

Utthita Trikonasana – foot to wall
(Extended Triangle Pose)

This is a standing *asana* in which the legs are kept firm and straight, providing stability for the torso to extend and open. The *asana* gets its name from the triangular shapes formed by the limbs and trunk. *Utthita Trikonasana* brings strength and suppleness to the legs and hips, and strengthens the muscles alongside the spine. With practice, your legs and hips will also gain elasticity and you may be able to take your hand all the way to the floor. You may also do this pose by taking the hand to the shin or to a yoga block.

1. Take the outer edge of your left foot to the wall and step the right foot about 4 to 4-1/2 feet apart. Align the right heel with the left arch.
2. Straighten both legs fully. Keep the right leg turned out 90 degrees and the left leg facing forward.
3. Now, lift and open the chest as you face the trunk forward.
4. Inhale and stretch the right arm up to lift and extend the right side of the body, then exhale and stretch your trunk over the right leg taking the right hand to the floor, your shin or to a block. Press your feet into the floor and tighten the knees to straighten the legs.
5. Stretch the left arm up and gaze at the hand as you work to open the front of the body.

Practice of standing *asanas* develops balance, confidence and an experience of the vast space within the body. The mind first connects with the outermost layers of the physical being. Then, through focused, steady practice, consciousness penetrates the more inner layers of one's being and becomes quiet, meditative and serene.

