

Using balance poses as a means of grounding

1. Standing balance flow



Mountain Pose

Tadasana

Begin with your feet parallel. Lift and spread your toes to activate the muscles in your lower legs. Create a slight bend in your knees and engage your quadriceps. Contract your lower abdominal muscle to level your pelvis and your upper abdominal muscle to draw your ribs in. Lengthen your side waist and draw your upper arm bones back.

Chair Pose

Utkatasana

From Mountain Pose, bend your knees to 90 degrees over your ankles, and keep weight equally distributed on your feet. Engage your lower abdominal muscles, as you reach your arms up and pull your arm bones back.



Tree Pose

Vrksasana

Modifications:

If you are unable to bring the foot to the thigh you can place the sole of the foot onto the calf – or place the toes onto the mat, bringing the heel to the calf

From Chair Pose, move into Tree Pose on the right side. Alternate sides as you repeat rounds.

The key to a stable tree is the connection of the sole of the foot into the thigh/calf and the responding connection of the thigh/ calf into the foot

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2. Inversion balance flow

Downward-Facing Dog Pose

Adho Mukha Svanasana

Spread your fingers wide, hands shoulder-distance apart or slightly wider, draw your shoulders away from your ears and lift your sitting bones high.

Whilst we may not think of downward facing dog as a balance or an inversion, this pose is both!

We use the hands as our foundation, balanced by support of the balls of the feet

Our head and heart are lower than our hips, offering a gentle inversion that can calm the mind and lift the spirits



Practice spending some time in adho mukha svanasana, focusing on your breath, a sense of spaciousness between the shoulders, yielding into hands and feet with a corresponding reach up, and back of the tail

Move from here into plank pose – kumbhakasana

Start in [Adho Mukha Svanasana](#). Then inhale and draw your torso forward until the arms are perpendicular to the floor and the shoulders directly over the wrists, torso parallel to the floor.



Practice spending one, or more breaths in kumbhakasana, focusing on your breath, the same sense of spaciousness between the shoulders, yielding into hands and feet with a corresponding reach forward with the crown and back with the heels (alternatively, lower the knees to half-plank)

Flow back to adho mukha svanasana on an exhale, continue for 2-5 rounds before resting in balasana (child's pose) or flowing through chaturanga to a simple bhujangasana (cobra) & back to downward dog or balasana

Press your outer arms inward and firm the bases of your index fingers into the floor. Firm your shoulder blades against your back, then spread them away from the spine. Also spread your collarbones away from the sternum.

Press your front thighs up toward the ceiling, but resist your tailbone toward the floor as you lengthen it toward the heels. Lift the base of the skull away from the back of the neck and look straight down at the floor, keeping the throat and eyes soft.

From here – if you are comfortable with inversions & have some wall space you might feel like adding in some handstand prep, dolphin pose (makarasana) or a calming, cooling inversion such as salamba sarvangasana (supported shoulderstand) or our 'go to' vapritha karani (legs up the wall pose) as an alternative to savasana