

The Science of Upanishads – Part 44: 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 four, including **(1) Padmasana, (2) Veerasana, (3) Bhadrasana (decent), and (4) Svastikasana (like the mystical sign)**. Today, we will discuss two more Asanas, including **(5) Dandasana (staff) and (6) Sopasrayasana (supported)**

(4) Dandasana or Staff Pose begins with a seated position in which the legs are extended forward. The palms or the fingertips (if the palms don't reach) should be rested on either side of the body. The upper-body should be extending upward through the crown of the head, and the back should be completely perpendicular to the ground (as though sitting against a wall). If this is not possible, one may want to use a block underneath one's sitting bones to reduce the intensity in the hamstring muscles. The entire core should be engaged throughout this asana. The legs should be squeezing together, and the toes should be pointing inwards toward the body. It may even be possible to create space between the heels and the ground by activating the leg muscles.



The benefits of Dandasana include:

- improves digestion
- prevents sciatic pain
- helps stretching and activating the muscles of the legs
- prevents tiredness in the feet and calf-muscles

(6) Paryankasana or Couch (or Bed) Pose. The steps involved in achieving the Asana include: (a) Come into Virasana (Hero Pose) and belt the legs so that the thighs do not slide too far apart and compress the back. When belting the legs, be sure to keep the knees a little bit apart, as much as the width of your hip joints, to leave room in the hip socket for the trunk to recline, (b) Recline into Supta Virasana (Reclined Hero Pose), (c) Press the elbows into the ground, lift the back and rest the back of the crown on the floor, (d) Bring the arms overhead and take hold of the elbows, (e) Hold the pose for 30 to 60 seconds,

changing the crossing of the arms half way, and (f) Come out of the pose slowly and go into Adho Mukha Shvanasana (Downward Facing Dog Pose) to relieve the legs and lower back.



The benefits include:

- This pose opens the lungs and chest and is a good preparation for pranayama
- It helps with lymph drainage, as the lymph flows from abdomen into the chest and supports lymph drainage under the collar bones
- It benefits the thyroid and parathyroid as the anterior neck spine is stretched and toned
- It benefits the vocal cords, throat and tongue, as this area is fully stretched
- It stretches the respiratory diaphragm and actively stretches the abdominal organs
- It stretches the feet, quadriceps and ilio-psoas
- This pose is beneficial for asthma, lung conditions, shallow breathing, depression, low blood pressure, chronic fatigue and kyphosis.

More to follow. Stay tuned.....

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