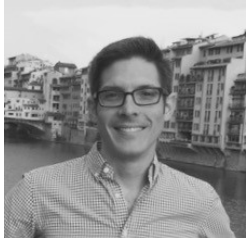


Courtesy of:



Intermediate Level Back Bend Sequence

February 2017



Sequence created and modeled by:

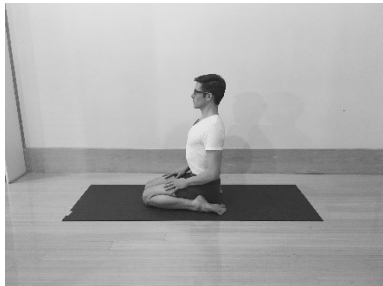
Gary Jaeger, CIYT, Senior Intermediate I

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Approximate Time: 90 minutes

Props required: 1 mat, 2 blocks, 1 strap, 3-5 blankets, 1 folding chair

Virasana



- Sit with your knees together and feet apart.
- If your buttock does not touch the floor, place a folded blanket or block under it.
- Grip in your outer ankles, and press the tops of the feet into the floor.
- 1 minute.

Parvatasana in Virasana



- Maintain your seat in *Virasana*.
- Interlock your fingers, turn the palms to the ceiling, and straighten your arms.
- Inject your arm bones down into the shoulder sockets.
- Grip your outer shoulder blades in to extend the sides of your trunk.
- Change the interlock of your fingers and repeat.
- 1 minute with each interlock.

Gomukhasana in Virasana



- Maintain your seat in *Virasana*.
- Extend your right arm out to the side, rolling the upper arm back and forearm forward.
- Bend your right elbow, placing your right hand in between your shoulder blades.
- Roll your right shoulder back and down.
- Straighten the left arm up to the ceiling, and grip your outer left shoulder blade in to extend the left side of your trunk.
- Bend your left elbow and clasp the fingers of the right hand.
- If your fingers do not clasp, use a belt.
- Switch the position of your arms and repeat.
- 1 minute each side.

Adhomukha Svanasana



- Press the hands into the floor and straighten your arms.
- Roll your inner upper arms out and your forearms back in.
- Grip your outer shoulder blades to extend the sides of your trunk back towards your legs.
- Press the front of your ankles, shins, and thighs back.
- 2 minutes.
- Swing your hips down and lift your chest to come into *Urdhva Mukha Svanasana*.

Urdhva Mukha Svanasana



- Press the tops of your feet into the floor to lift your thighs.
- Extend your buttocks back and take your tail bone down and forward.
- Roll your inner upper arms out and your forearms back in.
- Grip your outer shoulder blades to ascend the sides of your trunk.
- 30 seconds.
- Swing back up to *Adho Mukha Svanasana* and then repeat two times.

Parsvottanasana
(hands to floor)



- From *Tadasana*, jump your feet apart, turning your right foot and leg out and your left foot strongly in.
- Press your right foot into the floor to push your right hip back.
- Grip in your outer left thigh while resisting your inner left thigh out (like a clamp) to roll your left hip forward.
- Bend your trunk forward, bringing your hands to the floor (or blocks).
- Roll your inner upper arms out extend your torso.
- Bend your elbows and lengthen your torso over your front leg.
- Press the left foot into the floor to come out of the pose.
- Change sides.
- 1 minute each side.

Parsvottanasana
(hands in *Paschima Namaskar*)



- Standing in *Tadasana*, extend your arms back and ascend the sides of your torso.
- Swing the hands up behind the back and broaden across your collar bones.
- Descend the tops of the shoulders while gripping the outer shoulder blades in to ascend the sides of your trunk.
- Jump and turn your feet as you did above.
- Descend your buttock and look up and back before bending forward over the front leg.
- Press your left foot to come up.
- Change sides.
- 1 minute each side.

Virabhadrasana I



- Jump your feet wider than you did in *Parsvottanasana*.
- Press your right foot into the floor to push your right hip back.
- Grip in your outer left thigh while resisting your inner left thigh out (like a clamp) to roll your left hip forward.
- Extending your arms up, inject the arm bones into your shoulder sockets and grip your outer shoulder blades in to ascend the sides of your trunk.
- Descend your buttock, and bend your right knee into a ninety-degree angle.
- Maintaining the bend in the knee, resist your right shin back to the calf to redistribute your body weight to your left leg.
- Press your left foot to come up.
- Change sides.
- 30 seconds each side.

Salamba Sirsasana

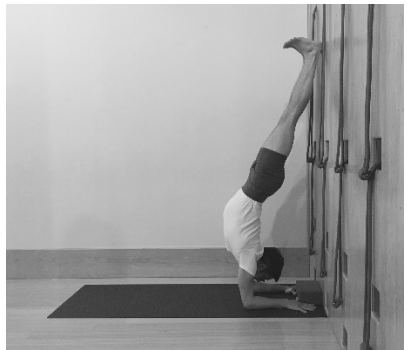


- Gripping your outer elbows to the inner elbows, press your arms to lift your shoulders, and take the crown of your head to the floor.
- Grip your outer shoulder blades in to lift the side trunk.
- Extend your legs to the ceiling (if you cannot balance in the middle of the room, take the support of a wall).
- Simultaneously lift the buttock and the base of the sternum to the ceiling.
- Resist the inner thighs out as you roll the outer thighs strongly in.
- 5 minutes
- Pressing the arms and lifting the shoulders, come down and rest in *Adhomukha Virasana*.

Adhomukha Virasana



Pincha Mayurasana



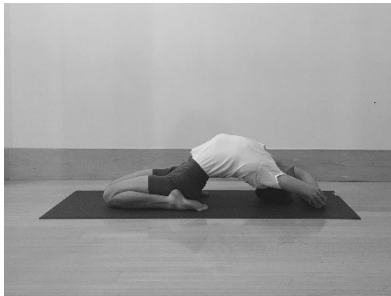
- Place a brick at the wall and kneel in front of it.
- Arrange your elbows and forearms so that they are shoulder-distance apart.
- Grip your outer elbows to your inner elbows, and straighten your legs.
- Pressing your thumbs into the block, move your shoulder blades away from the wall.
- Lift the shoulders and grip the outer shoulder blades in to lift the torso higher.
- Kick one leg and the other leg to the wall, and extend your heels up the wall.
- Simultaneously, lift the buttock and the base of your sternum to the ceiling.
- 1 minute.
- Rest in *Adhomukha Virasana*, then repeat kicking to the wall with your other leg first.

Paryankasana
(supported on a brick)



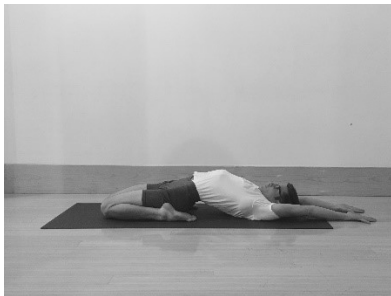
- Sit in *Virasana*, pull the buttock flesh back, and grip your outer ankle bones in.
- Keeping your chest lifted, lie over the brick so that it is aligned lengthwise in between your shoulder blades.
- Clasp your elbows, inject your upper arms in toward your shoulders, and grip the outer shoulder blades in to extend the sides of your torso.
- 1 minute, then change the clasp of your arm and hold for another minute.
- Press your hands to the floor to come up.

Paryankasana
(without brick)

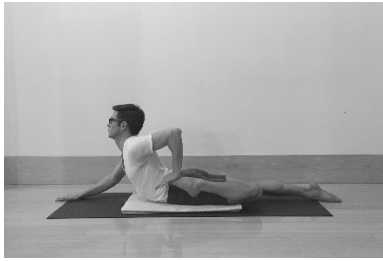


- Sit in *Virasana*, pull the buttock flesh back, and grip your outer ankle bones in.
- Keep your chest lifted and lie partially back until your elbows touch the floor.
- Pressing the elbows to lift the chest further, come to the crown of your head.
- Bring your hands over head as in *Urdhva Dhanurasana*, and move further onto the top of your head.
- Clasp your elbows, inject your upper arms in toward your shoulders, and grip the outer shoulder blades in to extend the sides of your torso.
- 30 seconds, then change the clasp of your arm and hold for another minute.
- If capable, release your head and buttocks away from each other to lie flat on the floor in *Supta Virasana*.
- If *Supta Virasana* is not possible, simply press your hands to come up.

Supta Virasana



Eka Pada Bhekasana



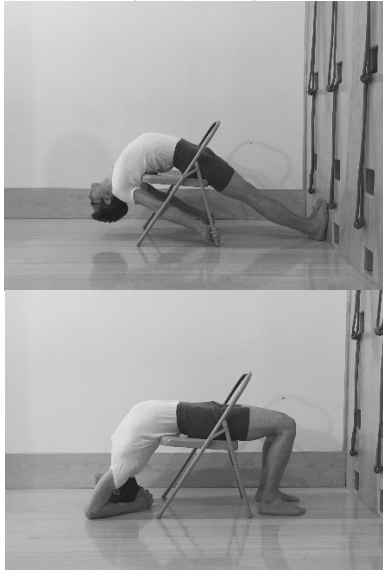
- Lie on your abdomen, stretch your legs back, and roll the backs of your thighs away from the mid-line of your legs.
- Lifting your chest with your left arm, reach back with your right arm and take hold of your inner right foot.
- Turn your fingers in the same direction as your toes and press the right foot down.
- As you press the foot down, resist it slightly back up in your hand in order to lengthen your quadriceps back to the knee and to take the tailbone down to the floor.
- 1 minute, then switch sides.

Bhekasana



- Lie on your abdomen, stretch your legs back, and roll the backs of your thighs away from the mid-line of your legs.
- Lift your chest up and reach back with both arms to take hold of the instep of each foot.
- Turn your fingers in the same direction as your toes and press the feet down.
- As you press the feet down, resist them slightly back up in your hands in order to lengthen your quadriceps back to the knees and to take the tailbone down to the floor.
- Repeat three times, 30 seconds each repetition.

Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana (in a chair)



- Turn the back of the chair to the wall and sit backwards in it.
- Lie back and press your arms into the back bars of the chair to elongate your spine.
- Slide back until the bottom tips of your shoulder blades are in line with the edge of the seat.
- Holding on to the bars of the chair, bend your elbows to coil your chest.
- Thread your arms through the front legs of the chair and hold the back legs of the chair.
- Stretch your legs straight and hold for 2 minutes.
- Release your arms, bend your knees and take hands into *Urdhva Dhanurasana* position.
- Slowly walk the hands toward the front legs of the chair as you slide off the seat of the chair, one vertebra at a time.
- Grip the outer shoulder blades to extend the elbows to the floor and bring the hands behind your head as in *Salamba Sirsasana*.
- Grip the outer shoulder blades, roll the outer armpits forward, and hold for 1 minute.
- Release your arms, take hold of the back bars of the chair and lift your chest to come up.

Urdhva Dhanurasana



- Lie over a bolster and take your arms over head.
- Roll your outer arms in as you inject your arm bones into the shoulder sockets.
- Roll your outer thighs in as you inject your thigh bones back into your hip sockets.
- Press your hands to lift your shoulder blades as you press your feet to lift your tailbone.
- Straighten your arms, grip your outer shoulder blades, and roll the outer armpits forward.
- Hold for 30 seconds and then tuck your head to come down.
- Repeat 3 to 6 times.

Salamba Sarvangasana



- Stack 3-5 blankets with the closed-edge sides neatly aligned.
- Lie on the blanket stack with your head on the floor and your shoulders one-inch in from the edge of the blankets.
- Swing legs over head to come into *Halasana*.
- Come to the tops of the shoulders and walk your hands down toward the shoulder blades.
- Lift one leg at a time and stretch them toward the ceiling.
- Pressing your thighs back, move your tailbone forward and lift your buttock to the ceiling.
- 5 minutes.

Setubandha Sarvangasana



- From *Salamba Sarvangasana*, lift your buttocks and bend your knees straight up toward the ceiling.
- Move the tailbone forward into your body as you roll your outer thighs in and extend your big-toe ball mounds to the floor.
- Once the feet are on the floor, resist your shins back to your clavicles, and take your shoulder blades more deeply into the back chest.
- 1 minute.
- Slowly come down and rest on your blankets for a few moments

Adhomukha Svanasana



Adhomukha Virasana



- Repeat *Adhomukha Svanasana* as above to release the back.
- Hold for 1 minute and then release into *Adhomukha Virasana* for 2 minutes.

Savasana



- Lie down.
- Roll your inner arms out.
- Allow your legs to fall symmetrically from the midline of your body.
- Let go, let loose.
- 5 to 10 minutes.

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