

## **Downward-facing Dog**

Adho Mukha Svanasana

*AH-doh MOO-kah shvah-NAHS-anna*

Downward facing dog is a standing pose. Because the head is lower than the hips, it's also a mild inversion pose. Inversions are great for increasing blood flow to the brain and eyes.

### The blueprint:

This standing pose resembles an upside down V. It is performed standing with your hands and feet on the mat, with your hips raised and your heels on the floor.

### How to do it:

1. Come to your hands and knees with your wrists below your shoulders and your knees underneath the hips
2. Curl the toes under and push back while raising your hips and straightening your legs

From this position, check your alignment:

Do

- make sure your heels are directly behind your second toe
- support yourself equally on your upper and lower body
- align your ears with your upper arms
- rotate your upper arms outward

Don't

- Let your knees knock inward to each other
- Round or arch your back
- Hunch your shoulders

3. Continue to push against the floor with hands and feet, elongating your upper and lower body.

### Benefits:

- strengthens the hands and wrists
- decreases back pain by strengthening the back and shoulder girdle
- helps relieve mild depression, stress and anxiety
- helps relieve the symptoms of menopause and helps prevent osteoporosis
- relieves menstrual discomfort when the head is supported

### Contraindications

- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Diarrhea
- Pregnancy: Do not do this pose late-term.