

## Kapoasana (Pigeon Pose) with block and bolster

Benefits: A super deep backbend, Kapotasana pulls the energy from the thighs, and concentrates it at the navel center. This energy revitalizes the autonomic system which brings about a deep organic restorative action.

The block and bolster provide a fulcrum and support for the pelvis, enabling concentrated effort which make the feet more accessible. This variation extends the thigh muscles, stretches your torso, opens the hips and groins, strengthens the lower back muscles and core, and prepares you for classical Kapotasana.



Kneel on a mat and a folded blanket facing away from the wall so that the toes are a forearm's length away from the wall. Place a bolster across your shins. Place a foam block on its narrow end on the bolster.

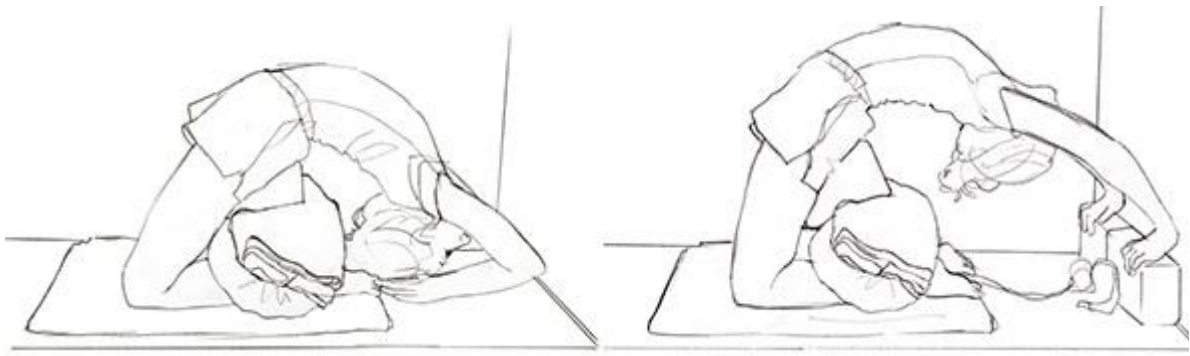


Curve back, supporting the lift of the chest with the upper back muscles. Reach back, one arm at a time and upper arms revolved in, to the wall behind you.

Sit back on the block, sliding the tailbone forward.



Maintain the height of your chest as you walk your hands as far down the wall as you can.

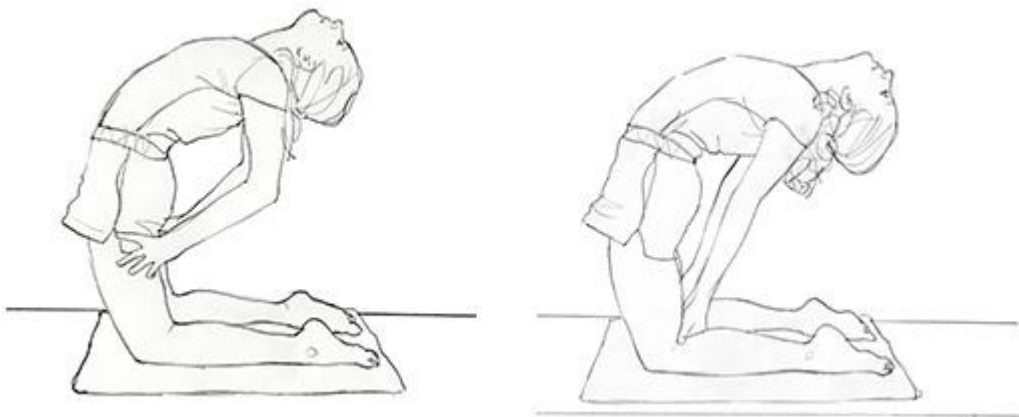


Walk your hands toward your feet.

Loop a belt around your ankles. Have the end of the belt extend toward the wall. Hold the belt and walk your hands along the belt toward your feet. Place two blocks on their narrow ends against the wall. Rest your hands on the blocks, and pull the chest up and away from the blocks.

## Kapoasana (Pigeon Pose)

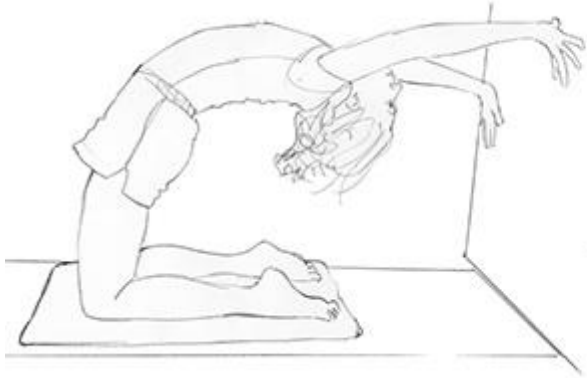
Benefits: For women in particular, Pigeon pose and its modifications is considered ideal for those trying to conceive as it realigns the uterus and stimulates the ovaries.



**Preparing for the pose:** Facing away from the wall, kneel upright, with your knees slightly less than hip width apart and your hips, shoulders, and head stacked directly above your knees. Point your toes back.

Bring your hands to your hips and placing your thumbs on the back of your pelvic rim, use them to press down and lengthen the lower back. Allow the tailbone to lengthen away from the upper back and the back ribs to lift away from the lumbar.

**Coming into the pose:** Keeping your shoulder blades pressed firmly into your back, lift your chest as high as you can. Roll your shoulders back and down. Slide your hands down to your thighs. With an inhalation draw your dorsal spine further forward and leading with your lower breastbone, lift your chest (not your shoulders) higher. When your chest is maximally lifted, exhale, bend your shoulders back and gradually release your head back. While doing this maintain your upper thighs perpendicular to the floor.



Take a deep breath and one at a time, reach your hands back toward the wall. Move your hips forward enough to counterbalance your backward movement.

Walk your hands down the wall, each time pressing the center of the thoracic spine forward and up into the breast bone.



Reinforce the lift of your chest as you let the backbend travel down your spine in a wave from top to bottom. Press your shins to the floor, keeping your hips high, raise your back thighs and pelvis as you approach the floor.



Draw your elbows in towards each other, continuing to lift the heart, lengthen your upper spine, and slowly drop the head back. When the floor behind you becomes visible, begin to crawl the hands toward the feet so the forearms come to the floor. You may be able to grasp the ankles or the calves.



Press your palms down, lift your head off the floor and with your hips high, open your groins as much as possible. Maintaining this height, lengthen and bend your upper back more and walk your hands to our feet. If possible, grip your ankles. Draw your elbows toward each other until they're shoulder width apart. If possible, wedge/anchor them firmly against the wall.

Use the strength of the abdomen and the legs to support the body in this shape. Take at least five deep breaths here, feeling the shins and forearms root down while the front of the body opens and expands.

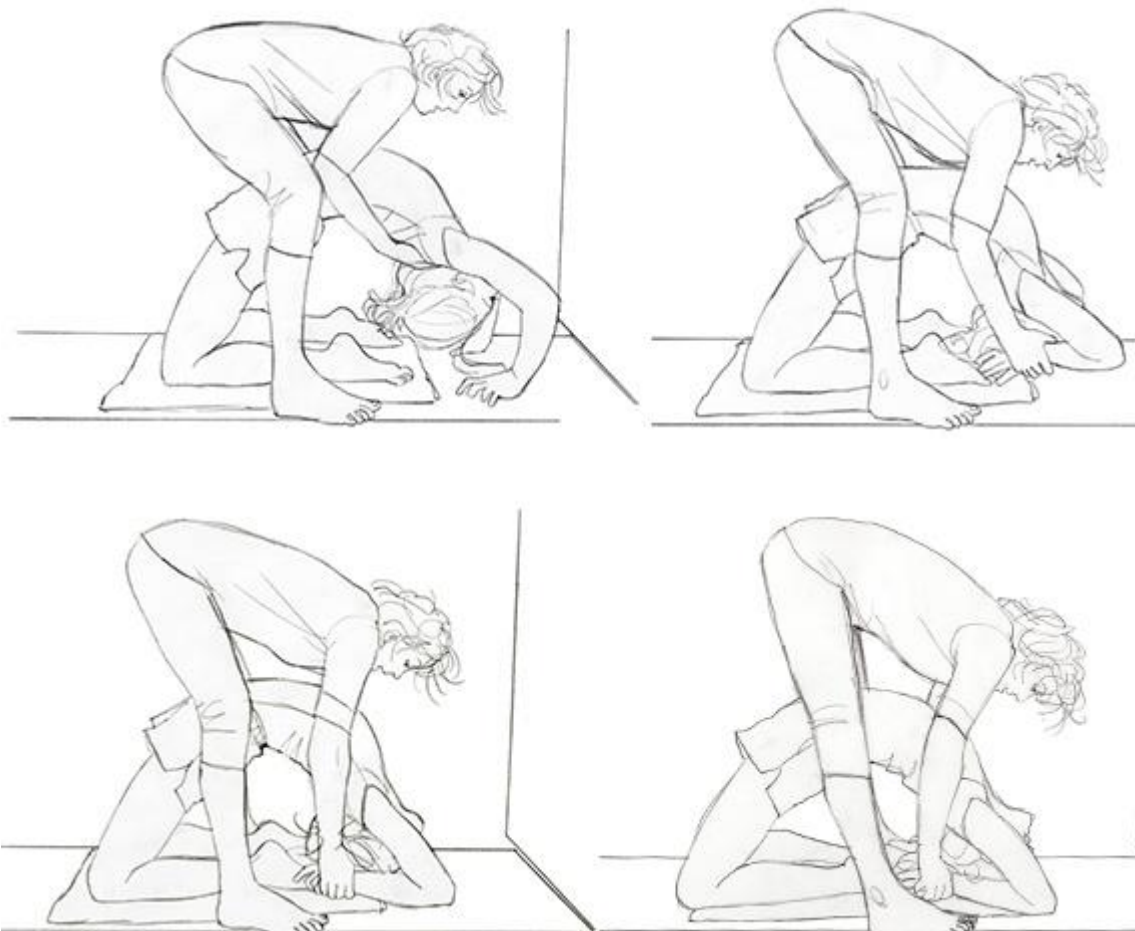
In the final pose, the top of the head rests on the soles of the feet (see Light On Yoga).

#### **Ways of working:**

Place your palms on the mat and reach for the end of a belt that has been looped around your ankles. Take more and more of the belt until you can touch your feet.

Hands on a block.

With help from an instructor:



To enhance the stability in the thighs and lower back, you may place a block between the thighs and squeeze the thighs into the block. The remaining steps may be done with or without the block.

**To come out of the pose:** walk the hands backward so the forearms lift off the floor. Use the strength of the arms to lift the head and tuck the chin back in toward the chest. Release your grip on your heels and slowly come back to the kneeling position.

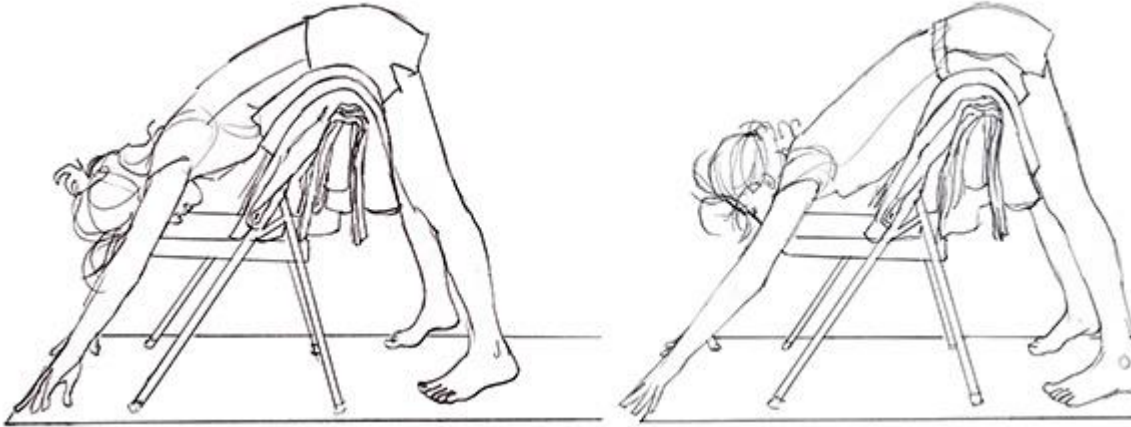
Take one or both hands to return to the lower back and lift back upright to stand on the shins.



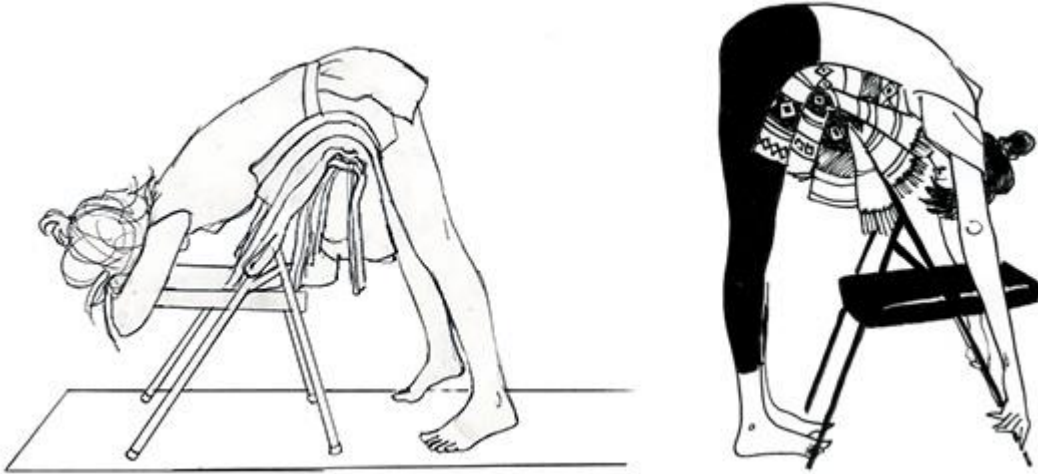
**COUNTER INDICATIONS:** The exercise is not recommended for those suffering from frequent migraines, and hypertension. If you have had a serious injury to your back or your neck, avoid performing any back bend.

## Adho Mukha Svanasana with a chair

Benefits: For recovery.



Lean over the top of a chair rest with your heels at wall (on blocks if necessary), and either your chin, or your forehead to front edge of chair seat. Extend your hands to the floor, or if necessary, to blocks.



For quiet mental relief, you may also support your forehead on your folded arms.