

Benefits:

Builds Strength in Abdominals; Loosens Abdominals. Traditionally the posture is excellent for “organ massage”.

Body Parts Used by This Posture:

Abdominals

Good Before: All yoga sessions.

Use: Warm Up

Builds you up for: Abdominal Breathing; poses that require strength in the abdominals, like Butterfly, Pelvic Push, Pelvic Lift, Leg Over, Side Raise, Elbow to Knee 2, Elbow to Knee 3, Shoulder Stand, Plow, Cobra, Bow, Back Push Ups.

Energy Center Used: Mostly Belly center; also Root center & Solar Plexus center.



This is one of the single, most important yoga exercises to know! It will quickly tone your abdominals; it will work your breathing muscles back into shape very quickly; some people use this for weight loss; it will warm you up in a hurry, too!

Safety Tip

If you're pregnant, do this exercise very lightly, as a gentle tuck and hold, with slow releases. And do not hold your breath while doing this.



Start Standing in “Sumo Wrestler Position”



OR Start
Sitting



OR Start
On all fours
in “Table Stance”

TIP In the sitting or standing positions, have your elbows opened wide to allow room for your abdominals to move freely.

Then

BREATHE OUT ALL THE WAY
Exhale every last bit of air in your lungs.

TIP This exercise is almost impossible if there is any air in your lungs. So take a second to squeeze more and more air out before you begin your lifts.

Then

Tuck your belly up as far as it will go.

TIP If your tummy doesn't want to tuck up, see if you can squeeze out more air. (If there's any air in you lungs, it will stop your belly from tucking up.



Then

Still not breathing, drop your belly down.

Then

Do several lifts in a row in before you take your next breath.

Tuck up and drop down. Tuck up and drop down. Etc.
Do as many of these lifts as you can before you need to catch your breath again.

Tip You may find your body gets a rhythm going. Like ocean waves. Go with that rhythm, it'll be easier.

Stop & Relax

When you need to catch your breath!

Repetitions

That was one “round”
Do three rounds in total.

Progress Markers

Beginners can usually do 3 – 5 lifts before they need to catch their breath. And you might only be able to get a little bit of a tuck and have to force pushing your body out.

After a few weeks of doing this every day, the tucks will become deeper and you might be able to manage 10 lifts per breath.

By Yellow & Green Levels, students are often doing 12 – 16 lifts per breath. With further advancement you’ll be able to do 20 – 30 lifts each round!

Totally unflattering, I know! But this exercise will whip your abdominals into shape faster than any exercise I know. You can do this in the privacy of your bathroom, or when you’re driving alone in a car, or at a bus stop in the winter when you’re wearing a heavy coat!