

The Science of Upanishads – Part 46: Foundations of Modern Yoga Practice (Contd.): Continuation of Descriptions of Individual Asanas (Physical Poses) as Part of The Third Anga (Limb) of The Ashtanga Yoga (Eight Limbed Yoga) of The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

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Out of the Twelve Major Asanas listed in the original Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (please refer to the earlier Mandir Bulletins for details), we have already covered seven, including (1) Padmasana, (2) Veerasana, (3) Bhadrasana (decent), and (4) Svastikasana (like the mystical sign), (5) Dandasana (Staff Pose), (6) Sopasrayasana (supported), (7) Paryankasana (bed or couch pose), (8) Krauncha-nishadasana (seated heron), and (9) Hasta-nishadasana (seated elephant). Today, we will discuss two additional Yogasanas, including (10) Ushtra-nishadasana (seated camel pose) and (11) Sthirasukhasana (stable and comfortable/easy pose).

(10) Ushtra – nishadasana (Seated Camel Pose): It consists of a backbend that stretches the whole front of the body. It is performed on the knees and is often used as preparation for deeper backbends.



The benefits of Ushtra-nishadasana include:

- Stretches the front of the body, particularly the chest, abdomen, quadriceps, and hip flexors
- Improves spinal flexibility, while also strengthening the back muscles and improving posture
- Strengthens knees and back
- Enhances balance and flexibility
- Improves concentration
- Creates space in the chest and lungs, increasing breathing capacity and helping to relieve respiratory ailments.
- Stimulates the kidneys, which improves digestion.
- Energizes the body and helps to reduce anxiety and fatigue.
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(11) Sthirasukhasana (Stable & Comfortable/Easy Pose):



There is no one specific yoga position that constitutes *Sthira Sukham Asanam*. This is any position that makes the body steady (Sthira) and comfortable (Sukha); any position that centers the body and facilitates concentration of the mind and hence meditation. Since meditation aims at freeing the mind of petty preoccupations and the centering of the conscious mind, you want to be able to sit in a position that is both steady and comfortable. So it becomes important that you remove physical stress and tension.

Every yoga pose should be done with the qualities of both steadiness (sthira) and comfort (sukha), effort and ease.

More to follow. Stay tuned.....

Read Here for More on [Ushtra-nishadasana](#) and [Sthirasukhasana](#) as Part of Asanas as the Third of the Eight Principal steps of Ashtanga Yoga Described in Yoga Sutras of Patanjali