

# *Sun Salutations*

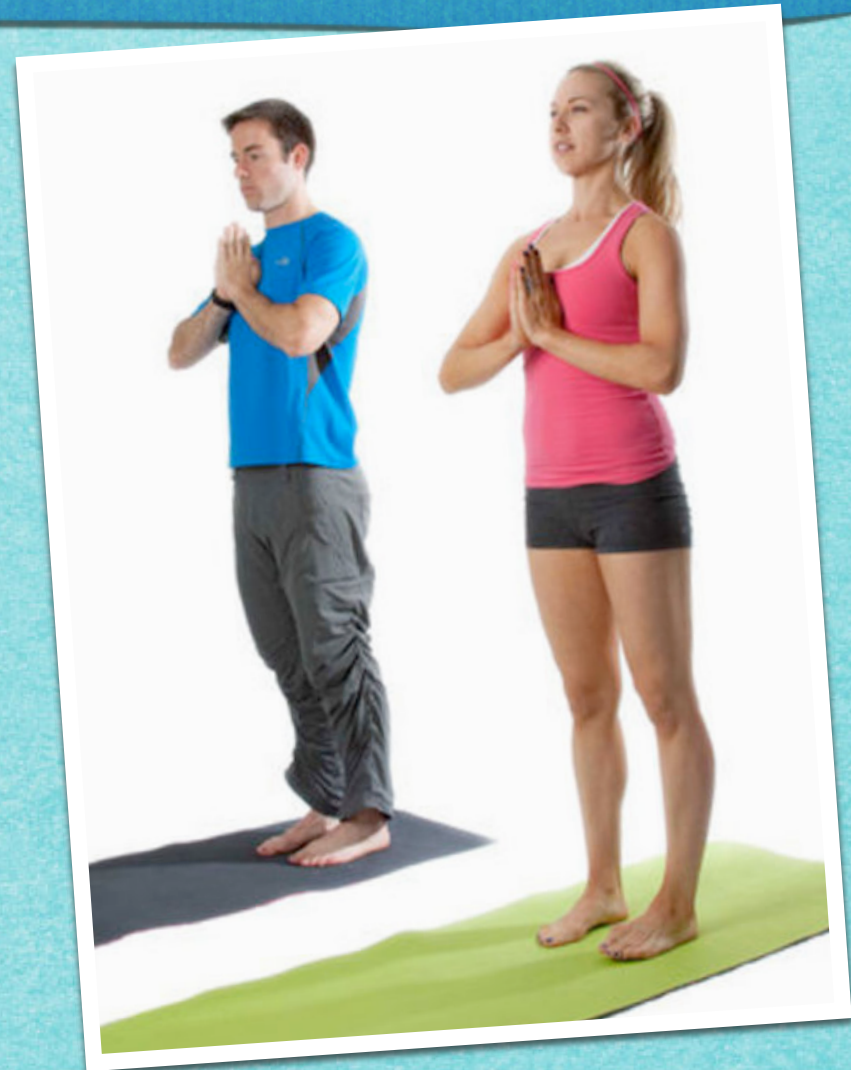
*Surya Namaskar*

by: Tracey Eccleston E-RYT 500 / E-RYT 200

# Mountain Pose

## Tadasana

- ▶ (tah-DAHS-anna)  
tada = mountain
- ▶ Lift the toes spread to engage the arches (allow toes to melt down keeping arches engaged)
- ▶ Feet parallel and hip width apart
- ▶ ground through four points (pad above big toe, pad above pinky toe, both edges of heel or centre of heel for 3 points)
- ▶ keeping knees soft, lift the knee caps
- ▶ keep knees pointing straight ahead
- ▶ tuck the tail bone under
- ▶ lift and engage the belly (zip up the core)
- ▶ Ignite the bundhas
- ▶ allow the heart to float
- ▶ dropping shoulders down, opening through the heart, allow your “wings” to draw out and away from the core
- ▶ relax the jaw and the tongue
- ▶ lift the crown, lengthen through the back of the neck
- ▶ allow hands to fall naturally down by your sides, thumbs out



# Forward Bend

## Uttanasana



- ▶ (OOT-tan-AHS-ahna)
  - ut = intense
  - tan = to stretch or extend
- ▶ starting in mountain pose, keeping the legs straight to focus on hamstrings (or bending the the knees to support lower back) slowly lengthening through the torso, dive into a forward bend
  - ▶ consider engaging uddiyana bunda (belly & core engagement)
- ▶ keep the spine straight and bend at the hip joint
- ▶ working to keep the back straight and long throughout the forward bend
- ▶ lengthen through the back of the neck with a slight tuck of the chin
- ▶ if hands do not touch the ground you can rest on thighs, shins, blocks or bolsters
- ▶ holding onto the opposite elbow while forward bending can create a deeper sense of gravity pull
- ▶ if there is a lower back challenge you can bend or soften the knee, reduce the degree of the bend and extend both front and back side of body (possibly resting on the thighs)

# Half Forward Bend

## Ardha Uttanasana

- ▶ (are-dah oot-tan-AHS-anna)  
ardha = half  
uttanna = intense stretch
- ▶ ensure to bend at the hips
- ▶ lengthen the entire spine, including the back of the neck (full extension through back of the neck with slight chin tuck)
- ▶ see notes for Full Forward bend
- ▶ engage core (uddiyana bundha)
- ▶ draw shoulder up, back and down
- ▶ allow hands to rest on thighs, shins or hands relaxed in front
- ▶ feet start in mountain pose
- ▶ lower level option is to bend the knees



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# Runners Lunge

## High Lunge



- ▶ This is often referred to as a transition pose
- ▶ two transitions are lunge to plank & downward facing dog to lunge
- ▶ knee should be aligned directly over ankle (ensuring no inner/outer rotation, or knees too far over ankles)
- ▶ back leg to remain engage and straight
- ▶ front toes should remain soft (wiggle)
- ▶ length of lunge (distance between feet) should be to comfort level (nice to back foot where plank would land for ease of vinyasa flow)
- ▶ keep hips square and once alignment is achieved slowly lower towards the earth
- ▶ work to elongate the back and avoid rounding the spine (lengthening the front side of the body, and lifting the heart helps)
- ▶ dristi to your front big toe
- ▶ feet are on two separate train tracks (hip distance apart even when one leg is back)

# Plank

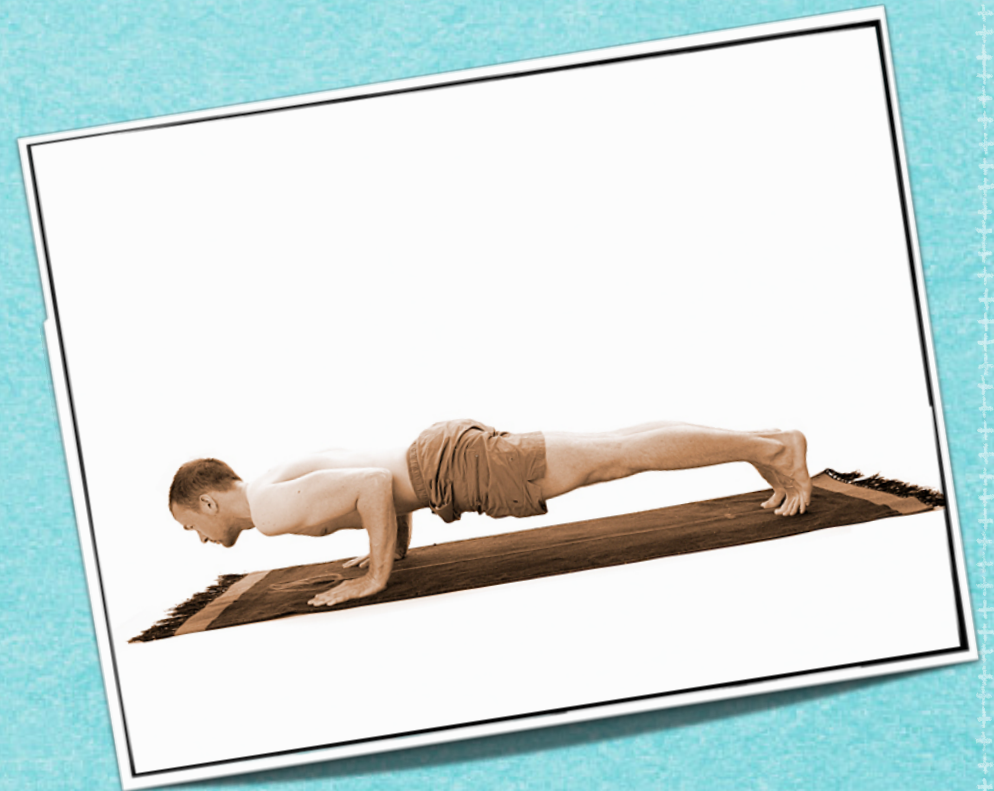
- ▶ Plankasana - fun made up term
- ▶ fingers are spread wide with index fingers parallel to the outside edges of mat
- ▶ hands are located stacked underneath elbows and shoulders
- ▶ place the arms so that when you move to chataranga, the elbows point towards your feet (to engage your triceps)
- ▶ shoulders should remain in a neutral position, away from the ears, engaged yet relaxed - keep a focus on engaging the front of the chest/shoulders as well. Back safety is more important than a perfectly straight line. A slight tip up in the tail bone can add protection
- ▶ engage core (udiyana bundah) ensuring the the whole length of the body is straight (just like a plank or mountain pose)
- ▶ press away from heels, and elongate through the back of the neck to create energy oppositions
- ▶ feet are approximately hip distance apart
- ▶ dristi is straight down to the floor
- ▶ if you are a beginner, or working on upper body strength, drop your knees (still keeping hips and torso straight)



# Four-limbed Staff Pose

## Chaturanga Dandasana

- ▶ (chaht-tour-ANG-ah don-DAHS-anna)
  - chatu = four
  - anga = limb
  - danda = staff
- ▶ starting in plank pose (see previous notes)
- ▶ shift your body weight forward to stack your elbows over your wrists
- ▶ keep elbows and arms tucked into the body (touching the sides if possible) in order to engage your triceps
- ▶ slowly bend your elbows (which in turn lowers the body to the earth)
- ▶ energy is pressing out the head & feet as well as upwards
- ▶ **USE YOUR CORE**
- ▶ remember to breath
- ▶ dristi is about a foot in front of the shoulders





# Cobra

## Bhujangasana



- ▶ (boo-jang-GAHS-anna)  
bhujanga = serpent, snake
- ▶ hands are located under the fronts of the shoulders (just like plank)
- ▶ shoulders should be down and away from the ears throughout the pose (ensure this before you start moving)
- ▶ use your triceps by tucking the elbows in (avoid biceps with elbows flaring out)
- ▶ baby cobra (either small lift same hand placement) or draw forearms to the floor elbows under shoulders and slowly extend up
- ▶ remember to engage your core before extending to elongate the back
- ▶ pay attention to lower back, buttocks tightening and avoid locking elbows
- ▶ starts directly down at the floor, and slowly moves to about a foot or two in front
- ▶ thighs, hips, shins, knees and tops of feet should remain pressing into the earth (toes can turn under if concerns of leg craps)

# Downward Facing Dog

## Adho Mukha Svanasana

- ▶ (AH-doh MOO-kah shvah-NAHS-anna)
  - adho = downward
  - mukha = face
  - svana = dog
- ▶ the distance between hands and feet should be the same as plank
- ▶ fingers should be spread wide with extra pressure on thumb and first finger
- ▶ think about lifting towards the tailbone through the arms (avoid pressing into the earth)
- ▶ tip tail (sit bones) up towards the sky, creating length in the lower spine
- ▶ internally rotate inner thighs to open through tail bone
- ▶ once upward motion is achieved think about lengthening hamstrings by dropping heels towards the floor (not everyone's heels can touch the floor)
- ▶ Hatha Dristi (gaze) eyes to knees (head is inline with the spine)
- ▶ hand distance apart should be slightly wider than the torso so that when lowering the the ground in other poses the body fits.
- ▶ hands on assists - lengthening the spine through pressure of heel of hand, moving up the spine to tail bone. Holding above the hips, and pulling skyward.



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