



Santhika
Retreat
Center

7 Yoga Poses to Connect You to the Space Element

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"Unencumbered by our definitions we experience ourselves as conscious intelligence aware of itself as open, endless space." - Gangaji

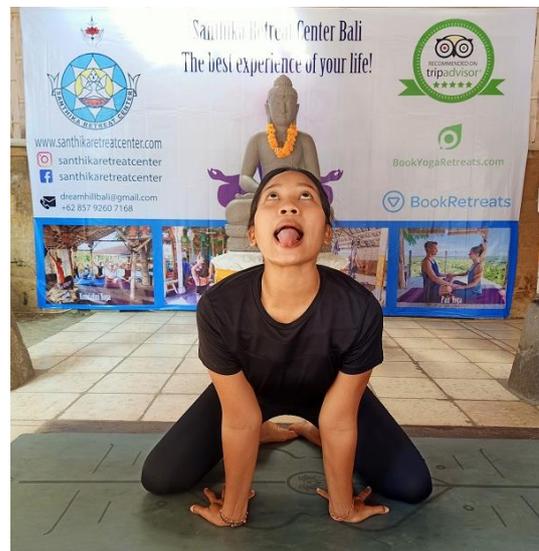
The space element is associated with the fifth chakra, Vishuddha or throat chakra, and is located in your neck. This element and chakra are associated with spirituality, intuition, connection, stillness, openness, freedom, communication, expansiveness, consciousness, and truth. It tends to be cold because it lacks the heat of fire, dry because it lacks the moisture of water, still because it lacks the mobility of air, light because it lacks the heaviness of earth, and ever-present because it is the space between all the other elements.

When the space element is balanced, you are able to freely communicate, express yourself, feel connected with the world around you, and feel physically and emotionally nourished. An unbalanced space element may lead you to feel empty, isolated, overwhelmed, withdrawn, and misunderstood.

1. Lion Pose (Simhasana)

This pose stretches the muscles of your face and can help ease teeth grinding and clenched jaw issues. It also brings awareness and strength to the muscles of your neck so you can discover the space for your own voice.

- Start by kneeling on the floor. You can also start in Lotus Pose.
- Exhale and press your palms firmly into the floor, about two feet in front of your knees. Spread out your fingers.
- Inhale deeply, and on your exhale, open your eyes and mouth as wide as you can, extend your tongue (try to touch your chin), and let out a "HAAAHHH" sound (roar).
- Inhale and relax your face.
- Repeat 5 to 10 times.





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2. Star Pose (Utthita Tadasana)

Star Pose is a building block for expansiveness, connecting you closer to the space element.

- Stand with your feet wide apart and your arms out to the side. Your heels should be turned in, your toes out.
- Draw your gaze and chin toward the sky, stretch your arms up and open, and reach out through your fingertips.
- On an exhale, expand your body out in five directions (hands, feet, head).
- Hold for 5 to 10 breaths.



3. Camel Pose (Ustrasana)

This pose will bring energy to your throat, but it is a more advanced pose so be aware of your body and its limitations, particularly if you have lower back issues.

- Kneel on the floor with your knees hip-width apart and your thighs perpendicular to the floor. Tuck your toes under.
- Bring your hands to your low back, your fingers pointing down.
- With an inhale, slowly draw your hips forward, while walking your gaze up and back. You should feel an opening of the chest and throat.
- To deepen the pose, continue to press your hips forward as you lean back and reach for one heel at a time. Hold onto each of your heels, with your fingertips pointing toward your toes and thumbs on the outside of each foot.
- Keep your thighs perpendicular to the floor, with your hips directly over your knees.
- Hold for 5 to 10 breaths.



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4. Fish Pose (Matsyasana)

Fish Pose is a vulnerable and uncomfortable pose for most, but it is also a great way to connect to the space element. Allow yourself to breathe into any sensations, letting your neck release as your throat begins to open.

- Place a block on the floor. Note: If you don't have a block, you can use a small pillow or rolled-up blanket or piece of clothing.
- Begin in a seated position, either extending your legs in front of you or bending your knees and placing your feet on the floor—whichever is most comfortable.
- Slowly lower your back over the block so that it is in between your shoulder blades.
- Rest the crown of your head gently on the floor, opening your throat. Adjust your legs, if needed.
- Hold for at least 10 to 15 breaths.





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5. Shoulder Stand (Salamba Sarvangasana)

This is a great follow-up pose to Fish Pose because it reverses your circulation, allowing fresh blood to flow to your throat.

- Lie flat on your back with your arms and legs extended.
- Lift your legs into the air.
- Roll your torso up and off of the mat to take the weight of the legs.
- Draw your shoulder blades underneath you and use your hands to support your lower back.
- Hold for 5 to 10 breaths.



6. Legs Up the Wall Pose (Viparita Karani)

Similar to Shoulder Stand Pose, this is also an inversion pose, but is gentler and restorative.

- Place a folded blanket flush against the wall and sit on the blanket with your right hip touching the wall and your knees touching your chest.
- Shift your weight so your back and shoulders are on the floor, with your sitting bone against the base of the wall and your legs extended up on the wall in a restful position.
- Let your head, neck, and chest rest heavily. Relax the rest of your muscles and let your hands rest on the floor or on your belly.
- Remain in this pose for 10 to 15 minutes, fully releasing and relaxing your body and focusing on deep breathing.





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7. Corpse Pose (Savasana)

This pose is a great way to end a yoga practice, letting yourself be present to all the sensations within you and the space around you. Corpse Pose will allow you to connect with the expansiveness and stillness of the space element.

- 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.
- Allow your body to blur with the space around you so that it becomes one.
- Hold for 5 to 15 minutes.



As you connect to the space element in your yoga practice, observe the stillness, freedom, and sense of awareness that opens within you. Creating space in your yoga practice can take real discipline, but if you're able to stay the course, the rewards can be full of possibilities and transformation.