



Hanumanasana (Monkey Pose / The Splits)

Description

Hanumanasana

hah-new-mahn-AHS-anna

• = name of monkey deity, reliever of suffering

Monkey Pose

Also known as: The Splits

Heart of Pose

Hip Stretch

Notes

- *Hanumanasana* represents the mythological Hanuman's leap from India to Sri Lanka to rescue princess Sita.
- *Hanumanasana* in its traditional form is an advanced posture.

See Also

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

Effects / Benefits



Energy, Mood, Emotion

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

- May be both calming and cooling and somewhat heating and energizing.

Inner Body

Inner body effects may include the following.

- Stimulates abdominal organs.
- â??Massagesâ?? reproductive organs.

Musculoskeletal

Musculoskeletal effects may include the following.

- Opens hips and groins, stretches buttocks, hip flexors, quadriceps, and hamstrings.
- Relaxes and strengthens abductors. (B.K.S. Iyengar, Light on Yoga)

Therapeutic Uses*

- [Digestive & Elimination Issues](#)
- Insomnia
- Runners â?? balancing some of the effects of running
- [Sciatica](#)
- [Stress](#)

* 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.

Basic Form

Set Up



1. Begin in Table or in [Adho Mukha Svanasana](#).
2. Step foot forward with toes facing forward.
3. Place ankle directly below knee. Keep shin vertical.
4. Place hands on floor on either side of foot. (Photo shows a potential next step of bringing hands to thigh.)
5. Lift chest. Avoid sinking in shoulders.

Moving Into Pose



1. Inhale ??? Move hips back. Keep back leg vertical, front leg straight
2. Exhale ??? Using hands for support, slide front heel away
3. Pause occasionally, moving slowly
4. Keep pulling abs in and lifting chest

Gaze

- Horizon

Hold Time

- 10 to 30 seconds

Coming Out

- Inhale ??? To slowly release.

To Emphasize



1. Keep hips square and even with front of mat.
2. Ground front sit bone.



3. Flex front foot and engage quadriceps to release hamstrings.
4. Internally rotate legs.

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.

1. Keep front leg pressed straight while sliding into pose.
2. Pull abdominals in to avoid overarching low back.
3. Engage [bandhas](#) for support.
4. Lift chest.
5. Flex front foot, engaging quads and releasing hamstrings.
6. Square hips.
7. Draw sternum slightly back.
8. Lift rib cage up.
9. Lengthen up through crown.
10. Keep head in line with spine.
11. Stretch up through fingertips.
12. Ensure knee of back leg is not twisting outward.
13. Ground through back leg and foot.
14. When fully in pose, press both legs straight, spread toes, roll thighs inward.
15. Surrender into sensation. • (Joseph & Lilian LePage)



TAKE YOUR TIME

[When moving into pose,] slide a little, then stop, slide, stop, slide, stop. Do not be in a rush. Take your time, go slowly. Wait for the sensations of stretch to diminish at each new edge before sliding deeper.
â?? Erich Schiffman

Variations

Moving into Pose

Blanket for Front Leg



Reaching front leg forward on sticky mat can be arduous. Resting front heel on blanket can enable a smoother sliding forward. Use hands to control speed of movement. Pause & feel often while moving slowly into pose.

Added Support

Support Pelvis, Hands to Blocks



Support pelvis with bolsters or blankets. Make sure prop is high enough for student to rest on it. Blocks under hands allow her to press into them for lift.

More Variations & Adaptations

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