

Restorative Sequence

This sequence features chest opening and inverted poses to promote respiratory health, mental quiet, and relaxation. Inverted poses are contraindicated if menstruating, with neck or eye problems, and for brand new beginners. In these cases or if time is limited, practice supta baddha konasana , adho mukha virasana, setubandha sarvangasana and savasana. Ease in the poses requires subtle action, reflection, and refinement, which should be without force and with attention to the breath. With supportive props and long holds, restoratives offer a direct experience of Patanjali's Yoga Sutra II.46, "Asana is perfect firmness of body, steadiness of intelligence, and benevolence of spirit."

Props and techniques:

- *Yoga: The Path to Holistic Health* by B.K.S. Iyengar, pages 184-185 provides a list of commonly used props. The sequences in Chapter 7 "Yoga For Ailments" contain images of prop setups for all categories of poses, including restoratives.
- *Yoga the Iyengar Way* by Silva, Mira and Shyam Mehta includes instruction on each pose.
- Weights (sandbags) may be used in the following poses: supta baddha konasana on each thigh to release the groins; supta virasana and savasana across thighs to release legs and calm the nerves; adho mukha virasana on sacrum to soothe the low back
- In savasana and other supine poses the eyes may be covered with a cloth. Advanced students may use a headwrap to cover the eyes throughout.

Sutra study: *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* by B.K.S. Iyengar, Sutra II.46 includes a 2-page commentary with description of qualities to be cultivated in asana practice.

Supta baddha konasana (with support) 8 minutes

Matsyasana or supta swastikasana (with support) 3 minutes each side

Supta virasana (with support) 5-8 minutes

Adho mukha virasana (with support) 5 minutes

Sirsasana 5 minutes

Viparita dandasana on chair 5 minutes

Salamba sarvangasana on chair 5-8 minutes

Setubandha sarvangasana on bench, bolsters, or two blocks 5 minutes

Viparita karani or simple legs up wall 5-10 minutes

Savasana with support 10 minutes