Asana Benefits
by Taya Mahony

**Boat (Paripurna Navasana)**
Benefits:
- Relieves stress
- Improves digestion
- Stimulates kidneys
- Stimulates thyroid and prostate glands
- Strengthens hip flexors, groin and abdomen
- Good for kidneys

Contraindications: Diarrhea, headache, heart problems, asthma, pregnancy, low blood pressure, insomnia, neck injury

**Bound Angle Pose (Baddha Konasana)**
Benefits:
- Stimulates abdominal organs
- Improves fatigue
- May help ease childbirth
- Eases menstrual discomfort
- Stimulates heart and circulation
- Helps relieve mild depression and anxiety
- Relieves symptoms of menopause
- Stretches thighs, knees, and groins
- Good for flat feet
- Improves blood pressure
- Good for reproductive system: improves infertility
- Good for asthma

Contraindications: Groin or knee injury

**Bow (Dhanurasana)**
Benefits:
- Improves posture
- Stretches front of body
- Stretches abdomen
- Stretches ankles, thighs and groins
- Strengthens back
- Stretches hip flexors

Contraindications: High or low blood pressure, migraine insomnia, low back pain, neck injury

**Bridge (Setu Bandha Sarvangasana)**
Benefits:
- Calms mind
- Relieves tension
- Stimulates digestive organs
- Stimulates abdominal organs

- Improves digestion
- Improves asthma
- Reduces anxiety, menstrual pain, high blood pressure, sinusitis, menopause symptoms, osteoporosis

Contraindications: Neck injury

**Camel (Ustrasana)**
Benefits:
- Stimulates abdominal organs
- Stretches front of body
- Opens chest and throat
- Improves posture
- Strengthens back muscles
- Improves thyroid
- Improves upper back curves

Contraindications: Insomnia, low back pain, neck injury, migraine, low or high blood pressure

**Cat/Cow**
Benefits:
- Massages back muscles
- Calms mind
- Relieves lower back pain
- Massages kidneys
- Flattens stomach
- Calms nervous system

Contraindications: Use caution with back pain

**Chair (Utkasana)**
Benefits:
- Reduces flat feet
- Strengthens ankles, calves, thighs and spine
- Stretches shoulders and chest
- Stimulates heart
- Stimulates abdominal organs

Contraindications: Insomnia, low blood pressure, headache

**Child’s (Balasana)**
Benefits:
- Stretches hips, ankles and thighs
- Calms brain
- Reduces stress
- Relieves back and neck pain when supported

Contraindications: pregnancy, knee injury, and diarrhea

Courtesy of www.livingyogaprogram.com
Cobra (Bhujangasana)
Benefits:
- Improves digestion
- Strengthens spine
- Stretches chest, lungs, abdomen and heart
- Firms buttocks
- Improves respiratory and reproductive organs
- Strengthens eyesight
- Stimulates nervous system
- Improves asthma
- Relieves stress and fatigue
- Eases sciatica
- Stimulates abdominal organs

Contraindications: Carpal tunnel syndrome, back injury, headache, pregnancy

Corpse (Savasana)
Benefits:
- Calms mind
- Helps lower blood pressure
- Relaxes body
- Reduces headache
- Improves fatigue and insomnia

Contraindications: Back injury: adjust pose accordingly, pregnancy: raise head and chest

Cow Face (Gomukhasana)
Benefits:
- Stretches ankles, hips, thighs, shoulders, chest, triceps and armpits

Contraindications: Serious neck or shoulder problems

Downward Facing Dog (Adhomukha Svanasana)
Benefits:
- Removes fatigue
- Rests heart
- Good for hearing and eyesight
- Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression, raises awareness and memory
- Energizes the body, removes fatigue, increases circulation to the brain
- Stretches the shoulders, hamstrings, calves, arches, spine, backside of body, arms, hands, hips, calves, Achilles tendon
- Strengthens the arms, hands, upper body and legs
- Helps relieve the symptoms of menopause
- Relieves menstrual discomfort when done with head supported
- Helps prevent osteoporosis
- Lengthens spine, rejuvenates discs
- Improves digestion
- Relieves headache, insomnia, back pain, and fatigue
- Therapeutic for high blood pressure, opens chest, asthma, flat feet, sciatica, sinusitis

Contraindication: Chronic back, hip, arm or shoulder pain, unmediated high blood Pressure

Eagle (Garudasana)
Benefits:
- Strengthens and stretches the ankles and calves, legs and hands
- Stretches the thighs, hips, shoulders, and upper back
- Improves concentration
- Improves sense of balance
- Improves sciatica
- Good for testicles
- Helps nerves in hands and feet
- Mental clarity and single-mindedness of thought
- Reduces stress

Fish (Matsyasana)
Benefits:
- Good for Asthma
- Kidneys, intestines
- Pineal and pituitary glands
- Good for thyroid
- Strengthens and stretches spine
- Good for nervous system
- Good for pelvis region and reproductive organs
- Relieves constipation and digestion
- The arms are strengthened
- Improves mental capacity and increases blood flow to brain
- The neck and the cheek muscles are stretched, reduces puffiness in cheeks

Counter Pose: Shoulderstand (Fish performed after)
Contraindications: Neck injury
Four-limbed Staff (Chaturanga Dandasana)

Benefits:
- Tones abdomen
- Strengthens arms and wrists

Contraindications: Pregnancy, carpal tunnel syndrome

Half Lord of the Fishes

Benefits:
- Improves digestion
- Good for kidneys
- Opens rib cage
- Improves balance, posture
- Helps urinary system
- Stretches hips, neck and shoulders
- Relieves menstrual cramps
- Good for spine
- Increases appetite
- Improves fatigue
- Eases sciatica
- Strengthens liver

Contraindications: Back or spine injury

Half Moon (Ardha Chandranasa)

Benefits:
- Improves coordination and balance
- Improves digestion
- Relieves stress
- Strengthens ankles, things and buttocks
- Strengthens abdomen
- Strengthens spine
- Stretches groin, shoulders, chest and back

Contraindications: Diarrhea, insomnia, low blood pressure, headache

Head to Knee

Benefits:
- Calms mind
- Strengthens back
- Improves digestion
- Stretches spine, shoulders, hamstrings, and groins
- Helps relieve fatigue and anxiety
- Improves high blood pressure
- Strengthens back
- Relieves menopausal symptoms
- Stimulates liver and kidneys

Contraindications: Asthma, diarrhea, knee injury

Hero (Virasana)

Benefits:
- Stretches thighs
- Good for high blood pressure
- Improves digestion and relieves gas
- Improves swelling of legs during pregnancy
- Relieves menopausal symptoms
- Strengthens arches
- Improves asthma

Contraindications: Headache, heart problems, knee injury, ankle injury

Legs-Up-the-Wall (Viparita Karani)

Benefits:
- Calms the mind
- Brings relief to cramped and tired feet and legs

Contraindications: Bend knees if experience tingling

Locust (Salabhasana)

Benefits:
- Strengthens spine muscles
- Relieves stress
- Stimulates abdominal organs
- Stretches shoulders, chest, belly and thighs
- Strengthens buttocks, arms and legs

Contraindications: Headache, back injury, neck injuries

Mountain (Tadasana)

Benefits:
- Relieves stress
- Improves sciatica
- Corrects incorrect posture
- Improves body alignment
- Tones but muscles
- Strengthens knees and legs
- Reduces flat feet

Contraindications: If you have Parkinson’s Disease or scoliosis stand with your back against the wall

Seated Forward Bend (Paschimottanasana)

Benefits:
- Calms the brain
- Relieves menopausal and menstrual pain
- Relieves stress
- Stretches spine
- Improves anxiety
- Reduces fatigue
Tree (Vrksasana)
Benefits:
- Relieves sciatica
- Reduces flat feet
- Strengthens calves, ankles, spine and thighs
- Improves balance
- Stretches groins, thighs, chest and shoulders
- Improves concentration and coordination
Contraindications: Dizziness, knee injury, headache, high or low blood pressure, lower arms

Pigeon (Rajakapotasana)
Benefits:
- Stretches spine, hips and groin
- Opens chest
- Massages kidneys and adrenal glands
Contraindications: Lower back problems

Plank
Benefits:
- Tones abdomen
- Strengthens wrists, spine, and arms
Contraindications: Carpal tunnel syndrome

Standing Forward Bend (Uttanasana)
Benefits:
- Relieves headaches and insomnia
- Good for asthma, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, infertility, sinusitis
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Helps relieve menopause symptoms
- Reduces mild depression
- Improves digestion
- Stretches calves, hamstrings and hips
- Beneficial to the kidneys and liver
- Calms mind
- Improves scoliosis pain when done with bent legs
Contraindications: Do with bent knees to reduce back pain

Sun Salute (Surya Namaskar)
Benefits:
- Strengthens and stretches all major muscle groups
- Massages internal organs
- Improves circulation
- Reduces fatigue
- Improves focus
- Relieves tension
Contraindications: High blood pressure, dizziness, back problems, pregnancy should speak with Dr.

Triangle (Trikonasana)
Benefits:
- Improves anxiety
- Stretches thighs, knees, and ankles
- Helps relieve stress
- Improves digestion
- Helps relieve menopausal symptoms
- Relieves backache
Contraindications: Headache, diarrhea, neck problems, low blood pressure, heart conditions

Upward Facing Dog (Urdhva Mukha Svanasana)
Benefits:
- Strengthens back, arms, and wrists
- Improves posture
- Tightens buttocks
- Stimulates abdominal organs
- Relieves depression and insomnia
- Opens chest and lungs
- Good for asthma
Contraindications: Back pain or injury, pregnancy, headache, carpal tunnel syndrome

Warrior (Virabhadrasana)
Benefits:
- Stretches and strengthens ankles and legs
- Good for carpal tunnel syndrome, infertility, sciatica, osteoporosis, flat feet
- Relieves back pain
- Good for pregnancy
- Improves stamina
- Stretches groin and shoulders
- Opens chest
- Stimulates abdominal organs
Contraindications: High blood pressure. Neck problems, diarrhea