

# BEND DON'T BREAK YOGA FOR ALL

HEALTH & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INSTITUTE 2025  
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

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# Mountain

## Major Muscles and Flexibility Areas:

External oblique's, Teres Maximus, Infraspinate Muscles  
Latissimus Dorsi, Back Extensors, Glutes, Quadriceps,  
Gastrocnemius/ Soleus, Flexors/extensors of the feet,  
Deltoids

## Cues:

- Inhale into this position
- Squeeze glutes and quads
- Pull belly button into the spinal cord
- Ground feet into floor
- Reach the finger tips to the ground
- Roll the shoulders back and down; Hugging the spinal cord
- Inhale the arms up, triceps behind the ears



# Monkey & Forward Bend

## **Major Muscles and Flexibility Areas:**

Hamstrings, Gastrocnemius, Soleus, Glutes, Back extensors  
Hips flexors, Abdominals

## **Cues:**

- Exhale into this position from mountain pose
- Reach the crown of the head forward and the bottom of the pelvis backward
- Pull belly button into the spinal cord
- Ground feet into floor
- Bend at the hips, not in the lower back, the goal is to keep the back flat (Like a Table)
- If the spine begins to curve, place hands on the legs (pictured)
- If more flexible place hands to ankles, then palms to the floor
- last position is to wrap the forearms around the legs and pull the chest into the thighs.

## **How to come out:**

-Drive the heels into the ground “turning” then toward each other creating an isometric contraction with the floor. This will load the hamstrings not the lower back 😊

# Plank with Variations

## Major Muscle and Flexibility Areas:

Deltoids, Rectus Abdominus, Glutes, Gastrocnemius, Pectorals, Soleus, Trapezius, Rhomboids, Back Extensors, Posterior Deltoid

## Cueing:

- Hands are shoulder width apart with the wrists directly under the shoulders; can be slightly wider than the shoulders
- The feet are hips width apart, push through the shoulders to prevent sinking in the shoulder joint
- Drive the heels towards the back wall
- Pull the belly button to the spinal cord to stabilize the abs, If a curve appears in the lower back, lift the hips to form a triangle
- Eventually strength and stabilization will develop to allow full extension.

## Benefits:

Strength building in the upper body and core muscles (abs, back extensors and gluteus)



# Hover Plank

## Muscle and Flexibility Areas:

Deltoids, Rectus Abdominus, Glutes, Gastrocnemius, Pectorals, Soleus, Trapezius, Rhomboids, Back Extensors, Posterior Deltoid

## Cueing:

- Begin to lower the body to the floor keeping the elbows tight to the sides of the body
- Stop when the triceps are parallel to the floor
- “Hover” for 3-5 seconds
- Then lower the whole body to the floor,

## Tips:

Strength building in the upper body and core muscles (abs, back extensors and gluteus)

Great for developing the muscles for flex arm hang!!



# Sphinx

## Major Muscle and Flexibility Areas:

Hamstrings, Quadriceps, Glutes, Gracilis, Trapezius, Rhomboids, Latissimus Dorsi, Erector Spinae, Deltoids, Biceps, Triceps, Pectorals Abdominals, Gastrocnemius, Soleus,

## Cueing:

- Lie on the abs, legs stretched out behind you.
- Place your hands flat on the floor with your elbows slightly forward of your shoulders.
- Cross your forearms. You should be able to touch opposite elbows.
- Stretch the hands forward.
- Spread your fingers
- Keeping your legs firm, energetically pull the floor towards you
- Lift the sternum; drawing the shoulders back.
- Move the shoulders away from the ears



# Extended Cobra to Cobra



## **Major Muscle and Flexibility Areas:**

Triceps, Deltoids, Pectoral, Abdominals, Glutes, Gastrocnemius, Soleus, Trapezius, Rhomboids, Back extensors

## **Cueing:**

- From plank position
- Extend the arms forward, out from the shoulders
- Bring the heels together; try to keep them close to each other, engaging the inner thighs
- Relax the Glutes
- Push-up through the hands inhaling
- Relaxing the shoulders away from the ears(no sagging in the shoulder)
- Inch the hands closer to the chest
- Ideally, the hands are under the shoulders, sternum pulled through and the hip pointers on the ground

## **Tips:**

If Cobra is difficult, place the forearms on the ground with the elbows directly under the shoulder  
Palms flat on the ground with finger tips spread  
Push the palms in the ground while pulling the sternum forward

# Downward Facing Dog & 3 Leg Dog

## Major Muscle and Flexibility Areas:

Gastrocnemius, Soleus, Hamstrings, Glutes, Back Extensors, Rhomboids, Deltoids, Extensors and Flexors of the wrist, Quadriceps, Abdominals, Pectorals

## Cueing:

- Starting on all four with the wrists directly under the shoulders and the knees directly under the hips
- Drop the gluts to the heels (child's pose) straighten the arms at the armpits
- Lift the knees forming a triangle with your body and the floor
- Hands shoulder width apart and feet hips width apart
- Spread the fingers wide and press weight into the index finger and thumb
- Turn the "eyes" of the elbows to face each other, thus, turning the upper arm
- Ideally, the heels should be on the ground BUT if the heels don't reach the ground, lift the heels and bend the knees slightly
- Extend through the shoulders, moving the ears away from the shoulders
- Once in position, roll the hips up and squeeze the gluts, alternate lifting the heels for an add calf stretch





# HIGH LUNGE POSE

## CUEING:

- From Downward Dog, step your left foot in-between the hands or from a standing position, step the right foot back
- Stack the front knee directly above the front ankle (be sure to keep the knee behind the toes)
- Back foot should be on the ball mount with the heel driving backward
- Place your hands on each side of the front foot
- Push through the palms and shoulders
- Squeeze the glutes to tilt the pelvis forward
- Hold for 30-60 seconds
- Repeat on other side

## MAJOR MUSCLE GROUPS:

Gastrocnemius, Soleus, Hamstrings, Quads, Glutes, Hip Flexors, Abs, Back Extensors, Pectoralis





# Sit Down/Stand Up

## Major Muscles and Flexibility Areas Cues:

Oblique's, Teres Maximus, Infraspinatus Muscles, Latissimus Dorsi, Back Extensors, Glutes, Quadriceps, Hamstrings, Gastrocnemius, Soleus, Flexors/extensors of the feet, Deltoids, Trapezius, Rhomboids, Psoas, Groin

## Cueing:

- From a stand, lower the glutes like sitting in a chair
- Lean the chest forward
- Slowly bring the heels to the glutes
- Then set the glutes on the ground to easy pose
- Reverse

**Plank:**  
Knee to elbow



**Plank:** Knee cross over  
to opposite elbow



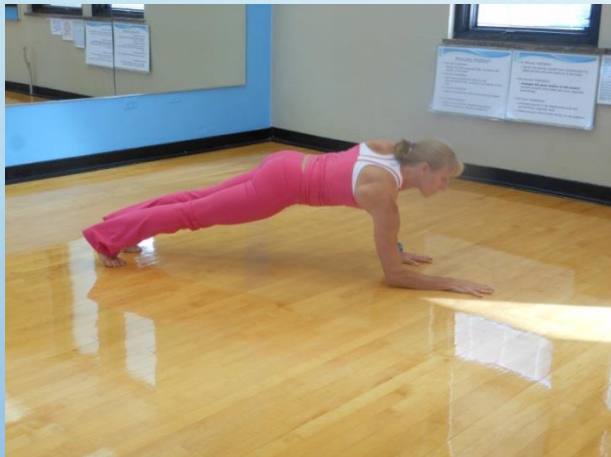
# Elbow to Hand Push-Ups

## Major Muscles and Flexibility Areas:

Rectus Abdominus, Transverse Abdominus, Oblique's, Deltoid, Pectorals, Triceps, Biceps, Back Extensors, Glutes, Quadriceps, Hamstrings

## Cueing:

- Go into normal plank position, starting on your hands (look at plank exercise for further instruction)
- Maintaining proper plank form, lower down onto left elbow, then right elbow.
- Come up onto left hand and then right hand
- After several repetitions repeat going right to left





# Low Lunge

## **Major Muscle and Flexibility Areas:**

Hamstrings, Quadriceps, Groin, Hip Flexors, Abdominals, Pectorals, Deltoids, Gastrocnemius, Glutes

## **Cueing:**

- Align the knee over the ankle
- Lower the back knee to the ground
- Slide the top of the back foot back
- Lift the upper body, extending the fingers tips to the ground
- Sweep the arms up with the triceps behind the ears
- Look up at the hands
- Lift with the sternum
- Gently arch back

# EXTENDED PUPPY

## Cueing:

- On all fours, wrists under the shoulders and knees under the hips
- Walk your hands forward as far as they can, arms should not rest on the ground
- Lift the glutes up without touching the arms to the ground
- Drop the forehead to the ground but keep the neck relaxed
- There should be a slight curve in the lower back
- Press the hands into the ground and with isometric contraction, continue pushing the hands into the ground and pull them back (there should be no movement)

## Major Muscle Groups:

Biceps, Deltoids, Trapezius, Rhomboids, latissimus Dorsi, Back Extensors, Glutes, Hamstrings



# **Balance Challenge**

The image features a light blue gradient background with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered around the edges. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The text 'Balance Challenge' is centered in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

# SIDE PLANK POSE

## Major Muscle Groups:

Biceps Brachioradialis, Flexors and Extensors in the wrist, Deltoid, Biceps, Triceps, Abdominals, Glutes, Quadriceps, Hamstrings, and Latissimus Dorsi

## Cueing:

- From plank, shift the weight to the outside edge of your left foot
- Stack the right foot on top of the left
- If stacking is difficult, move the top foot forward for better balance
- Push the right hip towards the ceiling
- Reach your right arm towards the ceiling
- Make sure the left arm isn't directly below the shoulder. It should be slightly in front of the shoulder activating the triceps
- Hold for 30-60 seconds
- Rotate back to plank & repeat on other side

## Tips:

- There are lots of variations to do in plank & side plank; explore and have FUN!





# HIGH LUNGE POSE

## Major Muscle Groups:

Gastrocnemius, Soleus, Hamstrings, Quads, Glutes, Hip Flexors, Abs, Back Extensors, Pectoralis

## Cueing:

- From Downward Dog, step your left foot in-between the hands or from a standing position, step the right foot back
- Stack the front knee directly above the front ankle; keeping the knee behind the toes
- Place your hands on each side of the front foot
- Push through the palms and shoulders
- Squeeze the glutes to tilt the hips forward
- Hold for 30-60 seconds; Repeat on other side



# TREE POSE

## Major Muscle Groups:

Quadriceps, Hamstrings,  
Gastrocnemius, Soleus, Flexors &  
Extensors of the feet, Glutes,  
Rhomboids, Trapezius, Deltoids,  
Triceps

## Cueing:

- Shift your weight to the right foot, lifting the left foot off the ground
- Place the sole of the left foot high on the inner right thigh
- Press the foot into the thigh and squeeze the right quad to “lock” the foot into place
- Keep the hip pointers parallel to the ground and straight forward
- Bring the palms to the sternum in prayer position
- Keeping the palms together, straighten the arms with palms above the head; Repeat on other side

## Tips:

- If balance/flexibility is an issue, place the foot against the ankle
- Extra fun.....close your eyes😊



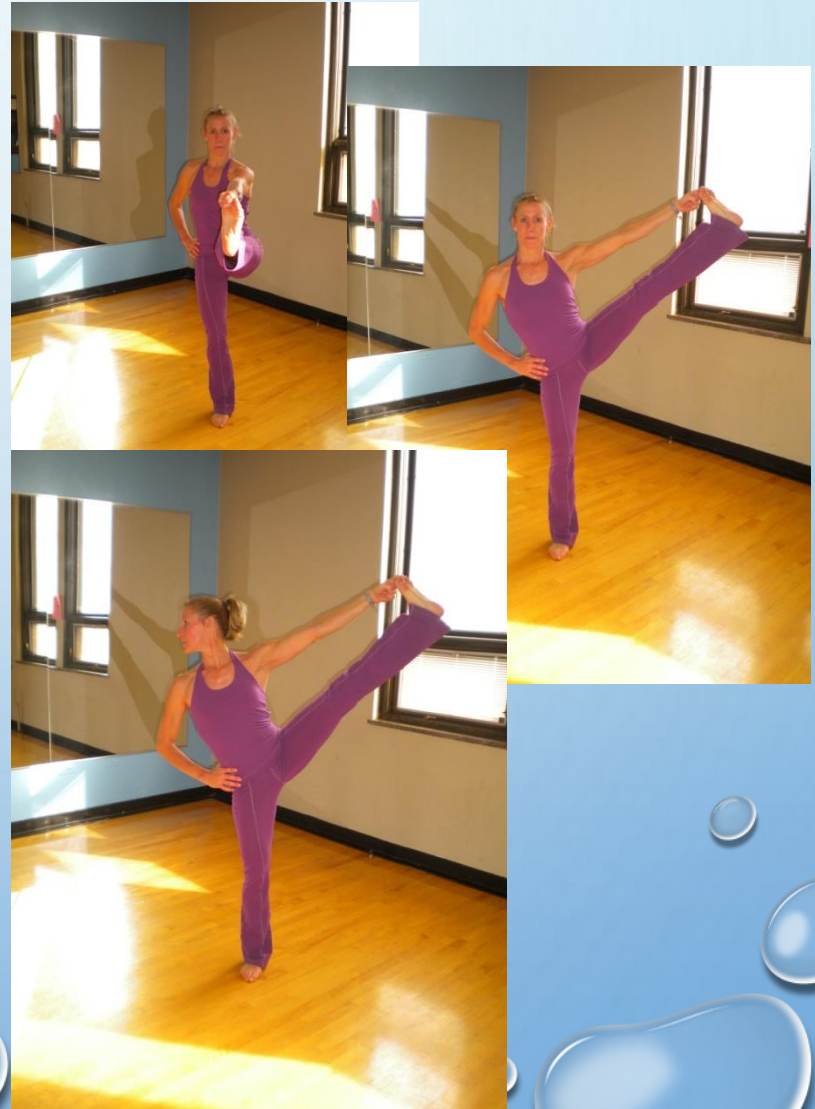
# EXTENDED HAND TO BIG TOE (FRONT TO SIDE SCALE)

## Major Muscles Groups:

Quadriceps, Hamstrings Gastrocnemius, Soleus, Flexors & Extensors of the feet, Glutes, Rhomboids, Trapezius, Deltoids, Triceps

## Cueing:

- From a standing position, bring the left knee hip level
- Rap “peace fingers” around the big toe or outside edge of the foot or ankle
- Place the opposite hand on the hip
- Squeeze the muscles of the standing leg
- Extend the left leg forward with the goal to straighten the knee as much as possible
- Square the hips so they are parallel to the ground
- If steady, swing the leg out to the side
- hold for 30-60 seconds; Repeat on other side\
- Advanced: Turn your head the opposite direction of your leg or close your eyes



# STANDING HEAD TO KNEE POSE

## Cueing:

- Stand on the right leg, “grounding” it to the floor
- Raise the left leg placing the left foot in the interlaced hands.
- If the foot can't make it to the hands, have both hands around the ankle
- Flex the foot and push it into the hands while the hands pull up (isometric contraction)
- Rotate the knee cap forward and feel the stretch in the traps.
- Hold for 30-60 seconds; Repeat on the other side

## Advanced position:

- Follow all the cues above adding on the following directions
- Extend the left leg forward so it's parallel to the ground; keeping the standing leg straight
- The goal would be to straighten the extended left leg
- Bending at the hip, lower elbows to the shin; holding
- Then lower the head to the knee; holding for 30-60 seconds; Repeat on other side

## Major Muscle Groups:

Great for the sciatic nerve, Back Extensors, Abdominals, Quadriceps, Hamstrings, Glutes, Deltoids, Trapezius, Latissimus Dorsi, Rhomboids, Biceps, Triceps



# WARRIOR 3

## Major Muscle Groups:

Quadriceps, Hamstrings, Gastrocnemius, Soleus, Flexors & Extensors of the feet, Glutes, Hip Flexors, Deltoids, Back Extensors

## Cueing:

- Toe the right foot back
- Square the hips towards the front
- Extend the arms out; like an airplane
- Squeeze the glutes, lift the right leg
- Bring the torso parallel to the ground
- Square up the right hip pointer to the ground
- Move the “airplane arms” forward so the elbows are by the ears and the fingertips Reaching forward; Palms face each other
- Place the head in-between the elbows; eyes focusing on the ground
- Extend through the fingertips and toes
- Lift the back leg high enough to activate the glutes and upper hamstrings
- Hold for 30-60 seconds; repeat on other side



# BONUS: CROW POSE

## Major Muscle Groups:

Triceps, Pectoralis, Latissimus Dorsi, Trapezius, Rhomboids, Erector Spinae, Biceps, Abs, Flexors & Extensors of the wrist,

## Cueing:

- From either a low squat or high squat
- Bring your hands shoulder width or slightly further apart
- Bring the knees to rest on the triceps
- Shift the weight forward into the hands coming to the tips of the toes
- Lift the glutes up engaging the abs, lifting one foot then the other
- Reach the crown of the head forward until the toes LIFT off the ground; If you are pushing into the pose it's not aligned



# BONUS: DANCER'S POSE

## Major Muscle Groups:

Hamstrings, Hip Flexors, Quadriceps,  
Glutes, Gracilis, Back Extensors,

## Cueing:

- Choose a focus point
- Shift your weight onto the left leg
- Inhale, bending the right knee grabbing the outside of the foot (palm should be facing out)
- Balance check, keeping the hip pointers parallel to the ground
- Inhale deeply, extending the left arms straight with fingertips point forward
- Exhale reaching forward with the left arm, lowering the chest
- Lift the right leg; pushing the right ankle into the right hand (isometric)

