

JHULANA LURHAKANASANA

Rocking and Rolling

This is one of my favourite asanas and I use it in every home practice.

Please do not do it if you are suffering from a serious back condition...seek medical advice.

It does need to be done with care, and as you roll backwards please always remember to tuck the chin in so the neck is kept safe. Tucking the chin in 'rounds' the shoulders a little, assisting with the rolling aspect of the practice. Use a blanket as well for extra protection of the spine. Check there is nothing nearby you could hit your head on.

There are four stages. You do not have to do all of them together...although I always teach all four of them. Do up to 5 repetitions for each stage.



Stage 1. Sit with the knees bent, holding hands or wrists behind the thighs or over shins. Lift the feet and find your balance here. Lengthen through the spine, crown to ceiling. Take a breath in, draw chin to chest as you release the spine to the floor, rolling backwards towards the shoulders, and roll back up with the inhalation.



Stage 2. Same starting position as above. As you roll back on the exhale, release the arms and take the hands to the ankles, above the head, as you inhale come back to the start.



Stage 3. Sit with the ankles crossed, holding the feet (right to right foot, left to left foot) thumbs on the instep. This is the one where you can really lengthen along the spine as you come forward to 'scoop' in the inhalation. As you come back and draw the chin in, release the spine to the floor, cross the feet the other way, taking hold (DO NOT cross the hands!) and come back to the start.



Stage 4. Sit with the knees bent and hands on the knees, release the spine to the floor, but keep looking between the knees as you hold them. Feet have come off the floor. Knees are as wide as is comfortable. KEEP THE HEAD OFF THE FLOOR throughout this part, in order to look after the neck. Exhale and roll to the right, right arm and leg come to the floor, left leg rests on top, turn head to look at right shoulder. Inhale to raise left leg and roll back to centre.

Exhale and roll to left, left arm and leg coming to floor and right leg resting on top. Turn the head to look at the left shoulder. Inhale back to centre. Keep going side to side – balancing across the whole of the back. When you have completed the repetitions, come to centre, bring the knees together, release head and shoulders to floor, take knees apart again and then 'drop' hands and feet to floor and completely let go.

Watch the experience and sensations of the practice.

The awareness throughout the practice is on an even breath and coordination of the movement. Overtime it will become a smooth practice...notice how the body moves...do you favour one side of the spine over another or is there balance.

This practice is believed to be especially good for the back, buttocks, hips and abdominal muscles.

Thank you John for pictures 2 & 3.