



Muladhara chakra

One of the most widely-understood benefits of a yoga practice is that it develops strength and flexibility. The body, while made up of flesh and bone, also consists of an energetic system. This can be thought of as electrical irrigation, radiating energetic frequencies. The currents of energy are transported through what are called nadis, which literally means “flow” and cross or terminate in energy centres called chakras, or “spinning wheels”. There are seven main chakras in the body. They open and flow when stimulated and can get blocked when out of balance. The following asana practice can help unlock the flow of energy throughout the body to enhance the human experience.

The first chakra, called the “root” or Muladhara chakra is located at the base of the spine with body associations through the bones of the legs down to the feet. It is related to our ability to manifest our earthly needs, be grounded and feel secure. When this chakra is out of balance we may suffer from low-back pain, sciatica, fear and lack of trust in our ability meet our needs.

Root chakra asanas involve the lower body, such as Virabhadrasana II (warrior pose). Sink in deep and feel the strength from your hips radiate to your feet. Visualise the colour red racing through your legs. Root down as if your feet are extending to the earth’s fiery core. Take a deep breath in and as you exhale repeat the sound “LAM”. Feel the vibrational energy of your voice travel through your legs and into the earth. Hold the posture for at least one minute on each side. Trust in your practice and be confident the earth provides everything you need.

The second chakra, called Svadhithana, literally means “sweetness”. It is located at the sacral spine and corresponds to change, flow, and creativity. Body associations include the hips and reproductive organs. It is related to our sense of desire and sexuality. When Svadhithana chakra is out of balance we may suffer from impotence, pelvic pain, urinary problems, feelings of inadequacy or shame of the body.

Balance the second chakra with poses that open the hips such as Supta Baddha Konasana (reclined bound angle pose). Use a couple of rolled blankets or a block under each knee if necessary. For at least two minutes, place both hands on your belly and feel your breath move into your lower abdomen. Visualise a warm and radiant orange light through your sacral region to temper your appetite. Take a deep breath in and on an exhale repeat “VAM”, feeling this sound travel through your hips and sacral spine. Be open to change. Surrender your desires into creative energy.

The third chakra, Manipura chakra, relates to power and action. It translates as “lustrous gem”, shining from the solar plexus like a bright yellow sun. It corresponds to will-power, confidence and self-esteem. Body associations include the digestive system, liver and core muscles. When this chakra is out of balance we may feel powerless, selfish or suffer from indigestion or ulcers.



Svadhithana chakra

A strong core creates a sense of empowerment to begin and complete all tasks. To increase the vibrational energy and strength of the solar plexus region, lie on your back with your knees bent, feet flat on the mat. Bring your hands behind your head. Engage your abdominal muscles and lift your head and shoulder blades. Visualise a bright yellow light radiating from your core. Take a deep breath in and exhale the sound “RAM”. Hold this posture for at least one minute. Accept your path and follow your gut instincts. Be powerful and follow through with all of your endeavours.



Manipura chakra

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The first three chakras are associated with our actions and reactions. They govern the energetic qualities of everyday life such as our work and relationship with the world. While keeping these chakras in balance is important, sometimes our energy gets stuck here and is

resistant to flowing upward through the heart to the crown chakra. It is essential for our spiritual evolution to keep all chakras open and expanding, moving beyond our basic needs, creativity and personal will power to matters of the heart and connection with the divine.

Anahata chakra



The heart chakra, Anahata, meaning "unstruck", is the fourth chakra and it relates to the unconditional nature of divine love. It is located in the centre of the chest, near the heart. Body associations include the lungs, heart, arms and hands. When this chakra is blocked we may experience heartache, loneliness, circulatory problems or asthma.

Stimulate Anahata chakra with heart-opening poses that involve the arms and shoulders. As a variation of Virasana (hero pose), extend your arms out to the side. Pull your shoulder blades together and lift your head to gaze upward. Inhale deeply into your lungs to expand your ribs and lift your sternum, exhale to repeat "YAM". Feel the airy quality of your breath expand into your heart space. Visualise the colour green radiating from your heart to your hands as if your arms were like branches of a tree, offering support to those in need. Stay in this pose for one to two minutes. Be compassionate. Share your heart. Rejoice in your ability to give and receive love.

quality across your vocal cords. Hold the posture for at least one minute releasing energy blockages of all those words you wished you said or didn't say. Let it go. Feel your throat open and expansive like a cloudless blue sky. Free your words, free your voice.

Vishuddha chakra



The fifth chakra, Vishuddha, meaning "purification", is located in the throat. It relates to our ability to communicate and express ourselves. Body associations include the neck and shoulders. When this chakra is out of balance we may experience sore throats, shyness and a resistance to speak the truth.

To open the throat chakra and free your voice, practice Matsyasana (fish pose). At the very top of your inhale take in just a little bit more breath, stretching across the front of your neck and throat. On an exhale repeat "HAM" making the sound of "H" linger. Feel the vibrational



Ajna chakra

Ajna, meaning "perception", is the sixth chakra, or "third eye". It is centred at the brow point between the eyes and projects outward. This chakra relates to our intuition and vision with a body association of the eyes. Blockages in ajna chakra may give us eye problems, headaches or the tendency to over-think. When this chakra is balanced we have faith in what we see without our eyes.

To create a flow through your Ajna chakra, sit comfortably and rub both palms together vigorously to create heat. Gently place your palms on your closed eyes. Bring your awareness to the third eye and imagine a velvety indigo-coloured veil there. Now project your gaze through it. Take a deep breath and exhale "OM", with greater emphasis on the "O". Feel the sound vibration travel from your throat to your third eye and beyond. Trust your intuition. Have faith in your destiny.

The seventh chakra, Sahasrara, meaning "infinite", is located at the crown of the head and just above with body-associations of the brain and nervous system. This chakra relates to consciousness and connection to the divine. When our crown chakra is closed we may deny our spiritual identity or doubt our true Self.

Sirsasana (headstand) – also known as the king of asanas – is a crown-opening pose. For those who do not practise inversions, sit comfortably and place both hands on top of your head. For one to five minutes press the top of your

head into your hands, then release your hands to your lap. Connect with the upward flow of energy from the top of your head and beyond. Remain focused on this sensation and silently chant "OM". Allow the internal sound vibration to radiate upward to the crown. Visualise yourself surrounded by the regal colour purple, bathed in the beauty of unity.

Without opening your eyes, move into Savasana (corpse pose). Counting from one to seven (from the root to the crown) repeat these affirmations in your mind.

- One: I am secure. All of my needs are being met.**
- Two: I am creative. I am open to change. I trust my body.**
- Three: I am powerful. I have energy to follow through and finish tasks.**
- Four: I love myself and others unconditionally. I give and receive love freely.**
- Five: I speak my truth. I trust my voice.**
- Six: I trust my intuition. I connect to the source of divine wisdom.**
- Seven: I am all beings. I am bliss.**

As our chakras balance, fear and insecurity melt away and we open ourselves to creativity and change. We become empowered and surrender the ego to our expanding hearts. We live free to speak and express ourselves. We trust in what we see without our eyes and we live in the beauty of connection with all that is.



Sahasrara chakra