

A Review of Fundamental Elements

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As you begin practice, invite a "softening" into the experience, begin with gentle, easy breathing in a rhythmic pattern pausing at the top and bottom of each breath, shoulders soften away from the ears, throat is relaxed, inner gaze toward the heart



Sitting might be more comfortable if the body feels stiff or tight



work your way into practice by massaging both feet "thumbing" to increase circulation and improve flexibility in the toes

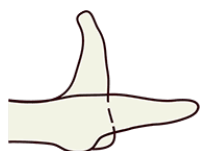


We did this together, and yes, it is a sign of great intelligence ;)

Gently squeeze your fingers with your toes

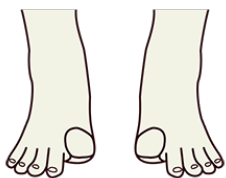


Squinch and spread



Lengthen the arch behind the heel by stretching the Achilles tendon, then shorten it

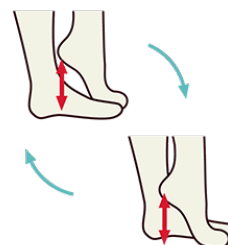
the toes are not active, they do not point or stretch



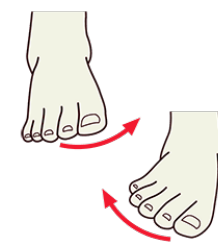
place both feet on the floor and explore "feeling and sensation" from the big toes across to the small toes from the inner to the outer edges of your heels



Practice until you feel more circulation and sensation



practice this both sitting and standing as long as there is no pain



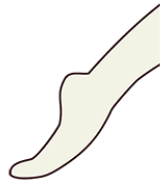
supinate and pronate using a strap or not, try to keep your knees still



stand tall, and as you alternate, sense the shifting center of gravity
find a focal point and continue,
seek confidence and stability



lengthen the shin again, wonderful for avoiding cramping



this is what it would like like with your foot on the floor



you can practice this standing, apply gentle pressure, **AVOID ANY and ALL DISCOMFORT**



Shift back to the chair or practice standing :)



draw one leg in and then the other, exhale when you draw in, inhale when you release and change sides

sit taller than in this picture, her spine is too round



Hold deeply and take several breaths feel the breath move in the back of the body soften, and enjoy this pose (hold the back of the thigh)
once again, keep your spine more elongated, our model is too rounded especially if you have osteoporosis



Baby-cradle each leg ... don't worry about how high the leg goes, just rock it gently to warm the entire hip area (no pain)



You can use your arms as pictured or with a strap



We practice this sitting down, but this is what the final stage of the pose looks like!



Once you've practiced the three poses above, take a bow as pictured or holding your shoulders. Hinge at the hip and keep the spine long



this is an excellent alternative, you can keep the blocks close in or incrementally walk them away. notice the length in the spine!



Now, shift the focus to your shoulders warming up the neck and upper back ... hold the brachial plexus to encourage the pectoral muscles to release



Tone the low belly, hold the elbows and stretch as far as you can breathe deeply into the space you are creating



Follow the next five postures to open the front of the chest while engaging the muscles in your back, adducting the arms behind you ...



move gently and slowly



this is a such a great way to begin to open the shoulders and safely build range of motion please avoid over-efforting. NO SHOULDER PAIN, EVER



Invite the shoulder blades to draw toward the spine as if yo are creating a little valley



Once you've completed the series above, stretch across the front of the body as a counterpose (a forward bend would be great here)



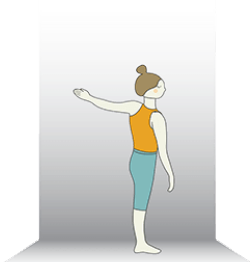
Simply begin to reach the arms slowly exploring range of motion (NO PAIN) Lead with the palm facing away from you and with the little finger reaching up first as if you are backstroking in the pool



circle the elbows,
first and then the
arms



begin at arms length
away from the wall
and gradually move
closer



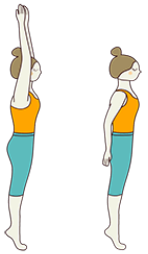
This is intended to
open the front of the
body
gently stretching the
pectoral muscles,
keep the belly toned
and the head held
high



Ultimately, we stand
as close to the wall
as possible
and move the upper
arm behind us ...
this takes time and a
non-competitive spirit



rest in standing
mountain pose



playfully move
through this little
series to explore
sensation
and balance



using the chair,
kitchen counter or
wall,
prepare to lunge after
reviewing the earlier
postures
that prepare you for
this series



use the chair or not ;)



supported lunge with
a long, straight spine,
head held in
alignment with the
sacrum,
tone in the low belly,
gentle breathing



rest in mountain



return to this pose
and stretch deeply,
lengthening the sides
of the body,
reaching hips away
from waistline



move into a nice high
lunge
using chair or not



Flip the toes gently,
pause,
balance,
breathe



lunge again,
with a subtle turn to
the side
as long as your neck
is comfortable.
you can still do this
holding onto a chair
or sink!



rest in mountain

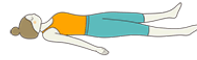


release into forward
bend
with or without
blocks or chair



TO release any
tightness in chest,
neck or back,
play against the ball
as pictured
or against the wall

This is your
alternative bridge
pose before
shavasana



and now release into
total and complete
stillness



keep legs bent if
more comfortable

soften, breathe, rest
deeply

