



POSE OF THE MONTH October 2005

UTTHITA HASTA PADANGUSTHASANA

Extended hand thumb to foot pose

Balancing asanas develop the cerebellum, the brain center that controls how the body works in motion. These asana improve physical balance, and still unconscious movement. As the moving body attains balance, it can rely on forces such as gravity to support and propel it, conserving its own energy and achieving grace and fluidity of movement.

An uncoordinated body has to constantly compensate for the lack of balance in order to avoid falling or knocking things over, this creates maximum effort for minimum results.

The focus required to balance poses with steadiness develops concentration and balance at the emotional, mental, and psychic levels. These asana are especially noted for balancing the nervous system and removing stress and anxiety.

At first balancing may be difficult, however the body is very adaptable and progress comes quickly with regular practice. Using drishti (gaze points) helps tremendously with balance, drishti is at the toe if steady, or at the wall if wobbly.

Method

1. From Samasthiti, inhale place left hand on waist and with the right hand catch the right big toe. If possible straighten both knees and spine (if not possible to straighten right knee then hold toe with knee bent). If you are new to this posture stay here, if you can go further, exhale and touch your chin toward your shin. Hold 5 breaths.
2. Inhale stand up straight, exhale take your leg to the side and head in opposite direction, if possible keep the arm, leg, and spine straight. Gaze over left shoulder. Hold 5 breaths.
3. Inhaling bring the leg and head to center, exhale touch the chin toward the knee, inhale stand up straight, release leg with both hands on waist hold leg up as high as possible for 5 breaths (toes point).
4. Exhale to Samasthiti.



Yogis having fun in Bristol VT with Christine Hoar at a Nancy Gilgoff adjustment clinic 7/05





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Benefits: Improves balance. Loosens the hip joints, strengthens vertebral column, lower abdomen and supporting leg.

This pose also stimulates the knots or blocks at the base of the Sushmna Nadi (inside the tiny bones of the coccyx) allowing prana to move upward. (The Sushmna Nadi is the spine.)