

Leg Fold 1

Level 1 / Posture 3

Benefits:

Strengths Lower Back, Lower Back Flexibility

Time to Do: 1 – 3 minutes

Body Parts Used by This Posture: Lower Back, Thighs, Shoulders

Warms You Up for: Any posture requiring flexibility in the lower back.

Good After: Shoulder Stand, Plow, Bow, Back Push Up, Relaxation, or after long periods of lying down.

Builds you up for: Spider

Combines Well with: Shoulder Stand & Plow; Back Push Ups

Energy Center Used: Root, Belly (Navel)



This is a popular stretch that provides gentle yet effective relief for the lower back. It's great when you're just getting up in the morning, relieving any stiffness that sets in over night. It's also a good tension reliever any time of day or before bed. For people who carry their excess weight in their thighs and tummy, it can be tricky to wrap your hands around the outside of your legs, especially when both legs are up together. In this case, you can modify the pose by wrapping your hands around the inside of your knee, between the knee and the thigh, and still gain some benefit. In time, your flexibility will improve and allow you to wrap your hands around the outside of your knees for the extra stretching that brings.

Difference from Leg Fold 2: Leg Fold 1 only stretches both legs together. Good for when you're in a rush or when you're just getting up.

Difference from Leg Fold 3: Leg Fold 1 does not include the neck stretch.

Yoga Snack

Great first thing in the morning before you get out of bed.

Start

Lying on your back, legs outstretched, neck lined up with your spine, chin pointing forward.

Then

Bring both knees up toward your chest
Wrap your hands around the outside of your knees & tug the knees closer to your chest



Hold for 6 – 20 breaths

Release Lower your legs & arms

Repeat 1 – 2 times

Breathing

Lie in Starting Position

Breathe in

Breathe out

Bringing Knees up to chest

Hold for 6 – 20 breaths

With each breath out
draw your knees closer and closer to your body.
Notice how breathing out invites the knees to naturally stretch more without forcing it.

Common Errors

- Starting out with body & legs crooked.
- Wrapping hands around the inside of knees, between knees and thighs, instead of the outside. This is OK if you cannot do this pose any other way, however, wrapping your hands around the outside increases the stretch in the thigh and lower back.

Tip Also feel your shoulders lying back loosely. Avoid lifting them up or hunching them upward as you deepen the pose.

Release

Breathe in

Breathe out, lowering legs & arms

Feel your muscles letting go of the stretch and your body sinking down into the floor.

Tip Wait for your body to completely release the pose completely before doing it again.