

# Upper Body Strengthenener

Level 7 - 8

This routine means business! It's a demanding work out designed to strengthen your upper body while giving you a complete work out.

**Breathing Theme** As with all routines for strengthening, use a breathing theme that involves holding for longer periods of time and, at some point in the posture, pushing to your limit, such as *Exploring the Edge*

## Breathing Theme – Exploring the Edge

Hold the poses for 2 – 6 breaths, breathing out strongly.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Repetition: is a warm up. 2<sup>nd</sup> repetition is to your comfortable limit.
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> repetition is where you get the strength building.
  - Hold the 3<sup>rd</sup> repetition at your extreme limit (short of pain!).
  - Each time you breathe out, see if your body will go any farther, (but not to the point of pain!).
  - Each time you breathe in, see what parts of your body will relax more.

## 1. Warm Up Breathing

Do these warm ups with very, very full breaths in, then when breathing out, squeeze out all your air. At the same time, make your stretches as full as possible, (without pain, of course). Alternate between these three poses, doing three rounds.

### Butterfly Breathing



### Simple Side Bend



### Abdominal Lifts



## 2. Meditation

Focus on your breaths out.

See how slow and even you can make each breath out.

How long can you comfortably take to breathe out?

## 3. Sun Salutations

At least 3 rounds, with very full breaths in and out, extending as fully as possible into the stretches.

## 4. Chest Expansion alternating with Eagle's Wings

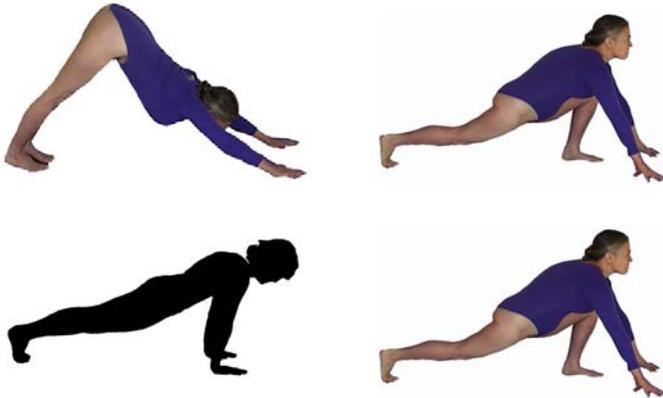
Do two rounds. For the Eagles wings of the first round have your right arm on top. For the Eagles wings of the second round have your left arm on top.



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## Upper Body Strengthener Level 7 – 8 (Continued)

**5. Alternate Downward Dog, then Lunges, then Plank, then Lunges;** Holding each until you feel your muscles need a rest. Do two to three rounds.



**6. Twist alternating with Butterfly** Alternate between the poses until you've done 3 Twist repetitions to each side of your body.



### 7. Cobra, Puppy, Cat, Combination (Alternating poses, in a continuous flow.)

Use this combination as a way to “cool down”. So, you don’t have to stretch to your extreme limit.

Move into and out of the poses in rhythm with your breathing, pacing your movements to start and end when the breath starts and ends.

When you get to the Puppy and when you’re lowering yourself to the floor after the cat, focus on long breaths out, feeling yourself slide into the stretch as long as you’re breathing out.

End in Puppy Pose, then move into Child Pose. Hold the Child Pose for your closing meditation.



**Child Pose**



### Closing Meditation

Feel your entire body sinking down and letting go each time you breathe out. Especially feel the weight in your shoulders dropping toward the floor as you let go of your breath.