



Marichyasana (Marichi's Pose) I (Forward Bends)

Description

Marichyasana

mar-ee-chee-AWS-ahnuh

Marici = name of a sage in Indian mythology (or name of a demon who begins to awaken)

- *Marichyasana I = Marichyasana A*
- *Marichyasana II = Marichyasana B*
- *Marichyasana III = Marichyasana C*
- *Marichyasana IV = Marichyasana D*

Heart of Poses

- Forward Bend

Notes

- Marichyasana poses are presented inconsistently among different sources; here they are shown as they are typically presented in Ashtanga and Iyengar sources.
- For the Marichi Twist, see that separate asana digest.
- For an extremely in-depth article on preparing for Marichi II, see Roger Cole's article [here](#).

See Also

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



Effects / Benefits

Energy, Mood, Emotion

- Calming.

Inner Body

- Massages abdominal organs, including liver and kidneys.

Musculoskeletal

- Stretches spine.
- Stretches shoulders.
- Lengthens hamstrings.

Therapeutic Uses*

- [Digestive problems](#)
- [Shoulder issues](#)

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

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.

These poses generally not recommended for students with these conditions:

- [Asthma](#)
- [Diarrhea](#)

Kyphosis

- In the case of Kyphosis (also called Hyperkyphosis or Thoracic Kyphosis), forward bending (spinal flexion) of any sort is contraindicated.



- [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.

Alternatives

The Variations section includes beginner poses. If none are appropriate, skip the pose.

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 abdominal wall separation if increased bulging in those areas is created by forward bending.
- [Pregnancy, 2nd & 3rd trimesters](#)

Basic Form

Set Up



1. Begin in [Dandasana](#) (Staff). Prop sit bones as needed to ensure natural spinal curves.
2. Inhale, bend right leg and bring heel close to buttock.
3. Allow some space between right foot and extended leg; line up right foot with outer edge of right hip.
4. Sit tall and press sit bones down.
5. Keep extended leg active.

Moving into Pose



Exhale

1. Reach forward until arm pit touches front of knee or shin.
2. With palm facing away from body, wrap right arm around right leg.
3. Clasp left wrist or hands behind back.

Inhale

- Lengthen spine.

Exhale

- Fold forward.

Coming Out

1. Inhale ??? Lift head and lengthen spine.
2. Exhale ??? Release and straighten legs.



To Emphasize

1. Ground sit bones.
2. Keep lengthened leg active.
3. Roll shoulders back.
4. Keep abdomen relaxed.
5. Keep moving head and torso forward.
6. Align bent knee upright.

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.

Bent Leg

1. Press ball of bent leg foot into mat.
2. Squeeze upper & lower leg of bent leg.
3. Externally rotate bent leg.

Straight Leg

1. Internally rotate straight leg.
2. Engage buttocks & press back of straight leg into floor.
3. Keep kneecap of extended leg pointing up.

Shoulders

1. Rotate shoulder on bent leg side down and toward the opposite leg.
2. Rotate shoulder of extended leg side up and back.

More

1. Simultaneously turn trunk in one direction while rotating pelvis & leg in the other. Engage bent leg and engage abdomen to turn trunk in other direction.
2. For more information, see [Anatomy for Backbends and Twists](#) 2010 p 27.

Variations

Bind Support



Use strap to span the difference between hands.

Forward Fold Variation



Use props or any other [forward bend](#) adaptations to make the pose accessible and safe.

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

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