

# Intro to Yoga Common Yoga Poses



## Child's Pose

*Balasana*

This is a lovely and nurturing pose that resembles the curled up position of a baby in the womb. Child pose is soothing for the back and restful for the head, face, and eyes; it also develops softness and flexibility in the knees, ankles, and hips.



## Seated Forward Fold

*Paschimottasana*

Many people find this pose frustrating because they want to touch their toes. Because we sit on chairs from an early age, we lose a great deal of flexibility in our lower back and legs. The key to this posture and patience and practice rather than force.



## Cobra Pose

*Bhujangasana*

The shape of this posture resembles a snake that is ready to strike. It helps to develop strength and flexibility in the upper spine, tones the digestive, eliminative, nervous and respiratory systems, and like all backbends, stimulates the brain and is generally refreshing and invigorating.



## Knees to chest pose

*Apanasana*

This is a wonderful way to relax the large muscles in the lower back and reduce tension in the area of the sacrum and hips. It is also an excellent counter pose for backbends or twisting postures. Take your time in this posture and try to visualize the back surface of your body slowly spreading out, softening and loosening. Observe how the simple act of breathing in can expand the muscles in the back of your body and how breathing releases them.



## Mountain Pose

*Tadasana*

This pose promotes calm, stillness and an awareness of your center. The pose forms the starting point for other standing poses, and it grounds the mind and body in preparation for more complex poses.



## Bridge Pose

*Setu Bandhasana*

The pose helps to develop flexibility, strength and an awareness of the way in which you can use your abdominal and pelvic floor muscles. Bridge pose strengthens your legs and helps your chest open out. It also stimulates the spine and the glands in the neck.

## Warrior I & Warrior II

*Virabhadrasana*

Both poses work strongly on the connection between the pelvis, hips and lower back. They tone and strengthen the thigh muscles and harness energy and strength, which are directed wherever that is needed in the body or mind.



## Twisting

Twisting postures increase suppleness in your spine and strongly stimulate your internal organs - in particular your kidneys, stomach, pancreas and spleen. They also help to develop awareness of your breathing. There are many variations of twisting postures in yoga-some, such as the lying down twist, are passive and rely on the weight of the body to create the twist, others are more active.

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**Bound Angle Pose**  
*Baddha Konasana*

The body folds forward at the hips, which helps to develop hip flexibility and spinal extension. It strengthens the lower abdomen and helps to relieve menstrual and bladder problems, including period pain.



**Standing Forward Bend**  
*Uttanasana*

Forward bends stimulate the spine, aid digestion and elimination and help to remove toxins from the body. This pose aligns the legs and hips, stretches the hamstrings and tones your whole system by inverting the upper body. Try to fold forward by relaxing your torso rather than pushing down to reach your toes. If you have a stiff back, take this pose gently and pay attention to your breath.



**Downward Facing Dog**  
*Adho Mukha Svanasana*

It is an energizing and refreshing pose that develops great strength and freedom and movement in your upper body.



**Triangle**  
*Trikonasana*

This pose helps to align the hips, legs, and torso and to develop strength, flexibility and stamina.



**Extended Side Angle**  
*Parsvokonasana*

Regular practice of this pose brings flexibility and strength to the spine and legs, and improves digestion, elimination and an awareness of body alignment.



**Tree Pose**  
*Vrksasana*

This pose helps to develop mental and physical equilibrium. Balance is strongly effected by your mental state and by learning to balance the body, your can learn how to calm the mind.



**Crescent Lunge**  
*Anjaneyasana*

This pose stretches the legs, groin, and hip flexors, while also opening the front torso, chest, and shoulders. It strengthens and tones the thighs, hips, and butt, while the balancing aspect helps to develop flexible stability. Considered a balance pose, backbend, and heart opener, Crescent Lunge helps the front of the body to expand, which increases energy and reduces fatigue.