

Benefits: Increases flexibility of outer hips and, a bit, shoulders and spine.

Time to Do: 1 – 3 minutes

Body Parts Used by This Posture: Legs, hips.



Warms You Up for: Leg Over, Twists, Side Stretches, Triangle poses.

Good After: Reclining Butterfly, Dead Bug

Builds You Up for: Leg Over, Twists, Side Stretches, Triangle poses.

Combines Well With: Reclining Butterfly, Dead Bug, Leg Fold.

Energy Center Used: Root and Belly Chakras

This is a wonderful pose for those with very stiff hips. It's gentle and yet effective. It's a great warm up pose and enjoyable for seniors and for people who have trouble with seated Butterfly poses. In *Serenity Yoga*, it's used at Yellow Level to help train you to pace your breathing and to tie movement with the breath. Try it first thing in the morning or at the beginning or end of your yoga routine to get you moving after you've been lying down.

Yoga Snack

Side to sides are a great way to get your hips moving after a long night's sleep. It takes as little time as you like and yet you'll enjoy the benefits all day long. See the end of these instructions for a gentle mini-routine to get you going in the morning.

Overview



Basic Instruction

Start

- ? Lying Down
(although, once you are familiar with this pose, you can modify it to do it in a seated position.)
- ? Knees up.
- ? Knees, legs, feet together.



Keeping your knees together

Bring both legs down to one side.



Tip: Your knees must stay together.

AND don't let your feet "stack". Don't let one foot slide on top of the other. If you do that, you won't get as good a stretch in your thighs and hips. Both feet need to stay in touch with the floor at all times.



You will feel this in your outer hip, and maybe in your inner thigh.

Hold for 1 – 6 breaths.

Return your knees to the upright position.

Pause.

Bring your knees down to the other side.

Hold for 1 – 6 breaths.

Return your knees to the upright position.



Continue back and forth for at least 3 repetitions for each side.

Do 5 or more repetitions if you're trying to achieve more flexibility in your hips.



Finish the repetitions with your knees upright and together.

Follow with: Reclining Butterfly, Pelvic Lifts or Leg Fold.

How long you hold it depends on what you are trying to achieve with the pose. See the Breathing Themes for ideas on ways to use breathing and holding with this pose.

Generally – if you’re trying to achieve flexibility in your hips, go for rhythmic, repetitive motions, from side to side, with no holds or short holds. For best results, use the Yellow or Blue Level Breathing Themes.

If you’re trying to nudge a stubbornly stiff hip out of grid lock, Breathing Themes Two or Five are helpful. In these cases, you might like to hold the poses for 2 – 6 breaths while you pay attention to your breathing theme.

Breathing



<p>Settle into your starting position, knees up. Relax into place. Feel the weight in your legs dissolving, sinking toward the floor as you breathe out. Once you are ready: Breathe in</p>	<p>Breathe Out Lowering your legs to one side. Pause or Hold <u>Breathe in & out</u> 0 – 6 times.</p>	<p>Breathe In Bringing your legs upright again. Pause your breathing and your movement</p>	<p>Breathe Out Lowering your legs to the other side.</p>
<p>Common Errors Other than not pausing when bringing the legs upright, the most common error is stacking the feet. Notice the difference between the stacked feet in one picture here and the correct version with both feet together, each foot in contact with the floor. However, you don’t have to keep your feet completely flat on the floor.</p>			

? 2005 Corinne Friesen
www.audiodyoga.com

Mini Routine

To Help Ease Stiff “Morning Hips”, Stiff Back and Get You Moving in the Morning

You can do this routine in bed or on the floor, to ease away morning stiffness in your hips and get you going.



Reclining Butterfly

Hold for 6 – 20 breaths.



Side to Sides

3 – 5 Rounds
No Hold as such but pausing instead.



Leg Fold

Both legs together.
1 round.
Hold for 6 – 20 breaths.

If you'd like to continue, you can then climb out of bed and do these stretches, to get energized and breathing well for your day:



Simple Side Bend

3 times each side.
Alternating sides.
No hold as such, but pause.



Wood Chopper

3 – 5 Repetitions
No Hold as such but pause.



Abdominal Lifts

3 rounds