



This is a simple set of exercises. It only takes 22 minutes and makes the back feel great and gets the energy moving. It is a good series to do after you wake up in the morning or before bed at night. It is also a good series to do before a longer meditation or meditative kriya.



1. **Front Stretch Left.** Sit with your left leg stretched out straight in front of you; and place your right foot against the inner thigh of the left leg. With both hands, stretch forward and then down over the left leg. Hold on to the foot or as far down the leg as you can reach with both hands. Keep the chin at a right angle to the chest. Stretch until you feel gently challenged. Hold steady with Long Slow Deep Breathing. Continue for 2 minutes.

2. **Front Stretch Right.** Same as exercise #1 above but the right leg is stretched out in front of you and the left foot rests against the inner thigh of the right leg. Continue for 2 minutes.



3. **Side Stretch Left.** Stretch your left leg out in front of you; place your right foot against the inner thigh of the left leg as in exercise #1. Take your left hand and catch the shin, ankle, or foot of the left leg. Take the right arm and place it behind the back. Tilt the pelvis forward so that it lifts the chest up high. The chin will be turned toward the right shoulder—don't let the head flop over so that the left ear is near the left shoulder. Gently stretch sideways over the left leg. You will feel the stretch in the left hamstring as well as the right hip. Hold steady and begin Long Slow Deep Breathing. Continue for 2 minutes.

4. **Side Stretch Right.** Same as exercise #3, but with the legs and arms reversed. Continue for 2 minutes.



5. **Basic Spine Flex.** Come into Easy Pose (a comfortable cross-legged sitting position). Grasp the shins above the ankles. Inhale as you lift the chest up high and tilt the pelvis forward. Then exhale, round the lower back, and rock the pelvis back. Remember to lift the chest up high on each inhale and keep the chin level to the ground in both positions. Continue for 3 minutes.



6. **Cross Crawl.** Lie down on your back with the arms by the sides and the palms flat against the floor. On the inhale, bring the left knee to the chest and at the same time bring the right arm up and over to the ground behind you. Exhale into the starting position and repeat with the opposite arm and opposite leg. Concentrate the breath's energy at the navel center. Continue for 2 minutes.



7. **Cat-Cow.** Come onto the hands and knees. The hands are shoulder-width apart with the fingers pointing forward. The knees are directly below the hips. Inhale and tilt the pelvis forward, arching the spine down, and stretching the head and neck back. Then exhale and tilt the pelvis the opposite way, arching the spine up and bring the chin to the chest. Make the motion very smooth in transition. This is a wonderful exercise for the entire spine. Continue for 2 minutes.



8. **Baby Pose.** Sit on the heels and place the forehead on the ground. Place the arms by the sides, hands near the ankles with the palms facing up. Allow the shoulders to relax. Breathe normally and continue for 90 seconds.



9. **Washing Machine.** Come into Easy Pose. Grasp the shoulders with the fingers in front and thumbs in back (right hand grasps right shoulder, left hand grasps left shoulder). Inhale and twist the torso to the left. Then exhale and twist the torso to the right. Keep the chest up high and let the head travel with the shoulders. Continue for 90 seconds.



10. **Shoulder Rolls.** Place the hands on the knees and roll the shoulders in big, slow, smooth circles. Breathe normally and continue for 1 minute.



11. **Deep Relaxation.** Lie down on your back. Have the arms by the sides with the palms facing up. The eyes are gently closed and the breath is soft and normal. Have the knees up slightly for comfort, if needed. Completely relax for 3 minutes.

This kriya is on the video *Kundalini Yoga: A Complete Course for Beginners*, vol. 1. Also published in *Aquarian Times*, Nov/Dec 2008.

In all Kundalini Yoga kriyas (exercises and sets of exercises), it is recommended (especially for beginners) to relax after each posture to allow the body to process the changes from the exercise before moving on to the next one, unless otherwise specified.

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