

Bakasana
(bahk-AHS-anna)
baka = crane

We've seen Bakasana called both Crane and Crow. So which is it?

Crow pose is the "easier" variation of this arm balance, with bent elbows. The knees rest near the armpit, and the shins may slightly rest on the upper arm. Crane is more challenging with completely straight arms. Both are powerful poses that improve balance and arm strength.

In Bakasana, your back is rounded as your torso and legs are balanced on the backs of your upper arms.



How to do it

1. Stand on a yoga mat with your feet approximately hip width apart. Squat, pushing your knees out wider than your hips and placing your hands on the floor in front of you.
2. Start leaning the torso forward, between the inner thighs. Bend your elbows and place the backs of your upper arms against your shins.
3. Lift up onto the balls of your feet and lean forward even more, taking the weight of your torso onto the backs of the upper arms
4. Snuggle your inner thighs against the sides of your torso, and your shins into your armpits, and slide the upper arms down as low onto the shins as possible.
5. Exhale and lean forward even more onto the backs of your upper arms, so the balls of your feet leave the floor and you are perched securely on the bent arms. Make sure your weight is equally distributed on your two hands
6. Stay in the pose anywhere from 20 seconds to 1 minute. To release, exhale as you slowly lower your feet to the floor, back into a squat.

Tip:

If you have pain in your wrists, try curling your fingers slightly. This should take some of the pressure off the wrists.

If you have trouble getting into a squat, place a folded towel under your heels.

If you are an advanced practitioner, work on straightening your elbows.

Do:

- keep your tailbone as close to your heels as possible; this helps keep your back rounded

Don't

- let your head drop. This will cause you to tip forward and lose balance.

Benefits

- Strengthens the wrist, forearms and abdominal muscles
- Improves digestion and concentration
- Stimulates the organs of the abdomen
- Improves balance and coordination
- Stretches the upper back

Contraindications

- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Pregnancy