

Benefits:

A good warm up for the body, stretching out knots in the whole body; wakes up the breathing muscles; prepares you for practicing yoga; refreshes you with some good, solid breathing; releases stress quickly.

Benefits of Optional Variation:

Builds balance; strengthens ankles; lays the foundation for “grounding” exercises.

Body Parts Used by This Posture:

Entire body. Especially spine.

Use: Warm Up

Good Before: Any yoga practise.

Good After: A long hard day!

Builds you up for: Complete Breath 2, Sun Salutation

Energy Center Used: All

Try Learning First: Mountain Pose 1 or Mountain Pose 2

Who Should Not Do This Posture: Do not do the **Optional Variation** (at the bottom of these pages) if you're pregnant.



All yoga routines start with a good, warm up breath and stretch. Complete Breath 1 is one of the simplest. It's a good, quick stress reliever. It's an excellent way to refresh your body with lots of good oxygen and quickly stretches away stress!

Yoga Snack The Complete Breath feels good any time: first thing in the morning; at the office for quick stress relief; at the end of a long hard day while; while you're waiting for the bath to run; just before bed to take the knots out.

Option

Begin with **Mountain Pose 1** or **Mountain Pose 2**

Start

Standing
Feet together
Arms by your sides
(Have your arms fall in line with your hip bones.)
Chin facing forward



Tip We're not looking for ram-rod straight here. (This isn't the military!) Just stand with your arms falling in line with your hip bones, but without forcing anything, and you'll be standing fairly straight without working hard at it

Tip Almost everyone tightens up their knees when they do this exercise. If you soften your knees, (unlock them), you will still remain standing, but your body won't be working as hard.

Discovery

You might not be as straight as you'd like at first. Some muscles are not in shape enough to hold this pose for long and let you be relaxed about it. In time, with lots of different yoga stretches, this position will come more naturally.

Now

Take a deep breath
While bringing your hands up over your head

Link your fingers together



Tip Fill your lungs to bursting! Right to the top



Hold your breath briefly



Now

Slowly let the air go
While your arms float down to
your sides.

Tip Breathe out through your
mouth. This is OK for now and
will help you pace your breathing.

Pause Repeat



Do 3 Repetitions

Optional Variation

Go up on your toes

While bringing your hands up over your head
And while breathing in.

(Good for balance and to build ankle strength.
Prepares you for better sense of “grounding”.)

Safety Tip

Do not do this Optional Variation if you're pregnant.