both arms back to the floor and place alongside the body, while lowering head, chest and both legs to the floor.



1. Lie down on the stomach.



Forehead on the floor, legs together and straight, toes turned out, arms straight alongside the body, palms turned up, eyes closed.

2. Bend knees and hold ankles.

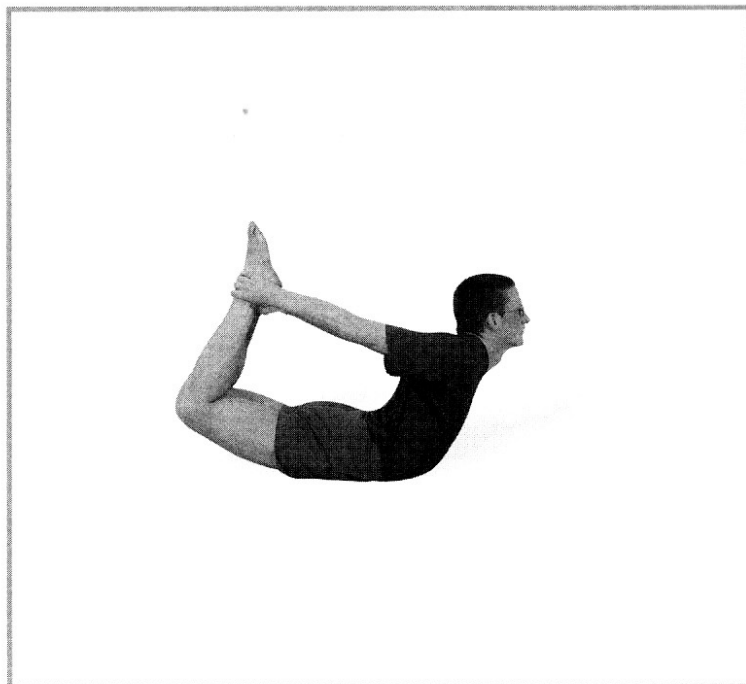


Forehead on the floor, grip ankles with the thumb on the inside and other fingers on the outside, feet and knees together and arms straight.

III.30

Dhanurasana

3. On inhale, pull the feet back and raise the chest while lifting the head up.



Knees off the floor.

4. On exhale, lower head, chest and knees to the floor.



Relax shoulders.

5. Release ankles, place hands on the floor alongside the body and straighten legs.



1. Kneel down and sit on closed heels.

2. On inhale, while raising arms from the front, rise on knees.

3. On exhale, lower arms from the front, and place hands on waist.



Heels and knees together, toes turned out, back straight, palms on the knees, eyes closed.

Arms straight across ears, palms facing the front.

Elbows bent.

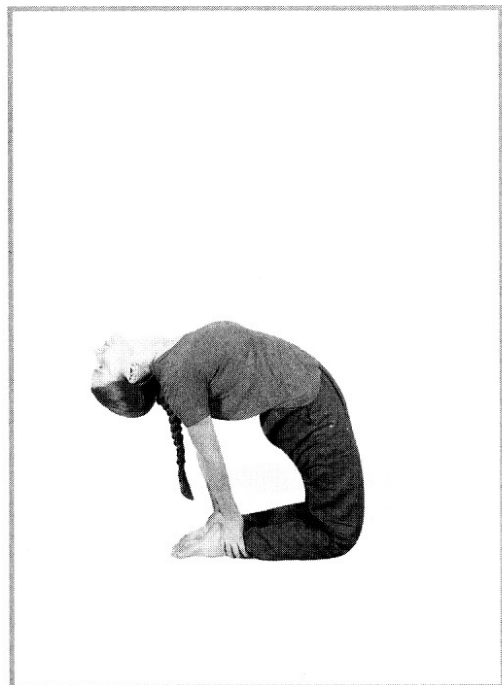
III.31

Ustrasana

4. On inhale, arch back and hold heels with the hands, drop head.

5. On exhale, release hands, come back to vertical position and place hands on waist.

6. On inhale, raise arms from the front.



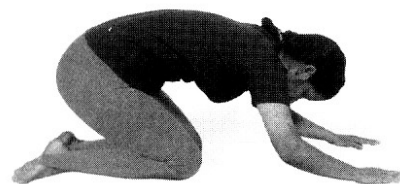
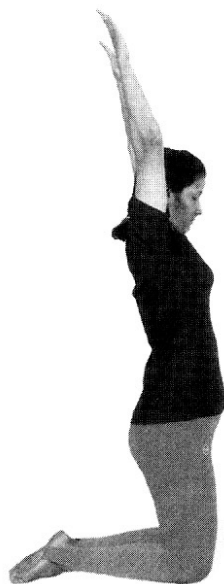
7. On exhale, lower arms and sit on the heels.



1. Kneel down and sit on closed heels.

2. On inhale, while raising arms from the front, rise onto knees.

3. On exhale, bend forward and place palms on the floor.



Heels and knees together, back straight, palms on the knees, toes turned out, eyes closed.

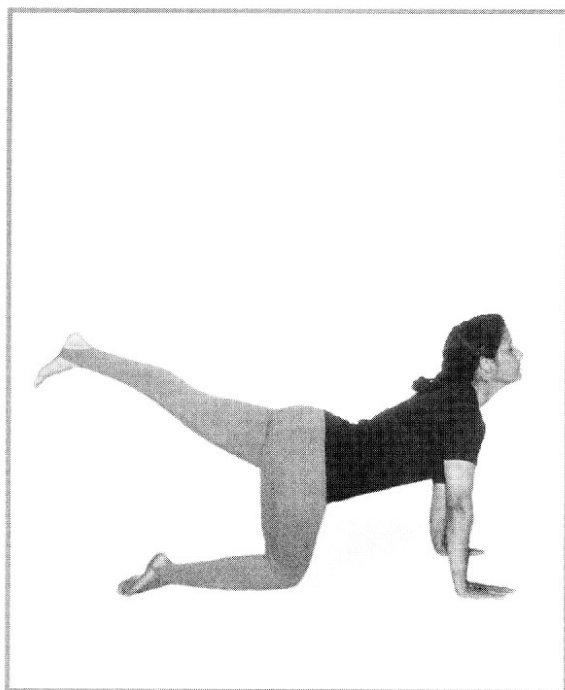
Arms straight across ears, palms facing the front.

Buttocks lifted away from the heels, head and elbows off the floor.

III.32

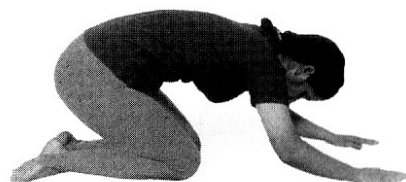
Cakravakasana

4. On inhale, while moving forward and arching back, extend left leg up.

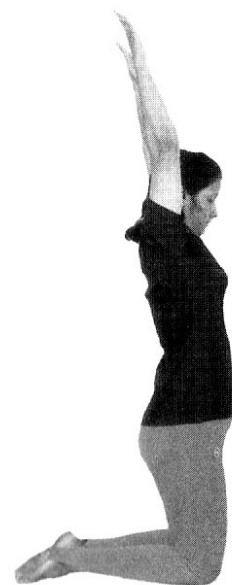


Left leg straight (not rotated), head up, eyes closed, shoulders relaxed, arms straight.

5. On exhale, bend down while bringing left leg to the floor.



6. On inhale, raise arms and come up on knees.



7. On exhale, lower arms and sit on the heels.



Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

IV. PAROVA

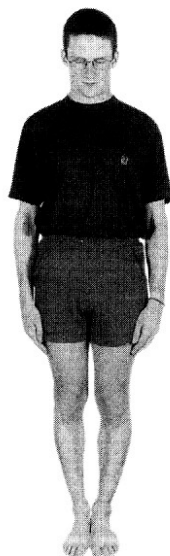
33. Utthita trikonasana (parsva)

35. Jathara parivrtti (parsva)

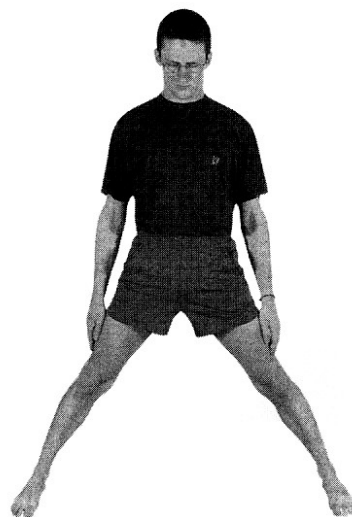
34. Utthita parsvakonasana

36. Mahamudra

1. Stand in samasthiti.



2. Take a stride sideways.



3. On inhale, raise arms from the sides to shoulder level.



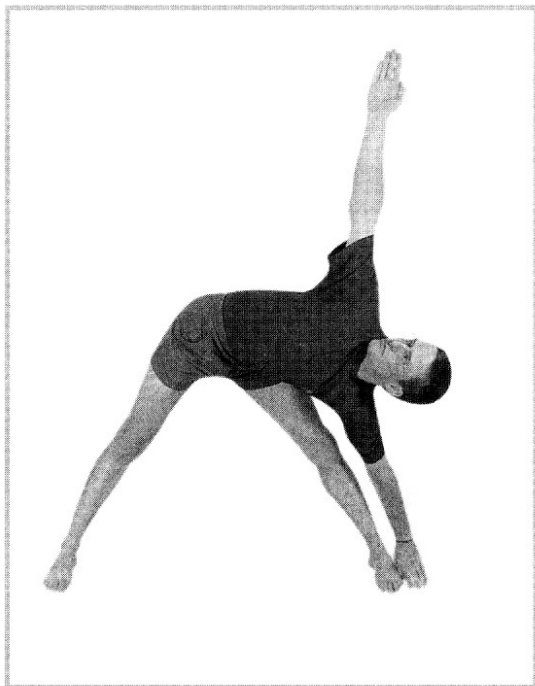
Feet together, back straight, legs straight, arms by the sides of the body, palms turned inwards, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

Legs straight, feet parallel, toes facing the front.

IV.33

Utthita Trikonasana (Parsva)

4. On exhale, bend laterally to the left and place left hand on the floor outside the left foot. Right arm extended up. Turn head and look up.



Weight on feet only, eyes looking up at right hand. Left palm on the floor, facing forward.

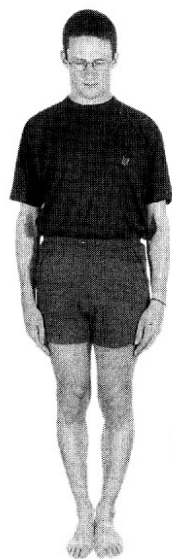
5. On inhale, turn head down, and come up.



6. On exhale, lower arms from the sides.

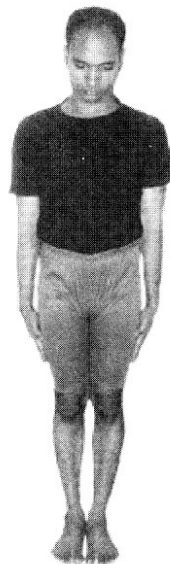


7. Bring feet together, returning to samasthiti.

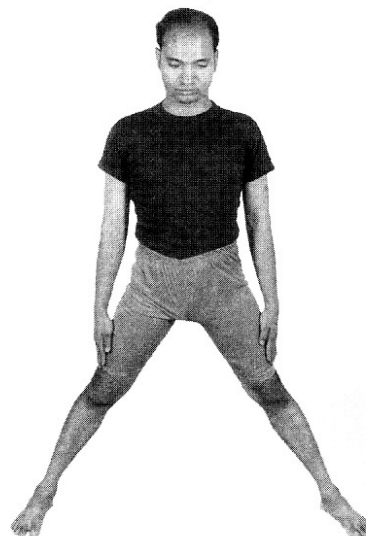


Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

1. Stand in samasthiti.



2. Take a stride sideways.



3. On inhale, raise arms from the sides to shoulder level.



Feet together, back straight, legs straight, arms by the sides of the body, palms turned inwards, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

Legs straight, feet parallel, toes facing the front.

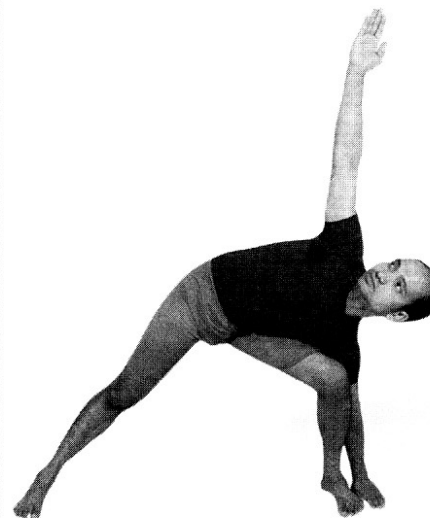
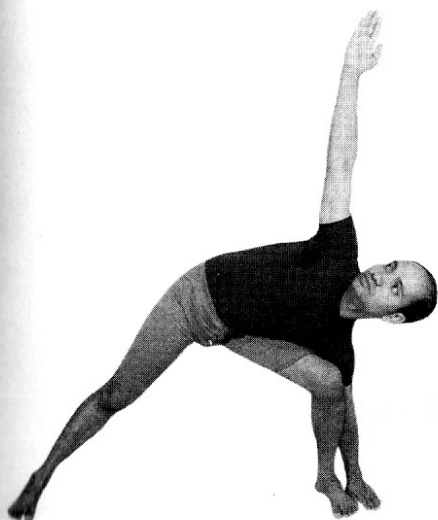
IV.34

Utthita Parsvakonasana (Parsva)

4. On exhale, bend left knee, bend trunk laterally towards left knee, place left palm on the floor outside the left foot. Right arm extended up. Turn head up.

5. On inhale, bring right arm over the ear.

6. On exhale, move right arm away from the head back to vertical position.

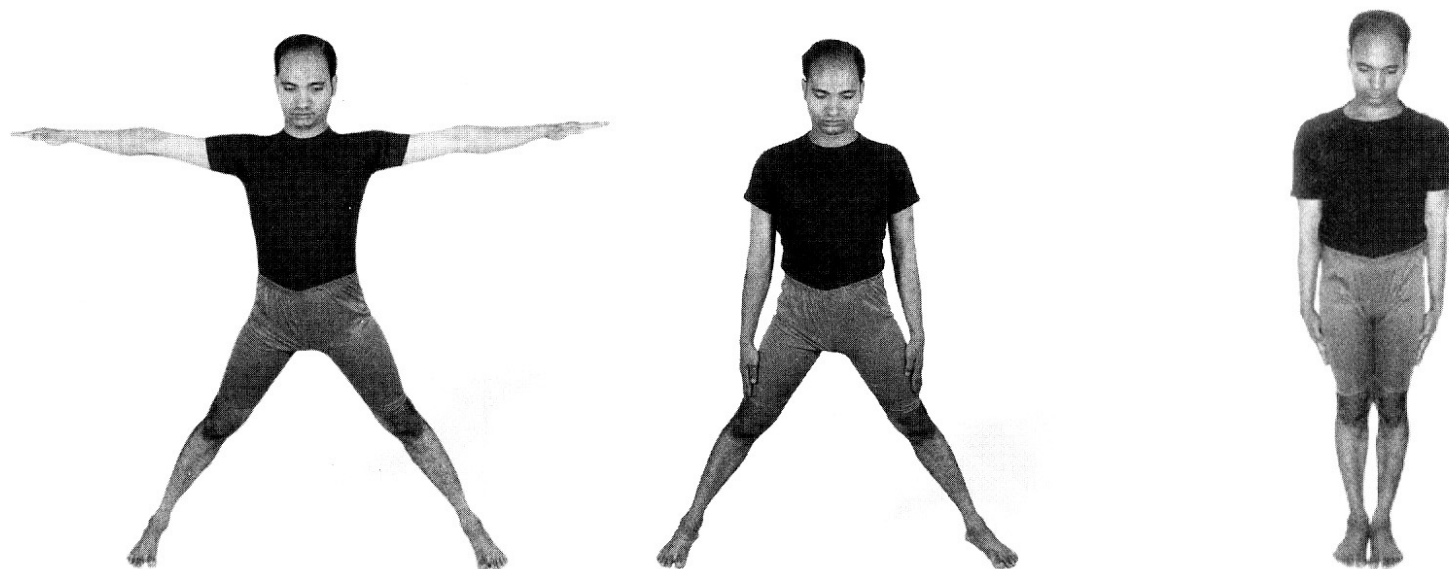


Left knee bent, feet parallel, toes facing the front, weight on feet only, straight arms, eyes looking at right hand, left palm on the floor, facing forward.

7. On inhale, turn head down, and come up, straightening the left knee.

8. On exhale, lower arms from the sides.

9. Bring feet together, back to samasthiti.



Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

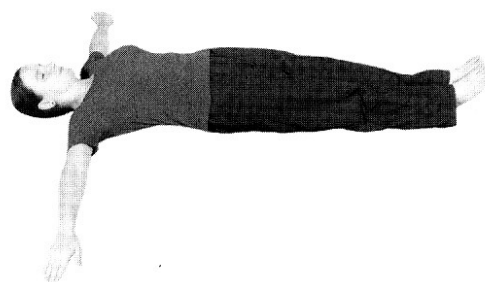
1. Lie down on the back.

2. On inhale, move arms from the sides till shoulder level.

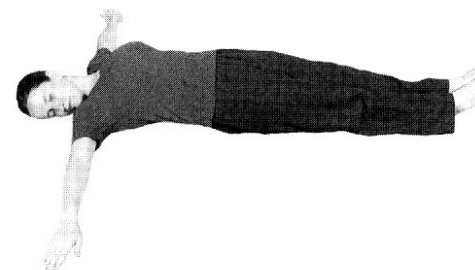
3. On exhale, turn head to right side.



Legs together and straight, arms alongside the body, palms on the floor, elbows straight, eyes closed.



Arms straight and on the floor.

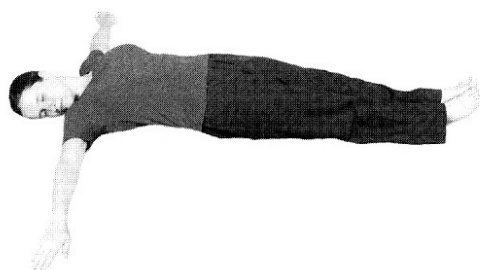


Right ear on the floor, head in line with the body.

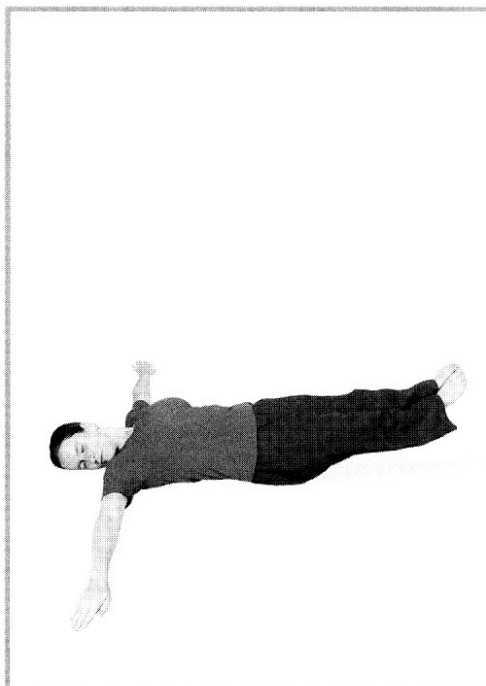
IV.35

Jathara Parivrtti (Parsva)

4. Inhale in this position.

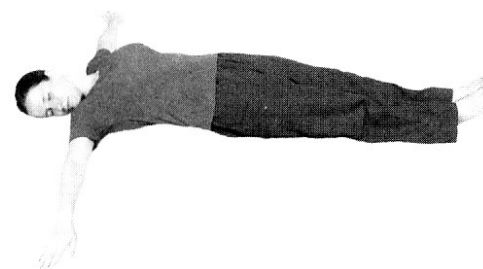


5. On exhale, move legs to the left side, one at a time in small steps.



Legs straight, feet together, hips remain firmly on the floor in line with the trunk.

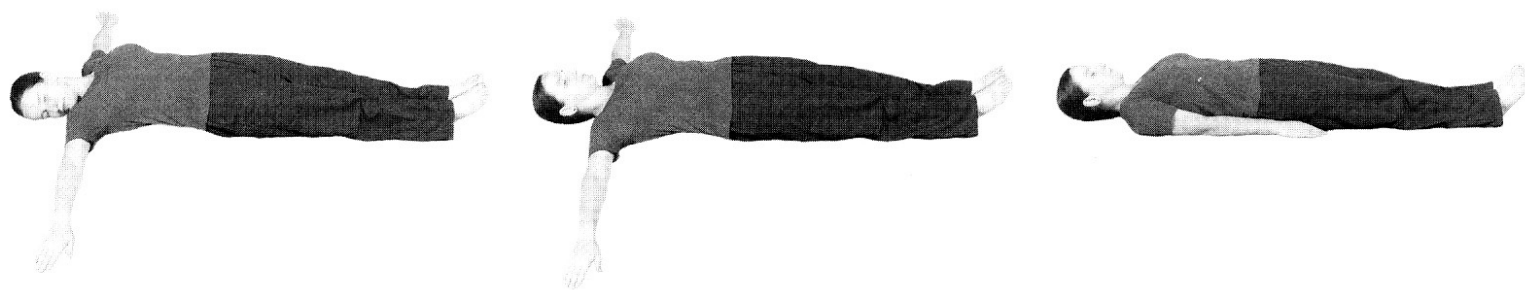
6. On inhale, bring legs to center in small steps, one at a time.



7. Exhale in this position.

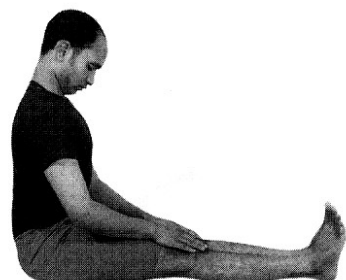
8. On inhale, turn head back to the original position.

9. On exhale, lower arms from the sides.

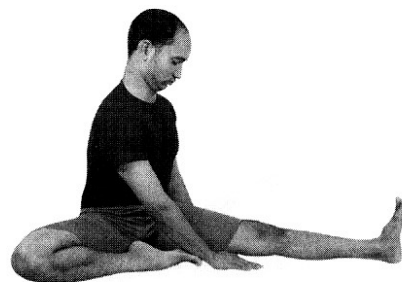


Note - This asana should be done on both sides

1. Sit with legs extended forward.



2. Bend right leg and press groin with the heel.



3. On inhale, raise arms from the front, above the head.



Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed, chin down.

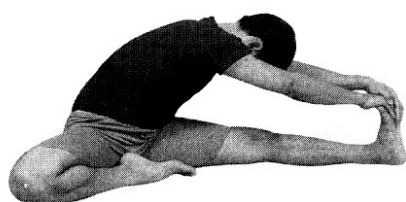
Body facing left leg, right knee on the floor, palms on the floor on either side of the left leg.

Arms straight across ears, palms facing front.

IV.36

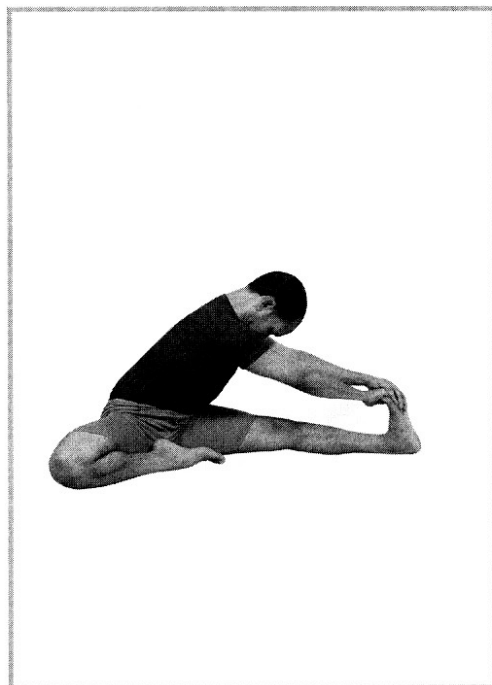
Mahamudra

4. On exhale, bend forward and place right palm over left foot and left palm over the right.



Back relaxed, arms relaxed.

5. On inhale, arch the back.



Chin down.

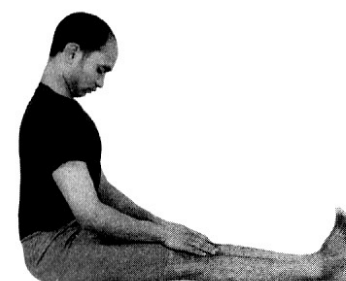
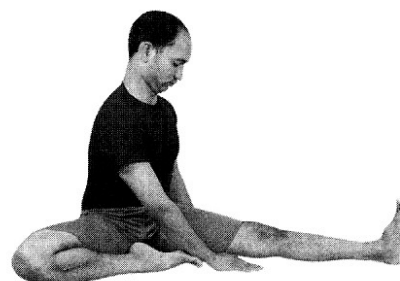
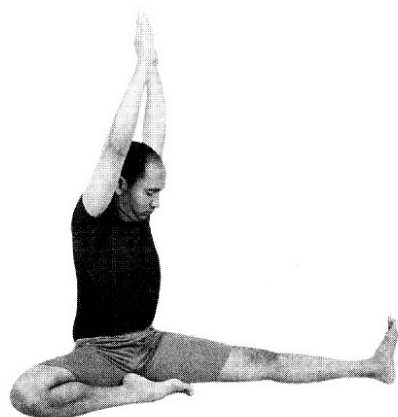
6. On exhale, relax the back.



7. On inhale, raise arms and come up.

8. On exhale, lower arms from the front.

9. Extend right leg forward.



Arms must lead the trunk.

Difference in leg position between janusirsasana and mahamudra

In mahamudra, the bent leg makes a wider angle with straight leg, when compared to janusirsasana.

Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

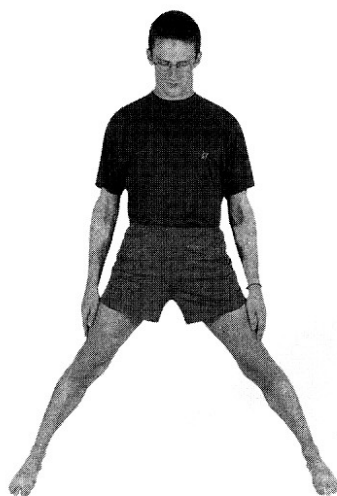
V. PARIVRTTI

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 37. Utthita trikonasana (parivrtti) | 40. Jathara parivrtti (ekapada) |
| 38. Utthita parsvakonasana (parivrtti) | 41. Ardha matsyendrasana |
| 39. Jathara parivrtti | |

1. Stand in samasthiti.



2. Take a stride sideways.



3. On inhale, raise arms from the sides to shoulder level.



145

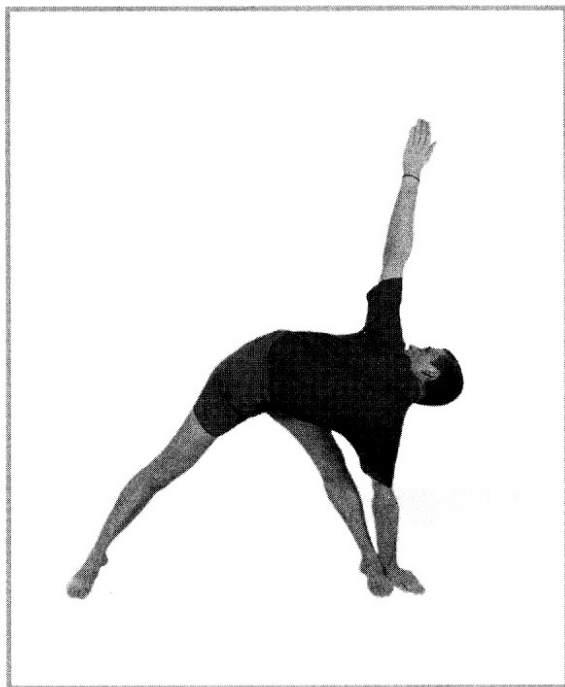
Feet together, back straight, legs straight, arms by the sides of the body, palms facing inwards, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulder relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

Legs straight, feet parallel, toes facing the front. Chin not tucked down.

V.37

Utthita Trikonasana (Pariivrtti)

4. On exhale, twist and place right palm on the floor outside the left foot. Left arm extended up. Turn head and look up.

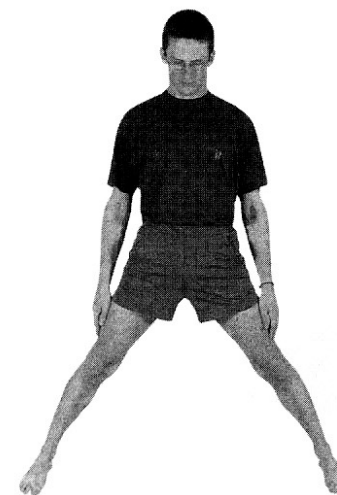


Weight on feet only, eyes looking at left hand, right palm on the floor facing forward.

5. On inhale, turn head down, and come up.



6. On exhale, lower arms from the sides.

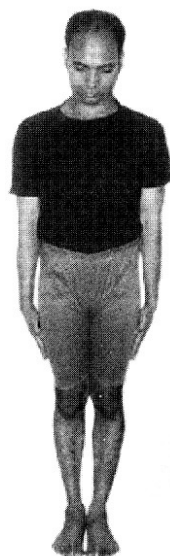


7. Bring feet together to samasthiti.

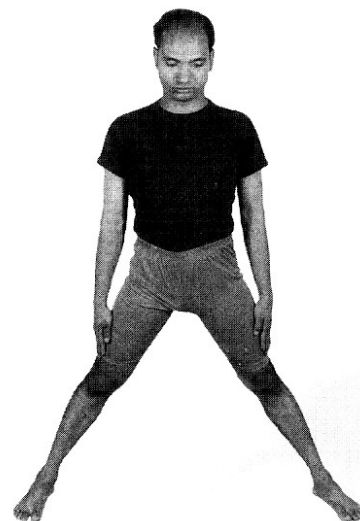


Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

1. Stand in samasthiti.



2. Take a big stride sideways.



3. On inhale, raise arms from the sides to shoulder level.



Feet together, legs straight, arms by the sides of the body, palms facing inwards, weight on both feet, buttocks relaxed, shoulders relaxed, chin down, eyes open.

Legs straight, feet parallel, toes facing the front, arms straight

Chin not tucked down.

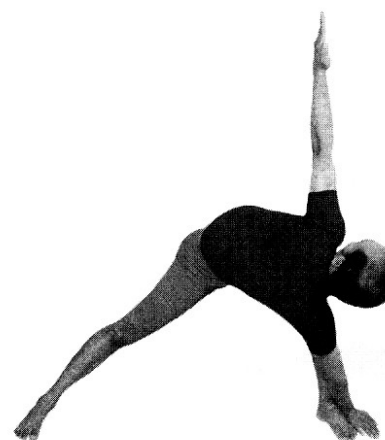
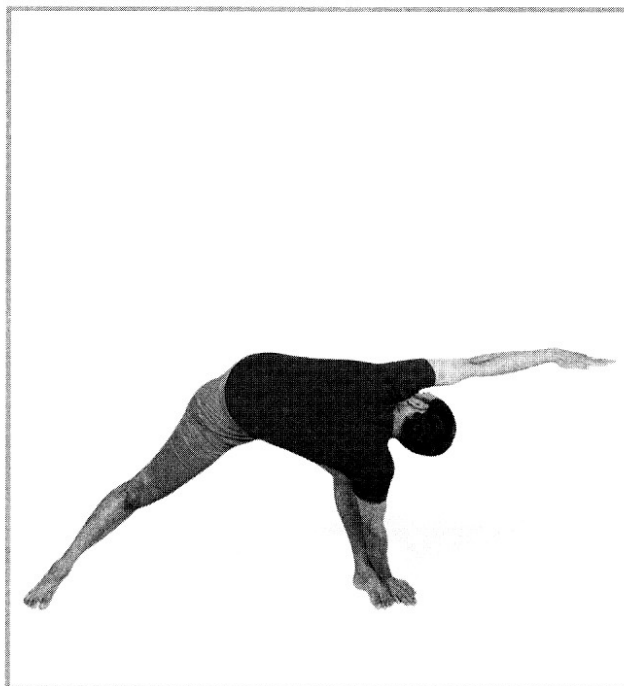
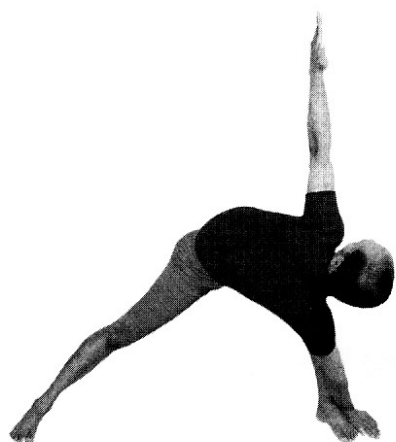
V. 38

Utthita Parsvakonasana (Parivrtti)

4. On exhale, bend left knee and twist towards it. Place right palm on the floor outside the left foot. Left arm extended up. Turn head up.

5. On inhale, bring left arm over the ear.

6. On exhale, move left arm away from the head to vertical position.

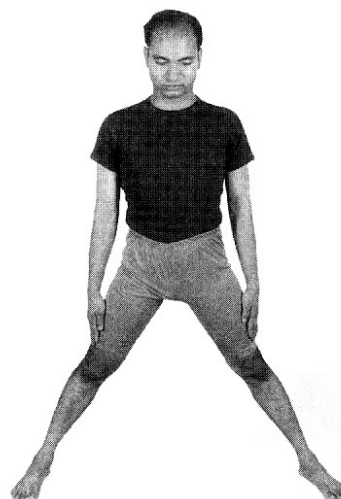


Left knee bent, feet apart and parallel, weight on feet only, eyes looking at left hand, right palm on the floor, fingers facing forward.

7. On inhale, turn head down, and come up, straightening the left knee.

8. On exhale, lower arms from the sides.

9. Bring feet together to samasthiti.



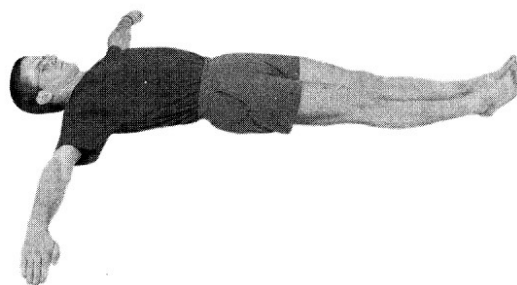
Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

1. Lie down on the back.



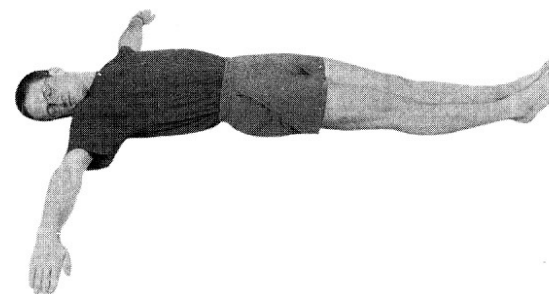
Legs together and straight, arms alongside the body, palms facing downwards, elbows straight, eyes closed.

2. On inhale, move arms from the sides to shoulder level.



Arms straight and on the floor.

3. On exhale, turn head to right side.

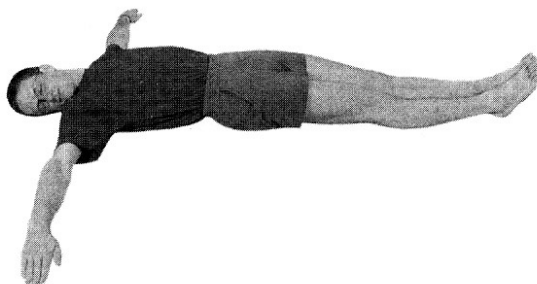


Right ear on the floor, head in line with the body.

V.39

Jathara Parivrtti (Parivrtti)

4. Inhale in this position.

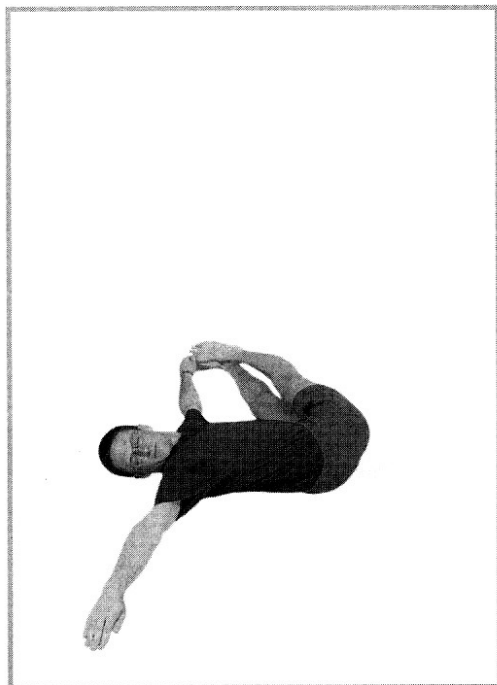


5. On exhale, lift legs to vertical position. 6. Inhale in this position.

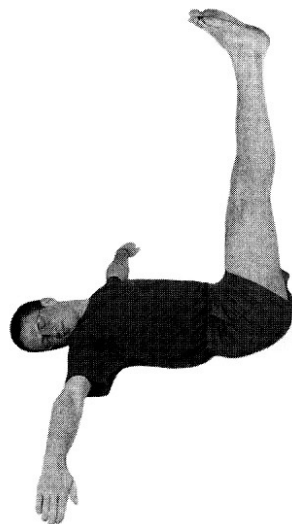


Legs vertical and together, hips on the floor.

7. On exhale, lower legs to the left without bending knees and place on the floor, holding toes with left hand.
8. On inhale, release feet and lift legs to vertical position without bending knees.
9. Exhale in this position.



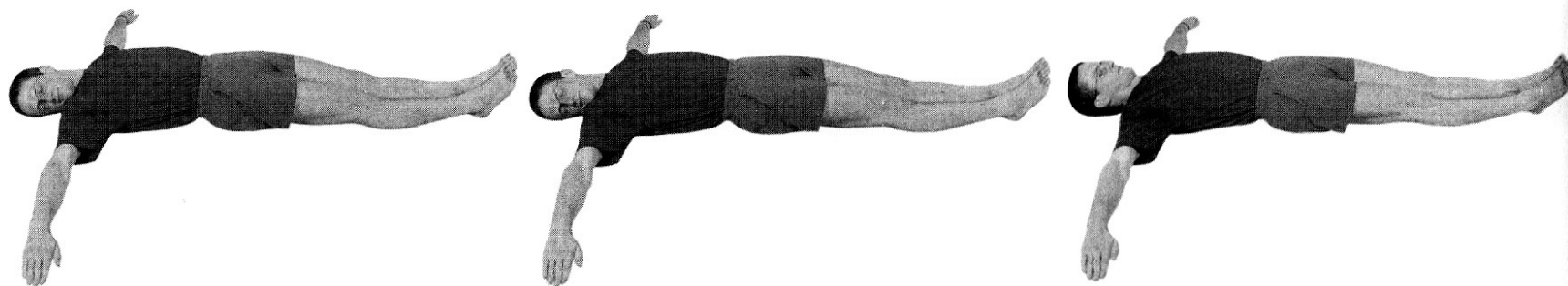
Legs straight, heels together, right ear and right shoulder still on the floor.



10. On inhale, lower legs to the floor without bending knees.

11. Exhale in this position.

12. On inhale, turn head back to the original position.



13. On exhale, lower arms from the sides.

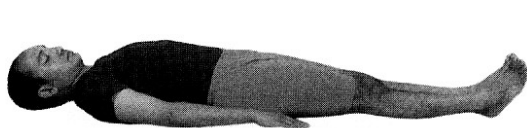


Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

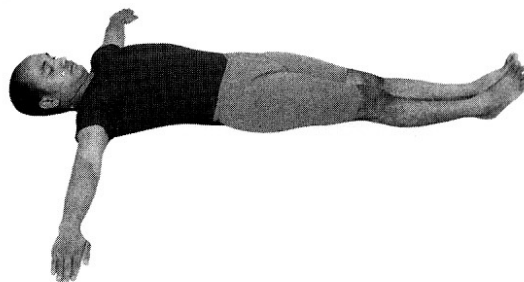
1. Lie down on the back.

2. On inhale, move arms from the sides till shoulder level.

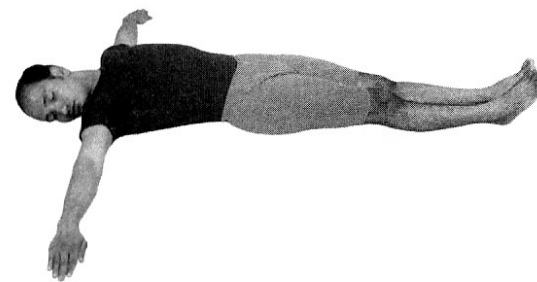
3. On exhale, turn head to right side.



Legs together and straight, arms alongside the body, palms facing downwards, elbows straight, eyes closed.



Arms straight, palms down.



Right ear on the floor, head in line with the body.

V.40

Jathara Parivrtti (Ekapada)

4. Inhale in this position.

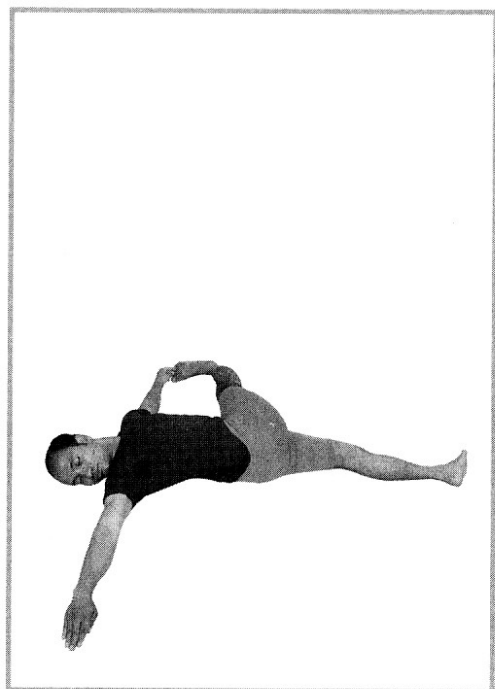
5. On exhale, raise right leg to vertical position without bending knee.

6. Inhale in this position.



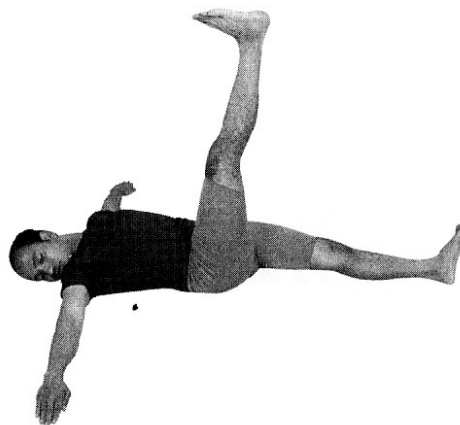
Legs straight. Hips on the floor.

7. On exhale, twist and lower right leg to the left side and place on the floor, holding toe with left hand.



Legs straight, right ear and right shoulder still on the floor.

8. Release foot and while inhaling raise right leg to vertical position without bending knee.



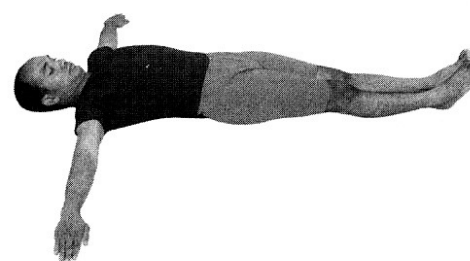
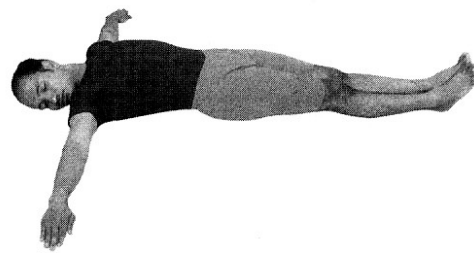
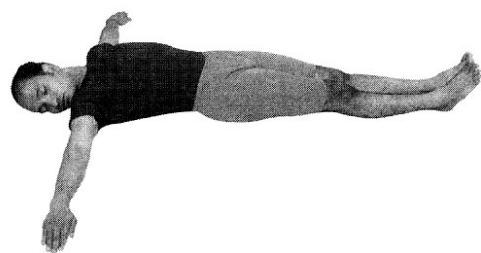
9. Exhale in this position.



10. On inhale, lower right leg to the floor without bending knee.

11. Exhale in this position.

12. On inhale, turn head back to the original position.

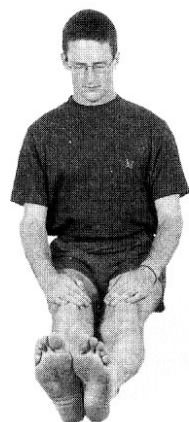


13. On exhale, lower arms from the sides along the body.

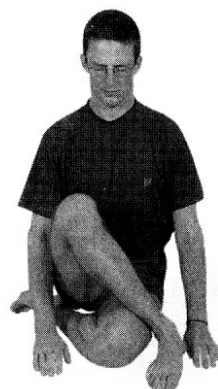


Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

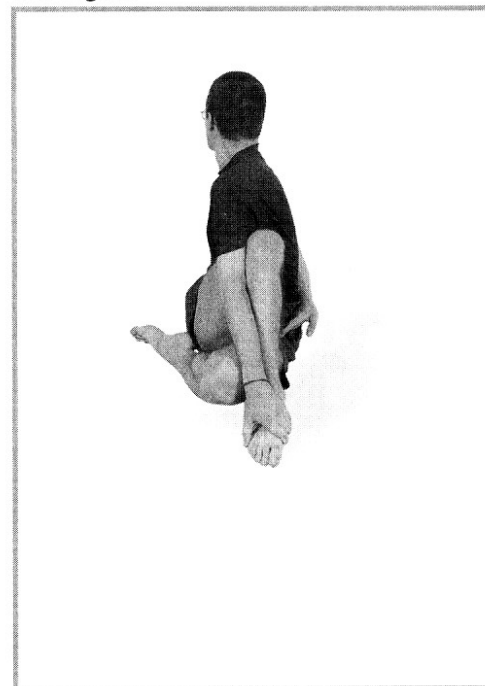
1. Sit with legs extended forward.



2. Bend left leg and place left ankle under the right thigh; bend right leg and place right foot outside left knee.



3. Twist trunk to the right, place left elbow outside right knee and hold the right foot. From behind hold left thigh with right arm. Turn head to the right.



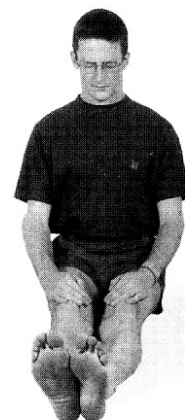
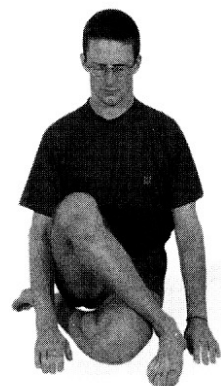
Legs together and straight, back straight, palms on the lap, shoulders relaxed, eyes closed.

Left knee on the floor, right knee vertical.

V. 41

Ardha Matsyendrasana

4. Bring head to the front, release right hand from left thigh and left arm from right leg, and untwist the trunk.
5. Extend legs forward.



Note - This asana is to be done on both sides.

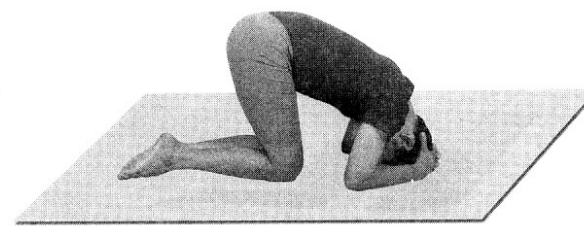
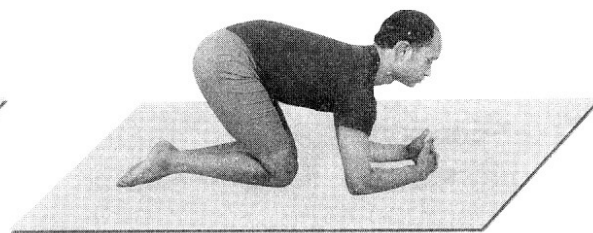
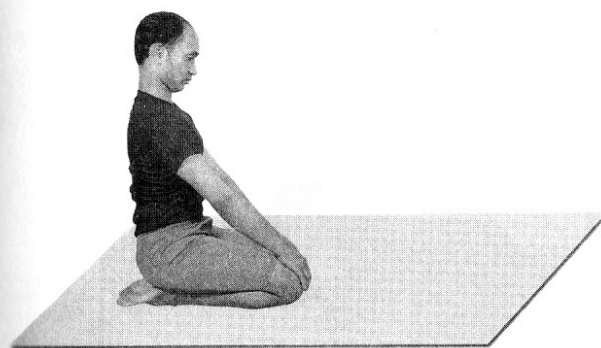
VI. VIPARITA

42. Sirsasana

43. Sarvangasana

44. Viparitakarani

1. Kneel down and sit on closed heels.
2. Bend forward and place forearms on the carpet, lock fingers.
3. Place crown of head* on the carpet, in between hands.



165

Sit on a carpet, heels and knees together, back straight, palms on the knees, toes turned out, eyes closed.

Thumbs up, elbows symmetrical and slightly apart and placed on the carpet.

Back of head against the palms with thumbs supporting it.

***Crown of the head** - It is the meeting point of the imaginary line drawn starting from both shoulders and passing through the sides of the neck, across the ears and finally meeting at the top of the head. When identifying the exact position of the crown of the head, head must be kept straight with eyes looking straight ahead. Chin is not tucked down.

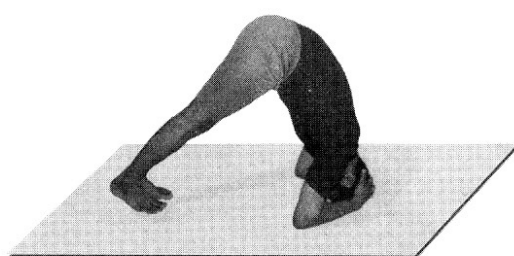
VI.42

Sirasasana

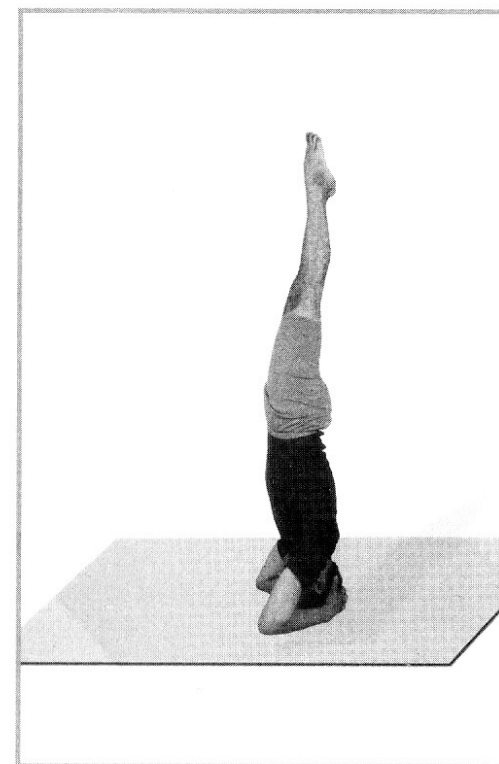
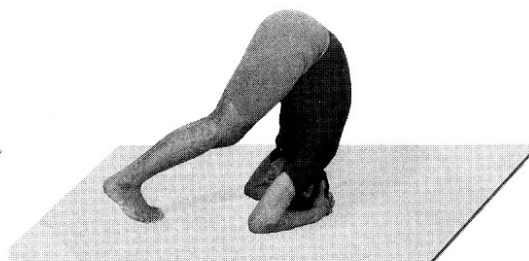
4. On inhale, lift knees off the floor.

5. On exhale, bring feet closer to the body one step at a time.

6. On inhale, raise legs straight up to the vertical position.



Buttocks raised, legs straight.

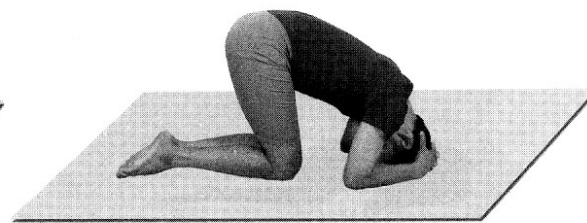
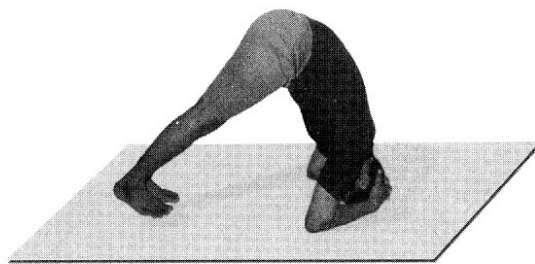
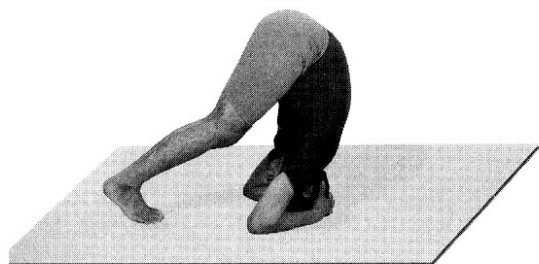


Legs, trunk and head in a vertical line.

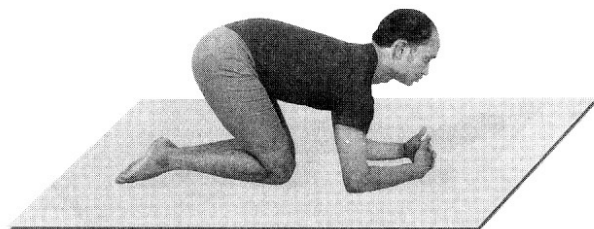
7. On exhale, lower straight legs to the floor.

8. On inhale, move feet away from the body, one step at a time.

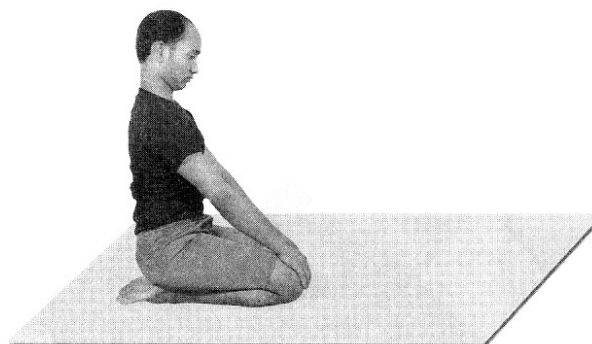
9. On exhale, lower knees to the floor.



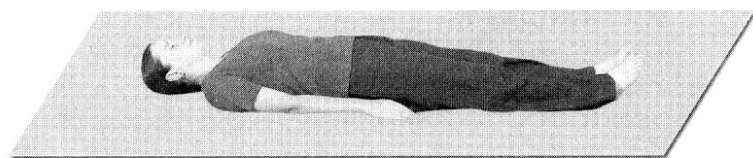
10. Lift head off the floor.



11. Unlock fingers and return to the starting position.



1. Lie down on the back.



Legs together and straight, arms alongside the body, palms facing downwards, elbows straight, chin down, eyes closed. Inhale in this position.

2. On exhale, lift straight legs and hips, move legs beyond head and support lower back with palms.

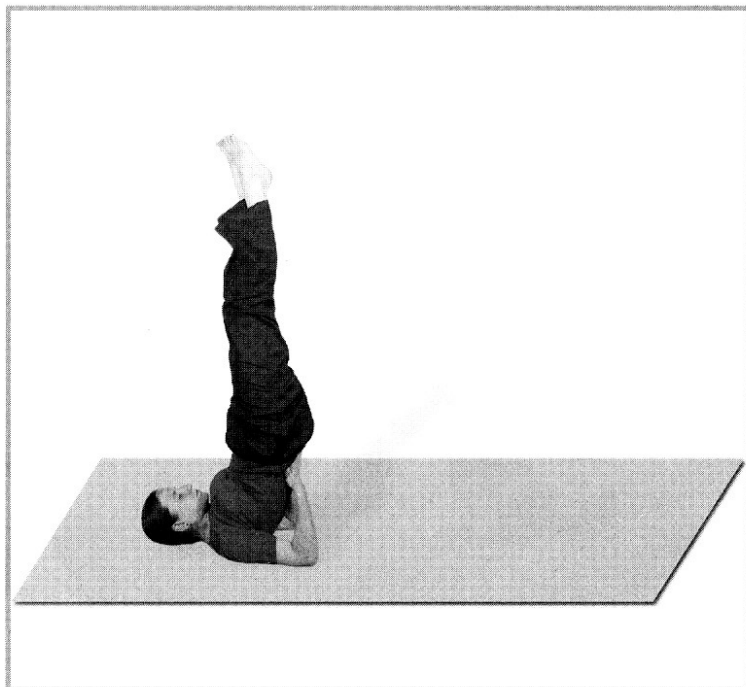


Palms pointing up, elbows parallel, feet off the floor.

VI.43

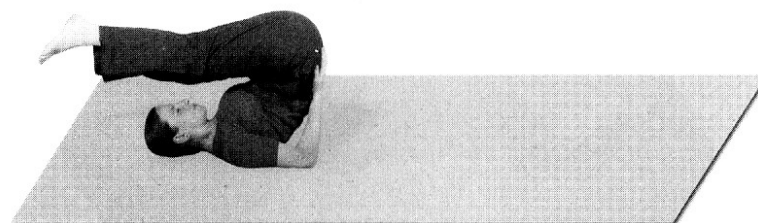
Sarvangasana

3. On inhale, lift legs vertically.



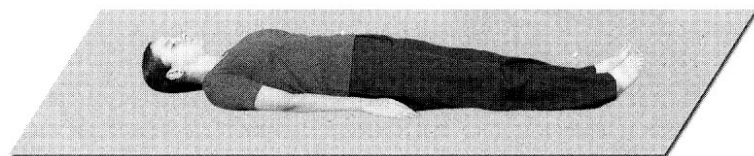
Legs and trunk are in a straight line.

4. On exhale, lower straight legs towards head, feet off the floor.

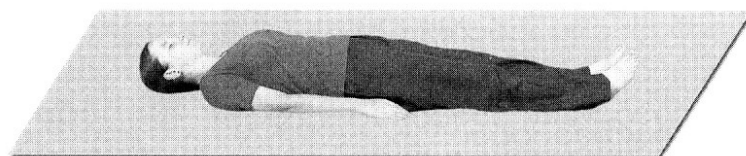


5. Lower palms to the floor.

On inhale, lower hips and straight legs to the floor and exhale in this position.

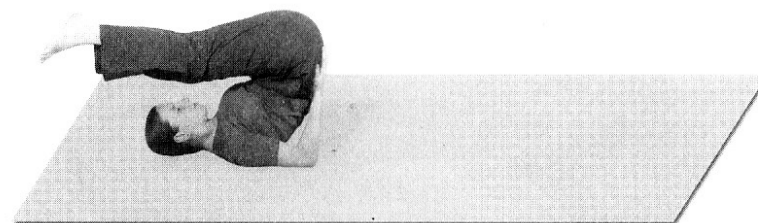


1. Lie down on the back.



Legs together and straight, arms alongside the body, palms facing downwards, elbows straight, chin down, eyes closed. Inhale in this position.

2. On exhale, lift straight legs and hips, move legs beyond head and support lower back with palms.

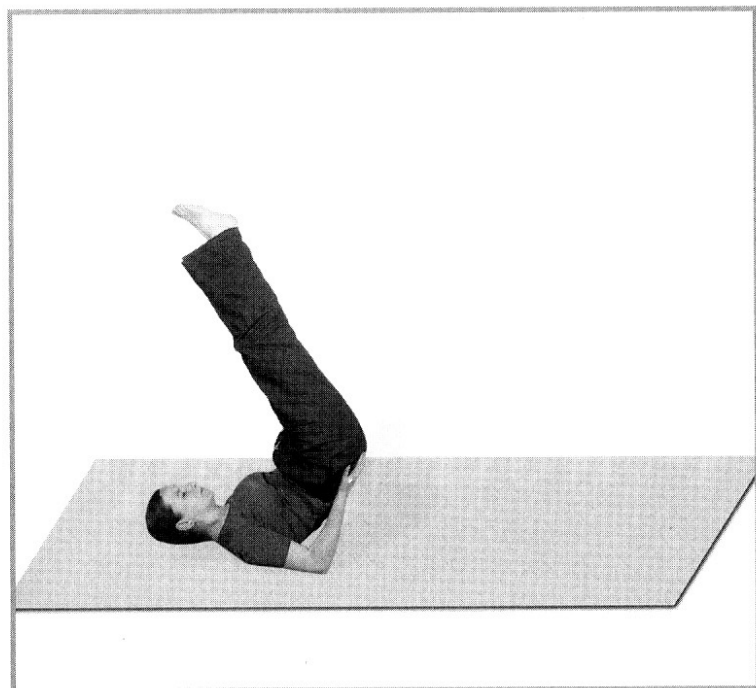


Palms pointing up, elbows parallel, feet off the floor.

VI.44

Viparitakarani

3. On inhale, lift legs up.



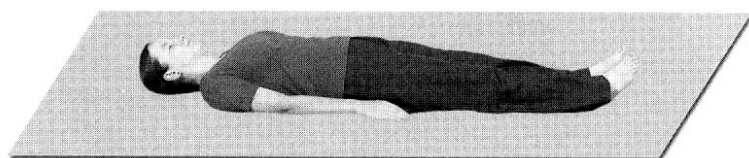
Legs and trunk are at an angle.

4. On exhale, lower straight legs towards head, feet of the floor.



5. Lower palms to the floor.

On inhale, lower hips and legs to the floor. Exhale in this position.



Difference between sarvangasana and viparitakarani

1. In viparitakarani, the trunk and the legs are at an angle, while in sarvangasana they are in a straight line.

2. In viparitakarani, there is less weight on the neck, than in sarvangasana.



Application 4

APPLICATION 4

History – Jennifer is an 18 year old college student. She is a classical dancer and has been practicing yoga for a long time.

Observation – She is very fit and flexible and is very keen to learn all the asanas, especially sirsasana.

Strategy – To teach her sirsasana.

1



Repeat 6 times

EX
↑
IN

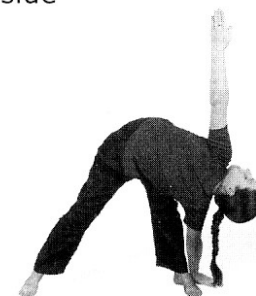


2



Repeat 6 times and then stay 6 breaths on one side, then repeat the same on the other side

EX
↑
IN



3

Repeat 6 times and then stay 6 breaths with head down

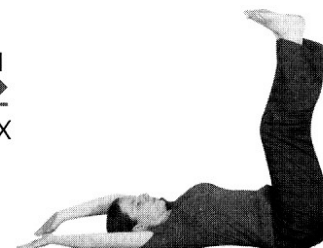
IN
↑
EX



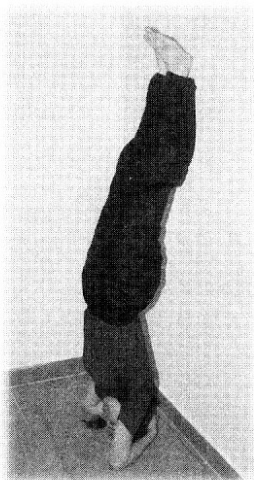
4

Repeat 6 times and stay each time for one breath here

IN
↑
EX



5



Stay 12 Breaths

6

Rest for 2 min.



7



Stay 12 Breaths

8

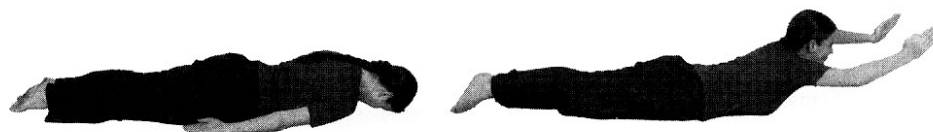
Rest for 2 min.



9

IN
↓
EX

6 times



10

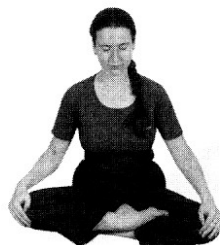
6 Breaths



178

11

Simple breathing
12 breaths



12

Rest for 2 min.





Application 5

APPLICATION 5

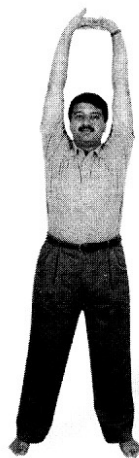
History – George is a 35 year old software professional. He is obese and stiff, has a family history of heart problems.

179

Observation – He is obese on account of over eating and lack of exercise.

Strategy – To caution him about the risks of being over weight, and ensure that the practice is regular. To use parsva postures, so that he “feels” some effect.

1



EX
↓
IN



Alternate 5
times each
side

2



EX
↓
IN



5 times each on
either side.

3

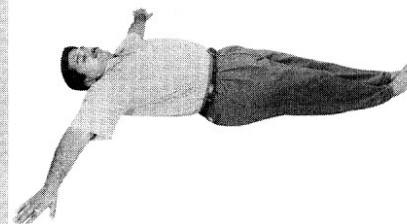


EX
↓
IN

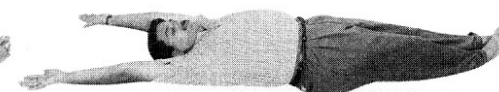


5 times

4



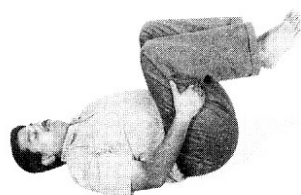
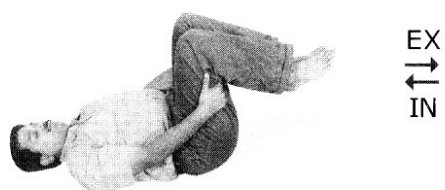
IN
↓
EX



Repeat arm move-
ment 10 times with
legs on left side and
then 10 times on the
right.

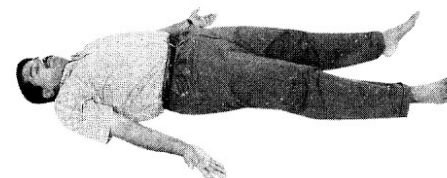
5

10 times



6

Rest for a few min.



7

Focus on each exhale,
Contracting the abdomen
10 times



Chapter 3

Modifications of Asanas

- ✓ Why asanas need to be modified.
- ✓ The different modifications of each asana.
- ✓ The modifications are presented based on the classification of the modified asana, which may be sometimes different from that of the classical asana.

Although the correct techniques of asanas have been presented in the previous chapter, modifications are necessary under certain circumstances. For example:

1. Asanas are modified when the classical technique cannot be done by the practitioner. When someone is not able to do *uttanasana* with legs straight, he/she may be asked to do it with bent legs.

IDEAL UTTANASANA



MODIFIED UTTANASANA



2. In certain cases, classical asanas are not desirable. For a pregnant woman, perfect *pascimatanasana* is not desirable. Instead, a modification can be done with legs spread and not bending the trunk completely.

IDEAL PASCIMATANASANA

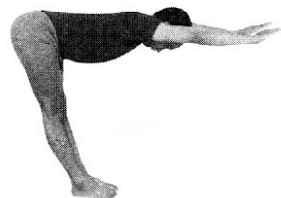


MODIFIED PASCIMATANASANA

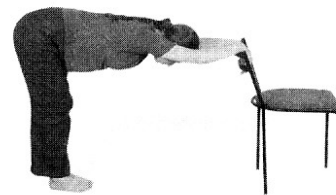


3. In some cases where certain emphasis needs to be given, the classical asana may be modified. When *ardha uttanasana* is suggested for someone to help arch the back, hands may be supported on a stool. This helps the person to focus better on the back.

IDEAL ARDHA UTTANASANA

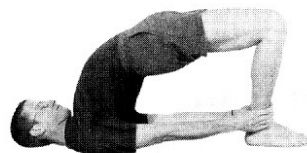


MODIFIED ARDHA UTTANASANA

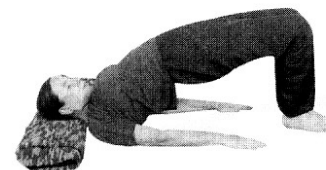


4. When an asana produces pain in a sensitive area, it should be modified to reduce this pain. For some people with stiff necks, dvipadapitham is suggested with a cushion under the neck, and arms not holding ankles.

IDEAL DVIPADAPITHAM



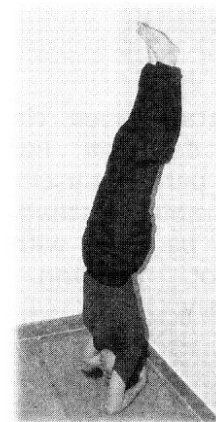
MODIFIED DVIPADAPITHAM



IDEAL SIRSASANA



MODIFIED SIRSASANA



5. There are occasions where asanas are modified and used as a preparation for ideal asanas. For those who have a fear of falling over in inverted asanas like sirsasana, they are asked to perform the posture against the wall. Over the course of time they are eventually able to do the asana without the support of the wall.

6. There must also be a gradual progression to lead the student from a situation where modified asanas dominate the course to a situation where the ideal asanas are done. For example, consider a possible evolution of pascimatanasana.

STAGE 1 - PASCIMATANASANA ON A STOOL

The beginner sits on a stool and bends forward. The posture is done dynamically. The forward bend is mild and the stretching of the legs and back muscles is limited.



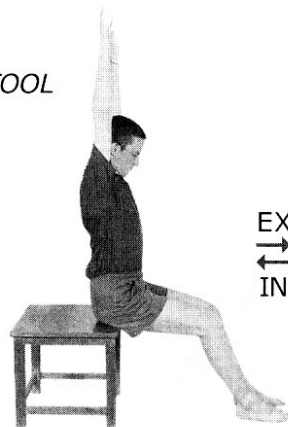
Repeat Movement.

EX
↑
IN



STAGE 2 - PASCIMATANASANA FROM THE EDGE OF A STOOL

After a few days of progressive practice, he practices sitting on the edge of the stool. The legs are a little more forward, which facilitates a better stretch of the back and the legs. He repeats this movement a few times and then stays for a few breaths.



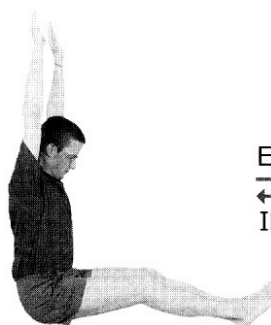
EX
↑
IN

Repeat Movement and stay



STAGE 3 - PASCIMATANASANA ON THE FLOOR BUT KNEES BENT

After a few more weeks of practice, his joints loosen a little more and he is now able to sit on the floor. He now practices pascimatanasana sitting on the floor, but with knees bent. He repeats this movement a few times and stays in the posture for an equal number of breaths. He is quite close to the ideal posture.



EX
↑
IN

**Four times repeat
four breaths stay**



STAGE 4 - PASCIMATANASANA

Finally, through regular practice, the student perfects pascimatanasana. He is now able to do the posture without bent knees and is able to stay for a few breaths without any discomfort.



EX
↑
IN

Six breaths stay



One should remember that this is just an example. The principle of a gradual approach to the posture can and should be applied to the other asanas as well.

It is important to remind the reader that in reality, some people will need more than four stages to perfect any asana. Some will never be able to do a particular asana ideally. The progression is more important than the final posture.

Many modifications are possible, but only a few are presented here. Each modification can serve many purposes, according to how it is used, where it is placed in the sequence of asanas, and what emphasis is given.

For example, consider a simple modification of *tadasana* where heels are not raised.



IDEAL TADASANA



MODIFIED TADASANA

This modification can serve a number of purposes based on how it is used. It can

1. Serve as a warm up.
2. Be used to loosen the shoulder joints.
3. Be used as a mild back exercise.
4. Help to lengthen the breath.
5. Activate the muscle structure.
6. Be used as a simple cardiac exercise.
7. Be used to extend the exhalation. This is achieved by focusing on exhale, and lengthening exhale each time this movement is done.

I. SAMASTHITI

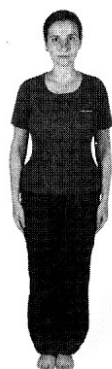
1. Samasthiti
2. Savasana
3. Dandasana
4. Vajrasana

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

1



IN
↓
EX



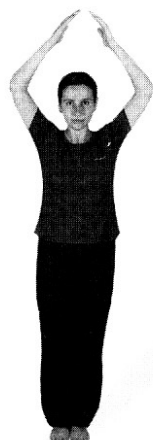
Spread arms.

To warm up. To loosen shoulder joints.

2



IN
↓
EX



Arms overhead.
Elbows bent.

For those with stiff shoulders and elbows.

I.1
Samasthiti

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

3



IN
⇌
EX



Raise arms to shoulder levels.

To warm up. To loosen shoulder joints.

4



IN
⇌
EX



EX
⇌
IN



Turn head to the left and bring right hand towards left shoulder.

For exercising the neck.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

5



IN
→
←
EX



Rest palms on wall.
Raise head, arch
back.

For stability and mild
head movement and
arching the back.

6



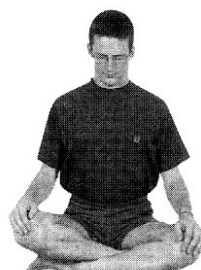
EX
→
←
IN



Legs apart. Cross
arms and touch the
opposite shoulders.

For stability and
reducing stiffness of
shoulders.

Similar modifications and their combinations are also possible in the following positions:



I.2

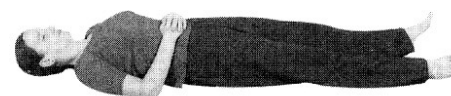
Savasana

1



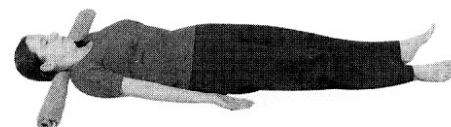
Cloth over the eyes. For resting the eyes.

2


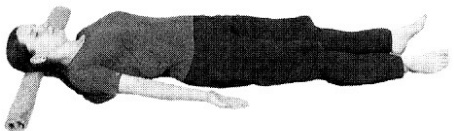


Palms on stomach. For calming effect.

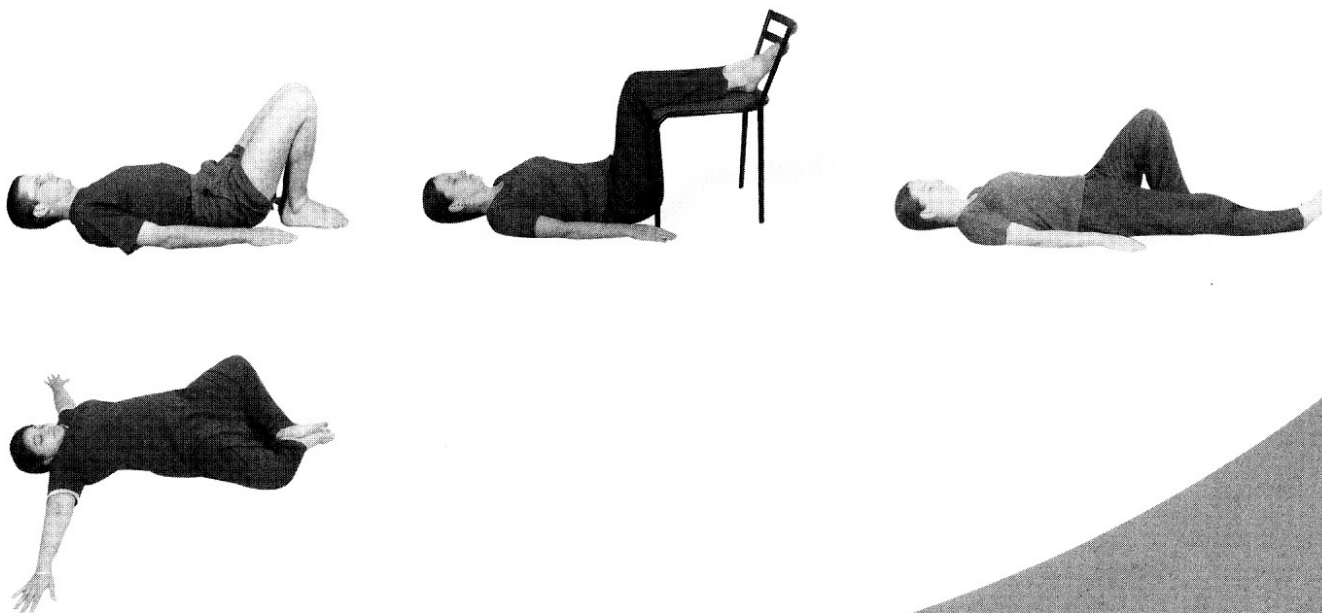
3



Cushion under the neck. For those with a stiff neck.

	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
4		Palm eyes.	For enhancing relaxation.
5		Cushion under the head.	To enable the student to breathe through the nose, when nostrils are blocked.

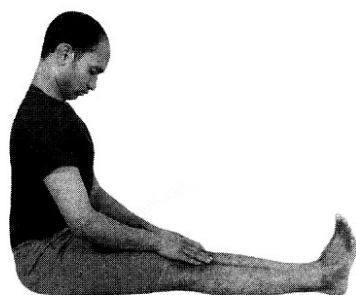
Similar modifications and their combinations are also possible in the following positions:



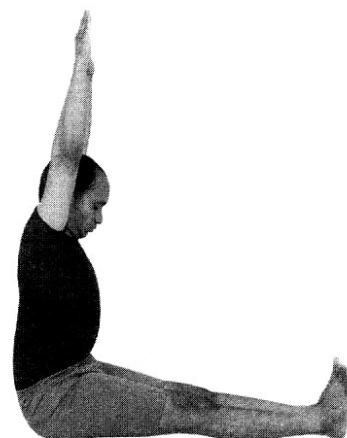
I.3

Dandasana

1

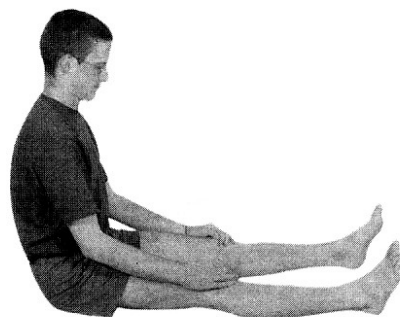


IN
↑
EX



To focus on back.

2



IN
↑
EX



Spread legs.

To widen support.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

Modifications

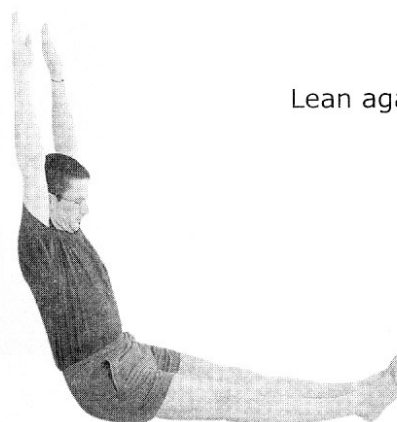
Remarks

Purpose

3



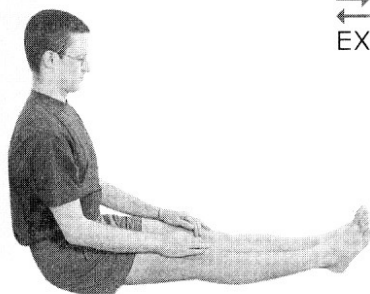
IN
EX



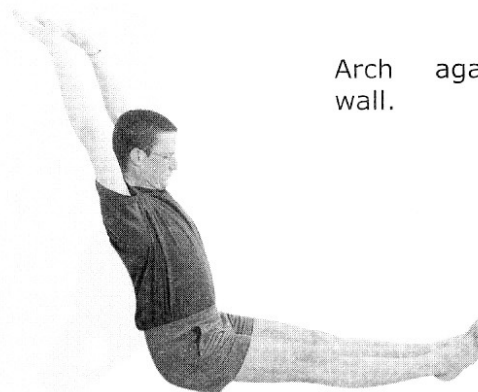
Lean against wall.

When it is not possible to sit without support.

4



IN
EX



Arch against the wall.

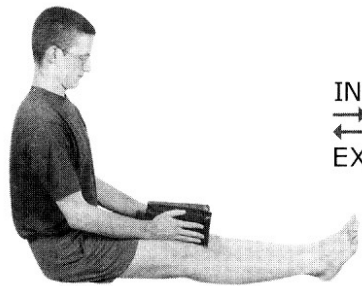
To increase the work on back arch.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

5



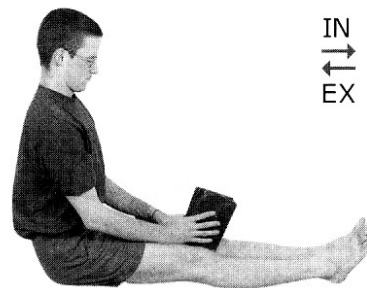
IN
↓
EX



Hold some weight between the palms.

To strengthen the arms, back, and legs.

6



IN
↓
EX



Hold weight with one arm.

To emphasize work on one arm.

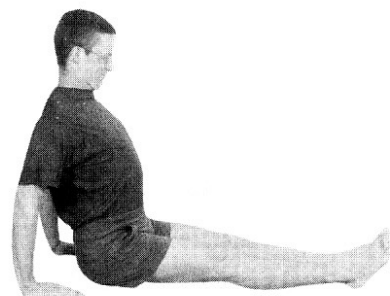
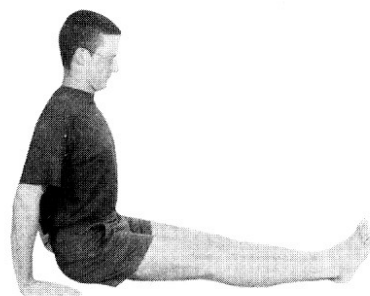
Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

7

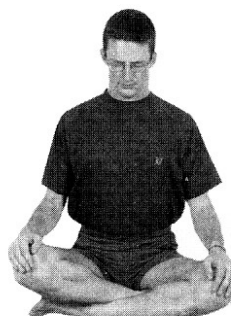
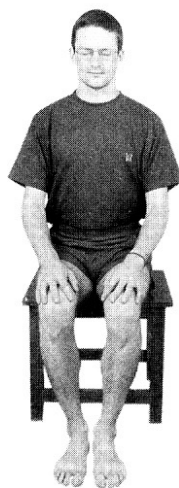
IN
↓
EX



Arch the back on inhale.

When legs are stiff and to keep back erect.

Similar modifications and their combinations are also possible in the following positions:



I.4

Vajrasana

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

1



IN
⇌
EX



rise onto knees.

To reduce strain on heels and knees. To emphasize arching of the lower back.

2



Padding under ankles.

For those with stiff ankles.

II. PASCIMATANA

5. Uttanasana
6. Parsva uttanasana
7. Utkatasana
8. Pascimatanasana
9. Vajrasana
10. Adhomukha svanasana
11. Urdhva prasrta padasana
12. Apanasana

II.5

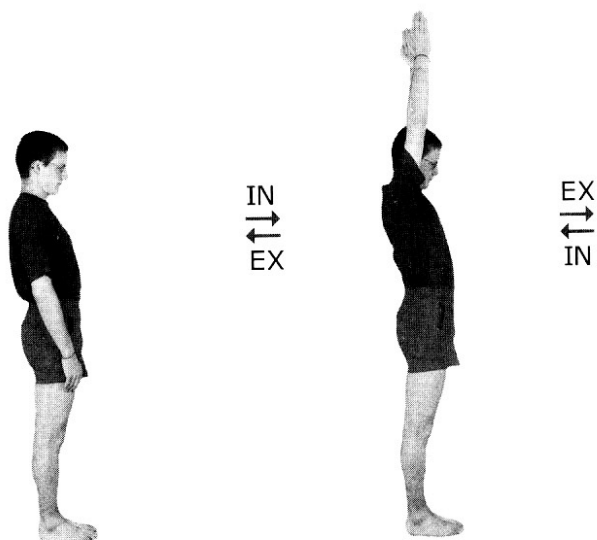
Uttanasana

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

1

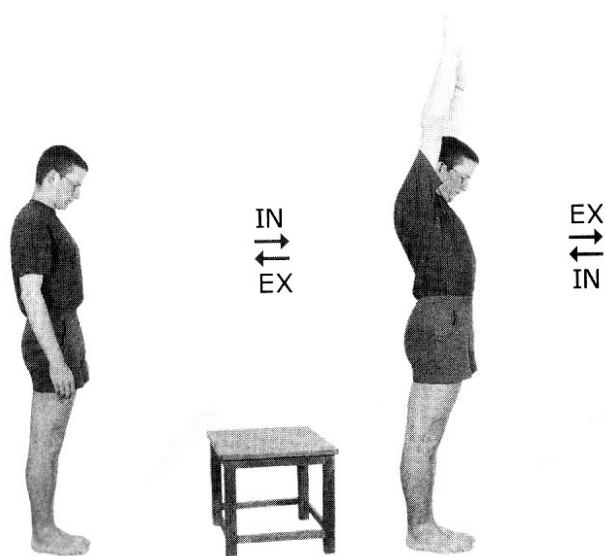


Bend knees.

For those with stiff shoulders, neck, and legs.

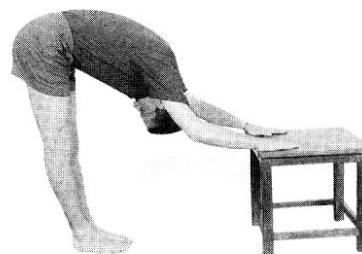


2



Bend forward onto a stool.

For those who are obese or pregnant. Also for those with stiff back, and who are prone to dizziness.



Modifications

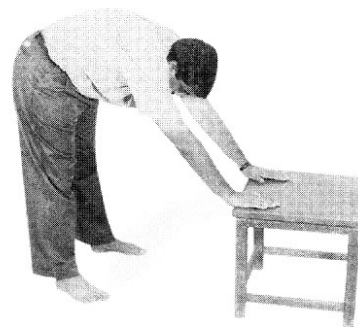
Remarks

Purpose

3



EX
↑
IN



Legs apart. Bend forward onto a stool.

For those who are overweight, or have large thighs. Also for those who have stiff hips and/or poor balance.

4



IN
↑
EX









EX
↑
IN



One arm behind back.

To emphasize one side.

	Modifications			Remarks	Purpose	
5		IN ⇌ EX		EX ⇌ IN		Both arms behind back. To increase focus on shoulders and the flexion of the lower back.
6		IN ⇌ EX		EX ⇌ IN		A support under heels. For those with stiff ankles.

7



IN
↓
EX



EX
↓
IN



Weight in hands.
Elbows bent.

To increase the work on the arms, shoulders, and upper back.

8

Exhale Here



Hold after exhale

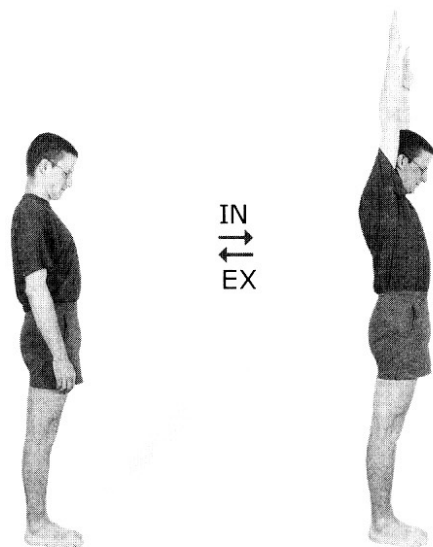
↓
IN



Bend forward after exhale.

To intensify abdominal contraction. To increase physical effort.

9



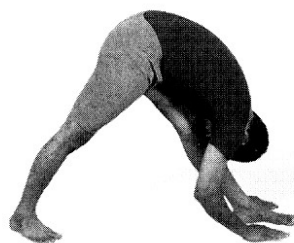
EX
IN

Palms under feet.

To intensify leg stretch.



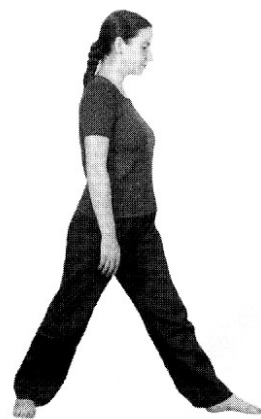
Similar modifications and their combinations are also possible in the following positions:



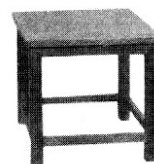
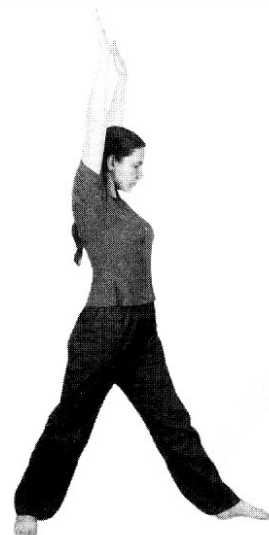
II.6

Parsva Uttanasana

1



IN
⇌
EX

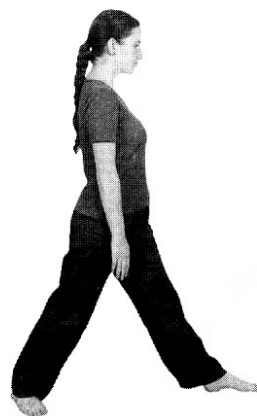


EX
⇌
IN

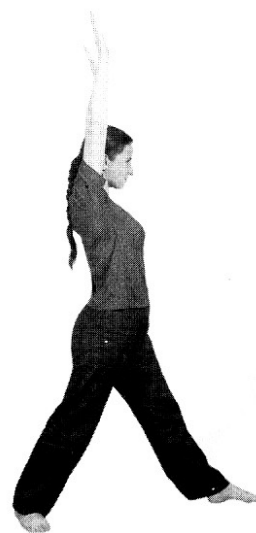
Bend forward onto a stool. To focus on one leg.



2

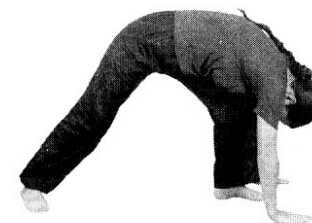


IN
⇌
EX



EX
⇌
IN

Bend front leg. To reduce the strain on the front leg and back.

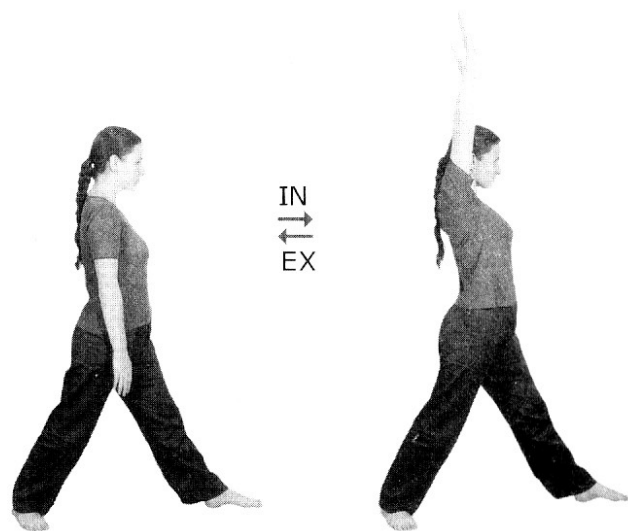


Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

3

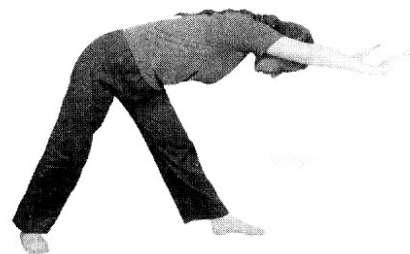


IN
↓
EX

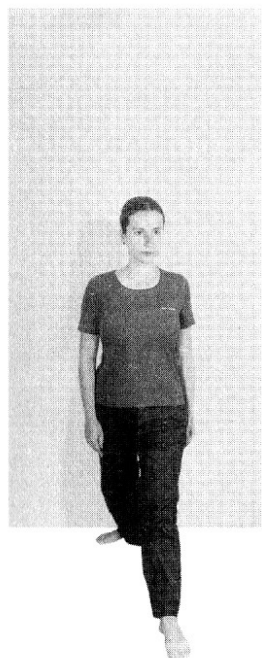
EX
↓
IN

Go halfway down and stay few breaths.

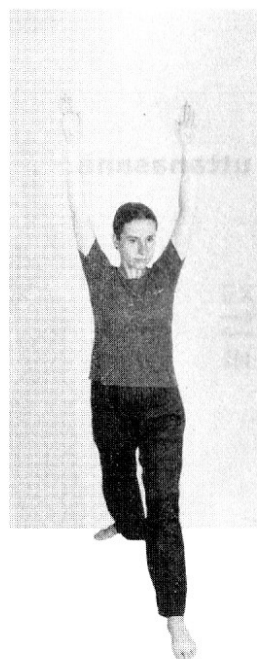
To emphasize work on each leg and the back.



4



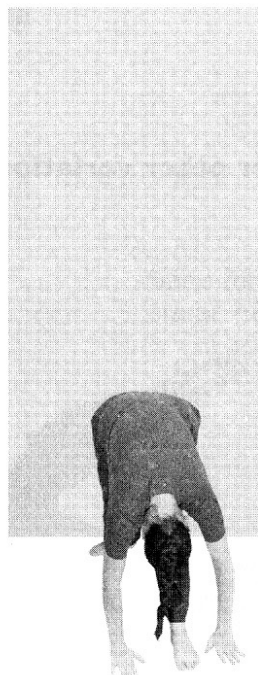
IN
↓
EX



EX
↓
IN

Back foot against wall.

For more stability.



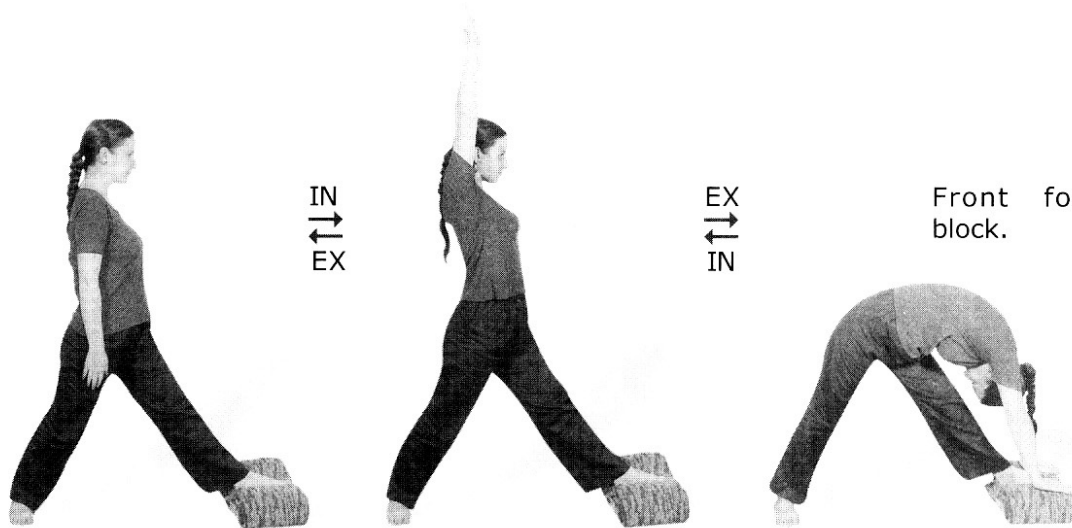
Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
---------------	---------	---------

5







IN
⇌
EX

EX
⇌
IN

Front foot on a block. To stretch each of the stiff legs.



For other variations refer to **uttanasana**.

	Modifications		Remarks	Purpose
1		<p>IN ↓ EX</p> 	<p>EX ↓ IN</p> 	<p>Padding under heels. For those with stiff ankles.</p>
2		<p>IN ↓ EX</p> 	<p>EX ↓ IN</p> 	<p>Bend forward and squat halfway.</p> <p>To reduce stress on the knees. To increase stress on thighs. To give freedom to breathe.</p>

II.7

Utkatasana

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

3



EX
↓
IN



Hold bar of a window and squat half way.

To reduce the strain on legs. To help balance.

4



IN
↓
EX



EX
↓
IN



Raise heels while squatting.

To respect stiff ankles. To relieve strain after much stretching. To protect arches of the feet.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

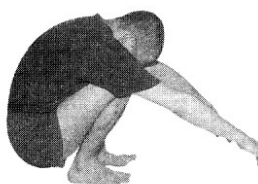
5



IN
⇌
EX



EX
⇌
IN



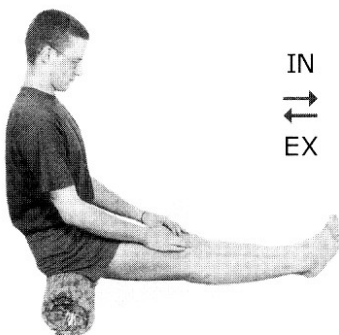
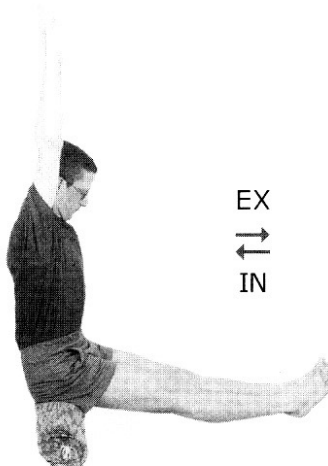
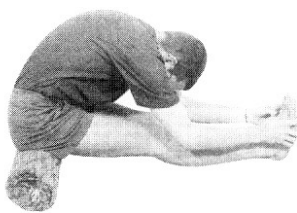
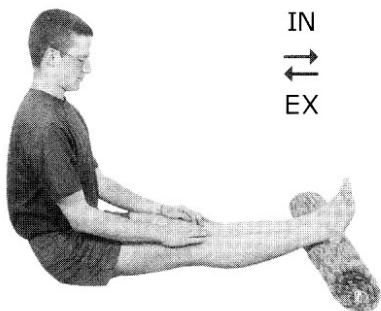
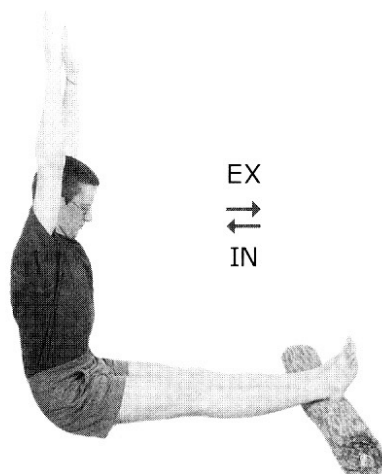

Drop arms while
squatting.

To simplify the posture. For those with stiff shoulders.

For other variations refer to uttanasana.

II.8

Pascimatanasana

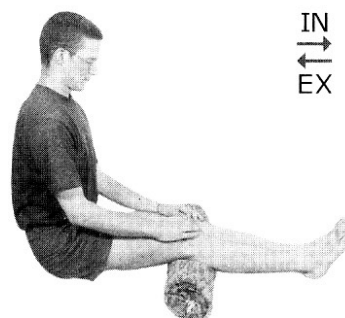
	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
1	 <p>IN ↕ EX</p>  <p>EX ↕ IN</p> 	Sit on a cushion.	To reduce stress on the legs.
2	 <p>IN ↕ EX</p>  <p>EX ↕ IN</p> 	Feet on a cushion or a block.	To intensify the stretch of the legs and trunk.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

3



IN
EX



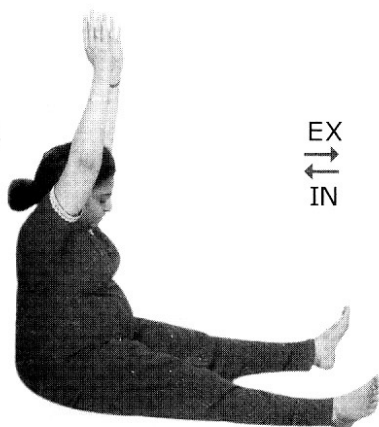
EX
IN



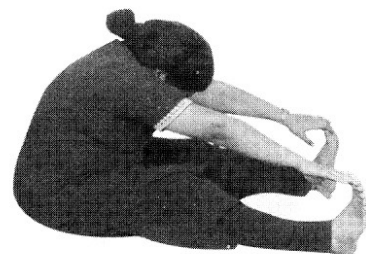
Cushion under knees.

To have a Pascimatana effect without much leg stretch. For those with stiff legs.

4



EX
IN



Legs apart. Don't bend forward completely.

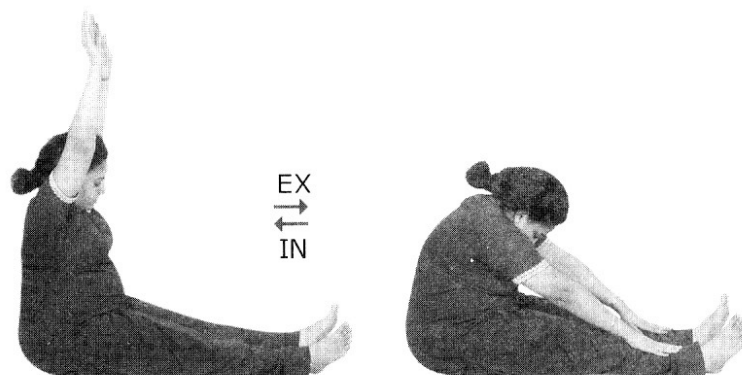
For pregnant women and overweight persons.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

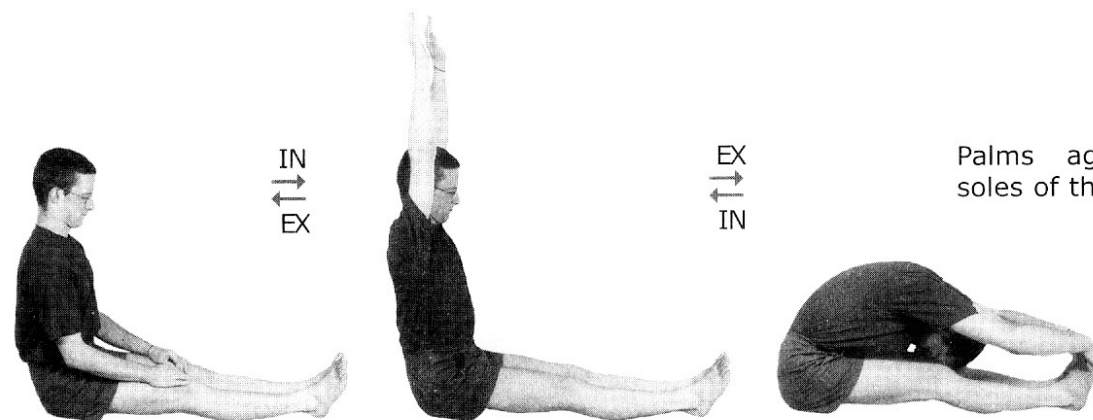
5



touch lower part of leg.

As a preparation for forward bend. When pressure on abdomen is not desirable.

6



Palms against the soles of the feet.

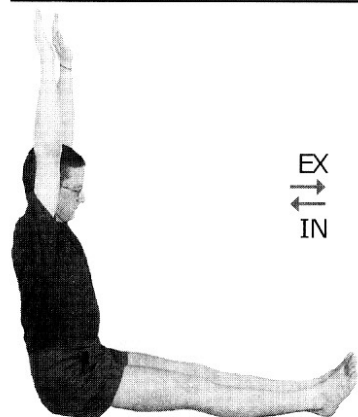
For focusing on ankles. To stress more on the calves.

Modifications

Remarks

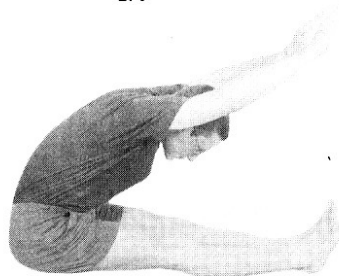
Purpose

7



EX
IN

IN



EX
IN

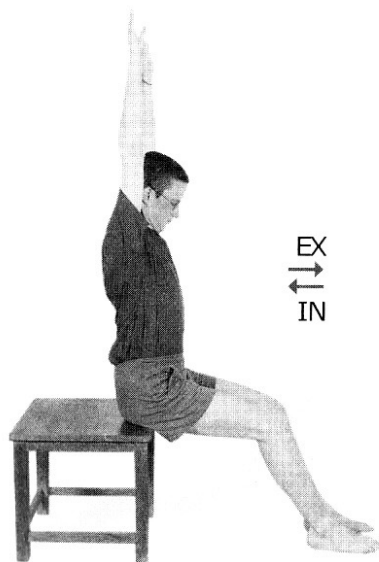


Move into the posture in two steps.

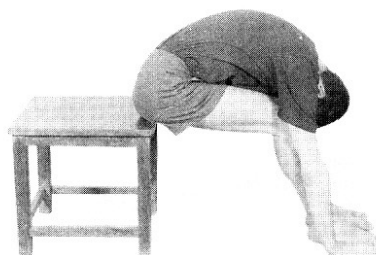
To focus on sections of the trunk.

EX

8



EX
IN



Sit on the edge of a stool and bend forward.

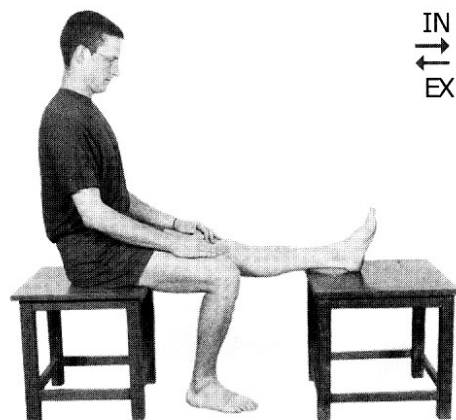
For those with stiff legs and back.

Modifications

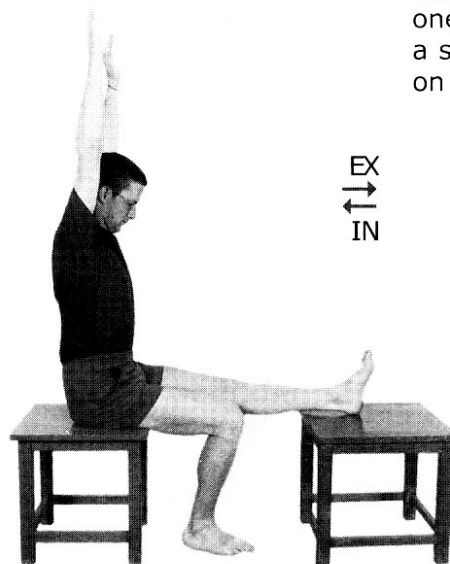
Remarks

Purpose

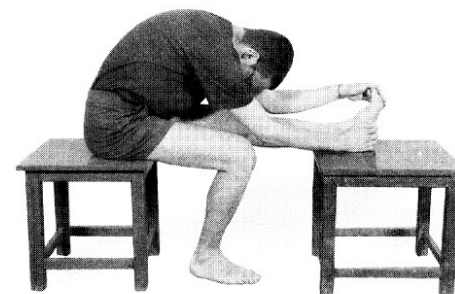
9



IN
↑
EX



EX
↑
IN



Sit on a stool, with one leg stretched on a stool and the other on floor.

To focus on one leg (stretched) and the corresponding side of the trunk.

Modifications

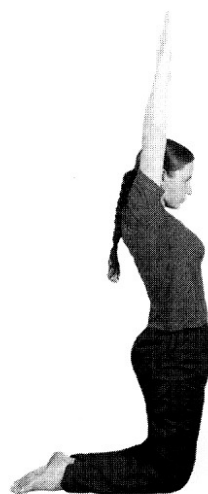
Remarks

Purpose

1



IN
⇌
EX



EX
⇌
IN

Rise onto knees and bend forward.

For back flexion, without straining the legs.



2



IN
⇌
EX



EX
⇌
IN

Cushion above heels.

For more movement at shoulders and reducing strain on the knees and ankles.



II.9

Vajrasana

Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
---------------	---------	---------

3



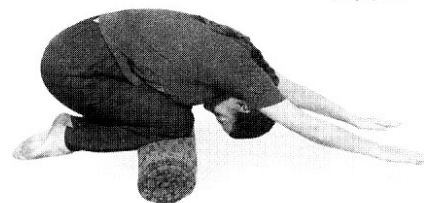
IN
⇌
EX



EX
⇌
IN

Padding under the knees.

Bend forward while sitting, for those unable to sit on heels.



4



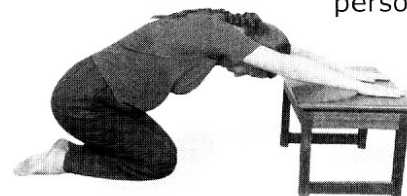
IN
⇌
EX



EX
⇌
IN

Bend down onto a stool.

A mild forward bend without straining legs, and for overweight persons.

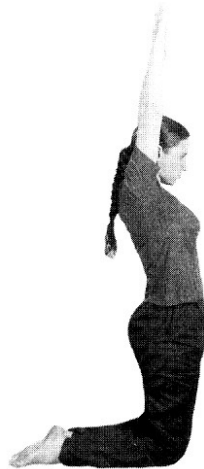


Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
---------------	---------	---------

5



IN
⇌
EX



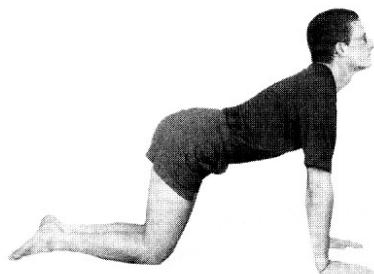
EX
⇌
IN



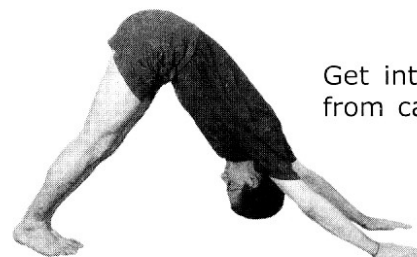
Sweep arms to the back while bending down. For neck rotation.

All the above variations are also possible with knees apart.

1



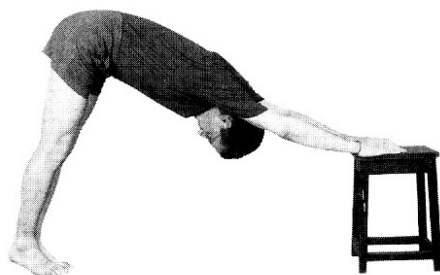
EX
↓
IN



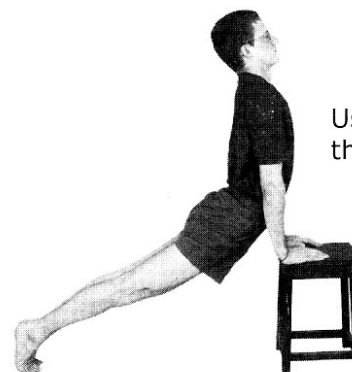
Get into the posture from cakravakasana.

For an easier approach when uttanasana is not a good start and caturangadandasana* is not possible.

2



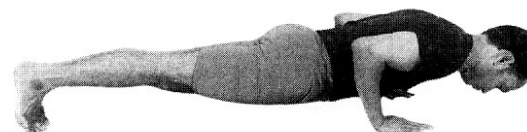
IN
↓
EX



Use a stool to arch the back.

For more movement at shoulders and reducing strain on the knees and ankles.

Note : *caturangadandasana is



II.10

Adhomukha Svanasana

Modifications

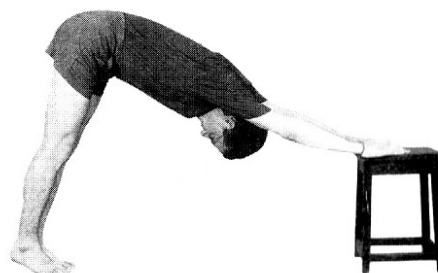
Remarks

Purpose

3



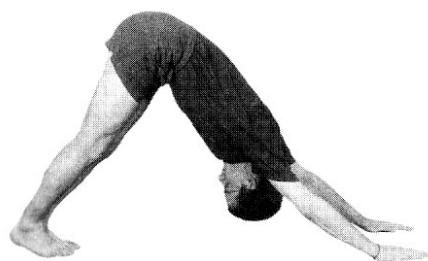
EX
↑
IN



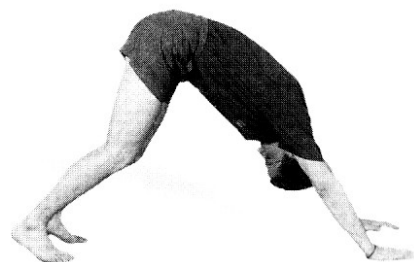
Bend halfway down to a stool and stay.

To focus on upper back and shoulders.

4



EX
↑
IN



Spread legs and bend them.

To reduce stress on legs and feet and increase stability.

II.11

Urdhva Prasrta Padasana

Modifications

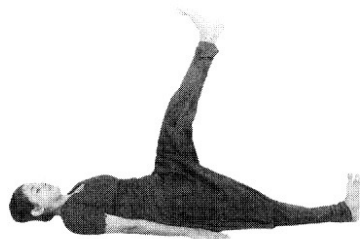
Remarks

Purpose

1



EX
↑
IN



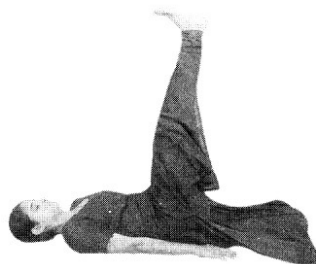
Lift only one leg.

To focus on each leg, one at a time. To reduce the stress on the abdomen.

2



IN
↑
EX



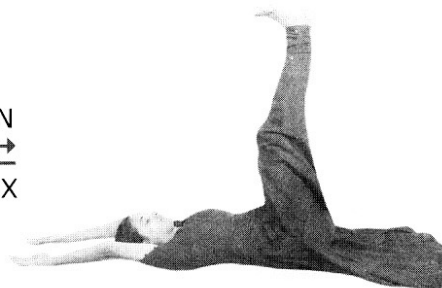
Bend the knees and lift feet off the floor. From this position, stretch the legs up.

For those who have a weak back. To reduce stiffness of the legs. To focus on the abdomen.

3



IN
↑
EX



Bend the knees and lift feet off the floor. From this position, stretch the legs up simultaneously raising the arms overhead.

To enhance coordination. To develop breath and circulation. To relieve stress in the legs and knees, and also to work on shoulder area.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

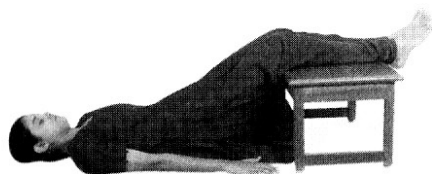
4



Place the legs against a wall.

To focus on breath and circulation without straining the legs. To focus on the abdomen.

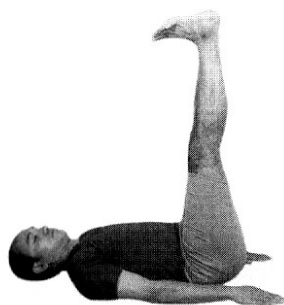
5



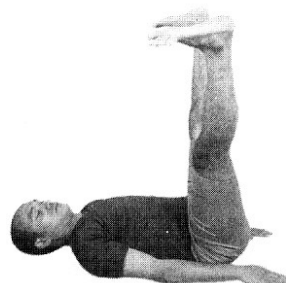
Place legs on a stool.

For improving circulation in the legs. For general relaxation without straining the legs and back.

6



IN
↓
EX



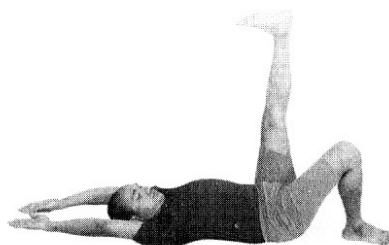
Spread legs.

To open the groin. To prepare for asanas like baddha konasana.

7



IN
↓
EX



Lift one leg while keeping the other foot on the floor with knee bent.

For focusing on each leg without straining the back. To reduce stiffness of the knees.

8



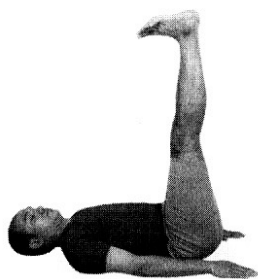
EX
↓
IN



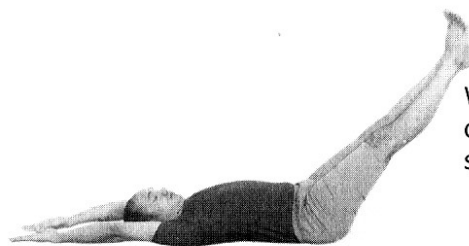
Bring legs down at an angle to the trunk.

To intensify work on abdominal muscles. To work also on shoulder area.

9



IN
↓
EX



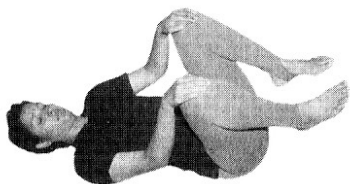
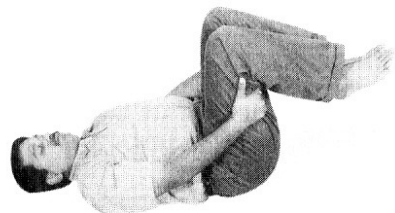
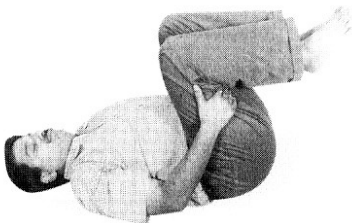
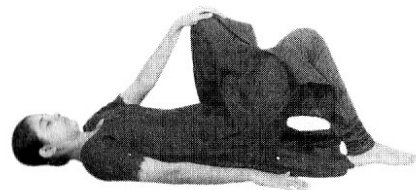

While moving arms overhead, lower legs slightly.

To intensify work on abdominal muscles.

Modifications

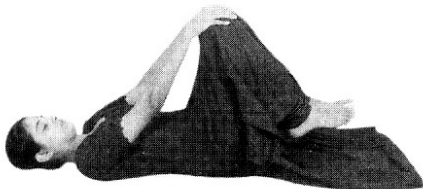



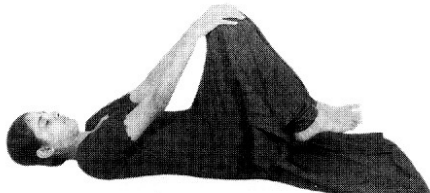
Remarks

Purpose

	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
1		Take a few breaths with knees apart.	For early pregnancy. For overweight persons.
2	 <div data-bbox="627 612 674 709" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; text-align: center;"> EX ↓↑ IN </div> 	Hold thighs.	For very obese persons. For those with stiff knees.
3	 <div data-bbox="627 1015 674 1112" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; text-align: center;"> EX ↓↑ IN </div> 	Hold one leg.	To focus on each leg. To prepare for classical apanasana.

II.12

Apanasana

	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
4	 <div>IN ⇕ EX</div> 	Extend legs up.	For those with stiff legs.
5	 <div>EX ⇕ IN</div> 	Padding under neck.	For those who have neck stiffness. For easier breathing.
6		Stay in posture and extend each exhale.	To lengthen exhale. To relax the back. For general relaxation.

III. PURVATANA

13. Ardha uttanasana

14. Virabhadrasana

15. Dvipadapitham

16. Bhujangasana

17. Salabhasana

18. Dhanurasana

19. Ustrasana

20. Cakravakasana

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

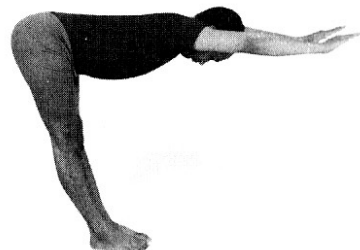
1



EX
↑
IN



IN
↑
EX



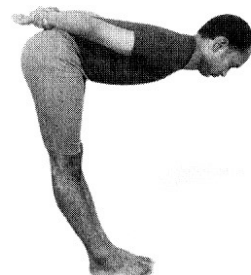
Get into posture from uttanasana.

To intensify the posture and to prevent any excess strain.

2



EX
↑
IN



IN
↑
EX



While bending forward, sweep arms back and when arching back sweep arms forward.

To increase work on shoulder joints. To emphasize upper back.

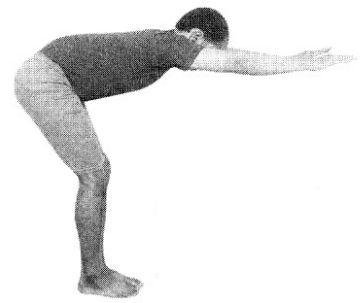
III.13

Ardha Uttanasana

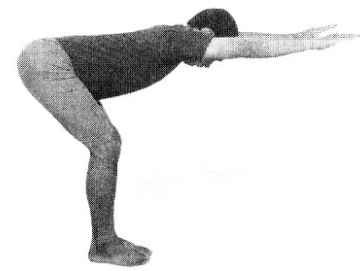
3



EX
↓
IN



IN
↓
EX



Bend knees.

To reduce focus on legs and increase focus on the back.

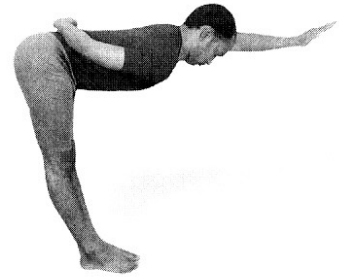
4



EX
↓
IN



IN
↓
EX



One arm behind back.

To focus on one side.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

Modifications

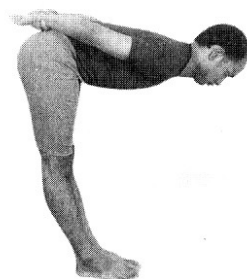
Remarks

Purpose

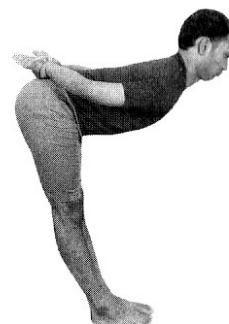
5



EX
↑
IN



IN
↑
EX



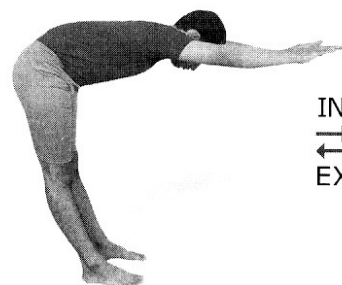
Both arms behind back.

Also to rest arms. To help in arching the back.

6



EX
↑
IN



IN
↑
EX



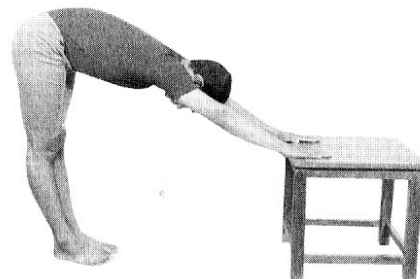
Legs slightly apart.

For stability.

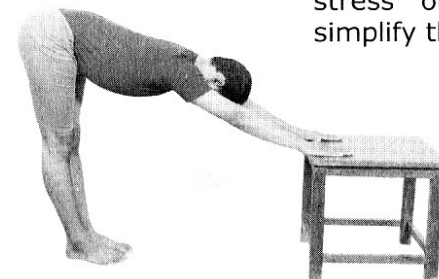
7



EX
⇌
IN



IN
⇌
EX

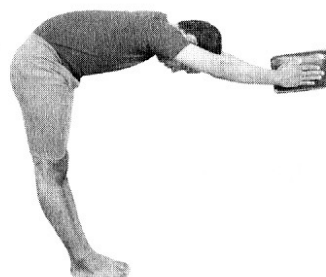


Use a stool for support. To support arms and enable more focus on back. To reduce stress on legs. To simplify the posture.

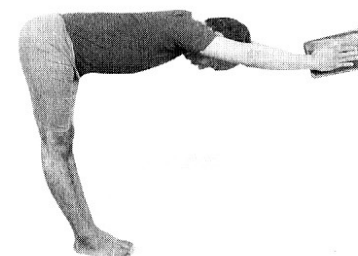
8



EX
⇌
IN



IN
⇌
EX



Use a weight in the hands. To increase stress on arms, back, and legs. To focus on upper back.

Modifications

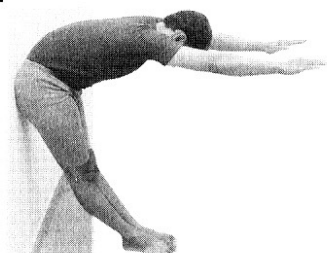
Remarks

Purpose

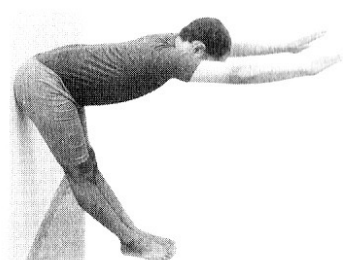
9



EX
⇌
IN



IN
⇌
EX



Lean against a wall.

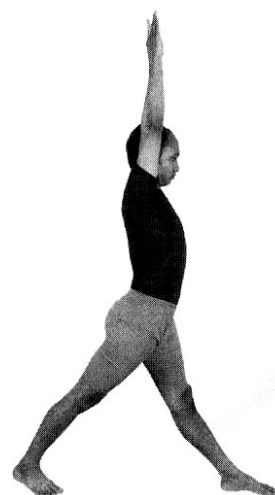
To support the body
and focus on the
trunk.

All the above variations are possible with legs apart and/or knees slightly bent.

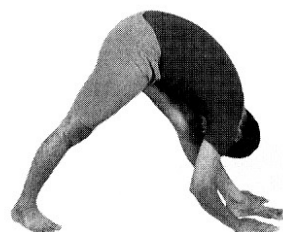
III.14

Virabhadrasana

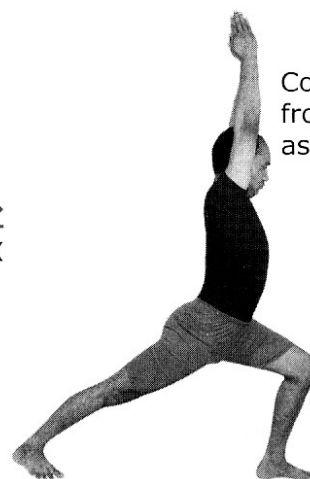
1



EX
↓
IN



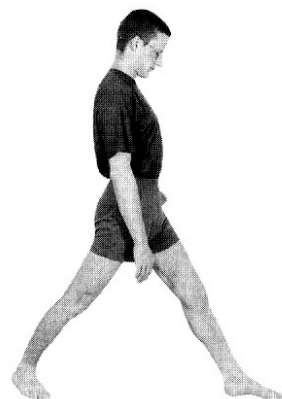
IN
↓
EX



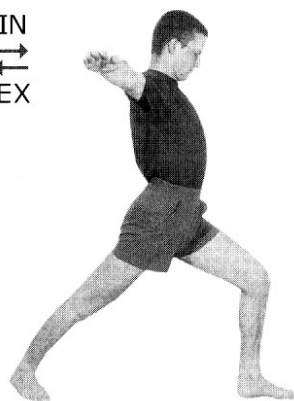
Come to posture from parsva uttan-asana.

To intensify the focus on one side. To neutralize any excess strain.

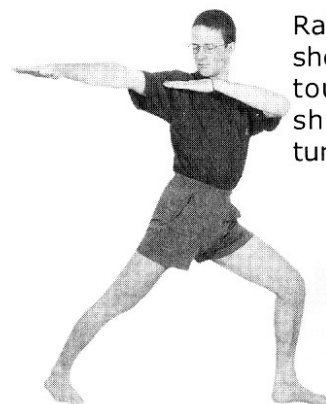
2



IN
↓
EX



EX
↓
IN



Raise arms to shoulder level and touch opposite shoulder, while turning head.

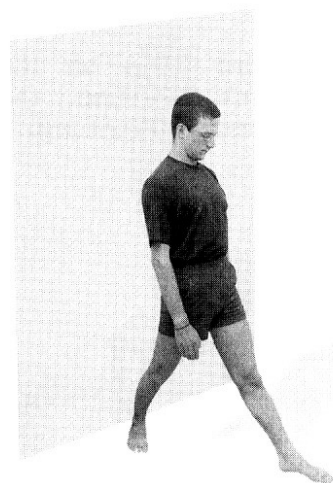
To focus on shoulders and neck. Also to introduce a mild twist in this posture.

Modifications

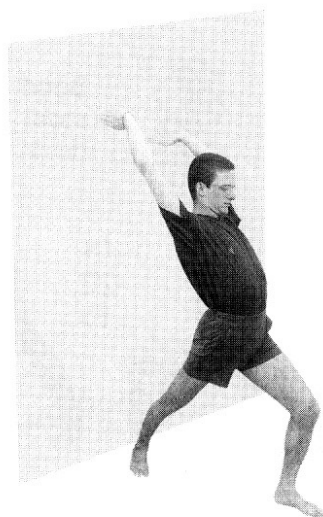
Remarks

Purpose

3



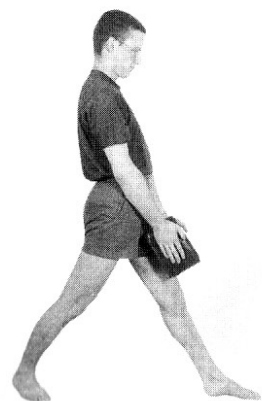
IN
↓
EX



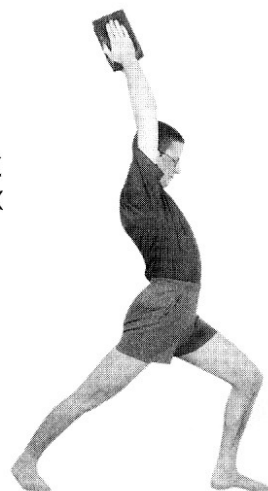
Lean against a wall and touch it while arching the back.

For stability and intensification of the posture.

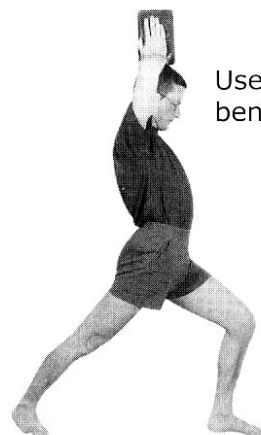
4



IN
↓
EX



EX
↓
IN



Use a weight and bend elbows.

To increase work on the arms, shoulders and upper back.

Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
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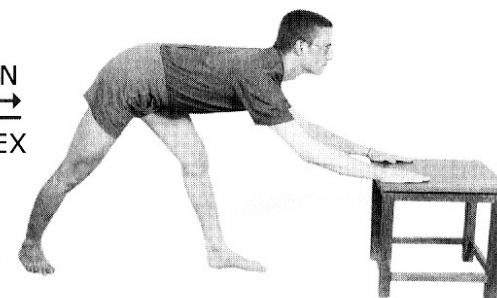
5



EX
⇕
IN

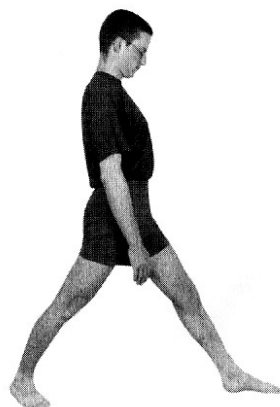


IN
⇕
EX

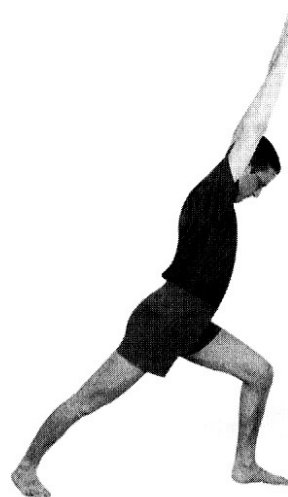


Bend forward onto a stool and arch the back. More focus on the back. Reduce the stress on front leg.

6



IN
⇕
EX



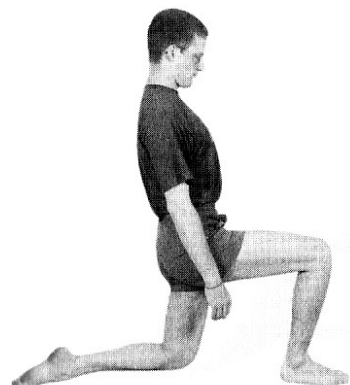
Lean forward slightly. For milder work on back. For more stress on front leg.

Modifications

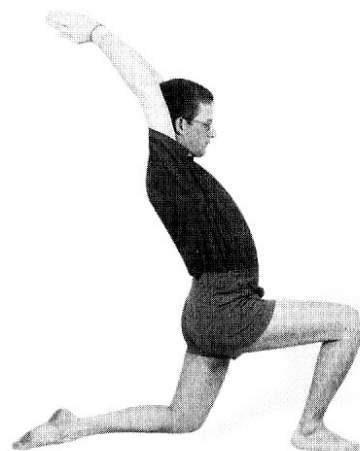
Remarks

Purpose

7

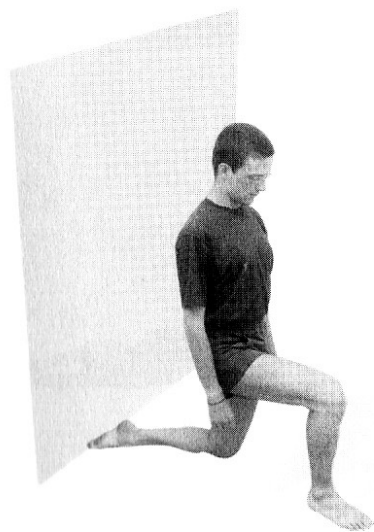


IN
⇕
EX

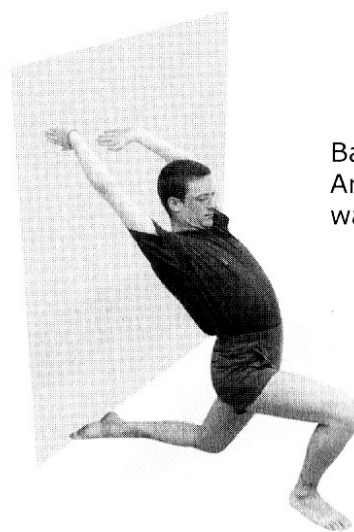


Back knee on the floor. For weak legs. To focus on one leg.

8

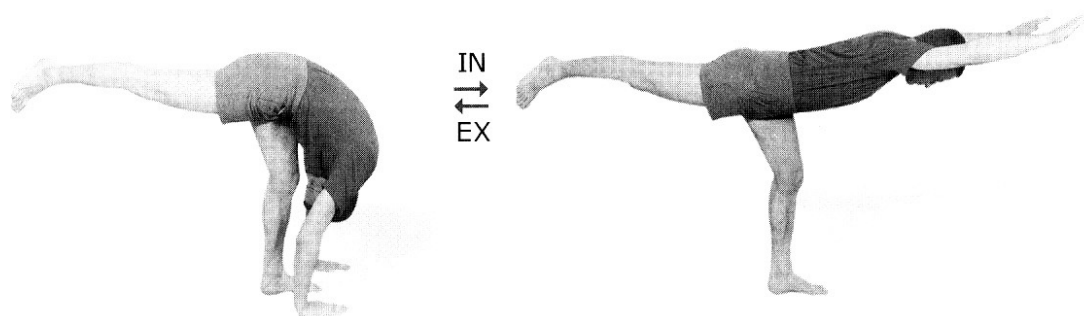


IN
⇕
EX



Back knee on floor. Arch back to touch wall. Also to increase the effect on back and shoulders.

9









Modifications

Remarks

Purpose


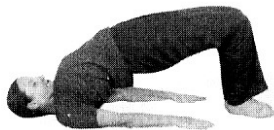



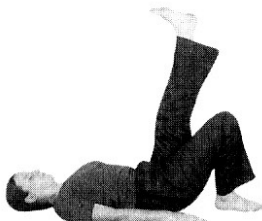

Balance on one leg.

To improve balance and check stability. Also to strengthen the leg placed on the floor.

	Modifications		Remarks	Purpose
1		IN  EX	Hands not holding ankles.	For those with stiff shoulders and legs.
2		IN  EX	Raise arms along with hips.	To add work for arms and back. Also to help the opening of chest.
3		IN  EX	Raise hips from raised arm position.	To focus more on the back.

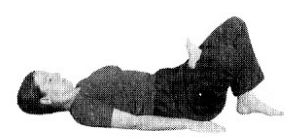
III.15

Dvipadapitham

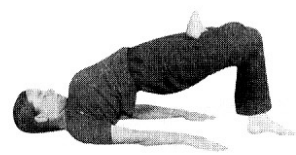
	Modifications		Remarks	Purpose	
4		<div>IN ⇌ EX</div>	<div>EX</div>  <div>IN</div>	<div>IN ⇌ EX</div> 	<p>Raise hips first and then the arms.</p> <p>To sustain the arch.</p>
5		<div>IN ⇌ EX</div>		<p>Spread knees as hips are raised.</p> <p>To open the groin / hips.</p>	
6		<div>IN ⇌ EX</div>		<p>One leg up.</p> <p>To strengthen the leg on the floor.</p>	

Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
---------------	---------	---------

7



IN
⇌
EX



One leg in padmasana.

To strengthen the leg on the floor. Also to prepare for padmasana.

8



IN
⇌
EX



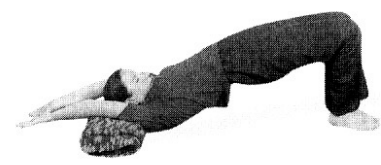
One foot closer to buttocks than the other.

To focus on one side.

9



IN
⇌
EX



Pillow under the head.

For those with stiff neck.

10



IN
↓
EX



Padding under the neck.

To reduce strain on the neck.

11



IN
↓
EX



Palm eyes as hips are raised.

For resting eyes. For relaxation.

12



Inhale here

EX
↓
EX

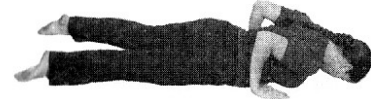


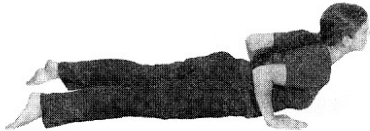










Inhale here

Movements on ex-hale.






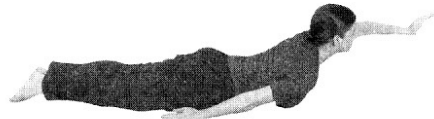
To reduce strain on back.

1. These modifications can be done with feet apart and/or feet away from hips.
2. The above movements can be done on exhalation also, as in example 12.

	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
1	 <div data-bbox="577 243 630 349"> IN  EX  </div> 	Legs apart.	To reduce stress on the legs and back.
2	 <div data-bbox="577 609 630 714"> IN  EX  </div> 	Hands on the floor.	For a milder effect.
3	 <div data-bbox="577 941 630 1047"> IN  EX  </div> 	Arms in front on the floor.	To reduce work on the back.

III.16

Bhujangasana

	Modifications		Remarks	Purpose	
4		IN → EX		Sweep arms to shoulder level.	To add arm movement. To intensify the posture.
5		IN → EX		Arms behind the back.	To intensify work on back.
6		IN → EX		Raise one arm above the head.	To focus on one side at a time.

Modifications

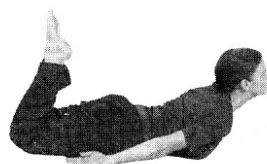
Remarks

Purpose

7



IN
↓
EX



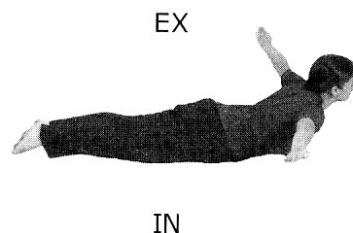
Arms on the floor and bend knees.

To deepen lower back contraction and as a preparation for dhanurasana.

8



IN
↓
EX



IN
↓
EX



Sweep arms and raise chest in two steps.

For emphasis on sections of the back.

9



IN
↓
EX


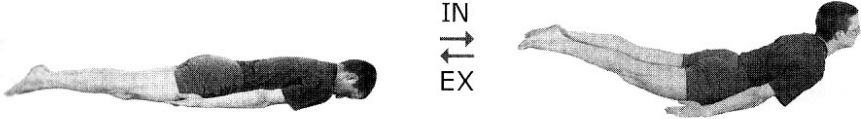
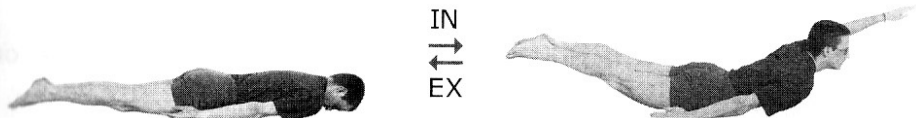


Head turned to one side in starting position.

To add a neck exercise.







10	IN	EX ↓ EX	IN	Movement on exhale.	To reduce stress on the back.
11		IN ↓ EX		Light weights in each arm.	To strengthen the arms. To increase work on the back.
12		IN ↓ EX	EX ↓ IN		To strengthen the back and arms. To increase stamina.

1. The above variations of arms, head and legs are possible in salabhasana.
2. These movements can be done on exhalation, as in example 10.

	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
1	 <p>IN ↓ EX</p>	Legs Apart. Arms swept to shoulder level.	To reduce stress on the arms and neck. To open the legs.
2	 <p>IN ↓ EX</p>	Arms along the body.	To reduce stress on arms, neck, and back.
3	 <p>IN ↓ EX</p>	Sweep one arm up only.	For focusing on one side.

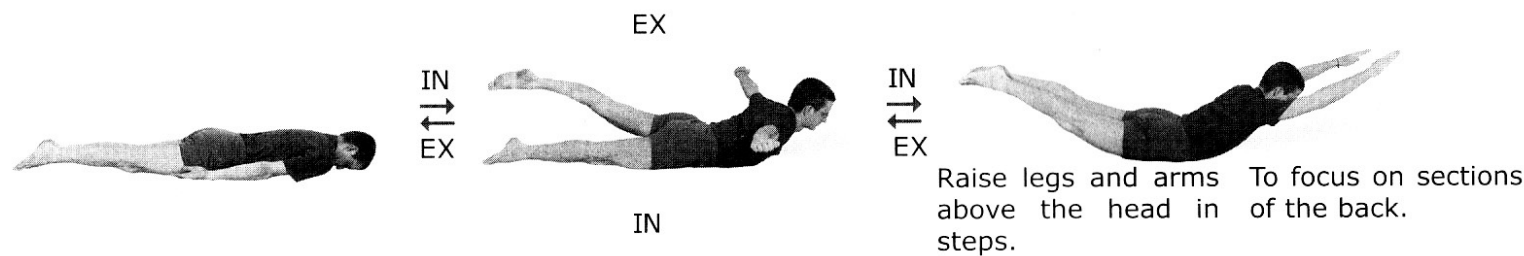
III.17

Salabhasana

	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
4	 	Sweep arms up and touch the head.	To reduce stress on the shoulders and neck.
5	 	Lift one arm and one leg (same side or opposite side).	Other arm and leg on the floor. For focusing on one side.
6	 	Hold a book between the knees.	To increase work on the legs and back.

Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
---------------	---------	---------

7



1. For other variations refer to bhujangasana.
2. The above movements can be done on exhalation also.

III.18

Dhanurasana

Modifications

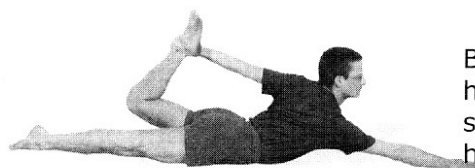
Remarks

Purpose

1



IN
↓
EX



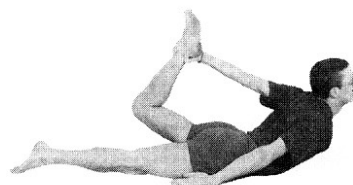
Bend one knee and hold ankle with the same hand. Other hand in front.

To focus on one side. To prepare for ideal dhanurasana.

2



IN
↓
EX



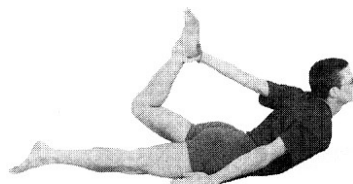
Bent knee on the floor. Other arm along the body.

To reduce the stress on bent leg and knee.

3



IN
↓
EX



EX here




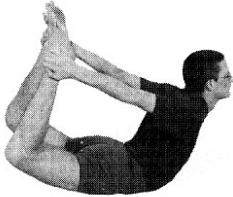
IN here

IN
↓
EX



Bend one knee and hold ankle with the same hand. Go up in steps.

For focusing on different sections of the back.

	Modifications		Remarks	Purpose
4			Bend one knee and hold ankle with both hands.	To open the chest further
5			Legs apart.	To simplify the posture.

1. For other variations refer to salabhasana and bhujangasana.
2. The above movements can be done on exhalation also.

III.19

Ustrasana

Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
---------------	---------	---------

1



IN
↓
EX

Rise on to knees and arch the back.

To arch the back. To prepare for ideal ustrasana.

2



IN
↓
EX

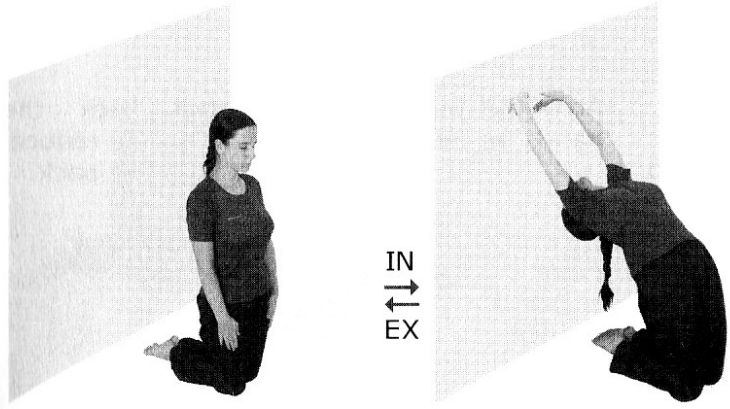
EX
↓
IN

Rise on to knees and arch back with one arm behind the back and then bend forward.

To focus on one arm and one side.

Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
---------------	---------	---------

3

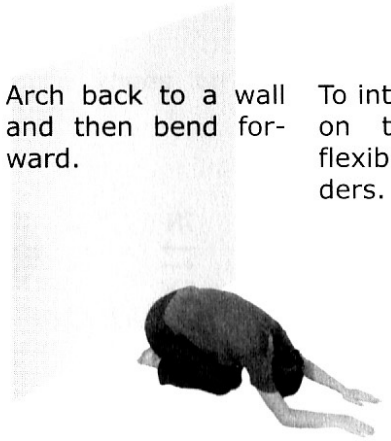


IN
↑
EX

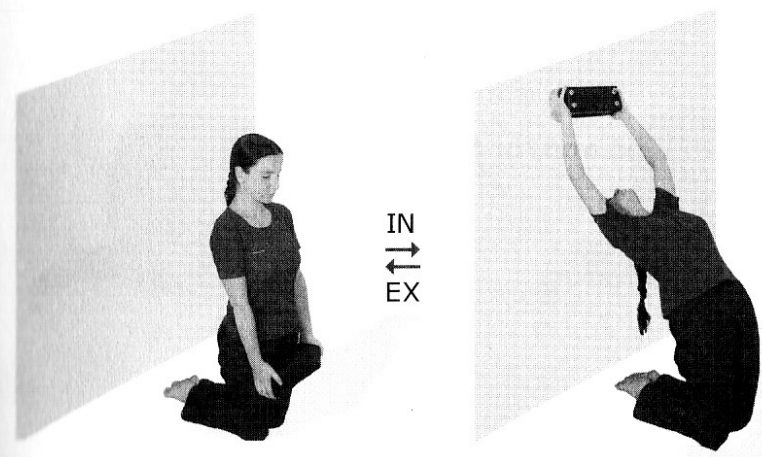
EX
↑
IN

Arch back to a wall and then bend forward.

To intensify the work on the back. For flexibility of shoulders.



4

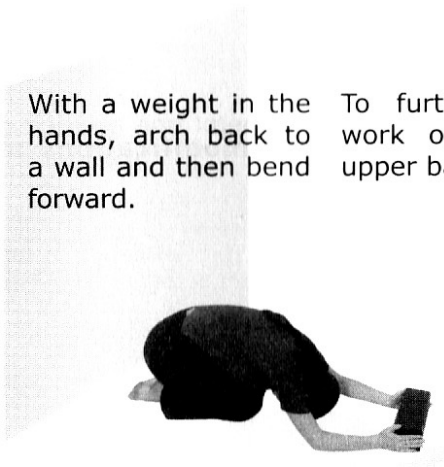


IN
↑
EX

EX
↑
IN

With a weight in the hands, arch back to a wall and then bend forward.

To further increase work on arms and upper back.



Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

5



IN
⇄
EX

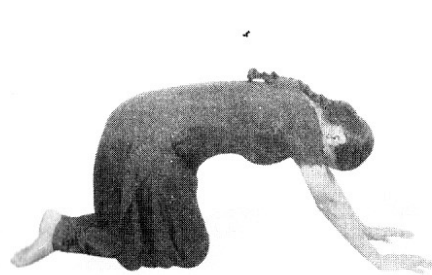


Arch the back, with hands on the back.

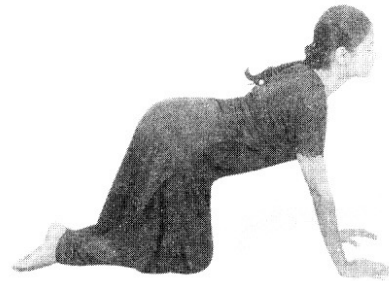
To pull back the shoulders. To reduce stress on the back.

The above modifications can be done with legs and/or knees apart also.

1

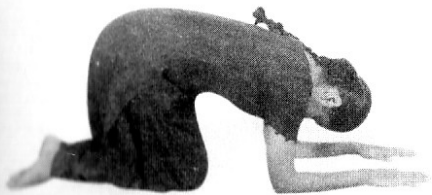


IN
⇄
EX

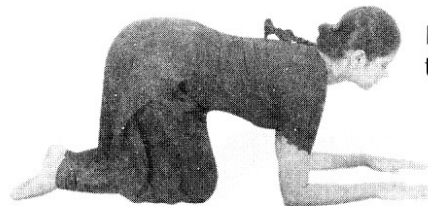


Both knees on the floor. Mild back movement.

2



IN
⇄
EX



Elbows and knees on the floor. To focus on the upper back and neck. To rest arms.

III.20

Cakravakasana

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

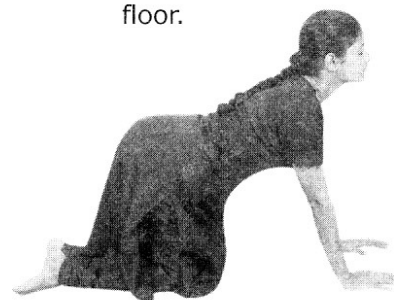
3



EX
↕
IN



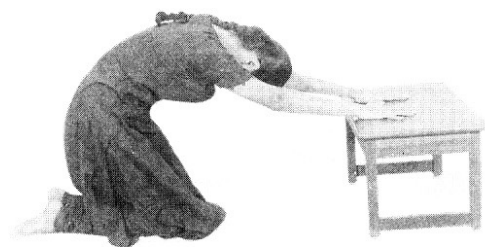
IN
↕
EX



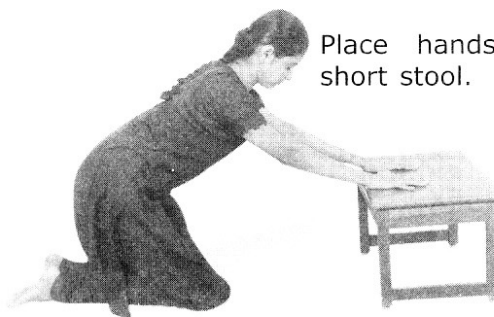
Bend down completely and rise with both knees on the floor.

For more movement of the whole back.

4



IN
↕
EX



Place hands on a short stool.

For those who cannot lower the head to the floor.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

5



IN
→
←
EX



Padding under knees. To protect weak knee joints.

6



IN
→
←
EX



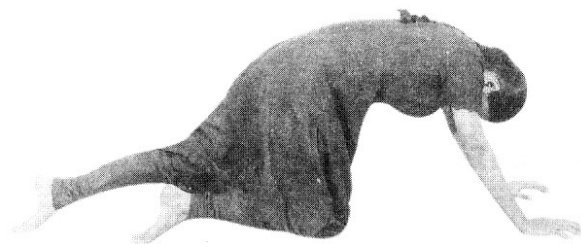
Raise one arm. To strengthen arms. To focus on one side of back.

7

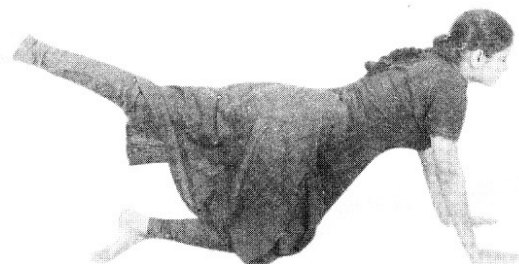
Modifications

Remarks

Purpose



IN
↕
EX



One leg already extended back in the starting position.

To focus on one side of the lower back. For more work on lower back and more hip movement.

All these modifications can be done with legs apart and using various breathing techniques. For example - On exhale, or with Sitali pranayama.

IV. PAROVA

21. Utthita trikonasana (parsva)
22. Jathara parivrtti (parsva)
23. Samasthiti
24. Mahamudra

IV.21

Utthita Trikonasana (Parsva)

Modifications

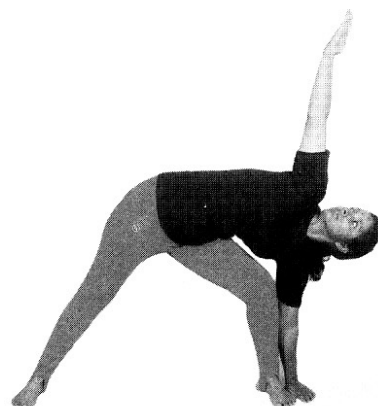
Remarks

Purpose

1



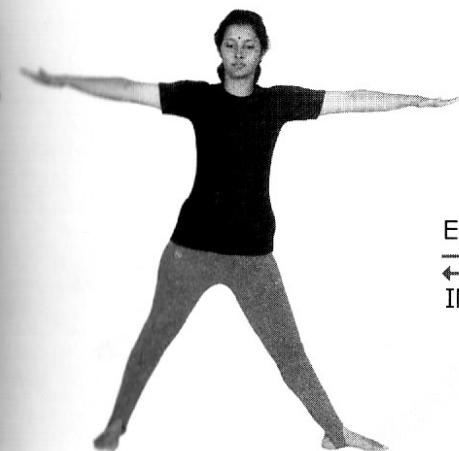
EX
↑
IN



Knee bent.

For those with stiff legs.

2



EX
↑
IN



One foot turned out and knee bent.

For those with stiff legs and hips.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

3



EX
↑
IN



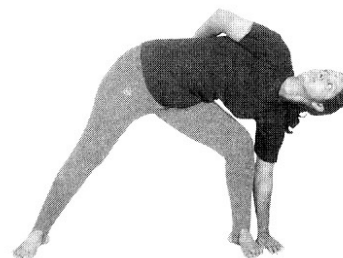
One hand rests on the back and head is facing down.

For those with stiff neck.

4



EX
↑
IN



One hand rests on the back.

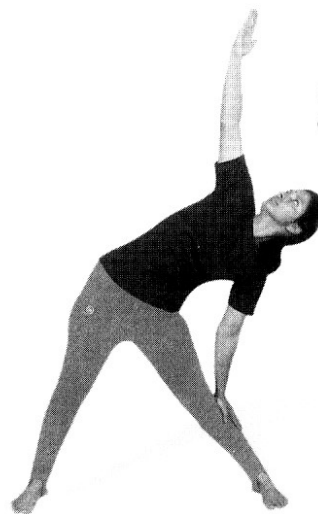
To reduce strain on the shoulders.

Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
---------------	---------	---------

5



EX
↑
IN



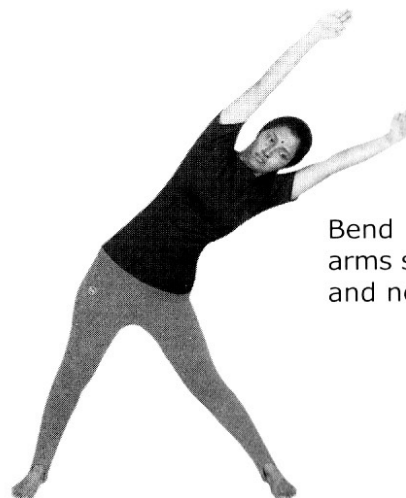
Hold one knee with one arm.

For a mild lateral bend.

6



EX
↑
IN



Bend laterally with arms stretched across and near the ears.

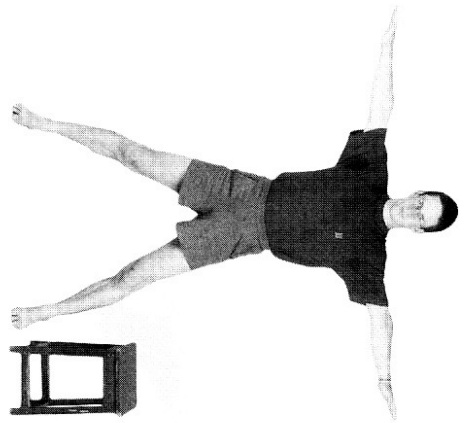
For preparing lateral stretch.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

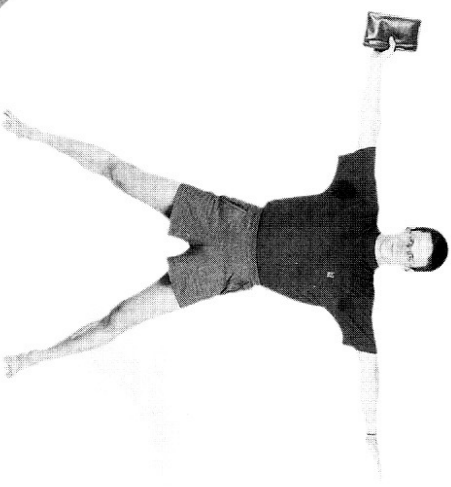
7



EX
↕
IN

Bend towards a stool. For a mild lateral bend.

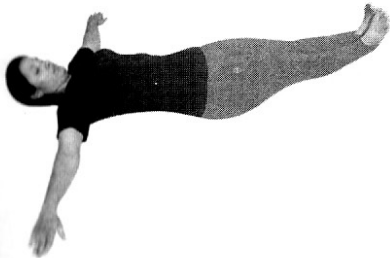


8



EX
↕
IN

Hold a light weight To intensify work on one hand.

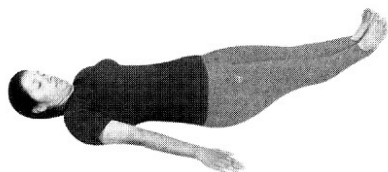
These modifications are also possible in uthitha parsvakonasana (parsva).

Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
<p>1</p> 	<p>Head movement in posture.</p>	<p>For those with neck stiffness.</p>
<p>2</p> 	<p>Move arms in posture.</p>	<p>To release strain on the shoulders.</p>
<p>3</p> 	<p>Lift arms, join palms and bring them back to the floor.</p>	<p>To open the chest.</p>

IV.22

Jathara Parivrtti (Parsva)

4



Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

Arms remain near the body.

For those with very stiff shoulders.

Modifications

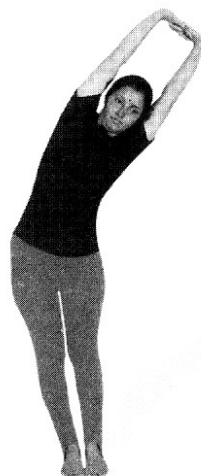
Remarks

Purpose

1



EX
↑
↓
IN



Stretch laterally.

For a lateral stretch.

2



IN
↑
↓
EX



Stretch laterally with one arm behind the back.

For lateral stretch and those with stiff shoulders.

Note - These modifications can also be done with feet apart.

IV.23

Samasthiti

IV.24

Mahamudra

Modifications

Remarks

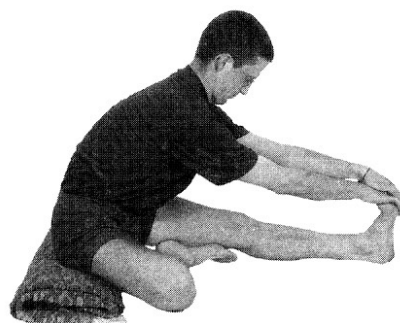
Purpose

1



Sole of bent leg touching the side of the knee. For those with stiff hips.

2



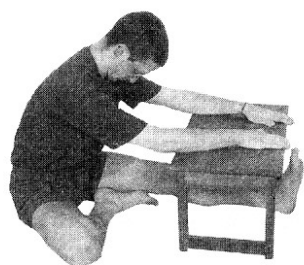
Seated on a cushion. Knee of extended leg bent. For those with a stiff back and legs.

3



Right foot below the left thigh. For those with very stiff hips and legs.

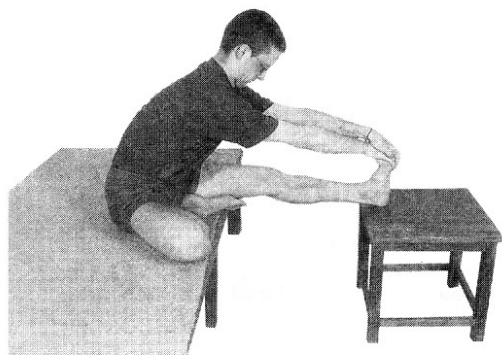
4



Hands on the stool.
Extended leg under
a stool.

For those with stiff
back and neck.

5



Sitting on a bed with
one leg on the bed
and extending the
other leg on another
stool.

For those who can-
not sit on the floor.

6



Sit on a corner of a
stool with both the
arms on one knee.

For those with stiff
back, knees,
hips, legs or groin.

V. PARIVRTTI

25. Utthita parsvakonasana (parivrtti)
26. Jathara parivrtti (parivrtti)
27. Jathara parivrtti (ekapada)
28. Padmasana
29. Dandasana
30. Ardha matsyendrasana

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

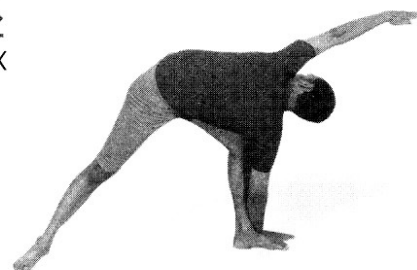
1



EX
↑
IN



IN
↑
EX



Foot turned out.

For those with stiff legs, hips, and groin.

2



EX
↑
IN



One arm behind the back.

For those with stiff shoulders.

V.25

Utthita Parsvakonasana (Parivrtti)

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

3



EX
⇕
IN



One arm behind the back. Head looking down.

For those with a stiff neck.

4



EX
⇕
IN



Twist and place hand on a short stool.

For a milder twist.

IN
⇕
EX



Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

5



EX
↑
IN



IN
↑
EX



Palm on the floor in front.

For overweight persons.

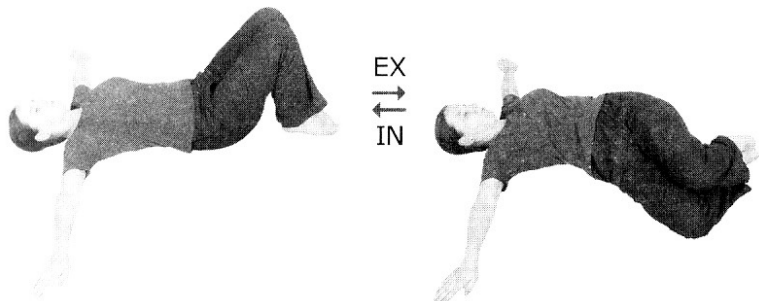
These modifications are also possible in utthita trikonasana (parivrtti)

Modifications

Remarks

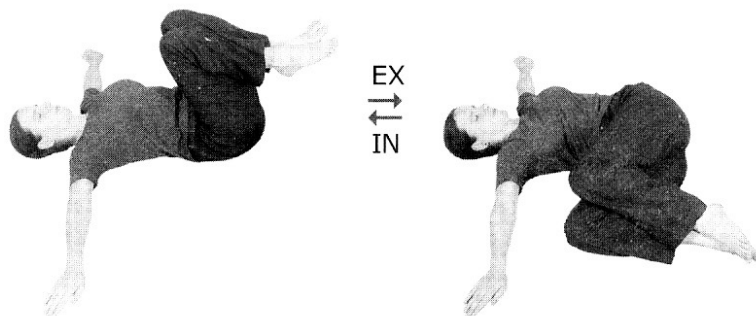
Purpose

1



Bend knees and twist to one side. For a mild twist.

2



Bend knees, raise feet off the floor and then twist. For hip rotation.

V.26

Jathara Parivrtti (Parivrtti)

Modifications

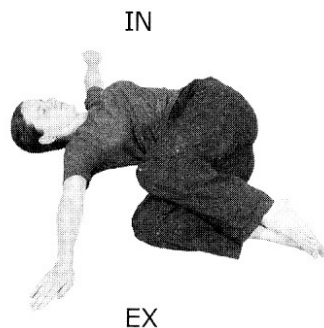
Remarks

Purpose

3



EX
↑
IN



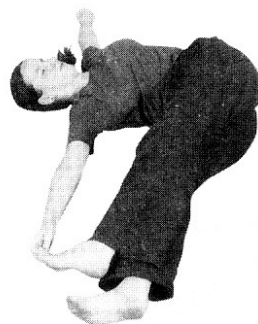
EX
↑
IN



Twist with bent knees and then straighten them.

To stretch legs.

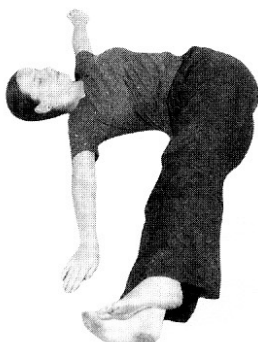
4



Holding one foot only.

To focus on one leg only.

5



Head not turned to one side. Feet not held by the hands.

For those with stiff neck. For a milder effect.

	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
6		Head not turned to one side. Arms slightly lower than shoulder level.	For those with stiff shoulders and a stiff neck.
7	<div data-bbox="825 492 863 586"> IN EX </div>	Open groin by bringing one knee to floor.	To rotate one hip.
8	<div data-bbox="825 852 863 946"> EX IN </div>	Head not turned to the side. Knees off the floor.	For a milder twist. For those with stiff neck and shoulders.

Modifications

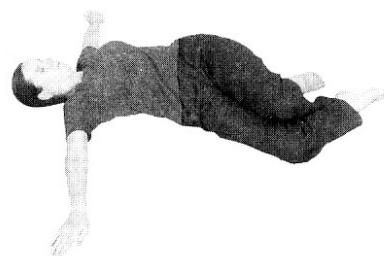
Remarks

Purpose

9



EX
→
←
IN






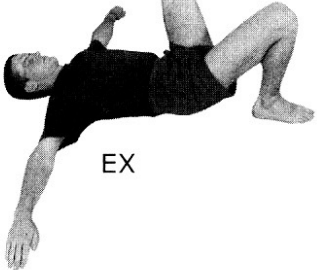
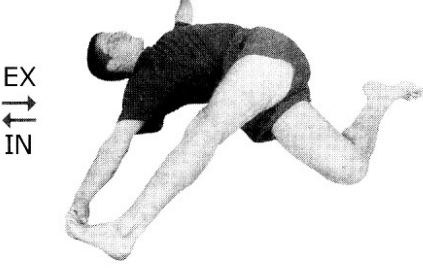

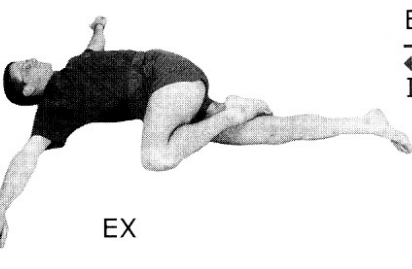

One foot closer to the buttocks than the other. Twist to one side.

To focus on one hip.

Some of these modifications may be done with head turned to opposite side, same side or not turned at all(as pictured).

V.27

Jathara Parivrtti (Ekapada)

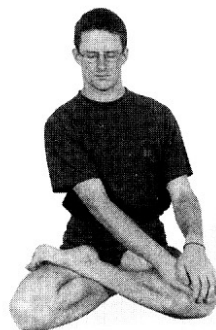
	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
1	 	Bend knee and twist it to the floor.	For a mild twist.
2	  	Bend right knee and place foot on floor. Lift left leg and twist to right.	To stretch left leg.
3	  	Bend one knee and twist to one side. Straighten same leg. Head not turned to one side.	To stretch one leg. To loosen hip and for a stiff neck.

Modifications

Remarks

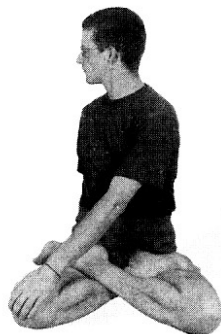
Purpose

1



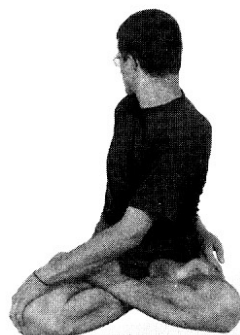
Both hands on one knee. For a mild twist.

2



Left hand holding the right knee. Right hand on the floor. For a medium twist.

3

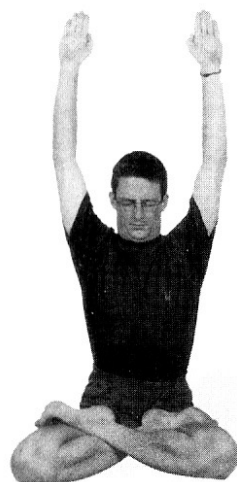


Left hand holding right knee. Right hand resting on the back. For a deeper twist.

V.28

Padmasana

4



EX
↕
IN



Modifications

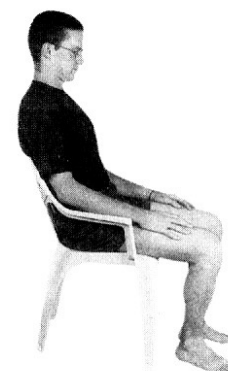
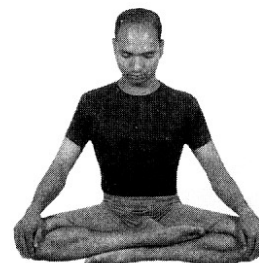
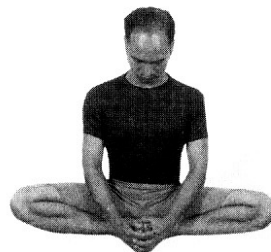
Remarks

Purpose

Left hand holds the left foot from behind the back. Right hand on the left knee.

To intensify twist.

Some of these modifications are also possible in the following positions:



Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

1



Right hand holding the left foot. Left hand resting on the back. Twist to the left.

Twist with legs straight.

2



Right hand under the left knee. Left hand on the back.

Mild twist.

3



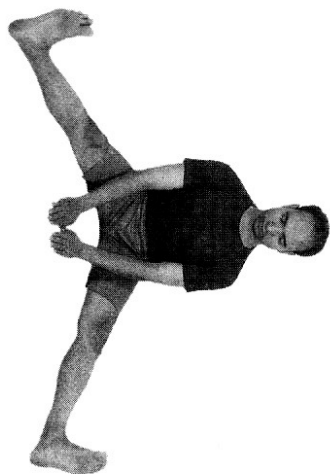
Right hand holding the left leg. Left hand on the floor behind the back.

Mild twist.

V.29

Dandasana

Similar modifications are also possible in the following positions:



Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

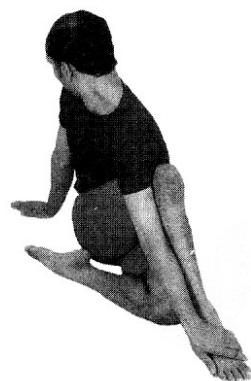
1



Hold right knee with left hand. Right hand on the floor behind the back. Twist to the right

Gentle twist.

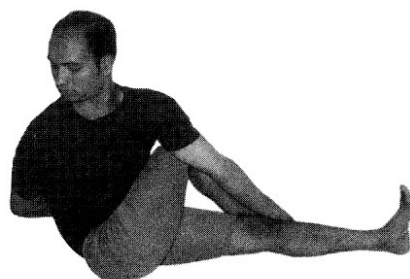
2



Left hand holding the right ankle. Right hand on the floor behind the back. Twist to the right.

Mild twist.

These modifications are also possible in the following position:



V.30

Ardha Matsyendrasana

VI. VIPARITA

31. Sirsasana

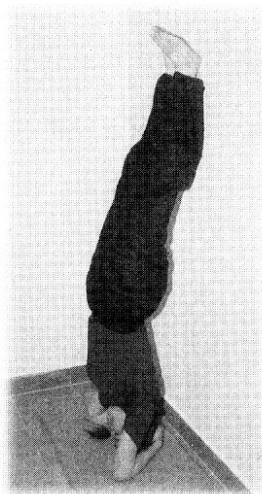
32. Viparitakarani

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

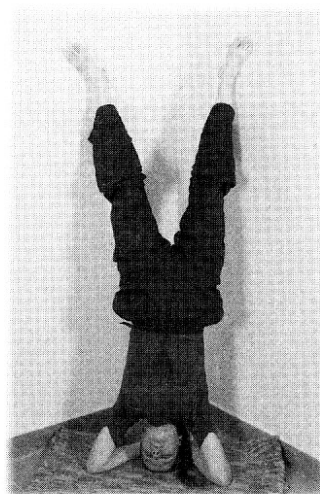
1



Against a wall.

For support.

2



Against corner of a wall.

For support in both directions.

VI.31

Sirsasana

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

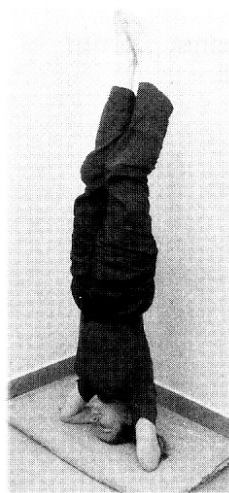
3



Bent leg on a wall.

For mild support.

4



Near a wall.

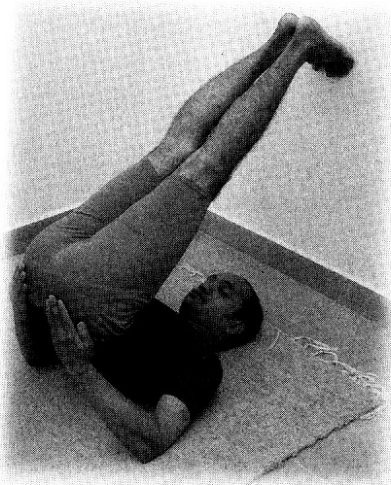
For caution.

Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

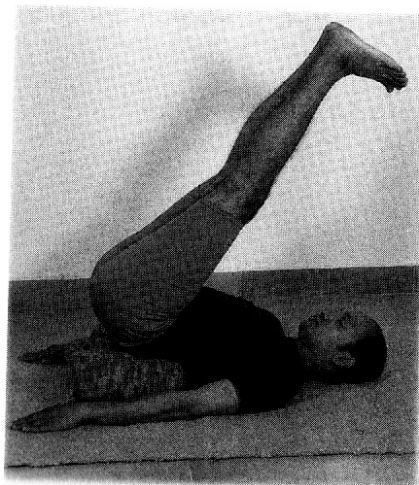
1



Legs against a wall.

To prevent rolling over.

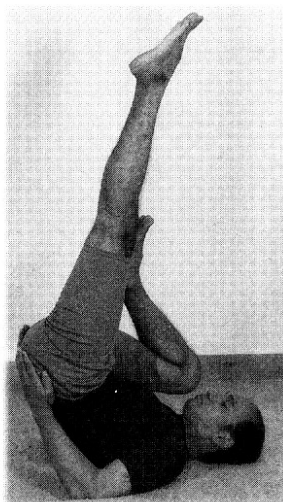
2



Cushion under the back.

For mild effect and supporting the back.

3



Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

Bend one leg near the head. For working on each leg.

Similar modifications are also possible in sarvangasana.

Application 6

APPLICATION 6

History – Lisa is a 71 year old housewife with shoulder pain and chronic hypertension.

Observation – She has stiff shoulder joints, pain in hips and in lying position, easily feels breathless. She is on medication for hypertension.

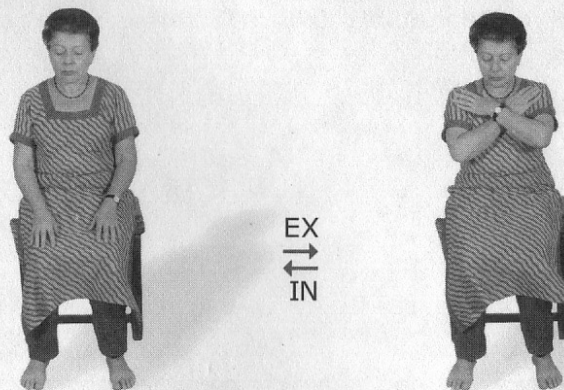
Strategy - To move arms within her limits and to use breathing to relax. To avoid too many postures or strain on shoulders and hip and prevent giddiness. To end in seated position.

1



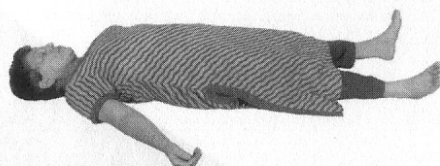
Alternating 3
times each side

2



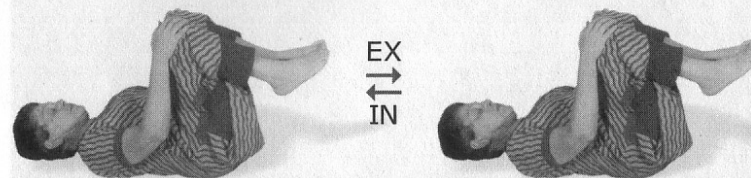
6 times

3



Rest on bed

4



6 times
Extend exhale
each time

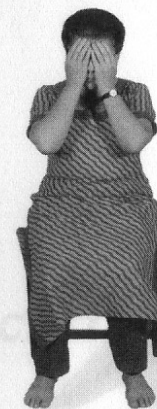
5

Rest 1 min.



6

Palm eyes.
Stay for 6 breaths.



7

Rest 1 min.



History - Michael is a 54 year old man who works in a high profile company. He has a neck pain, heart problem

Observation - He is able to sit on the floor. He gets agitated very easily. He has tender abdomen muscles and his face shows tiredness.

Strategy - While respecting his heart condition, to give him confidence and help him to sleep well. Some asanas to relax his neck are included.

Application 7

APPLICATION 7

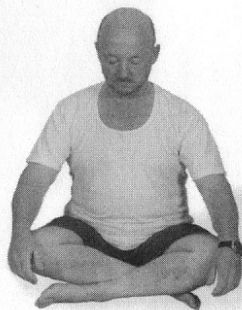
History – Michael is a 54 year old man who works in a high profile company. He has a neck pain, heart problem (Ischemia), depression and is on medication.

Observation – He is able to sit on the floor. He gets agitated very easily. He has tender abdomen muscles and his face shows tiredness.

Strategy – While respecting his heart condition, to give him confidence and help him to sleep well. Some asanas to relax his neck are included.

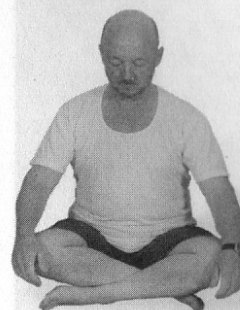
1

Visualise rising sun and when ready...



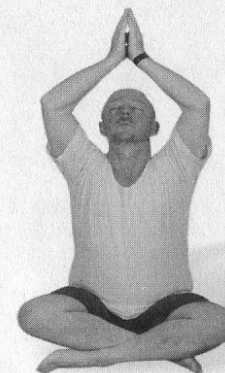
2

Take one breath



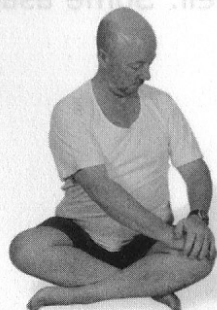
IN
⇕
EX

5 times
Take one breath

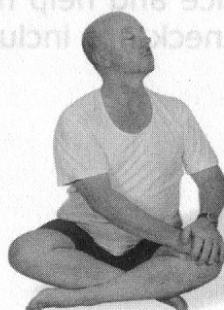


3

5 times on each side



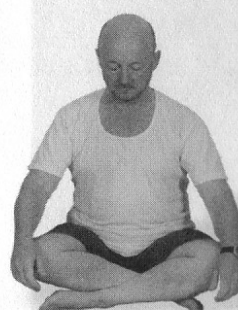
IN
⇕
EX



Rest whenever short of breath

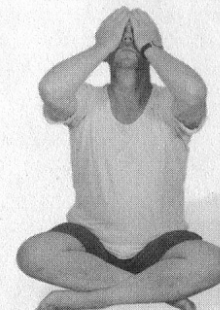
4

Take one breath here



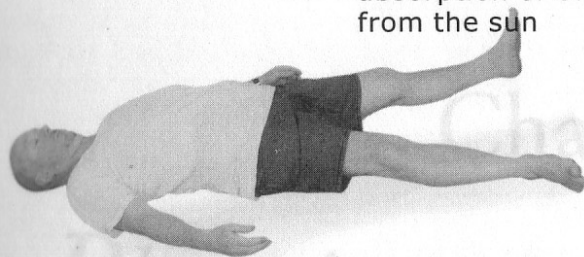
IN
⇕
EX

Palm eyes.
Repeat 5 times



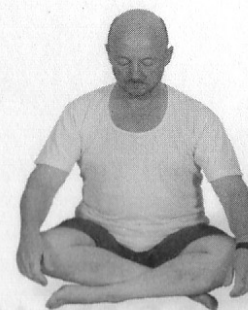
5

Mentally reciting an appropriate chant 10 times on each exhale, each recitation longer than previous one, visualizing the absorption of energy from the sun



6

Seated rest



Note : Practice twice. Once in the morning. Once before going to bed.

✓ How to choose an objective?

✓ Tools for planning an asana sequence.

Chapter 4

Planning an Asana sequence

- ✓ Why is planning necessary?
- ✓ How to choose an objective?
- ✓ Tools for planning an asana sequence.

Although most asanas are often seen as mere physical exercises, an asana includes the following levels: body, breath and mind (concentration and mental attitude). An asana should also be placed in the context of a sequence. Here the role and specific effects of an asana will be amplified or reduced according to its place in the sequence. As a consequence, the effect of an asana practice is not just the addition of individual asanas but the result of their combinations and interactions based on what the practitioner wants to achieve. This is where the planning of a sequence begins.

Choosing An Objective

In planning an asana sequence, asanas are not placed one after another at random, but are arranged carefully. First the student should have a goal for the practice. In a classical situation, the goal is to achieve a specific asana, or to prepare for a precise pranayama practice.

Often, in actual situations, since many people are not ready to practice the classical postures and come to practice yoga for different reasons, this goal can be expressed in terms such as:

- ♦ *practicing a difficult posture, or doing a daily routine to keep fit.*
- ♦ *getting some specific physical benefits like increased flexibility.*
- ♦ *gaining strength or stamina.*
- ♦ *improving some mental characteristics such as patience, determination and achieving inner calm.*
- ♦ *reducing some pain, recovering from an injury, working towards better health.*

- ♦ *preparing for a prayer, a meditation, a specific spiritual practice.*

The practitioner must be clear about the goal, and must also not have too many goals for the same practice. Although asana practice is very efficient, it is only regular practice over a period of time that produces lasting results.

The Tools For Planning A Course

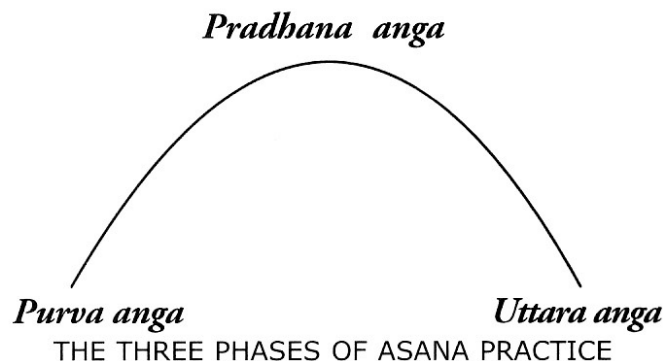
Usually a sequence begins with standing asanas, then lying (on the back), inversions, back arches (usually lying on the stomach), seated postures and after a rest, the sequence finishes with a pranayama practice. (For example have a look at the application example of Jennifer on page 175).

Though this is the usual order, it may be relaxed on occasions to suit an individual's needs and limits. As a result, there may be sequences without any standing postures at all. In some cases, one starts with seated asanas, then lying, and sometimes one finishes with standing asanas. This first rule goes with another very important fact which takes into account the three main phases of building an asana practice.

I. The Three Main Phases

The three main phases of a planned sequence are the purva anga (preparation), the pradhana anga (central or core phase), and the uttara anga (last or conclusion phase). Passing from one to the other is done in a smooth way, and in the actual situation there is no strict or strong boundary.

This is why some experience is often needed to recognize and apply these phases correctly.

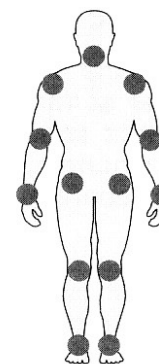


Other tools for designing a practice are the dynamic or static applications of asanas, and their use as preparation, goal, compensation, as an observation or as a rest position, as well as visualizations in asana, among others. Above all, the breath plays a leading role because there is no asana without proper breathing. We shall discuss these later in this chapter.

A. The Purva Anga (First Stage)

This is the preliminary or preparatory phase. It is often a little longer than the central one, the pradhana anga. As a warm up, it concerns the muscles and articulations, especially the spine, slowly expands the breath, directs attention, and creates a positive mental space for any special orientation.

Except for rest, most of these asanas are done with slow movements, always with special attention on the breath. This is called dynamic asanas. The movements concern all parts of the body. In the preparation, every joint should move.



EVERY JOINT SHOULD MOVE.

The first phase usually begins with a short observation in standing posture (samasthiti) and is followed by a few other standing asanas starting from samasthiti. They are dynamic (and/or static), symmetrical (and/or asymmetrical), forward bends (and/or back bends, twists, lateral stretches). All of these features depend on the goal set by the practitioner.

For those who have special requirements, easy postures are used. Here the body is either in a standing position, lying on the back, or in an easy sitting position (sukhasana or even sitting on a chair).

Then the practice slowly shifts from simple asanas to asymmetrical exercises and back arches, and/or their respective variations. The organization of the asanas, the emphasis on the breath, and the mental attitude will be designed to meet the chosen goal.

If the central phase is challenging, the preparation gives an opportunity to check the body and the breath, and know how to proceed towards the chosen goal.

B. The Pradhana Anga (Central Or Core Phase)

In this phase, asanas that are most relevant or effective in relation to the goal are used. It can be one asana or a series, but in all cases done with correct breathing, attention, and mental attitude.

Depending on the chosen goal and the qualities of the practitioner, this phase can be more demanding. It may include staying in difficult asanas for several breaths, specific breathing indications (holding of the breath, ratios, etc.), special mental attitudes (e.g. bhavana or visualizations), etc. This explains why the preparation has a great role to play.

The central phase comes approximately in the middle of the entire sequence and it can have a short or long duration, depending on the goal.

C. The Uttara Anga (Conclusion Phase)

This phase is as important as the first two. There is sometimes a tendency to be less attentive here because the preparation and the core phase have been achieved, or sometimes because there is a feeling of lack of time to finish the planned course. However, this would be a big mistake. One should never forget that the effects of a practice are determined by the entire sequence, which undoubtedly includes the conclusion

phase. It is not enough if one knows how to climb up a tree, it is equally important that one learns how to climb down.

This phase, the *uttara anga*, helps to relax the person after the *pradhana anga*. It is mainly composed of mild movements, compensations, and light breathing to come back to daily routines. It can also be a preparation for the *pranayama* and if so, it will include specific breathing and one or two asanas to prepare for the seated posture.

If well planned and correctly practiced, the conclusion phase will reinforce the effects of the sequence. If not respected, the benefits of the practice could be weakened and could even lead to some problems.

II. The Other Tools

To construct a sequence of asanas with the three main phases, some other tools are necessary. These are:

- A. ***Different kinds of asanas***
- B. ***Dynamic & static asanas***
- C. ***Rests***
- D. ***Compensations / counterposes***
- E. ***Transitions***
- F. ***Variations & modifications***
- G. ***Bhavana (focus)***
- H. ***Breathing***
- I. ***Vocal sounds***

A. Different Kinds Of Asanas

There are different categories of asanas, according to their base. These are,

- ❖ **Standing postures**
(where the base is the feet)
- ❖ **Lying on the back**
(where the base is the posterior side of the body)
- ❖ **Inverted postures**
(where the base is the head or the neck)
- ❖ **Lying on the stomach**
(where the base is the anterior side of the body)
- ❖ **Seated Posture**
(where the base is the seat).

Another very useful classification to plan a sequence is grounded on the position and effects on the spine. This gives

- ❖ **Samasthiti**
(spine vertical, head above)
- ❖ **Pascimatana**
(stretching of the back part of the body, the spine is stretched)
- ❖ **Purvatana**
(stretching of the front part of the body, arch of the spine)
- ❖ **Parsva**
(lateral stretch of the spine)

- ❖ **Parivrtti**
(twist of the spine)

- ❖ **Viparita**
(head down, legs and pelvis up, inverted compression of the spine).

This is the classification we have selected to present the asanas used in this book.

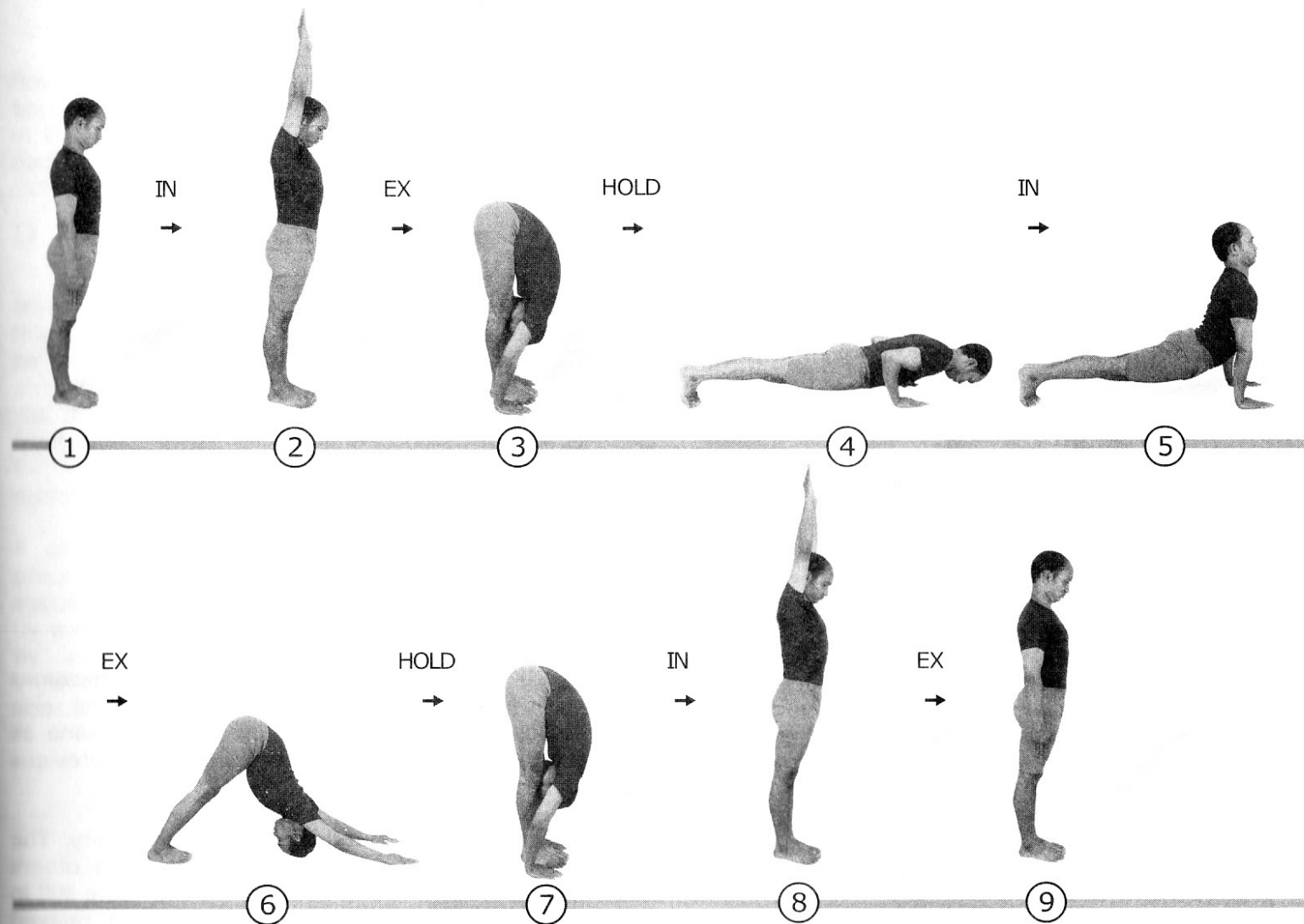
Generally in a classical sequence, it is important to begin with a standing and symmetrical asana and to finish with a seated and symmetrical asana. In some cases, however, to have a rather complete or balanced effect on the body, at least one asymmetrical position of the spine is desirable. In the same spirit, forward and back bends are necessary, even if one of them may dominate according to the fixed goal.

B. Dynamic & Static Asanas

In most books, asanas are shown only in their final positions. Because of this, people tend to reduce an asana to only a special position of the body.

This limited understanding has also been reinforced by the fact that ancient yoga books were not conceived as manuals for a self-taught practice. They are always brief in their descriptions, focusing directly on the final features of their asanas, and leaving the other explanations to the living teacher.

Once again it must be emphasized that yoga asanas comprise physical, energetic (breathing) and mental attitudes. Concerning the physical level, an asana is not merely a single position of the body. It always includes a starting posture, a key posture, and different well-indexed intermediary positions to get from the starting point to the key posture and back. Each movement from one position to the next one is done slowly, with great attention and with a correct breathing. This process is called the vinyasa krama of an asana. Every asana must be done with the correct vinyasa krama.



THE VINYASA KRAMA FOR ADHOMUKHA SVANASANA

This vinyasa krama can be repeated for a number of times with the correct breathing process. This is called the dynamic asana. In a sequence, sometimes only a part of is repeated to bring about a dynamic effect for one or more postures.

Most asanas can be done dynamically or statically. Some are mainly done static (rest positions, some lying twists, and inverted postures), except that the movement into and out of the posture must be done correctly.

The main reason for the practice of dynamic asana is to prepare for the static asana, which will be practiced immediately after, or later, depending on the capability of the individual.

For example, sirsasana:



STATIC POSTURE

Stay for 6 breaths



EX
↔
IN



Repeat 6 times

DYNAMIC POSTURE

C. Rests

Ideally, rest is included only when one becomes tired or short of breath during practice. Rest also prepares one to mentally focus on the next asana as well as to release any tension from the previous posture.

Rest must not last longer than necessary. The classical posture for rest is savasana, though others may also be used. If a short rest is needed while still in the standing postures, it will be taken in a relaxed samasthiti or sitting on a chair.

One usually takes a few minutes lying down rest, after an inverted asana and after any strenuous pose before performing the "compensation or counterpose."

The same principle applies before going into the practice of pranayama, to make sure that there is no fatigue, no shortness of breath, and no fast pulse. A

few minutes rest in savasana is also often suggested, once all the exercises are over, to deepen the effects in the system and to have a transition before going back to one's daily routine.

D. Compensations or Counterpose

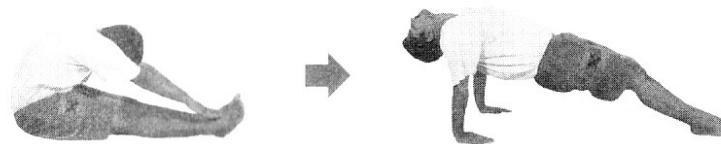
The body needs compensations/counterposes when one stays for sometime in an unusual position or if the work done puts some stress on the body. This can be observed by the fact that we need to stretch the arms or arch the back gently during certain activities, like driving a car for a length of time, or even sit in front of the computer for a long time. The same need for a counterpose/compensation (pratikriya-asana) exists in some situations when performing asanas.

A counterpose is usually a simpler asana than the preceding one. It usually moves the body in the opposite direction, which relaxes the strains produced by some asanas. The general rule is to 'open' the body by arching the back after a forward bend, and inversely, to bend forward after a back arch. One should also bend the body forward after twisting the

spine or stretching the body laterally.

If the main asana is seated, usually the pratikriya is also seated. Similarly, if the main asana is standing, so is the pratikriya asana.

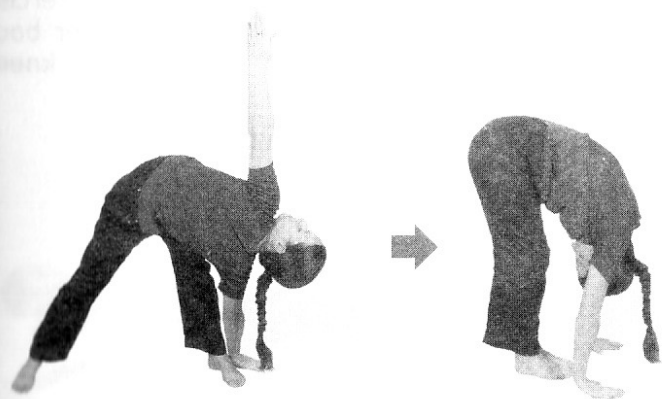
It is important to remember that the need for pratikriya asana may be in all the three phases of the planned sequence, that is purva anga, pradhana anga or uttara anga. A counterpose is used whenever and wherever there is a need for it.



AFTER PASHCHIMATANASANA, PURVATANASANA IS A COUNTERPOSE

The ancient yogis had designed specific counterposes for almost all asanas, but it is the effect of the asana on the person that will finally decide the choice of the pratikriya asana. For example, purvatanasana is the classical counterpose for pashchimatanasana.

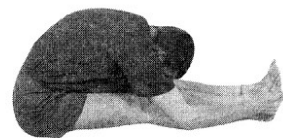
Once again, this will not be ideal for everyone, since purvatanasana is not such an easy posture for



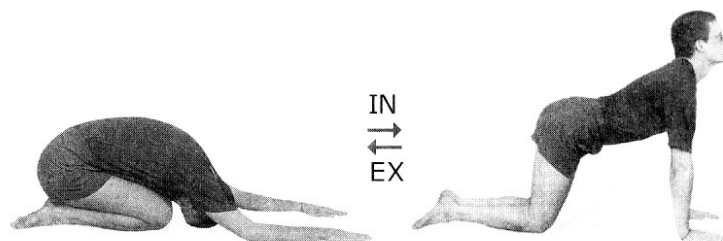
AFTER TRIKONASANA, UTTANASANA IS A PRATIKRIYA

many. So we will have to make some changes and accept an easier counterpose.

For example, after pascimatanasana 4 times, and 8 breaths stay, it might be desirable to practice a few dynamic forward bends in vajrasana, to relax the different parts of the body, fold the legs and most importantly, open the hips and have a mild arch of the spine.



AFTER PASCIMATANASANA 4 TIMES, AND 8 BREATHS STAY



A FEW MOVEMENTS IN VAJRASANA
MIGHT BE SUITABLE

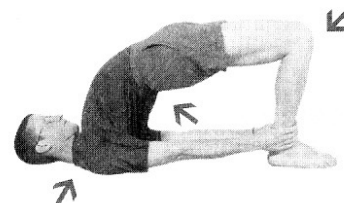
There is no need for a pratikriya asana after each asana but is necessary after a series of asanas and of course, somewhere at the end of a sequence.

The more strenuous a posture, the more the counterposes needed. Similarly, the lesser the preparation, the greater the need for a counterpose. For some people, the need for a counterpose may not be so evident immediately after a posture is done, but its value may be understood later in the day, or even the next morning. This is because some effects may take time to show up or reach the body. It is not always immediate. Hence, it is better to use counterpose as a preventive measure.

This applies particularly to most asymmetrical positions of the spine, arches, and inverted asanas, which almost always require a pratikriya asana.

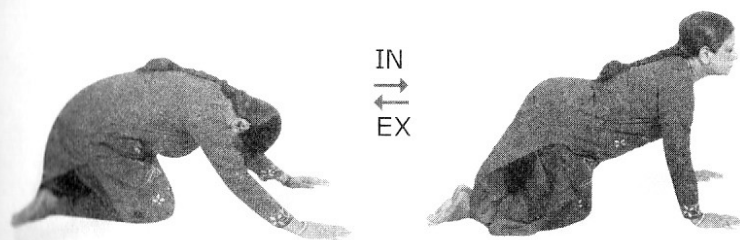
A pratikriya asana is specially designed to relieve some part of the body that is strained. This is why it will always be lighter for the joints and back than the asana it compensates.

For example, a person may feel the need for a counterpose that relaxes the neck after dvipadapitham, while another person may not feel any need to exercise the neck, but may need something for the lower back or hips. In the case of yet another, it may be the knees that need some counterpose.



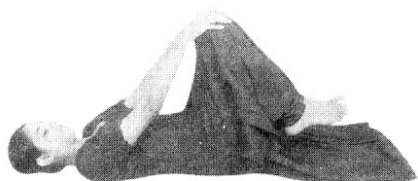
DVIPADAPITHAM : SAME ASANA DIFFERENT NEEDS

In the first case, a mild cakravakasana may be used to relieve the tension in the neck.



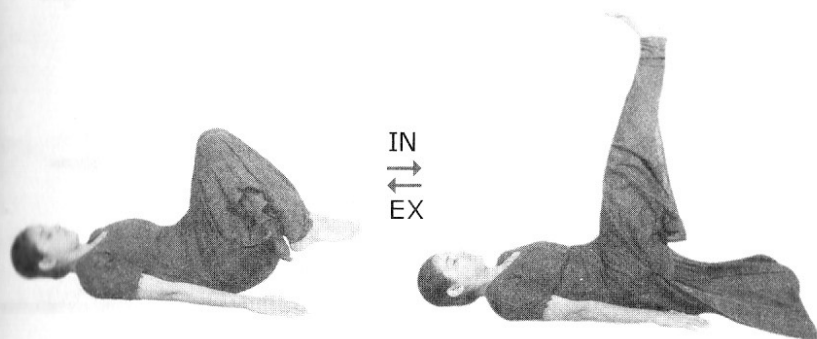
CAKRAVAKASANA FOR THE NECK

Apanasana would be ideal for those with the need to relax hips and lower back.



APANASANA FOR THE HIPS AND LOWER BACK

A modification of urdhva prasrta padasana may be used when the knees need to be relaxed.



URDHVA PRASRTA PADASANA FOR THE KNEES

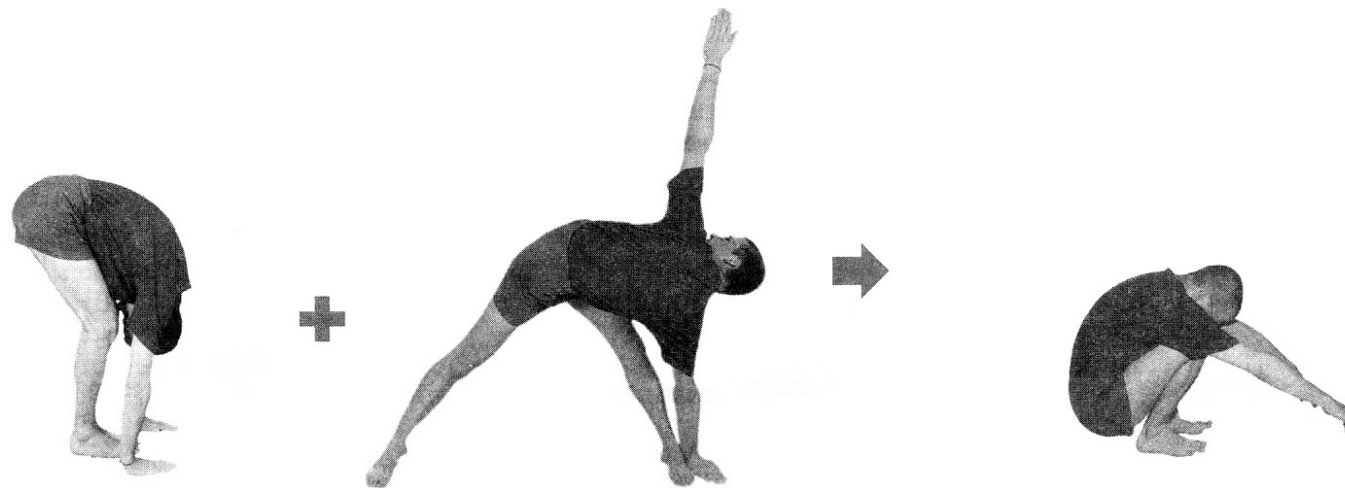
Most of the time, the pratikriya asana is practiced gently, dynamically, and generally at least half as many breaths as the asana we want to compensate for. The pratikriya asana will almost always be a symmetrical exercise.

For example, after uttanasana 6 times, and utthita trikonasana 6 times each side, a few forward bends with palms on the floor to relax the back, shoulders and neck, and bend the legs.

Sometimes, we may even need a pair of counter postures after a specific asana.

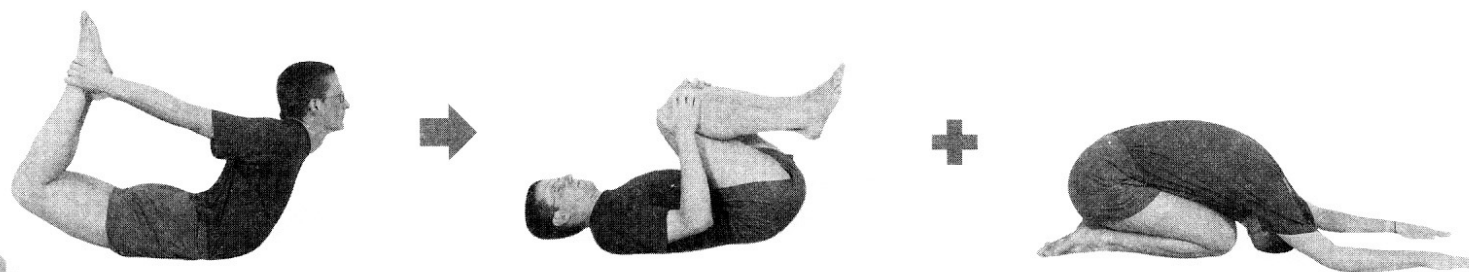
For example, after dhanurasana 6 times and 6 breaths stay, apanasana followed by a mild forward bend is necessary.

Last but not the least, there are a few situations where there is a need for a sequence of pratikriya-asanas. Sirsasana (head stand) is a special example since it requires an inverted counterpose (sarvangasana or viparitakarani), which itself requires a counterpose (bhujangasana), which itself require another counterpose (apanasana).



AFTER 12 UTTANASANA AND TRIKONASANA A MILD UTKATASANA FOLLOWS

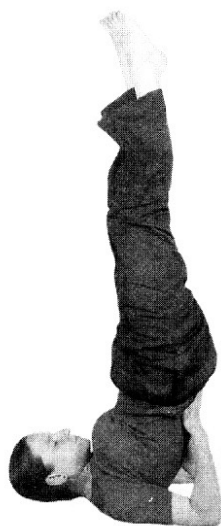
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AFTER DHANURASANA, APANASANA AND A MILD FORWARD BEND FOLLOW



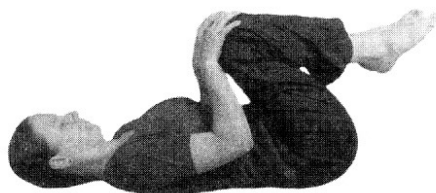
SIRSASANA



SARVANGASANA



BHUJANGASANA



APANASANA

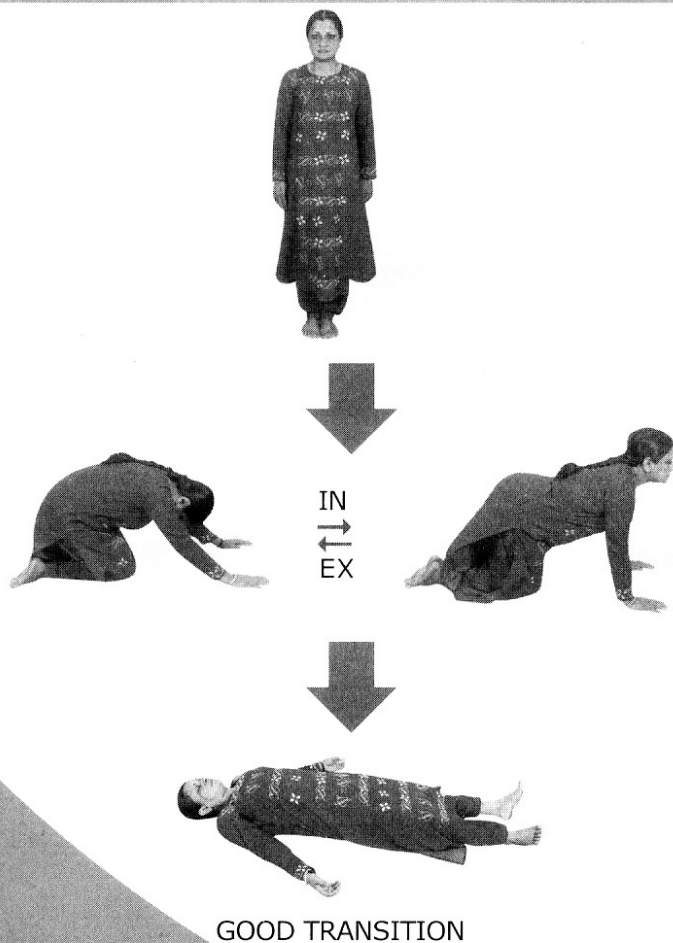


SAVASANA

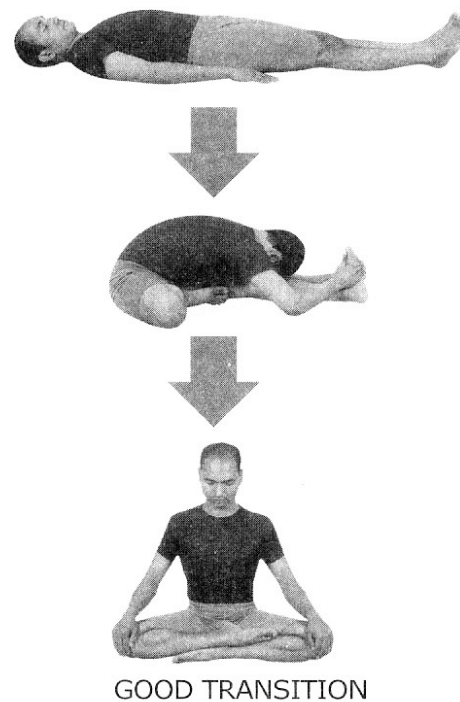
A SERIES OF COUNTER POSTURES

E. Transitions

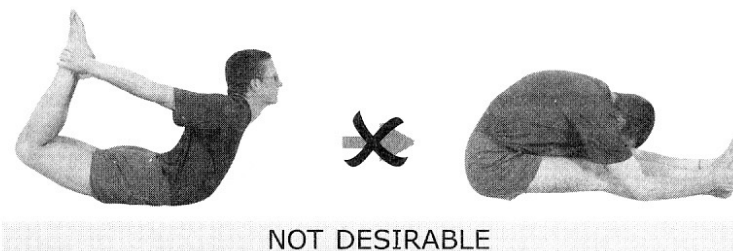
Going from one set of postures to another one sometimes requires a transition to avoid a sudden change in the position of the body. For example, a dynamic combination of forward bend in vajrasana with cakravakasana will ensure a smooth passage from the standing positions to the lying ones.

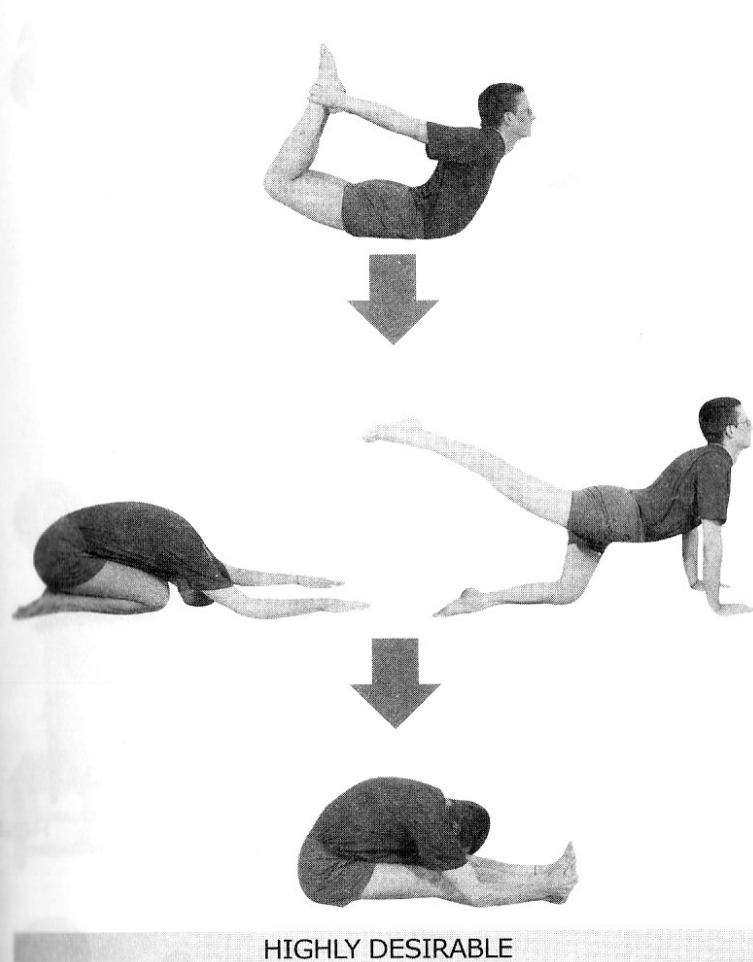


A janusirsasana done dynamically for a few times, will make the transition from lying postures to the seated posture for pranayama.



Transitions are necessary to retain the benefits of the sequence of asanas done. They are also used to avoid any injury that may arise due to extremes. For instance, it is not advisable to do pascimatanasana immediately after dhanurasana. It is better to introduce some cakravakasana in between so that the transition is smooth.





UTTANASANA

VARIATION OF UTTANASANA

Variations of asanas are only slightly different from the ideal asana. The effects are nearly same. Variations are taught only when one is not able to do the classical asana. This is because most often variations are either extensions of classical asanas or more intense. Consider the above variation of Uttanasana.

Here the variation is that the hands are swept behind the back while bending forward on exhale. All other features that are in Uttanasana are also present here. For example, the legs are straight and together and the head is near the legs. The effect of this asana is not so different from that of Uttanasana.

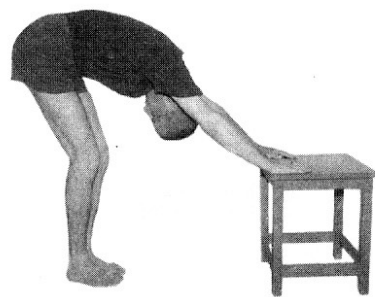
Most variations make the classical asana even more difficult, which also may increase the risks since most people today cannot perform them correctly. This explains why they are not the main focus in this book.

F. Variations & Modifications

Each asana has a great number of variations and modifications. The main variations, which are in use today were once again conceived by the great yogis and masters. Variations and modifications are introduced in the planning based on the individual's goals and abilities.



UTTANASANA



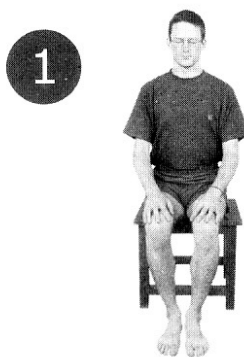
MODIFICATION OF UTTANASANA

On the other hand, **modifications** of asanas are introduced when the ideal asanas are not possible. They simplify the ideal asana and hence offer different benefits. Consider the above modification of uttanasana.

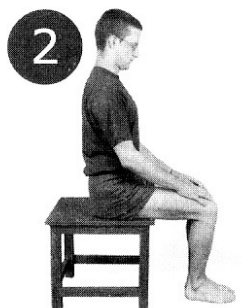
Here the modification is to bend the knees, and not bend down completely, but only onto a stool. The features are different from the ideal asana, the head is not on the leg, the legs are not straight, and the stretching of the back is much less. This is typically introduced for those who cannot do the ideal asanas.

For many beginners, modifications of asana and pranayama need to be used, even if the individual does not have any health problems. Firstly, because he/she may not yet be ready for the final techniques. Secondly, their body and breath are not yet prepared to perform the ideal asana.

FIRST COURSE - AIM PASCIMATANASANA

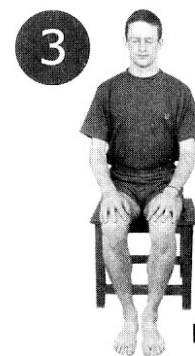


Sit. Breathe normally
10 times

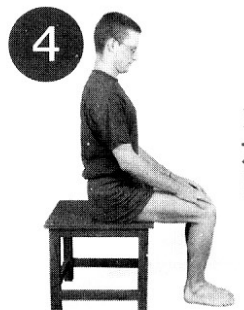


IN
EX

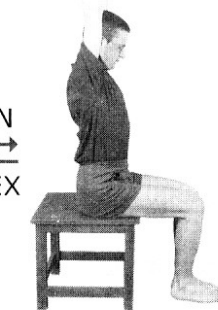
Raise arms, 5 times



Rest



IN
EX



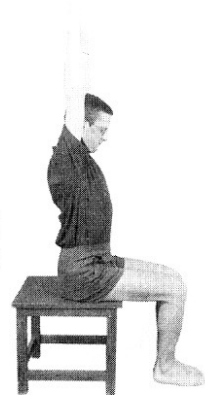
EX
IN



Feet apart, 5 times



Rest



5 times


 Rest + Breathing 10
times

Keeping this in mind, a first lesson aimed at pascimatanasana could be as illustrated in page 318 - 319.

Although the final goal is pascimatanasana, the posture does not appear in the first sequence at all. These few exercises will give some movements to different parts of the body without making it too strenuous, and the muscles along the back (neck, back and legs) are gently stretched.

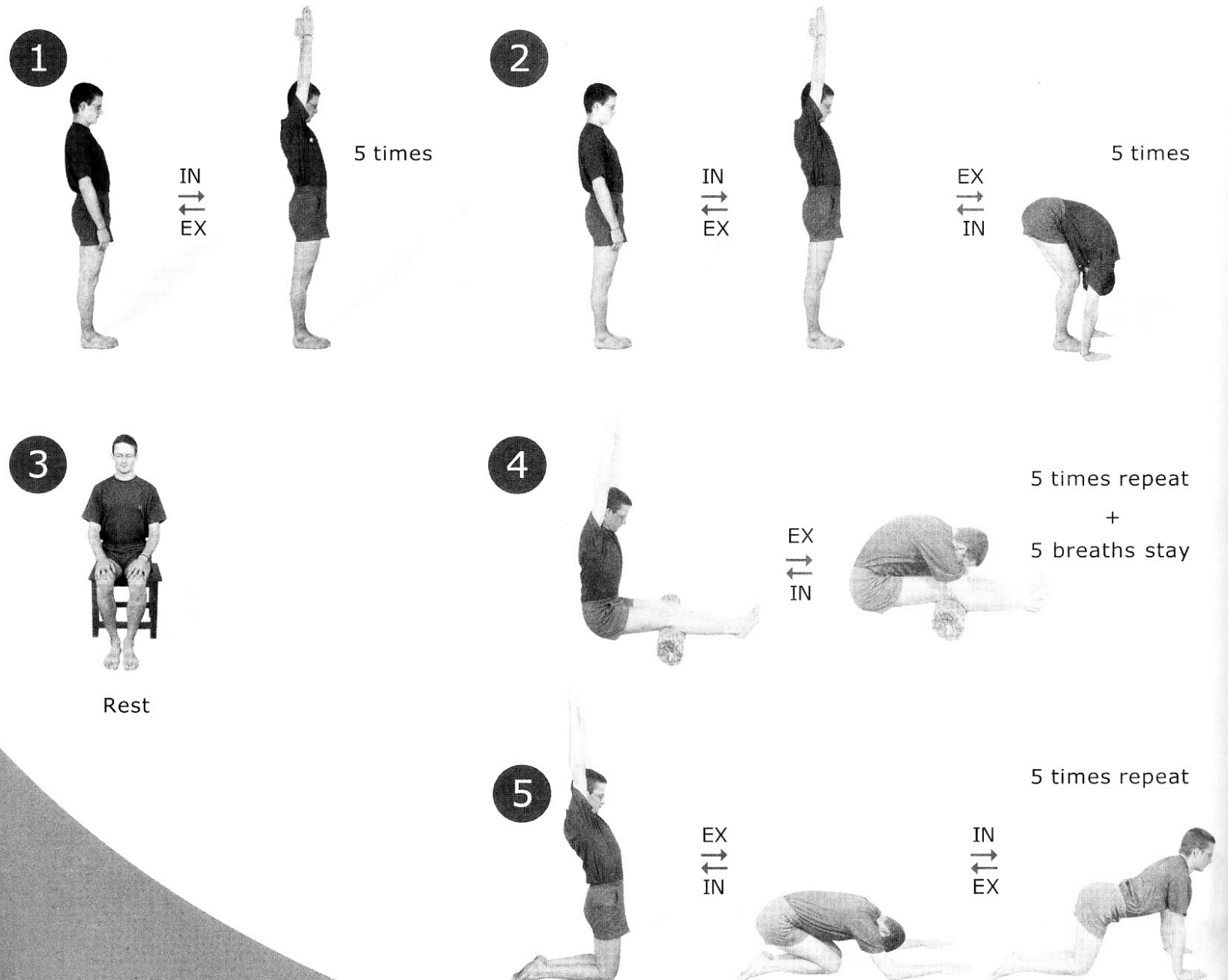
The beginner will have to practice this first lesson regularly, which usually means every day or at least four to five times a week. Each week the course may be reviewed with the teacher. After one or two weeks, the teacher will evaluate the student, and when student is ready for pascimatanasana, the teacher may plan a course including it.

One sees clearly that this practice is an evolution of the previous one, so that the student is not given a totally new set of postures. He/she already knows the three first asanas, which is usually encouraging.

The following lessons will continue to evolve according to the students abilities and progress. The support for the seated forward bend will very likely reduce, and after some time, the practitioner - who at that time will no more be a beginner - will be able to perform pascimatanasana on the floor, in the modified or ideal posture. See later course on page 320 - 321.

Different modifications of the selected asanas have already been discussed in chapter 3.

LATER COURSE - INCLUDING PASCIMATANASANA (MODIFICATION)



6



IN
↕
EX



5 times

7



Rest

8



IN=EX
10 breaths

9



Rest

G. Bhavana : Focus

The word comes from the Sanskrit root "bhu" which means "to become." A bhavana is a support to focus the mind, it helps attention and concentration. The bhavana can also be an intention, a visualization, a direction, a goal one wants to reach, or a special instruction that has been received from the teacher.

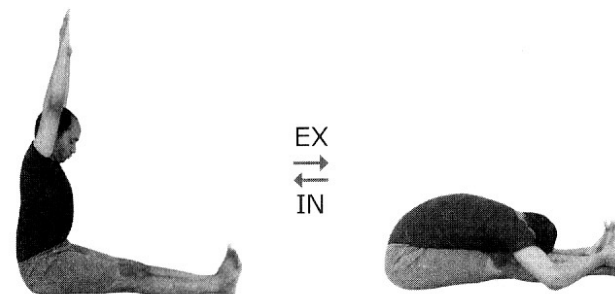
When a student performs an asana a certain number of times dynamically, it is already a bhavana since it means he/she should ideally be able to follow this instruction precisely. In an asymmetrical asana, one of the most commonly used bhavana is to do exactly the same on each side, except some special cases where there can be another instruction, which itself is another bhavana.

A bhavana is also often given in terms of breath specification, like inhale to be equal to exhale (IN = EX), or exhale to be longer than inhale (EX > IN). Some length of retention of the breath after inhale and/or exhale is also one of the usual bhavana used in yoga practice.

The bhavana can be a special attention to some specific part of the body, for example the movements of the spine, or making sure that a stretch of the back portion of the body is evenly distributed to all parts concerned, and not only in the legs.

There can be one bhavana for an entire course, or different bhavana-s for each asana. Finally, a set of different bhavana-s are also possible for the same asana. In some cases the student may also be asked to change the bhavana each day.

Example with pascimatanasana :



The above asana can have the following bhavana-s:

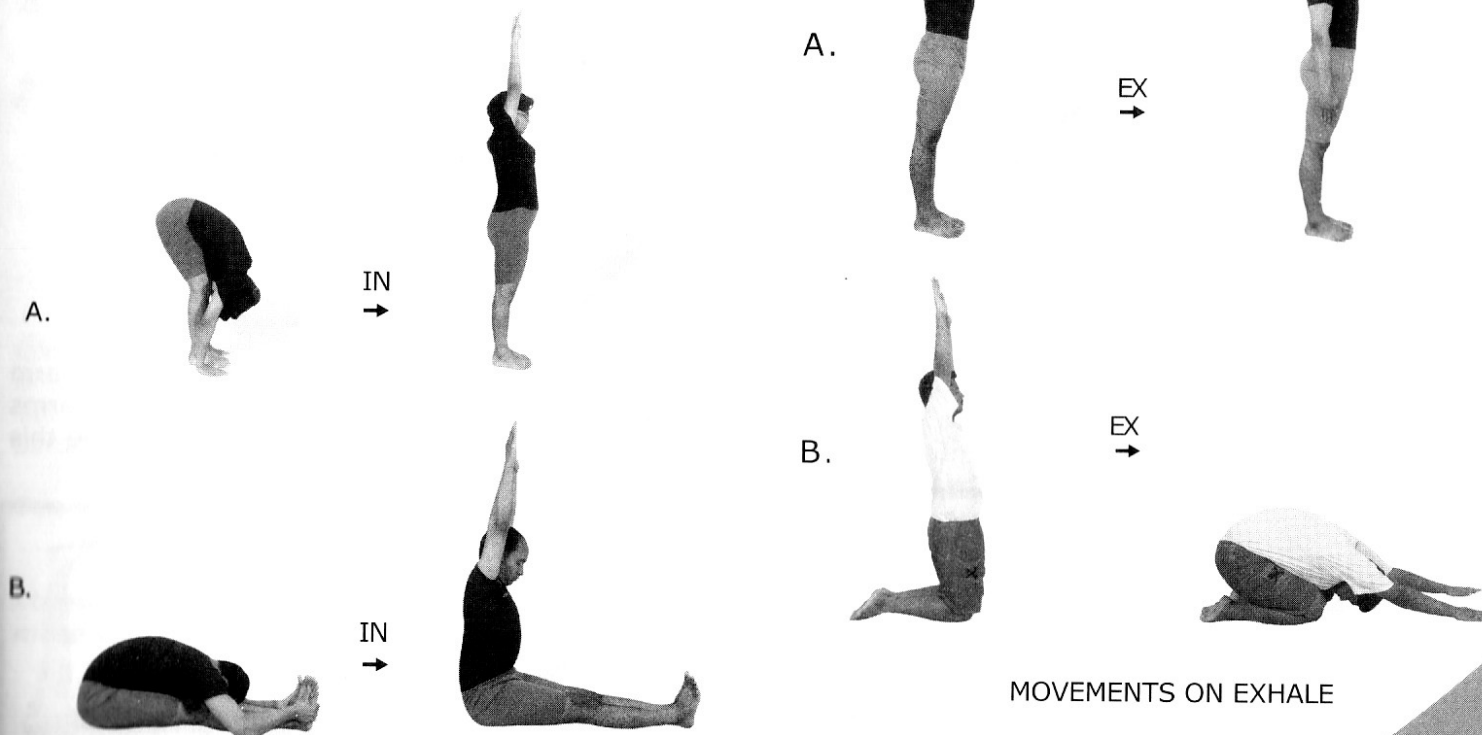
1. 6 Times repeat and then stay 8 breaths
2. EX > IN : Exhalation longer than inhale
3. Hold 4 seconds after exhale
4. Don't allow the feet to spread when bending forward.
5. While staying in the posture, visualize the inhaled breath nourishing the abdominal fire and on exhale, removing the impurities.

H. Breathing

The correct use of breath while performing asanas and pranayama is without doubt one of the most important characteristics of the yoga practice. There is no asana practice without breath.

Nathamuni, a great yogi who lived in South India around the 9th century, advised the inclusion of ujjayi pranayama while performing asanas. Ujjayi is breathing through both nostrils but with a slight constriction of the throat, producing a gentle throat sound.

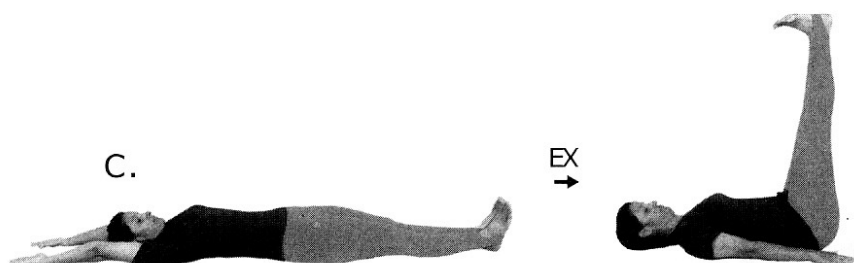
The correct way to breathe has already been explained earlier in this book. For example, when coming up, starting the inhalation in the chest (here in the upper back) straightens out the spine and tones the muscles of the back.



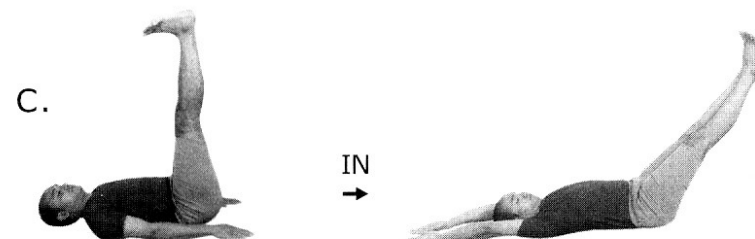
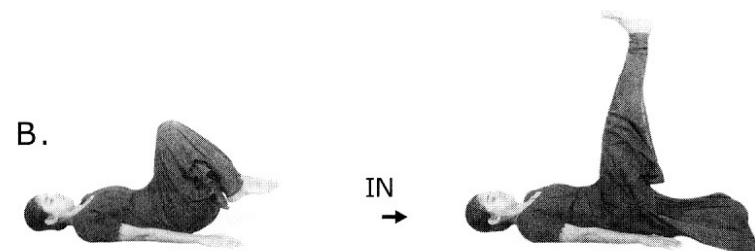
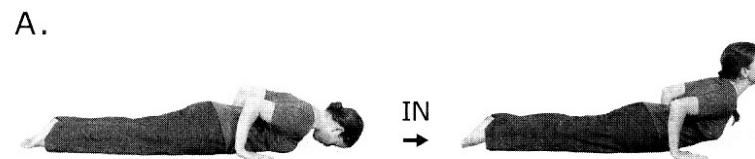
COMING OUT OF
UTTANASANA (A) AND PASCIMATANASANA (B)

This reinforces one of the greatest rules of breathing in asanas: any opening of the body, such as arching of the back, must be done on inhale. Likewise, the opposite movement or folding of the body must occur on exhale. The latter includes bending forward, twisting of the spine and even lateral stretches.

Further, lifting of the arms is done on inhale, whatever the position of the body. This is the same for lowering the legs to the floor (the body opens up). Exhale is done when lowering the arms, lifting straight legs, etc.

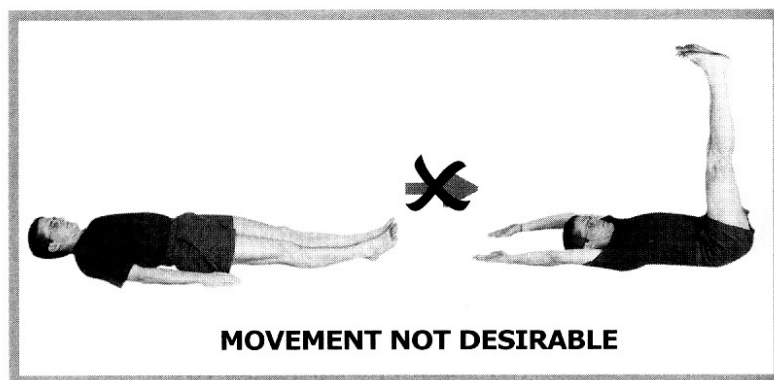


MOVEMENT ON EXHALE



MOVEMENT ON INHALE

This means that one should never lift an arm while lifting a leg, nor should one ever lower the arms when bringing a leg back to the floor. For example this movement is incorrect.



One should allow a mild movement of the spine in relation to the breath even in static asanas, which includes pranayama - the chest expands slightly, and the spine becomes erect on inhale. While on exhale, as soon as the abdomen has come in, the chest and the back relax a little.

Another important aspect is the timing of breath in asana practice. This means that one will often give a specific length to inhale and exhale.

For example:

Inhale movement - 5 sec
Exhale movement - 5 sec

Inhale movement - 5 sec
Exhale movement - 10 sec

Inhale movement - 5 sec
Hold after inhale - 5 sec
Exhale movement - free

Such instructions will also be included in the practice of pranayama. Following the timing of the breath not only involves more attention to the breath, but also intensifies the effects of the asana on the person.

Two important points to remember -

Inhale and hold after inhale are a little more stimulating, exhale and short hold after exhale are more calming or relaxing.

Contrary to the rules mentioned above, all movements may be performed on exhale, while the reverse is not true (do not lift the legs on inhale, do not come back from an arch on inhale, etc.).

I. Vocal Sound

While producing a vocal sound, exhale must be used. Thus, in certain special cases, the use of vocal sound is introduced while doing some asanas (dynamic and/or static postures) and pranayama, mainly to teach and/or emphasize exhale. This technique is also used with people who do not understand the instructions about the breath, like very young children and even some adults.

Vocal sound may have stimulating or calming effects depending on the type of sound, the pitch, the variations, the loudness, etc., and in relation to the position of the body.

Sound is most often used in asanas and/or pranayama for its soothing effects, keeping in mind that the sound must not be too high, too strong or used in too many asanas.

Using a sound in an asana also allows one to check and improve stability, strength and stamina among many other qualities.

The sound used is often a simple vowel or syllable ("maa") which may or may not have any special meaning. In some specific cases it could be a word or a phrase, used for its significance.

Among other possibilities, a vocal sound makes sure that while exhaling one knows exactly when exhale begins and when it ends. For example, some people find it difficult to measure their breath when asked to do a series, beginning with a short exhale and extending its length every time. This is easy to control with a simple syllable which is extended or simply said one time on one exhale, repeated twice on second exhale, and so on.

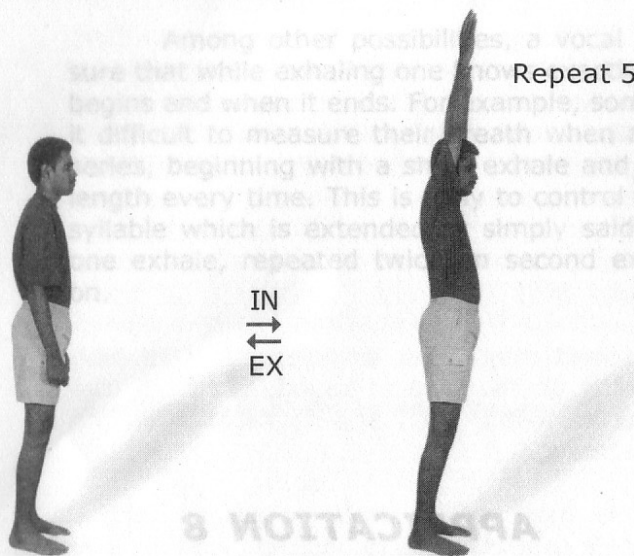
Application 8

History – Mathias is a 19 year old student. He has had jaundice twice, and typhoid once. He also has a weak constitution.

Observation – He lacks concentration. He is tall but generally stiff.

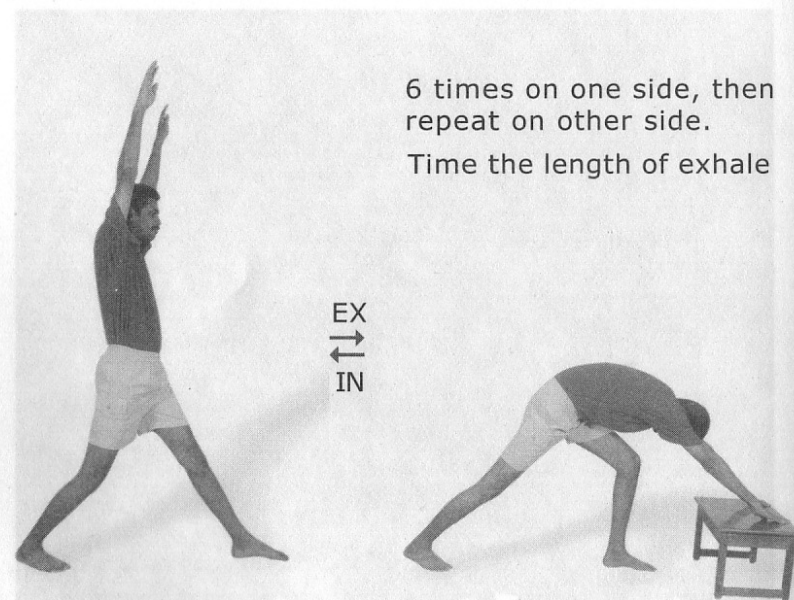
Strategy – To focus on the abdomen region.

1



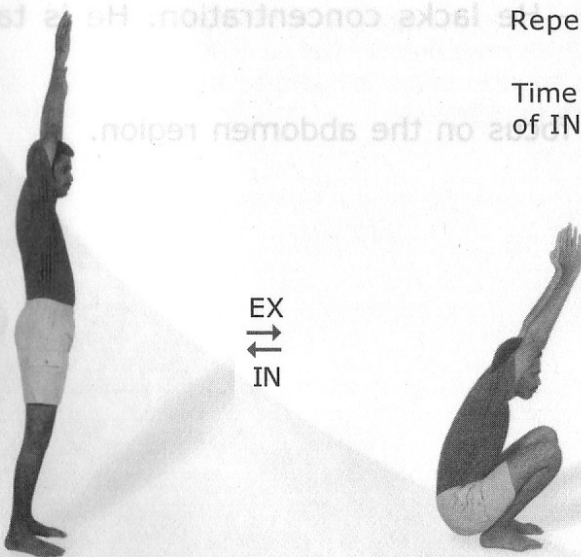
Repeat 5 times

2



6 times on one side, then repeat on other side.
Time the length of exhale

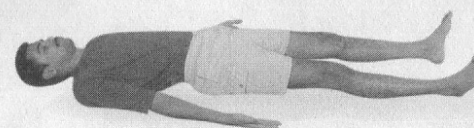
3



Repeat 7 times

Time the length of IN & EX

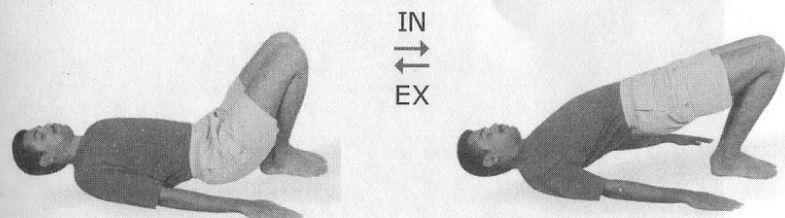
4



Rest

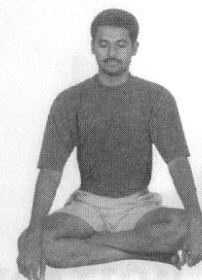
5

8 times



6

1. Time length of each exhalation; 10 breaths.
2. Time length of exhalation and inhalation; 10 breaths.



APPLICATION 9

Application 9

History – Jaya is a 53 year old housewife. She is under medication for hypertension.

Observation – She finds it difficult to sit on the floor. She is very alert, but agitated because of excess weight in the lower abdomen. She is also a very religious person.

Strategy – Since she is on medication, not to focus much on hypertension, but on the lower abdomen, which is her concern. This is to be done within her limits.

Note : The reason for each posture repeated different number of times is to maintain his attention

Application 9

APPLICATION 9

History – Jaya is a 53 year old housewife. She is under medication for hypertension.

Observation – She finds it difficult to sit on the floor. She is very alert, but agitated because of excess weight in the lower abdomen. She is also a very religious person.

Strategy – Since she is on medication, not to focus much on hypertension, but on the lower abdomen, which is her concern. This is to be done within her limits.

1



10 times
IN 4 sec.
EX 6 sec.

2



IN
↓
EX

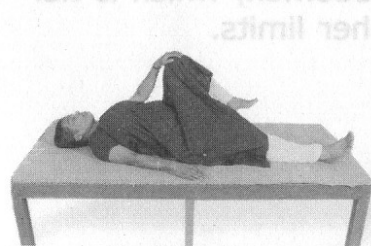


EX
↓
IN

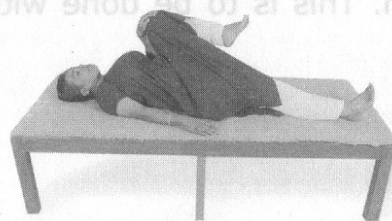


5 times
Stay 1 Breath

3

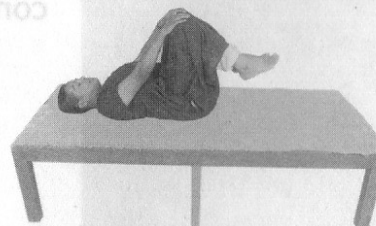


EX
↓
IN

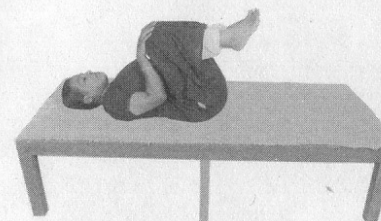


5 times each side

4



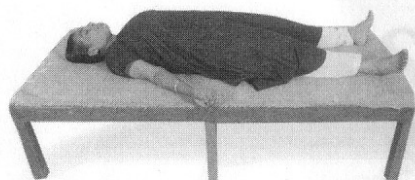
EX
↓
IN



10 times

5

Rest



6

IN freely EX, recite
'Goddess' name 28
Times



7

Rest seated 5 min.



Section 2
Pranayama

Section 2

Pranayama

Overview and Concepts

- ✓ What is Pranayama?
- ✓ The components of breath.
- ✓ Tools for pranayama.
- ✓ Concepts used in pranayama.

What is Pranayama?

Pranayama is defined as: "conscious regulation of the breath." While asana practice prepares for pranayama, pranayama itself is the ideal preparation for meditation. The ancient yogis gave a lot of importance to the practice of pranayama. Vyasa, the great sage who composed the epic Mahabharata, mentioned that pranayama is the best tool for purifying the human system.

Components and Breathing Technique

Pranayama has the following components:

- Inhale (recaka)
- Exhale (puraka)
- Retention (kumbhaka)

There are two kinds of retention:
• Upper retention (nahya kumbhaka)
• Lower retention (adhyana kumbhaka)

The main technique of breathing has been presented earlier in this book. The same technique can be used to start from the lower chest area, while inhale goes up to the throat area, while exhale goes down to the abdomen.

While practicing this technique of breathing, one should avoid a wild movement of the spine. On inhale, the chest expands slightly while the spine becomes straight. On exhale, the abdomen goes back towards the spine, while the chest may contract.

Tools

Pranayama offers a large number of tools. The main ones are presented here:

A. Throat breathing

Throat breathing is so called because there is a slight constriction of the throat, producing a gentle throat sound, even though of course, the air is passing through the nose. This type of breathing should neither be too loud nor too ting. The throat breathing is used on both inhale and exhale in ujjayi pranayama, and also in anuloma ujjayi, viloma ujjayi and ujjayi. These pranayama techniques are discussed in the next chapter. Apart from this, it has already been explained that ujjayi breathing is ideally used in all pranayama practices. Exceptions must be made in some pranayama techniques where

breathing is done through alternate nostrils and some where exhalation is through alternate nostrils. In some others, there is a combination of both inhale and exhale through alternate nostrils. Breathing with nostril control has a number of benefits that vary with each type of pranayama.

Chapter 5

Pranayama

Overview and Concepts

- ✓ What is Pranayama?
- ✓ The components of breath.
- ✓ Tools for pranayama.
- ✓ Concepts used in pranayama.

1. What is Pranayama?

Pranayama is defined as "conscious regulation of the breath." While asana practice prepares for pranayama, pranayama itself is the ideal preparation for meditation. The ancient yogis gave a lot of importance to the practice of pranayama. Vyasa, the great sage who composed the epic Mahabharata, emphasized that pranayama is the best tool for purifying the human system.

2. Components and Breathing Technique

Pranayama has the following components:

- ❖ *Exhale (recaka)*
- ❖ *Inhale (puraka)*
- ❖ *Retention (kumbhaka)*

There are two kinds of retention:

After exhale (bahya kumbhaka), and after inhale (antah kumbhaka).

The main technique of breathing in postures has already been presented earlier in this book. Even in pranayama, the same technique must be followed: *exhale has to start from the lower abdomen and move up to the chest area, while inhale must start from the chest and go down to the abdomen.*

While practicing this technique of breathing, one should allow a mild movement of the spine. On inhale the chest expands slightly while the spine becomes more erect. On exhale the abdomen goes back towards the spine, while the chest may contract.

3. Tools

Pranayama offers a large number of tools. The main ones are presented here:

A. Throat breathing

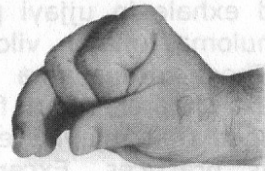
Throat breathing is so called because there is a slight constriction of the throat producing a gentle throat sound, even though of course, the air is passing through the nose. This type of breathing should neither be too loud nor too tiring. The throat breathing is used on both inhale and exhale in ujjayi pranayama, and partly used in anuloma ujjayi, viloma ujjayi and pratiloma ujjayi. These pranayama techniques are discussed in the next chapter. Apart from this, it has already been explained that ujjayi breathing is ideally used in all asanas practices. Exceptions must be considered as modifications.

B. Nostril breathing

Here, nostril breathing means breathing through one nostril at a time with the use of fingers on the nose. The yoga tradition presents a number of pranayama techniques where one will breathe using nostril control.

There are some pranayama techniques where inhalation is through alternate nostrils and some where exhalation is through alternate nostrils. In some others, there is a combination of both inhale and exhale through alternate nostrils. Breathing with nostril control has a number of benefits that vary with each type of pranayama.

In order to do this, close one nostril completely so that no air is flowing through it, and partially close the other one through which we breathe. To control the nostrils during pranayama, a special position of the hand is used called mrgi mudra (the seal of the deer, because the shadow of this hand looks like the head of a deer). The forefinger and second finger are folded towards the palm. The thumb on one side and the ring finger on the other side will control the right and left nostrils, respectively (for a right-handed person). The little finger stays together with the ring finger.



MRGI MUDRA

Nostril breathing is used on both inhale and exhale in nadi sodhana pranayama, and partly used in sitali, anuloma, viloma and pratiloma pranayama. The techniques of these types of pranayama are explained in the next chapter.

C. Mouth Breathing

The "mouth breathing" technique is used on inhale insitali pranayama, using a special position of the tongue. Another instance is the use of vocal sound to substitute exhalation, where a vocal sound is produced on exhale.

D. Ratios

In pranayama, the length of the different components are decided and measured according to the person's need and capacity. This is the ratio between the different components.

There are two types of main ratios:

- ❖ *sama vrtti*
- ❖ *visama vrtti*

By convention, the order of definition of a ratio is given as follows:

IN - HOLD - EX - HOLD.

In sama vrtti pranayama, the "active" components are of equal value. So there are only four sama vrtti pranayama:

1-0-1-0 : inhale equals exhale, no holding of the breath.

1-1-1-0 : inhale, hold after inhale and exhale have the same length.

1-0-1-1 : inhale, exhale and hold after exhale have the same length.

1-1-1-1 : inhale, hold after inhale, exhale and hold after exhale, each have the same length.

Visama vrtti pranayama is where the "active" components are of unequal value. There are many ratios possible:

1-0-2-0 : exhale is twice as long as inhale.

1-1-2-0 : inhale equals hold after inhale; exhale is twice the duration of inhale.

1-4-2-1 : hold after inhale is four times inhale duration, exhale is twice inhale duration, hold after exhale is equal to inhale duration.

These are only ratios that indicate the length of each component in relation to the others.

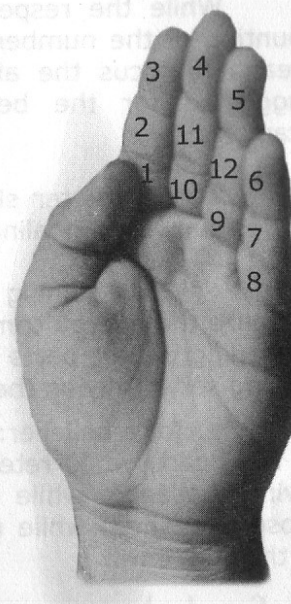
For example, 1-0-1-0 can be 4 seconds inhale and 4 seconds exhale (4-0-4-0), but it is also 10-0-10-0 or 16-0-16-0, and so on depending on a person's capacity. Obviously, the effects of a breath based on 4 seconds is not the same as one based on 16 seconds.

One may also formulate ratios in less rigorous terms like "EX > IN" (exhale longer than inhale), or "inhale equals exhale and/or hold after exhale". Here, the duration of the components are not given. In other cases a length is given, but only for one component of the breath: "exhale duration 10 seconds." Or hold after inhale for four seconds," etc. All these examples are modifications of ratios that can be used in asanas (dynamic and/or static) and in pranayama.

To conclude with the ratios section, one must remember that inhale and hold after inhale have a rather stimulating effect, while exhale and short hold after exhale are more calming or relaxing.

E. Counting And Number Of Breaths

Since pranayama is the conscious regulation of the breath, one breath is one pranayama. Obviously pranayama is never done for one breath only, but for many. This is what is called a pranayama practice. To facilitate the counting of the number of breaths, the different segments of left hand fingers are used, as shown in the illustration.



Usually, a pranayama practice will last at least 12 breaths, but often 16, 24 breaths and more are used. Due to certain constraints, some beginners may not be able to perform 12 breaths in one set. In such cases a modification is required. A person may be asked to do 4 breaths then take a rest with free breathing for one or two minutes, and then repeat this sequence two more times.

In this situation, one of the goals will be to enable the person to do the pranayama without rest in between, and this may take a few weeks. Once this is achieved, and if it is advisable, the number of breaths may slowly increase for the student.

F. Visualizations

While the respect of the given ratio plus the counting of the number of breaths is already a strong means to focus the attention, visualizations may be suggested for the benefit of the student. A few examples:

❖ for better sleep, evening practice: see the setting sun when inhaling, relax when exhaling,

❖ for gaining confidence, morning practice: visualize the energy coming into the body on inhale and pervading to all parts of the system on retention, rooting self, firmly on the ground while exhaling,

❖ for a believer: inhale while welcoming the Lord to the heart, while retention after inhale stay with this divine Presence, while exhaling share his Energy with those cherished, while retention after exhale surrender to the Lord's will.

G. Symbols

Different symbols may also be associated to the practice of pranayama. A great tradition of symbols comes from the recitation of mantras, formulae that have a special power. It is easy to understand from the few examples just mentioned how reciting a mantra along with the visualization can intensify the effects of pranayama. Needless to say, recitation on inhale is always mental, while it can either be mental or vocal on exhale.

Traditionally, the mantra is chosen by the master and taught to the student as the goal of the pranayama. To insist on the purification effects of mantra, the master can select a mantra glorifying agni (fire). The Indian tradition has countless mantra-s. When a student is of a different tradition or culture, a mantra in languages other than Sanskrit may be given. Often these mental recitations may be from the tradition of the student.

For example, while inhaling one can mentally recite "Let the energy of life come in me and pervade all parts of my body", on exhale "Let impurities in my body leave me", and while holding after exhale "Peace, Peace, Peace."

The teacher will also make sure that the mantra or mental recitation has the correct number of syllables to suit the student breathing's capacity. So, to have exhale longer than inhale, the mantra recited during exhale will have to be longer. If the ratio is 1-0-2-0, the same mantra may be kept, but recited once on inhale, and repeated twice on exhale.

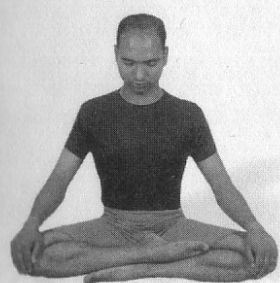
Pranayama with mantra is called "samantraka pranayama" (with mantra). When there is no mantra it is called "amantraka pranayama" (without mantra).

Apart from mantra-s which strongly connect the practitioner with the energy it conveys, other symbols may help to create the right ambiance: *choice of carpet, icon, candle, choice of clothing, of room, orientation towards the Sun, etc.* Any of these are also valid for asana practice.

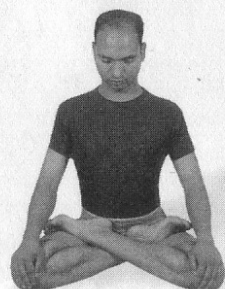
For all these (fixing ratios, choosing a suitable visualization, reciting mantras, etc.) the reader should be reminded that a competent teacher is needed.

4. Posture For Pranayama

The definition of pranayama is simply conscious regulation of the breath, and hence it suggests that any posture will do. The classical posture for pranayama is either padmasana or siddhasana, where the spine is erect, shoulders and arms are relaxed, and eyes closed.



SIDDHASANA



PADMASANA

When someone is unable to take up the above postures, other postures may be chosen. For example - sukhasana, brahmasana, vajrasana, sitting on a cushion or a chair, or even a lying position. For those with certain neck problems, chin down may not be imposed during the practice of pranayama.

With many people, the posture may depend on the length of the pranayama. A student may be able to stay in padmasana for a short pranayama (three to five minutes) but need to take sukhasana or sit on a stool for a longer one (fifteen minutes or more). In either case, the body must not disturb the breath.

APPLICATION 10

History - Vanilla is a 43 year old mother, belonging to a very rich and outgoing family.

Observation - She has a poor posture. With much responsibility, she has low energy levels. She often skips meals and does not have much time for practice.

Strategy - To emphasize the right diet at right times, improve her posture.

Application 10

APPLICATION 10

History – Vanilla is a 43 year old mother, belonging to a very rich and outgoing family.

Observation – She has a poor posture. With much responsibility, she has low energy levels. She often skips meals and does not have much time for practice.

Strategy – To emphasize the right diet at right times. To improve her posture.

1



IN
↓
EX



5 times

2



IN
↓
EX



5 times
Stay 1 Breath

3

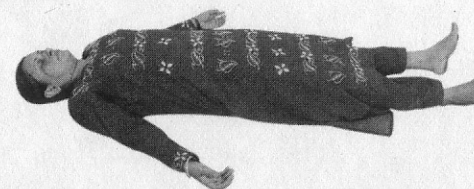


IN
↓
EX



5 times

4



Rest 2 minutes

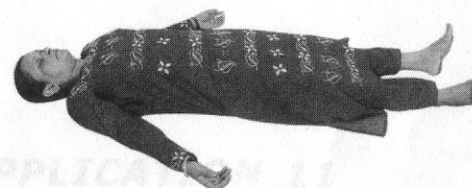
5

IN = EX, 10 breaths
1.0.2.0; 10 breaths



6

Rest 2 minutes



APPLICATION 11

Application 11

History - Faridah is a 56 year old woman, on a part time job. She has low back pain.

Observation - She is very fit for her age. One leg is stiffer than other. Back pain shifts from one side to the other. She has difficulty in getting up from the bed.

Strategy - To focus on the difference between the sides. Being fit, she can do moderate exercises.

Application 11

APPLICATION 11

History – Faridah is a 56 year old woman, on a part time job. She has low back pain.

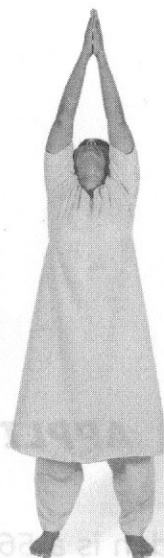
Observation – She is very fit for her age. One leg is stiffer than other. Back pain shifts from one side to the other. She has difficulty in getting up from the bed.

Strategy – To focus on the difference between the sides. Being fit, she can do moderate exercises.

1

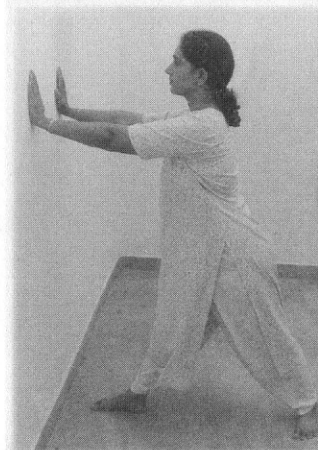


IN
↑
EX

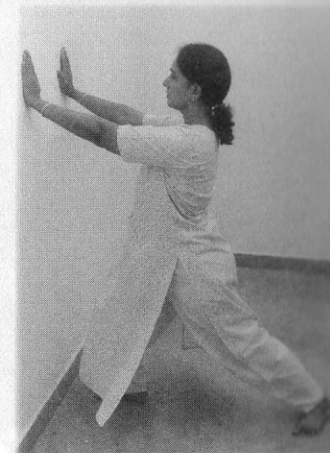


5 times

2

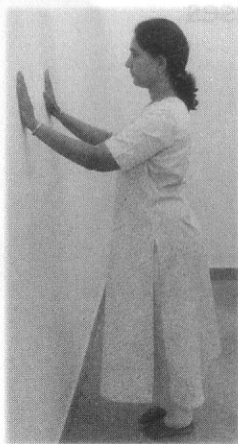


IN
↑
EX



5 times on one side,
and then on the
other

3



IN
↑
EX



5 times

4

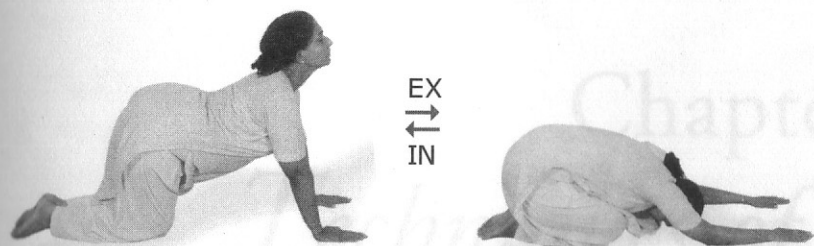


Rest

5

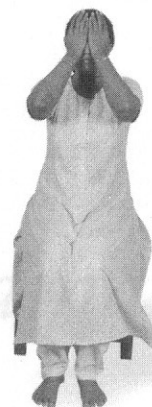
5 times

Rest before
pranayama.



6

10 breaths, nostril
exhalation
1.0.2.0



351

Note : To be practiced in the later part of morning.

Chapter 6

Techniques of Pranayama

✓ The techniques of different types of Pranayama

Though there are many well defined techniques of pranayama, only a few that are commonly used are described in this chapter.

1. Ujjayi Pranayama

Take a seated position and lower the chin down. Inhale and exhale through both nostrils with a slight constriction of the throat producing a gentle throat sound.

2. Nadi Sodhana Pranayama

Take a seated position and lower the chin down, then using mrgi mudra, to control air flow through nostrils,

- inhale through left nostril, exhale through right nostril, then

- inhale through right and exhale through left in the same way.

Here one cycle is two breaths. This pranayama is done only if the nostrils are free and not blocked by sinus congestion for instance.

Since the nostrils are always under control in nadi sodhana, there is no throat control (ujjayi sound) at all in this pranayama. Sometimes different techniques like throat breathing and nostril breathing may be alternately used during inhale and exhale as in some pranayama like anuloma ujjayi, viloma ujjayi and pratiloma ujjayi.

3. Surya Bedhana Pranayama

Take a seated position and lower the chin down, then using mrgi mudra to control air flow through nostrils,

- inhale through right nostril, exhale through left nostril.

Here one cycle is one breath only.

4. Anuloma Ujjayi Pranayama

Take a seated position and lower the chin down, then

- inhale through both nostrils with a slight constriction of the throat, producing a gentle throat sound (ujjayi), then exhale through left nostril using mrgi mudra,

- release mrgi mudra and inhale through both nostrils with a slight constriction of the throat, producing a gentle "throat" sound (ujjayi), exhale through right nostril, using mrgi mudra.

One cycle is two breaths.

5. Viloma Ujjayi Pranayama

Take a seated position and lower the chin down,

- then using mrgi mudra, inhale through left nostril, release mrgi mudra and exhale through both nostrils with a slight constriction of the throat, (producing the gentle "throat" sound of ujjayi),

- using mrgi mudra, inhale through right nostril, release mrgi mudra and exhale through both nostrils with a slight constriction of the throat, (producing the gentle "throat" sound of ujjayi).

One cycle is two breaths.

6. Pratiloma Ujjayi Pranayama

First establish chin down, then

- inhale through both nostrils with a slight constriction of the throat, (producing a gentle throat sound, ujjayi), and exhale through left nostril using mrgi mudra,

- inhale through left nostril using mrgi mudra, release mrgi mudra and exhale through both nostrils with ujjayi,

- inhale through both nostrils with ujjayi, and using mrgi mudra exhale through right nostril,

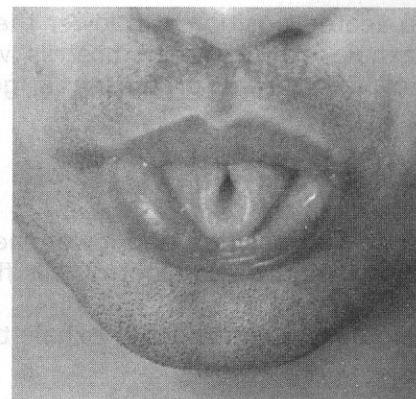
- using mrgi mudra, inhale through right nostril, release mrgi mudra and exhale through both nostrils with ujjayi.

Make sure that there is no throat constriction (ujjayi) when inhaling or exhaling through one nostril.

One cycle is four breaths.

7. Sitali Pranayama

In a seated position, curl up both edges of the tongue to form a sort of tube, and slightly extend the tip of the folded tongue out of the lips.



- Inhale through folded tongue while lifting the head up, open the mouth to roll back the tongue, close mouth, lower head (chin down) and exhale through both nostrils with a slight constriction of the throat, using a gentle "throat" sound (ujjayi).

One cycle is one breath.

Another classical sitali pranayama technique is to use a similar inhalation and exhale through alternate nostrils. Here one cycle is two breaths.

Application 12

APPLICATION 12

History – Ganesh is a 34 year old clinical psychologist. He has chronic anxiety, for which he is on medication. He also has constipation.

Observation – He has a lot of anxiety since childhood, because of high expectations from parents and fear of disappointing them. Because of poor digestion he has heaviness in the stomach leading to palpitation.

Strategy – To focus on reducing this heaviness.

1

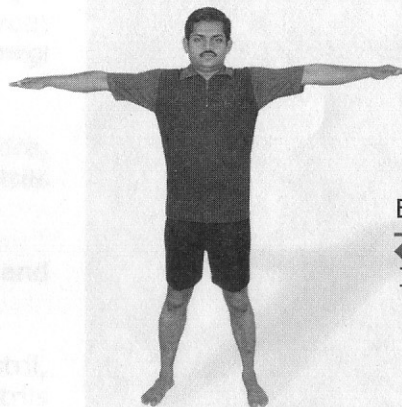


IN
⇌
EX



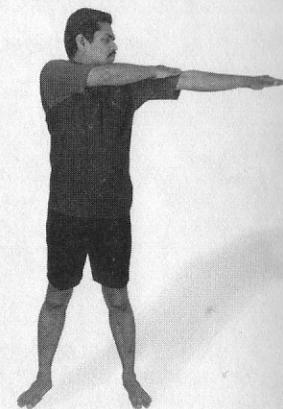
5 times

2



EX
⇌
IN

Alternating 5
times each side



3

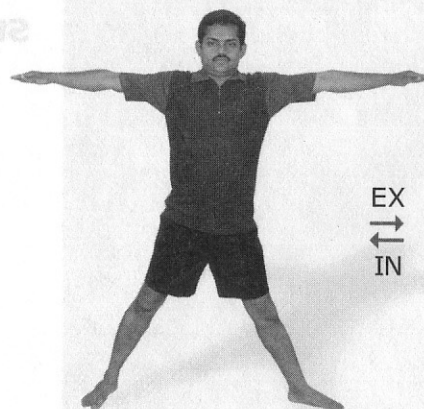


EX
⇌
IN



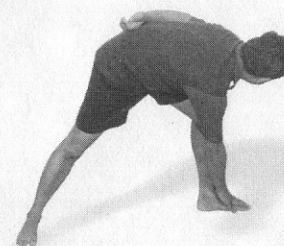
5 times on one side, then
other side

4



EX
⇌
IN

5 times on one side, then
the same on other side
4 sec. hold after exhale



5



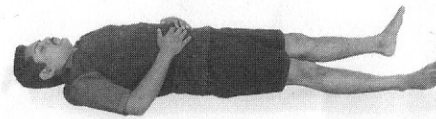
Repeat 5 times

EX
↓
IN



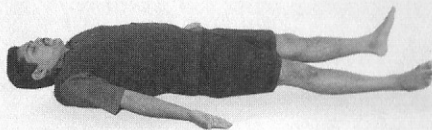
6

Rest



7

10 breaths
Ratio : 1.0.2.1



History - Rachael is a 71 year old grandmother. She has had a by-pass surgery and is on maintenance medication. She has difficulty in walking for more than 5 meters. She lives alone and is on sleeping pills.

Observation - Living alone has caused some depression, but she has a desire to be fit, so that she may take care of her dependent grandson.

Strategy - Focus on breathing- training within her capacity. Increase stamina to enable her to walk and to wean her away from sleeping pills.

Application 13

APPLICATION 13

History – Rachael is a 71 year old grandmother. She has had a by-pass surgery and is on maintenance medication. She has difficulty in walking for more than 5 meters. She lives alone and is on sleeping pills.

Observation – Living alone has caused some depression, but she has a desire to be fit, so that she may take care of her dependent grandson.

Strategy – Focus on breathing- training within her capacity. Increase stamina to enable her to walk and to wean her away from sleeping pills.

1

Count 10 Breaths



2

Count 10 Breaths
with hands on the
stomach



3

Recite "Ma" 10 Times
and rest for a few min.



4

Stay 1 breath
Repeat 5 times

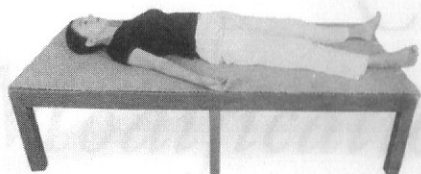
IN
↓
EX



5

Rest before pranayama

EX 2 sec. 10 times
EX 3 sec. 10 times
and rest



6

EX 2 sec. 10 times
EX 3 sec. 10 times
and rest



Note - To be practiced twice a day.

Chapter 7

Modifications of Pranayama

- ✓ Reasons for modifying pranayama.
- ✓ The different modifications for different types of pranayama.

In certain circumstances, pranayama also needs to be modified so that it is suitable for the practitioner. Some reasons for why pranayama may be modified are :

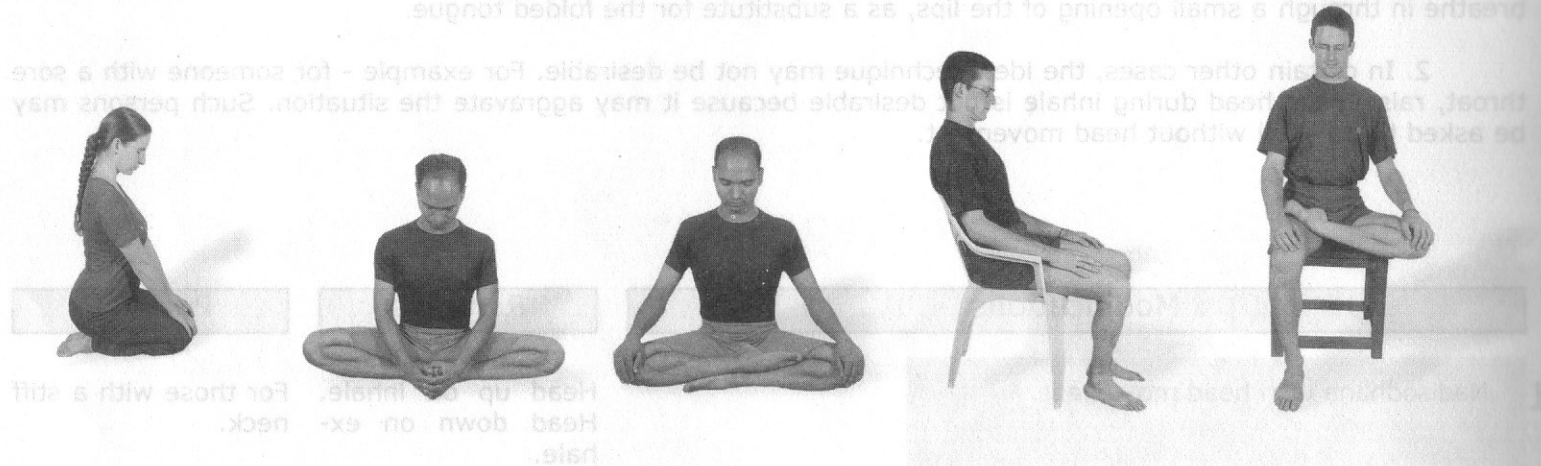
1. The practitioner may not be able to do the technique in the ideal way. For example - for someone who is not able to fold the tongue for sitali pranayama, it is modified to respect this situation. They may be asked to breathe in through a small opening of the lips, as a substitute for the folded tongue.

2. In certain other cases, the ideal technique may not be desirable. For example - for someone with a sore throat, raising the head during inhale is not desirable because it may aggravate the situation. Such persons may be asked to do sitali without head movement.

Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
1 Nadisodhana with head movement.	Head up on inhale. Head down on exhale.	For those with a stiff neck.
2 Nadisodhana with inhale and exhale only on same nostril.	Either left - left or right - right.	When one nostril is blocked. For focusing on one side.
3 Nadisodhana with inhale through left (or right) nostril, exhale through right (or left).	One cycle is one breath.	For focusing on one side. When one nostril is blocked.

NOTE -

1. Some of these modifications can also be done in the following positions:



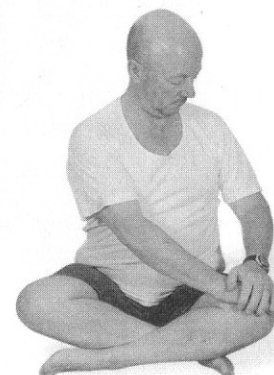
2. The length of inhale, exhale, and retention can also be changed.
3. The technique of breathing can also be modified to suit individual needs.
4. Use of vocal sound as a substitute for exhale is also a well desired modification in certain cases.

Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
<p>1 Inhale through folded tongue, raising the head. Throat exhale (ujjayi) while lowering the head.</p>	<p>Exhale while lowering the neck.</p>	<p>For those with a stiff neck.</p>
<p>2 Inhale through the lips, raising the head. Throat exhale (ujjayi) while lowering the head.</p>	<p>Inhale without folded tongue. Exhale while lowering the neck.</p>	<p>For those who have a stiff neck and/or for those who cannot fold the tongue.</p>
<p>3 Inhale through folded tongue. Exhale through both nostrils.</p>	<p>No head movement. No throat exhale.</p>	<p>For those with a sore throat and/or cough.</p>
<p>4 Inhale through lips. Exhale through both nostrils.</p>	<p>Inhale without folded tongue. No throat exhale and no neck movement.</p>	<p>For those who have a tender throat.</p>

7.2

Sitali Pranayama

	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
5	Inhale through folded tongue. Exhale through alternate nostrils while lowering head.	Exhale through one nostril while lowering the head.	When throat exhale is not desirable. For lengthening exhale and for relaxing the system.
6	Inhale through folded tongue. Exhale through alternate nostrils while lowering head. Change hands to control nostrils during each exhale.	Exhale through one nostril while lowering head. Change hands each exhale.	When throat exhale is not desirable. Also for those with stiff shoulders.
7	Rest between breaths.	Splitting number of times done.	For those with a weak constitution.
8	Hold one knee with both hands.	Hands on one knee.	For focusing on one side.



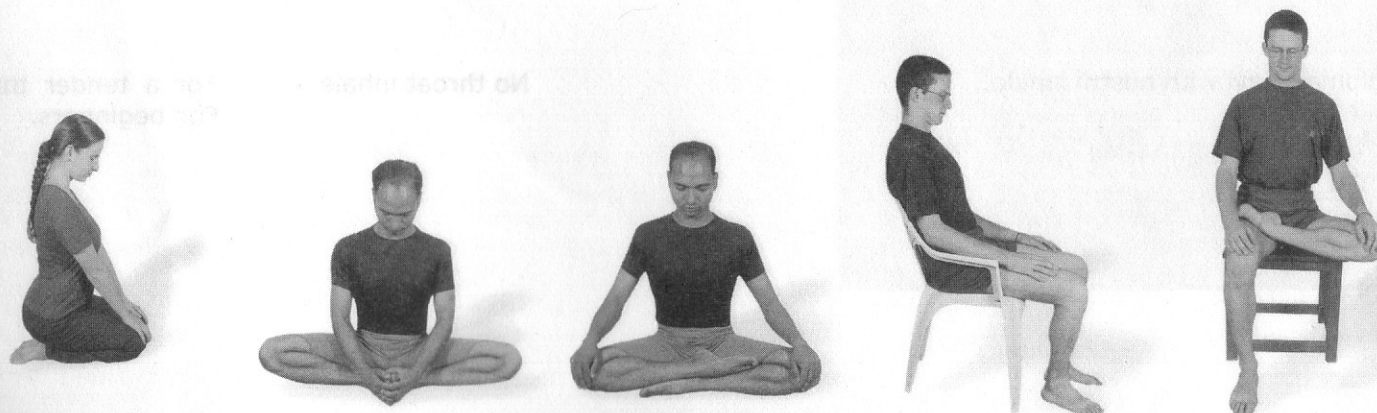
Modifications

Remarks

Purpose

NOTE -

1. Some of these modifications may also be done in the following positions:



2. The length of inhale, exhale, and retention can also be changed.
3. The technique of breathing can also be modified to suit individual needs.
4. Use of vocal sound as a substitute for exhale is also a well desired modification in certain cases.

	Modifications	Remarks	Purpose
1	Anuloma ujjayi with head movement.	Head up on inhale. Head down on ex- hale.	For those with a stiff neck.
2	Anuloma ujjayi with nostril inhale.	No throat inhale.	For a tender throat. For beginners.

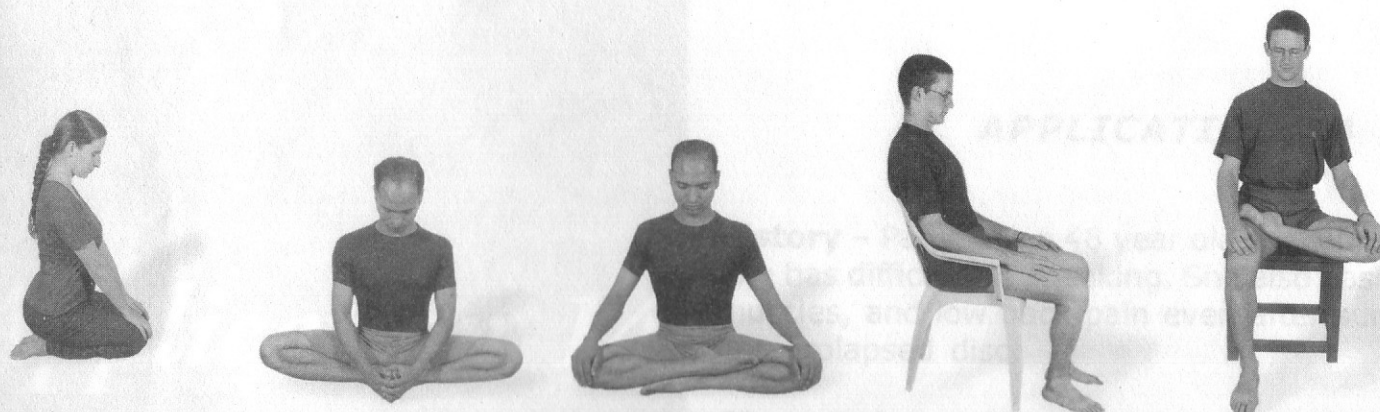


7.3

Anuloma Ujjayi Pranayama

NOTE -

1. These modifications can also be done in the following positions:



2. The length of inhale, exhale, and retention can also be changed.
3. The technique of breathing can also be modified to suit individual needs.
4. Use of vocal sound as a substitute for exhale is also a well desired modification in certain cases.
5. The above modifications may be used for viloma ujjayi and pratiloma ujjayi pranayama.

Application 14

APPLICATION 14

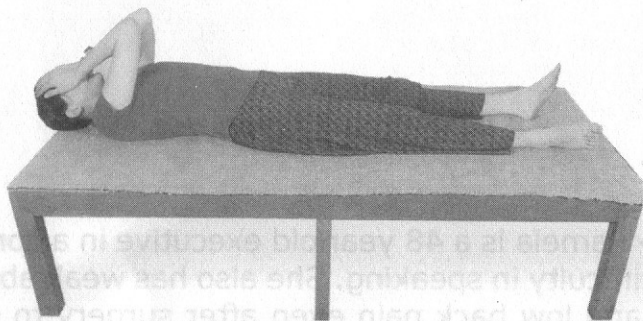
History – Pamela is a 48 year old executive in a company. She has difficulty in speaking. She also has weak abdomen muscles, and low back pain even after surgery to correct her prolapsed disc.

Observation – She is very much concerned about her future, and is worried about losing her job. Sitting on the floor is difficult for her.

Strategy – To rest her voice, educate her about breathing, and general relaxation leading towards strengthening abdomen muscles.

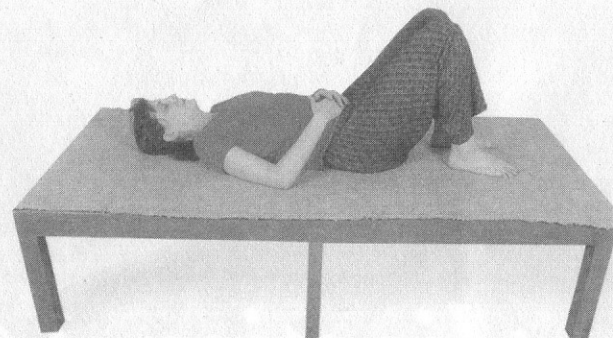
1

Palming eyes, visualize full moon.



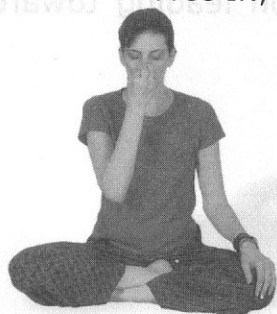
2

Place palms on stomach
Take 10 breaths
Exhale longer than inhale



3

Free IN, EX left N.10 sec.
Free IN, EX right N.10 sec.



4

Recite mentally "aham"
20 times



Application 15

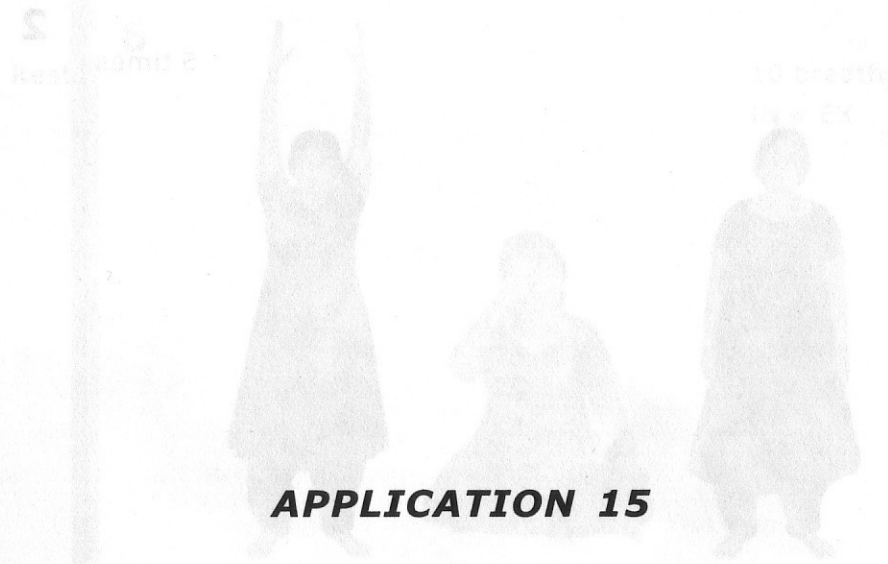
APPLICATION 15

History – Laura is 33 years old and is in the 7th month of pregnancy. She has a tender stomach and stiff low back.

377

Observation – She has kyphosis, rounded shoulders and is often short of breath.

Strategy – To improve the posture, to open up the groin area.



1

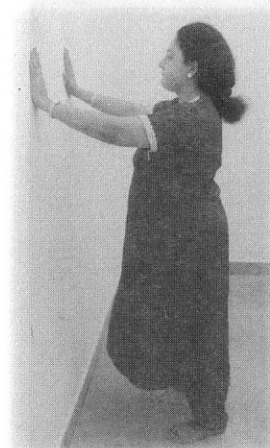


IN
↑
↓
EX



5 times

2



IN
↑
↓
EX

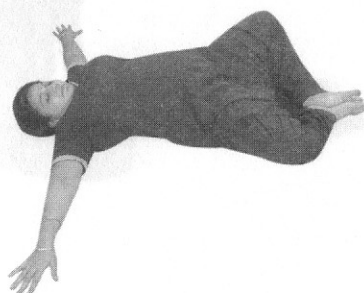


5 times

3



IN
↑
↓
EX



5 times

4



Stay 5 breaths on one side,
and then on the other

5



Rest

6



10 breaths
IN = EX

Why and How to Prepare for Pranayama?

Every yoga practice needs preparation and the same is true of pranayama. First of all, we prepare the breath using the sequence of asanas, which means that ideally, pranayama comes later.

The preparation involves work on body, breath and mind. Regarding the body, a few asanas may suffice to provide stability to the spine, lengthen the breath, and prepare the seated posture in which pranayama is done.

Preparation of the breath is very important. According to the classical texts, if the idea is to increase holding after inhalation (for example, for a person), a few asanas are necessary.

The preparation of the mind is done by focusing the attention on the breath and also by directing the breath with careful attention from chest to abdomen on inhaled, and from abdomen to chest on exhaled as already mentioned.

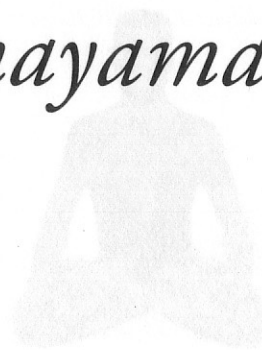
All the great masters of yoga have insisted on the right attitude of the mind, healthy and nutritious diet and positive attitude in daily life as well for pranayama (and meditation).

At all three levels of preparation (body, breath and mind), the person will benefit from a few minutes rest between the asanas and the pranayama practice. Not only does this rest the body, it also allows for an observation before proceeding and helps the mind to make the transition from asanas to pranayama. Let us thus consider this short rest as an important facet for the preparation for pranayama.

Planning the Pranayama

In addition to the preparation, the actual pranayama in itself has three phases, exactly like it is explained for the planning of a sequence (see chapter 4). So a *purva anga* (beginning or first part) starts with a comfortable ratio. After a certain number of breaths, the *pradhana anga* (central part) is reached, and also performed for a certain number of breaths, then comes the *utthara anga* (conclusion), in which the person gradually returns to his normal comfortable breathing ratio.

After the asana preparation, the practitioner is seated in *padmasana* for his pranayama!



PADMASANA

He takes a few free breaths, then:

- 6 breaths 10-5-10- 5 nadi sodhana pranayama,
- 6 breaths 10-10-10-5 nadi sodhana pranayama,
- 6 breaths 10-10-10-10 nadi sodhana pranayama,
- 6 breaths 10-5-10-5 nadi sodhana pranayama,
- 6 breaths (free ratio) nadi sodhana pranayama,
- few minutes of seated rest in *sukhasana*,
- few minutes rest in *savasana*.

Chapter 8

Planning for Pranayama

Why and how to prepare for Pranayama?

Every important task needs preparation and the same is true also for pranayama. First of all, we prepare the breath using a sequence of asanas, which means that ideally, pranayama comes later.

The preparation includes work on body, breath and mind. Regarding the body, a few asanas may suffice to provide mobility to the spine, lengthen the breath, and prepare for the seated posture in which pranayama is done.

Preparation of the breath is very important according to the chosen ratio. If the idea is to insist on holding after inhale (let us say 1-1-1-0 for a young person), a few asanas with retention after inhale are necessary.

The preparation of the mind is done by focusing the attention on the breath, and also by directing the breath with careful attention from chest to abdomen on inhale, and from abdomen to chest on exhale as already mentioned.

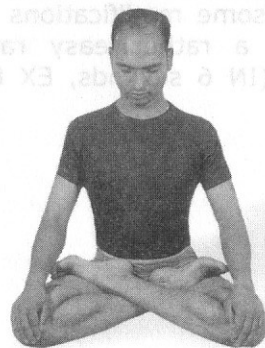
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In addition to the preparation, the ideal pranayama in itself has three phases, exactly like it is explained for the planning of a sequence (see chapter 4). So a purva anga (beginning or first part) starts with a comfortable ratio. After a certain number of breaths, the pradhana anga (central part) is reached, and also performed for a certain number of breaths, then comes the Uttara anga (conclusion), in which the person gradually returns to his normal comfortable breath ratio.

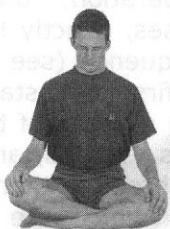
For example, after the asana preparation, the practitioner is seated in padmasana for his pranayama:



PADMASANA

He takes a few free breaths, then:

6 breaths 10-5-10- 5 nadi sodhana pranayama,
6 breaths 10-10-10-5 nadi sodhana pranayama,
6 breaths 10-10-10-10 nadi sodhana pranayama,
6 breaths 10-5 -10-5 nadi sodhana pranayama,
6 breaths (free ratio) nadi sodhana pranayama,
few minutes of seated rest in sukhasana,
few minutes rest in savasana.

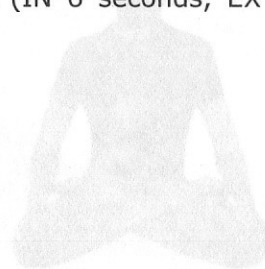


SUKHASANA



SAVASANA

Only and experienced and fit student can go this way. Most of the time, some modifications are needed. For example, keeping a rather easy ratio all through, without evolution (IN 6 seconds, EX 8), or just IN = EX, etc.



PADMASANA

He takes a few free breaths, then:
 5 breaths 10-2-10-5 nadi sodhana pranayama,
 5 breaths 10-10-10-5 nadi sodhana pranayama,
 5 breaths 10-10-10-10 nadi sodhana pranayama,
 5 breaths 10-5-10-5 nadi sodhana pranayama,
 5 breaths (free ratio) nadi sodhana pranayama,
 few minutes of seated rest in sukhasana,
 few minutes rest in savasana.

All the great masters of yoga have always insisted on the right attitude of the mind, healthy and nutritious diet and positive attitude in daily life as well for pranayama (and meditation).

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Every important task needs preparation and the same is true also for pranayama. First of all, we prepare the breath using a sequence of asana, which means that ideally, pranayama comes later.

...distinguishes great people from ordinary ones is their concern and care for others. As he said also, "Krishnamacharya was an extraordinary example. He could have stayed in the Himalayas, keeping for himself the great teachings of his master, and thereby enjoying all its benefits. But he did not. Instead, he decided to settle in a crowded city, in the middle of the people, and share his vast knowledge and wisdom, to help those who suffered from physical ailments."

This book has been conceived and presented in the true spirit of sharing with the readers the things that we have received.

We tried to demonstrate the universality of asanas and pranayama, and the application of their modifications. Though only a selected few are presented, with selected modifications, the reader must be reminded that there are many other asanas and pranayamas, and their modifications infinite.

Epilogue

All traditions that have transgressed time and culture owe their survival to their ability to adapt while at the same time respecting the deep spirit of their basic foundation. Those that cannot adapt have disappeared or are on the verge of it.

At the beginning of the new millennium, the world has become like a small village. Yoga also needs to adapt itself to today's context, so that it continues to benefit tomorrow's world. In his lifetime, Krishnamacharya showed us the way, by adapting yoga practices, teaching women when yoga was considered only for men, and teaching westerners also.

This book deals with only asanas and pranayama, which is only a part of yoga's tools and possibilities. It is often the starting point for progress. When a practitioner feels much better, thanks to these two limbs of yoga, the possibilities of meditation, a higher goal of yoga, are greater.

What distinguishes great people from ordinary ones, is their concern and care for others. In this field also, T.Krishnamacharya was an extraordinary example. He could have stayed somewhere in the Himalayas, keeping for himself the great teachings of his master, and thereby reaping all its benefits. But he did not. Instead, he decided to settle in a crowded city among other people, and share his vast knowledge and wisdom, to help those who suffered from different problems.

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We offer it to demonstrate the universality of asanas and pranayama, and the application of their modifications. Although only a selected few are presented, with selected modifications, the reader must be reminded that there are many other asanas and pranayama, and their modifications infinite.

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a

adhomukha	face down
apana	lower abdomen
ardha	half

b

baddha	hold, bind
bhujanga	cobra
brahma	the Supreme Force

c

cakravaka	ruddy goose
caturanga	four supports

d

danda	stick
dhanura	bow
dvipada	two feet

e

eka	one
ekapada	one foot

j

janusirsa	head to knee
jathara	abdomen

k

kona	angle
------	-------

m

mahamudra	great symbol
matsyendra	a yogi

mukha

face

n

nava	boat
------	------

p

pada	feet, legs
padma	lotus
parivrtti	with twist
parsva	side
pascimatana	stretch back
pitham	pose
prasarita	spread
prasrta	extended
purvatana	front stretch

s

salabha	locust
samasthiti	at attention
sarvanga	all parts
sava	corpse, dead
siddha	accomplishment
sirsa	head
sukha	at ease
supta	lying, sleep
svana	dog
svastika	auspicious

t

tada	straight tree
tadakamudra	appearance of a tank
trikona	triangle

u

upavista	to sit
urdhva	up

ustra

camel

utakata

squat

uttana

stretch out

utthita

stand

v

vajra	diamond, kneel, spine
viparita	inversion
viparitakarani	inverted
virabhadra	a hero

y

yoga	union
yogamudra	symbol of yoga

The fact that yoga has found increased acceptance today can be seen through the number of people practicing this discipline all over the world. Outside India, where it originated first, there are close to a hundred million people, for whom some form of yoga is part of their life.

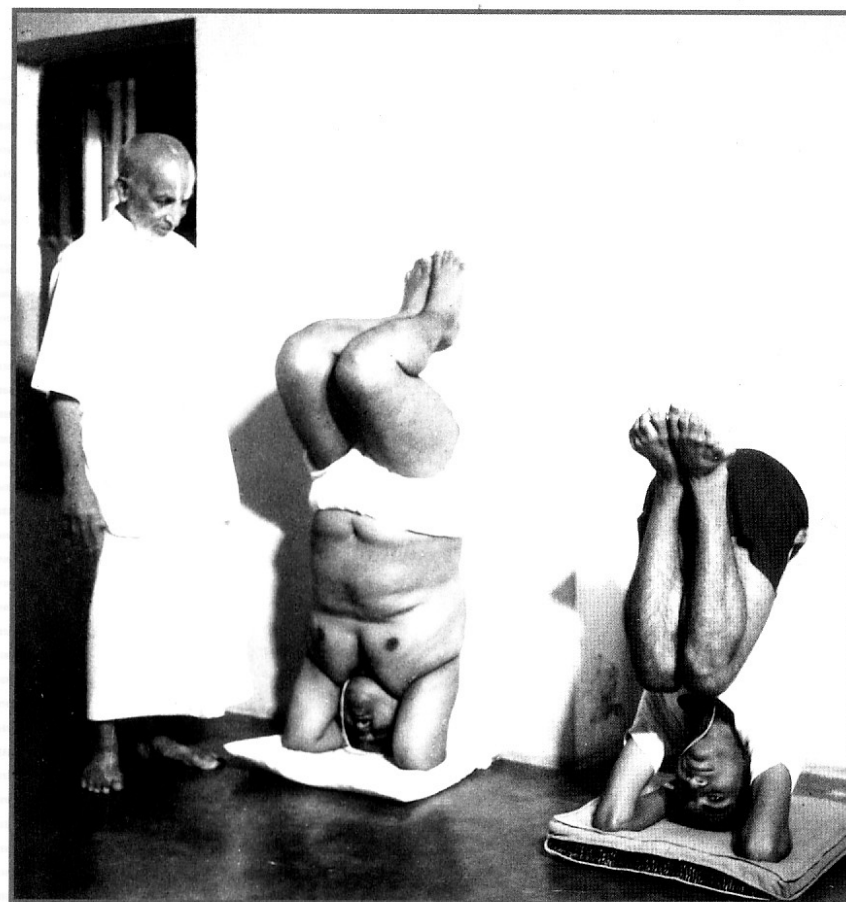
What has made this possible is the openness and the universality of its teachings, that makes yoga so appealing and relevant to all kinds of people. There are no prerequisite conditions to begin yoga practice. There is something in it for everyone.

Yoga accepts the concept of *Viniyoga*, Which has been exemplified in all the schools of philosophy that originated in India. The term simply means "to apply the tools in hand appropriately to the given context and situation."

The *Viniyoga of Yoga* is the ability to utilize the tools of yoga to suit different needs. This book deals with two of the most popular tools of yoga - Asana and Pranayama, and their application based on varying requirements.

This book of over 1000 pictures includes:

- ◆ The techniques of the most important asanas and pranayama presented in simple steps.
- ◆ The modifications that are possible and the contexts where these will be useful.
- ◆ The importance and principles of planning asana and pranayama practices.
- ◆ Examples where these have been applied to real life situations.



*T Krishnamacharya observing
two very different students*

TKV Desikachar, one of the most renowned authorities on yoga presents this book with two of his students, **Kausthub Desikachar** and **Frans Moors**.