

YOGA POSTURES

Yoga

The word 'Yoga' means to join or unite. In the *Yoga Sutras*, Sage Patanjali describes Yoga as the means by which our mind can be made still, quiet and free from all distractions.

Yoga is a group of ancient spiritual practices originating in India. As a general term in Hinduism it has been defined as referring to "technologies or disciplines of asceticism (practice of severe self-discipline) and meditation which are thought to lead to spiritual experience and profound understanding or insight into the nature of existence."

BHUJANGASANA

Bhujanga means a snake.

Steps:

1. Lie on your stomach. Join your legs. Point your toes. Place your palms to the sides of your chest with the fingers well spread and pointing forward.
 2. Raise your trunk off the floor. Straighten your arms. Throw your head back. Arch your spine as much as possible.
- **Do's:** Puff out your chest and tighten the muscles of your thighs.
 - **Don'ts:** Don't raise your thighs off the floor.
 - **Benefits:** Helps remove stiffness in the neck and spine.

JANU SHIRSHASANA

Janu means knee and shirsha means head.

Steps:

1. Bend your right knee & bring your right heel to your perineum. Raise your arms overhead.
 2. Bend forward. Hold your left foot with both hands. Lengthen your trunk. Rest your forehead or chin on your knees.
- **Do's:** Hold your ankle if you are stiff; gradually hold your foot. Keep extended leg stiff with your toes pointing upwards.
 - **Don'ts:** Keep shoulders at level.
 - **Benefits:** Stretches and strengthens the hamstring muscles. Tones the liver and kidneys, and rests the heart.

DHANURASANA

Dhanu means a bow.

Steps:

1. Lie on your stomach.
 2. Bend your knees. Hold your ankles.
 3. Raise your thighs, head and chest off the floor.
- **Do's:** Bring your head closer to your feet. Curve your body like a bow, stretch your arms like the bow string.
 - **Don'ts:** Don't let your ribs or your thighs remain on the floor.
 - **Benefits:** Make the spine elastic. Expand the chest and lungs

ARDHA CHANDRASANA

Ardha means half and Chandra means moon.

Steps:

1. Stand straight. Jump and spread your legs 2 to 3 feet apart and your arms sideways. Stand on a line, toes pointing forward and palms turned down.
 2. Turn your right foot out 90° and your left foot in slightly. Touch your right foot with your hand.
 3. Bend your right knee. Place your right fingertips in front of your right foot.
 4. Raise your left leg off the floor. Straighten your right leg and balance.
- **Do's:** Rotate your chest towards the ceiling.
 - **Don'ts:** Don't shift the foot on which you are standing, and don't let your head hang down or bring the head forward.
 - **Benefits:** Develops the legs correctly. Strengthens the lower back and pelvic region.

GARUDASANA

Garuda was born with the body of a man and the head wings and claws of an eagle.

Steps:

1. Stand straight. Bend your knees. Place your left leg over the right leg and entwine it around.
 2. Bend your arms. Place one arm over the other and entwine them around each other.
- **Do's:** Look straight ahead.
 - **Don'ts:** Don't entwine loosely.
 - **Benefits:** Strengthens the ankles. Relieves cramps in calves.