



Yoga For You

Ray Madigan and Shelley Choy

Gomukhasana

(Cow Face Pose), Easy Stage » "Go" is the Sanskrit word for "cow" and "mukha" means "face."
This pose looks like the face of a cow.

Gomukhasana massages and releases tension in the calf muscles and makes them elastic. In this easy stage, the calf muscles get a massage and the muscles of the hips and buttocks are stretched. The arm positions help to expand the chest and create more flexibility in the shoulders.

1. Place a folded yoga mat and blanket on the floor. Put a yoga block or similar on the blanket.
2. Kneel with feet to the right side of the block. Keep the knees pointing straight ahead and bring the feet together. Stretch the tops of the feet along the floor. Place your hands on the floor in front of you.
3. Keep the left foot in place as you cross the right leg over the left and place the right foot on the opposite side of the block. Both knees should now be on the floor with the left foot on the right side of the block and the right foot on the left side of the block.
4. Using the hands on the floor to help guide you back, sit on the block between the feet.



MANOA YOGA CENTER
Shelley Choy, co-director of Manoa
Yoga Center, shows Cow Face Pose.

5. Balance evenly on both buttock bones with the torso erect. The right knee should be positioned above the left knee, both knees pointing straight ahead. If this is not possible, add more height under your buttocks.

6. Now, turn your right arm in and take it behind the back up between your shoulder blades. Keep the back of the hand against the spine with your fingers pointing toward your head.

7. Keep your right arm in place as you extend the left arm straight up. Bend the left elbow and clasp the right hand. If you cannot make the clasp, hold a yoga belt or a towel with the hands.

(See previous column at starbulletin.com/print/?fr=/2005/10/02/features/yoga.html for arm position).

8. Keeping your torso erect, look straight forward. Breathe quietly through your nose as you work to point your left elbow at the ceiling and right elbow at the floor.

9. Stay for a few breaths then reverse the leg and arm positions. Repeat a few times until you can hold the pose with some ease.

Ray Madigan and **Shelley Choy** are certified Iyengar Yoga teachers and co-direct the Manoa Yoga Center at Manoa Marketplace. Visit www.manoayoga.com or call 382-3910. Manoa Yoga Center, the authors and the Star-Bulletin take no responsibility for any injury arising from the practice of these yoga postures. Readers should seek a doctor's approval before commencing this yoga practice.

Article URL: <http://starbulletin.com/2006/12/17/features/yoga.html>
© 1996-2006 The Honolulu Star-Bulletin | www.starbulletin.com