

## Dolphin Pose

Makarasana

Sometimes referred to as the puppy pose, Dolphin opens up the shoulders while strengthening the arms, legs as well as the core body. This is an intermediate posture and is a good all-round pose that will benefit students who are working toward headstands.

Dolphin is an inverted 'v' position with the forearms and toes on the floor on the floor with the rest of the body curved upwards in a v-like formation.

Because this pose helps relieve stress and tension in the upper back region, it's an excellent pose for those who have to sit for long periods.



### How to do

1. Begin on your hands and knees; make sure your knees are in line with your hips and your wrists in line with your shoulders.
2. Bring your elbows to the floor with your forearms parallel on the floor. Make sure your shoulders and elbows are in line with each other.
3. Exhale, curl your toes under and lift your knees up from the floor. Hang your head between your upper arms, being sure to keep your neck neutral.
4. Gradually straighten your knees and press your heels into the floor.
5. Hold for at least 30 seconds. While exhaling, gently bend the knees to release them to the floor. Or move directly into downward facing dog.
6. Once in the full posture, adjustments can be made by bending the knees to allow for tight hamstring muscles.

Do:

- keep your core engaged

Don't

- overextend your neck

### **Benefits**

- Improves digestion
- Relieves headache, insomnia, back pain, and fatigue
- Therapeutic for high blood pressure, asthma, flat feet, sciatica
- It helps in stretching the shoulders, spine, arches, hamstrings and calves.
- It strengthens and increases the flexibility of the spine, arms and legs.
- It helps relieve stress and tension in the upper back region and is therefore especially beneficial to those whose jobs require them to sit for long periods.

### **Contraindications**

- If you have had shoulder and neck injuries, keep your legs bent while practicing this pose

**Try Dolphin Push-ups** too -- clasp your hands, then push yourself forward so your face is over your hands and you are in Chatarunga. Push your hips back up into Dolphin as you straighten your knees. Repeat.