

Benefits:

Loosens & strengthens lower back, inner thighs, hamstrings

Time to Do: 1 - 3 minutes

Body Parts Used by This Posture:

Lower back, hamstrings, inner thighs

Build Up to This Posture with:

Butterfly, Butterfly Prep. Pose 2, Butterfly Extension, Reclining Butterfly Elbow to Knee 2, Side to Sides, Leg Over, Back Stretch

This Posture Builds You Up for: Spider 2, Back Stretch, Standing Wide Angle Poses, other forward bends like Wood Chopper.

Energy Center Used: Belly, Solar Plexus

Who Should Not Do This Pose Pregnant women – it compresses the belly too much. However, you'll hardly need the warning, since there's not much chance you'll want to do it after the fourth month!



Start



1. Sit with legs stretched in front of you, legs apart
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 each of your thighs.

Tip The wider apart your legs are, the harder the pose will be. So, as you get to know the pose, adjust the space between your legs to make it harder or easier.

Before you begin, take a moment to **elongate your spine** - feel like your body is getting slightly taller. Keep this feeling the entire time you're doing the pose. This will give you greater flexibility as you bend forward and will protect your back.



3. Fold forward, from the waste, allowing your arms to slide down your legs. Stop when you have a good stretch that does not hurt.

Tip Fold forward like a door closing, keeping your neck and spine lined up with each other. Try not to hunch your back or drop your head.



Safety Tip If you feel burning in your lower back or behind your knees, (in your hamstrings) you've gone too far. Lift your body up until the discomfort goes away. This is now the limit of your stretch for today.

Hold the pose for 6 – 20 breaths or until you feel you have reached your limit.

Release, by returning upright, retracing your movements. Wait until your body has completely relaxed from the stretch before you do it again.

Repeat, until you've done the pose three times.

See if you can go a little farther with each repetition. But not to the point of pain or burning.

Breathing

As with all forward bends, you go into this pose while breathing out. Breathe in as you release the pose.



Breathe in & out settling into place.

Breathe in, feeling yourself grow taller, elongating your spine.



Breathe out going into the pose

Breathe in & out while holding the pose.



Breathe in to come up.

Common Errors

Hunching over, bending the back.

Forward bends need to be done as if you're a door closing, hinged at the waist. Fold at the waist, with your neck and back staying lined up with each other, (straight), as you come closer and closer to your legs.



Rushing. Wait between repetitions. After you come up, notice your muscles letting go. Wait until they've completely let go of the stretch before you repeat the pose. Waiting lets them loosen and become fully flexible. This will make them ready to give you their best extension in the next round.