

FIT FOR FIFTY

Basic Yoga Techniques AM

How to perform them.

Complete Breath - Standing

Perform 5 times.



Stand with feet together and arms at sides. Relax. Exhale slowly and completely through nose. Contract abdomen to assist in complete exhalation.



Begin a slow inhalation through nose. Simultaneously begin to raise arms with palms facing up. Push abdomen out (distend) to assist in filling the lower part of lungs.



Continue the slow inhalation and the simultaneous raising of arms. Contract abdomen slightly and expand chest fully to assist in filling the upper part of lungs. Palms touch overhead. Lungs should be filled at this point. Hold position and retain air for a count of 5.



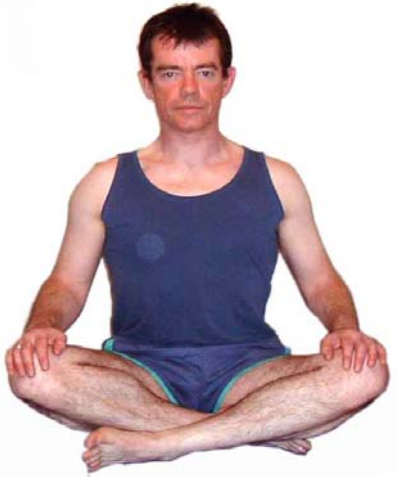
Execute a slow, controlled exhalation during which you slowly return arms to sides. Relax chest during first half of exhalation, contract abdomen during second half to assist in complete emptying of lungs. Without pause, repeat.

Complete Breath Seated

Perform 5 times

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Sit on floor in a simple cross-legged position. Draw legs in as far as possible. Palms rest on thighs. Spine must be held straight. Exhale deeply, contracting abdomen.



Perform the slow deep-controlled inhalation as in the standing position. During inhalation, the shoulders, not arms, are slowly raised to extreme position. Palms remain on thighs. Hold position and retain air for a count of 5. Slowly exhale and simultaneously contract abdomen and lower shoulders to starting position.

Chest Expansion

Perform twice



Stand erect with feet together and arms at sides.
Slowly and gracefully raise arms into position illustrated.



Slowly and gracefully extend arms straight outward at chest level.



Slowly bring arms behind back and interlace fingers. Raise arms as high as possible while holding spine straight.



Take a deep breath. While exhaling slowly, bend very gently backward as far as possible **without strain**.

Knees are straight, head bent backward, neck relaxed, arms raised.

Hold without movement for a count of 5.



Very slowly straighten to the upright position. Take a deep breath. While exhaling slowly, very slowly begin to bend forward. Fingers remain locked, arms come forward, knees straight, neck relaxed and eyes open.



Continue to bend forward as far as possible **without strain.** Hold without movement for a count of 10. Very slowly straighten to the upright position. Return arms to sides and relax.

Triangle

Perform 3 times on each side, alternating from left to right.



In a standing position, slowly separate legs and gracefully raise arms (palms down) as depicted.

Slowly bend to the left. **Without strain**, left hand holds lowermost outside area of left leg it can reach.

Right arm, with elbow straight comes over, stretching as far as possible. Knees straight, neck relaxed.

Hold without movement for a count of ten.

Slowly straighten to original position with arms outstretched.

Execute identical movements to the right side.

Hold without movement for a count of 10.

Slowly straighten to original position with arms outstretched.

Following final repetition, slowly lower arms to sides and bring legs together. Relax.

Dancer's Movements

Perform 5 times.



With heels together, rest hands on head as depicted. Palms are pressed together, fingers point straight upward.



In very slow motion, bend knees, rise onto toes and lower trunk until buttocks touch heels. Knees remain together throughout movements.



Without pause, very slowly raise body to the upright position and come up high on toes. Hold as steady as possible for a count of 5. Slowly lower heels to the floor and repeat. Following final repetition, lower arms to sides and relax.

Back Stretch

Perform twice.



Seated on the floor with legs extended and together, slowly raise arms keeping hands close together.



Take a deep breath and while exhaling, make a slow-motion dive forward.



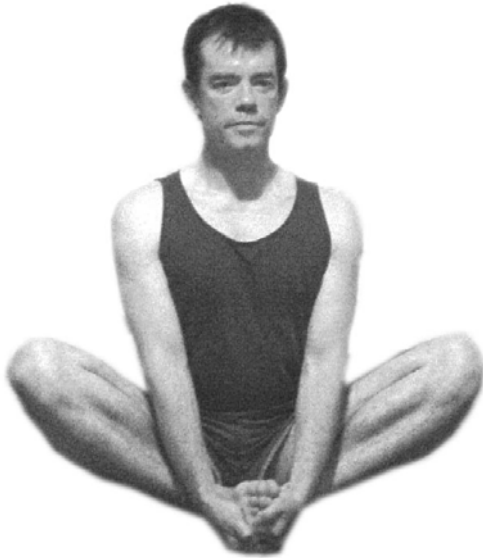
Take firm hold on the furthest part of the legs that can be reached **without strain**.



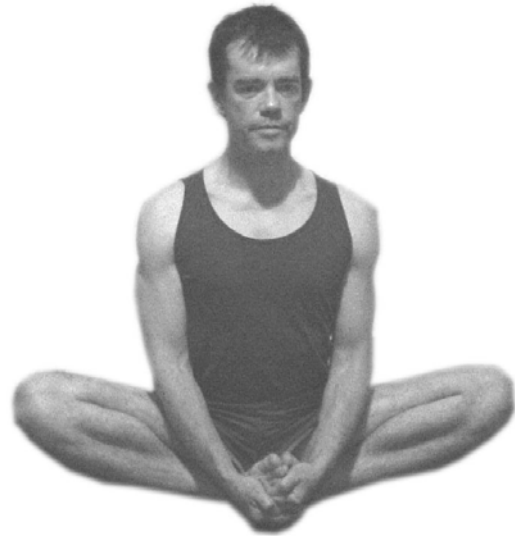
Lower forehead as far forward as possible **without strain**. Knees straight, neck relaxed, elbows bent. While breathing gently, hold for a count of 20. Release legs and slowly straighten trunk to upright position, simultaneously raise arms, as in starting position. Repeat. Following final repetition, rest hands on knees and relax.

Knee and Thigh Stretch

Perform 3 times.



Clasp hands around feet and interlace fingers.
Bring feet in as far as possible.
Straighten spine and head.



Pull up against feet to assist in slowly lowering
knees as far as possible towards the floor.
Hold without motion for a count of 10.
Allow knees and thighs to relax for a few
moments. Repeat.
Following final repetition, release feet and slowly
extend legs.

Twist

Perform 3 times on left side, then 3 times on right side.



Legs are extended. Cross left leg over right and rest foot on floor. Cross right arm **over** left knee and take firm hold of right knee or calf with right hand.

Place left hand firmly on floor behind your back (for balance).



Very slowly turn head and twist trunk as far as possible to the left. Keep trunk erect. Hold without motion for a count of 10.

Slowly return head and trunk to forward position. Relax a few moments then repeat.

Following the final repetition, extend legs and perform identical movements on opposite side. (Carefully exchange the words left and right in the instructions above.)

Backward Bend

Perform each of the 2 positions once.



Sit on heels. Knees together arms at sides. Place palms on floor behind your back and slowly inch backwards to a comfortable distance. Knees together, arms even with sides, fingers together and pointing directly towards rear.



Cautiously arch trunk upward as far as possible, simultaneously lower head backward as far as possible. Do not raise buttocks from heels. Hold without motion for a count of 20. Slowly raise head, lower trunk, inch hands forward to beginning position.



Change position of feet so that toes are on floor. Slowly lower buttocks to heels.



Repeat the instructions above. Hold without movement for a count of 10. **Remember**, do these movements and hold these positions **without strain**. After your final hold, bring your legs out from underneath and stretch them out in front of you and relax.