

Arhanta Yoga
ASHRAMS

10

YIN YOGA POSES

FOR THE UPPER BODY

▶ (+ 2 Exclusive Sequences)





INTRODUCTION

Many of my students have been asking me for some more Yin Yoga Poses that work on the upper body. People often ask me why most of the common Yin Yoga poses are targeting the lower body. In fact, Yin Yoga is not restricted to only the lower body. The principle of yin can be applied to a much wider set of poses, than the original poses by Paul Grilley.

A Yin Pose is basically a yoga pose where you are actively aware (not sleeping) but where your muscles are required to be only minimally active. Your muscles are active in to only the degree necessary to support you in the pose. Through the use of props, we avoid the need for any powerful muscle contractions.

You can also say that the poses which reach to the sky are Yang poses and the poses which bow or surrender to the earth are Yin poses. They encompass the principle of minimal action.

Below you can find a selection of Yin Yoga poses that are easy to do and provide efficient stretch to the muscles and joints of the upper body. These poses can be done with just a few props.

1

COW FACE POSE



Target Areas:

Triceps, shoulder girdle, pectorals

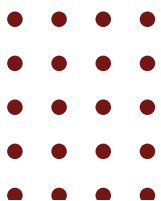


Contraindications:

This pose should be avoided or modified in case of any shoulder or elbow injury.

Instructions:

1. Sit on a cushion placed under your hips, with your feet pointing back.
2. Reach behind with your left hand, bend the elbow and place the back of your hand against the middle of your spine.
3. Raise your right hand to the ceiling, bend the elbow and try to clasp your left hand. If the hands do not reach easily, use a strap to bridge the gap.
4. Hold the pose for three minutes.
5. Repeat to the other side.
6. Rest in Child's Pose



2

SLEEPING EAGLE POSE



Target Areas:

Triceps, biceps, deltoids, trapezius, rhomboids

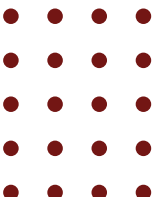


Contraindications:

This pose should be avoided or modified in case of any shoulder or elbow injury.

Instructions:

1. Lie down on your belly, with a in front of you.
2. Straighten your right arm and place it on the cushion, with the palm facing up.
3. Cross the left arm the right, elbow against elbow.
4. Bend both arms and wrap the right arm around the left, holding on to the left thumb.
5. Rest the head on top of you upper arms.
6. Hold the pose for three minutes.
7. Repeat to the other side.
8. Rest in Crocodile Pose



3

THREAD THE NEEDLE POSE



Target Areas:

Deltoids, trapezius, rhomboids

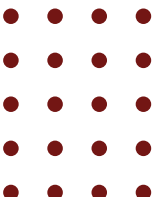


Contraindications:

This pose should be avoided or modified in case of any shoulder injury.

Instructions:

1. a. Come on all fours with a bolster or cushion between your hands.
2. b. Reach your left hand underneath your body toward the right.
3. c. Rest your head on the cushion.
4. d. Hold the pose for 3 minutes.
5. e. Repeat to the other side.
6. f. Rest in Child's Pose.



4

FISH POSE



Target Areas:

Thoracic spine, intercostal muscles, pectorals

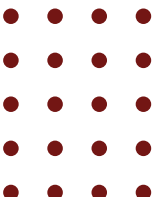


Contraindications:

This pose should be avoided or modified in case of any neck or blood pressure issues.

Instructions:

1. Place a cushion so that when you lie down your upper-middle back can rest on it.
2. Lie down on the cushion and gently drop your head along the cushion to the ground (top of the head resting on the ground).
3. Hold the pose for five minutes.
4. Slowly roll over one side, remove the cushion and relax in Corpse Pose.



5

REVERSE PRAYER POSE



Target Areas:

Deltoids, pectorals, intercostal muscles

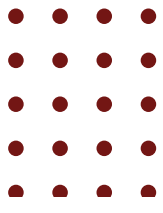


Contraindications:

This pose should be avoided or modified in case of any shoulder, elbow or wrist injury.

Instructions:

- 1. Sit on a cushion placed under your hips, with your feet pointing back.
- 2. Bring your hands behind you, palms together in prayer position (pointing the fingers downward makes the pose much more accessible).
- 3. Hold the pose for five minutes.
- 4. Relax in Child's Pose.



6

CRISSCROSS POSE



Target Areas:

Triceps, deltoids, trapezius, rhomboids

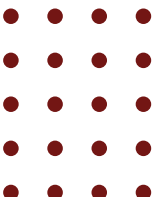


Contraindications:

This pose should be avoided or modified in case of any shoulder issues.

Instructions:

1. From a prone position, lift your chest and cross your arms in front of your chest, right arm in front of the left.
2. Keep the arms as straight as possible.
3. Lower yourself toward the ground, head resting on cushion.
4. Hold the pose for 3 minutes.
5. Repeat to the other side.
6. Relax in Crocodile Pose.



7

CACTUS BPOSE



Target Areas:

Anterior deltoids, pectorals, obliques

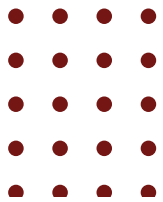
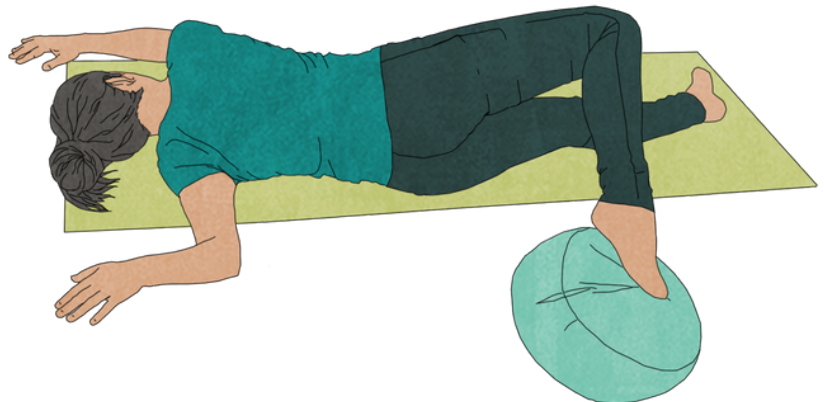


Contraindications:

This pose should be avoided or modified in case of any shoulder issues.

Instructions:

1. Lie on your belly, with your forehead on the mat and your arms at a 90-degree angle, elbows at shoulder-height.
2. Lift your right leg up, reach and drop it over to your left side.
3. Roll open to the left, while keeping the front of the right shoulder heavy.
4. Place the toes of your right foot on the ground or on a cushion.
5. Rest your head on the floor.
6. Hold for 3 minutes.
7. Repeat to the other side.
8. Relax in Crocodile Pose.



LION POSE



Target Areas:

Biceps, forearms, wrists, pectorals

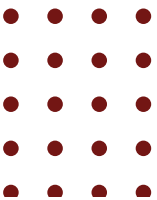


Contraindications:

This pose should be avoided or modified in case of any wrist issues. Be mindful when practicing this pose if you tend toward over-extended elbows (hyper-mobility).

Instructions:

1. Sit on your knees with your hips on your heels (or a cushion below the pelvis).
2. Knees are at least shoulder-width apart.
3. Lean forward and place your hands on the ground, fingers pointing back towards you.
4. Lean into your hands and pull your pelvis back and down toward your heels and your shoulder blades down toward the pelvis.
5. Hold the pose for 3 - 5 minutes.
6. Relax in Child's Pose



SEATED SPINAL TWIST



Target Areas:

Thoracic spine, pectorals, obliques, trapezius

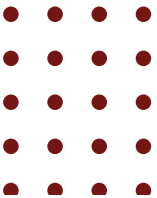
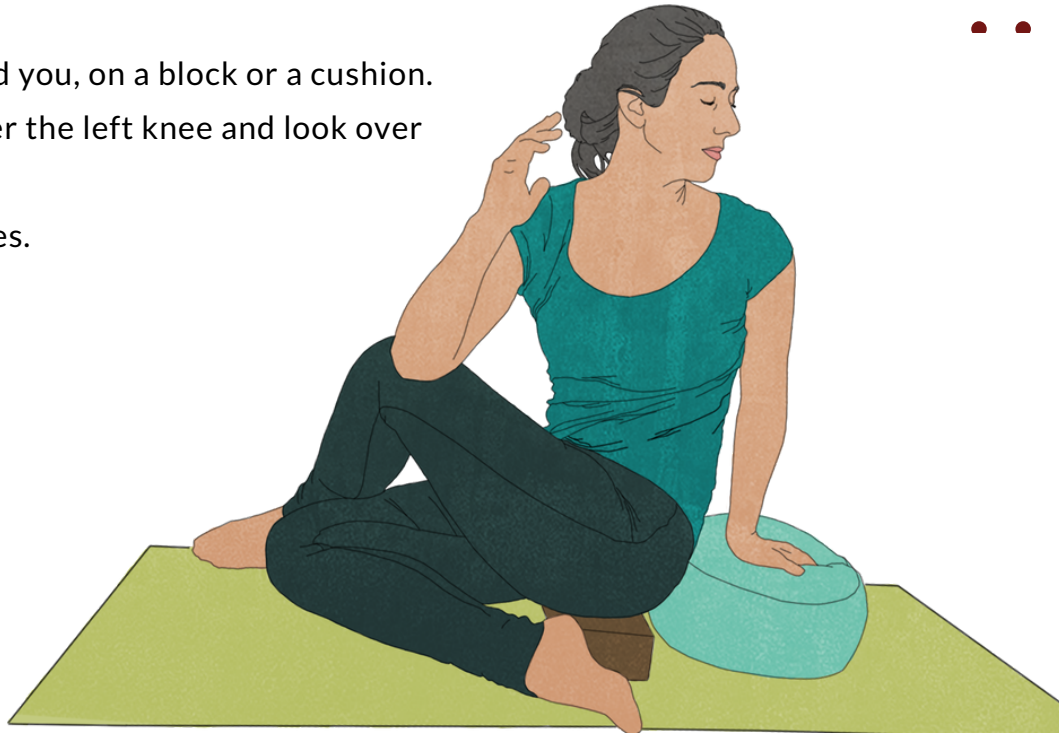


Contraindications:

This pose should be avoided or modified in case of any lower-back issues.

Instructions:

1. Sit on a cushion placed under your hips,
2. Bring your right heel towards your left buttock.
3. Cross your left foot over the right knee and place it to mat.
4. Place your left hand behind you, on a block or a cushion.
5. Cross your right elbow over the left knee and look over your left shoulder.
6. Hold the pose for 3 minutes.
7. Repeat to the other side.
8. Relax in Angel Pose.



10

RAINBOW POSE



Target Areas:

Obliques, intercostal muscles, latissimus dorsi, quadratus lumborum

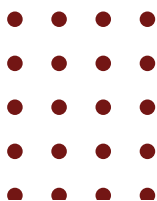
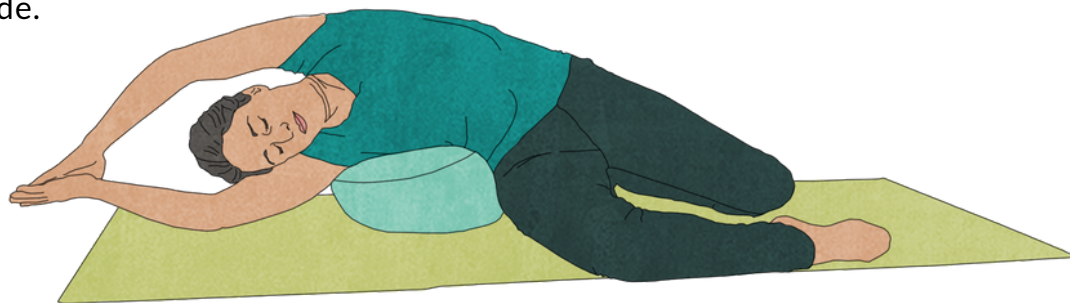


Contraindications:

This pose should be approached cautiously in case of pelvic instability and hypertension.

Instructions:

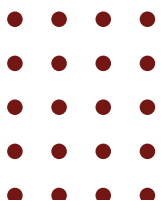
1. Sit with the soles of your feet together, a bolster or cushion next to your right side.
2. Bring the left leg backward, foot pointing back.
3. Lift your left arm up and bend over to the right.
4. Lie down sideways and rest your waist or rib cage on the cushion.
5. Hold the pose for three minutes.
6. Repeat to the other side.
7. Relax in Corpse Pose.



YIN YOGA SEQUENCE FOR THE UPPER BODY

Sequence 1 (60 min.)

Asana / Exercise	Duration
Cow-Face Pose	3 min. each side
Corpse Pose	1 min.
Butterfly	5 min.
Rainbow Pose	3 min. each side
Child's Pose	2 min.
Seated Spinal Twist	3 min. each side
Crocodile Pose	2 min.
Crisscross Pose	3 min. each Side
Crocodile Pose	2 min.
Seal	5 min.
Child's Pose	2 min.
Lion Pose	5 min.
Final Relaxation	10 min.



YIN YOGA SEQUENCE FOR THE UPPER BODY

Sequence 2 (60 min.)

Asana / Exercise	Duration
Reverse Prayer Pose	5 min.
Child's Pose	2 min.
Thread the Needle Pose	3 min. each side
Shoelace	3 min each side
Crocodile	2 min.
Sleeping Eagle Pose	3 min. each side
Crocodile	2 min.
Cactus Pose	3 min. each side
Child's Pose	2 min.
Cow-Face Pose	3 min. each side
Fish Pose	5 min.
Final Relaxation	10 min.

