

## Janu Sirsasana

### Getting into the pose:



Begin in Dandasana: Sit on the mat on one firmly folded blanket. Sit on two if your hamstrings and gluteal muscles are tight. Extend your legs out in front of you. Bend your right knee, and bring your heel in toward your perineum.

With your right hand take the thigh back. Press your left hand on the floor beside your left hip. Inhale, lift the torso and chest. Exhale, and turn to the left. Line up your navel with the middle of the left thigh.



Reach forward and with your right hand hold the outside of your left foot. Extend your chest and anterior spine forward and up, making space between each of your front ribs as you do so. Press the right knee into the floor and extend actively through the ball of your left foot. Continue using the pressure of the left hand on the floor to maintain the upward extension of the spine, and the twist to the left.

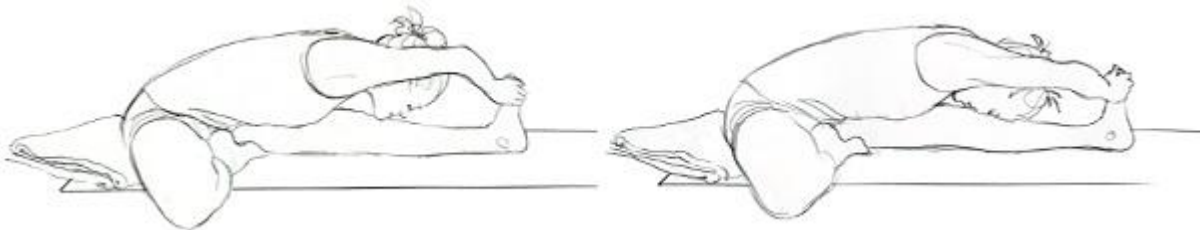
Then reach your left hand to the outside of the left foot and switch your right hand to the inside.



You can also come into the pose another way: Extend the arms up, and reach out of the waist to lengthen the front of the spine.

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### Head Down:



Maintaining the length of the torso, exhale, and extend your side ribs further forward over your left leg. Be sure to not either pull yourself forcefully into the forward bend, hunch the back or shorten the front spine. As you fold forward, bend your elbows out to the sides and lift them away from the floor. The lower belly should touch the thighs first, the head last.

Touch your chin first, then your forehead to your knee. As you do so, maintain the extension of the left leg. Pull the toes towards your head.



If you have the flexibility, reach the hands in front of the foot, turn them out and clasp your right wrist with your left hand. Relax the shoulders, neck and face.

### Coming out:



With an inhalation. Raise your head, pull your chest and ribs forward and up. Release your arms to your sides.



If you began with the arms raised, come out of the pose with the arms raised alongside your head in line with trunk.

Repeat on the other side.

## Variations:

### With a belt: Concave Spine

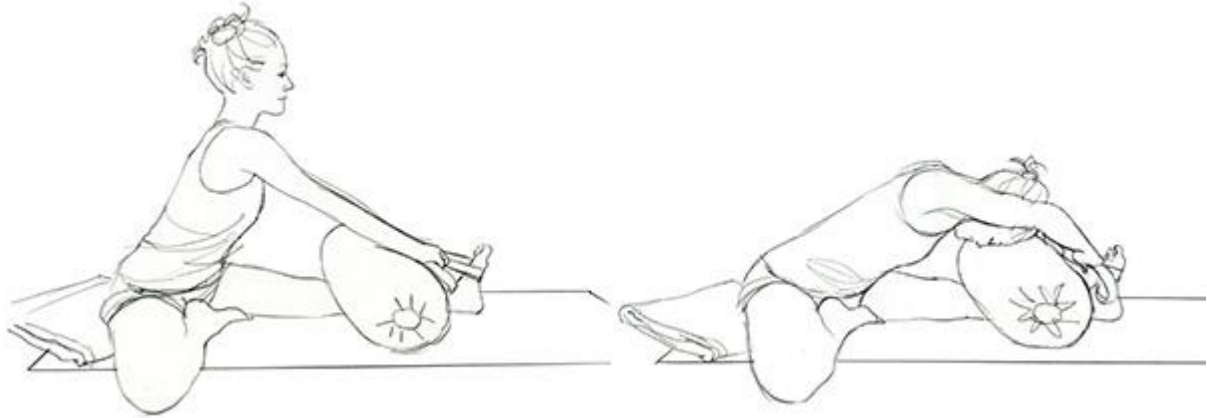


If you cannot reach your foot without rounding your back or bending your extended leg, use a strap to help you lengthen the

front of your spine. Place a belt around your foot and hold with both hands. Curve your spine in: move your navel forward and raise your side ribs.

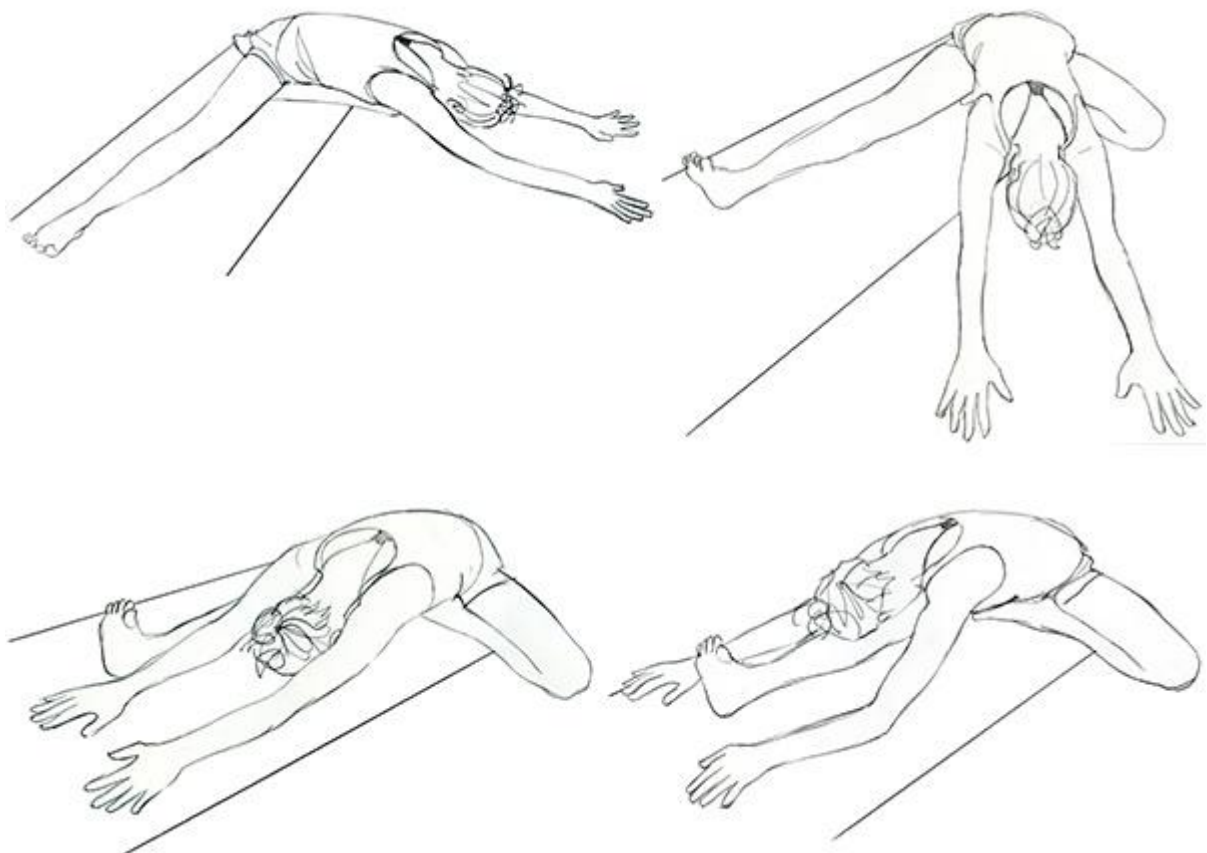
If your right knee doesn't rest comfortably on the floor, place another folded blanket under your hips, and then support the knee (which should not be higher than the pelvis).

### With a belt and bolster: Head Down



If your hamstrings are tight, to avoid straining the back, place a blanket under your head. The bolster also helps anchor the shin.

### Recovery Janu Sirsasana





For a soft release and to recover from back bends, come into the pose this way: Rest your left foot sole lightly against your inner right thigh. Place one or more folded blankets across your shin to support your head and another across your upper thigh to soften the lower back. For a similar effect, see above: [With a belt and bolster, Head Down](#).

### **COUNTER INDICATIONS:**

Recent or chronic back or knee injury, or knee inflammation.