

Side Lunge

Skandasana

SKANDA, THE WARRIOR GOD · ASANA, POSTURE



Hands down is a perfectly good place to stay. The depth comes from the hips, not the knee.

Helpful tips

- ✓ Sit back, not forward. Leaning over the bent knee is what tips you off balance.
- ✓ Go only as low as the bent knee stays comfortable. A shallow side lunge still does the work.
- ✓ Breathe into the inner thigh of the long leg. That is where this pose opens.

What it does

- ✓ Lengthens the inner thighs and the hamstrings of the straight leg.
- ✓ Strengthens the thighs and glutes of the bent leg.
- ✓ Moves the hips side to side, a direction most days never use.
- ✓ Builds steadiness low to the ground, one side at a time.

How to do it

- 1 Step wide**
Face the long side of the mat, feet wide, toes turned slightly out. Fold forward and bring your hands to the mat.
- 2 Bend one knee**
Shift toward the left and bend the left knee, sitting the hips down and back as if into a low chair.
- 3 Lengthen the other leg**
Right leg straight and awake, heel pressing down, toes lifting toward the ceiling.
- 4 Track the bent knee**
Keep it in line with the toes, never collapsing inward. Weight settles into that heel.
- 5 Lift the chest**
Hands on the floor or on blocks. Lengthen the spine and soften the shoulders away from the ears.
- 6 Hold, then switch**
Five slow breaths. Hands down, travel back through the center and repeat on the other side.

COMMON MISTAKES

- ✗ Letting the bent knee fall inward past the toes. The strain moves into the knee instead of the hip.
- ✗ Rounding the back to get lower. A long spine matters more than depth.
- ✗ Letting the straight leg go slack. Press through that heel so the leg stays working.

IF THIS IS HARD

Keep the bend shallow and set blocks under your hands, or hold the seat of a sturdy chair in front of you. If the bent heel lifts, slide a rolled blanket under it.

Go easy with knee, hip or pelvic pain. Keep the bend small, and come out if you feel it in the joint rather than the muscle.