

BASIC SEATED POSTURES For Meditation and Pranayama

Sukhasana



Sukha means easy or joyful (easy posture)

Benefits:

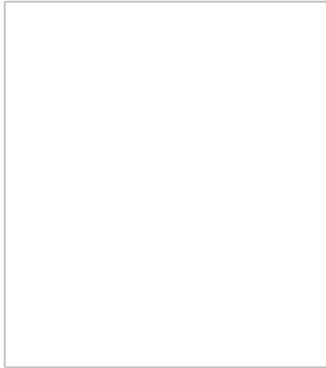
A starting position that helps focus awareness on breathing and the body and helps strengthen lower back and open the groin and hips.

Instructions:

Cross your shins, widen your knees, and slip each foot beneath the opposite knee as you bend your knees and fold the legs in toward your torso.

Relax the feet so their outer edges rest comfortably on the floor and the inner arches settle just below the opposite shin. There should be a comfortable gap between the feet and the pelvis.

If the knees rise above your hips, sit on a cushion or block. This will help support your back and hips. You will know you have the correct lift when your thighs release out of your pelvis and your abdomen relaxes.



Siddhasana

Siddha means one who is accomplished – Sage

Benefits: Opens the hips and strengthens the back.

Instructions: In this position you draw the left heel against the perineum and place the other foot resting on the ankle and lower calf of the other leg. The top foot will lie comfortable in the fold between the calf and thigh of the other leg. Soles are upright. Again if the knees rise higher than the hips, please sit on a blanket or block or chair.

“When siddha-asana is mastered, of what use are the various other postures?”

Hatha Yoga Pradipika

Padmasana



Padma means lotus. (lotus posture) *Not a posture for those with knee injuries or tight hips!*

Benefits: Calms the brain; Stimulates the pelvis, spine, abdomen, and bladder; Stretches the ankles and knees; Eases menstrual discomfort and sciatica.

Instructions:

Basic instructions: Padmasana “lotus posture” is performed by placing the right foot on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh.

HOW? Sit on the floor with your legs straight in front. Bend your right knee and bring left hand under right foot turning sole of foot to sky and take the right foot to the crook of the left thigh. Lift left foot, **lean back slightly** and carefully slide the left leg over the right, bringing left foot deep into the right groin. Draw the knees as close together as possible. Use the edges of the feet to press the groins toward the floor and lift through the top of the sternum



Vajrasana [vah-jras-anna] vajra = thunderbolt

Benefits: Improves and aids digestion, conditions pelvic muscles and brings awareness to posture, good for meditation and pranayama.

Cautions - Knee injuries - avoid this posture

Instructions: Slowly kneel onto a mat or blanket. Knees close together. Rest bottom onto the soles of the feet. Allow the heels to separate until they touch the sides of the hips.

Observe the how the head and spine can naturally balance over the pelvis.

Modifications

If the pose is too deep for the knees, place a folded blanket between the bottom and heels to decrease how far the hips come down onto the feet.

Place a thin cushion or rolled up towel under ankles if the stretch is too deep for the ankle joint or if the foot muscles are cramping.