



# Handstand Prep

**The Basics**

# Flexibility & Strength



## Warm Up

### 1- Forward Fold

Take the legs long in front of you, it is okay to have a slight bend in the knees. Fold the heart forward, relaxing through the face and neck. Hold for 1 minute.



### 2- Reverse Plank

From a seated position with the legs out long in front of you, take the hands behind you and ground the palms. Point the toes away, lift tall through the hips. Relax the head back.

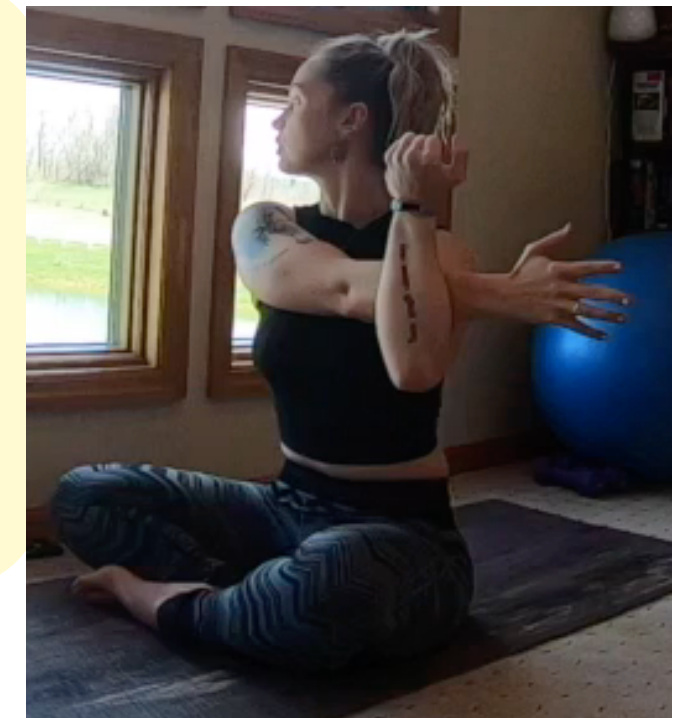
Hold 3-5 breaths.

### 3- Shoulder Stretch

Take the right arm straight across the body. Loop the left arm under the right forearm and pull the right arm into the chest.

If it feels okay on the neck, look over the right shoulder.

3-5 breaths. Do both sides.

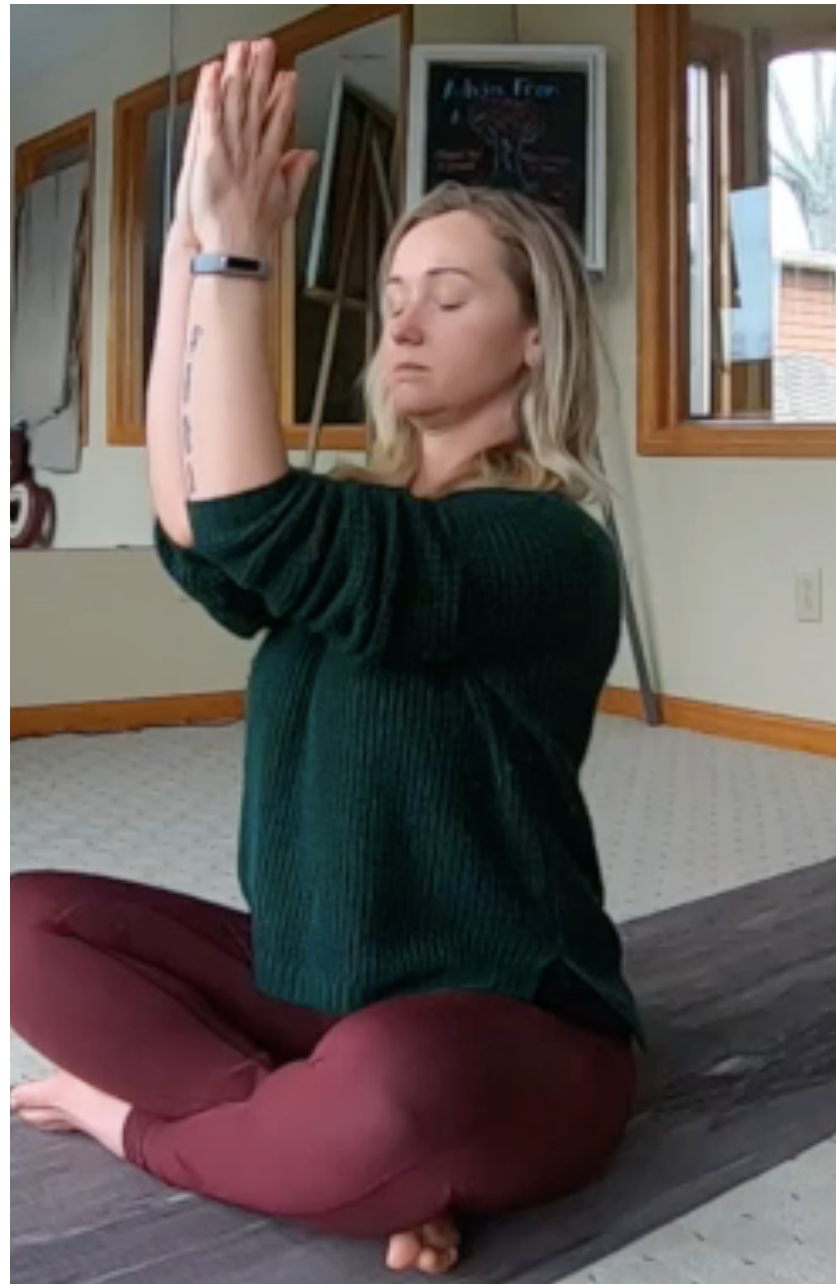


## Shoulder Work



**1-**

Take the right hand to base of the neck, left hand to the right elbow and guide it into your edge. Push back of head into right forearm. Hold for a few breaths and switch sides.



**2-**

Bring elbows towards each other as close as they will come, actively pushing them together. Keep them at shoulder height. Take a few breaths and release.



**3-**

Interlace hands behind the back and fold forward over your legs, reaching arms behind you into a shoulder-opening stretch. Take a few breaths and release.



## Those Shoulders Though



**1-**

Sitting with hips on heels, bring the arms up beside the ears. Engage the hands like you are actively pushing into the ceiling. Lift from the shoulders only, pushing up and then releasing back down. Do for 30 seconds.



**2-**

Laying on your stomach, take your left arm out straight at your side (half-T position). Roll your body so your back comes towards the left side of the mat (as pictured). Do both sides.

*\*For extra support, ground your right palm in front of your heart and your right foot behind your left leg. As pictured. Modify as needed.\**

# Wrist Flexibility

## Wrist Stretch

Take the hands under the shoulders, knees under hips. Remember to listen to your body and modify as needed.

Photos are listed as steps.

Take a few breaths in each pose and then gently release.

**1-**

Fingers point towards the side of the mat. Gently lean side to side.

**2-**

Fingers point back towards the knees. Begin to lean back (keeping wrists on earth) to find your edge.

**3-**

Turn tops of hands to earth (palms face up) and lean back towards the hips until you find your edge.





## Warm Up

### Push It Up

Palms under shoulders, fingers spread. Try to keep your whole body engaged as you lower down and come back up.

This is all about building the strength to be able to support yourself while being upside down ;)



### Down Dog

From plank, come right back to downward facing dog.

Push up and back through the arms, rounding the shoulder blades towards the front of the body so they do not fall together behind your back.

Reach the hips towards the wall behind you, heels towards the earth (they do not have to touch).

Reach the heart towards the thighs.

Yes, this is a restorative pose. Yes, it is *VERY* active and engaged!



## Tuck-Ups on the Ground



**1-**

Lay on your back, palms facing down at your sides. Keep your legs together!



**2-**

Draw your knees towards your chest, keeping the legs tight together. (Imagine they are zip-tied)

**3-**

Extend the legs over your head as much as you can. Legs are still tight together. Move with control.

**4-**

Then draw the knees back into the chest, just as you came up, and bring the legs long to hover just above the earth. Continue the flow 10-20 times.



# Tuck-Ups on the Wall



**1-**

Coming into tuck ups on the wall.  
Place your hands a few inches from the wall, shoulder distance apart.



**2-**

With the legs together, jump them up towards the wall behind you, aiming to stack body completely.

**3-**

Knees come to chest first and then legs straighten to the sky. Feet can come to wall if needed. Do 3 rounds of 5 attempts.

## Shoulder Work

### Shoulder Stretch

Take the hands to the wall, shoulder distance apart.  
Walk the legs back towards a down dog position off the wall. Lower the heart towards the earth.  
Take 3-5 deep breaths and then release.



### Embryo Pose

Coming into child's post with your hips on your heels and forehead to the earth.  
Take the arms at the sides, palms face up.  
3-5 deep breaths, release.





## Down Dog to Heel Lifts



**1-**

Come into down dog and hold for 5 breaths.



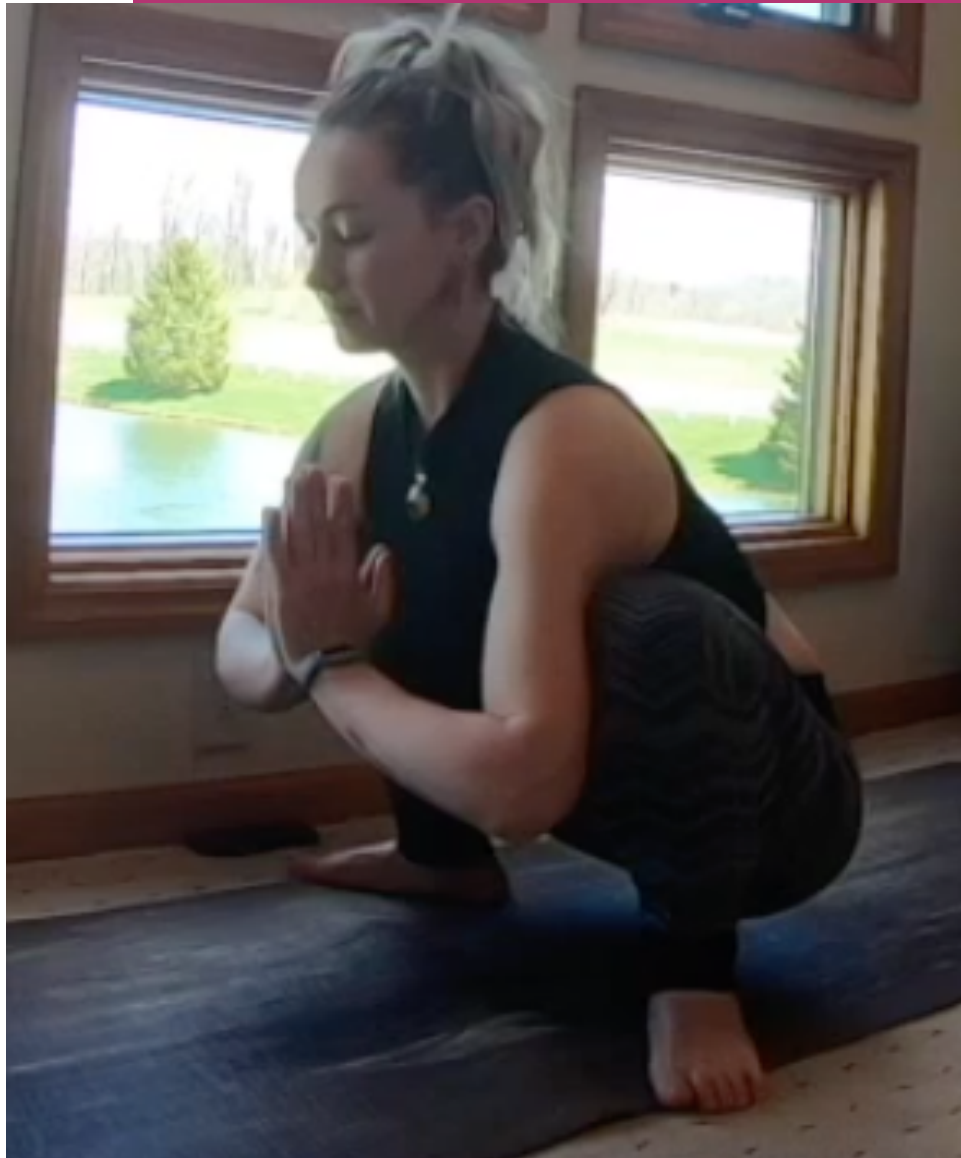
**2-**

Walk the feet towards the hands for forward fold.

**3-**

Grounding through the palms, lift the heels up and down with control. Do this 10 times and then relax.

# Learn to Fly



## 1- Malasana

Bring feet mat-distance apart. Toes point out (heels do not have to touch the earth).

Hands come to heart center, elbows push against the insides of the knees.



## 2- Time to Fly!

Ground the palms on the earth in front of you, shoulder distance apart. You are actively engaging into the hands.

Look at the earth in front of you and place the knees on the upper arms (you are creating a shelf for your legs with your arms).

Start to play with putting your weight onto your arms.

## 3- Crow

When you are ready, lift one toe at a time and come into crow!

Steady gaze, steady breath.

Hold as long as you would like!

You can come in and out of it too.

Do not get discouraged if you fall out- that is only more room for growth!



# Baby Got Back



## 1- Bridge Pose

Lay on your back with your feet on the earth, tucked just below the bum. Hands come to your sides, palms facing down. The fingers reach for and maybe graze the heels (this tip helps align the knees better).

Lift through the hips (as if there is a rope tied around your waist and you are being pulled towards the ceiling).

Hold for 5-10 breaths.



## 2- Wheel

You can do bridge again, or work into wheel pose.

For wheel pose, the hands come beside the ears, fingers pointing towards the shoulders. The rest of the body is aligned the same as bridge.

Push through the palms and feet to lift into wheel pose! Hold 5-10 breaths.

\*Extra challenge! Do 5-10 wheel push-ups!

# Headstand



## 1- Headstand

Interlace the hands behind the head and bring the head and elbow to the earth, creating a sturdy triangle base.

Walk the feet as close to the body as you can and then draw the knees to the chest, stacking the hips over the head.



## 2- Holding Headstand

With the knees to the chest, begin to lift the legs tall while keeping them together. This teaches proper alignment and control.

Hold 30-60 seconds, working on keeping that stacked alignment in the body.



## 3- Counter Pose

Slowly and gently come out of the pose. Stack fist on fist and let the forehead relax on top of them.

Rest for 1 minute.



# Shoulder Stand



## 1- Shoulder Stand

Laying on your back, begin to bring the legs straight towards the sky (this pose, Waterfall, may be enough. You can always add a block under the hips as a beginner option).

Taking the hands to the lower back, lift the hips to stack them over the heart. Extend through the toes.

The neck is in a very vulnerable state- *do not* look around!

Hold 5-10 breaths.



## 2- Plow Pose

Begin to gently, and with control, drop the legs over the head, towards the earth. You may bend the knees and relax them on either side of the ears. Hold 5-10 breaths.

## 3- Bridge Pose

Come all the way back to the earth. Then ground the feet below the bum and take a counter stretch with bridge pose.

Hold 5-10 breaths.



## Cool Down

### Reclined Butterfly

Take the soles of the feet together and let the knees fall away from each other.

Bring the arms over the head in line with the ears for a deeper heart opener.

Hold for 1-3 minutes.



### Reclined windshield wipers

Take feet mat-distance apart.

Gazing to the left, drop the knees to the right.

Hold for 1 minute then switch sides.





## It's The End



### **Savasana**

Get your favourite relaxation song, meditation or whatever gets you zen'd out playing.

Lay on your back, let your feet fall away from each other and your palms come up at your sides.

Your eyes are closed and your focus stays with your breath.

Stay for at least 3 minutes.

*A link to one of my guided meditations:*

*<https://youtu.be/vwm5wp3HjwQ>*



Thank You!

## Questions/Comments/Coaching

You can reach me at:

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I do 1:1 Yoga Coaching!

As a 500hr RYT, 800hr LMT, and  
Yogaslacker- holistic life and movement  
are my favourites!

I have made my passions into my career  
and love to help others find their flow.

I look forward to hearing from you!

xx- Jess Joy Holt

These classes on video & more content here:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?  
list=PLtXK0pjlaFv-1R\\_O11qQGdTNjqZLnBj63](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtXK0pjlaFv-1R_O11qQGdTNjqZLnBj63)

