

**Next time you breathe in
Stretch your chest upward
even more.**

Breathing out

- ? keep your chest stretched upward in it's new position.
- ? notice the weight in your hips and legs
- ? allow your legs to relax, feeling their weight sink into the floor.

Release

Breathe in and sit up, taking your weight off your hands.

Take the time to feel the muscles in your upper body relaxing and letting go.

Repetitions

Once your muscles have relaxed completely from the stretch, you can do it again – for a total of **3 repetitions.**

Common Errors

Dropping the neck back. This is very hard on the blood supply and nerves going to and from your head.

Letting go of the stretch in between breaths. While you're in each repetition, try to keep fully stretched when you breathe out. Then you'll be able to stretch even farther with your next breath in.



Try Combining with the Back Stretch for a Mini-Routine



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3. Place your hands directly behind you, finger tips pointing away from your body.

Tips

If your arms do not like to be directly behind you, it's OK to have them slightly to the side of your body.

If you have trouble reaching back:

? try resting your weight on your finger tips.

? If this is uncomfortable, try placing a large cushion behind you, large enough that you don't have to fuss with it to get your hands well placed and comfortable behind you.



You can also ease pressure in your wrists and hands by balling up your hands in a fist and resting on the fists, instead of having your palms flat.

4. Once you are in position

Take a few breaths to relax into place.

Allow the weight in your body to sink toward your hips and into the floor.

Allow the weight in your shoulders to sink toward your hands and into the floor.

5. Breathing in

Stretch the center of your chest toward the ceiling.

? Keep your hands, legs and hips on the floor.

? Don't drop your head back. Keep your neck and spine lined up with each other.



Hold this position

Breathing out

? keep your chest stretched upward

? notice the weight in your hips and legs, allow them to relax, feeling their weight sink into the floor.

Benefits:

Loosens shoulders, rotator muscles, front of chest, neck. Improves breathing muscles in the chest. Improves posture.

Time to Do: 2 – 3 minutes

Body Parts Used by This Posture:

Chest, Shoulders

Good Before: Balance Posture 2 or 3, Bow, Wheel

Combine with: Back Stretch, alternating each repetition of Back Bend Primer with a Back Stretch.

Builds you up for: Back Bends, Bust Expansion, Chest Expansion, Balance Posture 2 & 3, Bow, Wheel

Energy Center Used: Heart & Solar Plexus



This is a very simplified version of the back bend which can be done by most beginners and by many people with limited motion in their upper bodies. If done regularly, you will soon see improvement in your ability to do back bends. It's an excellent way to improve the rotation in your arms, to open up your chest for better breathing throughout the day, and improve your posture. It combines well with the Back Stretch for a refreshing mini-routine that can help you restore your energy in the middle of the day.

For audio instructions and to practice this pose along with Corinne, go to: www.audioyoga.com/BackStretch.htm

Start



1. Sit with legs stretched in front of you
Legs together

2. Now 'walk' back on your hips, one step each hip.
This lines your
body up well and
makes it easier to
sit upright.

If you still have
trouble feeling comfortable, you can place a
pillow under your thighs.

