

Neural Training through Handstand – A Guide

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Yoga, adho mukha vrksāsana,
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The paper gives some of the health benefits of the handstand (adho mukha vrksāsana) and informs on one of the ways how handstand can be safely learned in order to bring its full benefits.

I. Warming and Preparing the Body

1 Wrist Strengtheners

Arms at shoulder height. Extend the hands at the wrists, repeat 5 breaths in each (Fig. 1).

- Fingers pointing up towards the ceiling
- Fingertips touching
- Fingers turning outwards
- Fingers turning down to the floor
- Repeat the above with arms overhead

Repeat with arms behind.



2 Shoulder Stretches and Strengtheners with a Block

Squeeze the block with the base of the insides of the knuckles, concentrate on pulling the upper arms back and the shoulder blades back and down (Fig. 2). On the breath slowly taking the arms towards the ceiling. Spend a little time here. A phrase I use with my students... "shaking is good". Then repeat with the block behind and yes squeeze!



3 Shoulder Stretches with a Belt

Hold the belt roughly a little wider than shoulder width: Straight arms reach up to the ceiling; right upper arm to ear; draw left arm back and down. Repeat to the other side stretching the muscles of the chest, then moving the arms back in space, hovering at a place of intensity (Fig. 3).



4 Spinal Mobilization in Cat and Wrist Strengthening

From neutral cat (hands under the shoulders, knees under the hips, feet in line with the knees) draw the body weight back and lift the heels of the hands and then begin to move forwards and back on the breath. Plant the heels of hands down lightly (Fig. 4).

Extension and flexion of the spine in Cat/Cow on the breath: Inhale rotate the pelvis away take the movement through the spine, chin gaze up.

Exhale tuck the tail bone under, chin to the chest. Repeat 3 times.

Side stretch: On the breath keep the feet the knees still draw the right hip and the right shoulder together, making a banana shape with the body. Strengthening the side waist. Repeat 3 times on both sides.

Spinal rotation: Take the right hand to the center of the pose, on the breath lead with the left elbow towards the ceiling then float the left hand up. Exhale lower down. Repeat 3 times on both sides.



