



Baddha Konasana (Bound Angle Pose)

Description

Baddha Konasana

â??baddhaâ?• = fixed, restrained, bound

â??konaâ?• = angle

Bound Angle Pose

Also known as: Cobblerâ??s Pose

Heart of Pose

Hip / Adductor Stretch

Notes

COBBLERâ??S POSE IN THE WEST

Bound Angle pose is also called Cobblerâ??s Pose, because it is the position that shoemakers use in India. They hold the shoe with the feet, so that both hands are free to work on the shoe that they are making. Westerners can find this pose challenging because of the years we spend sitting in chairs with our knees close together. â?? Judith Lasater

GOAL IS NOT TO GET KNEES TO FLOOR

The goal of *Baddha Konasana* is not to get your knees to the floor as quickly as possible. Rather, the intent is to lengthen your inner and outer thighs, strengthen your lower back, and increase flexibility in your legs, hips, knees and back. These benefits may allow your knees to reach the floor but forcing



your knees to the floor could cause harm. â?? Miriam Austin

See Also

- [Asana Categories](#)
- [General Alignment Principles](#)
- [Alignment Cueing](#)

Effects / Benefits

Musculoskeletal

Musculoskeletal effects may include the following.

Baddha Konasana is a symmetrical pose. As such, it provides an opportunity for locating and balancing asymmetries, particularly in the hips and pelvis. â?? Ray Long

- Stretches adductors of inner thighs.
- Relaxes abdomen. (Judith Lasater)
- Increases flexibility in legs, hips, abdomen and lower back.
- â??When performed properly, it also strengthens the muscles of the lower back.â?• (Miriam Austin)

Inner Body

Inner body effects may include the following.

It is believed to have a healthy effect on the uterus of the menstruating and the pregnant woman. I recommend that a pregnant woman practice it every day to facilitate an easier delivery. â?? Judith Lasater

- Organs of pelvic region are â??toned and invigorated.â?•
- â??Soothesâ?• digestive and eliminative organs.
- Improves circulation. (Miriam Austin)
- â??Strengthens bladder.â?• (Silva Mehta)

Therapeutic Uses*

- Menstrual Problems
- [Pregnancy](#)

* This pose is often associated with positive effects related to the conditions listed. But unless trained in yoga therapy, teachers are usually advised against â??prescribingâ?• particular *asanas* to address specific conditions.



Yin Version

The *baddha konasana* shape with a forward fold is commonly found in Yin Yoga by the name Butterfly Pose.

Yin Butterfly is a wonderful grounding posture. It is a relatively accessible asana, especially with the use of props if necessary. If your neck is healthy, this pose will be a great release, especially in that crunchy space at the base of the skull. You can get a really great stretch of the low back without having to involve your hamstrings. There is some lovely stress placed on the connective tissues of the groin in this posture. Forward folds such as this are wonderful for turning the focus inward. Lacey Haynes

Cautions

When choosing a variation or alternative, consider the following:

1. The heart / purpose of the pose.
2. The role it is playing in the sequence.
3. Why the pose is not accessible or appropriate for this student at this time.

Contraindications

- [Knee or \(inner\) leg pain, chronic](#)
- [Sciatica](#) while some sources recommend this pose with sciatica, Doug Keller advises avoiding poses that actively rotate thighs outward which can tighten the deep rotators (and instead choose those that passively rotate thigh)

Sciatica can be aggravated in this pose. If you have any low back issues that make flexion difficult, it might be best to opt out. Lacey Haynes

Cautions

Only fold forward if knees are down and the bend can come from pelvis, not spine.

- Don't bounce knees.
- Activate hamstrings.

DO NOT BOUNCE

Do not bounce your knees up and down, but instead let gravity pull them down gradually. Judith Lasater

ACTIVATE HAMSTRINGS

Squeeze the lower legs against the thighs to activate the hamstrings. The hamstrings are muscular stabilizers of the knees; engaging them maintains congruency of the knee joint and helps to prevent excessive force being transmitted to the articular cartilage of the knees. â?? Ray Long

Basic Form

Set Up



1. From [Dandasana \(Staff Pose\)](#) or another seated position, draw feet in toward groin, allowing knees to bend out to side.
2. To encourage length, press fingertips into floor outside hips.

Moving In & Out of Pose



1. Draw legs toward body, as close to perineum as possible.
2. If possible, place hands around feet, fingers on top of feet, thumbs in soles.
3. Keep outer edges of feet together while opening feet, as if opening a book.
4. Alternatively, place soles of feet together and wrap hands around feet.
5. Or, place fingertips or palms to floor behind to press and lengthen spine and lift heart.

6. If folding forward, lead with chest and use strength of back muscles; keep front of body long.
7. To come out, use hands to assist knees up, then extend legs straight

To Emphasize



- Lengthen inner thighs toward knees, allowing knees to drop.
- Keep buttocks on floor.
- Keep front of body long.

Verbal Cues

It's typically advised that teachers provide no more than three instructions per pose so that students have time to work with the teaching. Here you'll find many options from which to choose. Some cues make the same point in different ways, and occasionally some can be contradictory, so please try them out for yourself. When cues are unusual or uniquely described, we have noted the source.

Torso



1. Keep spine long
2. Keep waist long and chest open
3. Lift upper chest, keep collar bones broad & lifted
4. Draw shoulders back and down



5. Release shoulder blades down back
6. Lift low back & low abdomen up and slightly in toward each other
7. Allow natural curves of spine
8. Keep front ribs back
9. Keep chest open

Hips & Legs

ENGAGING THE ADDUCTOR MUSCLES

Attempt to close (adduct) the knees to engage the adductor muscles in a facilitated stretch. Use a maximum of 20% of your force to draw the legs against the arms. Hold this action for a few slow, deep, and steady breaths. Then release the contraction and draw the knees closer to the floor by engaging the muscles at the sides of the hips-the gluteus medius and tensor fascia lata. This takes up the slack produced by the facilitated stretch and creates a new set length for the adductor muscles â?? Ray Long

1. Release tops of thighs toward ground
2. Press feet together
3. Squeeze lower legs against thighs to activate hamstrings (Ray Long)
4. Open knees toward floor
5. Draw pubis back (Rodney Yee)
6. â??Roll pubic bone down toward floorâ?• (to turn hips sockets forward and down, making it easier for thighs to drop â?? Judith Lasater)
7. When folding, fold at hips; avoid rounding back or collapsing front of body
8. Relax undersides of legs (Silva Mehta)
9. â??Lightly contract the perineal area & draw the bladder upâ?• (Silva Mehta)

More

1. In fold, extend arms fully forward, pressing palms into floor (Mark Stephens)
2. Relax shoulders, throat and neck
3. Allow head to be light atop neck
4. Gaze to tip of nose or straight ahead
5. David Swenson teaches in all variations to drop chin to chest while keeping spine long (Ashtanga Yoga 1999 p 108)

Variations

General Variations

- Sit upright, holding ankles
- Fingertips or palms to floor behind hips
- Vary distance of feet from body
- Sit with hips at wall

Using Props

- Elevate pelvis on prop
- Place props such as rolled blankets under knees
- Place block between feet
- Place block under feet
- Place strap under feet (i.e. under the sides of the feet that are on floor), hold each side of strap (Miriam Austin)
- Place weight on top of each thigh

Balancing Variation

- â??Navel Pressure Poseâ??: While sitting tall, draw feet up toward chest, wrapping forearms around feet (Christina Brown, The Yoga Bible 2003 p 135)

Alternative

If sitting up on the edge of a couple of folded blankets does not help drop the knees, then the difficulty may be coming from tightness in the hip flexor muscles. Suggest that your student practice Lunge Pose and its variations to stretch this area. The student can try the Lunge Pose immediately before practicing Bound Angle Pose. â?? Judith Lasater

Propping Support

Pelvis and Knees



Place folded blankets under hips. Place blankets, bolsters or blocks under legs and knees.

Block Variations

Between Feet or Under Feet



From Cool Yoga Tricks:

1. Sit against wall.
2. Place block at narrowest width between feet.
3. Press soles of feet into block (should be easier than pressing feet against each other).
4. Can also try block at medium width.
5. Variation: place feet on top of block (place mat on block if it hurts feet).

More Variations & Adaptations See [Variations](#) for many more considerations.

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