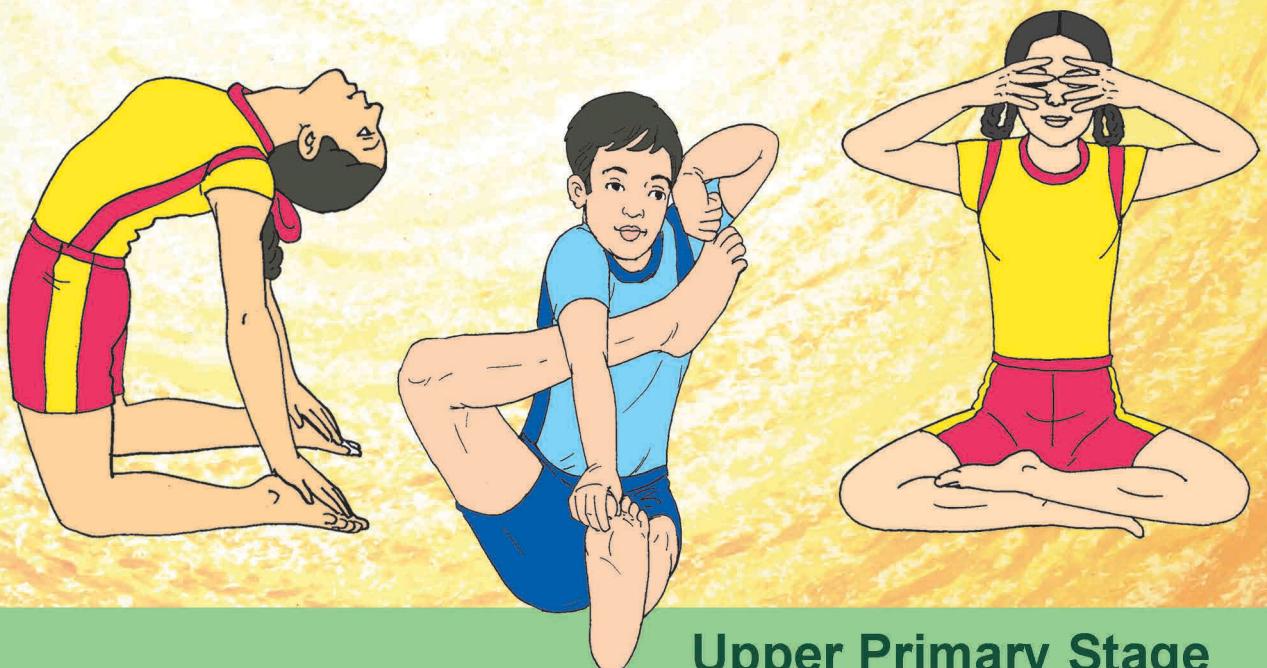


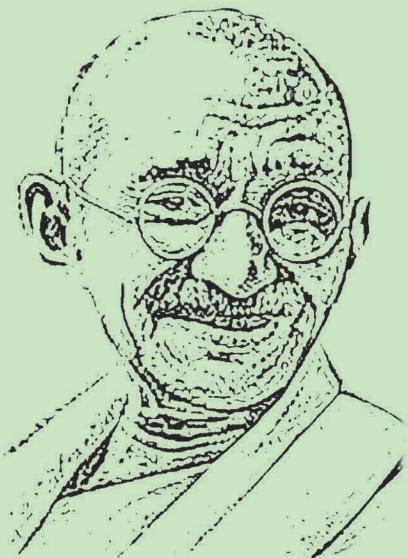


Yoga

A Healthy Way of Living



Upper Primary Stage



.....Ahimsa is the very definition of woman and there is no place for untruth in her heart. If she is true to herself she is no longer Abala – the weak, but she is Sabala – the strong.....

Yoga

A Healthy Way of Living

Upper Primary Stage

विद्या स मृतमनुरोद्धे



राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

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Foreword

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) takes the pride of contributing through this book entitled *Yoga: A Healthy Way of Living* meant for school children while celebrating International Yoga Day on 21 June. Yoga is an integral part of 'Health and Physical Education' which is a compulsory subject upto secondary stage. This curricular area adopts a holistic definition of health within which Physical Education and Yoga contribute to the physical, social, emotional and mental development of a child. Yoga has been considered to be introduced from Class VI onwards, though yogic activities may begin in an informal way from primary level onwards. The present book is meant for upper primary stage.

The main emphasis of this textual material is on developing physical fitness, emotional stability, concentration and mental development among the learners. It consists of four units. The first unit is an introductory unit. The other three units give a brief description of *Asanas*, *Pranayamas*, *Kriyas* and Meditation followed by successive actions or steps of these yogic practices. The language and explanations are simple and profusely illustrative so that students can learn and practise it even at home. This material is useful for teachers and others who wish to learn some common and important yogic practices for healthy living. The success of this effort depends on the steps that school principals and teachers will take to encourage children to do these practices and reflect on their learning.

I am highly thankful to Professor Saroj Yadav, Dean (Academic) and Project Coordinator of National Population Education Project (NPEP) and Adolescence Education Programme (AEP) and her team for their continuous effort to develop this material in the present form.

As an organisation committed to systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinement.

It is hoped that the students and teachers will find it useful.

B. K. TRIPATHI

Director

New Delhi

5 June 2015

National Council of Educational

Research and Training

About the Book

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) on the eve of International Yoga Day to be observed on 21st June has developed textual material on yogic activities for students of Upper Primary and Secondary stages. This textual material is meant for the students of upper primary stage (Classes VI to VIII). It includes various yogic activities to be performed by students of this stage. These activities are an integral part of the syllabi of Health and Physical Education brought out by NCERT. Yoga has been considered to be introduced from the primary level onwards in informal ways, but formal introduction of yogic exercises should begin only from Class VI onwards.

In this textual material, practices of *asanas* and *pranayama* have been given importance. Besides *asanas*, and *pranayama*, *kriyas* and meditation have also been included.

This book has four units. The first unit is an introductory, explains in brief the origin and history of Yoga and the general guidelines for doing yogic activities. This unit also includes specific guidelines related to yogic practices (*asanas*, *pranayama*, *kriyas* and meditation, etc.). The second unit is for students of Class VI and whereas the third and fourth units are for students of Classes VII and VIII respectively. In the second, third and fourth units, brief description of each yogic activity, followed by a description of steps or stages for practice have been included. The benefits have been given yogic activity-wise. Some important do's and don'ts including limitations which have to be kept in mind while practising these yogic practices have also been given. A special feature of this textual material is that it is profusely illustrative. Teachers can also learn the yogic activities listed in the syllabus with its help after some initial training in *yogasanas*. Illustrations have made the material more attractive and

user-friendly. The material was developed by a team of experts in yoga and practitioners. We are deeply indebted to all of them for their invaluable help in preparing this textual material. It is hoped that the students and teachers will find it useful.

Professor Saroj Yadav
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The National Council of Educational Research and Training wishes to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of the experts and teachers in reviewing and updating the material on *Yoga : A Healthy Way of Living*. This work inevitably required many helping hands and without their support it would not have been possible to bring out this publication within the stipulated time.

We are thankful to the following for their invaluable suggestions: Dr. Ishwar V. Basavardaddi, *Director*, Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, New Delhi; Shri Ashok Dhawan, *Coordinator (Yoga)*, Physical Education, Directorate of Education, Delhi; Dr. Devender Singh, *Asstt. Professor*, DIET, Delhi; Smt. Indra Sagar, *Physical Education Teacher*, JNV, Jafarpur, Delhi; Shri Ish Kumar, *Yoga Teacher* and the students of Govt. Boys S.S., Model Town, Delhi; Smt. Neelam Arora, *Yoga Teacher* and the students of SKV Model Town No. 1, Delhi; Ms. Suchint Kaur, Kaivalyadham, Lonavala, Maharashtra; Smt. Sarita Sharma, *Yoga Teacher* and students, Government SKV, Sector-4, R.K. Puram, Delhi; and Dr. Vipin Anand, *Yoga Teacher*, KV, JNU, New Delhi.

We are also thankful to Ms. Seema Jabeen Hussain and Shri Fajruddin for illustrating the book. We also acknowledge the sincere efforts made by Smt. Shashi Chadha for copy editing the book.

We appreciate the special efforts put in by Shri Bijnan Sutar, *Editor*; Shri Mathew John, *Editorial Assistant*, and Shri Mukesh Kumar Gaur, *Production Assistant* of Publication Division in bringing out this publication in time.

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Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	<i>iii</i>
Unit 1 : Introduction	1
Overview	1
What is Yoga	1
Importance of Yoga	2
Yoga – Its History	2
Objectives of Yogic Practices	3
General Guidelines for Yogic Practices	3
Common Yogic Practices	5
• <i>Yama and Niyama</i>	5
• <i>Asana</i>	6
• <i>Pranayama</i>	7
• <i>Pratyahara</i>	8
• <i>Bandha Mudra</i>	8
• <i>Shatkarma/Kriya</i>	9
• Meditation	9
Unit 2 : Yoga for Health	11
Overview	11
• <i>Surya Namaskar</i>	12
Asanas	17
• <i>Tadasana</i>	17
• <i>Vrikshasana</i>	18
• <i>Utkatasana</i>	20
• <i>Vajrasana</i>	22
• <i>Swastikasana</i>	23
• <i>Ardhapadmasana</i>	25
• <i>Niralamba Bhujangasana</i>	27
• <i>Ardhashalabhasana</i>	28
• <i>Makarasana</i>	30
• <i>Uttanapadadasana</i>	31
• <i>Pawanamuktasana</i>	33

• <i>Shavasana</i>	35
• Breathing with Awareness	36
• <i>Trataka</i>	38
• Meditation	39
Unit 3 : Yoga for Physical Fitness	43
Overview	43
What is Flexibility	43
Yogic Practices to Enhance Flexibility	44
• <i>Surya Namaskara</i>	45
Asanas	46
• <i>Tadasana</i>	46
• <i>Hastottanasana</i>	47
• <i>Trikonasana</i>	48
• <i>Katichakrasana</i>	50
• <i>Padmasana</i>	51
• <i>Yogamudrasana</i>	53
• <i>Paschimottanasana</i>	54
• <i>Dhanurasana</i>	56
• <i>Makarasana</i>	58
• <i>Supta Vajrasana</i>	58
• <i>Chakrasana</i>	60
• <i>Ardhahalasana</i>	61
• <i>Shavasana</i>	63
Kriya	63
• <i>Kapalabhati</i>	63
Pranayama	64
• <i>Anuloma-viloma Pranayama</i>	64
• <i>Bhastrika Pranayama</i>	66
Meditation	67
Unit 4 : Yoga for Concentration	70
Overview	70
Yogic Practices for Concentration	72
Asana	72
• <i>Garudasana</i>	73
• <i>Baddhapadmasana</i>	74
• <i>Gomukhasana</i>	76
• <i>Ardhamatsyendrasana</i>	77

• <i>Bhujangasana</i>	79
• <i>Shalabhasana</i>	80
• <i>Makarasana</i>	82
• <i>Matsyasana</i>	82
• <i>Naukasana</i>	84
• <i>Setubandhasana</i>	85
• <i>Halasana</i>	87
• <i>Shavasana</i>	89
<i>Kriya</i>	89
• <i>Agnisara</i>	89
<i>Pranayama</i>	91
• <i>Anuloma-viloma Pranayama</i>	91
• <i>Seetkari Pranayama</i>	91
• <i>Bhramari Pranayama</i>	93
<i>Meditation</i>	94

Do You Know?



According to the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002, free and compulsory education for all children in 6-14 year age group is now a Fundamental Right under Article 21-A of the Constitution.

**EDUCATION IS NEITHER A
PRIVILEGE NOR FAVOUR BUT A
BASIC HUMAN RIGHT TO
WHICH ALL GIRLS AND WOMEN
ARE ENTITLED**

*Give Girls
Their Chance !*



Unit 1

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

Yoga is a healthy way of life, originated in India. Now, it is believed to be a form of science accepted all over the world. The western culture is also accepting it as a healthy form of scientific exercise. Although the origin of yoga is obscure, it has a long tradition. Yoga for a common person contains the practices of *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *kriya* and meditation, which are helpful to keep oneself physically fit, mentally alert and emotionally balanced. This ultimately prepares ground for the spiritual development of an individual.

The main emphasis of the present yoga curriculum for school-going children is to develop their physical fitness, mental development and emotional stability.

Posture or *asana* form an important basis of this curriculum. These have, therefore, been given more weightage. Though other yogic activities have also been included in the curriculum.

WHAT IS YOGA?

The word 'Yoga' is derived from Sanskrit root *yuj* which means 'join' or 'unite'. This may be taken as the union of body, mind and soul, and is used in the literature both as an end as well as means. As an end, yoga signifies 'integration of personality' at the highest level. As means, yoga includes various practices and techniques which are employed to achieve the development of such integration.

These practices and techniques are means in the yogic literature and are also referred collectively as 'Yoga'.

IMPORTANCE OF YOGA

Good health is the right of every human being. But this right depends on individual, social and environmental factors. Along with environmental or social factors to a large extent, we can develop a better immune system and a better perception of oneself so that other conditions do not affect us adversely and we can achieve good health.

Health is a positive concept. Positive health does not mean merely freedom from disease, but it also include a jubilant and energetic feeling of well-being with an amount of general resistance and capacity to easily cultivate immunity against specific offending agents.

Yoga is one of the most powerful drugless system of treatment. It is having its own concept of wellness which has been scientifically understood and presented by many. Yoga can be adopted as lifestyle for promoting our physical and mental health. Yoga, if introduced at the school level, would help to inculcate healthy habits and lifestyle to achieve good health.

The aim of yoga thus, at the school level, is to encourage a positive and healthy lifestyle for physical, mental and emotional health of children. Yoga helps in the development of strength, stamina, endurance and high energy at physical level. It also empowers oneself with increased concentration, calm, peace and contentment at mental level leading to inner and outer harmony.

YOGA – ITS HISTORY

Yoga has its origin thousands of years ago in India. It has originated from a universal desire to attaining happiness and getting rid of sufferings. According to yogic lore, Shiva

is considered the founder of yoga. A number of seals and fossil remains of Indus Valley Civilisation, dating back to 2700 BC indicates that yoga was prevalent in ancient India. However, systematic reference of yoga is found in Patanjali's *Yogadarshana*. Maharishi Patanjali systematised the yogic practices. After Patanjali, many sages/yogis contributed to its development and as a result yoga has now spread all over the world. In this sequence, on 11 December 2014, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) with 193 members approved the proposal to celebrate 'June 21' as the 'International Yoga Day'.

OBJECTIVES OF YOGIC PRACTICES

- To develop a understanding of yogic practices and apply this understanding accordingly in one's life and living.
- To develop healthy habits and lifestyle in children.
- To develop humane values in children.
- To develop physical, emotional and mental health through yogic activities.

General Guidelines for Yogic Practices

Yoga may be introduced from the primary level onwards in informal ways, but formal introduction of yogic exercises should begin only from Class VI. The yoga curriculum must address itself to the children and there should be some hints to them to take up a study of this subject on their own in addition to what is being taught in the class. Yogic activities can be done by all children including children with special needs. However, children with special needs should perform these activities in consultation with yoga experts/yoga teacher as per their capacity.

- The yogic practices should start with a quiet mood which could be attained by reciting a short prayer.

- It is essential that body should be prepared by activities such as ankle bending, knee bending, finger movements, hand clenching, wrist bending, wrist rotation, elbow bending, shoulder rotation and eye movement. After this, *Surya Namaskara* can be practised.
- Regularity of practice is essential both in the physical and mental aspects of yoga.
- Patience is an important requirement for yoga. Do not despair if you do not succeed today in doing a certain *asana* or in following a right principle of conduct. Perseverence in your efforts is needed. Success will come with time.
- Do not compete but cooperate. A spirit of competition is a definite hindrance on the path of yoga. Competitions feed our ego while yoga helps us to rise above our ego.
- Yogic practices should be learnt under the guidance of experienced teacher.
- Most of the *asanas*, *pranayamas* and *kryias* should be practised on an empty or on a very light stomach. Bladders should be emptied and bowels should be evacuated before starting these practices.
- Early morning is the ideal time for yoga practice but it can also be practised in the evening with empty stomach about three hours after lunch.
- Yoga should not be practised in hurry or when you are exhausted.
- Select a well-ventilated, clean and non-disturbing place for your practice.
- Yogic practices should not be performed on hard surface. A *durry*, a mat or a blanket can be used for this purpose.
- Bath before the practice is good. Use cold or warm water as per the requirement of the individual and season.
- Clothes should be loose and comfortable while performing the yogic practices.

- Breathing should be as normal/natural as possible. It is not to be manipulated unless instructed specifically to do so.
- There are limitations of yogic practices. If you are suffering from any problem or chronic disease, inform your teacher before starting yogic practices.
- Yogic practices should be adopted on the basis of the principle of progress. At initial stage, easy practices should be adopted. Later on more difficult ones can be practised. Therefore, start with simple yogic practices and gradually proceed to do advanced practices.
- Yogic practices should not be combined with other physical activities in same session. These are two different types of activities and could be separately practised.
- Yogic practices can be carried on at home once they are properly learnt in the school.
- Yoga has a broader meaning. Therefore, apart from *asana* and *pranayama*, one should practise moral and ethical values in life.

COMMON YOGIC PRACTICES

Yoga propound several practices such as *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *shatkarma* (cleansing practices), *mudra*, *bandha*, *dharana*, *dhyana* (meditation). Here, we will discuss those practices which are commonly used.

Yama and Niyama

These are initial sets of principles that are concerned with our conduct in personal and social life. These are related to ethics and values.

Asana

The term *asana* means sitting in a particular posture, which is comfortable and which could be maintained steadily for long time. *Asana* gives stability and comfort, both at physical and mental level.

Guidelines for the Practice of Asanas

- Generally, the *asanas* are practised in the sequence of standing, sitting, prone-lying and supine-lying position. Though there is other version which follow different sequence.
- *Asanas* must not be practised in haste or by applying any sort of undue force. Jerks should be avoided.
- *Asanas* should be performed with body and breath awareness. There should be coordination between breath and movement of body parts.
- As a general rule, inhale while raising any part of the body and exhale while bending down.
- The practitioner has to follow instructions sincerely and practise them with an optimal attention.
- Final position should be attained slowly step by step and should be maintained with closed eyes for an inward awareness within the body.
- Final position of *asanas* must be maintained for as long as one is comfortable.
- One should maintain the final posture according to one's own limitations and should not go beyond one's capacity.
- During maintenance phase of *asana*, there should ideally be no tremors or any type of discomfort.
- An utmost care must be taken in increasing the time for maintaining the *asanas*.

- Regular practice is essential. Body starts listening to your command only after a regular and diligent training for a sufficient period of time. If regularity is disturbed due to some reasons, then one should resume the practice as soon as possible.
- In the initial phase, yogic practices involve de-conditioning and re-conditioning processes. Therefore, initially, one may feel little fatigued after the practice but after few days' practice, body and mind get adjusted and one starts experiencing a feeling of well-being and happiness again.

Pranayama

Pranayama consists of the breathing techniques which are related to the control of breath or respiratory process. *Pranayama* popularly known as yogic breathing, involves a conscious manipulation of our breathing pattern.

The health of the respiratory system depends upon the quality as well as the quantity of air inhaled by the person. It also depends on the rhythm and completeness of the breathing. Through *pranayama*, a practitioner advantageously works with her/his respiratory, cardiovascular and nervous systems which bring about emotional stability and peace of mind.

Pranayama has three phases known as *puraka*, *rechaka* and *kumbhaka*. *Puraka* is the controlled inhalation; *rechaka* is controlled exhalation and *kumbhaka* is controlled retention of breath.

Initially, the exhalation (*rechaka*) may be only a little more prolonged in comparison with inhalation. Insistence on 1:2 ratio in the beginning may prove counterproductive. As we practice, 1:2 ratio is reached in natural manner.

Guidelines for the Practice of *Pranayama*

- *Pranayama* should be done preferably after the practice of *asanas*.
- Breathing in *pranayama* should be done through the nose only except *sheetali* and *sheetkari*.
- During *pranayama*, there should not be strain in facial muscles, eyes, ears, neck, shoulders or any other part of the body.
- During *pranayama*, eyes should remain closed.
- In the beginning, one should be aware about the natural flow of the breathing. Make inhalation and exhalation prolonged in a gradual manner.
- While observing breathing, attend to your abdominal movement which bulges a bit during inhalation and goes in a bit during exhalation.
- In the beginning stage one should gradually learn to maintain the 1:2 ratio of breathing which means exhalation time should be double the inhalation. However, while practising *pranayama*, do not make haste in resorting to any of the above mentioned ideal ratio.

Pratyahara

Yogic practice of *Pratyahara* means withdrawal of senses from sense organs in order to control mind. In *pratyahara* the awareness about the external surrounding is withdrawn and is taken to inside. Introspection, studying good books are some practices which can help in *pratyahara*.

Bandha and Mudra

Bandha and *Mudra* are the practices involving manipulation of certain semi-voluntary and involuntary muscles in the body. These practices bring about voluntary control and tone up the internal organs.

Shatkarma/Kriya (Cleansing Process)

Shatkarma means six *karmas* or *kriyas*. The *karma/kriya* means ‘action’. *Shatkarma* are purificatory process which cleanse the specific organs of the body by detoxifying them. The purification helps to keep the body and mind healthy.

There are six cleansing processes described in hatha-yogic texts. These are *Neti*, *Dhauti*, *Basti*, *Trataka*, *Nauli* and *Kapalabhati*. These are beneficially used to clean the internal organs or systems by using water, air or manipulation of certain organs of the body.

Guidelines for the Practice of Kriyas

- *Kriyas* should be done with an empty stomach. Therefore, they should be done preferably in the morning.
- *Kriyas* should be performed under the supervision of an expert.
- Each *kriya* has specific process which should be strictly adhered to.
- Different things like water, salt, air, manipulation are used for each *kriya*.

Meditation

Meditation is a relaxation practice which induces relaxation in body and mind. In meditation, concentration is focussed for a long time on a single object like, breath, tip of the nose, etc. Meditation is a relaxing practice; it develops a sense of well-being in the person.

Guidelines for the Practice of Meditation

- Practice of *asanas* and *pranayama* will help in developing ability to sit in one position for a considerable period of time in meditation.

- Select a peaceful calm and quiet place for the practice of meditation.
- Allow your eyes to get closed gently to enter into an inner awareness.
- A meditative practice invites many thoughts, memories and emotions on the surface of mind. Remain non-reactive to them.
- As you continue with this process for some time, you may feel an abstract and a non-specific awareness of the whole body. Now continue with the whole body awareness. In case of any difficulty, go back to the breathing awareness.
- In the beginning, it is generally difficult to observe the breath. If mind wanders, do not feel guilty. Slowly but firmly bring your attention to your breath.

Unit 2

YOGA FOR HEALTH

OVERVIEW

Yoga has become very popular not only in our country but also in many other parts of the world. Yogic practices lead to the development of holistic health. As said in the introduction, Yoga specifically means a connection of body and mind. It contributes to the promotion and maintenance of healthy body and sound mind. We can develop abilities like agility, balance, coordination, strength and flexibility by performing yogic practices. These also improve physical, mental and emotional health. It also helps in better functioning of all the systems of the body. Yoga thus helps in overall well-being of a person.

You have seen people of different age groups, performing various yogic practices such as *asanas* and *pranayamas*. Yogic practices are beneficial for the health of people of all age groups including children. In this context, you need to know the following important points as students.

Points to remember:

- As informed in the introduction, regularity of practices is essential. We should follow the practices with sincerity and faith.
- Yoga is primarily used as a preventive measure. It can also be used for better management of physical and mental disorders.
- We should not expect miracles and have patience.

- Due to any reason, if practices are discontinued, we can start again with the basic practices and gradually move ahead.
- The duration and time of yogic practices depend on your availability.
- Along with yogic practices, it is important to take nutritious and healthy food. We should take atleast eight hours of sound sleep.

In order to bring more flexibility, *Surya Namaskara* should be practised.

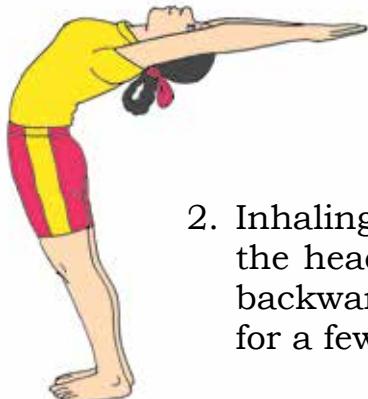
Surya Namaskara

Surya means Sun and *Namaskara* means salutation. It is basically salutating the Sun through postures.

Surya Namaskara is a series of 12 physical postures. These postures stretch various muscles and spinal column and give flexibility to the whole body.

Let us perform *Surya Namaskara* by following the steps given below:

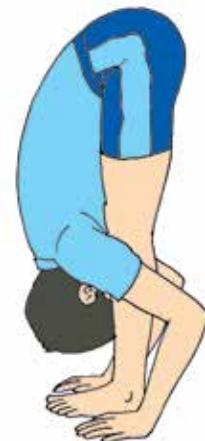
1. Stand erect with feet together. Join the palms together in front of the chest in a *namaskara mudra*. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.



2. Inhaling, raise both arms above the head and slightly bend trunk backward. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.

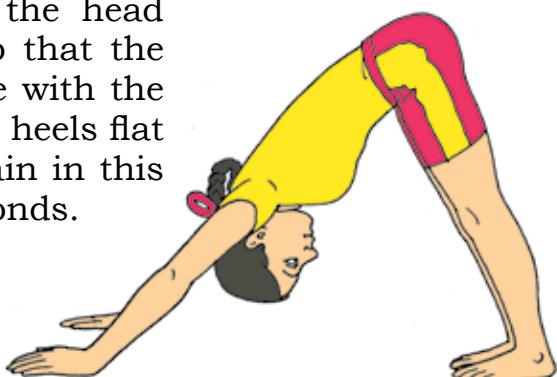


3. Exhaling, bend forward from the waist keeping the arms by the side of the ears until palms touches the floor on both sides of the feet and the forehead touches the knees. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.



4. Extend the right leg behind as far as possible. Bend the left knee and keep the left foot on ground between the palms. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.

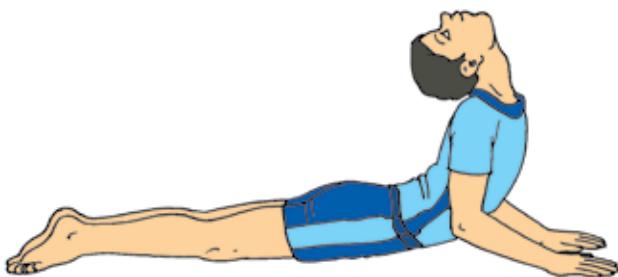
5. Exhaling, bring the left leg back to join with the right leg. Simultaneously, raise the buttocks and lower the head between the arms so that the body forms a triangle with the floor. Try to place the heels flat on the ground. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.



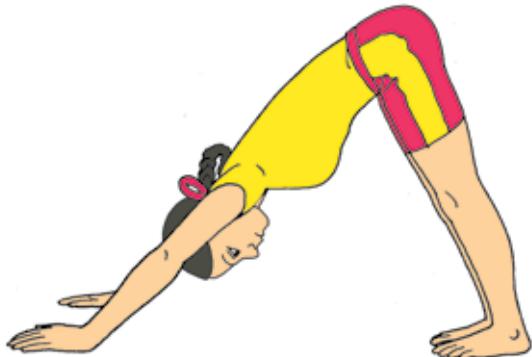
6. Gently lower knees, chest and chin to the ground with normal breathing. Toes, knees, chest, hands and chin should touch the floor. The buttocks are kept up. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.



7. Lower the hips while pushing the chest forward, and raise the trunk upward until the spine is fully arched and the head is facing up. The legs and lower abdomen remain on the floor. Inhale while raising torso. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.



8. Exhaling, lower the trunk keeping the palms flat on the floor. Place both feet flat on the ground. Raise the buttocks and lower the head between the arms. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.



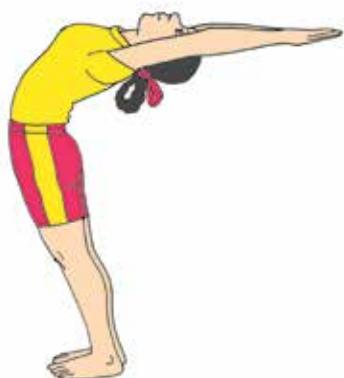
9. Inhaling, extend the left leg behind as far as possible. Bend the right knee and keep the right foot on the ground between the palms. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.



10. Exhaling, bring the stretched left foot forward. Join both legs, straighten the knees and bend forward. Bring the head near the knees. Palms should be placed on floor beside the feet. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.



11. Inhaling raise both arms and the trunk slowly. Bend backwards with arms stretched up. Stay in the posture for a few seconds.



12. Breathing out, come to an erect and straight position. Bring the hands in front of the chest and join the palms together in *namaskara* posture. Breathe normally in this position. Remain in this posture for a few seconds.



Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronise breathing with the movements of the body. • Inhale during upward bending and exhale during forward bending. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not practice beyond your capacity. • The person having spinal cord injury should not practise <i>surya namaskara</i>.

Benefits

- It helps to increase strength, endurance and flexibility.
- It improves concentration.
- It removes excess fat.
- It gives energy to the body.
- It helps in increasing the height of growing children and tones up their body.
- It warms up the body.
- It improves blood circulation all over the body.
- It provides flexibility to the whole body.

Let us now perform the following *asana* for health.

Tadasana (Palm Tree Posture)

Tada in Sanskrit means ‘Palm tree’. This is called *Tadasana* because in it the body imitates a ‘Palm tree’. This tree is known for its height and also for being vertically straight. Hence, it has been named *tadasana*.

Let us perform *Tadasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Stand erect, legs together, hands by the side of the thighs. Keep the back straight and gaze in front.

1. Stretch the arms upward, over the head and parallel with each other, with the palms facing each other.
2. Slowly raise the heels and stand on toes. Raise heels as much as you can. Stretch body up as much as possible. Stay for a few seconds in this final position.

Releasing position:

3. While returning to the original position, bring the heels on the floor first.
4. Slowly bring down the hands by the side of the thighs and relax.



Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inner arms should touch the respective ears and hands parallel to each other. • Stretch the arms and fingers fully. • Keep the head, neck and the body in one line. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not bend forward or backward.

Benefits

- It gives vertical stretch to whole body muscles.
- It strengthens thighs, knees and ankles.
- It helps in improving height of growing children.
- It helps to remove laziness and lethargy.

Limitations

- Those having complaints of *reeling sensation* should not practise it.
- Avoid performing this *asana* if knee joints and ankle joints are having pain and stiffness.

Vrikshasana (Tree Posture)

This is a balancing *asana*. The Sanskrit word *vriksha* means 'tree', thus, this is the 'Tree Posture'. In the imagination of the tree, foot seems as a roots, leg is the trunk, arms as the branches and leaves, head as top of the tree, all make the posture in the shape of a tree.



Let us perform the *Vrikshasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Stand with the feet together and the arms by the sides and gaze in front.

1. Bend the right leg at the knee. Keep the sole of the right foot as high as possible in the inside of the left leg thigh (heel upwards and toes downwards).
2. Balancing on the left foot, raise both the arms over the head and joining the palms together or may bring both the arms in the front of the chest with palms joined together (*Namaskara* posture). Hold the position for 10–15 seconds.

Releasing position:

3. Take both the arms down by the side of the body.
4. Bring down the right leg on the floor and stand erect.
5. Repeat the procedure from left leg.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention should be focused on any fix point, in front. • Try maintaining the balance of the body on one leg. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not bend the body in the final posture.

Benefits

- Regular practice of this posture will help in developing concentration among students.
- Regular practice of the *Vrikshasana* improves balance and coordination of body.
- It improves blood circulation.
- It tones up muscles of the legs.

Limitations

- Person having reeling sensation should not practise this *asana*.

Utkatasana

In Sanskrit *ut* means ‘raised’ and *kata* refers to ‘hips’. This *asana* is also a balancing posture. The posture is known as *utkatasana* because in this *asana*, the hips are kept raised.

Let us perform the *Utkatasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Stand erect placing both the feet firmly on the floor.

1. Make a comfortable distance between the feet, about 8-12 inches.
2. Raise both the arms in front, up to shoulder level and palms should be facing downward.
3. Raising the heels stand on the toes and slowly sit on the toes.
4. Hands should be placed on the respective knees. Maintain the position for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing position:

5. Balancing the body, keep the arms on the floor.
6. Maintaining the balance, slowly stand erect on the toes and raise both the arms in front, up to shoulder level.



7. Place the heels on the floor. Bring the hands by the side of the thighs and feet together.
8. Stand erect with placing both the feet firmly on the floor.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the balance while taking and releasing the posture. • In the final posture, upper part of the body should remain erect. • In the final posture, weight should be taken by hamstring muscles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not put the body weight on heels. • Do not bend forward.

Benefits

- It enhances the mobility of the knee joints, ankle joints and hip joints.
- It strengthens the muscles of the legs (hamstring and calf), the arms, biceps, shoulder, the pelvis and the lower back.
- It reduces the fat in the waist and hip joint and makes good figure of the body. This helps in enhancing self-esteem.
- It improves functioning of digestive system.

Limitations

- Those having complaints of reeling sensation should not practise it.
- Avoid performing the *asana* if knee joints and ankle joints are having pain and stiffness.

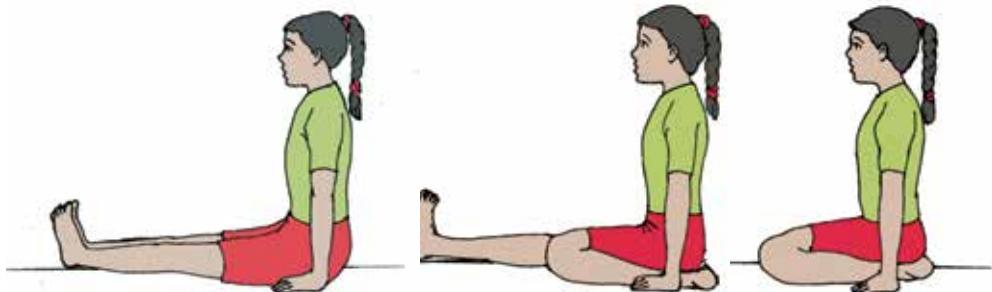
Vajrasana

This is a meditative posture. It is the only *asana* which can be practised immediately after taking meals.

Let us perform the *Vajrasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit with legs extended together, hands by the side of the body, resting on the ground.

1. Fold the left leg at the knee and place the foot under the left buttock.
2. Similarly, fold the right leg and place the foot under the right buttock.
3. Place both the heels so that the big toes overlap each other.
4. Position the buttocks in the space between the heels.
5. Keep the hands on respective knees.
6. Keep spine erect, gaze in front or close the eyes. Initially you can stay for 10–15 seconds.



Releasing position:

7. While returning to the original position, bend a little towards right side, take out your left leg and extend it.
8. Similarly, extend your right leg and keep arms on the sides of the body.

Return to the original position.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the final posture spine must be erect. • Heels should be outside and buttocks should be resting on the heels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not bend forward or backward.

Benefits

- It is a meditative posture and helps in concentration.
- It improves our digestive system.
- This strengthens muscles of thighs and calf.

Limitations

Those suffering from chronic knee pain should not practise *Vajrasana*.

Swastikasana (Auspicious Posture)

The Sanskrit word *Swastika* is normally considered to be an amalgamation of the words *su* and *asati*. *Su* means 'good' and

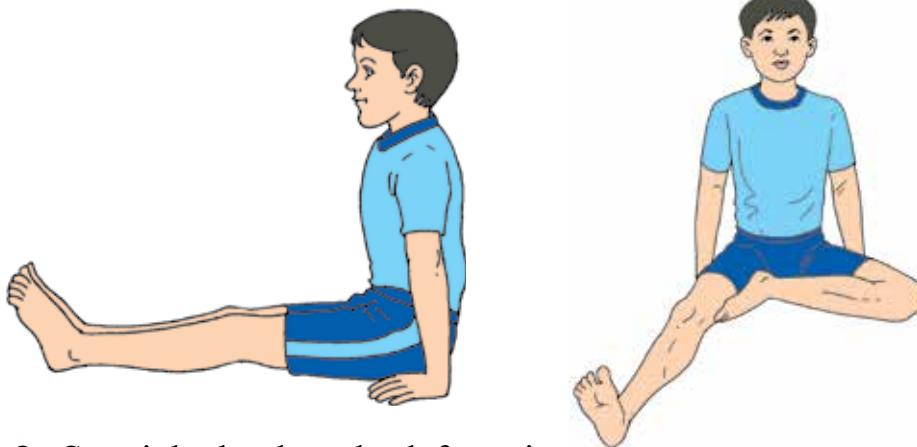


asti means ‘being’. Thus, *Swastika* would mean well-being. *Swastika* is considered an auspicious sign in Indian culture. It is a symbol of goodness.

Let us perform the *Swastikasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit erect with legs extended together.

1. Set left heel against the right groin.



2. Set right heel to the left groin.
3. Insert toes in between thighs and calves. Sit erect keeping the spine straight. Keep hands in *jnana mudra* on knees. For forming *jnana mudra*, bent the index fingers and join the tip of the index finger with tip of the thumb. This is known as *Swastikasana*. Maintain the position for 10 seconds.

Releasing position:

4. Release the hands and keep them on floor by the sides of the body.
5. Extend the right leg back to the position.
6. Extend the left leg back to the position.
7. Sit in the starting position.

Repeat the posture by changing the sequence of legs.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the final posture, spine must be erect. • Adjust the feet in such a way that the knees are kept on the ground. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not apply undue force to assume the posture. • Do not bend backward.

Benefits

- It helps in concentration of mind.
- It strengthens ankle joints.
- This posture helps to increase flexibility in knee joints and ankle joints.

Limitations

- Avoid this *asana* if suffering from sciatica or pain in knee joints and ankle joints.

***Ardhapadmasana* (Half Lotus Posture)**

Ardhapadmasana also is a meditative posture. This is done by arranging one foot on the opposite thigh and the other foot under the opposite thigh. It is called *ardhapadmasana* or half-lotus posture because half the technique of *padmasana* is employed in this posture.



Let us perform the *asana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit with legs extended together, i.e., long sitting posture.

1. Fold the right leg in the knee and place the sole of right foot against inside of left thigh.
2. Fold the left leg at the knee and place the left foot on the top of right thigh.
3. Place the hands on the respective knees in *jnana mudra* and maintain the pose for a comfortable time. This *asana* may be continued for any length of time.

Releasing position:

4. Release the *jnana mudra* and keep the hands by the sides of the body.
5. Extend the left leg back to the position.
6. Extend the right leg and sit in long sitting posture.

Now repeat it by changing the position of legs.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the final posture spine must be erect. • Adjust the feet in such a way that the knees are kept on the ground. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not apply undue force to assume the posture. • Do not bend at the back.

Benefits

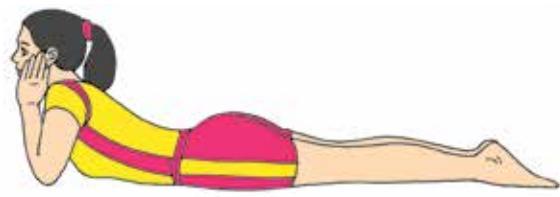
- It promotes blood supply in pelvic area, beneficially affecting the organs of that area.
- This posture helps to promote better concentration.
- It removes mental and physical fatigue. This helps in developing harmony in body and mind.

Limitations

- Avoid performing this *asana* if suffering from sciatica or pain in knee joints and ankle joints.

Niralamba Bhujangasana (Cobra Posture)

This is a modified simple form of *Bhujangasana*. *Bhujanga* in Sanskrit means cobra (snake). In this *asana*, the body looks like a cobra, hence it is called *Bhujangasana*.



Let us do this *asana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Lie flat on the stomach with toes and heels kept together and forehead on the ground. Arms stretched up over the head.



1. Inhaling slowly raise head, chin, neck, shoulders and chest up to the navel with the support of the forearms.
2. Raise your head upwards, allowing it to bend backwards.
3. Now bend arms at the elbows, keep wrists together with open palms.
4. Place your chin in the palms. Just like face is resting in the cushion of palms. Maintain the position for 10 seconds.

Releasing position:

5. Unfold the arms back.
6. Exhaling lower chest, shoulders and head down to the floor. Relax in starting position.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breathe comfortably. • Practise this <i>asana</i> as per the optimal capacity without any discomfort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not apply undue force to assume the posture. • When bending the body backwards, be sure not to make any violent jerks, as this may injure muscles.

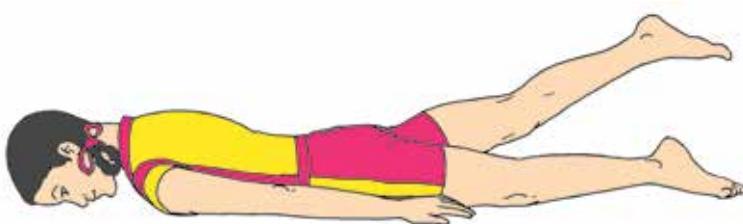
Benefits

- It helps in removing pain of the neck and jaws.
- This posture give rests to the body and keeps the spine and neck healthy.
- It also maintains flexibility of backbone and gives exercise to nerves attached to the spine.
- It is very useful in asthma.
- It helps to attain relaxation of mind and body.

Limitations

- Avoid practice in case of hernia and abdominal pain.

Ardhashalabhasana (Half Locust Posture)



This posture is a simple modification of the original posture named as *shalabhasana*. In Sanskrit, *shalabha* means 'locust'. In *shalabhasana*, the body resembles the shape of a locust. In *Ardhashalabhasana* half the



technique of *Shalabhasana* is employed hence, it is called *Ardhashalabhasana*.

Let us perform *Ardhashalabhasana* following steps as given below:

Starting position: Lie prone, i.e., on stomach with chin resting on the ground, the arms extended along the body and the legs fully stretched.

1. Keeping the knee straight, raise the right leg from the ground as high as possible and maintain the posture comfortably for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing Position:

2. Lower the raised leg to the ground slowly.
3. Similarly raise the left leg slowly to the maximum and maintain the posture for some time (5-10 seconds). While releasing the posture lower the raised leg to the ground and relax.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legs should be raised only to the point where the pelvic does not tilt. • The chin should be kept on the ground throughout. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid bending the knees while raising the legs alternately. • Do not push yourself too much. • Jerk and unbearable strains should be avoided.

Benefits

- It strengthens the back muscles of the legs.

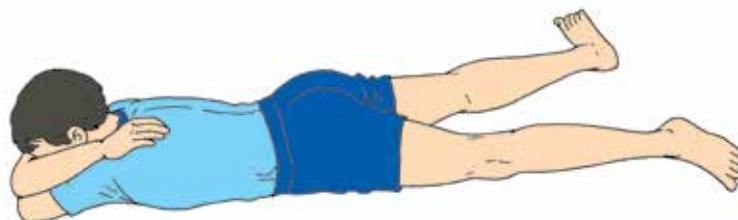
- It improves the tone of the abdominal organs.
- *Shalabhasana* is a good exercise for the legs, thighs, buttocks, the lower abdomen and wrists.

Limitations

- Person suffering from ulcer in stomach, hernia, weak lungs and cardiac complaints, high blood pressure should consult yoga expert before practising this *asana*.

Makarasana (Crocodile Posture)

Makarasana is a relaxative posture. The posture is called *Makarasana* as the body in this *asana* resembles the shape of *makara*. In Sanskrit *makara* means crocodile.



Let us perform *Makarasana* following the steps as given below:

Starting position: Take prone lying position.

1. Keep the legs at a comfortable distance with heels inside and toes pointing outward and the ankles resting on the ground.
2. Fold the arms at elbows. Hold the opposite shoulders with the hands. The elbows are kept one on the other.
3. Place the head on the cushion of the arms and breathe normally.

Releasing position:

4. Remove the right hand from the left shoulder and place it along the right side of the body.
5. Remove the left hand from the right shoulder and place it along the left side of the body.
6. Reduce the distance between the feet and take starting position

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both elbows can be kept slightly apart if found difficult to put one on the other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not press the chest on the ground so that the breathing becomes uncomfortable.

Benefits

- It relaxes body and mind both.
- It reduces anxiety and stress.
- It is beneficial for respiratory organs as well as for digestive organs.
- It improves blood circulation in whole body.

Limitations

- Those having complaint of obesity and cardiac problems should avoid this practice.

Uttanapadasana

In Sanskrit *uttana* means 'raised' and *Pada* means 'leg'. In this *asana*, legs are raised hence the name of the *asana* is *uttanapadasana*. This is a traditional posture.

It can be practised by raising one leg at a time or by raising both legs simultaneously.

Let us perform Uttanapadasana following steps as given below:

Ek-Pada Uttanasana

Starting position: Lie on back (supine) with legs together, hands by the side of the body, palms placed on floor.

1. Inhaling, slowly raise the left leg at 30° , 45° and upto 60° angle and maintain the posture for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing position:

2. Lower down the leg slowly at 45° and 30° come back on the floor while exhaling.

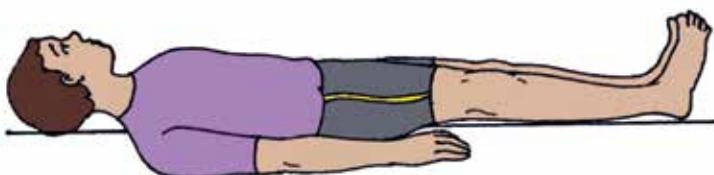
Practise with right leg in a similar way.

Dvi-Pada Uttanasana

1. **Starting position:** Lie supine with legs together, hands by the side of the body, palms placed on floor.



2. Inhaling, raise slowly both the legs at 30° , 45° and upto 60° angle and maintain the posture for 5-10 seconds.



Releasing position:

3. While exhaling slowly lower down both the legs at 45° and 30° angle and then to the floor.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It causes pressure and contraction at the lower abdomen, hence practise carefully. • Keep the trunk and head straight on the floor. • Keep the arms, legs and shoulders relaxed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not bend legs at knees while raising them upward. • Do not shake the body and avoid jerky movement.

Benefits

- It is beneficial in constipation, indigestion, nervous weakness and diabetes.
- It strengthens the abdominal muscles.
- It balances the navel centre (*nabhimandal*).

Limitations

- Do not practise with both legs if suffering from back complaints.

Pawanamuktasana

The Sanskrit word *pawana* means 'air' or 'wind' and *mukta* means 'freedom' or 'release'. This is called as the 'wind relieving posture' as it assists in releasing trapped digestive gas from the stomach and intestines.



Let us perform *Pawanamuktasana* by following steps as given below:

Starting position: Lie supine with legs together and hands kept by the sides of the body, palms resting on the floor.

1. Inhaling, fold both the legs at the knee over the belly.
2. Hold the knees with the interlocked arms and press them on the belly.
3. While exhaling, raise the head and let the chin touch the knees.

Releasing position:

4. Bring the head down cautiously.
5. Release the interlocked arms and bring them on the floor.
6. Exhaling, unfold the legs back on the floor.
7. Bring legs together, hands by the side of the body, palms placed on floor and relax.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It causes pressure and contraction at the lower abdomen, hence practise it carefully. • Knees should be together while pressing against the chest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't shake the body and avoid jerky movement. • Do not get disheartened in initial stage. • Do not bend the head if suffering from spondylitis

Benefits

- This *asana* helps to increase digestive power.

- It helps to deal constipation by stimulating the abdominal region.
- It helps in releasing trapped gas from the stomach.
- It helps to dissolve extra fat deposited in the abdominal region.

Limitations

- Do not practise, if suffering from severe back pain or abdominal injuries.

Shavasana (Corpse Posture)

It is a traditional relaxing posture. The posture is called *shavasana* as it resembles a dead body. In Sanskrit, *shava* means a ‘dead body’.



Let us perform *Shavasana* by following steps as given below:

Starting position: Lie supine on the floor, legs apart at a comfortable distance and hands kept at a distance of about six inches from the body.

1. Keep palms upwards, fingers naturally flexed and eyes closed.
2. Breathing should be very slow. Nobody knows that you are taking breath from a distance of 8–2 inches. Head should remain straight.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a comfortable supine position which offers least resistance to the gravity. • Continue focussing on the natural breathing. • Let the breathing be as natural as possible with attention on the abdominal movements and also on the sensations of the touch of air within the nose walls. • Keep the eyes closed throughout the practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not tense any part of the body, hence loosen entire frame of the body. • Do not move the body parts during the practice. • Do not pay attention to the thoughts and feeling. • Do not tilt the head to the left or right. • Do not be impatient during the practice.

Benefits

- It reduces anxiety, fatigue and stress.
- It relaxes the muscles.
- It induces feeling of freshness.
- *Shavasana* relaxes rigid nerves, boosts up energy level and develops harmony, as well as calmness in the body.

Limitations

- Do not practise if someone is having low blood pressure or depression.

BREATHING

Breathing with Awareness

Breathing is an important process. It is vital to our life. Breathing consists of inhalation and exhalation. You know that through inhalation, we take the oxygen in and through exhalation we throw the carbon-di-oxide out. This process

keeps on going day and night without any break. But we are not aware of this. We also do not know whether we are breathing properly or not.

Therefore, we should try to be aware of how we are breathing. This awareness will help us in breathing properly.

Let us breathe with awareness by following the steps given below:

1. Sit in a comfortable posture like *Ardha-Padmasana*, *Padmasana*, *Swastikasana*. Keep palm over your knees and close your eyes.
2. Breathe normally. Concentrate on each inhalation and exhalation. Observe your breath.
3. Now, inhale very slowly and fill the chest with air as much as you can. It will cause expansion in chest and as a result diaphragm will go down towards abdomen, resulting in the bulging of abdomen.
4. Now, exhale very slowly, emptying the lungs. During exhalation, chest will contract and diaphragm will come up towards chest cavity. Abdomen will contract. This is one round. Practise 5 rounds. This way you can be aware about your breathing and also learn to breathe properly. To come back, now breath normally, remove your hands from knees, open your eyes and relax.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentrate on your breath only. • Inhale and exhale very slowly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not make any changes when you are observing normal breathing. • Do not strain too much in the beginning.

Benefits

- This will create awareness about the breathing pattern.
- This will help in taking more oxygen in and throwing more carbon-di-oxide.
- It will help purify the blood.
- It induces calmness and reduces anxiety.
- It helps to increase concentration.

Trataka (Concentrated Gazing)

Trataka is a *kriya* which is performed for cleansing and strengthening the eyes. In this *kriya*, eyes are focussed on a particular object which could be a flame of a lamp or a burning candle or a point.

This is done without blinking the eyes till the eyes get tired or start watering.

Let us practise *Trataka* by following the steps given below:

Preparations

Place a burning candle or a lamp at the distance of 2-3 feet. Its flame should be at the eye level. Flame should be still. You can also practise on a point or a still object.

Technique

1. Sit in any meditative posture in a dark room and close the eyes.



2. Open your eyes and gaze at the flame with both eyes wide open. Continue gazing at it without blinking the eyes till the eyes become tired or start watering.
3. Now close the eyes and relax.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop gazing when eyes become tired or start watering. • Keep the body still throughout the practice. • Gaze at the flame only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not blink the eyes or do not move the eyeballs. • Flame should not be flickering.

Benefits

- It cleanses the eyes.
- It improves eye sight.
- It improves memory and concentration.
- It reduces anxiety.

Limitations

- Person having glaucoma or chronic eye problems should not practise *Trataka*.
- Person suffering from epilepsy should not use practice on a flame.

Meditation

Meditation is a yogic practice. This makes the body and mind relaxed. Meditation involve



focussing on a single point which could be breath, a mantra, a word or an object. In the beginning, focussing of the mind is difficult, therefore a beginner can start meditating for a short duration only and later on can increase its duration.

Let us practice meditation by following the steps given below:

Starting Position: Sit in *Ardhapadmasana*, *Padmasana* or in any other meditative comfortable posture. Place your hands in *jnana mudra* on your knees. Sit erect. Close your eyes gently and breathe normally.

1. Concentrate on inhalation and exhalation. During this, your mind may wander here and there. Try to concentrate on your breath only. Keep breathing normally. Try not to think about anything. Give attention to the breath only.

Releasing Position:

2. Cup the eyes with the hands and blink the eyes for few seconds so that sudden exposure to light does not irritate them. Slowly open your eyes and remove the hands and relax.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meditate in a peaceful environment. • Keep the eyes closed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not use the hard floor for sitting in meditation. • Do not wear the uncomfortable clothes.

Benefits

- It gives deep relaxation.
- It lowers heart rate and blood pressure.
- It helps to reduce stress.
- It helps in managing emotions.
- It increases concentration.

ASSESSMENT

Q. I Answer the following questions.

1. What do you understand by yoga?
2. What are the benefits of yoga?
3. List two important guidelines for performing *asanas*.
4. Write two benefits each of *Swastikasana*, *Niralambha-Bhujangasana* and *Vrikshasana*.
5. How many postures are there in *Surya Namaskara*?
6. Have you experienced any change in your body after performing *Surya Namaskara*?
7. Did you experience any change in your body after performing the *asanas*?
8. How will you perform the *Ardhapadmasana*?
9. Which *asana* you like most and why?
10. Describe two *asanas* which make you relaxed.

Q. II Put a tick (✓) mark on Yes or No

1. There are ten postures in *Surya Namaskara*.
(Yes/No)
2. All yogic practices can be performed any time.
(Yes/No)
3. Yoga connects body and mind.
(Yes/No)
4. *Vajrasana* is performed in standing position.
(Yes/No)
5. *Vrikshasana* is performed on one leg. (Yes/No)

Q. III Fill in the blanks

1. In *Makrasana*, we lie on
2. *Shavasana* relaxes..... and mind.
3. *Pawanmuktasana* improves
4. Through inhaling, we take in.
5. *Trataka* helps to improve

PROJECT

1. Make a chart of *Ardhapadmasana*, *Swastikasana* and *Vajrasana*.
2. Make a chart of any two *asanas* which are performed in standing position. Write their benefits also.

Unit 3

YOGA FOR PHYSICAL FITNESS

OVERVIEW

You have been observing that you and members of your family generally stretch their bodies immediately after waking up in the morning. Have you ever thought why do we do this? We generally do this instinctively without knowing its importance. In fact, stretching is very important as it gives flexibility to our body which becomes stiff after long hours of sleep or inactive. Our body may become stiff also after continuous activity for long hours. That is the reason we experience difficulty in moving our body after walking, playing or indulging in physical activities continuously for a long time. That is why sports persons are very often seen stretching their body before and after the sports events as it makes their body flexible.

Stretching and flexibility are inter-related. Stretching enhances flexibility. In this chapter, we shall discuss flexibility and contribution of Yoga in improving it.

WHAT IS FLEXIBILITY?

Flexibility is the ability to move the joints and surrounding muscles to its maximum. Raising our hands and rotating our shoulder in a circular motion backward and forward to its maximum is an example of flexibility.

Flexibility is an important component of physical fitness. It is crucial for our body to perform even the most basic activities such as walking, bending, squatting, running, etc.

There are individual differences in flexibility. Many factors such as age, gender, genetics and lifestyle are responsible for this variation.

Activity

Think about the activities we perform in day-to-day life. Prepare a list of those activities which require flexibility. Examples of some activities are given below. Add more activities to them.

- Picking up a book from the table.
- Walking

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Benefits of Flexibility

There are a number of benefits of flexibility.

- Flexibility improves the range of motion in muscles and joints, thereby improving performance of motor activities.
- It reduces the risk of injury and pain.
- It improves overall balance of the body.

Activity

Let us understand the importance of stretching and flexibility by reading the following case:

Ravi was a student of Class X. He was a good player of football. But he could not go to play for the last few months as he was preparing for the examinations. After remaining indoors for a long time he went out to play football one day.

But he could not play well. He also experienced pain in his leg muscles for the next few days.

Now, answer the following questions:

- Identify the probable cause of pain in Ravi's leg muscles.
- Suggest some ways so that Ravi should not face this problem in future.

Now the question is — Can flexibility be enhanced? The answer is yes. Flexibility can be enhanced by yogic practices.

YOGIC PRACTICES TO ENHANCE FLEXIBILITY

Yogic practices especially *asanas* are useful for developing flexibility as the *asanas* involve stretching. You have learnt some yogic practices in Unit 2.

Before starting *yogasanas* practise some yogic micro-activities like neck bending, neck-shoulder rotation and *Surya Namaskara* to prepare the body to perform *yogasanas*.

Surya Namaskara (Sun Salutation)

Surya means ‘sun’ and *namaskara* means ‘salutation’ or bowing down. It consists of 12 postures. The postures practised during *surya namaskara* act as a good link between warm up and *asanas*.

Regular practice of *suryanamaskara* helps in maintaining good health. It improves physical strength, endurance and flexibility thereby improving overall physical fitness.

You have learnt *surya namaskara* in Unit 2. Perform *surya namaskara* according to the technique given in Unit 2 of this book.

ASANAS

Asana plays an important role in improving overall physical fitness. *Asanas* increase flexibility through stretching. Different *asanas* increase the flexibility in different parts of the body. For example, *Dhanurasana* promotes flexibility of the spine by stretching muscles in abdominal region.

Asana helps in increasing flexibility in the following ways:

- It helps in stretching our muscles safely.
- It helps in increasing the range of motion in joints.
- It helps in preventing muscle stiffness.
- It fastens recovery in cases of injury.
- It may increase the lubrication of joints and slows the ageing of tissues.

Now, we shall discuss the *asanas* which stretch muscles of different parts of the body and enhance flexibility. However, in this chapter, other yogic practices as *pranayama*, *kriyas* are also included. These practices will contribute towards a healthy living. You may also continue the practices learnt in Unit 2.

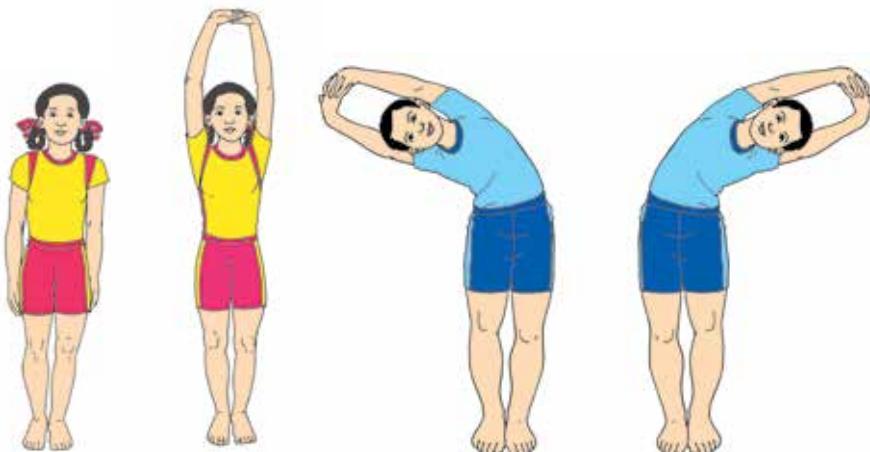
Tadasana

You have performed *Tadasana* in Unit 2. The technique of doing this *asana* is given in Unit 2 of this book. *Tadasana* stretches whole body. Therefore, continue performing this *asana* for developing flexibility.



Hastottanasana

Hastottanasana is made of three words: *hasta*, *uttana* and *asana*. *Hasta* means 'arms'; *uttana* means 'stretch up' and *asana* means 'posture'. In this posture, the arms are stretched upwards, hence, it is called *Hastottanasana*.



Let us perform *Hastottanasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Stand erect on the ground, keep both feet together.

1. Slowly inhaling, raise both arms over the head.
2. Turn your palms raising them up. Now interlock your fingers.
3. Exhaling, bend from the waist towards the right side as much as possible. Maintain this position comfortably for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing position:

4. Inhaling, come to the centre.
5. Now practise it from the left side as well.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bend from the waist only. • Stretch the arms up as much as possible. • Keep the arms straight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not bend forward or backward.

Benefits

- It stretches the muscles of back.
- It reduces pain in neck, shoulders and arms.
- It is beneficial for increasing the height of growing children.
- It increases the flexibility of spine.

Limitation

- During severe backache, hernia and abdominal inflammation this *asana* should not be performed.

Trikonasana (Triangle Posture)

Trikona a Sanskrit word means 'triangle'. In this *asana*, the body makes the shape of a triangle, hence, it is called *Trikonasana*.

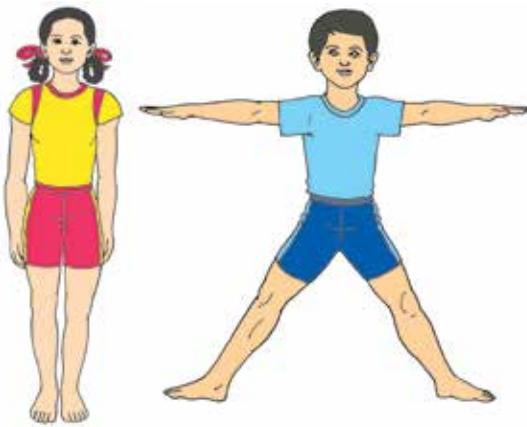
Let us perform *Trikonasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Stand erect, legs together and hands by the side of the thighs.

1. Move your legs 1-2 feet apart.



2. Stretch the arms sideways and raise them to shoulder level. The arms should be parallel to the floor in one straight line.
3. Bend to the left side from the waist.
4. Place the left hand on the left foot.
5. Stretch the right arm up. Here, the two arms will be at 180° . Maintain this position with normal breathing comfortably for 5-10 seconds. Optimally, the right arm can be further bent toward left side, keeping arms at 90° angle.



Releasing position:

6. To come back, lift the left palm. Straighten your trunk and bring the arms in line with shoulders.
7. Bring down your arms and keep hands by the sides of thighs.
8. Bring your feet together and relax.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bend from the waist only. Maintain the final posture with normal breathing. Bend as much as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not bend the knees while turning sideward. Do not lean forward or backward while performing this <i>asana</i>. Do not bend beyond capacity.

Benefits

- It stretches up the muscles of trunk, legs and hips.
- It improves the flexibility of spine.
- It helps in increase the height of growing children.
- It relieves the pain in the neck and back.

Limitation

- Do not practise this *asana* in case of severe backache.

Katichakrasana (Lumber Twist Posture)

Katichakrasana is made of three words: *kati*, *chakra* and *asana*. *Kati* means 'waist', *chakra* means 'wheel' and *asana* means 'posture'. In this *asana*, the waist and arms move like a wheel. Hence, it is called *katichakrasana*.

Let us perform *Katichakrasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Stand erect on the ground with feet 12 inches apart.

1. Now, raise your arms and bring them in front of the chest, with palms facing each other.
2. While inhaling, take the arms slowly towards right side of your body. Simultaneously, twist your body from the waist to the right side and take your arms back as far as possible.
3. While swinging towards right side, keep the right arm straight and left arm bent. Look in the back.



Releasing position:

4. Exhaling, bring the arms to the front.
5. Repeat the practice by swinging towards the left side as well.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep right arm straight and left arm bent while twisting to the right side and vice versa. • Inhale, while twisting towards back and exhale while coming back to the centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not bend forward or backward. • Do not move the lower part of the body. • Do not jerk the body.

Benefits

- It stretches the waist region and makes lower back strong.
- It strengthens shoulders, neck, arms, abdomen, back and thighs.

Limitation

- Persons suffering from severe spinal problems should not practise this *asana*.

Padmasana

Padmasana is made of two words: *padma* and *asana*. *Padma* means 'lotus'. The legs in the sitting position of this *asana* give the appearance of a lotus. This is a meditative *asana*.

Let us perform *Padmasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit on the ground.

1. Slowly fold the right leg and place right foot on the left thigh close to the pelvic bone. The right heel should be pressing the lower part of the abdomen.
2. Slowly and carefully fold the left leg and place it on right thigh. The heel should press lower part of abdomen.
3. Form *jnana mudra* with your hands. For *jnana mudra*, fold index finger and join the tips of your thumb and index finger. Keep other fingers straight.
4. Keep the hands in *jnana mudra* on knees. Keep the body straight and maintain the position.



Releasing position:

5. Remove left leg from the thigh and then remove right leg and come to the starting position

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knees should touch the ground in final position. • Keep head and spine erect and shoulders relaxed. • Keep the arms relaxed in the final position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not bend forward and backward in the final posture. • Do not tense the arms.

Benefits

- It is good for concentration and memory.
- It brings calmness and peace.
- It is good for digestion.
- It stretches leg muscles and brings flexibility in legs.

Limitation

- Person suffering from pain or injury in knees or sciatica should not practise this *asana*.

Yogamudrasana

Yogamudrasana is a further extension of *Padmasana*.

Let us perform *Yogamudrasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting Position: Sitting in *Padmasana*, take both arms behind the back. Hold the right wrist with palm of the left hand.



1. Exhaling, bend forward and bring forehead or chin to the floor. You may stay in the final position inhaling and exhaling normally. Maintain the position for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing position:

2. Raise your body, release the hands, and inhaling come to the starting position.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the back straight while bending. • Bend as much as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not strain the body. • Avoid jerking the body.

Benefits

- It stretches spine and makes it flexible.
- It improves digestion.
- It helps in improving concentration.
- It tones spinal nerves.

Limitation

- Persons with heart problems and back problems should not practise this *asana*.

Pashchimottanasana

Pashchimottanasana means stretching the posterior region. In Sanskrit, *Pashchima* means 'posterior' and *uttana* means 'stretch-up'. In this posture, posterior muscles of the body get stretched hence, it is called *Pashchimottasana*.

Let us perform *Pashchimottanasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit with the legs extended together.

1. Bend the elbows. Make hooks with the index fingers.
2. Bend the body forward and catch hold of the toes with the hooks of the fingers.



3. Place the head between the arms.
4. Keeping a little bend in the elbows and without bending the knees, try to touch the forehead with the knees. Maintain the position for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing position:

5. Raise the head slowly.
6. Release the hold of the toes and keeping the body erect, bring the hooks of the fingers near the chest.
7. Place the hands on the respective sides of the body.
8. Sit with the legs extended together.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhale while bending forward. This will help the bending. • Relax the muscles while bending forward. • Maintain the final position at your comfort level. This will gradually help in further progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid jerks and strain while assuming and releasing the posture. • Do not allow the knees to bend while touching the forehead with the knees.

Benefits

- It gives a good posterior stretch to the spinal column.

- It helps to increase the flexibility of the spinal and abdominal muscles.
- It helps to improve the blood circulation in organs situated in the abdominal region.
- It helps to correct postural deformities.

Limitation

- Those suffering from heart diseases, ulcer in abdomen, slipped disc, sciatica should not practise it.

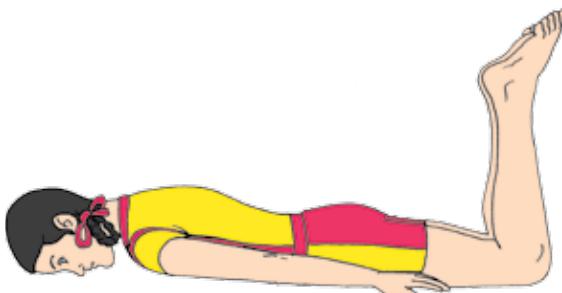
Dhanurasana (Bow Posture)

In Sanskrit *Dhanur* means ‘bow’. This is called the bow posture because in this posture the body resembles a bow with its string attached to it.

**Let us perform
Dhanurasana by
following the steps
given below:**

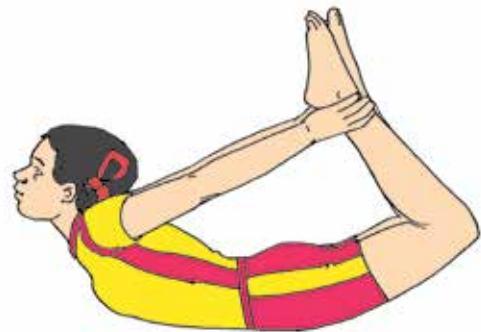
Starting position: Lie down flat on stomach.

1. Exhaling, slowly bend the legs backwards at the knees.
2. Hold the toes or ankles firmly with hands as per your capacity.
3. Inhaling, raise thighs, head and chest as high as possible. Stretch and bring the toes or ankles towards head. Look upward. Maintain the position comfortably for 5-10 seconds.



Releasing position:

4. Release the hands and keep the arms beside the body.
5. Straighten the legs. Bring the legs, head, shoulders and torso slowly on the floor and relax.



Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arch the back, as much as possible. • The arms should be straight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not jerk or strain , take the position slowly. • While assuming the posture, do not lean over to a side.

Benefits

- *Dhanurasana* is a good practice for joint of the shoulders, knees, ankles and entire backbone.
- It is beneficial for management of diabetes mellitus as it massages the liver and pancreas.
- It helps to reduce excess fat around the belly, waist and hips.
- It removes stiffness of the ligaments, muscles and nerves in the back, arms, legs, shoulders, neck and abdomen.
- It stimulates and regulates the functioning of glands.
- It helps in reducing backache pain.
- It is good for the conditions of hunched back and drooping shoulders.

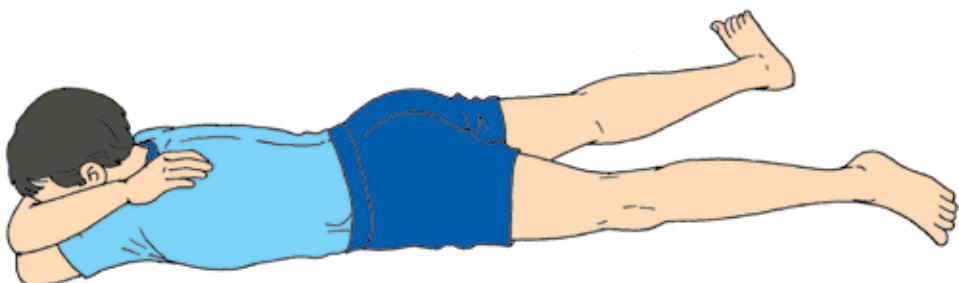
Limitation

- Person with high blood pressure, hernia, peptic ulcer, appendicitis, slipped disc, lumber spondylitis should not practise this *asana*.

Makarasana (Crocodile Posture)

Makarasana is a relaxing *asana*. you have learnt it in Unit 2. Practise this *asana* according to the technique.

The posture is called *Makarasana* as the body resembles the shape of *makara*, which means 'crocodile'. *Makarasana* is a relaxing *asana*.



Supta Vajrasana

Supta Vajrasana means 'lying backward' in *Vajrasana*. This *asana* is the extension of *Vajrasana*.

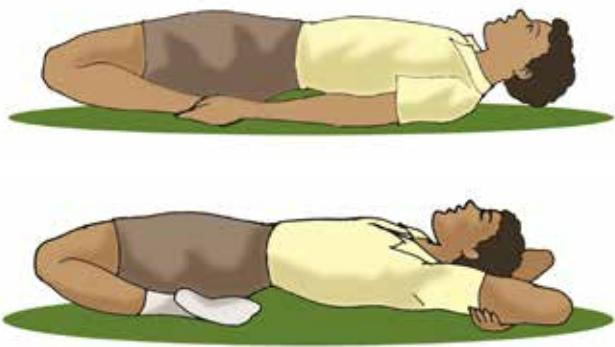
Let us perform *Supta Vajrasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit in *Vajrasana*.

1. Slowly bend backwards taking the support of the elbows.



2. Lie on the back in *Vajrasana*. Keep the hands on thighs or take the arms behind and hold the elbow/arm with the hand of another arm.



Releasing position:

3. Place your hands by the side of your body. Come to the *Vajrasana* with the support of elbows and arms.

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take support of elbows and arms while bending backwards and coming back to the sitting position. Keep the knees together and shoulders on the ground. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not strain the ligaments and muscles of the thighs by forcing the knees to touch the ground. Do not come back by straightening the legs.

Benefits

- It stretches abdominal muscles.
- It makes the back flexible.
- It reduces backache.
- It is useful for high blood pressure.
- It gives relief in constipation.

Limitation

- Person suffering from knee complaints, slipped disc, sciatica and pain in the hip should not practise this *asana*.

Chakrasana

Chakra means 'wheel'. In this *asana*, the body assumes the shape of a wheel, hence, it is called *Chakrasana*. This *asana* improves flexibility of whole body especially the back.

Let us perform *Chakrasana* by following the steps given below:



Starting position: Lie on your back.

Bend the legs at knees, heels touching the buttocks. Keep the feet 12 inches apart.

1. Raise the arms up, bend them at the elbows, take them behind over the head. Place the palms on the floor beside the head, fingers pointing towards the shoulders.
2. Slowly, raise the body and arch the back.
3. Straighten the arms and legs. Move the hands further towards the feet as far as you feel comfortable. Maintain the position comfortably for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing position:

4. Slowly lower the body in the manner so that the head rests on the floor. Lower down rest of the body and lie flat on your back. Relax.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise your body carefully. • Keep the arms and legs straight as much as possible in final position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not stretch too much while bringing the hands towards feet. • Do not give jerk to the spine. • Try not to bend the arms and legs in final position.

Benefits

- It makes spine flexible.
- It removes rigidity of the bones and joints in the middle part of the back.
- It is good for digestion.
- It improves the functioning of heart.

Limitation

- Person suffering from weak wrist, high blood pressure, vertigo, hernia, abdominal problems, etc., should not practice this *asana*.

Ardhahalasana (Half Plough Pose)

Ardha means 'half' and *hala* means 'plough'. It is a preparatory practise of *Halasana*.



Let us perform *Ardhahalasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Lie in supine position with legs together, hands by the side of the body, palms placed on floor.

1. Raise your both legs up stopping at 30° , 45° and 60° angles.
2. Further raise and bring the legs up to 90° without bending at knees. Maintain the posture comfortably for 10 seconds.

Releasing position:

3. Lower down the legs stopping at 60° , 45° and 30° angles.
4. Lower down slowly the legs on the floor. Keep hands by the sides of the body.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the legs straight. • Stop at 30°, 45°, 60° and 90° angles. • While raising the legs up, palms should be on the floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not shake the body. • Avoid jerky movement. • Do not bend the legs at knees. • Do not haste while releasing the posture.

Benefits

- It stretches leg muscles and ligaments of leg.
- It improves digestion and removes constipation.
- It helps in bringing about stability in body and mind.

Limitation

- Person having complaints of hernia, slipped disc, high blood pressure and sciatica should avoid the practice of this *asana*.

Shavasana (Corpse Posture)

You have learnt *Shavasana* in Unit 2. It is a relaxing posture. Perform *Shavasana* by following the technique given in Unit 2.



KRIYA

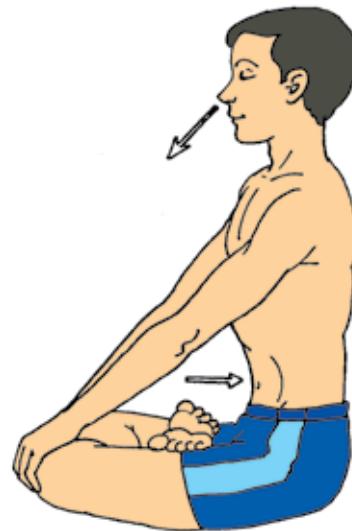
Kapalabhati (Frontal Brain Cleansing)

Kapalabhati is considered a *kriya* (cleansing practice) which cleanses the specific parts of body by detoxifying them.

In Sanskrit, *Kapala* means 'skull' and *bhati* means 'shine'. *Kapalabhati* is supposed to cleanse frontal brain.

Let us perform *Kapalabhati* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit straight in *Padmasana*, *Ardhapadmasana* or *Vajrasana*



1. Take deep breath through the nostrils.
2. Now, exhale with a forceful contraction of the abdominal muscles. Do not make any effort to inhale. This is one stroke of *kapalabhati*. Begin with 10 strokes at a time. This is one round. One can practise one to three rounds in a session.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhale forcefully and inhale passively . • Focus on exhalation only. • Contract the abdominal muscles while exhaling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not move the chest or shoulders while exhaling. • Do not distort the face.

Benefits

- It stimulates the nerves in the abdominal region, tones up the abdominal muscles and improves digestion.
- *Kapalabhati* expels carbon-dioxide and other waste gases from the lungs.
- It improves heart and lungs capacity and therefore good for bronchial/asthma.
- It removes lethargy.

Limitation

- Those suffering from heart problems, high blood pressure, hernia, vertigo and gastric ulcer should avoid practising *kapalabhati*.

PRANAYAMA

Anuloma-viloma Pranayama (Alternate Nostril Breathing)

The *Anuloma* means 'towards' and *Viloma* means 'reverse'. In this *pranayama* nostrils are alternatively used in reverse order for each inhalation and exhalation. This *pranayama* is also called *Nadi-shodhana pranayama*.



Let us perform *Anuloma-viloma Pranayama* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit in the position of *Ardhapadmasana*, *Padmasana* or in any other comfortable meditative posture.

1. Keep the body erect and place the hands on the respective knees.
2. Raise the right hand and place the right thumb on the right nostril and close it.
3. Inhale slowly through the left nostril.
4. Release the pressure of thumb on right nostril. Now close the left nostril by the ring finger and the little finger and exhale slowly through the right nostril. Now inhale slowly through the right nostril.
5. Close the right nostril with thumb and exhale slowly through the left nostril. This is one round of *Anuloma-viloma pranayama*. Repeat it 5 times.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inhale and exhale very slowly. • Concentrate on the breathing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not produce sound from the nose. • Do not press hard on the nostrils. • Do not breath through the mouth.

Benefits

- It calms down the mind.
- It improves concentration.
- It provides sufficient oxygenated blood to the body.
- It helps to regulate blood pressure.
- It reduces anxiety.

- It is beneficial in many diseases such as asthma, high or low blood pressure, insomnia, chronic pain, endocrine imbalances, heart-problems, hyperactivity, etc.

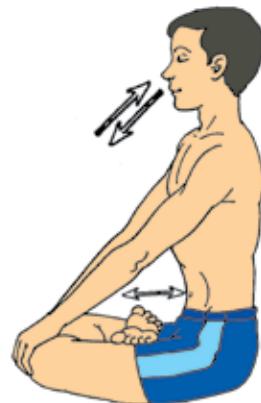
Bhastrika Pranayama

The word *Bhastrika* has been taken from a Sanskrit word *bhastra* which means 'a pair of bellows'. In this *pranayama*, we imitate the action of bellows by inhaling and exhaling rapidly and forcefully.

Let us perform *Bhastrika Pranayama* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit in *Padmasana*, *Ardhapadmasana* or in any other meditative posture. Keep the body erect.

1. Then inhale and exhale forcefully through the nostrils.
2. Continue this forceful exhalation and inhalation counting up to ten breaths.
3. At the end, final exhalation is followed by a deep inhalation and slow exhalation. This is one round of *Bhastrika Pranayama*.



Remember the following points

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move lungs, diaphragm and abdomen with each inhalation and exhalation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest and shoulders should not move. • Do not practise it in extremely hot conditions.

Benefits

- It improves appetite.
- It destroys phlegm.
- It is beneficial in case of asthma.
- It increases the exchange of oxygen and carbon-dioxide into and out of blood stream.

Limitation

- Person suffering from heart problems, high blood pressure, vertigo, stomach ulcers should not practise this *pranayama*.

MEDITATION

Meditation is a yogic practice which relaxes our body and mind. You know that many times we become restless and worried. We need to relax our body and mind. This relaxation can be achieved by meditation. Practise meditation daily.

You have learnt meditation in Class VI. The technique of meditation is given in Unit 2 of this book.

ASSESSMENT

Q. I. Answer the following questions:

1. Why do you think that flexibility is important for physical fitness?
2. How can flexibility be increased?
3. Write the name of two *asanas* which help in increasing the flexibility of the body.
4. Write the technique of *Katichakrasana*.
5. Is there any difference in flexibility of a child and an elderly person.
6. Name the body parts which require more flexibility.
7. Write two benefits of *Chakrasana* and *Dhanurasana*.
8. Name two *asanas* which increase flexibility in spine.
9. What is the difference between *asana* and *pranayama*?
10. Write the benefits of *Anuloma-viloma pranayama*.
11. Write a short note on *Bhastrika pranayama*.

Q. II. Put a tick (✓) mark on Yes or No

1. *Padmasana* increases flexibility of legs.(Yes/No)
2. *Yogamudrasana* is performed in *Padmasana*.
(Yes/No)
3. *Shavasana* is a relaxing posture. (Yes/No)
4. *Chakrasana* is performed in sitting position.
(Yes/No)
5. In *pranayama*, breathing is generally done through mouth.
(Yes/No)

Q. III Fill in the blanks.

1. In *Dhanurasana*, the body resembles the shape of _____.
2. _____ and _____ are performed in supine (lying on back) position.
3. Flexibility of spine can be increased by _____.
4. *Padmasana* increases the flexibility of _____.
5. In *Trikonasana*, the body makes the shape of _____.

Project

1. Make a chart showing two parts of the body where *asanas* can help to increase flexibility.
2. Share your experiences about the benefits of yogic practices with your friend and prepare a report.
3. Practise any five *asanas* daily for ten days. Write your holding time in the final position of each *asana* in the table given below.

Asanas	Duration of Holding Time (in seconds) in Final Position Day-wise									
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10

Analyse the observations and share them with your friends/peers.

Unit 4

YOGA FOR CONCENTRATION

OVERVIEW

In earlier units we have discussed more about yoga and physical health. In this Unit, we will focus on yoga as a means to enhance concentration in order to promote emotional and intellectual health. You know that concentration is an act or ability to give your continuous attention or thought to a single object or a single activity. It is the most fundamental requirement for achieving anything in life. It is required for school lessons, homework or even for leisure-time activities. Concentration can be improved by developing harmony between body and mind. We know that without a healthy body, our mind cannot work efficiently. Similarly, without a healthy mind, our body cannot work efficiently. Therefore, it is essential that we develop harmony. Here, our emotions play a major role. If we are able to regulate our emotions, then it will be easier for us to discipline the mind and attain better concentration. In this context, the yogic practices of *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara* and *dhyana* (meditation) play an important role. These practices can certainly help us in enhancing our concentration.

Yamas are the principles which guide us how to conduct in society. There are five restraints: (i) *Ahimsa* (non-violence); (ii) *Satya* (truthfulness); (iii) *Asteya* (non-stealing); (iv) *Brahmacharya* (celibacy); (v) *Aparigraha* (non-possessiveness).

Niyamas refers to the five observances. These are: (i) *Shaucha* (cleanliness); (ii) *Santosha* (satisfaction); (iii) *Tapas* (austerity); (iv) *Swadhyaya* (knowing about self); (v) *Ishwarapranidhana* (surrender and devotion to god). Through *Yama* and *Niyama*, one develops love and kindness for every living creature, feeling of satisfaction, peace of mind, balance and harmony with oneself and the society. *Yama* and *Niyama* help in developing control on our mind resulting into better focus.

Asanas are physical postures which are performed by coordinating the movement of body and breath. This results into enhanced concentration.

Pranayama means extension or expansion of breath (*prana*). It regulates our breathing system. It increases the supply of oxygen to the brain. With these, our brain functions in a better way, and reduces anxiety and anger. *Pranayama* calms the mind and helps in concentration of mind.

Pratyahara is an important yogic practice as it helps in enhancing our concentration. In *pratyahara*, we control our senses of hearing, seeing, smelling taste and touch. You know that we have five sense organs – eyes, ears, tongue, nose and skin. We continuously receive stimulation from these sense organs. Some of these make us emotionally disturbed. As a result, we cannot concentrate on anything. Therefore, it is important that we should select right things. If we select right things, it will save our time and energy and also enhance our concentration. You can better understand this from an example. Suppose you see a fight in school or at home or you watch violence in a movie. After seeing that you may be disturbed and keep on thinking about those scenes only. As a result, you cannot focus on your study. But, if you read a good story, attend an inspiring event or watch a good movie, it would help you to work better

and focus on your studies. Therefore, it is necessary that we see hear, taste, smell and touch the right things. This will protect us from unnecessary disturbances, enhance concentration and help us in achieving our goals.

Meditation relaxes our body and mind. In meditation we have to concentrate on any object or spot continuously for some time. It helps to increase our ability to concentrate. It also enables us to control our emotions and enhances harmony.

All the above yogic practices help us in having harmony between body and mind, thereby improving concentration and improving performance of mental work.

Let us perform these yogic practices to have better results.

YOGIC PRACTICES FOR CONCENTRATION

Prepare your body to perform *asanas*. For this, perform micro-yogic activities like neck rotation, shoulder rotation, wrist rotation, finger rotation, ankle rotation, etc. and follow *it by Surya Namaskara*. Perform *Surya Namaskara* by following the steps as given in Unit 2 of this book.

ASANA

As discussed in earlier units, *asanas* are body positions or postures. These postures are performed in standing, sitting, prone and supine positions. The *asanas* provide multifold benefits. These keep us physically and mentally fit. The *asanas* also help to control stress and improve overall performance of the body and mind. It is very important to be alert and conscious while doing the *asanas*. At the same time one must be relaxed while practising *asana*. Some *asanas* are given on next pages.

Garudasana (Eagle Posture)

This *asana* is named after the well-known bird *Garuda* (eagle). In this *asana*, the hands with arms placed in front look like the beak of an eagle.

Let us perform Garudasana by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Stand erect with feet together, hands by the sides of the thighs.

1. Balancing on the left foot, raise the right leg, bend the right knee and wrap it around left leg.
2. Entwine the forearms keeping the left elbow remaining below. Keep the palms together in front. Keep trunk as erect as possible and maintain the posture for 5 to 10 seconds.

Releasing position:

3. Release arms. Put the right foot down on the floor.
4. Come to the starting position.

Repeat it by changing the position of legs and arms.

Remember the following points:



Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt it within the limitation of your body. • Keep the trunk erect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid any jerks. • Do not apply force on any part of the body.

Benefits

- It helps to loosen the joints of legs and arms.
- This *asana* helps to give static stretching of the muscles of upper and lower parts.
- It enhances concentration.
- It develops balance in the body.

Limitation

- Those suffering from muscular pain, spasm, injuries of bones and joints should not practise it.

Baddhapadmasana

Baddha means ‘bind’ and *Padma* means ‘lotus’.

Let us perform *Baddha-padmasana* by following the steps given below:

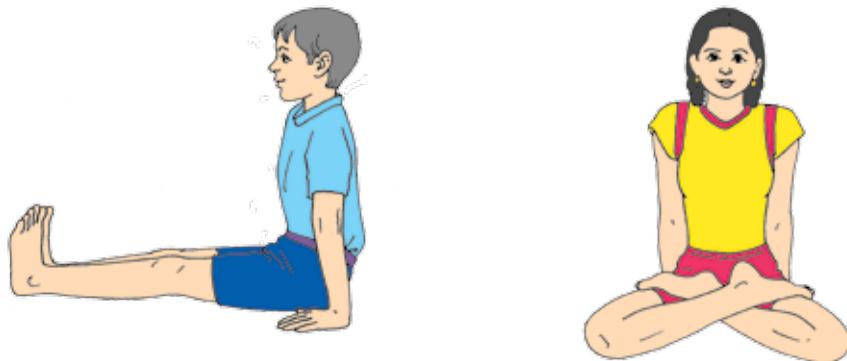
Starting position: Sit with legs extended in front. Fix the right foot on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh (*Padmasana*).



1. Take the arms behind the back and cross them at the back. Hold the right big toe with right hand and left big toe with left hand. Maintain the posture for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing position:

2. Release toes. Bring arms by the side of your body.
3. Release the foot lock.
4. Sit with legs extended in front and relax.



Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform very slowly within your limitation. • The spine is to be maintained erect. • If needed, sit on a small cushion if difficult to perform. • Stretch the shoulders back when trying to hold the big toes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not force your legs to perform this <i>asana</i> beyond your capacity.

Benefits

- It creates an inner peace.
- It gives more blood supply to the pelvic region.
- It improves concentration.
- It reduces pain in shoulders, arms and back.

Limitation

- Avoid performing this *asana* if knee joints and ankle joints are stiff.
- Avoid if suffering from the problem of varicose veins in legs.

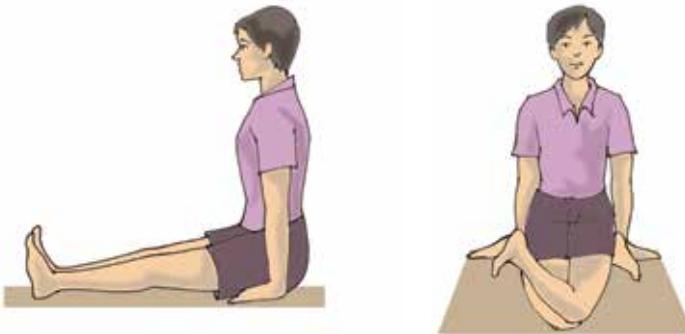
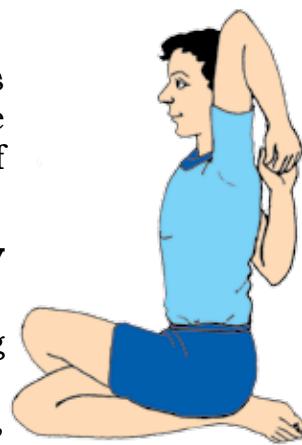
Gomukhasana

Go means ‘cow’ and *mukha* means ‘mouth’ or ‘face’. In this *asana*, the position of legs look like the face of cow, hence, it is called *Gomukhasana*.

Let us perform Gomukhasana by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit in long sitting posture.

1. Bend the right leg at the knee, bring the right foot to the left side and place it close to the left buttock.
2. Fold the left leg in the knee. Bring the left foot to the right side and place it close to the right buttock.



3. Take the left arm over the left shoulder and right arm behind the back. Clasp the fingers of both hands at the back.
4. Sit in this position for 10-15 seconds.

Releasing position:

5. Release the fingers. Bring the arms on the side of the body.

6. Release the left leg and extend it.
7. Release the right leg, extend it and come to the starting position.

Repeat it by changing the position of arms and legs.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the heels in touch with buttocks. • Keep the knees one over the other. • Keep the head and neck erect without bending in the joints • Look in the front. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not sit on the heels. • Do not allow the knees to be raised.

Benefits

- It increases concentration and induces inner peace.
- It is helpful in correcting postural deformities like drooping shoulders.
- It is beneficial for improving lung capacities.
- It is useful in arthritis.
- It relieves backache, sciatica and general stiffness in shoulders and neck.

Limitation

- Those who are suffering from bleeding piles should not practise this *asana*.

Ardhamatsyendrasana (Half Spinal Twist)

This *asana* takes its name from the Yogi Matsyendranath, who first taught this *asana* to his students. Since the full posture is difficult to be practised, therefore its simplified form has been popularised and known as *Ardhamatsyendrasana*.

Let us perform *Ardhamatsyendrasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit on the floor with legs extended in front.

1. Bend the right leg and place right foot near the buttock. The outer edge of the foot should touch the ground.
2. Bend the left leg at the knee and place left foot flat on the floor near outside of the right knee.
3. Bring the right arm over the left knee and hold the left foot with right hand. Slowly twist the trunk to the left side and take the left arm behind the back and wrap it around the waist.



4. Turn the head towards left and look back. Maintain the position for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing position:

5. Turn the neck and bring the head to the centre.
6. Place the arms by the sides of the body.
7. Straighten the leg and extend them in front and relax. Repeat the same procedure with other side.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep spine erect and abdomen in. • Twist the trunk only to the extent of comfortable position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not strain the back.

Benefits

- This is beneficial for improving concentration.
- This posture gives the right and left twists to the spinal column.
- Every vertebra of the spine gets fully *stretched*.
- It helps to bring the trunk muscles in proper tone.
- It reduces digestive problems.

Limitation

- Person suffering from peptic ulcer, hernia, enlarged liver or having any surgery in abdominal region should not practise this *asana*.

Bhujangasana (Cobra Posture)

Bhujanga in Sanskrit means a 'cobra'. In *Bhujangasana*, one imitates a cobra with its hood fully expanded.

**Let us perform
Bhujangasana by
following the steps
given below:**

Starting position: Lie on stomach on the ground, with forehead touching the floor. Extend the arms along the body.



1. Bend the arms at the elbow, place the palms by sides of the shoulders on the floor.
2. Inhaling slowly, raise the head, neck and shoulders. Raise the trunk upto navel and arch the back. Maintain the posture for 10-15 seconds.

Releasing position:

3. Exhaling slowly bring down the torso and then head and chin. Place the forehead on the ground.
4. Straighten the arms and keep them by the side of body and relax.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put minimum weight on hands. • The trunk should be raised upto the navel only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not raise the region below the navel. • Do not jerk the body.

Benefits

- This *asana* makes spine flexible.
- It solves many digestive problems.
- It helps in enhancing focus.

Limitation

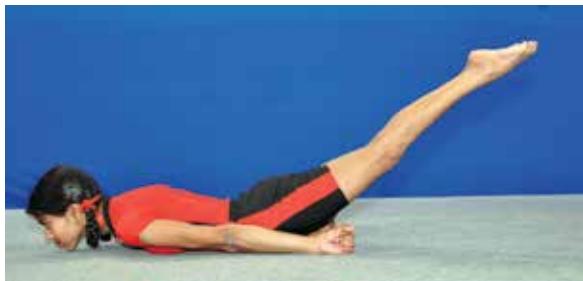
- Person suffering from peptic ulcer, hernia and intestinal tuberculosis should not practise this *asana*.

Shalabhasana (Locust Posture)

In Sanskrit *Shalabha* refers to 'locust' (grasshopper) and *asana* means 'posture'. The final posture of this *asana* imitates a locust (grasshopper).

Let us perform *Shalabhasana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Lie flat on the stomach. Legs together, hands by the side of the thighs, palms facing downwards or the hand clenched.



1. Stretch both the arms and place the hands under the thighs.
2. Inhaling, raise both the legs upwards as high as possible. Maintain the position for 5-10 seconds.



Releasing position:

3. Exhaling slowly bring down outstretched legs to the floor. Place arms beside the body.
4. Lie flat on the stomach. Legs together, hands by the side of the thighs.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the hands to balance and control the body weight. While lifting the leg, contract the lower back muscles. Legs should remain straight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jerk should be avoided. Do not rush through the exercise and do not raise your legs too much. Do not put too much pressure on the hands.

Benefits

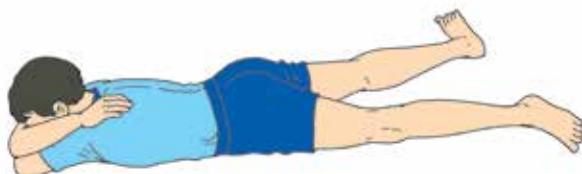
- *Shalabhasana* is a good exercise for the legs, thighs, hips, buttocks, the lower abdomen, diaphragm and wrists.
- It helps to reduce excessive fat formed around the knees, thighs, waist and the abdomen.
- The waist becomes elastic and flexible.
- It induces harmony and enhance concentration.
- It provides relief in lower back pain.

Limitation

- Person suffering from ulcer in stomach, hernia, high blood pressure and cardiac complaints should not practise this *asana*.

Makarasana (Crocodile Posture)

Makarasana is a relaxing posture. It induces peace and brings harmony. You have practised *Makarasana* in previous classes.



Continue practising *Makrasana* by following the technique given in Unit 2 of this book.

Matsyasana (Fish Posture)

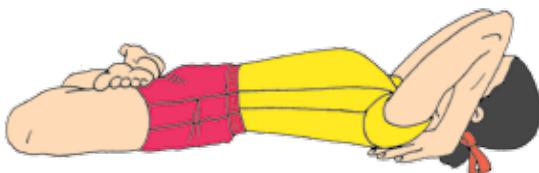
Matsya means ‘fish’. In this *asana* the body takes the posture of a floating fish, hence it is called *matsyasana*.



Let us perform Matsyasana by following the steps given below.

Starting position: Sit in *Padmasana* in a comfortable position.

1. Bend backward, supporting the body with arms and elbow. Lift the chest, take the head back and lower the crown of head to the floor.
2. Place middle part of the head on the ground. Hold the big toes. Elbow should touch the ground.



Releasing position:

3. With the help of the elbows, lower the chest, bring the head on the ground. Unlock the legs. Come back to the sitting position in *Padmasana*.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep trunk erect, while sitting in <i>Padmasana</i>. • Raise the trunk only to the extent of comfortable position, spine should be arched to the maximum. • Take the support of elbows while bending backward and lowering the chest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not bend the neck backward with a jerk. • Do not remove the support of the elbows to neck while lifting up the chest.

Benefits

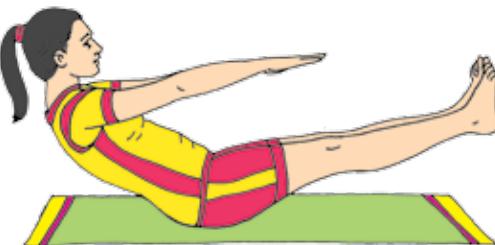
- This posture has therapeutic value for mild backache and fatigue.
- The posture gives very gentle exercise to the spine and makes the body flexible.
- This is useful in throat problems like tonsillitis.
- It reduces anxiety and induces the feeling of floating.

Limitation

- Avoid practising the *asana* in case of peptic ulcers, heart disease, hernia and problems in back.

Naukasana (Boat Posture)

Nauka in Sanskrit means 'boat'. The final position of this *asana* resembles a boat, hence the name has been given *Naukasana*. This *asana* can be performed both in supine and prone position.



Let us perform *Naukasana* by following the steps given below:

Lying on back (supine) position:

Starting position: Lie flat on the back. Keep the heels and feet together. The arms should be by the sides of the body and palms resting on the ground.

1. Inhaling slowly raise the legs. Simultaneously, raise the head and trunk upto 45°.

2. Stretch and raise the arms up and maintain the position for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing position:

3. Exhaling slowly bring the head and trunk down on the floor.
4. Slowly bring down the legs and arms on the floor and relax.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trunk should be raised upto the neval level only. • The hands should stretch straightway without bending at the elbow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not raise trunk or legs in unparallel way.

Benefits

- It stimulates digestive system.
- It gives relief in gastric problems.
- It removes lethargy resulting into improved concentration.
- It removes nervous tension and brings relaxation.
- It reduces fat around the waist and abdomen.

Limitation

- People suffering from hernia should not practise this *asana*.

Setubandhasana

Setubandha means 'formation of bridge'. In this *asana* the thighs, buttock, waist and dorsal region are raised in air resting on feet, arms and shoulders. It resembles the position of a bridge, hence the name is *Setubandhasana*.

Let us perform Setubandhasana by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Lie supine with legs together, arms by the side of the body and palms resting on the floor.



1. Fold both the legs at the knees, with soles of the feet placed on the floor and heels closer to the buttock.
2. Hold both the ankle joints firmly with hands or place both the hands near heels.
3. Raise the thighs and spine upward, as high as comfortably possible.
4. Keep the neck and the shoulders firmly on the floor. Maintain the posture at your comfort level.

Releasing position:

5. Release the hold of ankles.
6. Lower the thighs down on the floor.
7. Straighten and extend the legs.
8. Bring legs together and arms by the sides of the body.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knees should be kept apart while performing initially. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not get disheartened in initial stage if you are unable to catch hold the ankles.

Benefits

- It brings coordination between body and mind and enhances concentration.

- It is beneficial to strengthen the lower back and abdominal muscles.
- It broadens the chest.
- It relieves the tension and stiffness of the muscles and tones up the body.

Limitation

- Do not practise if suffering from any back problems, cardiac problems, high blood pressure and excessive obesity.

Halasana (Plough Posture)

Hala in Sanskrit and Hindi means ‘plough’. In the final position of this *asana*, the body resembles the shape of a plough.

Let us perform *Halasana* by following the steps given below:



Starting position: Lie in supine position, legs together and arms beside the body.

1. Keeping the knees straight, raise the legs up to 30°.
2. Raise the legs further up to 60°.



3. Raise the legs still further up to 90° keeping them vertical and straight.
4. With the support of the hands raise the trunk and lower the legs over the head. The toes should touch the ground. Push the legs a little beyond the head. Arms should be straight in the starting position. Maintain the position for 5-10 seconds.



Releasing position:

5. Slowly lower the back and buttocks to the ground. Bring the legs to 90° position and gradually bring the legs to the starting position.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give the support of the hands to the back while raising the buttocks. • Keep the knees straight throughout the <i>asana</i>. • Balance the weight on hands and shoulders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid giving any type of jerk to the body. • Do not force the legs to touch the ground if it is difficult.

Benefits

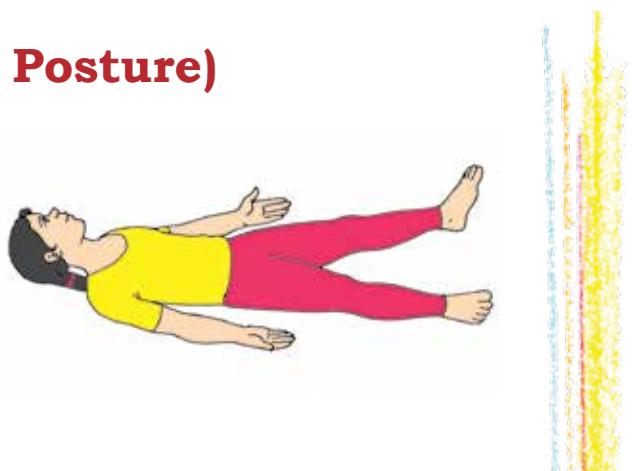
- It gives good exercise to the thyroid gland.
- It gives a good stretch to the spinal column and back muscles, making the spine strong and healthy.
- It helps in increasing the height of children.

Limitation

- Practice of this *asana* should be avoided in case of cervical spondylitis, hernia, high blood pressure and slipped disc.

Shavasana (Corpse Posture)

This is a relaxing posture. It eliminates fatigue and brings peace and harmony by relaxing the body and mind. Practise it by following the technique which has been given in Unit 2 of this book.



KRIYA

In this unit we are discussing *Agnisara*. Continue the practice of *Trataka*, which has been discussed in Unit 2.

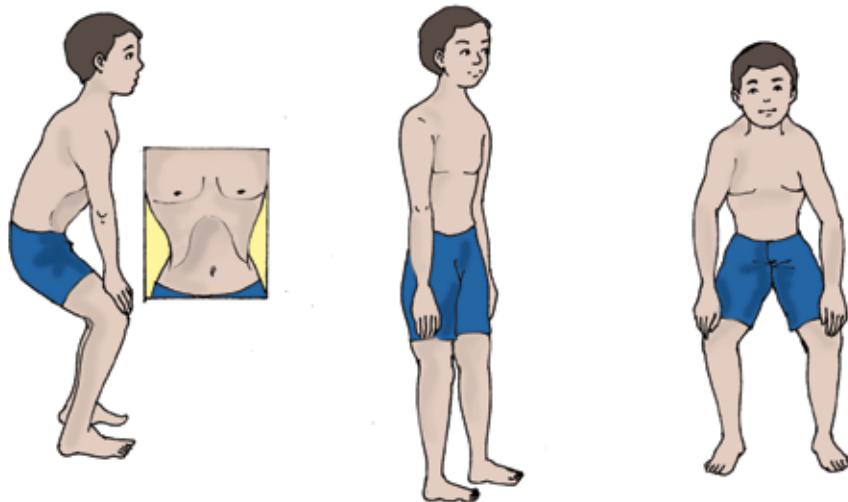
Agnisara

Agnisara is considered a yogic *Kriya*. In Sanskrit *agni* means ‘fire’ and *sara* means ‘essence’. The essence of fire (digestive process) is supposed to be located in navel region. This practice regulates digestive process.

Let us perform *Agnisara* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit in any comfortable posture.

1. Keep the hands on the knees. Exhale completely.



2. Contract and expand the abdominal muscles rapidly as long as you are comfortable while retaining the breath outside.
3. Then slowly breathe in.
Repeat the practice 2-3 times.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is advisable to practise it on a completely empty stomach. • Keep the abdominal muscles relaxed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not practise it after meals. • Do not strain the abdominal muscles too much.

Benefits

- It strengthens the abdominal muscles and nerves.
- It stimulates appetite.
- It reduces constipation.
- It alleviates dullness and depression.

Limitation

- Person suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease, peptic ulcers or chronic diarrhoea should not perform this *kriya*.

PRANAYAMA

Anuloma-viloma Pranayama (Alternate Nostril Breathing)

Anuloma-viloma Pranayama reduces the anxiety and brings harmony to the mind and body. It improves concentration. Practise *Anuloma-viloma Pranayama* by following the techniques given in Unit 3 of this book.



Seetkari Pranayama

In *Seetkari Pranayama*, a sound of 'see' or 'seet' is made during inhalation, hence, it is called *Seetkari Pranayama*.

Let us perform *Seetkari Pranayama* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit erect in *Padmasana* or any other meditative posture.

1. Keep the hands in *jnana mudra* and close the eyes gently.
2. Touch the palate in the mouth with tongue.



3. Hold the front teeth lightly on each other. Separate the lips.
4. Breathe in through the teeth making the whistling sound of 'see'.
5. Retain the breath as long as you can.

Releasing position:

6. Join the lips and exhale slowly through both nostrils.
7. During exhalation keep the mouth closed.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neck and head should not bend forward or backward. • Inhale through the mouth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not inhale from nostrils. • Do not practise it in polluted area because the air inhaled through the mouth cannot be filtered.

Benefits

- *Seetkari Pranayama* keeps the mind cool and enhances concentration.
- It tranquillizes body and mind both.
- It helps in controlling thirst and hunger.
- It reduces irritation.

Limitation

- Person suffering from low blood pressure, asthma, bronchitis and constipation should avoid practising this *pranayama*.
- It should not be practised in cold weather.

Bhramari Pranayama

The word *bhramari* is derived from a Sanskrit word *bhramara* which means a ‘black humming bee’. In *Bhramari Pranayama*, a sound resembling the sound of a black bee is produced, therefore, it is called *Bhramari Pranayama*.

Let us perform *Bhramari Pranayama* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit in *Padmasana* or any other comfortable sitting posture. Close the eyes.

1. Breathe in through the nose.
2. Close both the ears with thumbs and put the fingers on forehead and eyes. Exhale while making a soft sound of a humming bee. Keep the sound low pitched and concentrate on the sound.
3. After exhaling, bring your hands back on your knees and inhale in slowly. This is one round.
4. Practice 2-4 rounds in similar way.

Remember the following points:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the humming sound while exhaling. • Focus your mind on the sound. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not make the sound at high pitch.



Benefits

- It improves concentration.
- The sound which resonates in the brain, removes tension and anxiety.
- It helps reduce anger.
- It pacifies the mind and improves memory.

Limitation

- During ear infection, this *pranayama* should not be practised.

MEDITATION

Meditation is a yogic practice which relaxes body and mind. It helps in improving concentration and induces peace in mind. For improving concentration practise meditation by following the technique which is given in Unit 2 of this book.



ASSESSMENT

Q.I Answer the following questions:

1. Why *Yama* and *Niyama* are important for value development?
2. Write a short note on *Prathahara*.
3. Do you find any change in your concentration after performing *asana* and *pranayama*? Write your experience.
4. What changes do you experience after meditation?
5. Do you find any change in your mental state after performing *Bhramari Pranayama*? Write your observations.
6. Describe any two practices which are performed in prone position (lying on stomach).
7. Describe the steps of *Ardhamatsyendrasana*.
8. Write a short note on *Gomukhasana*.
9. How does the control of senses (*Pratyahara*) help in concentration?
10. Write the benefits of *Anuloma-viloma Pranayama*.

Q. II Put a tick (✓) mark on Yes or No

1. Agnisara increases respiratory efficiency.
(Yes/No)
2. In *Garudasana*, the person stands on two legs.
(Yes/No)
3. We make forceful exhalation in *Anuloma-viloma Pranayama*.
(Yes/No)
4. Agnisara is a *asana*.
(Yes/No)
5. In *Shalabhasana*, the body takes the shape of a locust.
(Yes/No)
6. In *asana*, movements of part of the body are coordinated with breathing.
(Yes/No)

7. There are ten principles of *yama*. (Yes/No)
8. Meditation improves concentration. (Yes/No.)

Q. III Fill in the blanks

1. In *Halasana*, the body looks like a _____.
2. There should be a gap of _____ hours between the meals and performing yogic practices.
3. Alternate nostrils are used for each inhalation and exhalation. _____.
4. *Ardhamatsyendrasana* is a simpler version of _____.
5. A soft humming sound is made in _____.
6. The five *Yamas* are 1._____, 2._____, *Brahmacharya, Asteya, Aprigraha*.
7. The five *Niyamas* are *Shaucha*, _____, *Tapa*, _____, *Ishwarapranidhana*.
8. In *Matsyasana*, one experiences a feeling of _____.

PROJECT

1. Make a chart of five practices which increase concentration.
2. Practice meditation for five minutes daily for ten days. Prepare a report on the changes you feel after ten days.
3. Prepare a report on the experiences of two persons who have been practising yogic practices minimum for two years.

Syllabus for Upper Primary Stage in Yoga

Theme / Sub-Theme	Questions	Key Concepts	Resources	Activities/Processes
Yoga for Health	How yoga is suitable for me and why should we do asanas and pranayamas?	Benefits of Yoga Practices	Textbook, other materials diaries, charts, video clips, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surya Namaskara Asanas • Tadasana • Vrikshasana • Utkatasana • Vajrasana • Suastikasana • Ardhapadmasana • Niralamba Bhujangasana • Ardha-Shalabhasana • Makarasana • Uttanapadasana • Pawanmuktasana • Shavasana • Breathing with Awareness • Trataka Meditation

Class VII			
Yoga for Physical Fitness	How flexibility and physical fitness can be achieved through yogic practices?	What is flexibility? Various yogic practices to enhance flexibility	Textbook, other materials, diaries, charts, video clips, etc.
		<p>What is flexibility?</p> <p>Yogic Practices to Enhance Flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Surya Namaskara Asanas</i> • <i>Tadasana</i> • <i>Hastottanasana</i> • <i>Trikonasana</i> • <i>Katichakrasana</i> • <i>Padmasana</i> • <i>Yogamudrasana</i> • <i>Paschimottanasana</i> • <i>Dhanurasana</i> • <i>Makarasana</i> • <i>Supta Vajrasana</i> • <i>Chakrasana</i> • <i>Ardha Halasana</i> • <i>Shavasana</i> • <i>Kriya</i> • <i>Kapalabhati Pranayamas</i> • <i>Anuloma-viloma</i> • <i>Bhastrika</i> <p>Meditation</p>	

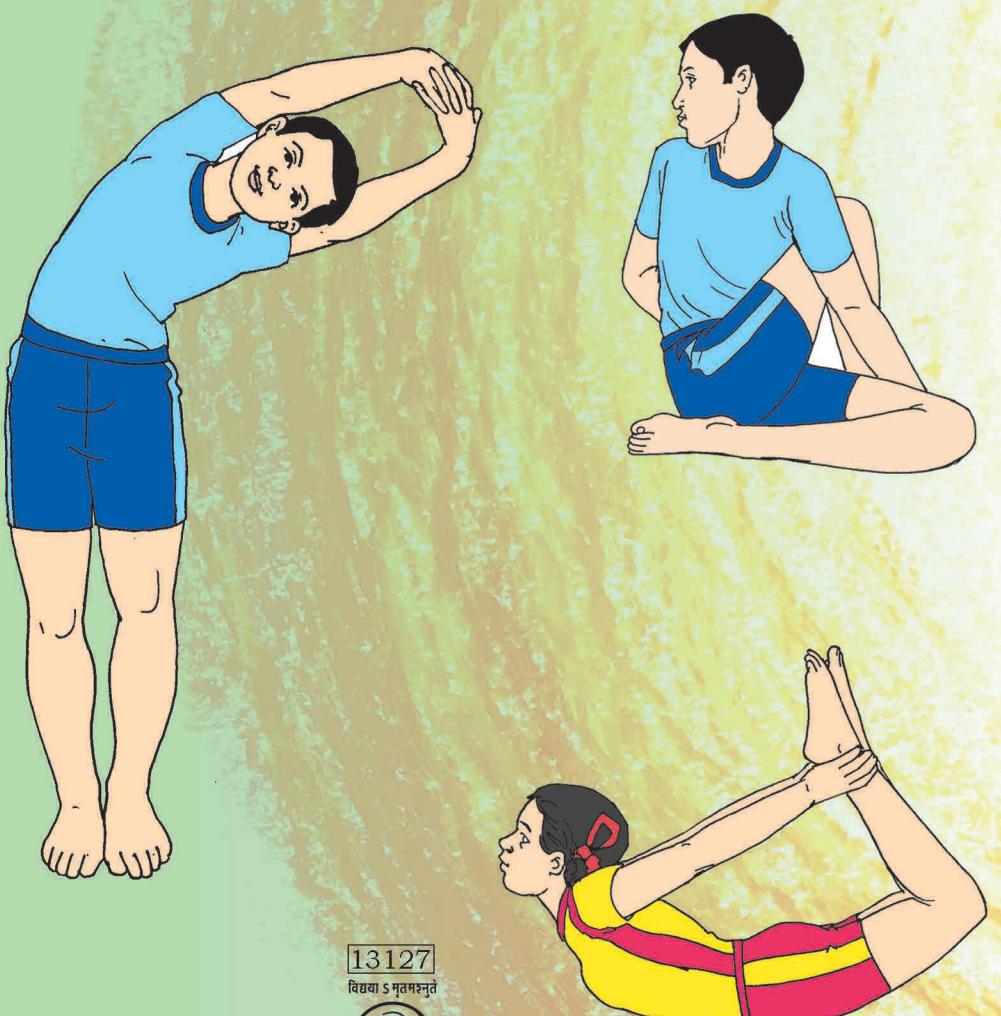
	Class VIII
Yoga for Concentration	<p>How yogic practices help in developing concentration and harmony?</p> <p>Benefits of yogic practices for developing concentration and harmony.</p> <p>Textbook, other materials, diaries, charts, video clips, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Garudasana</i> • <i>Baddhapadmasana</i> • <i>Gomukhasana</i> • <i>Ardhamatsyendrasana</i> • <i>Bhujiangasana</i> • <i>Shalabhasana</i> • <i>Makarasana</i> • <i>Matsyasana</i> • <i>Naukasana</i> • <i>Setubandhasana</i> • <i>Halasana</i> • <i>Shavasana</i> • <i>Kriya</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Agnisara</i> • <i>Pranayamas</i> • <i>Anuloma-viloma</i> • <i>Seetkari</i> • <i>Bhramari</i> <p>Meditation</p>

NOTES

For Peace...

**Building a culture of peace is
an incontestable goal of
education. Education to be
meaningful should empower
individuals to choose peace
as a way of life and enable
them to become managers
rather than passive
spectators of conflict.**





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