



Svarga Dvijasana(Bird of Paradise)

Description

Svarga Dvijasana

â??dvijaâ?• = twice born

â??svargaâ?• = paradise, heaven

Bird of Paradise Pose

The Bird of Paradise is a tropical flower.

â??Twice born pose.â?• As in â??birdâ?• and â??egg.â?• â?? Kat Heagberg

Heart of Pose

- Standing Balance (requiring both stability and flexibility)
- Shoulder and Hip Stretch

Trivikramasana & Durvasana

We didnâ??t find this pose in any book, including those by authors Iyengar, Swenson, Stephens, Frawley, Birch, Long, Yee, LePage, Brown, Vishnu-devananda, Austin or Pappas. All coverage was via online sources. The closest we found (outside of online sources) was in The Complete Book of Vinyasa Yoga 2005 p 97.

Srivatsa Ramaswami features a series of poses he calls â??The Conqueror of the Three Worlds Sequence.â?•

- The first pose in this sequence is *Trivikramasana*.

- Some refer to *Trivikramasana* as Standing Splits (including Yoga International [here](#) and Kino MacGregor [here](#)). It is like a very deep [Utthita Padangusthasana](#) (Extended Hand to Toe) to the side.
- The next pose in the Conqueror sequence is *Durvasana* (Pose Dedicated to Durva), also found in the advanced third series of Ashtanga Yoga. This pose takes the hip opening of Bird of Paradise to a more extreme level ??? with leg behind the back rather than binding with arm ?? as shown [here](#).

Effects / Benefits

Musculoskeletal

Musculoskeletal effects may include the following.

- Requires and builds balance.
- Strengthens pelvis, glutes, quads and calves.
- Engages core.
- Requires shoulder flexibility.
- Stretches hips.
- Lengthens hamstrings and calves.

[This pose is] distinguished by the strength and balance required in the supported leg, foiled by the elongation and stretch of the extended leg. ?? Ling Beisecker

Energy, Mood, Emotion

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

- Develops concentration.
- Requires focus.

Cautions

Contraindications

- [Hamstring injury or pain](#)
- [Knee injury or pain](#)
- [Low back issues](#)
- [Shoulder injury or pain](#)

Cautions

- Requires mindful preparation.
- Shoulders, hamstrings, hips, knees and back are at risk.
- If there is pain, back off to a preparatory step.

DON'T PRACTICE IF THERE IS PAIN

If taking your knee behind your shoulder or establishing a bind creates pain in your lower back or shoulder, your body is not ready to do the pose without risking injury. Instead, practice the first four poses in [this sequence](#) [*Utthita Trikonasana* with Bind, *Utthita Parsvakonasana* with Bind, *Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana*, *Bhujapidasana*] regularly in order to develop the mobility in your shoulders and hips for this last pose, and then revisit it down the road a bit. â?? Natasha Rizopoulos

Kyphosis

- In the case of Kyphosis (also called Hyperkyphosis or Thoracic Kyphosis), forward bending (spinal flexion) of any sort is contraindicated. (Yoga International)
- [Neck, Shoulder & Upper Back Issues](#)

Sciatic Pain

- In the case of [sciatic pain](#), sometimes forward bends are completely avoided.
- Other experts recommend avoiding seated forward bends and those with a twisting component such as *Janu Sirsasana* (Head to Knee Pose).
- Generally, forward bends done on the back such as *Apanasana* (Knees to Chest) are considered safer.

Strenuous Forward Bends

Strenuous forward bends in general are not advised in the following cases. These conditions indicate a need for particular care in choosing forward bend variations or alternatives, and promoting safe practice.

Pain

- Any case where pain is experienced during forward bending, including degenerative discs, low back strain or any acute injury.

Back Issues

- Disc Injury, recent or acute
- Disc Herniation
- [Osteoporosis of the thoracic spine](#)
- Spinal Stenosis, when instructed by healthcare provider to minimize forward bends.

- Spinal surgery, recent

More

- [Hamstring tendonitis](#), when there is pain in hamstrings during forward bending.
- Hernia or a abdominal wall separation if increased bulging in those areas is created by forward bending.
- [Pregnancy, 2nd & 3rd trimesters](#)

Basic Form & Verbal Cues

Introduction

ASYMMETRICAL POSE REQUIRING STEADY FOCUS

The Bird of Paradise is not a bird at all, but a flower that symbolizes the entire tropical plant genus. The unusually beautiful shapes and colors of the petals look like a bird taking flight, while the signature asymmetrical shape makes this a staple in most tropical bouquets. Similarly, *Svarga Dvijasana* or Bird of Paradise Pose celebrates asymmetry and is a creative expression of a mash-up of Tree, Extended Side Angle, and Extended Hand-to-Big-Toe Pose! [It] will teach you the value of [drishti](#) (gaze) by increasing your ability to concentrate during chaotic situations, because with so many transitions during this pose, maintaining steady focus is crucial. â?? Judy Rukat

Choose to move into the pose from:

- [Baddha Utthita Parsvakonasana \(Bound Side Angle Pose\)](#)
- [Tadasana \(Mountain Pose\)](#)
- [Malasana \(Garland / Yogic Squat\)](#)

From Bound Side Angle Pose

A person in a pose for the cameraDescription automatically generated with low confidence

From Warrior 2 to Bound Side Angle

1. From [Virabhadrasana II \(Warrior 2\)](#), exhale, take front arm under front thigh; take back arm up & rotate it to take behind back.
2. Clasp wrist (of front arm) or span distance with strap.
3. Keep front leg bent while turning torso upward.
4. Gently press hips forward.
5. Gaze beyond top shoulder, or neutral.

From Bound Side Angle to Uttanasana Variation

1. From [Utthita Parsvakonasana \(Extended Side Angle\)](#) with bind, exhale, turn gaze to floor.
2. Keeping bind, turn feet to be parallel.
3. Carefully move them to hip distance.
4. Straighten legs.

From Tadasana & Uttanasana

A person doing yogaDescription automatically generated with low confidence

1. From [Tadasana \(Mountain\)](#), keep length, exhale and fold forward to [Uttanasana \(Standing Forward Bend\)](#)
2. Take feet hip or mat-width.
3. Inhale, lengthen right arm; exhale, reach it through legs to wrap around right upper thigh (hand on hip).
4. Inhale, reach left arm around back to bind.
5. Breathe here; open chest.
6. Walk right foot in slightly.
7. Shift weight into left foot.
8. Keep abs engaged; inhale, come up to standing, bringing right leg with you.
9. See instructions above for more refinements.

From Malasana

A person sitting on the floorDescription automatically generated with low confidence

1. From [Malasana](#), wrap left arm around back and right arm under right inner thigh.
2. Clasp hands or strap.
3. Straighten bent legs slightly, walking left closer to right.
4. Steady gaze.
5. Ground through left foot and shift weight.
6. Keeping bend in left leg, slowly begin to lift right foot.
7. Straighten left leg.
8. Lift gaze.
9. Keep right knee bent or begin to straighten, drawing it to torso.
10. See instructions above for more refinements.

From Uttanasana Variation to Bent Leg Variation

A person in a black tank topDescription automatically generated with low confidence

1. From [Uttanasana \(Standing Forward Bend\)](#), bind on one side.
2. Shift weight into foot of unbound leg.
3. Keep toes of supporting foot spread, weight evenly distributed across four corners of foot.

4. Slowly come up to standing, lifting bound leg up with you.
5. Keep hip of standing leg aligned.
6. Lengthen spine.
7. Broaden collarbones; lift chest.
8. To maintain balance, focus gaze and hug into midline.

Full Pose

1. If appropriate, straighten bound leg.
2. Take gaze over opposite shoulder.

UTTANASANA TO BIRD OF PARADISE

Once you are standing, direct your sitting bone [of lifted leg] toward heel [of standing leg] and firm the [lifted leg] buttock under you; these actions will emphasize the rotation in the hip socket [of lifted leg] while lengthening your waist [on side of lifted leg] so that your torso is even on both sides. Consider the effect of these actions on your [standing] leg. The opening in your [lifted leg] hip will be more distinct if it is balanced by strength and stability in your [standing] leg. Push your [standing leg] femur back so that the leg is straight and the groin is hollow. Then, reach your sternum away from your navel and drop your pubis and tailbone down toward the floor. Use this stability to explore extending your [lifted] leg with ease. Be more interested in maintaining the integrity of your standing leg and the rotation in the [lifted leg] hip than in straightening your [lifted] leg. — Natasha Rizopoulos

Watch For

- Keep knee over ankle.
- Keep hip at midline.
- Keep legs active.

AVOID COMPROMISING THE KNEE & HIP JOINTS

Stay safe. If the central axis of the body becomes displaced, you may compromise the knee and hip joints. Aim to keep the supporting foot facing forward, toes spread, with the knee over the ankle, and the supporting hip plugged into the midline. Keep the quadriceps on both legs contracted, allowing the standing leg to support you more fully and the hamstrings on the extended leg to open further without strain. — Yoga Journal, Bird of Paradise: 5 Steps to Master this Standing Pose

EXPLORE THE OPPOSITE OF YOUR PLACE OF FAMILIARITY

If you arrive on the mat with an excess of either strength or flexibility, and consistently work from that place of familiarity, take this opportunity to explore and engage with its opposite. Off the mat, perhaps you can also grow by expanding your definition of yourself to encompass a broader range of possibility. — Natasha Rizopoulos

Variations

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- Keep lifted leg bent.
- Bend torso at right angle as shown above.
- Instead of binding, hold shin of lifted leg.
- Practice a modified *Garudasana* (Eagle Pose) as Leah Sugerman teaches and demonstrates [here](#).
- Rather than standing, practice from seat: lift one leg and bind.

DON'T LET THE BIND DEFINE THE POSE

Please do not let the bind define this pose for you. Yes, binding opens the shoulders and improves the fine motor skills and coordination of the fingers and hands, but you can still happily strike this pose with or without the full grip! Over time and with practice, your chest will expand and you will join your hands with an easy, breezy, graceful spirit keeping you bound and buoyant, but it's really just a fancy detail. Do not let it deter you from dancing your way into paradise. â?? Judy Rukat

Alternative

A person doing yogaDescription automatically generated with medium confidence

- [Supta Padangusthasana \(Reclined Hand to Toe Pose\)](#)

Sequencing

Preparation

Take care to thoroughly warm and prepare the whole body, particularly the following:

- Hamstrings
- Hips
- Shoulders
- Back

I have some useful bird of paradise tips to share! tips like how to approach this *asana* one step at a time, how to find a comfortable bind, how to rise up into the pose with more stability, how to remain stable once you get there, and how to increase the challenge when you're ready for it. Here are some of my now-favorite takes on *svarga dvijasana*, broken down step by step. They include a balance prep, a fun archery-inspired variation, plus two routes you can take to move into the more traditional

version of the pose. [See [article](#) for details.] â?? Kat Heagberg

Sample Prep Poses

- [Surya Namaskar \(Sun Salutations\)](#)
- [Virabhadrasana II \(Warrior 2 Pose\)](#)
- [Prasarita Padottanasana \(Wide Leg Standing Forward Bend\)](#)
- [Utthita Trikonasana \(Extended Triangle Pose\)](#)
- [Utthita Parsvakonasana \(Extended Side Angle Pose\)](#)
- [Baddha Parsvakonasana \(Bound Side Angle Pose\)](#)
- [Baddha Trikonasana \(Bound Triangle Pose\)](#)
- [Parivrtta Parsvakonasana \(Revolved Side Angle Pose\)](#)
- [Anjaneyasana \(Low Lunge\)](#)
- [Utthan Pristhasana \(Lizard Pose\)](#) + Bind variation as Ling Beisecker teaches and demonstrates [here](#)
- [Low Lunge Variation: Quad Stretch, Opposite Hand + Twist](#)
- [Malasana \(Yogic Squat\)](#) Variation â?? See Kat Heagbergâ??s teaching and pics [here](#) for exploring One Legged Garland Pose, morphing into a modified Bird of Paradise
- [Eka Pada Rajakapotasana \(Pigeon Pose\)](#)
- [Garudasana \(Eagle Pose\)](#)
- [Parasarita Padottanasana C](#) (Wide Legged Standing Forward Bend, hands clasped behind back)
- [Akarna Dhanurasana \(Archerâ??s Pose\)](#)

Peak Progression Considerations

- [Utthita Trikonasana \(Extended Triangle\) â?? With Bind](#)
- [Vrksasana \(Tree\)](#)
- [Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana \(Extended Hand to Toe\)](#)
- [Bhujapidasana \(Shoulder Pressing\)](#)
- [Utthita Parsvakonasana \(Extended Side Angle\) w/ Bind](#)
- [Uttanasana \(Standing Forward Bend\) â?? Hip Distance with Bind](#)

Sample Cool Down

Natasha Rizopoulos recommends the following poses to follow Bird of Paradise:

- [Garudasana \(Eagle\)](#)
- [Gomukhasana \(Cow Face\)](#)
- [Adho Mukha Svanasana \(Downward Facing Dog\)](#), [Dolphin](#) or [Sirsasana \(Headstand\)](#)
- [Halasana \(Plow\)](#)
- [Sarvangasana \(Shoulderstand\)](#)
- [Halasana \(Plow\) â?? second time](#)
- [Jathara Parivartanasana \(Reclined Twist\)](#)
- [Savasana \(Corpse\) â?? Long](#)

Sample Sequence

[Svadhithana Fluid Flow \(Int / Adv 75-min\)](#) â?? Builds to peak pose of *Svarga Dvijasana*. Class includes analysis, photo view and accelerated video.

Category

1. Uncategorized

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