

Dandasana The rod or staff posture

One of the benefits and lessons that is available to us in yoga is that it requires us to pay attention to our bodies. This allows us the opportunity to become our own teacher. In Yoga, as we hold the postures our body is constantly sending us information. We must use this information to develop a stronger practice. Pay attention. Listen to your body. It is trying to tell you something.

Dandasana is one of many seated postures. Like some Yoga postures, it looks deceptively simple, but there is in fact, a lot of work that is going on to achieve a solid Dandasana.

Benefits:

1. Extends and strengthens the para-spinal muscles
2. Tones the abdominal organs.
3. Builds muscle in the thighs.

Caution: If you have a recent injury or a pre-existing medical condition consult your physician before you begin.

1. Sit on the floor. Extend your legs forward with your big toes and heels together. Place your hands on the floor next to hips with your fingers pointing forward.
2. Firm your thigh muscles. Pull your kneecaps towards you and roll your thighs in and down. Press the backs of your thighs hard into the floor, while making sure you do not lift your



heels off of the floor.

3. Flex your feet. Pull your toes towards you, especially the little toe side of each foot. Push out through the balls of your big toes and your inner heels. Keep working the thigh muscles.
4. Bring the top of your pelvis forward and up, so that you are on your sitting bones. It is helpful here to imagine a big wheel at the side of each hip, moving forward and drawing you up from the pelvis onto your sitting bones. Continue pressing the backs of your thighs hard into the floor. Imagine that you trying to sit on the backs of your thighs. Do not lose this action in the legs.
5. Allowing your hands to rest lightly on the floor, lift your chest away from your pelvis. Keep the pelvic bones grounded as you do this.
6. Open your chest. Roll your shoulders back and down. Bring the inner edges of your shoulder blades forward into your back ribs. The breastbone moves forward and up.
7. Do not harden or grip your belly. Breathe through your nose. (This is true for all Yoga postures) Inhale fully, exhale completely.
8. Keep your ears over your shoulders with your chin level to the floor. Bring the outer edges of the shoulders down and extend your neck.
9. Hold the posture for ten complete breathes. Repeat the posture three times.
10. Note: If your hamstrings are tight you may find it difficult to extend your spine in the posture. Fold a thick towel or a blanket and sit on it as you attempt the posture. This will help you to lift your spine out of your pelvis. If you have weak spinal muscles place a strap or belt around the soles of your feet and hold the strap/belt as you work to lift and extend your spine.