

15-Minute Yoga Sequence to Strengthen Bones

Practicing Yoga has been shown to increase density in the spine, pelvis and thigh bones. This 12-pose sequence is inspired by [Dr. Loren Fishman's study](#) cited in [Yoga Journal's Strengthen Your Bones](#) and [Harvard Health's Yoga to Prevent Osteoporosis](#). Hold each pose 30 seconds (5-6 deep breaths), and pause for 30 seconds between poses, noticing sensations. **Above all, listen to your body and modify as needed!**

Warm-Ups		<p>Marjaryasana/Bitilasana: Cat/Cow</p> <p>Pause to set an intention for your practice.</p> <p>Then, start warmups in Tabletop position on hands (or forearms) and knees. Inhale to lift tailbone, lower belly and lift face. Exhale to tuck tailbone, round mid back and look back toward knees. Repeat several times, leading with deep breaths.</p>
		<p>Dandayamana Bharmanasana: Balancing Table</p> <p>Inhaling, extend right leg back parallel to floor and left arm forward. Hold for a few deep breaths, then exhale to release. Change sides.</p>
		<p>Balasana: Child's Pose</p> <p>Bring knees apart and big toes together. Draw buttocks toward heels, and rest forehead on the mat or a block. Reach arms forward and straight (or down alongside body) and soften heart center toward floor. Breathe deeply.</p>
	 <p>Modify: Bend knees</p>	<p>Adho Mukha Svanasana: Downward-Facing Dog</p> <p>Starting in Tabletop position, walk knees back a few inches, and soften upper back. Exhaling, lift knees and reach hips skyward. Bend knees to keep spine elongated. Lift up through armpits, and press down through fingerprints and the base of the fingers. Reach tops of thighbones back. Inhaling, engage arm and leg muscles; exhaling, lengthen limbs and spine.</p>
Link these 3 Poses		<p>1. Salabhasana: Locust</p> <p>Lie on belly with arms straight alongside torso, palms facing down. Lift shoulders, head, upper body arms and legs. Modify by lifting one leg at a time. After several breaths, transition to a second round of Downward Dog, then rest in Child's Pose.</p>
		<p>2. Virabhadrasana II: Warrior II Pose</p> <p>Stand with feet wide apart. Turn right foot out, left foot in, so feet are in a "T" position. Extend arms. Exhaling, bend right knee directly above right ankle. Engage leg muscles and press down through feet. Hold for a few breaths; then move into Side Angle (next pose).</p>
		<p>3. Uttita Parsvakonasana: Extended Side Angle</p> <p>From Warrior II, lengthen both sides of torso and lightly rest right forearm on right thigh. Reach left arm up or alongside ear. Stretch from pelvis down through outer left heel and up through fingertips. Inhaling, rise up and rest hands on waist to relax arms for a few breaths. Then move into Triangle (next pose).</p>
		<p>4. Uttita Trikonasana: Extended Triangle</p> <p>From Side Angle, straighten right leg and place right hand on right shin, the floor or a block. Stretch left arm up. After several breaths, rise up and stand with feet hip's width apart to rest. Change sides beginning with Warrior II again (pose 2).</p>

	<p>5. Vrksasana: Tree</p> <p>Standing with feet hip's width apart, bend right knee and rotate right thigh outward without turning pelvis. Place right foot above the ankle or knee of your left leg (but not against the knee itself). Bring palms together in front of chest or lift arms skyward. Rest for a few moments, then change sides.</p>
 <div data-bbox="139 401 459 520" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Optional: Uttanasana (Standing Forward Bend) after each side.</p> </div>	<p>6. Parivrtta Trikonasana: Revolved Triangle (Modified)</p> <p>Stand with feet hips' width apart, hands on waist. Step left foot back, planting it at a 45° angle. Straighten both legs and engage muscles. Keeping spine elongated, hinge forward at front hip until you feel a stretch in the front hamstring muscles (back of thigh). Place left hand on outer right leg and lift right shoulder to twist toward the right. Keep right hand on waist or extend right arm up toward sky. After several breaths, return to center and step forward to Uttanasana. Rise and change sides.</p>
<p>NOTE for poses 7-8: If you have osteoporosis, back issues or are new to yoga, practice chair variations for safety.</p>	
	<p>Poses 7-8 Variations, Twists in a Chair: Sit in a chair with your heels under your knees and maintain length in your torso as you gently twist to the right, feeling the twist at the ribcage. Keep both sides of chest open and twist only to the point where you can maintain length in your spine (don't round your back). Change sides. Then, practice with thighs crossed.</p>
	<p>7. (Optional) Marichyasana II: Straight-legged Twist (Modified)</p> <p>Sit on blocks or folded blankets to maintain natural curves of the spine (avoid rounding low back). Extend legs forward with knees bent (or straighten left leg with foot flexed). Step right sitting bone back an inch or so. Place right hand on floor just behind buttocks, fingers pointed back. Inhaling, extend left arm up, then cross it over to outer right thigh, twisting to right. After a few breaths, change sides.</p>
	<p>8. (Optional) Matsyendrasana: Bent-Knee Twist</p> <p>Begin as in Pose 7, but with left leg bent so foot is near right buttock, and right foot on the floor at the outer left thigh. Proceed as in Pose 7, change sides.</p>
	<p>9. Setu Bandha Sarvangasana: Bridge Pose</p> <p>Lie on back, with knees bent, feet on floor hip's width apart. Tuck shoulder blades under slightly. Inhaling, lift buttocks and chest for several deep breaths.</p> <p>Optional: With arms extended, interlace fingers and come onto outer shoulders.</p>
<p>Link these 2 Poses</p>	 <p>10. Supta Padangusthasana I: Reclining Hand-to-Big-Toe I</p> <p>Lie on back, place strap around the ball of right foot; hold one end of the strap in each hand. Keep left leg bent or extend straight on mat. Straighten right leg up toward the ceiling without lifting right sitting bone. Move into Pose 11.</p>
	 <p>11. Supta Padangusthasana II: Reclining Hand-to-Big-Toe II</p> <p>From Supta Padangusthasana I, hold both ends of the strap in your right hand. Keep the left side of body grounded as you extend right leg out to the right side and lower it toward the floor, just until you feel a new stretch. Change feet, Pose 10.</p>
	<p>12. Savasana: Corpse</p> <p>Allow the body-mind to relax completely in a comfortable position, legs straight or knees bent with feet on floor. Release tension with each exhalation, and just BE. After, sit quietly and observe the effects of the practice.</p>

