

Pose of the Week 7-12-08

Standing Forward Bend



Uttanasana

(OOT-tan-AHS-ahna)

ut = intense

tan = to stretch or extend

Sometimes called ragdoll or forward fold.

Standing forward bend is an often used relief within standing flows and the sun salutation. Forward bends are calming to the mind and body. For many of us, tight hamstrings limit our flexibility in this pose. If this is true for you, come to the pose in a variation with bent knees. As with other forward bends, this pose stretches the entire back side of the body.

- Calms the nervous system
- Stretches the back body

Primary Muscles – Spinal Extensors, Piriformis, Glutes, Hamstrings, Calves

Variations - Bent knees. Hands on the legs, wrapped together, on the floor, grabbing big toes, under feet, or behind legs, etc...

Tips –

- Ground feet – toes straight ahead, feet hip width apart for stability (there are also variations with the feet closer)
- Knees and feet parallel
- Lift a bit in the thighs and roll the thighs inward, spreading the sit bones apart
- Rock back and forth on the feet a bit to find a grounded, balanced position. You may find a better stretch coming a little more forward on the feet.
- Tip the hips forward. Always coming into the pose bending at the hips not the waist
- Bend knees if hamstrings prohibit flexibility – all the benefits are still available to you with bent knees
- If you are able to straighten the legs, align hips over knees
- Head and neck relaxed – allow yourself to let go

/ come inside. / surrender to this moment.



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