



## Astavakrasana (Eight Angle Pose) & Eka Hasta Bhujasana (Leg Over Shoulder Pose)

### Description

### Astavakrasana



### Eka Hasta Bhujasana



### Astavakrasana

â??astaâ?• = eight

â??vakraâ?• = bent, curved

Eight Angle Pose

### Eka Hasta Bhujasana

*(Eh-kah Ha-stah Boo-JAS-ah-nah)*

â??ekaâ?• = one

â??hastaâ?• = hand



â??bhujaâ?• = arm

Leg Over Shoulder Pose

Also known as: One Leg Over Arm Pose, Elephantâ??s Trunk Pose & Shoulder Pressing Pose

### Heart of Poses

- Asymmetrical Arm Balance

## Effects / Benefits

---

### Energy, Mood, Emotion

Effects to energy, mood or emotion may include the following.

- Develops concentration.
- Requires focus.

### Musculoskeletal

Musculoskeletal effects may include the following.

- Strengthens wrists, arms, shoulders and upper back.
- Engages and strengthens core.
- In Leg Over Shoulder, builds quadriceps strength in straight leg.
- Tones inner thighs.
- Stretches glutes, hips, hamstrings and calves.
- â??Stretches lower-side erector spinae and spinal rotators.â?• (Ray Long)
- â??Lengthens the lower-side oblique abdominals and the trasversus abdomini.â?• (Ray Long)
- Requires and builds balance.

*Astavakrasana* develops a sense of cooperation within the body as you find the delicate balance between letting yourself tip forward while your arms work strongly to keep you aloft. â?? Christina Brown

### Sequencing

---

### Prerequisites & Preparation

These poses require:



- A high degree of [wrist extension](#)
- Mobility in [hips](#)
- Spinal flexion (so [forward bending contraindications](#) apply)

To prepare the body and build confidence, consider the following types of stretches and poses.

## Legs & Hips

Examples of poses that prepare the hips, legs and obliques include:

## Dandasana

While it's axiomatic that the core is meant to do some of the work in arm balances, it can be unclear exactly which action is required to channel the challenge of this arm balance to your core. You can find that action, a pelvic tilt, in [Dandasana](#). [See article for in-depth guidance on teaching this.]  
— Amber Burke

## Standing Poses

- [Virabhadrasana II \(Warrior 2\)](#)
- [Utthita Parsvakonasana \(Extended Side Angle\)](#)
- [Uttanasana \(Standing Forward Bend\)](#)
- [Parivrtta Parsvakonasana \(Revolved Side Angle\)](#)
- [Parivrtta Utkatasana \(Revolved Chair\)](#)
- [Garudasana \(Eagle\)](#)

## Other Hamstring Stretches

- [Supta Padangusthasana \(Reclined Hand to Toe\)](#)
- Other [Forward Bends](#) including [Marichyasana A \(Marichi Forward Bend\)](#)

## Other Hip Stretching Poses

- [Sukhasana \(Easy Posture\)](#)
- [Marichyasana C \(Marichi Twist\)](#)
- [Gomukhasana \(Cow Face\)](#)
- [Anjaneyasana \(Low Lunge\)](#)
- [Runner's Lunge](#)
- [Utthan Pristhasana \(Lizard\)](#)
- [Agnistambhasana \(Fire Log Pose\)](#)
- [Figure 4 Variations](#)
- [Other Hip Stretches](#)

## Core Activation



Active supine twists such as *Jathara Parivartanasana* strengthen the abdominal obliques, which are the most important group in many *asanas* involving rotational movements such as *Parsvakonasana* or *Astavakrasana*. — Mark Stephens

- [Navasana \(Boat\)](#)
- From Down Dog or Plank, vinyasas taking Knee to Shoulder
- [Jathara Parivartanasana \(Revolved Abdomen / Reclined Twist\)](#)
- [Other Core Strengtheners](#)

## Upper Body Strengthening

- [Adho Mukha Svanasana \(Downward-Facing Dog\)](#)
- [Plank Pose](#)
- [Chaturanga Dandasana \(Four-Limbed Staff Pose\)](#)
- [Adho Mukha Vrksasana \(Handstand\)](#)

## Prep Poses Incorporating Arm Strength & Core Activation

- [Lolasana \(Pendant\)](#)
- [Tolasana \(Scale\)](#)
- [Utpluti Dandasana \(Floating Stick\)](#)
- [Parsva Bakasana \(Side Crow\)](#)
- [Eka Hasta Bhujasana \(Elephant Trunk Pose\)](#)

## Sample Sequencing

### Sample Warm Up

- [Surya Namaskar \(Sun Salutations\)](#)
- [Virabhadrasana II \(Warrior 2\)](#)
- [Utthita Parsvakonasana \(Side Angle\)](#)
- [Uttanasana \(Standing Forward Bend\)](#)
- [Runner's Lunge](#)
- [Utthan Pristhasana \(Lizard\)](#)
- [Parivrtta Utkatasana \(Revolved Chair\)](#)
- [Parivrtta Parsvakonasana \(Revolved Side Angle\)](#)
- [Garudasana \(Eagle\)](#)

### Peak Progression Considerations

- [Chaturanga Dandasana](#)
- [Navasana \(Boat\) + Variations](#)
- [Tolasana \(Scale\)](#)
- [Parivrtta Parsvakonasana \(Revolved Side Angle\)](#)
- [Parsva Bakasana \(Side Crow\)](#)
- [Marichyasana A \(Marici Forward Bend\)](#)

- [Eka Hasta Bhujasana \(Elephant Trunk\)](#)
- [Astavakrasana \(Eight Angle\)](#)

## Sample Counter Poses & Cool Down

- [Wrist Release Stretches](#)
- [Urdhva Mukha Svanasana \(Upward Facing Dog\)](#)
- [Setu Bandhasana \(Bridge\)](#)
- [Supta Baddha Konasana \(Reclined Bound Angle\)](#)
- [Janu Sirasana \(Head to Knee\) \(source\)](#)
- [Balasana \(Child's\)](#)
- [Reclined Twist \(source\)](#)

## Sample Sequence

- [Manipura Flow \(Int / Adv 75-min\)](#) â?? Builds to peak poses of *Eka Hasta Bhujasana* (Elephant's Trunk) and *Astavakrasana*. Class includes analysis, photo view and accelerated video.
- [Eka Hasta Bhujasana Sequence by Sandra Anderson](#)

## Verbal Cues & Mythology

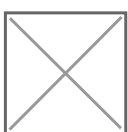
## Upper Body & Torso

Option: Place blocks under hands.

1. Keep pressing palms.
2. â??Create some feeling of upper back extension, while the arms bend to a strong, stable Chaturanga.â?• (Adam Husler)
3. Use [Chaturanga](#) alignment in shoulders; do not allow shoulders to dip below elbows.
4. â??Cultivate significant twist evenly throughout your spine.â?• (Adam Husler)
5. Draw chest forward; create length and lift in front body and upper back.
6. Gaze forward or, if that strains neck, down.
7. To come out of *Astavakrasana*, straighten arms.

In *Eka Hasta Bhujasana*, â??elbows that can hyperextend often do. Keep your elbows â??softâ?? and continue to attempt to spin the elbow creases toward your thumbs.â?• (Amber Burke)

## Lower Body



1. Squeeze inner legs. Use ankle bind for leverage.
2. Squeeze arm with thighs.
3. Squeeze knees toward each other.
4. Extend knees, lengthen legs.
5. Press out through balls of feet.
6. Lift hips.
7. With ankles crossed, pull up with top leg.

Pay attention to the engagement of your inner legs! We want those [adductor muscles](#), which draw your legs toward the center of your mat, to fire up. In Eight-Angle Pose, I encourage the legs to actively squeeze together against the arm; that's not so hard for the top leg, but the bottom leg would like to dangle free. Crossing the angles by placing your bottom leg on top, will give you a little more leverage to get that juicy squeeze so you can feel strong in the pose. ?? Adam Husler

### BLEND SERIOUSNESS & PLAYFULNESS

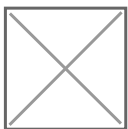
On the road to attaining your goals in yoga and elsewhere in your life you will inevitably encounter obstacles! How you meet these obstacles will affect how well you surmount them and what your state of mind will be in the process! One tool I have found to be invaluable is a sense of playfulness. In yogic terminology, this is called *lila* (pronounced LEE-lah). By this, I don't mean being casual or careless! But serious and grim are not synonymous! A challenging goal learning *Astavakrasana*, for example can provide an excellent opportunity to practice blending seriousness and playfulness. ?? John Schumaker

### COMBINES COMPONENTS OF A TWIST AND AN ARM BALANCE

*Astavakrasana* combines the components of a twist and an arm balance! Look for ways to accentuate the twist in the pose. For example, note how the leg that is on top of the arm hooks its foot under the opposite ankle. Pull up with the top leg to draw the pelvis and lower body deeper into the turn. Then! press down with the hand and straighten the elbow of the free arm! This rotates the shoulders and upper body away from the pelvis and deeper into the twist. ?? Ray Long

## Alanna Kaivalya Video

In this 8-minute video, Alanna Kaivalya begins with an [ancestral story](#) and followed by physical preparation for *Astavakrasana*.



## Kino MacGregor Video

In the 3-minute video below, Kino MacGregor demonstrates and highlights some fundamental verbal cues for the full pose.



## Jim Bennett Video

In this [2-min video](#), Jim Bennett gives a brief tip emphasizing the use of leg strength in arm balances in general, plus a demonstration of squeezing the legs together in *Astavakrasana* to engage [mula bandha](#) and lift the [pelvic floor](#)..

### Author

michaeljoelhall