

YOGA FOR YOUR THIRD EYE CHAKRA

POSES TO OPEN AJNA



BALASANA / CHILD'S POSE

A restful pose to start this sequence to centre yourself and to tune inwards. Kneel on the floor, big toes touching and sit on your heels. Separate your knees slightly wider than your hips. Exhale and lay the torso down, in between your thighs. Slowly place your forehead on the mat. You can extend the arms forward, palms facing down or behind you, palms facing up (see pic). Lengthen your tailbone away from the pelvis, while you lift the base of the skull away from the back of your neck. With every exhale, sink deeper into the floor. Feel the weight of the shoulders pulling the shoulder blades across your back. Connect with your breath and stay there for 30 secs to a few minutes.



UTTANA SHISHOSANA / EXTENDED PUPPY POSE

This pose lengthens the spine and calms the mind. Come onto all fours, with your knees under your hips. Start walking the hands forward, as you exhale, and pull the pelvis towards your heels. You are stretching in opposite directions. Keep the arms active and gently place your forehead on the mat and allow your neck to relax. Press the hands down, stretch through the arms and back while pulling the hips back. Breathe into your back and feel your spine lengthen in both directions. Hold for 30 sec to 1 min, then drop your buttocks on your heels to release the pose.



ADHO MUKHA SVANASANA / DOWNWARD FACING DOG

Come back to all fours, check that your hips are above your knees and your shoulders above your wrists. Spread your fingers, press the palms into the floor; as you exhale, lift the knees up and the sit bones towards the ceiling. Lengthen the tailbone and press it slightly towards the pubis. Exhale, push the thighs back and the heels towards the floor. Straighten your knees and turn the thighs slightly inwards. With every inhale, lengthen the back, with every exhale, press the heels down. Gaze towards your navel. Breathe steadily. Stay for 5 breaths to 1 min. Exhale, bend your knees and release to Balasana.



PARSVOTTANASANA / PYRAMID POSE

From standing, step the right foot forward, one leg length in between your feet. Rotate your left foot 45° and check that your heels are on the same line. Firm your thighs, lift the kneecaps and keep the hips levelled. Inhale, grab the opposite elbows behind you or place your hands in reverse prayer position, behind your back (see pic). Inhale, press into the feet and lengthen the back. Exhale, lean the torso forward above your right leg. Keep the hips square. Slowly work towards bringing your forehead to your knee, or your chin to your shin. Breathe steadily through the nose and hold for 15-30 secs. inhale, come up as you press through the heels. Repeat on the other side.



JANUSIRSASANA / HEAD TO KNEE POSE

Sit with your legs straight in front of you. Find your sit bones. Inhale, bend your left knee and place the heel close to the perineum, the sole of the foot on your inner thigh. The left shin should be perpendicular to your right leg. Use a blanket to support the left knee, if needed. Inhale, lengthen the torso and suck the belly in. Exhale, slowly walk your hands towards your right foot, as you bring the torso closer to the thigh, and your chest towards your knee, with a straight back. The lower belly should touch the thigh first. Don't force it; simply acknowledge how far you descend and stay connected to your breath. If you come forward comfortably, grab your feet, or your wrist behind the foot. Hold for 1 minute, as you turn within. Come up on an inhale and swap side.



PASCHIMOTTANASANA / SEATED FORWARD BEND

Sit with your legs straight in front of you. Find your sit bones. Engage your legs and flex your feet. Inhale, lift the sternum and draw the belly in. Exhale, bend from the hips not the waist, lean your chest and torso forward. Breathe in the hamstrings, as you gradually bend forward. Lengthen the tailbone away from the pelvis. The lower belly should touch the thighs first, then the stomach, then the chest, and the head last. If your breath is shallow and restricted, that's your sign to back off a little. Keep breathing steadily where you are. If possible, grab the sides of your feet. To go deeper, grab the wrist behind your feet. Inhale, keep lengthening the torso. Exhale, release deeper in the bend, without forcing it. Stay here for 30 secs to 1 min (or longer if you enjoy this calming pose). To come up, inhale and lift the torso slowly.



APANASANA / KNEES TO CHEST POSE

Lie on your back. Exhale and bring both knees to your chest. Grab your forearms, or opposite elbows over your shins. Slightly tuck your chin in. Inhale, draw the tailbone and sacrum towards the mat, flatten the back on the floor, especially the lower back; exhale, press the knees towards your chest, whilst keeping the sacrum on the mat. Stay here for a few deep breaths. To deepen the stretch, bring your forehead to your knees. This pose activates your third eye and is very calming and soothing. Breathe smoothly and stay there for as long as it's comfortable and enjoyable. To release, exhale and extend your legs to the floor. Repeat a few times and notice how your body and mind feels in between each practice.

Finish the sequence by lying in Savasana (Corpse Pose) for a few minutes.

