

(Supported) Shoulderstand



Salamba Sarvangasana

sah-LOM-bah sar-van-GAHS-unnuh (sa=with; alamba=support; sarva=whole; anga=limb, body)

PROPS & ASSISTS

- ▼ blankets (2-4)
- ▼ wall

CONTRAINDICATIONS - CAUTIONS

- ⊗ pregnancy
- ⊗ high blood pressure, headache; menstruation
- △ neck & shoulders
- △ lower back, sciatica

CUES & TIPS

- bring elbows as close together as possible
- push back ribs in and up
- when lifting legs up to straight, open hips and engage glute muscles
- soften throat, relax tongue, gently push back of neck/skull into mat

ASPIRE TO

- ✓ fingers spread wide on lower back
- ✓ feet flexed
- ✓ straight elongated line from chest to toes

AVOID

- ✗ elbows wide
- ✗ legs angled overly forward or back

MODIFICATIONS (LESS/MORE INTENSE) - VARIATIONS

- ▼ supported torso only to about 45° angle then legs straight up
- ▼ use wall to walk legs up getting into pose
- ▼ several folded blankets below shoulders and upper arms (not under neck or head)
- ❖ bring soles of feet together and open knees wide
- ❖ fold legs crossed or into lotus

BREATH FOCUS

- when doing final leg raise, inhale
- while in pose focus on calm, regular breath
- when lowering, exhale

BASIC STEPS

- lie on back, arms at sides
- supporting lower back with hands, lift knees to over head, thighs parallel to floor, lower legs & torso perpendicular
- adjust upper arm/elbow position as req
- straighten and extend legs toward ceiling

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Symbolic of new perspective.

forward bend		side bend		backward bend		twist	balance	I
STANDING	SEATED	RECLINED	ARM/LEG SUPPORT	INVERSION			RESTING	

KEY TO ASANA QUICK REFERENCE

Common Name
(& any alternatives)

Sanskrit Name
Pronunciation
Translation

Props & assists to
have on hand

Not Recommended ☹
& Approach With
Caution △ conditions

Guidance for getting
into and/or holding
the pose

Observational
attributes to aim for
or avoid when in pose

Options to make it
▼ less ▲ more
intense
Some possible
variations ❖

Particular breathing
instructions*

Main steps (not
detailed instructions)
to get into pose.

Symbolism or
significance of pose*

Action*

Body Position

*field may be
blank on some
poses

Side Plank (aka Lateral Inclined Plane; One-Arm Stand)	
Vasisthasana vah-sih-TAH5-unnuh (vassistha = best, richest, excellent)	
PROPS & ASSISTS ❖ wall	CONTRAINDICATIONS - CAUTIONS ☹ wrists - carpal tunnel △ shoulder
QUES & TIPS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • squeeze both legs together and straight • elongate arms as much as possible, stacking shoulders to form a straight line • active engagement of core and legs is essential 	
ASPIRE TO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ feet stacked side-by-side, as if standing ✓ arms at right angle to torso ✓ torso basically straight 	AVOID <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ hips or shoulders sinking ✗ lifting hips too high
MODIFICATIONS (LESS/MORE INTENSE) - VARIATIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▼ don't look up ▲ upper arm extended out to the front (adds side stretch) ❖ wedge feet against a wall to assist balancing 	
BREATH FOCUS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when raising arm, inhale • when lowering arm, exhale 	BASIC STEPS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downward-facing Dog (DFD) • slowly revolve body, stabilizing with outer foot; upper hand to waist • engage core, move outer leg on top of lower • raise outer arm, open palm, look up RELEASING: lower arm, revolve back to DFD
Connects sky and ground.	
Forward bend STANDING	side bend SEATED
backward bend RECLINED	twist ARM/LEG SUPPORT
balance RESTING	balance RESTING

Last Revision

Main chakra(s)
activated*:
Crown
Brow / 3rd Eye
Throat
Heart
Solar Plexus
Sacral
Root

Level:
Novice
Beginner
Intermediate
Advanced

These pages are an aid to yoga instruction, provided to students as a reference for poses they have done in yoga class. They are not comprehensive, nor intended to replace qualified instruction.

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