

# YOGA SEQUENCE FOR Karate

## Sankalpa - Setting an Intention:

Intentions are the fuel to manifesting your goals and visions. An intention will help create more clarity in your life, especially when the seed is planted right before you start your meditation.

There are two kinds of sankalpa:

The first one being a statement you make about something which is already in place, for example, 'I am at peace with myself,' or 'I am healed.'

The second kind of sankalpa is to set a specific intention or goal, which you hope to aim for. This could take the form of setting yourself milestones, or mini goals, in order to help you achieve your ultimate goal within a time frame set only by you. "I am successful in all that I undertake," "I am more aware and efficient."



## Pranayama - Breathing Exercises:

### 1) - KAPALABHTI:

#### Benefits:

1. The breathing technique involves "active exhalation and passive inhalation". During inhalation the stomach sinks in and vice-versa during exhaling. This stomach movement is therefore beneficial for the muscles around it, including that of the liver and pancreas. The blood flow to these areas also increases.
2. It aids digestion and removal of acidity and gas related problems.
3. Regular practice of kapalabhati is also beneficial for belly fat loss.
4. The technique involves forceful breathing which strengthens lungs and increases its capacity.
5. "Practicing Kapalabhati helps in removing blockages in the heart and lungs," said Anju.
6. It also increases blood supply to various parts of the body.
7. It activates the body and removes lethargy. Facial radiance is a natural benefit as the name suggests.

8. It activates the brain cells and improves memory and concentration power.
9. Kapalbhathi is great for focus and checks forgetfulness.
10. "Kapalbhathi has spiritual paybacks as well. It activates the chakras in the body and helps in achieving a higher, greater awakening," shared Anju.

#### **Instructions:**

Kapalbhathi can be done either in the regular yogic posture with crossed legs and straight back as well in vajrasana. For those who suffer from back issues, the technique can be done by resting against the wall or even lying straight on the floor or bed. While maintaining the posture, force your breath out in shorter intervals. Beginners can practice 20-30 breath pumps going up to 200.

#### **2) - BREATH RETENTION:**

##### **Benefits:**

Breath retention is an incredibly effective tool to regulate mental chatter and improve concentration. When you are yearning for a new breath during a hold, you are devoting all concentration to this activity—training the mind to focus intensely on one thing at a time. Kumbhaka is the Sanskrit word for this powerful type of breathing exercise, where you focus your attention on the pause at the top of the inhale and/or at the bottom of the exhale. Most people think of the breath as two parts: the inhalation and the exhalation. But there are actually four parts to the breath, including of course, the inhalation and exhalation, but also the space between the inhale and the exhale, and the space at the bottom of the exhale before a new breath begins. Normally, this space is minimal and even unnoticeable. With a breath retention practice, you consciously extend the pauses at the top of the inhale and at the bottom of the exhale to create a holding pattern where you're ceasing to breathe in or out.

##### **Instructions:**

**Simple Practice**The pattern is simple: inhale, hold, exhale, hold, repeat.

1. Exhale everything out through your mouth.
2. Seal the lips and inhale slowly (on a count of five) through your nose until your lungs are completely full.
3. Hold at the top for a count of five, keeping lips sealed.
4. Exhale through the nose for five—taking all five counts to release the breath. Think of air slowly being released from a balloon, that's the controlled pace of the release.
5. When lungs are completely empty (you can release a little extra air at the bottom if there is still air left,) then hold for a count of five.
6. Focus on creating space with every inhale and releasing with every exhale.

#### **3) - ANULOMA VILOMA:**

### **Benefits:**

By nature, we are usually dominant on one side or the other; the right brain (creative, artistic) or left brain (intellectual, mathematical). Anuloma Viloma attempts to cleanse the mind and stimulate the right and left nadis so they are balanced. Anuloma Viloma is one breathing exercise that can be practiced every day.

### **Instructions:**

Anuloma Viloma, or 'alternate nostril breathing' is best practiced before seated meditation or asana practice. Its purpose is to stimulate the nadis or energy channels that run throughout the body like electrical wires. The right side of the brain controls the left side of the body, and vice versa. If you are breathing to the count of 3, you will breathe in for 3 counts, hold the breath for 16 counts, and exhale for 8 counts. For the purpose of a beginner practice, we will start with multiplications of 3 counts. This practice starts and ends on the left side.

1. Prepare: Come to Sukhasana, or any comfortable seated position, preferably with your legs crossed at the ankles. You may want to sit on a meditation cushion or pillow. With your spine straight and shoulders relaxed, begin your yogic breathing, taking full deep breaths in and out through the nose. Close your eyes.
2. Begin on the left: Bring your right hand to a Vishnu mudra; curl the ring and small finger into the palm, and leave the thumb, index, and middle finger free. Take 3 deep breaths in and out to get ready. On your 3rd exhale, bring your hand up to your face, occlude the right nostril with your right thumb, and breathe in through the left nostril to the count of 3.
3. Hold your breath: close both nostrils with your thumb on the right, and index and middle fingers on the left. Maintain steady, constant pressure on the nostrils. The shoulders should be relaxed. Hold the breath for 16 counts.
4. Exhale on the right: Release your thumb, slowly exhale, working the lungs completely empty by the end of 8 counts.
5. Inhale on the right: Keeping your hand position the same with gentle pressure on the left nostril with the index and middle finger, inhale on the right (same side) to the count of 3, filling your lungs.
6. Hold your breath, repeat on the right: Repeat the steps, alternating the breath from the left to the right, making it smooth and effortless.



## **ASANA-YOGA POSTURES:**

### **1) - Surya Namaskara - Sun Salutations:**

#### **Benefits:**

**Sun Salutation** comprises a sequence of 12 yoga postures, it provides a good cardiovascular workout. If done at a slower pace, these postures help tone the muscles and can relax the system and meditative. Regular practice of Sun Salutation improves the functions of the heart, liver, intestine, stomach, chest, throat, and legs – basically, the whole body. The process purifies the blood and improves blood circulation throughout the system and ensures proper functioning of the stomach, bowel, and nerve centres. Practicing Sun Salutation daily helps balance the three constitutions – Vata, Pitha and Kapha – that the body is made up of, according to Ayurvedic science. Sun Salutation is also known to enhance the physical strength of a person. Each position counteracts the one before, stretching the body in a different way and alternately expanding and contracting the chest to regulate the breathing. Practiced daily it will bring great flexibility to your spine and joints and trim your waist. It limbers up the whole body in preparation for the Asanas (postures)

#### **Instructions:**

One round of Sun Salutation consists of two sequences, the first leading with the right foot and the second leading with the left. Co-ordinate your movements with your breathing. Start by practicing 3 rounds and gradually build up to twelve rounds.

- 1 Stand erect with feet together and hands in the prayer position in front of your chest. Make sure your weight is evenly distributed. Exhale.**
- 2 Inhaling, stretch your arms up and arch back from the waist, pushing the hips out, legs straight. Relax your neck.**
- 3 Exhaling, fold forward, and press your palms down, fingertips in line with toes - bend your knees if necessary.**
- 4 Inhaling, bring the left (or right) leg back and place the knee on the floor. Arch back and look up, lifting your chin.**
- 5 Retaining the breath, bring the other leg back and support your weight on hands and toes.**
- 6 Exhaling, lower your knees, then your chest and then your forehead, keeping your hips up and your toes curled under.**
- 7 Inhaling, lower your hips, point your toes and bend back. Keep legs together and shoulders down. Look up and back.**
- 8 Exhaling, curl your toes under, raise your hips and pivot into an inverted "V" shape. Try to push your heels and head down and keep your shoulders back. Inhaling, step forward and place the left (or right) foot between your hands. Rest the other knee on the floor and look up, as in position**
- 10 Exhaling, bring the other leg forward and bend down from the waist, keeping your palms as in position**

11 Inhaling, stretch your arms forward, then up and back over your head and bend back slowly from the waist.

12 Exhaling, gently come back to an upright position and bring your arms down by your sides.



## 2) - Utananpadasana -Leg Raises:

### Benefit:

Leg Raises or Utanpadasana are simple exercises used to warm up the body and prepare it well for other yoga poses or asanas. Both, Single Leg Raise and Double Leg Raises help strengthen the muscles of the stomach and lower back. Stand with your feet together. Bend your knees slightly and fold your torso over your legs, moving from the hips, not the lower back.

### Single Leg Raises: Instructions:

In this series, one leg is raised while the other remains flat on the floor. At first you can push down with your hands to help lift your leg. Once your muscles are stronger, leave your hands and palms up your sides. Keep both knees straight and press your lower back down to the floor to straighten the spine. Lie on your back while your arms are placed by your sides. Inhale and slowly raise the right leg as high as you can without bending at the knee. Press your lower back down to the floor to help keep the spine straight. Now clasp your right leg with both hands and pull it gently towards you and continue to keep your head down. Make sure that you breathe normally throughout this time. Slowly lift your head to your leg and raise your chin to your knee and hold the pose for one breath. Exhale slowly, place your head back on the floor, and lower the leg back. Repeat the exercise using the left leg. Do this using each leg three times.

### Double Leg Raises: Instructions:

Lie flat on the floor and place your arms to the sides. Draw your tummy muscles into your spine. Inhale and raise both legs off the floor. Make sure your knees are straight and your buttocks are still on the floor. Hold the pose for a few breaths. Exhale and lower your legs to the floor once again. When lowering your legs, make sure that your back remains flat on the floor.



### 3) Balasana - Childs Pose:

#### Benefits:

Releases tension in the back, shoulders and chest

- Recommended if you have dizziness or fatigue
- Helps alleviate stress and anxiety
- Flexes the body's internal organs and keeps them supple
- It lengthens and stretches the spine
- It gently stretches the hips, thighs and ankles
- Normalizes circulation throughout the body
- It stretches muscles, tendons and ligaments in the knee
- Calms the mind and body
- Encourages strong and steady breathing

#### Instructions:

1. Kneel on the floor. Touch your big toes together and sit on your heels, then separate your knees about as wide as your hips.
2. Exhale and lay your torso down between your thighs. Broaden your sacrum across the back of your pelvis and narrow your hip points toward the navel, so that they nestle down onto the inner thighs. Lengthen your tailbone away from the back of the pelvis while you lift the base of your skull away from the back of your neck.
3. Lay your hands on the floor alongside your torso, palms up, and release the fronts of your shoulders toward the floor. Feel how the weight of the front shoulders pulls the shoulder blades wide across your back.



### 4) - Ardha Pincha Mayurasana- The Dolphin:

#### Benefits:

Dolphin Pose calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression. It stretches the shoulders, hamstrings, calves and arches while strengthening the arms and legs. It helps relieve the symptoms of menopause and relieves menstrual discomfort. It also helps prevent osteoporosis and improves digestion. It relieves headache, insomnia, back pain and fatigue, while being therapeutic for high blood pressure, asthma, flat feet and sciatica.

### **Instruction:**

- 1 - Begin on all fours.
- 2 - Drop your forearms to the mat about shoulder-width distance apart and leave your hands flat on the ground or interlace your fingers
- 3 - Ground your index finger on the mat
- 4 - Curl your toes, as you lift your hips high to the sky and create a Downward-Facing Dog-like shape
- 5 - Keep your shoulders broad and widen through your collarbones
- 6 - Lengthen your tailbone away from the pelvis and press it toward the pubis. Against the resistance, lift the sitting bones toward the ceiling
- 7 - Moving from the inner ankles, draw the inner legs up into the groin
- 8 - Engage your midline
- 9 - Bend your knees slightly and lift your hips higher to the sky
- 10- Level your hips
- 11 - Gaze at your feet or between your hands
- 12 - Option to walk your feet toward your hands



### **5) - Balasana - Childs Pose:**



### **6) - Kumbhakasana - Plank:**

#### **Benefits:**

Plank Pose tones all of the core muscles of the body, including the abdomen, chest, and low back. It strengthens the arms, wrists, and shoulders, and is often used to prepare the body for more challenging arm balances. Plank also strengthens the muscles surrounding the spine, which improves posture. Practicing Plank Pose for several minutes builds endurance and stamina, while toning the nervous system.

#### **Instruction:**

1. Begin on your hands and knees, with your wrists directly under your shoulders. Breathe smoothly and evenly through your nose. Bring your thoughts to focus on the present moment.
2. Spread your fingers and press down through your forearms and hands. Do not let your chest collapse.
3. Gaze down between your hands, lengthening the back of your neck and drawing your abdominal muscles toward your spine.

4. Tuck your toes and step back with your feet, bringing your body and head into one straight line.
5. Keep your thighs lifted and take care not to let your hips sink too low. If your butt sticks up in the air, realign your body so your shoulders are directly above your wrists.
6. Draw your pelvic floor muscles toward your spine as you contract your abdominal muscles. Keep your head in line with your spine. Broaden across your shoulder blades and across your collarbones.
7. Draw down through the bases of your index fingers — do not let your hands roll open toward the pinkie fingers.



#### 7) - Balasana - Childs Pose:



#### 8) Setu Bandha Sarvangasana - Bridge:

##### Benefits:

Bridge pose builds core and lower body strength, lengthens and strengthens the spine, energizes the body, and stimulates the endocrine and nervous systems.

##### Instructions:

Lying on your back, bend both knees and place the feet flat on the floor hip width apart. Slide the arms alongside the body with the palms facing down. The fingertips should be lightly touching the heels.

2. Press the feet into the floor, inhale and lift the hips up, rolling the spine off the floor. Lightly squeeze the knees together to keep the knees hip width apart.

3. Press down into the arms and shoulders to lift the chest up. Engage the legs, buttocks and mula bandha to lift the hips higher.

4. Breathe and hold for 4-8 breaths.

5. To release: exhale and slowly roll the spine back to the floor.





## 9)- Matsyasana - The Fish:

### Benefits:

- Stretches your deep hip flexors and intercostals (muscles between the ribs)
- Relieves tension in your neck, throat, and shoulders
- Stretches and tones the front of your neck and your abdominals
- Stretches and stimulates the organs of your belly and throat
- Strengthens your upper back and the back of your neck
- Relieves stress and irritation
- Improves posture
- Therapeutic for rounded-shoulders, asthma, spasms in the bronchial tubes, and other respiratory issues

### Instructions:

1 -Lie on your back on the floor with your knees bent, feet on the floor. Inhale, lift your pelvis slightly off the floor, and slide your hands, palms down, below your buttocks. Then rest your buttocks on the backs of your hands (and don't lift them off your hands as you perform this pose). Be sure to tuck your forearms and elbows up close to the sides of your torso.

2 -Inhale and press your forearms and elbows firmly against the floor. Next press your scapulas into your back and, with an inhale, lift your upper torso and head away from the floor. Then release your head back onto the floor. Depending on how high you arch your back and lift your chest, either the back of your head or its crown will rest on the floor.

3 -There should be a minimal amount of weight on your head to avoid crunching your neck.

4 -you can keep your knees bent or straighten your legs out onto the floor. If you do the latter, keep your thighs active, and press out through the heels.

Stay for 15 to 30 seconds, breathing smoothly. With an exhalation lower your torso and head to the floor. Draw your thighs up into your belly and squeeze.



## 10) - Balasana - Childs Pose:



## **11) - Dandasana - Seated Staff Pose:**

### **Benefits:**

- **Helps improve posture**
- **Strengthens back muscles**
- **Lengthens and stretches the spine**
- **May help to relieve complications related to the reproductive organs**
- **Stretches shoulders and chest**
- **Nourishes your body's resistance to back and hip injuries**
- **Helps to calm brain cells**
- **May improve functionality of the digestive organs**
- **Creates body awareness**
- **Helps improve alignment of body**
- **Provides a mild stretch for hamstrings**

### **Instructions:**

1. **Begin by sitting on the floor with your legs extended out in front of you. If your hamstrings are tight, sit on a bolster or blanket so your torso can be upright and vertical. You can also sit with your back against a wall with your shoulder blades touching it, leaving a space between the wall and your low back.**
2. **Sit forward on your sit bones and draw your thighs to the floor. Flex your feet and press out through your heels. Keep your big toes, inner heels, and inner knees together.**
3. **Strongly engage your thigh muscles around your thigh bones, and activate the muscles surrounding your knee caps.**
4. **Press your thigh bones firmly down into the floor. Make sure your legs do not rotate outward.**
5. **Stretch your heels away from your body and tilt your pelvis slightly forward, extending the distance between your heel bones and sit bones.**
6. **Do not collapse your low back. Work to lift your torso up from the base of your pelvis. Keep your weight evenly distributed across both sit bones.**
7. **Place your hands on the floor alongside your hips, pressing through your palms with your fingers pointing forward.**
8. **Broaden across your collarbones and lift your chest. Then, broaden across your shoulders. Draw your belly button in toward your spine. Anchor your body through your tailbone and sit tall.**
9. **Keep your torso perpendicular to the floor, and lift the crown of your head.**



## **12) - Paschimottanasana - Seated Forward Bend :**

### **Benefits:**

- It acts as a stress reliever.
- Reduces fatty deposits in the abdomen.
- Remove anxiety, anger and irritability.
- Calms the mind.
- Stretches the spine and brings flexibility.
- Good for constipation and digestive disorder.
- Useful for increasing height.

### **Instructions:**

1. Sit up with the legs stretched out straight in front of you, keeping the spine erect and toes flexed toward you.
2. Exhale and hinging at the hips, slowly lower the torso towards the legs. Reach the hands to the toes, feet or ankles.
3. To deepen the stretch: A) Use the arms to gently pull the head and torso closer to the legs. B) Press out through the heels and gently draw the toes towards you.
4. Breathe and hold for 3-8 breaths.
5. To release: A) Slowly roll up the spine back into Staff pose. B) Inhale the arms back over your head as you lift the torso back into Staff pose.



## **13) - Purvottanasana - Upward Plank:**

### **Benefits:**

- Strengthens your triceps, wrists, back, and legs
- Stretches your shoulders, chest, and front ankles
- Frees your mind
- Helps keep you open to new possibilities

### **Instructions:**

1. Sit in Dandasana (Staff Pose) with your hands several inches behind your hips and your fingers pointing forward. Bend your knees and place your feet on the floor, big toes turned inward, heels at least a foot away from your buttocks.
2. Exhale, press your inner feet and hands down against the floor, and lift your hips until you come into a reverse tabletop position, torso and thighs approximately parallel to the floor, shins and arms approximately perpendicular.
3. Without losing the height of your hips, straighten your legs one at a time. Lift your hips still higher without hardening your buttocks. Press your shoulder blades against your back torso to support the lift of your chest.

4. Without compressing the back of your neck, slowly drop your head back.
5. Hold for 30 seconds, then sit back down in Dandasana with an exhale.



#### **14) - Navasana - Boat Pose:**

##### **Benefits:**

- Tones and strengthens your abdominal muscles
- Improves balance and digestion.
- Stretches your hamstrings.
- Strengthens your spine and hip flexors.
- Stimulates the kidneys, thyroid and prostate glands, and intestines.
- Aids in stress relief.
- Improves confidence.

##### **Instructions:**

1. Sit on the floor with your legs straight in front of you. Press your hands on the floor a little behind your hips, fingers pointing toward the feet, and strengthen the arms. Lift through the top of the sternum and lean back slightly. As you do this make sure your back doesn't round; continue to lengthen the front of your torso between the pubis and top sternum. Sit on the "tripod" of your two sitting bones and tailbone.
2. Exhale and bend your knees, then lift your feet off the floor, so that the thighs are angled about 45-50 degrees relative to the floor. Lengthen your tailbone into the floor and lift your pubis toward your navel. If possible, slowly straighten your knees, raising the tips of your toes slightly above the level of your eyes. If this isn't possible remain with your knees bent, perhaps lifting the shins parallel to the floor.
3. Stretch your arms alongside the legs, parallel to each other and the floor. Spread the shoulder blades across your back and reach strongly out through the fingers. If this isn't possible, keep the hands on the floor beside your hips or hold on to the backs of your thighs. Exhalation and sit upright on an inhalation.
4. While the lower belly should be firm, it shouldn't get hard and thick. Try to keep the lower belly relatively flat. Press the heads of the thigh bones toward the floor to help anchor the pose and lift the top sternum. Breathe easily. Tip the chin slightly toward the sternum so the base of the skull lifts lightly away from the back of the neck.
5. At first stay in the pose for 10-20 seconds. Gradually increase the time of your stay to 1 minute.



### 15) - Balasana - Childs Pose:



## BACK BENDING SERIES:

### 16) - Bhujangasana - Cobra Pose:

#### Benefits:

- 1 -Opens up the shoulders and neck.
- 2-Tones the abdomen.
- 3 -Strengthens the entire back and shoulders.
- 4 -Improves flexibility of the upper and middle back.
- 5 -Expands the chest.
- 6 -Improves blood circulation.
- 7 -Reduces fatigue and stress.
- 8 -Useful for people with respiratory disorders such as asthma. (Do not practice this yoga pose during the attack though).

#### Instructions:

- 1) Lie on your stomach with your toes flat on the floor and forehead resting on the ground.
- 2) Keep your legs close together, with your feet and heels lightly touching each other.
- 3) Place your hands (palms downwards) under your shoulders, keeping your elbows parallel and close to your torso.
- 4) Taking a deep breath in, slowly lift your head, chest and abdomen while keeping your navel on the floor.
- 5) Pull your torso back and off the floor with the support of your hands.
- 6) Keep breathing with awareness, as you curve your spine vertebra by vertebra. If possible, straighten your arms by arching your back as much as possible; tilt your head back and look up.
- 7) Checkpoint: Are your shoulders away from your ears? Keep your shoulders relaxed, even if it means bending your elbows. With regular practice, you will be able to deepen the stretch by straightening the elbows.
- 8) Ensure that your feet are still close together. Keep smiling and breathing. Smiling Cobras!
- 9) Don't overdo the stretch or overstrain yourself.
- 10) Breathing out, gently bring your abdomen, chest and head back to the floor.



## 19) -Ardha Shalabhasana - Half Locust :

### Benefits:

- Exercises the heart and circulatory system.
- Lowers blood pressure when practiced regularly.
- Stretches the hip flexors.

### Instructions:

- Lie prone on your stomach. Breathe into your belly. Notice the connection between the front side of your body and the earth.
- Place your arms and hands underneath your body with the palms facing down. The backs of your hands are under your pelvis with your fingertips pointing towards your feet.
- Keep the pelvis square and press it into your hands.
- Lift one leg at a time, reaching the toes away from the hip sockets.
- Feel the thigh subtly (almost energetically) rotating inward so that the knee is toward the mat.
- Make sure that your nose is grazing the mat and that your face and neck are parallel to the floor. Your weight is on your arms and torso, not on your neck or face.
- Lengthen your legs and lift them slowly upward.
- Reach out through your toes.
- Press the pubic bone and hip flexors into the mat to protect your lower back.
- Ensure that the neck does not bend and is an extension of the rest of the spine.
- Lower your head, chest, arms and legs to the earth on your next exhale.



## 20) -Poorna Shalabhasana -Full Locust :

### Benefits:

- Strengthens the muscles of the back, especially the lower back
- Stimulates the autonomic nervous system, appetite and the digestive process.
- It balances the functioning of the liver and other abdominal organs, and helps to get rid of stomach disorders.

### Instructions:

- 1 - Begin lying on your stomach with your arms at your sides. Rest your forehead on the mat. Extend your legs straight behind you, hip-width apart. Do not roll your heels inward or outward. Instead, press your weight evenly across the tops of both feet.

- 2 - Inhale and raise your head to look forward. On your exhale, lift your chest and arms. Keep your arms alongside your body with your palms facing down. Lift your upper spine and reach your arms back toward your feet.
- 3 - Use your inner thighs to lift your legs up toward the ceiling. Reach straight back through the balls of your feet. Your weight should rest on your lower ribs, belly, and front pelvis.
- 4 - Keep your chest lifted as you widen across your collarbones. Draw your shoulder blades into your back ribs and extend them away from each other.
- 5 - Gaze at your cheeks. Keep your breath smooth and even.
- 6 - Hold for up to one minute. On an exhalation, slowly release your body to the ground. Place your right ear on the mat and relax your arms at your sides for a few breaths. Repeat the pose for the same amount of time, then rest with your left ear on the mat.



## 21) - Dhanurasana - Bow Pose.

### Benefits:

- 1 Strengthens the back and abdominal muscles
- 2 Stimulates the reproductive organs
- 3 Opens up the chest, neck and shoulders
- 4 Tones the leg and arm muscles
- 5 Adds greater flexibility to the back
- 6 Good stress and fatigue buster

### Instructions:

- 1 Lie on your stomach with your feet hip-width apart and your arms by the side of your body.
- 2 Fold your knees, take your hands backwards and hold your ankles.
- 3 Breathing in, lift your chest off the ground and pull your legs up and back.
- 4 Look straight ahead with a smile on your face.
- 5 Keep the pose stable while paying attention to your breath. Your body is now curved and taut as a bow.
- 6 Continue to take long deep breaths as you relax in this pose. But bend only as far as your body permits you to. Do not overdo the stretch.
- 7 After 15 -20 seconds, as you exhale, gently bring your legs and chest to the ground. Release the ankles and relax.



## 22) - Balasana - Child's Pose:



## 23) - Ardha Matsyendrasana - Half Spinal Twist:

### Benefits:

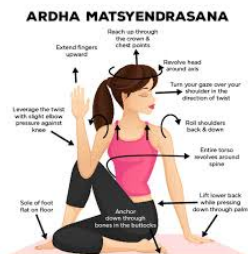
Makes spine supple

Increases the elasticity of the spine

Opens the chest and increases the oxygen supply to the lungs.

### Instructions:

Sit up with the legs stretched out straight in front of you, keeping the feet together and the spine erect. Bend the left leg and place the heel of the left foot beside the right hip (optionally, you can keep the left leg straight). Take the right leg over the left knee. Place the left hand on the right knee and the right hand behind you. Twist the waist, shoulders and neck in this sequence to the right and look over the right shoulder. Keep the spine erect. Hold and continue with gentle long breaths in and out. Breathing out, release the right hand first (the hand behind you), release the waist, then chest, lastly the neck and sit up relaxed yet straight. Repeat to the other side. Breathing out, come back to the front and relax.



## STANDING POSES:

## 25) - Vrikshasana - Tree Pose:

### Benefits:

This pose leaves you in a state of rejuvenation. It stretches the legs, back and arms, and invigorates you. It brings balance and equilibrium to your mind. It helps improve concentration. This posture has been found to relieve some cases of sciatica. It makes the legs strong, improves balance, and opens the hips. Helps those who are suffering from sciatica.

### Instructions:



- 1 - Begin standing in Mountain Pose (Tadasana), with your arms at your sides. Distribute your weight evenly across both feet, grounding down equally through your inner ankles, outer ankles, big toes, and baby toes.
- 2 - Shift your weight to your left foot. Bend your right knee, then reach down and clasp your right inner ankle. Use your hand to draw your right foot alongside your inner left thigh. Do not rest your foot against your knee, only above or below it. Adjust your position so the centre of your pelvis is directly over your left foot. Then, adjust your hips so your right hip and left hip are aligned.
- 3 - Rest your hands on your hips and lengthen your tailbone toward the floor. Then, press your palms together in prayer position at your chest, with your thumbs resting on your sternum.
- 4 - Fix your gaze gently on one, unmoving point in front of you.
- 5 - Draw down through your left foot. Press your right foot into your left thigh, while pressing your thigh equally against your foot. Inhale as you extend your arms overhead, reaching your fingertips to the sky. Rotate your palms inward to face each other. If your shoulders are more flexible, you can press your palms together in prayer position, overhead.
- 6 - Hold for up to one minute. To release the pose, step back into Mountain Pose. Repeat for the same amount of time on the opposite side.



## **26) Prasarita Padottanasana - Wide Angle Pose:**

### **Benefits:**

- Strengthens and stretches the inner and back legs and the spine
- Tones the abdominal organs
- Calms the brain
- Relieves mild backache

### **Instructions:**

1) - Stand in Tadasana (Mountain Pose), facing one of the long edges of your sticky mat, then step or lightly hop your feet apart anywhere from 3 to 4 1/2 feet (depending on your height: taller people should step wider). Rest your hands on your hips. Make sure your inner feet are parallel to each other. Lift your inner arches by drawing up on the inner ankles, and press the outer edges of your feet and ball of the big toe firmly into the floor. Engage the thigh muscles by drawing them up. Inhale and lift your chest, making the front torso slightly longer than the back.

2) - Exhale and, maintaining the length of the front torso, lean the torso forward from the hip joints. As your torso approaches parallel to the floor, press your fingertips onto the floor directly below your shoulders. Extend your elbows fully. Your legs and arms then should be perpendicular to the floor and parallel to each other. Move your spine evenly into the back torso so that your back is slightly concave from the tailbone to the base of the skull. Bring your head up, keeping the back of the neck long, and direct your gaze upward toward the ceiling.

3) - Push your top thighs straight back to help lengthen the front torso, and draw the inner groins away from each other to widen the base of your pelvis. Take a few breaths. As you maintain the concavity of your back and the forward lift of your sternum, walk your fingertips between your feet. Take a few more breaths and then, with an exhalation, bend your elbows and lower your torso and head into a full forward bend. Make sure as you move down that you keep your front torso as long as possible. If possible rest the crown of your head on the floor.

4) - Press your inner palms actively into the floor, fingers pointing forward. If you have the flexibility to move your torso into a full forward bend, walk your hands back until your forearms are perpendicular to the floor and your upper arms parallel. Be sure to keep your arms parallel to each other and widen the shoulder blades across the back. Draw your shoulders away from your ears.

5) - Stay in the pose anywhere from 30 seconds to 1 minute. To come out, bring your hands back on the floor below your shoulders and lift and lengthen your front torso. Then with an inhalation, rest your hands on your hips, pull your tail bone down toward the floor, and swing the torso up. Walk or hop your feet back into Tadasana.



### Warrior Poses 1, 2, 3:

#### Benefits:

- Strengthens your shoulders, arms, legs, ankles and back
- Opens yours hips, chest and lungs
- Improves focus, balance and stability
- Encourages good circulation and respiration
- Stretches your arms, legs, shoulders, neck, belly, groins and ankles
- Energizes the entire body

#### Instructions:

##### Warrior 1:

1) Begin in Mountain Pose (Tadasana), standing with your feet hip-distance apart and your arms at your sides. Let your thoughts settle. Focus on the present

moment. Breathe deeply and evenly, calming your mind. Draw your awareness inward. Turn to the left. Exhale as you step your feet wide apart, about 4 to 5 feet. Turn your right foot out 90 degrees, so your toes are pointing to the top of the mat.. Pivot your left foot inwards at a 45-degree angle.

Align your front heel with the arch of your back foot. Keep your pelvis turned toward the front of your mat. Press your weight through your left heel. Then, exhale as you bend your right knee over your right ankle. Your shin should be perpendicular to the floor. Lift through the arches of your feet, while rooting down through your ankles. Reach up strongly through your arms. Broaden across your belly, lengthen the sides of your waist, and lift through your chest. Keep your palms and fingers active and reaching. You can keep your arms parallel, or press your palms together. Gently tilt your head back and gaze up at your thumbs. Keep your shoulders dropped away from your ears. Feel your shoulder blades pressing firmly inward. Press down through the outer edge of your back foot, keeping your back leg straight. Hold for up to one minute. To release the pose, press your weight through your back heel and straighten your front leg. Lower your arms. Turn to the left, reversing the position of your feet, and repeat for the same length of time on the opposite side.

### Warrior 2:

Begin in Mountain Pose (Tadasana), standing with your feet hip-distance apart and your arms at your sides. Let go of distractions. Notice the quality of your breath. Draw your awareness inward, to the centre of your body. Turn to the left. Exhale as you step your feet wide apart, about 4 to 5 feet. Check to ensure that your heels are aligned with each other. Turn your right foot out 90 degrees, so your toes are pointing to the top of the mat. Pivot your left foot slightly inwards. Your back toes should be at a 45-degree angle. Lift through the arches of your feet, while rooting down through your ankles. Raise your arms to the side to shoulder height, so they're parallel to the floor. Your arms should be aligned directly over your legs. With your palms facing down, reach actively from fingertip to fingertip. On an exhalation, bend your front knee. Align your knee directly over the ankle of your front foot. Your front shin should be perpendicular to the floor. Sink your hips low, eventually bringing your front thigh parallel to the floor. Make sure your front shin stays vertical. Widen your stance as needed to make sure that your knee does not move forward past your ankle. Press down through the outer edge of your back foot, and keep your back leg straight. Keep your torso perpendicular to the floor, with your head directly over your tailbone. Do not lean towards your front leg. Turn your head to gaze out across the tip of your right middle finger. Broaden across your collarbones and lengthen the space between your shoulder blades. Engage your triceps. Drop your shoulders and lift your chest. Draw your belly in toward your spine. Keep your torso open, not turned toward the front leg. Hold for up to one minute. To release, inhale as you press down through your back foot and straighten your front leg. Lower your arms. Turn to the left, reversing the position of your feet, and repeat for the same length of time on the opposite side.

### Warrior 3:

Begin standing in Mountain Pose (Tadasana) with your feet hip-distance apart and your arms at your sides. Breathe smoothly and calmly, bringing your awareness to the present moment. Turn to the left and step your feet wide apart, about 4 to 5 feet. Turn your right foot out 90 degrees so your toes point to the top of the mat. Pivot your left foot inward at a 45-degree angle. Point your pelvis and torso in the same direction as your right toes are pointing. Bend your right knee over your right ankle so your shin is perpendicular to the floor. Raise your arms overhead with your palms facing each other. This is Warrior I (Virabhadrasana I). Press your weight into your right foot. Lift your left leg as you lower your torso, bringing your body parallel to the ground. Your arms, still extended, will now reach forward. Flex your left foot and reach out through your heel, as if you're pressing a wall behind you. Keep the muscles of both legs actively engaged. Straighten your standing leg as you continue to lift the left leg, but do not lock your knees. Work toward bringing your arms, torso, hips, and raised leg parallel to the floor. You may need to lower the hip of your raised leg slightly in order to bring your hips parallel to your mat. Stretch your body from your fingertips all the way through your lifted heel. Gaze at the floor a few feet in front of your body. Hold the pose for 30 seconds. To release, exhale as you softly lower your left foot back to the floor, coming again into Warrior I. Lower your arms and step forward into Mountain Pose. Repeat the pose for the same amount of time on the opposite side.



## 28) - Trikonasana - Triangle Pose:

### Benefits:

Triangle pose engages every part of the body, strengthens the core, opens the hips and shoulders and stretches the legs.

### Instructions:

1. From a standing position with the legs 3 feet apart as in Five Pointed Star, turn the right toes to the right wall and the left toes slightly inwards. Inhale and press the left hips out to the left as you slide both arms to the right parallel to the floor.
2. Exhale and rotate only the arms, raising the left arm up and resting the right hand against the right leg, with the palms facing forward.
3. Press into the feet, pull up the knee caps, keeping the legs strong. Reach the finger tips away from each other, bringing the arms into one straight line with the shoulders stacked on top of each other. Press the left hip forward and the right hip back.

4. Breathe and hold for 3-6 breaths.
5. To release: inhale and reach the raised hand up towards the ceiling as you press down into the feet using the whole body to lift back into 5 pointed star.
6. Repeat on the other side.



## **FINISHING ASANAS:**

### **29) Sivasana - Corpse Pose:**

#### **Benefits:**

- .Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression.
- Relaxes the body.
- Reduces headache, fatigue, and insomnia.
- Helps to lower blood pressure.

#### **Instructions:**

- 1 Lie flat on your back, preferably without any props or cushions. Use small pillow below your neck if absolutely required. Close your eyes.
- 2 Keep your legs comfortable apart and let your feet and knees relax completely, toes facing to the sides.
- 3 Place your arms alongside, yet a little spread apart from your body. Leave your palms open, facing upward.
- 4 Taking your attention to different body parts one by one, slowly relax your entire body.
- 5 Begin with bringing your awareness to the right foot, move on to the right knee (as you complete one leg, move your attention on to the other leg), and so on, and slowly move upwards to your head, relaxing each part of the body.
- 6 Keep breathing slowly, gently, deeply and allow your breath to relax you more and more. The incoming

**breath energizes the body while the outgoing breath brings relaxation. Drop all sense of hurry or urgency**

**or any need to attend to anything else. Just be with the body and the breath.**

**Surrender the whole body to**

**the floor and let go. Make sure you don't fall asleep!**

**7 After some time, about 10-20 minutes when you feel fully relaxed, keeping your eyes closed, slowly roll**

**onto your right side. Lie in that position for a minute or so. Then, taking the support of your right hand,**

**gently sit up into a seated pose such as Sukhasana (Easy Pose).**

**8 Keep your eyes closed and take a few deep breaths in and out as you gradually become aware of your**

**environment and the body. When you feel complete, slowly and gently open your eyes.**

