

The Sun Salutation

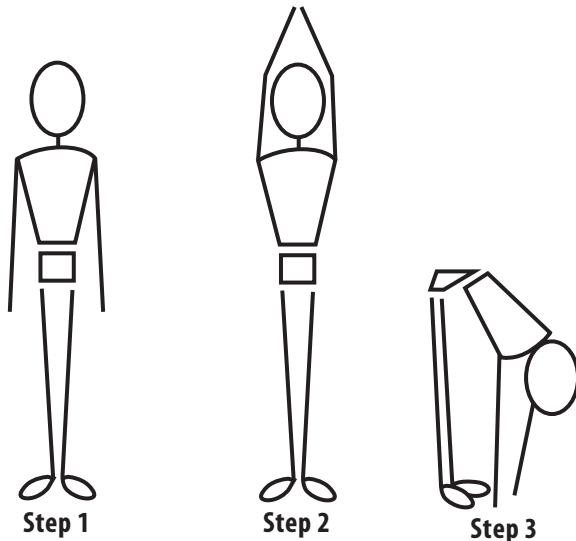
A Yoga Regimen

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In ancient India, people saluted the sun at sunrise and sunset using a series of yoga poses. We no longer worship the sun, of course, but doing the poses comprising the "Sun Salute" each morning and evening promotes muscular strength, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness. This yoga regimen can also help reduce stress. People who do the Sun Salute on a daily basis for several months often experience reduction in blood pressure and resting heart rate.

Breathing is important part of yoga. A complete breathe is the smooth even inhalation and exhalation of breath through the nose. Use breath control to move in and out of a pose.

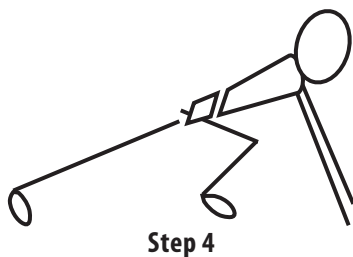
Caution: If you have low back pain associated with a degenerated spinal disk - or extreme pain or stiffness caused by arthritis - talk to your doctor before participating in a yoga regimen. Pregnant women should not do the Sun Salutation.



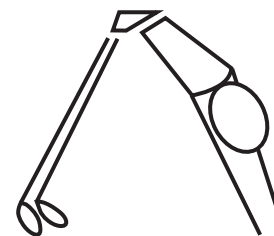
1. Mountain Pose: Stand straight with your feet planted firmly on the ground and arms hanging at your sides with palms in. Inhale and exhale through your nose. Hold pose for three complete breathes.

2. Mountain Pose - Arms Up: Inhale evenly, raise your arms over your head, pressing your palms together.

3. Forward Bend: Exhale bending at hips, hand with head and neck toward ground & aligned with your spine. Touch hands to the ground with fingertips in-line with toe tips. Place hands flat on the ground if you can (bend your knees if you need).

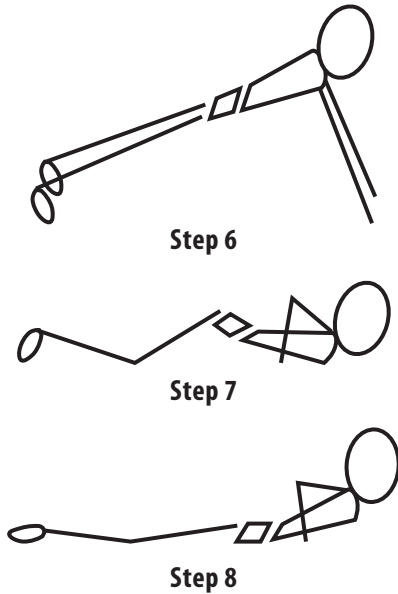


4. Lunge: Inhale and look forward, with hands flat on ground wrists in-line with shoulders on outsides of feet, arms straight, step back with right foot. The knee of the front leg should be bent at a 90° angle. Try not to rest your chest on your knee, keep your back straight.



5. Downward Facing Dog: Exhale. Keeping arms straight step back with front foot, place feet flat on the ground, legs straight, and lift hips in an inverted V. Keep head in-line with spine. (Bring feet close to hands if necessary to move heels toward the ground). Extend the spine by pressing thighs back and chest toward ground.

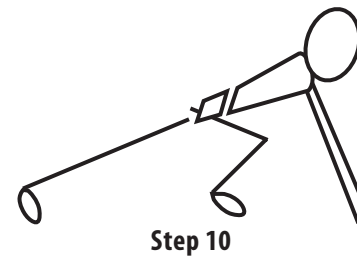
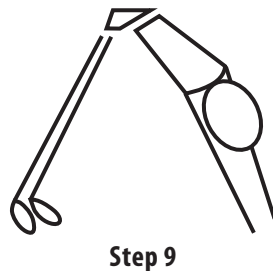




6. Plank pose: Inhale, keep legs and arms straight, drop hips toward ground until body is parallel to ground (hands should be in-line with shoulders).

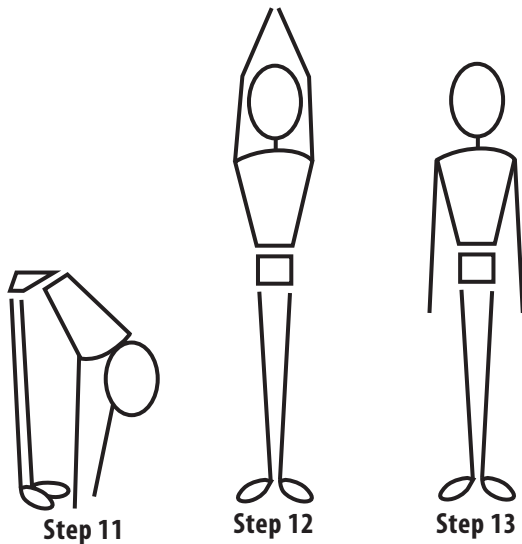
7. Knees, chest, chin: Exhale, lower your knees, chest and chin to the floor, keeping your elbows in tight with your body and palms flat on the floor.

8. Cobra: Inhale, lower your body onto the ground, pointing your toes. Straighten arms and lift your upper torso up off the ground (allow your hips to slide forward if necessary). Variation - Baby Cobra: Inhale, lower your body onto the ground, pointing your toes. Lift your upper torso so that your elbows are in-line with shoulders.



9. Downward Facing Dog: Exhale, lift your hips back to the downward facing dog pose, hold for 3 to 5 breathes.

10. Lunge: Inhale, return to the lunge pose by bringing your left leg forward between your hands.



11. Forward Bend: Exhale, bring your back leg forward to the forward bend pose. Keep your fingertips in-line with toe tips.

12. Mountain Pose, Arms Up: Inhale and return to mountain pose with your arms up above your head, palms pressed together.

13. Mountain Pose: Exhale, lowering arms to sides. Repeat poses beginning with opposite leg and repeat again on both sides.

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