



January 2016 Effort and Ease Yoga Sequence

To practice breathing calmly through challenging things, and remind ourselves that we can work hard toward goals and also be content where we are today.

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Begin in Downward Facing Dog. Inhale to lift your right leg up, and exhale to step between your hands and begin this revolving Vinyasa sequence. Take about three rounds of the following poses on your right side, with one breath in each pose so you are in strong, continuous motion, before switching to the left.

High Lunge. With your right foot between your hands and your fingertips on the ground, press strongly through your left heel and lift the back of your knee so your leg gets straighter. Stomp down into your right foot (knee should be over ankle), and spread your toes wide. With all this strength in the legs, relax your face and shoulders and *inhale* lift to a High Lunge.

Warrior II. *Exhale* to turn your left foot out 90 degrees, and spread your arms open wide at shoulder height into Warrior II. Find the balance between effort and ease here by letting your shoulders relax down, but remain really engaged in your arms and fingers.

Peaceful Warrior. *Inhale* to reach your left hand back to rest on your left thigh and reach your right arm up. Fan open your right ribs, enjoying the opening and stretch of the pose while remaining strong in your legs—feet pressing downward and inner thighs squeezing in toward each other.

Extended Side Angle to Revolved Low Lunge. In one long *exhale*, begin to revolve your right arm toward your bent right leg, briefly resting forearm on thigh. Let your left arm trace a half circle above your head as it travels to the ground next to your right foot. Simultaneously turn your left toes to face forward. Twist toward your right knee, right arm extended alongside your ear in a revolved low lunge.

Standing Splits. *Exhale* to take your right arm to the ground outside your right foot. *Inhale* to walk both hands forward about 12 inches, and lift your left leg up, toward parallel with the floor. Find effort and ease here by flexing your toes toward your ankle, and pressing through the ball and heel of your foot. Just like High Lunge, lift from the back of your knee and thigh. Can you stay here for a breath, and relax into the strength of this pose just as much as you would a deep stretch?

Next exhalation, slowly and strongly touch your left foot back to a Low Lunge. *Inhale* to lift into **High Lunge** to repeat the sequence on the right side.

For a simpler view, the sequence and breathing are like this:

INHALE	EXHALE	INHALE	EXHALE	INHALE	EXHALE	INHALE	EXHALE
High Lunge	Warrior II	Peaceful Warrior	Side Angle	Revolved Lunge	Low Lunge	Standing Splits	Low Lunge

