



Bharadvajasana (Sage Bharadvaja Twist)

Description

Bharadvajasana I

<https://yogateachercentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Bharadvajasana-I.jpg>

Bharadvajasana II

<https://yogateachercentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Bharadvajasana-II.jpg>

Bharadvajasana

bah-ROD-va-JAHS-anna

Bharadvaja = name of a sage

Bharadvaja’s Twist / Sage Twist

Heart of Pose

- Twist

Notes

Sometimes used to bring spine back to neutral after deep backbending

Effects / Benefits

Energy, Mood, Emotion



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

- Triggers the [relaxation response](#), thereby soothing stress.
- Elevates mood and energy.

Inner Body

Inner body effects may include the following.

- â??Massagesâ?? abdominal organs.

Musculoskeletal

Musculoskeletal effects may include the following.

- Stretches and fully rotates the spine.
- Releases tension in back and neck.
- Opens chest and rib cage.
- Stretches and strengthens shoulders.
- Increases flexibility of ankles, knees and hips.

Therapeutic Uses*

- [Backache](#)
- [Carpal tunnel syndrome](#)
- [Digestion](#) â?? Twists â??massageâ?? the abdominal organs, thereby aiding digestion.
- [Neck pain](#)
- [Pregnancy](#) â?? Because it is an open twist, considered safe during pregnancy.
- [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.

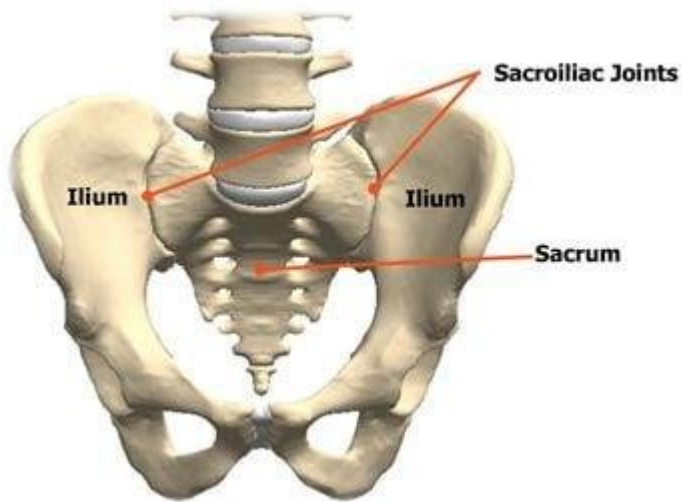
Contraindications

This pose is generally not recommended for students with these conditions:

- Diarrhea
- [Headache, Migraine](#)
- [High Blood Pressure](#)
- Low Blood Pressure
- [Insomnia](#)

- [Knee Injury](#)

SI Joint Issues



- Many advise against twists for sacro-iliac (SI) joint issues.
- Others suggest varying seated twists by moving twisting side buttock forward a couple of inches.

See Also

- [SI Joint Issues](#)
- [Category: Twists](#)

Alternatives

When contraindicated, you may wish to

- Review [preparatory poses or variations](#),
- Choose alternatives such as the sample below, or
- Skip the pose.

Reclined Twist

<https://yogateachercentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Reclined-twist.jpg>

[Jathara Parivartanasana Variations](#)

Cautions

Neck & Upper Back

Some students may have a tendency to tighten muscles at the back of the neck, thereby contributing to [headaches](#), [upper back tension](#) and fatigue.

To counteract this tendency, soften the muscles at the back of the neck.

Some Lifting vs Excessive Tilting

Hip Lifted

<https://yogateachercentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/No-lifting-hip.jpg>

Sit Bones Grounded

<https://yogateachercentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/No-lifting-hip.jpg>

Avoid excessive tilting onto the twisting side buttock, as shown in first image here, which may cause low back compression.

It has been said that if there is too much lift in the twisting side buttock (i.e. pelvis is too asymmetrical), the low back and SI joints may be at risk. However, as Judith Hanson Lasater teaches [here](#), if the pelvis is allowed to move as is [now recommended](#) in all twists, there may be some lifting as part of the pose.

- To minimize asymmetry, sit twisting side buttock on corner of a blanket.
- For more considerations related to twisting alignment, see [Asana Category: Twists](#).

Teaching Considerations

- Support twisting side sit bone on blanket to reduce asymmetry in pelvis.
- Press sit bones into earth.

Basic Form

Set Up

<https://yogateachercentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Sitting-pose.jpg>

1. Begin in [Dandasana \(Staff Pose\)](#).
2. Draw heel close into hip in [Ardha Virasana \(Half Virasana\)](#).

Bharadvasana I Version

<https://yogateachercentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/sitting-pose-2.jpg>



1. For *Bharadvajasana* / leg variation, begin in [Dandasana](#).
2. Draw both feet outside right hip.
3. Rest right ankle in arch of left foot.
4. Create space between knees.

Moving into Pose

<https://yogateachercentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/moving-into-sitting-pose.jpg>

Exhale

1. Take other foot into Ardha [Padmasana](#) (Half Lotus).
2. Separate knees until thighs are at right angle with each other.

Inhale

- Lift chest, lengthen torso

Exhale

1. Begin to twist.
2. Keep buttock weighted down.
3. Lengthen tailbone toward floor.
4. Clasp lotus toe. (In version I, take hand to floor behind hip.)
5. Slide other hand underneath lotus knee. (In version I, take hand to knee.)
6. Palm down, point fingers toward leg.
7. Press shoulder blades against back.

Gaze

- Over front shoulder

Hold

- 30 seconds to 1 minute or more

Coming Out

- Exhale to release

To Emphasize

<https://yogateachercentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/No-lifting-hip.jpg>



1. Root down. (But as Judith Lasater teaches [here](#), allowing pelvis to turn may result in the hip lifting some as well.)
2. Elongate spine.
3. Draw shoulder blades down.
4. Spread collarbones.

Verbal Cues

Base

1. Root sit bones.
2. Keep dropping sit bone with every exhalation.
3. Sit up tall. Keep the spine long.
4. Extend from base of spine all the way up through top of head.
5. Draw navel back toward spine.

Chest

1. Open and lift chest.
2. Open, lift and spiral chest.
3. Spread collarbones.
4. Draw upper spine in toward heart center.

Back & Shoulder Blades

- Engage shoulder blades.
- Draw shoulder blades down back.
- Flatten shoulder blades into back.
- Broaden back muscles.
- Use rhomboid muscles between shoulder blades to draw shoulder blades deeper and deeper into back.

Deepening with Breath

- Inhale, expand rib cage upward away from waist. Exhale, rotate chest.
- Inhale, elongate the spine. Exhale, twist.

More

- Create length by pulling the hand behind the back and pushing away with the other hand.
- When gazing over front shoulder, draw chin slightly down toward shoulder.

- Sense how holding the Lotus foot brings connection while the spine spirals upward.

MORE REFINED CUEING RELATED TO KNEES

Breathe and soften your inner groin to your inner knee. Roll your inner knee to your outer knee, and draw your outer knee into your outer hip. Come out if you feel any knee pain. • Yoga Journal, 3 Ways to Modify Bharadvaja's Twist

Alanna Kaivalya Video

Myth to Pose: Exploring Bharadvajasana's Sage Wisdom•

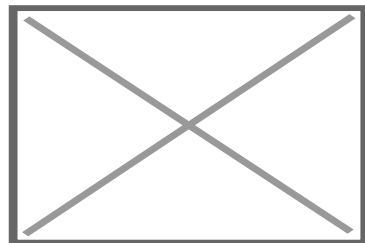


See Also

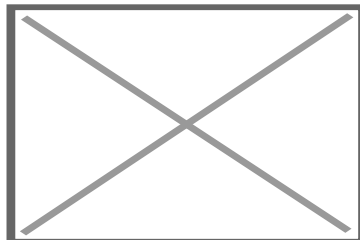
- Don't miss the detailed teaching support in [Asana Category: Twisting Poses](#).

Variations

Bharadvajasana II Pose Dedicated to Sage Bharadvaja



Hand On Knee Rather than Beneath Knee



See [Basic Form](#) for instructions

Place hands on top of knee instead of under it.



Bind with StrapUse Strap to Span Distance
A person sitting on the floorDescription automatically generated with low confidence

No Bind VersionsTraditional Leg Position
A person sitting on the floorDescription automatically generated with low confidence

Wrap belt
around
Padmasan
foot with e
of strap be
you.Use st
to span the
distance,
slowly walk
your hand
close to the
Padmasan
foot as
possible w
maintaining
long spine.
Back Hand
Floor or
BlockTake
front hand
around kne
and back h
to floor or
block.â?•
Hands-Fre
Use â??go
postâ?• arm
arms out fr
shoulder,
elbows be
degrees,
palms facin
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hands-free
option with
added arm
strengthen
is to take a
straight ou
side.



Support Lotus LegProp Knee

A person sitting on the floorDescription automatically generated with low confidence

Not shown
knee of
Padmasan
leg doesnâ
touch floor
prop with
block.Keep
knee lower
than hip.Im
[here](#).

Support HipsSit on Blankets

A person sitting on the floorDescription automatically generated with low confidence

Not shown
hips or kne
are straine
sit on a sta
of blankets
at the back
that the
Padmasan
leg is entir
on the
blankets ar
the Virasan
leg is on fl
beside
blankets.Im
[here](#).

Bharadvajasana ISimple Twist Leg Variation

A person sitting on the floorDescription automatically generated with medium confidence

From
[Dandasana](#)
[\(Staff Pose](#)
bring both
beside righ
hip. Positi
top of righ
in arch of l
Separate
knees.



ProppingPlus Alternative Bind

A person sitting on the floorDescription automatically generated with medium confidence

Some sources recommend sitting on a mat or blanket photo. Others teach that bone lifts, reduce asymmetry pelvis by supporting twisting side (other) sit back (only). An alternative grasping Padmasana is to connect with upper instead.

No BindSimple Twist No Bind

A person sitting on a ledgeDescription automatically generated with low confidence

Take the Bharadvaja base or [Sukhasana](#) Front arm connects with opposite knee Tented fingers of back hand reach to floor prop behind

Back Hand VariationBack Hand to Block

A person sitting on a benchDescription automatically generated with low confidence

If student is collapsing, place back hand to block help increase length in spine



AlternativeTwist at Wall

A person doing yogaDescription automatically generated with medium confidence

Watch Out ForTilting

A person sitting on the floorDescription automatically generated with medium confidence

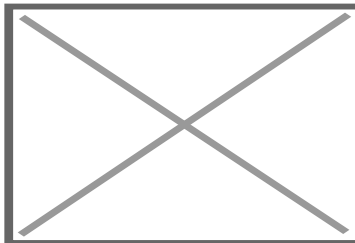
The wall can help to encourage the action of twisting to provide support for added length. Most are showing a variation. Watch out for student collapsing side rather than finding grounding lift. See [Cautions](#) for teaching cues to correct.

In ContrastSit Bones Grounded

A person sitting on the floorDescription automatically generated with medium confidence

To see contrast with photo where hip is lifted.

Seated TwistStretch ??? Seated Twist



Reclined TwistBoth Legs Twist

A person lying on a yoga matDescription automatically generated with medium confidence

Chair YogaSeated Twist

A person sitting on a chairDescription automatically generated with medium confidence

Chair YogaStanding Twist at Wall

A person sitting on a chairDescription automatically generated with medium confidence

See also: [Asana](#) [Category: Twists](#)

Mythology & Inspiration



Sage Bharadvaja

The pose [Bharadvajasana](#) is named after the *rishi* (sage) Bharadvaja.

- Bharadvaja is known for his devoted study and teaching of the Vedas.
- In one story, Bharadvaja spends three lifetimes studying the Vedas night and day. He is so dedicated to study that no one has ever seen him. One day, Shiva arrives. But rather than liberate him, Shiva explains that while Bharadvaja may know more about the Vedas than anyone else, he doesn't understand the true meaning of the teachings. He observes that Bharadvaja lives alone with no joy and has not shared his knowledge with anyone. In his fourth life, Bharadvaja became a well-known and beloved teacher and at the end of his life, Shiva said he could now be free of the cycle of death and rebirth. But Bharadvaja declined, saying "there is no one who resides more fully in my heart than you, but now I know that I can never be closer to you than when I share moments of joy with others and by connecting to them through spiritual texts."
- Bharadvaja was reborn and came to be known as a great sage.
- In another story, during his daily devotional practices, he visualized washing Rama's feet and hands. And one day, his visualization came to life as Rama himself came seeking shelter in Bharadvaja's ashram.

For more detailed stories of Bharadvaja, see [Mythology: Asana-Related Stories](#).

Utilizing Mythology in Class

A group of people sitting on the grass

Description automatically generated

To utilize mythology in your teaching, you may wish to:

- Find a story from mythology that resonates with you and share a brief telling with students. The effect of storytelling can be unlike any other teaching approach. You may find that stories tap into something deep and powerful that connects all of us, across time and space.
- Take one teaching from the story to become your theme.
- Use the [theme guidelines](#) to help you develop your theme effectively.

Teaching Applications & Tools

Storytelling

For stories of Bharadvaja, see [Mythology: Asana-Related Stories](#).

Talking Point

SHARE YOUR JOY TO OTHERS

This story teaches us that when we find the source of our joy it is our duty to share it with others. This doesn't mean that we try to convince others to be joyful, rather we live the lessons we have been



taught and in living this way we set an example that can inspire others to find the source of their own joy. Many people spend a lot of time doing something that makes them unhappy or focusing on a goal so hard that they miss the point. If we take the wisdom of this story to heart, we know we must live fully, find our passion and share it with others. â?? Yoga with Maheshwari

Invite a Personal Connection

You may wish to guide students, while practicing this pose, to contemplate how they might make a greater effort to exhibit / live something they already â??know.â?• How might they model and share this wisdom with others?

Affirmations

1. I can do whatever I will to do.
2. I am the architect of my life.
3. Today I take a step toward my dreams.
4. Action is the energy that translates my thoughts into reality.
5. I can make a difference.
6. I hold the keys to my destiny.
7. The fire within me burns through all blocks.
8. I commit to deepening my relationship with myself, others, and the earth.
9. I open myself fully to life.
10. I open my heart fully to living.
11. I give my love unconditionally.
12. I live in harmony with all Beings.

More Inspiration

BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING

Like most other *asanas*, *Bharadvajasana* is a balancing act, one that can be mentally as well as physically centering. Work with variations to help you get a feel for how to keep your hips level with the floor, both sides of your torso and back long and even, and the central axis erect. From there, you can enjoy the freedom of turning from a solid foundation with a calm presence that might take you higher. â?? Marla Apt

ROTATE FROM DEEP IN THE BELLY

Notice if you have begun to pull yourself into the pose with your head, brain, or eyes. Instead, drop down into an awareness of your organs, especially your intestines. Ambition, and the desire to â??get thereâ?• (wherever â??thereâ?• is) can pull your head forward. So without hurrying, begin with every exhalation to rotate from deep in your belly. When you lead with your head in twists, you cheat your spine out of the fullness of this movement. Bring the left side of your intestines towards the right, and let your head trail slightly behind. Can you sense the delightful, undulating motion of your breath through your spine, and let the twist deepen as you exhale, so that the movement is

characterized by ease, not force? Let your spine ride the rhythm of your breath. â?? Denise Benitez

IMMERSE, EXPERIENCE, GO WITHIN

Close your eyes, breathe smoothly, and immerse yourself in the feeling-tone of the pose. Experience yourself as a spiraling curve of energy. Go within and be guided by the inner feeling. â?? Erich Schiffman

Hands on Adjustments

Grounding Assistance



To help student feel added grounding with twist. Photo shows a simple seated twist since twist adjustment principles can be adapted.

1. Set up behind student. You may wish to support the studentâ??s back with your knee or thigh.
2. Provide pressure to the hip away from the twist. Place inner edge of foot on the quadricep.
3. Can add support to shoulders or ribs with twist as shown.
4. Gently increase twist as appropriate.
5. Guide student to lengthen on inhalation and twist on exhalation. Time your adjustment actions to her breath.

Deepening Twist

A picture containing personDescription automatically generated

To help student find a deeper twist, as appropriate.

1. Set up behind student. You may wish to support studentâ??s back with one or both knees, or your thigh.
2. Do not press on spine. (Always avoid bone on bone.)
3. Place hands around ribs. Be cautious of fingers near breasts.
4. With studentâ??s inhale, gently provide lift to help lengthen spine.
5. With studentâ??s exhale, gently turn into the twist.
6. Continue lifting and twisting with the breath as is comfortable for student.

Author

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