

Teaching Seated Poses

With Rixie Dennison
April 23, 2016



Sitting Well – The Value of a Comfortable Seat

Sthira – stable, firm, steady
Sukham – easy, pleasant, soft, gentle, mild
Asanam – seat or to sit, (meditation) posture

The Benefits

Calms the brain, strengthens the back, remove fatigue, refreshes the brain and soothes the nerves, stretches the back, brings awareness

The Challenges

Chronic rounding, low back pain, tight hamstrings, gravity, habitual patterns

Preparations

Take your time to get set up

Extension brings space

Props for Sitting

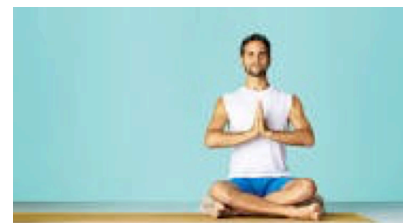
Blankets and Blocks

Sitting – Stability, Length and Mobility

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Sukhasana – Easy Pose

2 blankets and blocks – cross your shins – widen your knees, slip each foot beneath the opposite knee, fold the legs in toward your torso. There should be comfortable gap between the feet and pelvis



Sources: www.yogajournal.com , www.googleimages.com and all of my teachers past and present who have freely passed on to me their experience and wisdom.

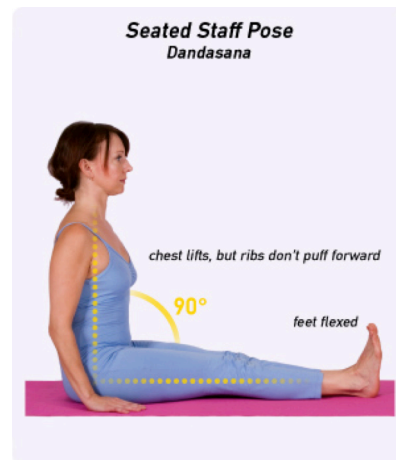
Neutral Pelvis – Balance the tailbone and pubic bone; Lengthen your tail bone toward the floor, slide your shoulder blades toward each other and then melt them down the back. Alternate the cross of the legs.

Knees lower than hips – crease level to knees

Hands – Stack your hands in your lap, palms up or palms down.

Dandasana – Staff Pose

Extend legs together in front of your torso. If your torso is leaning back it may be because of tight hamstrings are dragging the sitting bones toward the knees and the back of the pelvis toward the floor. If so, blanket or a bolster to lift the pelvis. Check alignment at the wall. The sacrum and the shoulder blades should touch the wall, but not the lower back.



Sit towards the front of the sit bones - pubis and tail bone to neutral. Without hardening the belly firm the thighs- press them down toward the floor, rotate them slightly toward each other. Flex your ankles, pressing through your heels. Lengthen up through the spine –

Baddha Konasana – Bound Angle Pose

baddha-konasana-bound-angular-pose.png
Sit in Dandasana, raising your pelvis on a blanket, exhale, bend your knees, pull your heels toward your pelvis, then drop your knees out to the sides and press the soles of your feet together. If groins or hips are tight – use blocks to support on each side. The spine nice and tall using your arms and hands behind to support.



Vajrasana – Thunderbolt Pose

An alternative to taking a cross-legged position. It gives the muscles along the front of the legs—the quadriceps, shins, and ankles—a

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stretch. Lay your shins on the floor and sit **on** your heels. But if you have a tighter body, this can be quite uncomfortable.

Blanket for ankle comfort. If you're feeling a lot of pressure on the toe knuckles or have problems pointing your toes to make the front of the ankle rest flat, take a blanket or two and rest your shins on them as your toes hang off the back. In time, you might be able to remove layers of blanket as your flexibility increases.

Blanket for knee comfort. If you're feeling pain in your knees, don't suffer through it! Take one or more blankets and stack them between your calves and thighs. Depending on your body, you might be happier with the blankets' edge coming all the way to the back of the knee, or leaving some space between the edge and the back of the knee. As your body changes, you might be able to reduce the layers of blanket you need.



Block for knee comfort. Another option for elevating the pelvis and reducing the angle of flexion in the knee is to sit on a block. Run a yoga block on its medium height horizontally under your pelvis, and settle your sitting bones on it like you're riding on a cruiser bike with a broad saddle. Your feet will straddle the block, making this a lighter way to practice.

Once you've found a comfortable kneeling position, tilt your pelvis forward and back a few times, finding a comfortable neutral alignment that's not tipped forward or back. In this sweet spot, your spine should be free to rise up long through its natural curves, making more room for the breath and one less distraction for seated meditation.

Suggestions: Take your time - place a seated pose in each of your classes through the session. Learning to sit in Yoga is priceless.

Notes:

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