

The Renegade Dialogue

(1.0)

Renegade - (ren-i-gād) - an individual who rejects lawful or conventional behavior

WELCOME TO THE RENEGADE DIALOGUE

What you are about to read was born out of deep curiosity, exhaustive experimentation, and simple faith. As the community that once held close company under the Bikram name moves into its next evolution we are faced with a sense of limitless possibility that is both exhilarating and daunting. We are faced now with important questions: Who are we as a community? What do we stand for? What is essential and what is not?

The Renegade Dialogue does not an attempt to answer those questions, it simply tries to engage them directly and provide an alternative perspective for consideration. Fundamentally, the "dialogue" of Bikram Yoga has served as a unifying element. While this is powerful, it is also problematic. The original dialogue is static, it does not integrate new knowledge and information. It does not entertain new ideas. It does not react to the various and differing interpretations of its readers. It does not grow.

If our community of teachers wishes to develop and progress over time, we cannot allow ourselves to be dogmatically bound to a single document. Intellectually, we must allow ourselves to breathe. We must look out into the world with curiosity and draw on the understanding and study of great teachers from all walks of life. We must learn to share across boundaries.

Perhaps paradoxically, all of this can be done while maintaining the core standards of the practice; sequence, timing, and heat. With care, education, and open hearts, we can move this practice we love forward without losing its essence. The Renegade Dialogue was written with this faith in mind; that we may truly allow ourselves and our community to shed unnecessary boundaries and explore the full potential of the practice that has served us all so well.

Presented with love to those who give of themselves freely for the benefit of others.

Be well,

Kyle Ferguson

MISSION

To further education, encourage discussion, and support mindful engagement in the practice and teaching of 26&2 (aka Bikram Yoga) by presenting an alternative teaching perspective for all members of the community.

PHILOSOPHY

The Renegade Dialogue was created with the belief that all practices benefit from new ideas; all systems should be investigated and challenged; no document, no person, no set of rules is ever perfect. To drive ourselves forward, to truly grow, we must be willing to challenge paradigms and interrogate dogmas.

To protect what we love we must allow for adaptation. This does not mean we have to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Retaining and highlighting what is effective about our current perspective is essential to improvement. We can build on what we have, from where we are, by bringing fresh concepts into play.

The Renegade Dialogue follows three Principles of Alignment Practice:

- 1) Experience Is Primary
- 2) Every Body Is Different
- 3) Struggle Is Not A Method

As such, the internal sensation of the postures is highlighted, accommodations are made for unique physical needs, and intensity commands ("push and push and push") have been removed in favor of words like "engage", "tighten", and "feel".

The Renegade Dialogue is not intended to be the final say in the matter of hot yoga dialogue. It is not a perfect document, and does not claim to be. It aims to encourage evolution, not stagnation. Every effort has been made to assure the commands are safe and practical while maintaining a spirit of exploration. However, as in every yoga practice, commands should be followed mindfully under the guidance of an experienced teacher, with respect for individual needs and injuries.

METHODOLOGY

The Renegade Dialogue was created by synthesizing the work of various yoga and bodywork traditions. You will find the timing and sequence of 26&2 remain unchanged. Some setups have been slightly revised to provide new and potentially improved access to the postures. In places where physical adjustments or modifications are suggested, they are presented to enhance the value of the practice in its current form. The intention here is to help create a class experience that meets student expectations and improves access to depth, power, and progress in the postures.

The alignment concepts found here are drawn largely from Hatha and Ashtanga Yoga -most prominently the principles of the Anusara method- with some adjustments made to suit the unique postures found in 26&2 (e.g. the "Bikram Triangle"). The general language and word sequence has been influenced by the work of Darren Rhodes and his Yoga Hour method. Some postural adjustments and anatomical ideas have been sourced from Yin Yoga (e.g. 'anatomical uniqueness' with regard to bone structure and joint mobility). Additionally, the work of Thomas W. Myers -specifically in his book 'Anatomy Trains'- and the Asana teaching of Zhenja La Rosa contributed valuable insight and inspiration.

Every command in this dialogue has been tested repeatedly with real students in real-life settings. Nothing you read here was invented wholesale for this document or included without multiple in-class trials. Interested teachers are encouraged to practice this dialogue themselves at least a few times before attempting to teach it to their students. If something doesn't work for you, don't teach it. However, you may discover that curious, sincere engagement of what you find here yields insight and empowerment. At very least, reading The Renegade Dialogue may encourage investigation and participation, which is its primary goal.

FORMAT

The format of The Renegade Dialogue draws on 26 & 2 tradition so as to be intuitive for current teachers. However, you will find footnotes have been inserted extensively throughout the dialogue. These are mostly corrections to be applied at the teacher's discretion, with some notes on ways to teach the dialogue and comments on student experience.

Enjoy.

PRANAYAMA BREATHING¹

Stand tall in the center of your mat
Feet together²
Arms at your sides
Meet your own eyes in the front mirror
We begin class with the breathing exercise

Pranayama is in through your nose and out through your mouth
Keep the breathing in the back of your throat the whole time
(The air in your throat should sound like ocean waves)

Interlace all ten fingers and bring them to your chin³
Soft jaw, steady gaze
Ready the mind
And away we go

Inhale through your nose
Bring your elbows up
Fill your lungs slowly
Exhale, open your mouth widely
Go "HAHHHH"
Look toward the back wall
Bring your elbows forward, towards the mirror
Touch your elbows together
Up away from your chest

Inhale, elbows up, look forward
Belly in, legs tight
Keep the weight in your heels
Full lungs
Exhale, open wide
Trace your eyes back along the ceiling
Elbows forward
Chest up, grip tight
Clear the lungs

¹The full name of this breathing is Ujjayi Pranayama, which means "breath of victory". In the greater world of yoga this refers to the toning of the throat in the breath, regardless of body position.

²Maybe an inch or so between your heels

³Try not to wiggle your neck or push your head forward, just touch the chin

Inhale, elbows up, look forward
Keep your belly in
Open your chest
Stretch the muscles around your rib cage
Exhale, heart high, eyes back
Keep your eyes open, it helps
Pull your belly in tight as you bring your elbows forward
Shoulders neutral⁴

Inhale, keep the tone in your throat
Soft jaw
Steady gaze
Full lungs
Exhale, trace your eyes back
Neck long, elbows forward
No backbend, stay upright
Belly in

Inhale, belly in
Legs strong, tailbone down, hips tight
Start to feel the breath in the muscles of your back
Exhale, wrap your elbows forward
Tighten your core to keep upright
Clear your lungs

Inhale
Notice your neck, unlock there
Keep your belly in
Don't push your ribs to the mirror
Stay upright, open your lungs
Exhale
Draw your ribs down and in
Tight legs
Weight in your heels

Inhale
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Exhale
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Inhale

⁴Do not hurt your neck

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Exhale

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Inhale

Coming to the end of this set

Make these the big breaths

But no struggle

Keep your neck and jaw soft

Exhale

Look back, chest up

Press your heels down

Belly in, clear your lungs

Inhale, steady

Belly in, open your rib cage

Full lungs

Exhale

Trace your eyes back

Squeeze your elbows together, tight

Let it all out

Release

SECOND SET

-On the LAST BREATH-

Inhale

Make sure your neck and shoulders aren't gripped

We are going to hold this one

Full lungs and hold

(Pause briefly, five seconds max)

Exhale, look back and clear your lungs completely

Let it all out

SUPPLEMENTARY DIALOGUE

We are trying to increase your tidal volume

That's the amount of air you turn over on each breath

Not just how much you take in

But how much you let out, too

Beware of achievement-based thinking here
It's not about how high you can lift your elbows on the inhale
Or how far you can look back on the exhale
Our main focus is getting air in and out
Keep your belly in, turning over the breath
If you focus on your eyes and elbows first
You'll miss the main event

Remember, struggle and breathing don't mix
If you're doing pranayama and you're fighting
You're fighting your own breath
Don't wear yourself out
Soften your jaw, ungrip your neck
It's the beginning of class
We're just warming up

Notice that your weight might keep moving forward toward your toes
Stay focused, keep the weight toward your heels
This requires steady focus
Keep your core and your legs engaged
Without gripping

NEUTRAL STANDING

Just standing still is what we do the most in this class
It's important to the practice
We want to treat it like a yoga pose⁵

Standing at neutral is;
Upright with your heart open⁶
Let your head float, ears above your shoulders
Body weight evenly distributed⁷

Meet your own gaze
Breathe
Feel your body deeply

⁵Which it is, it's called "Samasthiti"

⁶Notice if shoulders are turned forward with your palms turned back
Lift your shoulders, turn your palms forward
Then drop your shoulders and turn your palms to the midline

⁷On the tripod of the foot

HALF MOON SIDE BEND

Stand tall in the center of your space
Find a breath
Keep your legs together, eyes forward
Relax your shoulders
Let your head float

Turn your palms out
Inhale, arms up over your head
Interlace your fingers, release the index fingers, steeple grip
Keep your thumbs crossed, palms sealed together
Arms straight, upper body back slightly

Chin up a bit, arms by your ears⁸
Bring the weight to your heels
Belly in, tailbone down, chest up

Stretch up out of your hips and sway right and left
Stretch up as you pass through the middle
Let your hips move left and right
Feel the weight shift side to side on your feet

Stand tall, upright
Again, chin up a bit, jaw soft
Put the weight in the heels⁹
Belly in, tailbone down slightly¹⁰
Tighten your legs
Inhale and stretch up out of your hips

Bend to the right, keeping your arms and legs straight
Stay in your heels¹¹
Keep your hips square to the mirror (left hip forward)
Stretch across the room to the right
Spine long
Belly in, use the inhale to lift your chest up, out, and over

Right shoulder forward

⁸ Make sure not to shove your head forward, keep ears above shoulders

⁹ Notice that your hips may travel forward over the toes. Keep the hips back in space over the heels.

¹⁰ It can help to bend the knees a moment to take the tailbone down, then straighten again

¹¹ Press your achilles tendons down through the mat

Open your heart up toward the ceiling a bit
Try to drive the breath up into the left side of your rib cage
Stretching the left side of your body

Notice if there is excess tension in your neck¹²
Keep your shoulders out of your ears
Soft jaw
Weight in your heels
Legs tight

One more inhale to lift the chest
Exhale to stretch across the room
Push your hips out to the right
Breathe and breathe and breathe

Inhale and come up
Reset

Chin up gently
Ungrip your neck
Weight in your heels
Belly in, tailbone down, chest up

¹²You will notice as you move through the practice, when the postures become difficult, the neck often locks up. This is usually stress tension. It's unnecessary and we can learn to let it go.

BACK BEND

Take a full inhale
Let your head go back
Keep your neck long
(Opening your heart center and the front of your throat)
Press your heels down
Inhale, lift your chest up
Exhale and reach your arms back

Keep your legs strong¹³, press your heels down
Tailbone forward, belly in, chest up
Stretch the arms back, triceps back
Breathe evenly the whole time
Steady breathing the whole time
Reach back, look back with your eyes
Belly in, chest up¹⁴
Lengthen your spine
Now go all the way back
Let the weight of your arms draw you down and back
Inhale to open your chest
Exhale, legs strong, reach back more
Go back more, find your confidence
And breathe and breathe and breathe

Inhale and come up easy
Arms up

¹³ Turn your inner thighs back

¹⁴ Lift up out of the low back, don't crunch there

HANDS TO FEET

Bend your knees and come down
Put your hands on the floor and relax your neck
Soften around the roof of your mouth
Release your head, relax your shoulders
Move your hips a little, right and left
Opening up your hips and low back
Walk it out

Now bend your knees more
Touch your chest to your knees and take a grip behind your heels
Step on your fingers
Eventually, the sides of your hands will come together
Work your elbows behind your calf muscles

Once again, relax your neck
Put the weight in your toes
Don't grip the floor with your toes

Take a full inhale, activate your fingertips
On the exhale begin to pull on your heels
Gently tuck your chin, try to touch your hairline to your shins
Keep your chest on your knees
Draw your shoulders up away from your ears
Lengthen your spine down

Pull your belly in and take a deep breath
Exhale and pull steadily as you gently tuck your chin
Keep the weight forward¹⁵

Tighten your legs and push your hips up to the ceiling¹⁶
One more full breath, fingertips strong
Feel the expansion of the back muscles on the inhale
Exhale and pull down, gently tuck your chin one more time

Release

Inhale and come up
Reach up to the ceiling and rejoin the group

¹⁵ Push your palms into your heels

¹⁶ Inner thighs back

Release your arms down and stabilize
Meet your own eyes in the mirror
Steady breathing, steady gaze

AWKWARD 1

From neutral, feet together
Step your right foot to the right about 6 inches
Feet hip width apart
Make sure your toes are pointing forward¹⁷
Eyes forward, steady gaze
Lift your arms up parallel to the floor
Arms forward, five fingers together¹⁸
Tighten your arms, elbows strong
Let your head float

Belly in, tailbone down, chest up
Shift the weight to your heels
Exhale and sit down into an imaginary chair behind you¹⁹
Notice if your neck is locked, soften there²⁰
Press your heels down and move your hips back
Tighten your quads
Keep your feet, knees, and hips in parallel lines

Belly in, chest up
Remember, it's not a back bend, keep your core tight
Press your heels down
Inhale, lift your heart up and lean back
Sit your hips down
Keep your knees close, six inches apart
Sit down further, chest up

Arms straight, triceps tight
Soften your jaw, let your head float
Steady breathing, steady gaze
Sit down further
Lean back more
Way back

Change
Keep your arms up

¹⁷ Shins and kneecaps pointing forward

¹⁸ Do not cup the palms

¹⁹ As you sit back, notice if your feet try to make a "V" shape. Keep them parallel. Be disciplined on this one.

²⁰ If looking down to the floor for a moment helps clear neck tension, go for it

AWKWARD 2

Go up on your toes, high as you can
Press the balls of your feet down into the mat
Keep your heels pointing straight back (not turned inward)
Knees point straight forward
Belly in, jaw soft
Let your head float
Steady gaze, steady breathing
Long spine, get taller

Tighten your calf muscles and your quads
Bend your knees and begin to sit down into the chair
Press your upper body back against an imaginary wall²¹
Sit down as far as you can keeping your torso upright
If you start to lean forward or back, slow down
Keep your heels high
If you get down so your thighs are parallel to the floor, stop there

Tighten your core
Arms tight, neck long, jaw soft
Steady gaze, steady breathing
Come up higher on your toes
Feel your legs working, focus there
Be with the effort, steady

Sit down an inch more
Legs tight, higher on the toes
Higher on the toes
Breathe

Change

SECOND SET

Come up on your toes, as high as you can
Heels pointing straight back
Shoulders neutral

Press back against your imaginary wall
Sit down towards the level of a chair

²¹ Actually press yourself into this imaginary wall. The imaginary wall does not simply measure upright, it can actually provide support.

Stay upright
Neck long, triceps tight

Inner thighs tight
Imagine you're squeezing a volleyball between your knees
Belly in, steady gaze
Move into the work, breathing
Sit down more
Come up higher on your toes
Knees up, heels up

Change

AWKWARD 3

Keep your arms up
Relax your neck
(Move your head around if it helps)
Lift your heels half an inch
Bend your knees, press them together
Belly in, chest up, arms tight
Slowly slide down your imaginary wall

Long spine
Slide down until your hips float a couple inches off the heels
(If that's available to you today)
Keep pressing your knees together, feel your inner thighs engage
Tighten your core muscles²²
Keep pressing against the imaginary wall

Knees together very strongly²³
Press your knees together and down
Steady gaze, steady breathing
Arms tight
Let your head float

Breathe

Slowly come back up
Press back against the wall the whole time
Step your feet together, arms down

Stand at neutral

Breathe

²² Imagine you are wearing a corset and tighten it

²³ Feel your inner thighs engage powerfully

Inner thighs tend to chronically weak, be disciplined here

EAGLE

Stand tall at neutral

Look at your arms, make sure you know right and left

Turn your palms out

Inhale and lift your arms up

Exhale, bring your right arm under your left

Cross your elbows and your wrists²⁴

Press your hands together²⁵, feel your shoulders tone

Soften your jaw

Lift your heart and pull your elbows down

Bend your knees and sit down

Lift your right leg up

Cross your right knee over your left thigh

Then wrap your right foot behind your left leg

Eventually all your toes will be behind your calf²⁶

(If you can't get the full wrap, no worries

Just point your toes where you want them to go, they'll get there one day)

Tighten the core muscles and lift your chest

Don't crunch into a backbend, keep your spine long

Relax your neck, let your head float

If the back of your neck is locked up, drop your chin a bit²⁷

Sit your hips back like you're sitting into a hammock

Knees to the right a little

Belly in, chest up

Press your right thigh down on your left

Press your left thigh up into your right

Press your heel into the floor

Soft jaw, shoulders down, upper body back

Steady breathing, steady gaze

Sit down a little more

²⁴ Rookies: After you cross your elbows, turn your thumbs in towards your nose. Take your top hand away from your face -towards the mirror- then cross the wrists.

²⁵ Your palms don't need to be totally level, it's OK

²⁶ Use your toes to get your toes around

²⁷ It's ok if you can't see over your hands, just release the stress tension of the neck

Knees to the right

Now, like you've been hit by a gust of wind, lean back

Change

Stand up and release your legs

Inhale and take your arms up overhead

Exhale and swing your left arm under your right

LEFT SIDE (Including setup modification)

Bring your left arm under your right

Cross your elbows and your wrists

Thumbs in, press your hands together

Chest up, elbows down

Sit down in the chair

Lift your left leg up, take your knee across

Then wrap your left foot behind your right calf

Do what's available to you

(If you can wrap all the way

Press your left foot into the back of your right calf

See if you can eliminate the space there)

Now, gently lean your chest forward, heart down a bit

Then shift your hips down and back

Weight in your heel

Keep your hips and legs like this

Back and down

Press your left thigh down

Belly in, lift your chest back up

With your hips down and back

Tighten your legs

Tighten your arms

Ungrip your neck, soft jaw

Squeeze arms and legs together

Steady gaze

Sit down more, chest up

Breathe with your back²⁸

Change

²⁸ Eagle can cause a lot of struggle because it puts tension around our breathing space. If you can find space in the pose to breathe, you can do it.

WATER BREAK

Have some water if you like
Then simply practice standing still
At neutral, upright
Let your head float
Heart open and breathe
Feel your body, deeply

Remember, everything we do in this room is part of your practice
Every sip of water, every movement, every breath

It's all part of the whole

STANDING HEAD TO KNEE

Stand tall

Shift your weight to the left

Little bend in your left leg

Belly in tight, bend down

Pick up your right foot with both hands

Interlace your fingers under your foot, thumbs included

(If you can't grab your foot, try standing upright with your knee lifted and practice balance and leg strength)

Look to your standing leg

Shift the weight slightly forward toward your toes

(Don't grip the floor with your toes)²⁹

Tighten your left glute

Press the back of your heel into the mat strongly as you straighten your left leg

Now even body weight on your standing foot³⁰

Tighten your standing leg, calf and quads³¹

Make sure your kneecap is lifting³²

(Don't push your left knee back, push your left hip up)

Thigh muscles grip to the bone, feel your muscles strong

Ungrip your neck and soften your jaw

(If your neck is locked up tight, take your belly in and gently look down to the floor)

If you're upright, balancing straight and strong

Inhale and gently kick your right heel forward

Toward the mirror

Work your right leg parallel to the floor

Right leg straight, arms straight

Pull your toes back

Belly in, chest up, jaw soft

Inhale and open your heart, let your head float

Tighten both legs, super strong

If you have both legs straight

²⁹ TEACHING NOTE: When toes grip the floor, they turn white.

³⁰ This doesn't mean foot flat like a pancake, it means all four corners of the foot - front and back, side to side- anchored evenly

³¹ Imagine your leg is a straw, and suck power up from the floor

³² If it's not lifting, gotta start again from a little bend in the knee

Exhale and bend your elbows
Spin your elbows down and in toward the calf muscle
Belly in, steady breathing
Eventually your elbows might go below your calf muscle

Hold here
Breathe
Standing leg strong

Release slowly
The same way you came in

Stand tall
Breathe
Let it rise, let it fall

STAGE 3 (second set)
If your elbows get down to the calf muscle
Tighten the core, belly in³³
Inhale, tailbone down
Exhale and tuck your chin to your chest
Put your forehead on your knee
Elbows in
Standing leg tight, glutes strong
Stabilize your (standing) hip, inner heel down
Soften your jaw
Belly in
Breathe with your back
Curl in
Be steady

Change

³³ Remember: each subsequent phase of this pose needs more core engagement

STANDING BOW

Bring your right hand out in front of you, palm up
Take it out to the right side
Now, don't turn your wrist, just let your hand fall down³⁴
Grab your right foot from the inside³⁵
Keep your five fingers together
Thumb with your index finger

Bring your knees together firmly
Take your left arm up high, palm forward
Neck long, jaw soft
Belly in, chest up, let your head float

Chin up, inhale and charge your heart forward
Bring your body down as you kick your right foot back and up
Drive your right thigh back

Keep your standing leg straight and strong
Tighten the core, soften your jaw
Steady gaze, stretch forward toward the front mirror
Eventually your left shoulder may come under the chin

Notice your right shin behind you
It may lean to the side
Try to keep it vertical³⁶

Let your right shoulder stretch back
Open your heart
Come down more
Eventually your heart comes level with your hips

Tighten your left glute
Stabilize the left hip
The whole posture's moving through that hip, be steady there
Left leg strong
Belly in, use your inhale to lift your chest
Exhale to kick harder and stretch across the chest
Come down

³⁴We are opening the shoulder joint here

³⁵Middle finger to the crease of the ankle

³⁶No need to get the hips perfectly square, just keep the right thigh from spinning out

Try to touch the mirror

Keep your head level, nose vertical
Nice and easy in your neck and jaw
Spine long
Steady gaze, steady breathing

One more inhale to open the heart
Exhale, come down and kick
Breathe and kick
And kick

Change
Kick back to slowly rise up out of the posture

BALANCING STICK

From neutral
Turn your palms out
Inhale and bring your arms up overhead
Interlace your fingers, palms together
Release your index fingers, steeple grip
Biceps by your ears³⁷
Chin up a bit, jaw soft

Step your right foot forward
Shift your weight forward
Lift your back foot so your toes come up an inch
Then bring your body down, left leg up
Steady, under control
Biceps by your ears
Try to bring your heart level with your hips
Get your whole body parallel with the floor
Look at one point on the floor
Ungrip the neck, soften the jaw³⁸
Steady gaze at one point on the floor, four feet in front of you
Stabilize your right hip³⁹
Glutes strong

Bring your left hip down, level⁴⁰
Tighten your core, navel to your spine
Now get your left leg up and breathe
Don't freak out, you're OK
Feel it
If you can breathe you can do it
Breathe and stretch
And stretch

Change

Stand up and step your feet back together
Chin up, jaw soft, steady
Step the left leg forward

³⁷ Don't press your head forward

³⁸ Notice that stress tension likes to kick in when the work gets harder

³⁹ The whole posture stable on your left hip

⁴⁰ Be gentle with this one. It can take time, don't force it

STANDING SEPARATE LEG STRETCHING

From upright, neutral
Turn your palms out
Inhale, bring your arms up overhead
Exhale, step your right foot out wide
Arms down parallel to the floor

Check your feet - heels in line, toes turn in a bit⁴¹
Tighten your legs
Inhale and lift your chest
Exhale and come forward all the way down
Arms folded back⁴², chest toward the floor

Put your hands on the floor
Move the weight to your toes
So your hips are directly over your heels
Don't lean your hips back⁴³
Ungrip your toes on floor⁴⁴

Inhale and pull your heart forward, away from your hips
Exhale, bend your elbows and fold down
Keep your legs tight, kneecaps lifting
Be disciplined with the leg strength

If it's available, grab under your heels from the outside
Five fingers together, thumbs included
If you can't grab your heels just keep your hands on the floor
Gently look at the floor, don't lock your neck
To pull, bend your elbows

Again, legs tight, nice and easy in your neck
Draw your shoulders away from your ears
Move your elbows toward your shins

⁴¹ A good measure for this; outer edges of the feet parallel

⁴² Swan dive

⁴³ If your hips or ankles feel locked up, try bending the knees for a moment

(This will unlock the joints and the hamstrings.)

Move the hips forward above the heels

Then straighten the legs again by pressing your butt up to the ceiling

⁴⁴ Try: Lift and stretch the toes up away from the floor and feel your legs tone

Move your heart back between your legs

If you want a little more -

Tighten your glutes and try to internally rotate the tops of the thighs

With the weight forward, ungrip the toes and stretch your heels back

Tighten your legs

Soften your jaw

Steady gaze at the floor⁴⁵

Feel the expansion of the inhale

Exhale and lengthen your spine down

Your hairline might eventually kiss the mat

Release

Inhale to come up

Feet step back together, arms up

Exhale and let your arms come down

Breathe

Be steady

Let your blood pressure normalize⁴⁶

SECOND SET

If you are touching your forehead to the mat easily

Take a shorter stance

If you're having difficulty taking a grip

Maybe take a wider stance

Do what is available to you

⁴⁵ If your neck feels locked up, try gently nodding "yes" a few times. Feel your spine lengthen.

⁴⁶ Your head just went below the heart, then back. It might take a moment for everything to reset.

TRIANGLE

From upright, neutral
Turn your palms out
Inhale, lift your arms up
Exhale, step your right foot out wide
Bring your arms down parallel to the floor
Arms tight, let your head float

Push your hips forward, tailbone down
Belly in, chest up
Turn your right foot out so it points straight to the back wall
Turn your left foot in an inch

Inhale
Bend your right knee into a lunge
Thigh parallel with the floor
Shin vertical
Warrior Two⁴⁷

Look to your right knee, point it to the right pinkie toe
If your right knee is collapsing forward to the front plane of the
body, turn your left hip forward more⁴⁸

Inhale, float the armpits, neck nice and easy
Exhale, firm your legs and sit your hips down

Inhale and move your arms
Place your right elbow directly inside your right knee, palms forward
Fingertips hovering just above your second toe

Look down at your right foot
Make sure your right knee is in line with your right pinkie toe⁴⁹
Now, take your chin to your chest and look at your navel
Pull your belly in, tighten your core
Gently sweep your chin to your left shoulder
Look past your left thumb toward the ceiling⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Remember: Warrior 2 is not the thing before the thing, it is
already the thing

⁴⁸ Hips turning toward your right hand

⁴⁹ Again, if your knee is collapsed forward; turn your left hip down
across the body a bit

⁵⁰ If the back of your neck starts to lock and grip your head back,
you've gone too far. Do what's available today.

Push your right elbow back against your right knee
Push your knee back into your elbow
Engage the resistance there
Feel the opening across your hips
Soften your jaw
Tighten your left leg, straight and strong
Keep the outer edge of your left foot anchored strongly
Pull strength up your left leg, to your heart

Inhale, open your chest⁵¹
Exhale, belly in and stretch
Stretch your wrists away from one another, into the twist

Sit your right hip down more
Push your right heel down to activate the right thigh and hip muscles
Steady breathing, steady gaze
Stretch the body
Shine

Inhale
Lift the upper body
Return to Warrior 2
Straighten the right leg
Turn the right foot in and the left foot out

Other side

⁵¹NOTE: Some students lack the mobility in the torso to twist the chest open without the hips pushing back. In this case, work from the legs to the hips, then up. Make sure the hips and legs are stable - lunging thigh, knee, and hip in line with the front foot - and only twist the chest open as much as is available without pushing the hips back (and twisting the front knee forward).

STANDING SEPARATE LEG HEAD TO KNEE

From upright, neutral

Turn your palms out

Inhale and lift your arms up overhead

Seal your palms together, thumbs crossed

Exhale, step out about three feet

Pick up your toes and pivot on your heels to the right

Right foot straight forward

Turn your left foot in, about 45 degrees⁵²

Turn your hips, try to get them square, forward

(Twist your hips a few times if it helps⁵³)

Tighten your legs, jaw soft

Belly in

Inhale and stretch up

Tuck your chin to your chest

Exhale and round forward and down

Try to touch your forehead to your knee⁵⁴

You can bend your front knee as much as you need to

You can open your hands and put them on the floor

On either side of your front foot

No worries

Press the ball of your front foot down

Shift the weight forward a bit

Scissor the inner thighs toward one another

Try to get your hips square⁵⁵

Belly in, tuck your chin

Push your fingertips down

Anchor your back heel down firmly

Inhale into the muscles of your back

Exhale and pull your navel to your spine

Back heel and fingertips press down

⁵² This will depend on your mobility. Some people may need more forward, some more to the side

⁵³ Just remember your hips and your shoulders are different things

⁵⁴ Depending on body type, just get your forehead as close as possible

⁵⁵ Shift your weight to the front foot and pull the inner thighs toward one another

Eventually you can put your palms back together if you like

Drive your forehead back into your knee⁵⁶

Put a little pressure there

Soft jaw, steady gaze

Now breathe

Feel it

If you can breathe you can do it

One more inhale to open the back

Exhale and compress deeply, chin to chest, navel up

Hands together, legs strong

Inhale and come up

Pivot on your heels around to the left

Square your hips, soft jaw

Left side

SECOND SET (right leg forward)

Notice if your hips are swinging right⁵⁷

Try to swing your "tail" left

Try: bend your back knee and lift your back heel

With both knees bent, pull the right hip back to get hips square

Then power the back heel down, holding the legs straight

⁵⁶ Imagine there's a lasso around your belly button

Tighten the lasso up to the ceiling

⁵⁷ The right side of the body shortening

TREE⁵⁸

From upright, neutral
Shift your weight to the left
Keep your left leg straight and strong
Pick up your right foot and set it in half-lotus⁵⁹
Right heel on your left thigh, as high as it goes
Heel in line with your femur
Hold your foot from behind with your left hand
Sole of your foot facing up
Belly in, chest up, tailbone down⁶⁰
Be gentle with your right knee as you let it down and back⁶¹

Put the back of your right hand on your inner right thigh
Gently press your right hand back
With your thigh, press forward against the hand
Notice how your core engages, glutes engage
Opening the hips

Standing leg strong
Feel the floor
Soften your jaw and let your head float
Belly in, chest up
Heart open, stand tall
Eventually you can bring your right hand up to heart center
If your foot doesn't slip you can lift your left hand to meet it

Tighten the corset
Lift the upper back
Get taller
Lean back a little bit
Steady gaze, steady breathing
Smile

⁵⁸ Note: 'Tada' means 'Mountain' in Sanskrit, so "Tadasana" means "Mountain Pose". If you wish to say "Tree Pose" in Sanskrit, the term is "Vrksasana" (pronounced 'VRIK-shasana). Choose what you like, just be informed.

⁵⁹ "Ardha Padmasana"

⁶⁰ Try: gently bend the standing leg, tuck your tailbone down under the body, then press the heel into the floor to stand the leg straight again.

⁶¹ To protect your right knee, stretch the toes of your right foot, especially the right pinkie toe.

Gently release the right leg and do the other side

TOE STAND

Everyone look to the floor, about four feet in front of you

Find a point that you can meditate on for the whole pose⁶²

Steady gaze

Pick up your right foot, just like in tree pose

If you'd like to do a second set of tree, do a second set of tree

If you'd like to go down to toe stand, follow along

Do what is available to you today

Keep your standing leg straight to begin

Belly in, chest up

Bend at your hips

With your right hand, reach down and forward toward the mat

If your right hand touches and your foot doesn't slip

You can bring your left hand down

Once you have body weight on your fingertips

Walk your hands forward 6-12 inches⁶³

Bend your left knee

(Like it might touch the mat between your hands)

Then sit your hips down and back onto your left heel

Once your hips are down

Walk your hands back until they are in line with your hips

Roll your shoulders back to stack the spine

Right knee down gently

Belly in, chest up

Heart open, head floats

Jaw soft, look at the floor

Breathe

If you are ready, chest up, spine straight⁶⁴

Bring your left hand up to the center of your chest

⁶² Not the idea of a point, an actual point.

⁶³ Maybe more. The further the hands go forward, the higher the standing heel can lift.

⁶⁴ To open your heart, try turning your palms forward toward the mirror

If you can balance, bring your right hand up⁶⁵

Steady, look at the floor

Float

(One day you might hover up an inch or two off of the heel⁶⁶)

Bring your hands back down to the mat in front

Slowly come back up the same way you went down

Step your right leg down

Keep your eyes to your point on the floor

Left side

⁶⁵ If you're having trouble bringing the hands up, just try clapping your hands once.

⁶⁶ If you can get both hands up, float off the heel, and also smile at the same time, you're allowed to look back to the mirror

SAVASANA

(After toe stand)

Stand tall, eyes forward, rejoin the group

Neutral

Eyes forward

Bring the palms together at the heart center

Honor the work of the standing series

Turn around and lie down on your back

Feet towards the back wall

Palms up⁶⁷

If you have any wiggles, fidgets, adjustments you need to make

Make them now

Get them out of the way

Then be still

Soft jaw

Relax your shoulders

Relax your hips

Breathe

Feel the body deeply⁶⁸

Two minutes in silence

(At the conclusion of Savasana)

Take a full breath

Let it go completely

⁶⁷ Palms up opens the line of the heart

If you feel unsteady or worked up

Turn your palms down for a moment

To ground yourself

Then palms up when you're stable

⁶⁸ Notice the mind. Notice your impulses.

WIND REMOVING

Bend your right leg up
Take a grip with your hands just below the knee
Interlace your fingers
Relax your right foot

Draw your knee toward your right shoulder
Gently at first
If you start to pinch at the hip
Take your knee out to the side a little⁶⁹

Plug your shoulders down to the ground
Open your heart⁷⁰
Squeeze your elbows down toward your hips
Neck long, jaw soft
Keep your head on the floor
With your eyes, look down to your chest⁷¹
Exhale and pull steadily
Keep your elbows in tight to the side body

Send the inhale all the way down to the right hip
Pull into the exhale
Chin down, jaw soft
Eyes down
Eventually the back of your neck will lie flat⁷²

If you'd like a little more to work with
Stretch your left heel to the back wall
Inhale to the right hip
Exhale, belly in
Pull the knee directly to the front mirror

Breathe

Release
Left side

⁶⁹ We don't want to pinch bone against bone, go around if you need to

⁷⁰ Pull the shoulder blades together underneath you

⁷¹ There is an intimate connection between the muscles that move your eyes and the muscles that move your spine. Turn your eyes in their sockets and your skull will move.

⁷² Let the back of your skull slide toward the mirror

BOTH LEGS

Draw your legs up to your chest
Hold your knees with both arms
Elbow to elbow grip is ideal
If you don't have access to that grip
Try one hand around the opposite wrist
Or simply hold fingertips⁷³

If you feel any pinching at the hip joint
Take your knees away from each other more

Relax your feet
Breathe

There is no 'pull' in this one, simply hold tight with your hands
Relax your shoulders down
Eyes down to your heart
Soften your jaw

Feel the expansion of the inhale
Feel the release of the exhale⁷⁴
Notice if there is any resistance or tension in the low belly
Let that go⁷⁵

Let your back lie flat on the floor⁷⁶
Eventually your neck may get flat to the floor

Breathe
Let the posture sink into gravity
Release

⁷³ We are trying to get the fingers and hands active in this grip. The more the fingers and hands work, the more the shoulders can relax down.

⁷⁴ Notice how the breath moves in the muscles of the back.

⁷⁵ Compress your gut

⁷⁶ Try pushing the knees away from your chest, into the arms, as you exhale. Then let everything relax.

SIT-UP

Feet together, flex your feet⁷⁷

Stretch the arms up overhead, cross your thumbs

Tighten your legs

Inhale fully⁷⁸ and sit up, head toward your knees

Grab your toes and exhale twice, sharply

One, two

Turn around and lie down on your belly

⁷⁷ Flex your toes toward your face

⁷⁸ The motion of the sit-up should occur in the pause between inhale and exhale.

COBRA

Lying on your belly
Turn your head forward
Put your hands under your shoulders
Fingertips in line with the tops of your shoulders⁷⁹

Put your mouth down to the mat
Bring your feet together, heels touching⁸⁰
Palms flat⁸¹

Firm your legs
Press your tailbone down
Keep your neck long
Elbows in tight to your body the whole time

Inhale and lift your chest up
Come up halfway
Keep your belly button on the ground, chest up
Elbows about a ninety degree angle
Look forward to the front mirror to start⁸²

Palms flat, legs strong, spine long
Press your feet down
Pull your chest forward and up
Shoulders back⁸³

Now turn your head upward
Look up through your eyebrows
Soften your jaw and breathe

Chest up, legs strong, chest up, long spine
Open your heart

⁷⁹ The tendency is for the hands to be too high, which will crowd the neck and shoulders in the posture. When in doubt, slide your hands down a bit (towards your hips). A little too far down is no problem.

⁸⁰ For some this may be very difficult, in which case heels apart is OK.

⁸¹ Press the tips of your fingers and the perimeters of your palms down strongly

⁸² It is very common to lift up and hyperextend the neck, which locks the spine and - subsequently - the whole pose. Looking forward as you lift the chest to begin helps manage this problem.

⁸³ With your palms flat, try to pull your mat to the back wall

Breathe

One more inhale to open your chest

Exhale, elbows tight

Slowly come down

Turn your head right

Put your left ear down on the mat

LOCUST

Straighten your arms

Flip your palms down on the mat and slide your arms underneath

Pinkie fingers touching eventually

If your elbows hurt a little bit, that's ok⁸⁴

Turn your head forward

Spread your fingers widely⁸⁵

Palms flat on the floor

Chin forward, jaw soft⁸⁶

Keep your neck long

Press the top of your right foot down into the floor

Until your right knee lifts off the mat

Right thigh locked tight

Left leg totally relaxed

Firm your palms down into the mat⁸⁷

Keep your hips level

Press your right hip down on your arm

Inhale and slowly lift your right leg

Keep pressing your right foot down, toes pointed

As your right leg lifts

Tightening your right thigh and knee

Keep your kneecap pointing straight down⁸⁸

Ungrip your neck, soften your jaw

Lengthen your spine

Breathe

If you want more power

It's in your hands and forearms

Against the floor

Find a moment

Feel your body

Lift the leg with confidence and breathe

⁸⁴ More than a little bit, feel free to bring the arms out from underneath.

⁸⁵ Especially your thumbs from your index fingers

⁸⁶ Don't worry about shoulders down. Depending on body type, this can be a misleading idea.

⁸⁷ Press the fingertips and perimeters of the palms down

⁸⁸ Not turning out to the side

Slowly bring the right leg down
Left side

BOTH LEGS

Turn your head in, mouth down⁸⁹
Readjust your arms underneath
Long spine
Stretch your fingers widely, palms flat⁹⁰

Legs together, kneecaps straight down
Press your feet down so your knees lift
Thighs tight
Press your tailbone down

Without bending your knees
Take a deep breath and lift both legs together⁹¹
Steady
Stretch the backs of the knees

Ungrip your neck
Lengthen your spine
Breathe
If you can breathe, you can do it⁹²

Legs tight
Spine long
Palms flat
Lift a little higher

Breathe
Slowly come down

⁸⁹ Smush your face

⁹⁰ Press the fingertips and perimeters of the palms down

⁹¹ Initiate the lift with your inner thighs

⁹² Very often, our least favorite postures are the ones where breathing is a challenge. If you can enter your least favorite posture and emphasize breathing, it may very quickly become manageable and even pleasant.

FLYING LOCUST

Turn your head
Take your arms out to the side like airplane wings
All five fingers together
Legs straight, legs together

Mouth down on the mat
Tighten your arms and legs⁹³
Press your tailbone down
Soften your jaw
Take a full breath

Lift up, arms, legs, and chest come up
Look forward to start
Steady breathing
Lift your hands so your fingertips are level with the top of your head

Come up higher, open your heart
Start to look up through your eyebrows to the ceiling
Lift your chest
Lift your thighs

Steady breathing
Use your exhales

Stretch your arms
Float your armpits
Keep your neck long, even as you look up
Tighten your legs

Chest up
Thighs up
Go higher
And breathe

Gently come down

⁹³Without clenching

FLOOR BOW

Turn your head forward
Bend your knees
Reach back and grab your feet from the outside
An inch or two below your toes
Thumbs with your index fingers
If you can manage the grip, straight wrists empower this pose⁹⁴

Mouth down to start
Step one is let your heart melt into the floor
Relax across your chest⁹⁵
Soften your jaw

Be steady
Take a full breath and slowly kick your heels away from your hips
Let your chest lift up
Elbows straight, pulled taught
Lift your thighs up off of the floor
Knees outer hip-width

Don't be in a rush to stare at the ceiling⁹⁶
Look forward, let your heart fall forward toward the mirror
Kick your feet back and up

Open your chest, keep your neck long
Now start to look up through your eyebrows to the ceiling

Tone your glutes and kick
Tight quads, stretch your toes back⁹⁷
Roll forward to your low ribs

Kick back and up and breathe
Open your heart
Kick higher and breathe

Gently come down

⁹⁴ You will most likely have to allow your grip to slip off your feet an inch or two. It will be a little less secure, but it will change the shoulder stretch.

⁹⁵ This posture opens the chest and heart center

⁹⁶ Avoid hyperextending the neck and locking the spine

⁹⁷ Try: use your hands to pull your feet higher.

PUSH UP

Turn your head forward

Put your hands under your chest

Like you might do a push up

Do a push up⁹⁸

⁹⁸ You can keep your knees down if you need to.

FIXED FIRM

Come forward and kneel at the top of your mat
Knees together, open your feet behind you
So you can sit down between your heels⁹⁹
Tops of your feet flat on the floor

If you feel any tweaking in the knees, go easy¹⁰⁰
You can open your knees as much as you need to

If you can get your hips down comfortably
Take your hands to your feet
Thumbs inside, fingers outside

Go back one elbow at a time¹⁰¹
When your elbows are down, pause
Tuck your tailbone forward (towards the mirror)
Take your chin to your chest, belly in
Inhale fully to open the heart

Exhale and let your head go back
If you can, put the top of your head on the floor
Pause here
Take a full inhale, once again opening the heart

Exhale, tuck your chin and bring your shoulders down
Eventually your upper back down to the floor
Eyes to your chest

Inhale to open your heart
Exhale, spread your toes and press your feet down
Tuck your tailbone forward, low belly in
Engage the stretch in the tops of your thighs¹⁰²
If you're comfortable here, bring your arms overhead¹⁰³

On the inhales, open your chest
Draw your sternum to your chin

⁹⁹ Ideally your heels will gently hug your hips

¹⁰⁰ You can try starting from all fours (table-top) and gently shifting the hips back. If pain persists, just sit out this pose.

¹⁰¹ Try to lead with the left at least 50% of the time, for symmetry's sake

¹⁰² Imagine sliding your quads toward the front mirror

¹⁰³ Arms straight or grab elbows, both work

On the exhales, tailbone forward (toward the mirror)
And low ribs down¹⁰⁴, relax the low back

Eyes to chest
Jaw soft
Steady breathing
Let the front body lengthen
Let the back body settle

Open your heart
And breathe

Hands back to your feet
Slowly come back up under control, using your elbows
Once you're up safely
Turn around and lie down on your back¹⁰⁵

Then be still

¹⁰⁴ Resist the temptation to crunch a backbend in the low spine. This is not a low back compression posture. A neutral arch in the spine is ideal, take your time

¹⁰⁵ It can feel nice to bounce your legs on the floor a bit, just to let the legs relax.

HALF TORTOISE

Come to kneel in the middle of your mat
Knees together, feet together
Hips on your heels
Sit upright, powerful

Arms straight, turn your palms out
Inhale and bring your arms up overhead
Seal your palms together, cross your thumbs
Arms by your ears

Chin up gently
Take a full breath
Exhale and come forward
Keeping your arms with your ears
Touch your forehead to the floor¹⁰⁶
Keep your palms together, sealed tight

Chin away from your chest a little
Eyes pointed down to the mat (not in towards the knees)
Soften your jaw and breathe
Let the inhale move in the muscles of your back
Let the exhale take your hips down

Gently stretch your arms forward to lengthen the side bodies
Notice if your shoulders are gripping behind your neck
Be easy there¹⁰⁷
Arms by your ears is more important than arms straight¹⁰⁸
Gently stretch the arms forward

Breathe steadily
Let gravity do most of the work
Let your thighs compress your gut
Let your gut push into your lower spine
Gently opening your lower back

Feel the breath in the muscles of the back
Be steady, no struggle

¹⁰⁶ Please don't worry about getting your forehead to touch first

¹⁰⁷ Stress tension in your neck is not a productive use of your energy

¹⁰⁸ Try bending the elbows and spinning the triceps down

Stretch forward through your ring fingers

Squeeze your knees together, squeeze your palms together
Inhale and come up tall
Arms up
Exhale, bring your arms down
Turn around and lie down on your back

Savasana

SECOND SET (Modified entrance)
Kneel, knees and feet together
Inhale and lift your arm up
Seal your palms
Arms by your ears

Now, chin up away from your chest
Look up to the ceiling
Lift your heart high

Stretch up, then begin to come down
Keep your chin away from your chest the whole time
Eventually looking at your reflection
In the mirror

When your hands touch the floor
Gently bring your forehead down to the mat
Let your upper body rest on your lower body

Now, with an inhale try to gently backbend inside the pose
Then exhale and relax¹⁰⁹
Ungrip your shoulders from behind your neck
Breathe with your back muscles
Let your hips sink down and back
Let your head rest on the floor like a stone

Breathe

Squeeze your knees together, palms together
Inhale and come up

¹⁰⁹ Repeat this a few times if it feels like it helps lengthen the torso for you

CAMEL

Come to the top of your mat and stand up on your knees
Set your knees hip-width, thighs vertical¹¹⁰
Shins parallel, toes pointing straight back
Tops of your feet flat on the mat

Put your hands on your hips
Fingers down, thumbs out
Lift your shoulders and roll them back
Bring your elbows closer behind you

Press your hands down on your hips
Inhale and lift your chest up, open your heart
Take your chin to your chest
Exhale and go back halfway

Have a breath here
Inhale to open your heart
Chest up, eyes forward to the mirror
Exhale, let your head go back

Take one hand back at a time to grab your heels¹¹¹
Thumbs outside, fingers inside
(If you can't grab your heels, no worries
Just keep your hands on your hips)

If it's available to you, seal your palms on the bottoms of your feet
Now don't let your grip slide off your heels

Inhale to lift your chest up, open your heart
Exhale, steadily press your hips forward
Long spine, eyes looking to the point between your eyebrows

Tone your belly in
Chest up, hips forward¹¹²
Tighten your glutes¹¹³

¹¹⁰No wide triangles

¹¹¹Again, try to lead with the left hand half the time to promote symmetry

¹¹²If you get to thighs vertical, don't push forward more. Just focus on lifting the chest

¹¹³But no clenching (no pun intended)

Let your inhale open your heart
Long spine, long neck¹¹⁴, soft jaw (mouth closed)
Exhale and lift your chest
We're opening the heart center here

Remember, if you can breathe you can do it

Gently bring your hands back to your hips
Inhale to come up
Once you're up, turn right around and lie down
Be dizzy
Let it in and let it go

SECOND SET

Be steady, notice your jaw
Notice your tongue
Be gentle there
Imagine your shoulder blades are two supportive hands
Let them lift you up

¹¹⁴ Keep your neck gently engaged

RABBIT

Come to the middle of your space
Kneel with your knees together, feet together
Fold your towel over your heels (for a dry grip)
Grab your heels over the towel
Thumbs outside, fingers inside
Good strong grip

Belly in, inhale and lift your chest up
Tuck your chin to your chest (mouth closed)
Exhale and curl down

Put the top of your head down on the floor¹¹⁵
Forehead close to your knees
Once you're here, sink your grip further
Make sure your grip is strong

With a strong grip
Take a full inhale
Exhale and lift your hips up

Come forward so that your arms are pulled taught (like ropes)¹¹⁶
Hands like steel hooks
Minimum weight on the top your head¹¹⁷

Keep your grip very strong
Shoulders up, away from your ears
Exhale and pull your navel to your spine
Hips up
Inhale into the muscles of your back

We're looking for a back stretch here
Take your time finding it
Squeeze your heels together
Stretch your toes down into the mat
Pull your belly to your spine
Pull on your heels

¹¹⁵ Like in a headstand

¹¹⁶ Triceps tight

¹¹⁷ You can do this posture very well with no weight on your head at all

Just make sure you're not rolling onto the *back* of your head

Breathe

One more inhale to open the back

Exhale compress the belly

Grip tight, hips up

Then slowly roll your hips down

Inhale and roll your spine up

One vertebra at a time

Once you're up

Turn around and lie down

Savasana

SECOND SET ADDITION

With your grip strong

Belly in

Squeeze your heels together tightly

And -with your hands- try to pull your heels apart

Now press your feet down into the mat

And -with your hands- try to pull your heels up

Lift your hips up and forward more

HEAD TO KNEE (FLOOR)

Come to the middle of your mat
Sit with your hips square to the mirror
Take your right leg out and your left foot in
Your thighs should be at a right angle
With your left foot pressed firmly on your right thigh
Hips level

Take your arms up overhead
Interlace your fingers
Turn your heart to the right
Reach out and grab your right foot
All ten fingers interlocked

You can bend your right knee if you need to, no worries
Step one is grab the right foot

(Do this next part in stages)
Inhale and lift your chest high
Arms straight, eyes forward, spine long
Pull on your foot, toes back
Then tuck your chin to your chest
Exhale, bend your elbows and take your forehead to your knee¹¹⁸

Soften the jaw and the tongue
Pull your belly in
Try to push your navel from left to right across your torso

Breathe
Feel the inhale in the back
On the exhale bring your elbows down and in, belly tight
Turn your triceps down and in towards your nose
Let your shoulder blades move down off your back

Keep your hips level
(Left hip down)
Tuck your chin
Try to put your nose into your navel
Notice any resistance in the jaw

¹¹⁸ Bend your knee if you need to, try to get your forehead and knee to touch

Eventually your hairline rests above your kneecap
Your elbows will touch your calf muscle and kiss the floor
At the same time

Breathe
Inhales open the back
Exhales compress the front
Pull on your toes

Change
Come up
Stretch your arms up
Turn your heart to the left

LEFT SIDE (After Setup)
Notice that the left side of your torso might try to collapse down
and in
Lift the left side of your rib cage up
Away from your left thigh
Create space there

AFTER LEFT SIDE
Feet together in front of you
Lie down (to realign your spine)
Inhale
And immediately sit back up
Exhale, grab the toes

STRETCHING

Take a two finger grip around your big toes¹¹⁹
(Bend your knees if you need to)
Walk your hips back, right then left¹²⁰

Work your legs towards straight¹²¹
Press your inner thighs down¹²²
Pull your pinkie toes back
Stretch your feet and toes back towards your face

Ungrip your neck, soft jaw
Belly in tight
Inhale and lift your chest up, open your heart
Exhale and bend your elbows, lengthening your spine¹²³
Lead with your heart

Stretch your heels forward, hips back
Legs tight, neck easy
Bring your elbows down towards the floor
Lengthen your spine, round your back evenly
Keep your neck long, spine long

Steady breathing, steady gaze
If you can get your chest down flat, take your forehead to your shins
Feel the stretch in your whole back body

Don't bounce, just be with it
Feel what it feels like to be still and use your strength
Stretch the toes back one more time
(Immediately smile)

Change
Turn around and lie down

¹¹⁹ Index and middle fingers inside the big toes
Trigger grip

¹²⁰ Maybe get weird. Try left then right (!)

¹²¹ If you can't get them straight, try this: Bend your knees up so they touch your chest. Keeping your chest and legs together, work your legs straight. Only go as far as you can keeping upper body and lower body touching.

¹²² Keep your heels down (don't practice hyperextending your knees)

¹²³ Try lifting the elbows wide to the sides on an inhale and dropping them down towards the floor on an exhale.

SPINE TWIST

Sit facing the front mirror
Bend your left knee on the floor, facing forward
(Don't sit on your left heel)
Step your right foot on the floor
Close to the left knee, your heel might touch the knee
Your foot might cross the knee
Keep both hips down, level¹²⁴

Put your right hand down behind you¹²⁵
Lift your left arm straight up
Inhale, stretch your left hand high
Exhale, take your left elbow across your right knee
Reach to grab your left knee if it's available¹²⁶

Sit tall, upright¹²⁷
Unlock your neck
Keep your right hip down the whole time

Take your belly in, navel to your spine
Inhale and lift your chest
Exhale and turn your heart
Get taller as you twist

Steady gaze, turn your eyes out over your left shoulder
Soft jaw, don't crank your neck¹²⁸
Inhale, lift
Exhale, twist

If you want power, it comes from the ground
Press the top of your left foot down
Press the inner edge of your right foot down
Belly in, spine straight (upright, don't lean back) and twist

Open your heart

¹²⁴ If you can't keep your hips level on the mat
Try putting your right heel next to the left shin instead

¹²⁵ Up on fingertips is often helpful

¹²⁶ If it's not, keep your left elbow bent all the way
Use the point of your elbow to drive your knee back

¹²⁷ If your low back rounds, try left leg straight

¹²⁸ If you crank the neck around too hard it locks the rest of your spine. Be easy there.

Let your head float
Stretch your optical nerve by looking all the way around to the right
Inhale and lift higher
Open your collar bones, shoulder blades together
Exhale and wring it out
Navel in and up

Twist and twist and twist

Change

Turn around and lie down

Savasana

KAPALBHATI

Kneel in the middle of your space
Knees together, feet together
Upright, powerful
(If sitting cross-legged feels more stable for you, do that)

Let your head float
Arms straight, put your hands on your legs
Wherever they land is fine
Shoulders neutral

In Kapalbhati we pull the belly in
To press the air out, past the lips¹²⁹
It's the exact same mechanics as a water pistol

Sit tall
Back straight
Eyes forward
Steady

Let your belly release
Soften your jaw
You're going to snap the belly in tightly
As you exhale
(Don't worry about the inhale)

Ready
Begin

(clap or snap fingers to set the pace, do about 40-60)

SECOND SET

Relax your neck, shake it off
Sit upright, steady
Eyes forward

Second set is the same thing
Done more quickly

¹²⁹ Notice if you're catching the breath with your teeth, try to send it straight out past the lips

Here we go -

(snap or clap to set the pace)

SUPPLEMENTARY DIALOGUE for KAPALBHATI

Notice if tension has moved up to your neck

Let that go

Do the work at the bottom of your torso

Not the top

Ungrip your neck

Shoulders neutral

Jaw soft

You have to quite literally dig deep

Go to the bottom of your spine

Push it all out

FINAL SAVASANA

Turn around and lie down

Palms up

Head straight

Eyes closed

Breathe easy

Feel your body deeply

Relax

Take your time here

When you choose to go

Go in peace

Namaste