



**Santhika  
Retreat  
Center**

## 8 Yoga Poses to Connect You to the Earth Element

[www.santhikaretreatcenter.com](http://www.santhikaretreatcenter.com)

*"To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves." - Mahatma Gandhi*

A great way to increase your connection with the earth element is to practice grounding yoga poses. Here are eight poses to help you find a sense of stability and security, and improve your balance.

### 1. Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

Mountain Pose may be the best asana to help you connect with the earth—and to your body, breath, and mind. It is also a great foundational pose for all other standing poses. When practiced regularly, it can help improve posture and stability.

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and parallel, with your arms at your sides.

Spread your toes and press them into the floor; distribute the weight of your body evenly into both of your feet.

Engage the muscles in your thighs and legs.

Align your head over your heart, your heart over your hips, and your hips over your ankles.

With each inhale, lengthen your spine and reach the crown of your head toward the sky.

With each exhale, allow your shoulders to relax away from your ears and reach your fingertips toward the ground.

Continue for 5 to 10 breaths.



### 2. Warrior I Pose (Virabhadrasana 1)

Warrior I is a fierce pose that offers strength, confidence, and stability.

Start in Mountain Pose (above).

On your exhale, step your left foot back and turn it to about a 45-degree angle. Your left foot should be firmly planted and touching the ground.

Bend your right knee over the right ankle, so that your shin is perpendicular to the floor. If you can, bring your right thigh parallel with the floor.

Raise your arms above your head and reach your fingers toward the sky.

Hold for 5 to 10 breaths. Repeat on the other side.





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### 3. Tree Pose (Vrikshasana)

Balancing poses, such as Tree Pose, help improve stability. This is a foundational pose that teaches you how to root to the ground, improves your concentration, and strengthens your leg muscles.

Stand with your feet together and palms together at your heart.

Choose a point of focus for your eyes and hold a steady gaze to support your balance.

Slowly lift your right foot off the floor and open your knee out to the right side, placing the sole of your foot to the inside of the left leg—at your ankle, shin, and possibly even above the knee, being careful not to rest it directly on the knee.

Helpful Modification: You can start off by lifting your heel only a few inches from the ground and resting it on your opposite ankle, and using the ball of your foot as a kickstand to help you balance. Alternatively, you can hold onto a wall or piece of furniture for more support.

Once you feel stable, raise arms above your head, fingertips reaching to the sky.

Hold this pose 5 to 10 breaths, if possible.

Repeat with opposite leg.



### 4. Eagle Pose (Garudasana)

This balancing pose is a little more challenging than Tree Pose because it requires a bit more strength, flexibility, endurance, and concentration. But with a little practice, you will see a drastic improvement in your balance!

Stand with your feet together and palms together at your heart.



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Focus your gaze to support your balance.

Bend your knees slightly, lift your left foot up and, balancing on your right foot, cross your left thigh over the right. If possible, wrap your left foot around your lower right leg.

Extend your arms in front of you so that they are parallel to the ground.

Cross right arm over the left, then bend your elbows, so they are stacked.

Clasp your hands together (palms facing each other) and lift your elbows up so that your arms are parallel to the ground. If you have any issues with your shoulders, just bring your hands to opposite shoulders, like you're giving yourself a big hug.

Hold for 5 to 10 breaths, if possible.

Repeat on opposite side.

### 5. Head-to-Knee Forward Bend (Janu Sirsasana)

This seated pose invites a sense of grounding while developing flexibility in your hamstrings, back, thighs, and hip joints.

Sit on your yoga mat with your feet stretched forward.

Bring your right foot to the inside of your left thigh by bending your right knee open. Draw your right heel toward your perineum and allow the outside of your right thigh to rest on your mat.

Flex your left foot to activate the entire left leg.

Inhale your arms overhead, and as you exhale, slightly rotate to the left from your torso, then fold forward over your left leg.

You can rest your hands on either side of your left leg, reach for your foot, or allow your right hand to come to the outside of your left calf or foot for a deeper twist.

Hold for 5 to 10 breaths, if possible.

Repeat on the other side.





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### 6. Hero Pose (Virasana)

Stretch your lower limbs and lengthen your spine as you ground your mind and body in hero pose.

Note of caution: This pose is not recommended if you have a knee or ankle injury.

Kneel on the floor so that your knees are touching (put a folded piece of clothing or blanket under your feet, shins, or knees for added comfort).

Shift your feet slightly open and away from your hips, keeping the tops of your feet flat on the floor.

Slowly rest your glutes on your feet. If you experience any discomfort, sit on a yoga block or meditation cushion to alleviate some of the pressure on your ankles or knees.

Hold for 10 breaths.

For an added challenge, try Reclining Hero Pose by slowly lowering your back to the ground in order to deepen the stretch and allow more of your body to come into contact with the earth.



### 7. Child's Pose (Balasana)

Child's Pose invites you release any tension or stress, and it's a great way to feel supported by the ground. It's also a comfortable pose to begin or end your yoga sequence because it allows you to center yourself.

Start by kneeling on the ground.





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Touch your big toes together and spread your knees wider than your hips. Rest your weight on your heels.

On an exhale, extend your arms out in front of you and fold your torso so that it rests on the ground between your legs. Gently rest your palms on the ground. If this is too much of a stretch in your hips, rest your forehead on a block between your legs.

Hold for anywhere from 5 breaths to several minutes.

### 8. Corpse Pose (Savasana)

Corpse Pose allows your entire body to make contact with the ground and is a common way to end a yoga practice. This may seem like an easy pose, but it can actually be quite challenging. The goal is to be as still and relaxed as possible, which can be difficult to do while managing a monkey mind (i.e., thoughts continuously popping up in your mind).

Start by lying on your back. If you need neck support, fold a towel and place it under your neck.

Relax your lower body by stretching out your legs and spreading them comfortably apart.

Relax your upper body by stretching your arms open, either along your body or to your sides, whatever feels most comfortable. Bring your palms to face up toward the sky.

Relax your neck, jaw, eyes, and breath, allowing your breath to find a slow and natural rhythm.

Release any tension in your body, inviting it to become weightless; there should be no effort to maintain your position.

Feel the connection of your body with the ground; enjoying the stability it provides you.

Hold for 5 to 15 minutes.

