

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.

Try Learning First: Abdominal Lifts 1



Abdominal Lifts 2 will advance the strength and depth of your lifts once you have been practicing Ab. Lifts 1 for a while. These exercises will also help you pick up speed with your lifts. They will quickly tone your abdominals and will work your breathing muscles into even better shape very quickly.

Difference from Abdominal Lifts 1: The second round is done as one lift that you hold with increasing intensity. The third round is your chance to see how fast you can go – how many lifts you can get in before you need to catch your breath!

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.

Abdominal Lifts 2 (continued)

Round 1

Now that you're in your starting position

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, without breathing

Tuck your belly up as far as it will go. Done well, this will feel like a hiccup

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.

Abdominal Lifts 2 (continued)

Round 2

Stop & Relax (Catch your breath!)

Then:

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

Now, without breathing

Tuck your belly up as far as it will go.

Still not breathing

Keep on tucking your belly up...

more... more... more

Until you need to catch your breath!

Discovery

Can you feel more muscle groups being worked as you tuck up more and more? Which ones? Where?

Then, when you need to breathe

Drop your belly down and relax
(Catch your breath!)

Repeat

Do this tuck & hold 2 – 3 times



Round 3

Same as Round 2, only faster!

Do Round 3 with the repeated tuck & drop, like you did in Round 1. Only don't worry about doing it well. Go for numbers! See how many you can do before you need to gasp for breath!

Abdominal Lifts 2 (continued)

Progress Markers

Round 1 warms you up to the exercise.

The tuck & hold from Round 2 helps you use more muscle groups and builds the strength in your abdominals better – because you're giving complete attention to detail. This will improve the overall strength of your abdominals and will eventually make your first round deeper and more intense.

Round 3 helps you get a better sense of rhythm and encourages your body to establish a faster rhythm. This will eventually improve the speed and rhythm of your first round, even when you're not thinking about it.

Encouragement

By now you may be past the point of feeling foolish doing these. Or you might find yourself skipping this part of the work out – maybe because the lifts feel kind of weird or maybe because you're not feeling especially glamorous when you're doing them. I would encourage you to stay with it. The results will eventually show in your energy level, the depth of your breathing and you might soon see more definition of your abdominal muscles. Great benefits for a small price!