

Stretches/Yoga for Riders

Keeping riding muscles strong while out of the saddle!



Stair Stretches for Ankles, Calves and Balance

1. Find a stair you can stand on with feet spread hip width distance apart (about two fists placed in between your feet).
2. Take a slight bend in your knees and come onto the balls of your feet- as if your feet were in stirrups.
3. Start by balancing with your heels level with your toes- hold for 15 seconds.
4. Either holding onto something for balance or challenging balance by bringing arms out side to side, raise onto toes (hold for 15 seconds) then lower heels (hold for 15 seconds).
5. Repeat 10x three or four times a week.



Chair Pose with a Block for Inner Thighs, Hips, and Core



Utkatasana- Chair Pose

Chair pose has a multitude of benefits- strengthening thighs and ankles, stretching achilles tendons, shins and shoulders and opening the heart. It can also help tone the back, butt, hips, shoulders and core. When adding a block, it aids in the hugging in of the inner thighs, thus lighting up the muscles down the midline of the lower body in a similar fashion as riding a horse.

Chair Pose in 4 Steps

1. Place feet hip width distance apart (~two fists placed to the inside of the arch of the foot) and evenly distribute your body weight into all four corners of the feet (through the ball and heel of the foot).
2. Begin to bend through the knees, drawing the thighs as close to parallel to the ground as they can go while still maintaining even weight in the feet. Let the hips sink back and work on keeping the torso pulling upright and away from the thighs. If using a block, insert between the thighs and squeeze the midline to light up the leg muscles down the inside of the body.
3. Sweep arms forward and up, but stop when you reach the point that the back begins to arch. Draw your bottom ribs towards your hip points to find a flat back and engaged core. Allow shoulders to move away from ears and breathe. Hold anywhere between 15 seconds and one minute, repeat three times.
4. To exit, push into the feet to straighten the knees and stand up, allowing arms to drop down alongside the body

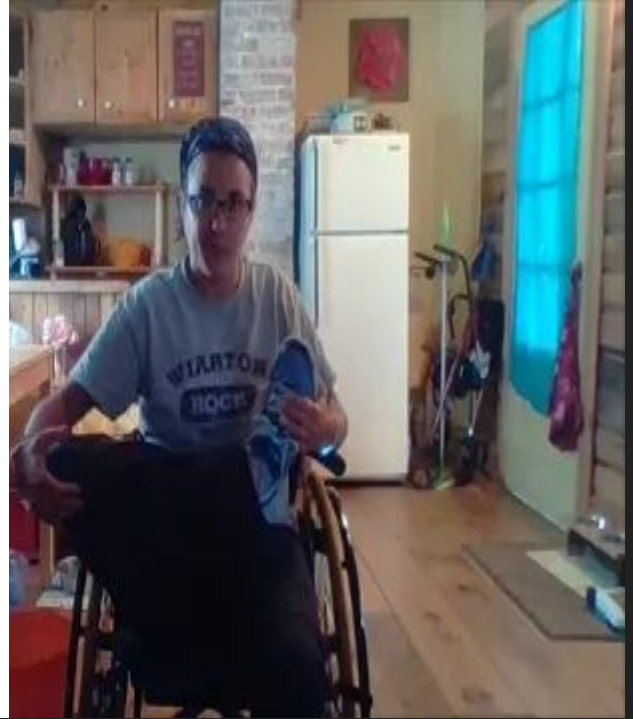
Chair Modifications

You can receive many of the same benefits of chair pose with modifications to assist with balance and limited mobility, such as:

- Sitting on the edge of your chair
- Using the wall
- Coming into the pose on your hands and knees and using the floor for the front plane of your body



Seated Pigeon Pose



Pigeon Pose Benefits


Pigeon pose has a myriad of benefits, both physical and mental. It stimulates the nervous system, improves flexibility and organ function. It provides a deep stretch through many muscles in the lower body, including the inner and outer hip, buttock and groin area. It can aid in the release of tight lower back muscles and decrease pain levels in this area. Mentally, this is a great pose to sit with uncomfortable feelings. Because we shove many emotions down, some people find that they cry when first coming into this deep hip opening pose. Some people find anger and fear boil up within it, and it is a good exercise in restraint to sit with these emotions.

Seated Pigeon Pose in 6 Steps


1. Find your seat bones (might need to scoop any extra skin out from underneath you to come down on them evenly).
2. Starting with the right foot planted firmly on the ground with knee bent, lift the left leg and place the left ankle over the top of the right knee.
3. Gently and intentionally, press down into top of left knee with left hand, and lift the ankle of the left foot with the right hand to square the hips.
4. For a more intense stretch, you can fold forward over the leg at the hips, being mindful to limit rounding through the back.
5. Hold for 15-60 seconds, breathing deeply into the pose.
6. Switch legs.

Cat and Cow Pose with Variations/Modifications

SmartChair
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Cow pose



Cat pose



Cat and Cow Pose Benefits

Cat/Cow pose offers an incredible range of benefits to the body.

It helps to:

- Improve posture and balance
- Massages the organs that aid in digestion and reproduction
- Opens the spine and diminishes back pain
- Calms the mind and relieves stress
- Greatly aids in flexibility
- Allows for more coordinated physical movement

Seated Cat and Cow Pose in 4 Steps

1. Place hands on thighs or hold onto chair.
2. On an inhale, start to lift the gaze towards the ceiling and gently arch through the back(Cow).
3. On an exhale, begin to lower the chin towards the chest and round through the spine(Cat).
4. Repeat 8-10 times, following the breath.

Bonus You can make this more fluid by adding in a side body stretch as well, dropping left shoulder towards left hip point, and repeating on second side.

Cat and Cow on Hands and Knees in Four Steps

1. Come onto hands and knees, with hips stacked over knees, and shoulders stacked over wrists.
2. On an inhale, start to drop the belly towards the mat, lifting the gaze and tailbone and arch through the back(Cow).
3. On an exhale, round through the spine, tuck the chin towards the chest and the tailbone back towards the ground.
4. Repeat 8-10 times- following breath and allowing movement to be fluid- stretching side body in this can feel very nice

*Can be modified to come down onto elbows or extend arms out long to hold onto the edge of a chair for wrist/elbow/shoulder issues. Can be modified by adding a blanket under knees to protect those joints as well.