

(Half) Bow Preparatory Pose

Level 1 / Posture 57

Benefits:

Strengthens Quadriceps.

Time to Do: 3 – 5 minutes



Body Parts Used by This Posture: Thighs

Build Up to This Posture with : Balance Posture 1, Pelvic Lift

This Posture Builds You Up for: Half Bow, Bow, Balance Posture 2, 3; Pelvic Lift, Back Push Up, Incline Plane, Lunge

Energy Center Used: Root

Who Should Not Do This Pose: Pregnant women (as if you'd want to!)

Here's a good excuse for lying around! Many people who can't manage the Bow or Half Bow find this one a satisfying compromise. It builds the strengths in your quads without demanding too much of your shoulders or lower back. If you're round bodied, it can be difficult to reach your ankles or foot, in which case you might want to hang on to your pant leg or use a belt around your ankle. If you keep practicing this pose you will eventually be able to hold on to your foot without help – maybe sooner than you think!

Difference from Half Bow The Half Bow uses most of your body, while the Preparatory Pose uses mostly the thighs, so, although the benefits aren't as great, the Half Bow Prep Pose is easier – and less discouraging. The Half Bow Preparatory Pose is preferred by those with round bodies.

Difference from Bow The Half Bow Prep Pose is easier! Try it if you're thinking of giving up on the Bow.

Yoga Snack

Another great TV watching pose! But watch out for that tendency to fall asleep on the spot!

A good one in bed to help you fall asleep or to get the legs working in the morning.

Basic Instruction



Start

lying on your stomach, legs together, arms by your sides, forehead on the floor / mat / pillow.

2. Bend one knee, bringing your foot toward your hip.

3. Hold on to your foot with the corresponding hand, (same hand as the foot).



Place the other hand on the floor under your collar bone.

4. Tug your foot closer to your body.

5. Hold for 6 breaths

See if the stretch will (willingly) increase each time you breathe out.



You Will Feel This In Your thigh!

Release Lower your leg and arm to the floor. Relax.

Switch Sides. Repeat

Do 3 times on each side, alternating sides.

Details

Start

If you need to, at a beginning level, you can start lying on your front with your chin *to the side*.

Safety Tip – if you do that it can put more pressure on your lower back. Also this will not allow you to elongate your spine as much.

Elongating your spine: Once you are in your starting position, take a moment to *lengthen your spine* – let your spine “grow” a little. This will give you more flexibility & more benefits in the long run.



Safety Tip

A common error: holding on to the foot with the *opposite* hand. This makes it more likely you will twist your ankle. And you won't get as good a stretch in the thigh.



Modifications

If you can't reach your foot:

If you use this modification:

Do 3 times on one side.
Let go, relax.

Then do the other side.

After each repetition, relax the stretch but **don't let go** of your ankle / leg / belt

If you can't reach your foot, it can be difficult to squirm into & out of the posture. Try the holding on to your ankle, your leg, your pant leg or use a belt. This means you will not want to alternate legs during your repetitions.

Safety Tip Do not twist your ankle to hold on to your foot. If you can't manage this safely, then hold on to your ankle or your leg, or your pant leg or use a belt.

Breathing- Basic Movements

Settle into your starting position

Breathe in & out feeling your body settle and relax



Breathe in drawing your foot up & holding onto it



Breathe out, tugging the foot closer

Hold 6 breaths, feel your foot coming closer to your hip every time you breathe



Modified Movements



Settle into your starting position
Breathe in & out feeling your body settle and relax



Breathe in
Breathe out tugging the foot closer

Hold 6 breaths, feel your foot coming closer to your hip every time you breathe out.

Release Breathe in Breathe out, relaxing your stretch. **Repeat,** 2 more times, same side.

Final release: Breathe in, Breathe out, lowering leg & arms completely. **Relax.**

Repeat other side.

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**When you master this pose,
you might like to go on to the Half Bow.**