

Air

Even though it surrounds us and expands us, air is an element that is a given and it is often overlooked as we go through the practice. We do a separate practice -- pranayama, or a disciplined breathwork, to skillfully work with air. As our lungs fill with air, we first notice the chest lifting and becoming spacious. In this practice we will direct our focus to the broaden the chest. As we invite the breath in, muscular energy enables us to bring our power and awareness to the heart; consequently the expanded out-breath enables lengthening to further enhance the form of the pose.

Ansanas



Cat/Cow



Anjaneyasana



Wild Thing



Salambasana



Bhujangasana variation



Virabhadrasana 2



Parsvakonasana



Virasana



Pigeon Prep w/Back Knee Bent



Dhanurasana



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Application. In order to gain a sense of expansiveness to increase the presence and effect of air in the body, practice with postures that expand the heart area. Lengthen the side ribs, and for the pinnacle pose, dhanurasana, prepare the quads through poses to lengthen the front sides of the legs. After all the backbends, make sure you spend time in Dog to lengthen the back body and balance the front and back actions.

Photos by Joel Wright Alyce Henson