

Rivers on Yoga

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Purvottanasana – The intense front body stretch

If you suffer from, or are at risk of developing carpal tunnel syndrome this could be the posture for you.

Purvottanasana, like Vasisthasana, helps to develop strength in the wrists. The front of the body from the head to the toes represents the east. (Purva means towards the east) Uttana means intense stretch. In this posture the front of the body is fully stretched. The wrists and ankles are strengthened, the chest is opened and flexibility is restored to the shoulder joints.

Benefits:

Strengthens wrists and ankles

Opens chest

Improves shoulder flexibility

Caution:

If you have a pre-existing medical condition or a recent injury, please consult with your physician before you practice.

1. Sit in Dandasana, the Rod or Staff posture by placing your hands next to your hips with your fingers pointing forward. You're your knees and extend your legs, flex your feet and keep your toes and heels together while making sure you firm up your thigh muscles.
2. Keeping them strong, lean back into the arms. Place the soles of your feet on the floor and as you lift your pelvic bones towards the ceiling, engage the legs.
3. Press your hands firmly into the floor and extend your arms. Keep your shoulders directly over your wrists, so that your arms are perpendicular to the floor.
4. Continue raising your pelvis. Do not tighten or distend your abdomen. Extend your legs, pressing the soles of your feet into the ground. Keep the soles of both feet firmly planted on the floor, with your big toes and



heels together. Firm your thigh muscles and roll your inner thighs towards the floor.

5. Your torso should be parallel to the floor. Extend your neck and look back behind yourself. Hold the posture for up to one full minute, breathe fully and evenly. On an exhalation lower your pelvis to the floor. Take a short rest and then repeat the posture.
6. As your strength, stamina and flexibility increases, hold the posture for longer periods.