Yoga Poses Using a Chair

Tadasana: Mountain Pose - Body Awareness/alignment

Stand in Mountain Pose for 3-5 breaths. Keep your feet pressing down as you lift up through your chest keeping the abdominal wall drawn in. Extend up through the crown of the head; remember to keep your shoulders relaxed. Stay here for 3 full breaths.

Standing Tadasana - Mountain Pose /Arms up – Shoulder Stretch and Core

Inhale as you take your arm up above your head keeping your shoulders relaxed and extending up through your fingertips. Press down into your feet and extend the spine and hold this for 3 full breaths.
**Uttanasana: Forward Fold (Modified) Hamstring/Lower Back Stretch**

Inhale as you reach for your chair coming into a modified forward fold. Press into your feet and activate your legs, moving your thighs back and lifting your tailbone upward. Press gently into your hands and softening between your shoulder blades. Extend the crown of your head forward creating extension in your neck and draw the shoulders away from your ears. For a more challenging pose, drop down on to your elbows. Hold for 3 full breaths.

**Utkatasana; Chair Pose Strengthening Lower Body and Core**

Press into your feet and inhale on your exhale start to sit back into chair pose. Sit way back extending your glutes back and activating your core muscles. Your arms will stay high and your gaze will follow. Keep your arms extended, but relax your shoulders. Hold for 3 full breaths.
Prasarita Padottanasana - Expanded Foot Pose (Modified) Hamstring/calf/Lower Back

Take the right foot under the chair and line up your right ankle with the front let of the chair. Step back with your left foot about 2-3 feet, keeping the feet wider apart than your hips and turn your left toes to 45 degrees. Square your hips forward and flex forward at the hip placing your hands on the chair. Press into the big toe of your front leg, and draw your knee cap up engaging your front thigh muscle. Now press back into your back leg keeping the heel down and extend your spine. Draw your shoulders down away from your ears and lengthen through the crown of your head. To make the pose more challenging, drop down on to your elbows. Hold for 3 full breaths and repeat on the other side.

Virabhadrasana I -Worrier 1 Pose –Lower body/Core

Take your right toes under the chair centered and step back with your left leg 2-3 feet. Your left foot should be turned out to 45 degrees and your stance is hip width. Inhale to extend the spine and on the exhale bend your right knee towards the seat of your chair. Try and have your knee touch the chair so you are close to 90 degrees bent in the right leg. Inhale as you draw your core in and begin to reach your arms up and gaze up. The back leg stays strong this is your power leg, keep the front knee over the ankle as you extend the spine. Hold for 3 full breaths and repeat on the other side.
Virabhadrasana II – Worrier 2 pose- Lower Body/Core

Take your right toes under the chair centered and step back with your left leg 2-3 feet. Your left foot should be turned out to 45 degrees and your stance is hip width. Inhale to extend the spine and on the exhale bend your right knee towards the seat of your chair coming into worrier 1 and bring your arms up over head. On your exhale open up the hips and arms so that the hips are now facing to the side and the arms are at shoulder height. Your gaze goes out over your right fingers. Hold the pose for 3 full breaths and repeat on the other side.

Vrksanasa – Tree Pose – Balance- Leg and Core Strength

Stand at the back of your chair with your left leg in towards the chair. Place your left hand on the top of the chair for balance. Take the right leg into tree position. (Low, medium or high, just not at the knee joint) Press down into your feet extending the spine and your right arm up over head. Hold for 3 full breaths and then turn and do your other side. Another option is to wedge your knee into the chair as in figure 2 and extend both arms up over head,

Step about a half body length away from the seat of your chair. Place your right heel on the chair and square your hips. Inhale the arms up and press down into your standing leg and lift up through the chest and extend up through the crown of your head. Keep your hips level and your core engaged. Hold for 3 full breaths then repeat on the other side.

If you want more of a challenge go to pose 2.


Step about a half body length away from the back of your chair. Place your right heel on the chair back and square your hips. Inhale the arms up and press down into your standing leg and lift up through the chest and extend up through the crown of your head. Keep your hips level and your core engaged. Hold for 3 full breaths then repeat on the other side.

If you want more of a challenge go to pose 3.

Pose 3. Utthitia Hasta Padangusthanasa – Extended hand/foot pose- Balance –lower body strength and core

Step about a half body length away from the back of your chair. Place your right toes on the chair back and square your hips. Reach forward and grab hold of your right shin and pull your right leg up keeping your knee bent. Place your left hand on your hip and press down into your standing leg and lift up through the chest and extend up through the crown of your head. Keep your hips level and your core engaged. Hold for 3 full breaths then repeat on the other side.
**Uttanasana: Forward Fold (Modified)**
**Hamstring/Lower Back/Shoulder Stretch**

Inhale as you reach for your chair coming into a modified forward fold. Press into your feet and activate your legs, moving your thighs back and lifting your tailbone upward. Press gently into your hands and softening between your shoulder blades. Extend the crown of your head forward creating extension in your neck and draw the shoulders away from your ears. For a more challenging pose, drop down on to your elbows. Hold for 3 full breaths.

**Virabhadrasana III - Worrier III (Modified) Strengthens standing leg.**

From a forward bend position, press in to your right leg and extend your left leg back until your heel is in line with your glutes. Keep the toes of your left leg pointing down. Press into the chair with your arms and activate your core and extend your spine. Hold for 3 full breaths and then repeat on the other side.

**Seated Chair Twists/Chest Opener**

Sit facing backwards on a chair. Slide your body back so that your glutes are right at the edge of the seat. Press down into your feet as you reach both hands back and hold on to the front part of the seat as up lift up through the chest and draw your shoulders on your back. Keep your core engaged and feet active. Hold for 3 breaths and then add the twists. Hold each twist for 3 full breaths as well. Remember to keep the legs active, core engaged and shoulders down.
Namaste

Paschimottanasana- Modified -Eastern facing forward fold pose-Gentle Hamstring stretch.

Can be used as a sitting Savasana relaxation pose

Sit on the floor with your legs under the chair as wide as the chair legs. Bring your upper body forward resting your head on your hands, or fists. Close your eyes and relax your shoulders, stay here for 5 full breaths.

Savasana-Corpse Pose- Modified- Relaxation

Lie on your back with your legs up on the chair. Allow the arms to be at your sides with the palms up. Relax the entire body and focus on your breath, stay here for 5-10 breaths.

Namaste