



Supta Padangusthasana (Reclined Hand to Toe)

Description

Supta Padangusthasana A



Chin to Shin

Supta Padangusthasana B



Open Leg to Side

Supta Padangusthasana C



Two Hands Drawing Leg Toward Floor Outside Ear

Supta Padangusthasana

soop-TAH-pod-ang-goosh-TAHS-anna

â??suptaâ?• = reclining

â??padaâ?• = foot

â??angustaâ?• = big toe

Reclined Hand to Toe

Also known as: Reclined Big Toe

Heart of Pose

- Forward Bend
- Hip & Leg Stretch

Notes

- Known for relieving low back pain
- Good pose for times when seated and standing forward bends put low back at riskâ?? such as for students with tight hamstrings or back issues such as disk injury
- Considered a preliminary pose for seated postures and advanced poses
- Can provide hip opening and hamstring stretch in preparation for seated forward bends
- See also [Asana Categories: Forward Bends](#)



See Also

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

Effects / Benefits

Energy, Mood, Emotion

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

- [Forward bends](#) in general known to calm the body, quiet the mind and turn the senses inward
- “Releases deep tension in the body-mind” (Joseph LePage)
- Cooling energetically
- Activates first and second [chakras](#)

Inner Body

Inner body effects may include the following.

- Said to stimulate prostate and some digestive organs

Musculoskeletal

Musculoskeletal effects may include the following.

- Stretches hips in multiple directions
- Opens groins, hamstrings, adductors and calves
- Lengthens low back
- Releases tension in hamstrings and glutes, which relieves some low back pain
- Beneficial for knees, releasing tight muscles that pull on knees and strengthening the muscles that straighten knees (Baxter Bell)
- Strengthens abdomen.

Therapeutic Uses*

- [Arthritis pain in hips and knees](#)
- [Back pain and low back stiffness](#) “Releases hamstrings, tractions low back, and addresses asymmetries
- [Digestive issues](#)
- [Flat feet](#)



- [High blood pressure](#)
- Infertility
- Menstrual discomfort
- [Muscle tension from sitting, standing or walking](#)
- [Sciatica](#)
- [Stress](#)

* This pose is often said to have a positive effect on the conditions listed. But unless trained in yoga therapy, teachers are usually advised against prescribing particular asanas to address specific conditions

Basic Form

Set Up



1. Lie on back.
2. Bend knees and place feet flat on floor.

When using a strap around the foot, options for placement include:

1. Ball of the foot – because the ball of the foot is diagonally oriented, place the strap diagonally as well. (Baxter Bell)
2. Arch, or center, of the foot.
3. Heel.

Baxter Bell describes the potential effects of each positioning in a 3-minute video [here](#). In summary:

1. If a student has plantar fasciitis or heel spurs, avoid placing the strap on the arch of the foot. Otherwise, the arch of the foot is a good choice for feeling the stretch in hamstrings.
2. For more calf stretching, consider placing the strap on the ball of the foot.
3. The effect of the strap on the heel may prompt a sense of more grounding down toward hip joint.

Moving Into Pose



Inhale

1. Clasp toe or foot or use a strap.
2. Straighten leg upward.
3. Option: clasp ankle, calf or thigh.
4. If low back is strong, slide opposite leg straight.

Version A



1. Exhale ??? Lift chest toward leg.
2. Gaze: Toes or neutral.
3. To Come Out: Inhale ??? Lower head and shoulders to floor. Exhale ??? Lower leg to floor.

Version B



1. Exhale â?? Open leg out toward the floor.
2. Gaze: To the side opposite opened leg, or neutral.
3. To Come Out: Inhale â?? Return leg to center. Exhale â?? Lower leg to floor.

Version C



1. Exhale â?? Extend heel toward ceiling.
2. Gaze: Toes, or neutral.
3. To Come Out: Exhale â?? Lower leg to floor.

Hold Time

- 5 breaths, or 30 seconds to 2 minutes

To Emphasize



1. Press sacrum firmly down.
2. Flatten shoulder blades on floor.
3. Press both feet away.
4. Keep knee and toes of grounded leg pointing up

Caution

If you experience a nagging pain along the "pelvic rim, lower back, or upper hip"

Try using two long straps. Loop both straps and place one around the "hip crease of your top leg and the foot of the bottom leg. Use the other strap around the base of your skull and the foot of the top leg. This will allow you to relax and hold your pelvis in a neutral position without stressing the low back.



Many of us shift the pelvis when we stretch our hamstrings, causing or aggravating sacroiliac-joint imbalance. • Eddie Modestini & Nicki Doane

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.

Pelvis & Grounded Leg

1. Keep pressing pelvis down, keeping hips even and relaxed.
2. Press inner thigh of grounded leg into the earth.
3. Keep both legs engaged; grip thigh muscles to bone.
4. Extend from calves toward heels.
5. In opening leg to side, avoid tipping by pressing sacrum into floor by extending and pressing grounded leg away and down.
6. In chin to shin version, press pubic bone down while lifting chest away from belly.
7. In chin to shin version, keep sit bones down.

Stretching Leg

1. Keep both legs engaged; grip thigh muscles to bone.
2. Extend from calves toward heels.
3. In opening leg to side, stretch that inner leg toward heel.

Shoulders, Neck, Face

1. Relax shoulders away from ears.
2. Keep shoulder blades on floor and down back.
3. Keep back of neck long and in a neutral position.
4. Avoid overarching neck; prop if needed.
5. Release tension in neck and face.

More

1. Engage bandhas throughout pose to keep pelvis neutral.
2. Keep natural curve in low back.
3. As tension is released, soften more deeply into the earth.
4. Lengthen side of lifted leg by moving that outer hip away from shoulder.
5. Elongate torso.

6. Broaden chest and collarbones.
7. Although both legs and hips are very active in this pose, you are essentially at rest from the waist up. (Brad Priddy)
8. Breathe smoothly and imagine your breath bathing your hamstrings and calves, relieving tension. (Jason Crandell)
9. See Basic Form in menu above for considerations related to placing the strap around the ball of foot, arch of the foot or the heel.

Variations

Grounded Leg Variation

Bend Knee, Foot on Floor



Bending knee of grounded leg can be a safe way for students to start the pose. Those with strong backs may then choose to extend that leg straight. Others may keep the grounded leg bent for any further variations.

Spanning Distance to Foot

Strap Variations



Here the student is practicing Version A with bent grounded leg and strap on lifted leg. For another option, see photo [here](#) of one strap around head & lifted leg, second strap around upper thigh of lifted leg & foot of grounded leg.

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

Author

michaeljoelhall