

# Practice: International Yoga Day

-- Geeta S Iyengar

Dear Fellow Practitioners,

We are all yoga *sādhakās* and *sādhanā* is our very breath, our *prāna*.

The United Nations has declared 21<sup>st</sup> June as the International Yoga Day, which will be celebrated all over the world.

For us every day is yoga day. However to respect this special day [the concept of which was suggested by Guruji] in a talk in Bangalore sometime in 2011-2012, to respect Guruji, we have thought of a special practice programme for this day. Many students from across the world approached me if they could have a special sequence of practice for this day... the solstice. This happens to be a Sunday, a holiday, in most parts of the world. So, here are some suggestions on what you can practice. This is for the regular practitioners.

## Invocation

- Invocation to Sage Patanjali
- Invocation to Guru

## Āsana practice



01. *Tādāsana*
02. *Namaskārāsana*
03. *Urdhva Hastāsana*
04. *Uttānāsana*
05. *Adho Mukha Śvānāsana*

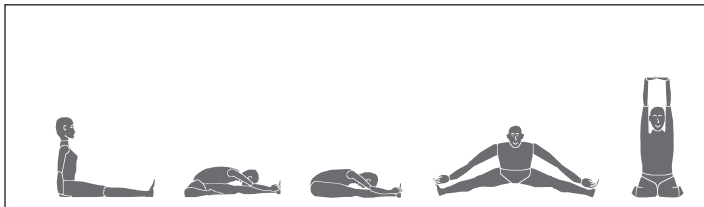
06. *Urdhva Mukha Śvānāsana*
07. *Uttānāsana*
08. *Tādāsana*

### **Standing Āsana**

09. *Utthita Trikonāsana*
10. *Utthita Pārśva Konāsana*
11. *Virbhadrāsana-I*
12. *Parivritta Trikonāsana*
13. *Pārsvottanāsana*
14. *Pasārita Padottanāsana*

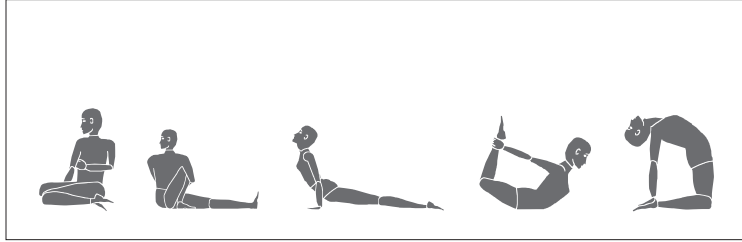


15. *Dandāsana*
16. *Jānu Śirsāsana*
17. *Paschimottanāsana*
18. *Adho Mukha Upavishta Konāsana*
19. *Virāsana – Parvatāsana*



20. *Swastikāsana – Parvatāsana*

21. *Pārśva Dandāsana*



22. *Bhradvajāśana*

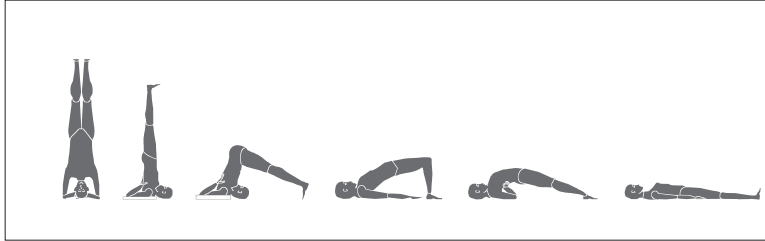
23. *Marichyāsana*

24. *Urdhva Mukha Svānāsana*

25. *Dhanurāsana*

26. *Ustrāsana*

27. *Adho Mukha Śvānāsana*



28. *Śirṣāsana*

29. *Sarvāṅgāsana*

30. *Halāsana*

31. *Chatushpādāsana*

32. *Setu Bandha Sarvāṅgāsana*

33. *Śavāsana*

## **Pranayama**

*Pranayama in Shavāsana*

*Ujjayi* – 15 Cycles

*Svastikāsana or Virasan*

*Ujjayi* – 15 cycle

*Viloma I* – 8 cycles (Inhalation retention)

*Viloma II* – 8 cycles (Exhalation retention)

*Śavāsana*

Sit in *dhyāna*

Prayers

### **Other recommendations:**

A half an hour programme of *āsana* and *prānāyāma* will be recommended soon by Government of India and the Indian Missions. The intent of this programme is to build awareness of this subject and also to give some experience to the novices.

- You have all the freedom to practice the programme recommended by the Missions.
- You can have your own personal individual practice and decide on your own sequence of practice.
- You can merge the recommended practice with your own.
- You can practice the sequence that has been given here.

There are other activities that you could do on this day on your own or in a group.

1. Chant the *Yoga sutras*
2. Chant 108 names of Sage Patañjali
3. You can also arrange for lecture demonstrations.

## Introducing yoga to novices

Some teachers may like to introduce yoga to new students or freinds and family members as a part of celebration of this day. They will obviously not be able to practice what has been suggested for the regular practitioner.

This is what I recommend for introducing yoga to the new students. All they need is to get some experience of practice. A feel of the practice of *āsana*. An introduction to the concept of straightness and alignment.

They need to learn to perceive their hands, legs and spine. Learn how to adjust and watch their own body with their eyes.

### Standing:

1. *Tādāsana*
2. *Urdhva Hastāsana*
3. *Utthita Hasta Pādāsana*
4. *Urdhva Hasta Pasārīta Pādāsana* (combination of 2 and 3)
5. *Utthita Trikonāsana*
6. *Uttanāsana* [feet apart]

### Sitting: Forward Bends:

1. *Dandāsana*
2. *Upavīstha Konāsana* (only spread the legs)
3. *Janu Śirsāsana* (only bending)
4. *Marichyāsana* (only bend the legs)
5. *Paschimottānāsana* (legs apart)

### Twists:

1. *Dandāsana – Parśva Dandāsana*
2. *Jānu Śirsāsana – Parśva Jānu Śirsāsana*
3. *Upavīstha Konāsana – Parśva Upavīstha Konāsana*

### **Back Archs:**

1. *Ustrāsana* – bending only half way
2. *Chatushpadāsana*

### **Relaxation**

3. *Savāsana*

During this practice, let these students

- become aware of the different body parts,
- their placement,
- the range of movement,
- the alignment of the body and
- some awareness of the breath.

This should be our gift to the new entrants to this field.

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