

SURYA NAMASKAR "A"

SUN SALUTATION "A"



Surya Namaskara can be used as warm-up before a Kundalini Yoga kriya or as a serie in itself. Coordinate your breath with the movements to create an uninterrupted pace along the sequence of postures. Start practicing 3 repetitions and then gradually get to 5 reps. Surya Namaskar increases cardiac activity and circulation, stretches and relaxes the spine, giving a massage to the internal organs, improves the functioning of the digestive system, exercises the lungs and increases oxygen in the blood.



1. Tadasana (Mountain Pose) with hands in Prayer Mudra - Samasthiti. Stand up straight, feet together or hip distance apart, toes and heels touching, weight evenly distributed between both feet. Find your balance and open the chest.

2. Urdhva Hastasana (Upward Salute). Inhale, bring your arms up over your head, palms touching. Elongate the spine and be sure not to compress the vertebrae of the neck and lower back. Drishti at the thumbs.



3. Uttanasana (Standing Forward Bend). Exhale and bend forward from the hip joints, not from the waist. As you descend draw the front torso out of the groins and open the space between the pubis and top sternum. Emphasize on lengthening the front torso. If possible, with your knees straight, place hands on the floor on either side of the feet, with fingertips and tips of the toes in line. Drishti at the tip of the nose. Press the heels firmly into the floor and lift the sitting bones toward the ceiling.

4. Ardha Uttanasana (Half Standing Forward Bend) Inhale, raise the head up, open your chest, straighten the spine, keeping the hands or fingertips on the floor. Drishti at the Third Eye Point.



5. Chaturanga Dandasana (Four-Limbed Staff Pose).

Exhale and bend the knees, stepping back to Plank Pose. Align your shoulders slightly ahead of the wrists and come onto the balls of your feet, pressing the soles of your feet back, as if into a wall behind you. Move your chest forward and bend your elbows to lower yourself towards the floor, keeping your body as straight as a plank of wood, neither letting your center sag nor sticking your buttocks up in the air. Direct your Drishti to the floor, about 15cm in front of you, and continue to lower until your shoulders are at the same height as your elbows. Push back through the heels to engage the quadriceps and bring the lower body to life, and reach your sternum forward, creating a straight, taut line of energy from the crown of your head through your feet. *Stepping back into Plank Pose instead of jumping is a good option while you master jumping back.*



6. Urdhva Mukha Svanasana (Upward Facing Dog).

Inhale as you push forward and up, straighten the elbows and elongate the spine. Stretch from the tip of the toes through the upper back so that there is no pressure on the lower spine. Drishti at the tip of the nose. Fingers are spread wide apart.

7. Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward-Facing Dog).

Push into your fingers and palms, as if trying to push open a heavy door. Spread your fingers as wide as you can. *Both those things will prevent overstraining your wrists as you bear weight on them in these postures.* Exhale and lift your hips, stretching the spine, stretch your heels onto or down toward the floor. Straighten your knees but be sure not to lock them. Pull in your low belly towards your spine, so that it can protect your spine from hyperextending. *That can prevent wear-and-tear back pain and other complications down the road.* Feel your hips rising higher to the sky, and with that more of the posture's muscular effort goes into your legs, rather than mostly in your arms. Gaze toward the navel and hold this position for five breaths.



8. Ardha Uttanasana (Half Standing Forward Bend).

Inhale and bend the knees to jump or step to the front into Ardha Uttanasana.



9. **Uttanasana (Standing Forward Bend).** Exhale and bend forward.



10. **Urdhva Hastasana (Upward Salute).** Inhale and come all the way up into Urdhva Hastasana.



11. **Samasthiti.** Exhale and return to the starting position with hands in Prayer Pose.