

Tadasana (Mountain Pose)

Tadasana is the foundation of the clan of poses known as standing *asanas*. This seemingly simple pose challenges us to evenly balance our weight, attention and structure without falling into habitual patterns of unevenness. It requires great concentration. The practice of *Tadasana* leads to increased awareness of our posture and develops balance, sensitivity and calm perseverance.

- 1) Find an even surface and stand with the feet together. Look down at the feet as this will help you to be more conscious of them. Bring the big toes to touch evenly together and press the balls of the big toes down. Keep them pressing down as you spread the weight to the inner heels and outer edges of the feet. Distribute the weight evenly on both feet.
- 2) Take your fingers to the thighs and looking at the thighs press them back until you feel the weight come onto the front edge of the heels. Do not shift or move the feet about. You will notice that with weight on the heels, the thighs lift the kneecaps up and the legs become firm and straight.
- 3) Keeping the thighs back, take one hand to the lower belly and the other hand to the buttocks. As you lift the pit of the belly up, draw the buttocks down. This lifts the pelvis to vertical, prevents the buttocks from sticking out, and minimizes arching of the lower back. Keep the legs firm and straight.
- 4) Maintain the position and actions of the feet, thighs and pelvis as you roll the thighs in so the knees point straight forward.
- 5) Now spread and open the chest, by turning the upper arms out, and bring the shoulder blades into the back. Extend the arms straight down in line with the trunk. Move the shoulders down and away from the ears so the chest opens and the neck is long.
- 6) Keep the chin parallel to the floor and look straight forward with soft eyes as if gazing at the horizon. The head should neither be tilted back nor thrown forward.
- 7) Relax the muscles of the face and breath evenly through the nose as you work to keep the weight balanced evenly over the center of the arches of the feet. Do not oscillate. Adjust the back of the head, shoulders and buttocks to be in line with the heels. Do not overarch your back nor slump.
- 8) Let your attention be on maintaining this even, steady balance without distraction. This leads to a meditative state where the mind becomes absorbed in the moment, free from distraction as the body becomes light and poised.



Tadasana is the foundation of all of the standing poses.

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