

Asana

Guru Salutation

Guru Namaskar

Starting Position: stand erect on the upper edge of your yoga mat, with your feet close to each other and parallel, your hands with the palms separated, fingertips joined and placed at the level of your heart; lungs full.

1 – While exhaling, join your palms together.

Your forearms remain aligned and slightly away from your torso in order to further refine and stabilize your sense of balance.



2 – While inhaling, extend your whole body from your heels to the back of your head; your big toes press into the ground; your pelvis tilts forward; your knees do not bend and your glutei close inwards. Your upper body opens when you move your arms to the sides, thumbs pointing backwards. Your chin stretches upwards at the end of the movement.

When suffering from problems in the cervical area, don't stretch your neck; if you are having shoulder problems, keep your hands in the *Namaskar Mudra*.

3 – While exhaling and keeping your legs straight, bend your torso forward until the tips of fingers reach the ground.





4 – While inhaling, extend the spine to create an angle of 90 degrees between your torso and your lower limbs; at the same time, cup your eyes with your hands. Stay still with full lungs for at least 10 seconds; gaze towards the centre of your forehead, keep the mental flow still and stable.

This suspension and total emptying phase is the heart of this practice. Being passive and attentive at the same time, like *Shiva* Himself is in front of you: it is not possible to contemplate his light because the strength of it would burn the eyes, but if you're sufficiently attentive and empty, its reflection will fill you and all your being.

5 – While exhaling, move back to the erect position with your palms together.

While inhaling, separate the palms but keep tips of the fingers together.



During this practice, movements are always slow, uniform and harmonious. Repeat the sequence at least 3 times.

Contraindications: due to the full retention phase, this exercise is not advisable to those suffering from heart disease and very high blood pressure.

Benefits: the exercise has a harmonizing effect on all levels and it is especially beneficial for its effect on the psycho-mental level: favours quiet, silence and receptiveness. Moreover, it is effective on the physical level because it tones the body and makes breathing deep and effective.