

YOGA FOR YOUR THROAT CHAKRA

POSES TO BALANCE VISHUDDHA

NECK TILT AND GENTLE TWIST



1. Sitting in a comfortable position with your spine straight, inhale and place your hands on your shoulders. As you exhale, slowly and gently bring your ear towards the shoulder. Inhale, come back to center and move on to the other side, front and back.

2. Then, release the hands, place your right hand on your left knee and the left hand behind your back to support the spine. Inhale lengthen through the spine; exhale start twisting by gently looking over your left shoulder, without forcing or pushing it. This is a soft neck warm up.

SIMHASANA/ LION POSE



This is a funny one! Bend your right leg, then the left, cross the ankles and sit on the heels, toes pointing back. Bring the weight of the body onto the thighs and knees. Place your palms on your knees, fingers pointing down. (Sit crossed-legged if it's easier for you; in this case, place the back of the palms on your knees.) Sit with your back erect, torso slightly forward, arms stretched. Open the jaws wide and stretch the tongue out towards the chin as far as you can. Gaze at the centre of the eyebrows or tip of the nose. Hold for 30 secs, repeat on the other side by bending the left leg first. This asana helps the speech to become clearer.

ASTANGASANA / EIGHT LIMB POSE



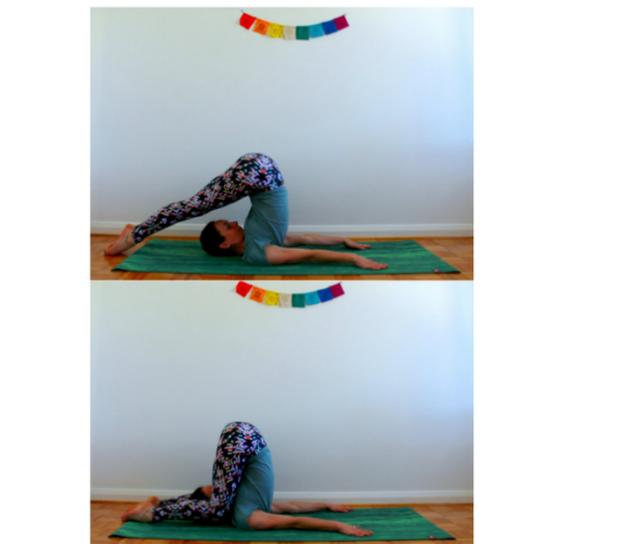
Astangasana is performed in the classical sun salutations. From Downward Facing Dog, exhale and bring the knees, chest and chin to the mat. Keep the hands under the shoulders and hug the elbows towards your torso. Press the chest towards the floor and lift the tailbone towards the ceiling. Breathe slow and steady and hold for 5-10 breaths. To release, either press up into Cobra as you inhale, or push back into table top (on all fours), as you exhale. This asana stretches the neck and shoulders, and lengthens and realigns the spine.

SARVANGASANA / SHOULDERSTAND



Lie down on your mat and take a few deep breaths. Exhale, bend the knees and bring them towards your stomach. On an exhale, lift the hips off the floor, and bring your hands to your lower back. Exhale and lift the trunk perpendicular to the floor, slowly bringing the chest to the chin. Only the neck, shoulders and back of the arms should touch the floor. Exhale, stretch the legs straight, perpendicular to the floor and point your toes. Hold for 1-5 min, as long as you maintain an even breath. From here, option 1 is to release by gradually sliding down (middle back, lower back, hips then legs). Lie there and relax for a few breaths. Option 2 is to continue into the next pose, Halasana, from the shoulderstand.

HALASANA / PLOW POSE



From the shoulderstand, exhale and bend from the hips, slowly lowering the toes to the floor, beyond your head. Keep the torso perpendicular to the floor and the legs extended, as much as possible. Soften the throat and draw the chin away from the sternum. You can keep the hands on the back torso, flat on the floor (picture) or interlace the fingers and keep the arms straight, pressing into the mat. Breathe steadily and hold for 1-2 min. To go further, bend the knees, place them just beyond the shoulders (they should be touching the floor) and press them against your ears (Ear Pressure Pose, lower photo). Rest your shins flat on the floor. Close your eyes and look inwards. This pose is excellent for the thyroid gland. To release, bring your hands onto the lower back for support, move back into the shoulderstand, and unroll very slowly vertebra by vertebra on an exhale. Lie flat on your back and relax for a few breaths, while enjoying the benefits of these inversions.

URDHVA MATSYASANA / EXTENDED FISH POSE



This is a variation of Fish Pose. You can find an easier version of this asana in the Yoga Sequence for Your Heart Chakra post, which is traditionally practised after Sarvangasana and Halasa, on the way down as a counterpose but you can also practise it by itself. It stretches the throat, neck and core. From lying on your back, inhale and lift your chin and chest, arch your spine, and come onto the crown of the head. Then lift your legs up so they are at a 45° angle from the ground. Lift your arms up and extend them so that they are parallel to the legs. Keep extending the ribs up and your core active, while breathing evenly and maintaining balance on your head and buttocks. Hold for 5 breaths. To release, lift the head up, lie down on your back, then release the legs and arms to the mat. Relax for a few breaths.

VIPARITA KARANI/LEGS-UP-THE-WALL POSE



A nice restorative pose to conclude this sequence. This pose gives blood circulation a nice boost towards the upper body and head. You can also rest the legs against a wall and enjoy this mild inversion for several minutes. Lie on your back, arms alongside the body, palms facing down. Inhale and lift both legs up straight until they are perpendicular to the floor. Flex your feet. Keep the head, neck and back in a neutral position. The lower back should be on the mat. Hold for as long as the breath is steady and the pose comfortable. Exhale and slowly release both legs to the mat by engaging your core. If you choose to do it against the wall, allow a little space between your buttocks and the wall. You can also raise the hips by placing a blanket or cushion underneath. Enjoy your relaxation!

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

