

tenminute **yoga**



DONALD BUTLER

tenminute
voga

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藏书章

tenminute yoga

**100 Personal Programmes
for Daily Practice**

DONALD RIITLER



*Yoga is about changing the
whole way we think about
ourselves and our world.*

Patanjali, *Yoga Sutras* 1:2

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• Precautions

The programmes in this book have been designed to be a safe introduction to yoga. However, neither the publisher nor the author can accept responsibility for any injuries sustained during their performance. If you are pregnant or if you have any doubts about your health, consult a doctor before embarking on any of these techniques.

How to Use This Book

All yoga techniques work because they focus the mind and stimulate the body.

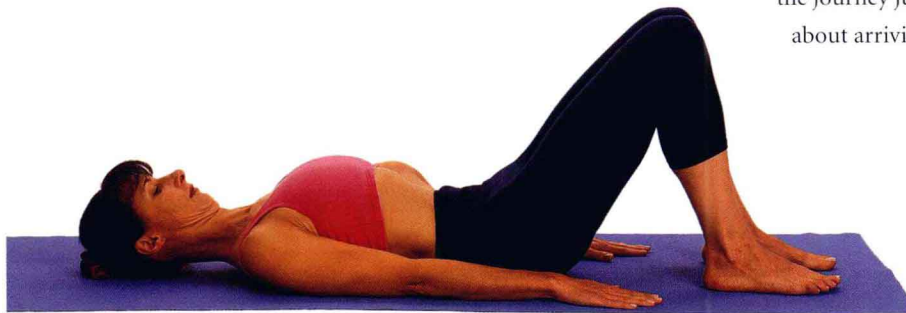
There are four main classical yoga traditions: hatha yoga, raja yoga, karma yoga and bhakti yoga. As you work through the poses and exercises in this book you will be practising all the major yoga techniques – *pratyahara*, *asana*, *kriya*, *pranayama*, *mudra*, *bandha* and *samyama*. Hatha yoga is thought by most scholars to mean the yoga of balance – *ha* (the sun) and *tha* (the moon). From that derive other notions of balance – left and right; male and female; positive and negative; yin and yang – so it's important that you perform all the poses on both sides and alternate the side you start with.

Yoga is a science of living, and it includes physical movements and postures, skilled and precise breathing techniques, properly structured mental concentration and safe and effective relaxation exercises. Regular practice will help you to become physically fitter, mentally more alert, emotionally calmer and personally more stable and confident about your life.

Yoga works best when it is practised daily, but most people find it hard to set aside a time for yoga every day. There can also be the temptation to make random choices of techniques and to end up performing the same limited range, mostly of postures, without proper regard for their suitability. It's not easy to make genuine progress, and bad habits can easily form, in posture work, in breathing and in the mental techniques.

If you work through the programmes in this book, you will develop a repertoire of postures and techniques that you can build up into a routine that suits your own personal circumstances. If you make the time you spend on yoga special and enjoyable, the benefits you derive from it will increase. As you practise these programmes,

remember that yoga is about enjoying the journey just as much as it is about arriving.

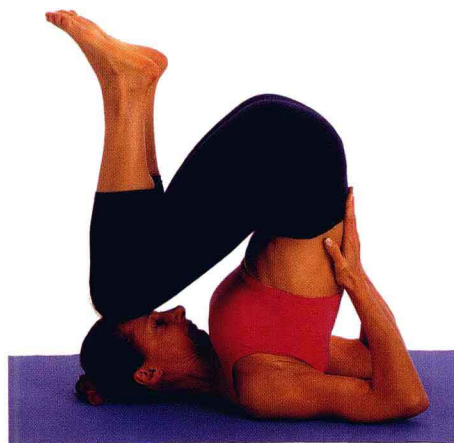
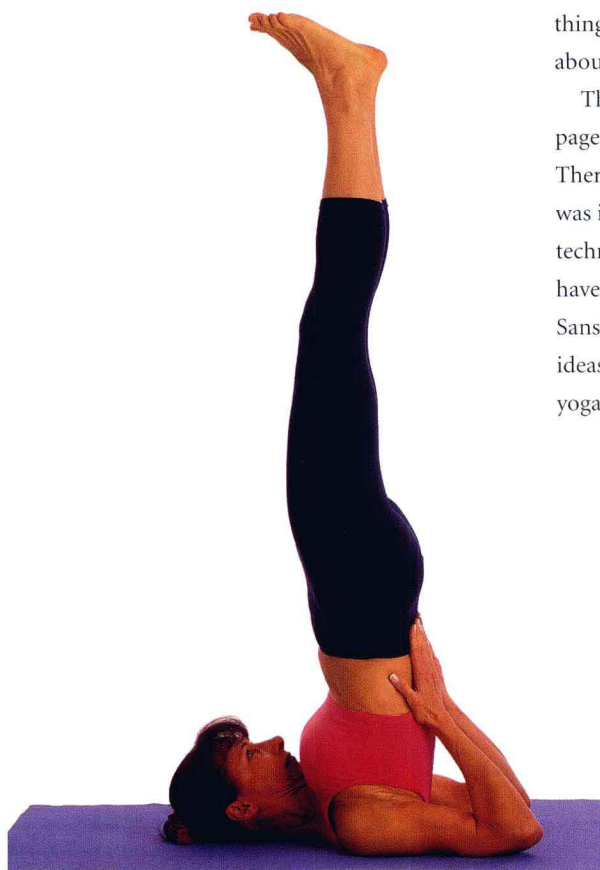


This book aims to provide you with a generous supply of yoga programmes that you can perform at home. The programmes are designed – in pairs – to be a balanced selection of postures, breathing exercises, mental techniques and relaxation (see page 30). If you follow the sequence of programmes you will have a really full and interesting selection of things to do each day, and your expertise and understanding will become deeper and more mature. Each programme is designed to take about 10 minutes. If you can spare 20 minutes, just put the two halves of the pair together – you can leave out the last item in the first, and the first item in the second, and save yourself five minutes.

Yoga is good for everybody, from the earliest years right through to full maturity and old age. It's also infinitely adaptable: we've given you the full versions of all the techniques in the programmes, but we've taken care to show you when and how you should adapt them.

If you have any doubts about whether you should perform something in a programme, consult your doctor. See page 135 for advice about yoga and your health.

There's a complete guide to getting the most from your yoga on pages 32–3, and every programme has a detailed commentary. There's also a full glossary containing the Sanskrit terms. We felt it was important to provide you with the full Sanskrit terms for the techniques, alongside their English equivalents. Quite often, we have given you a selection of English words and phrases, where the Sanskrit is not easy to translate. At the end of the book are some ideas for further study, and suggestions for mixing and matching yoga techniques to make up your own choice of yoga programmes.



Part 1

Introduction

Before we turn to the programmes themselves, we are going to look at the traditional poses that are used as the starting point for individual postures. There are also a number of limbering exercises, as well as information about hand gestures and aids to performing the programmes.

It's not a good idea to practise yoga techniques when your mind and your body are not ready.

Your mind needs to be ready, so that you can concentrate on what you are doing. We have given you a time to prepare your mind, at the beginning of each programme. The traditional Sanskrit name for this is *pratyahara*, a word that has many English equivalents. We have called this period 'becoming aware'. If you are performing a double programme you don't need to include this period at the beginning of the second part of each programme.

Your body needs to be ready, too. Your joints and muscles need to be warmed and loosened, and if you don't prepare the parts of your body that you are going to use, you will not be supple enough to enjoy the programmes and you could get cramp or injure yourself.

Part 1

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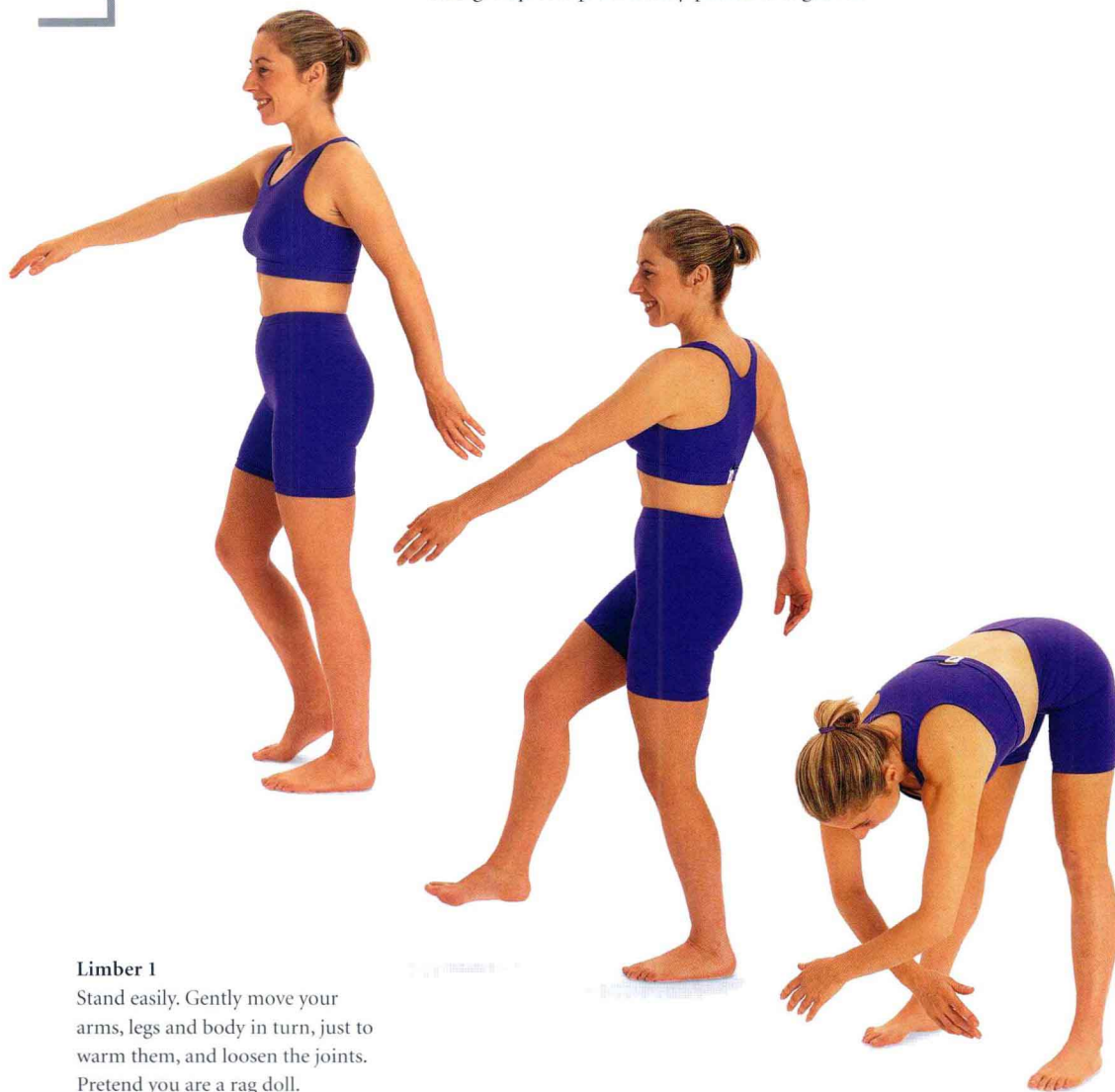
Inner Energy Centres 26

The Sun Salutation 28

Limbering Exercises

Here are 10 different limbering sequences, each one designed to prepare you for a particular group of postures (*asanas*). Until you get used to performing these sequences, it is suggested that you refer to these pages each time.

After each posture you need to help your body restore its balance and to allow energy to flow through the parts of your body you have just used. A good way to do this is to repeat the limber sequence. Performing a posture an equal number of times on each side will also help. When you come to design your own programmes, you can also group complementary postures together.

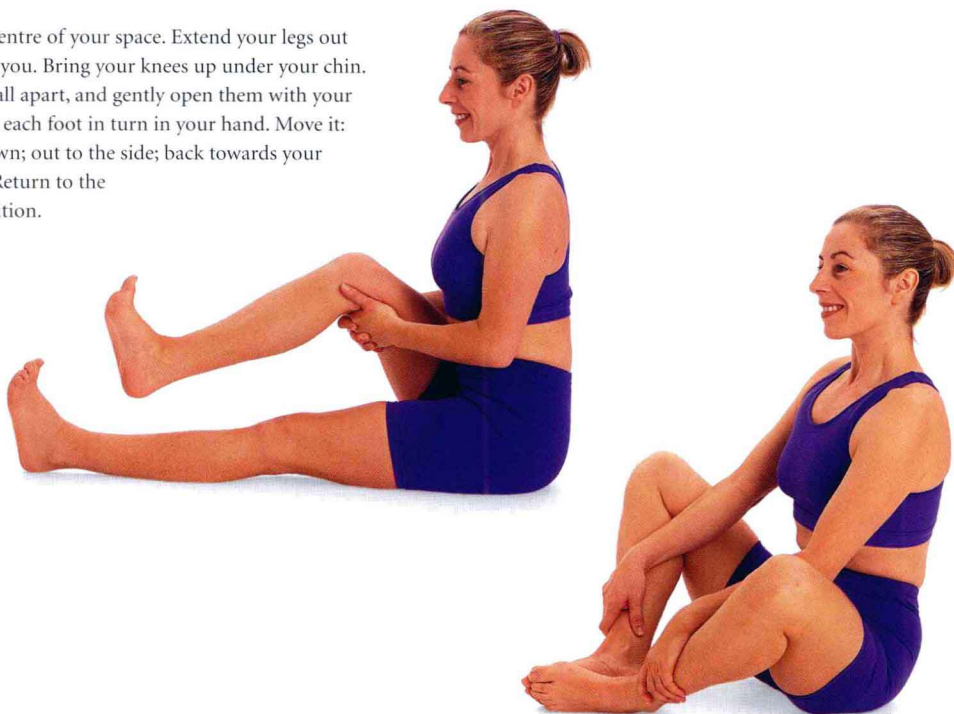


Limber 1

Stand easily. Gently move your arms, legs and body in turn, just to warm them, and loosen the joints. Pretend you are a rag doll.

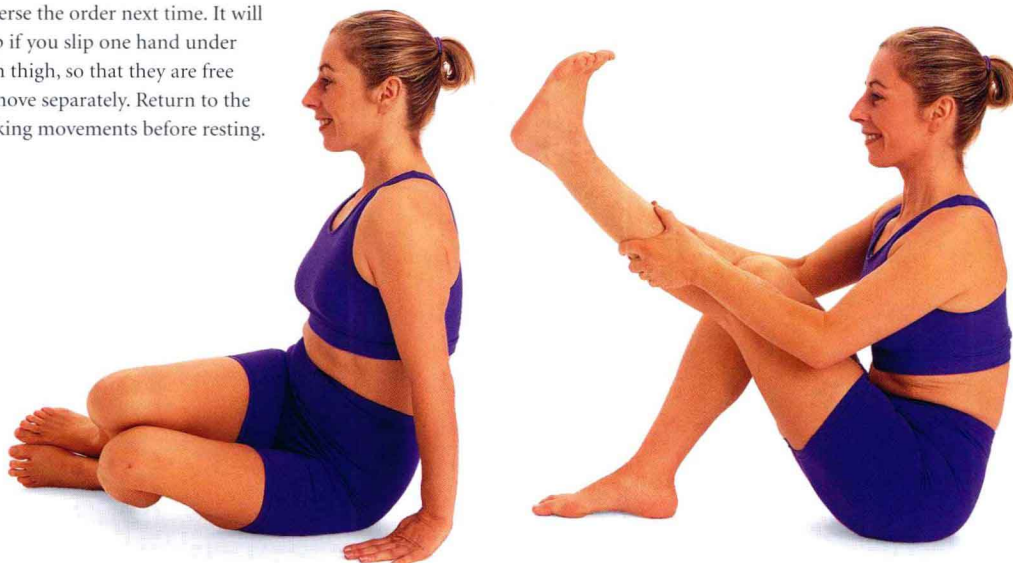
Limber 2

Sit in the centre of your space. Extend your legs out in front of you. Bring your knees up under your chin. Let them fall apart, and gently open them with your arms. Take each foot in turn in your hand. Move it: up and down; out to the side; back towards your shoulder. Return to the sitting position.



Limber 3

Sit easily. Lift your knees to your chest and rock gently from side to side. Lift your left foot and try to straighten your left leg, raising it up into the air. Lower your leg and rest the foot on the floor. Repeat with the other leg. Reverse the order next time. It will help if you slip one hand under each thigh, so that they are free to move separately. Return to the rocking movements before resting.





Limber 4

From a tall standing position, the Mountain, inhale. As you exhale, lower your head, bring your shoulders forward, curl your back down, and let your arms hang down so that your hands reach down towards the floor.

Breathe quietly and encourage your body to fold right down

to its lowest point. This varies, so find your own optimum position. Stay there, breathing quietly – feel your back softening and your legs getting longer.

Begin to uncurl. Make sure that you have seen your shoulders open before you raise your head, inhaling and resuming the Mountain.



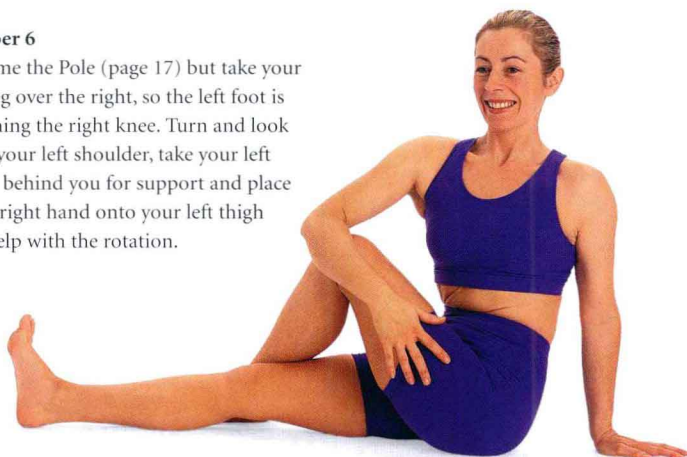
Limber 5

Assume the Pole (page 17), taking time to perform it with care and attention. Lift your left leg out to the side, using your hands to minimize the movement of your spine. Do this with your right leg too. Use small movements to ease your legs out to their widest angle. Take your buttocks out behind you, and sit fairly and squarely on your sitting bones. You may feel some of your lazy muscles starting to complain, so don't be too ambitious. Put your hands together in front of you, and 'walk' your hands forwards. Keep your back straight. Your spine will lower and your hips will begin to fold. Go as far forward as your hands will walk. Stay there, breathing gently. This will open your hips, and extend the muscles in your thighs. Return to the Pole and rest. Cuddle your knees to your chest if you like and then go for another walk.

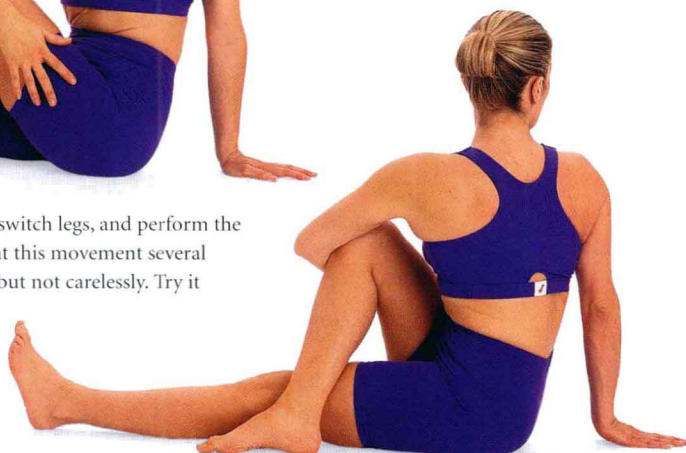


Limber 6

Assume the Pole (page 17) but take your left leg over the right, so the left foot is touching the right knee. Turn and look over your left shoulder, take your left hand behind you for support and place your right hand onto your left thigh for help with the rotation.



Slowly return to the front, switch legs, and perform the rotation to the right. Repeat this movement several times. Try it quite quickly, but not carelessly. Try it slowly and pause in the turn, breathing quietly. Try exhaling as you turn, so that you turn with a small waist.

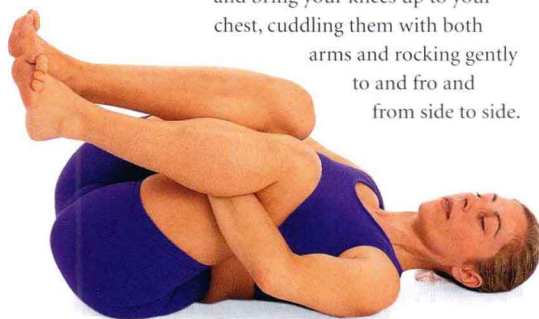


Limber 7

Assume a position on all fours. Make sure that your hands are properly under your shoulders and that your knees are under your hips, or you will not get the support you need. Gently move your spine up and down. See if you can rotate your spine: keep your breathing quiet and move your torso up, then to the right, then down and finally to the left. It doesn't matter if it's not perfect. Rotate in the other direction.

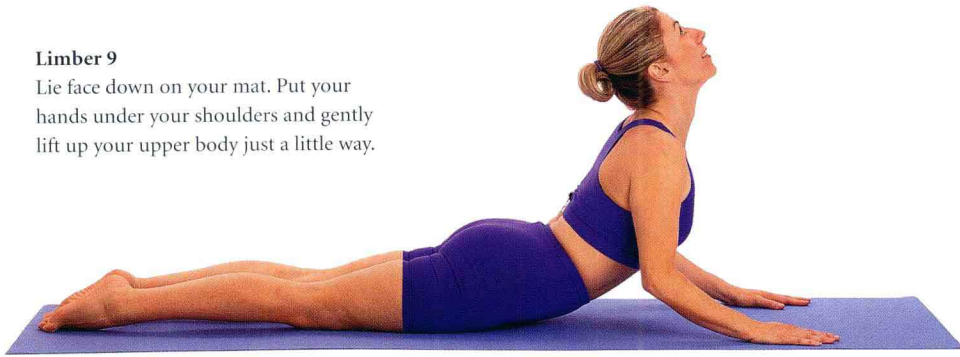
Limber 8

Lie supine in the Corpse (page 18) and bring your knees up to your chest, cuddling them with both arms and rocking gently to and fro and from side to side.

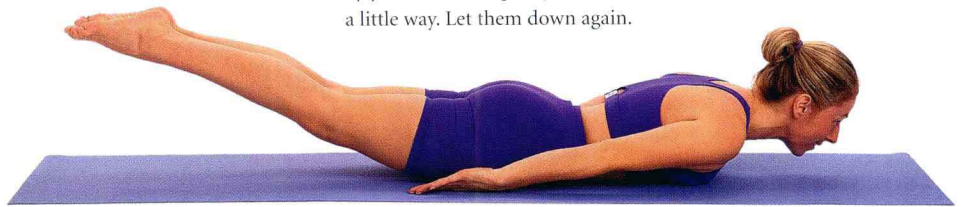


Limber 9

Lie face down on your mat. Put your hands under your shoulders and gently lift up your upper body just a little way.

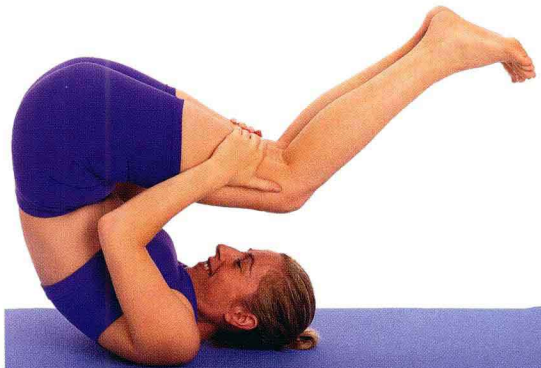
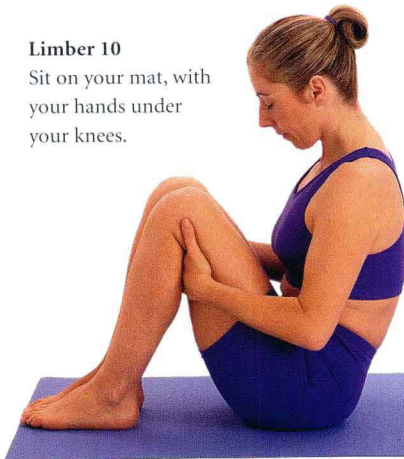


Then let it down again. Put your hands back by your sides and gently lift up your legs just a little way. Let them down again.

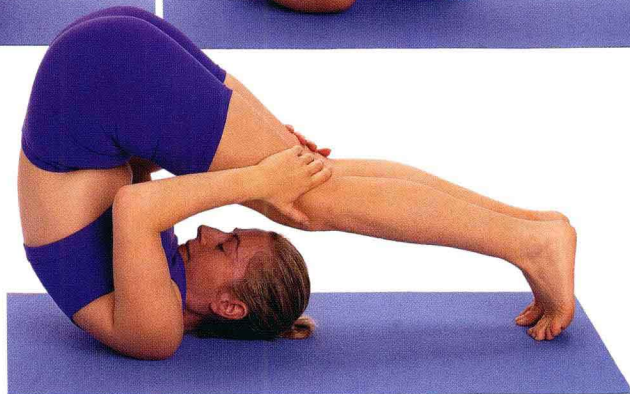


Limber 10

Sit on your mat, with your hands under your knees.



Lean back until you tumble over, releasing your legs, and swinging back with your legs straight out behind you. Hold and tumble back up again.



Starting Postures

All the postures (*asanas*) in yoga begin from one of the five classical positions, and most of them return to it. These positions help you to begin the posture with a few moments of calm awareness and to conclude on a note of stillness and control.

In each programme we suggest that you firmly establish the classical position or starting posture before you embark on the *asana*. Use these pages to become familiar with these postures before beginning the programmes that use them. The five postures are:

- **The Mountain**, the true yoga standing position
- **The Rock**, the kneeling position
- **The Pole**, the correct sitting position
- **The Corpse**, total resting on your back
- **The Prone Corpse**, total resting on your front.

The benefits of yoga, physical, mental and spiritual, work best when we are fully aware. These ancient basic positions give us the chance to establish a pose and settle our thoughts, before embarking on a body movement or mental technique.

When we have performed any yoga posture, it's good to return again to the basic position, and collect our thoughts before proceeding to the next event. These attitudes will begin to affect our general lifestyle, teaching us to pause, if only for a moment, before undertaking a task, or making a decision, so that our attention is always focused, and our performance more poised.

This is the real way to pace ourselves, put our energy to the best use, and stay relaxed.

Sthiram sukham asanam.

(Postures should be firm and feel good.)

Patanjali, *Yoga Sutras* 2.46

The Mountain

The Mountain (*tadasana*) is the true yoga standing position. It lengthens the whole body and restores its proper balance. If you have time, when you have completed the pose let your whole body go soft and assume the position all over again.

- 1 Stand tall.
- 2 Have your feet nearly touching.
- 3 Stand equally on your left and right foot.
- 4 Stand equally on the balls and heels of your feet.
- 5 Tighten your knees.
- 6 Stand tall on your legs.



- 11 Lift your head to the top of your neck.
- 12 Look straight ahead.
- 13 Glance down towards the floor.
- 14 Breathe deeply into the top of your chest.
- 15 Exhale into your abdomen.
- 16 Continue breathing gently with your abdomen only.

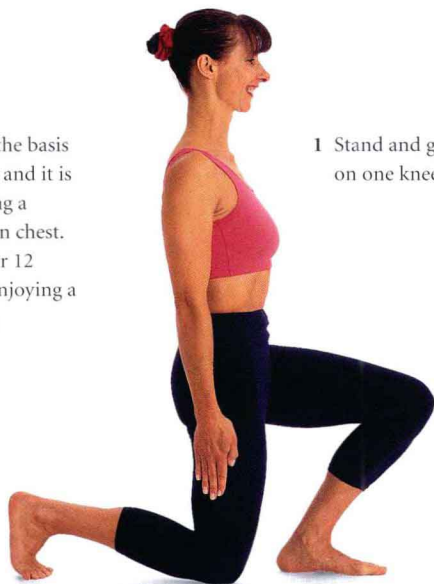


- 7 Move the front of your pelvis up, and your tailbone down.
- 8 Lift and widen your midriff.
- 9 Lift your chest and widen your shoulders.
- 10 Place your arms beside you, the hands lightly touching the sides of your thighs.

The Rock

The Rock (*vajrasana*) is the basis of the kneeling postures, and it is marvellous for developing a straight back and an open chest.

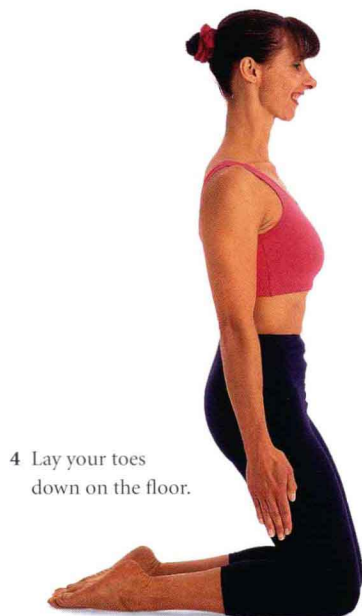
Stay still in the pose for 12 seconds before resting, enjoying a feeling of inner strength.



- 1 Stand and go down on one knee.



- 2 Bring the other knee down beside it.
- 3 Kneel tall.



- 4 Lay your toes down on the floor.

- 5 Move your torso back horizontally and down vertically, until your buttocks are resting on your heels.
- 6 If this is a problem, use a kneeling stool.
- 7 Feel your feet opening out to support your buttocks.



- 8 Lift each knee in turn to release tension in the kneecaps.
- 9 Move your thighs a little way apart.
- 10 Lift the soft parts of your buttocks out behind your heels.
- 11 Feel your sitting bones.
- 12 Move your pelvis back to flatten your abdomen.
- 13 Place your hands flat on the tops of your thighs.
- 14 Breathe deeply into the top of your chest.
- 15 Breathe deeply out in your abdomen, leaving your chest up and open.