

Warrior Pose: Stand Firm in That Which You Are

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When you inhale, it represents receiving strength from God.
When you exhale, it represents the service you are giving to the world.

—B.K.S. Iyengar

Meditation and yoga practices support us in realizing oneness, our innate connectedness with all that is. Why then, would we practice Warrior Pose? This may seem contradictory to the essential nature of yoga. We practice Virabhadrasana (warrior) not to war against others, but to stand firm in that which we are as we fight the inner battle against ignorance and ego. As spiritual warriors, we abide in the truth of our essential nature and draw upon our inner reserves to heroically overcome erroneous thinking or debilitating habits.

Virabhadrasana, also known as the Friendly Hero Pose, embodies the spirit of a warrior and conveys readiness, stability and courage. As we take the pose of spiritual warrior we become aware of vital force rising and the potential for transforming it into right action and compassionate service in the world.

Virabhadrasana (vii-ra-bha-draa-sa-na)

vira = hero bhadra = kind, gracious, happy asana = pose

Step by Step Practice

1. Stand with the feet hip width apart, Tadasana. Step out with the left foot about three feet. Open your left hip to turn the foot out 90°; be sure that the left knee points in the same direction as the left toes. The hips remain facing forward as much as possible—keeping the knee tracking toward the toes.
2. Inhale as you bring your arms up to horizontal, rolling the palms to face up and lengthening out through the fingertips. Exhale and relax your shoulders, keeping arms horizontal. Inhale and lengthen through your spine, then exhale and bend your left knee, bringing it over your left ankle into a sideways lunge, chest still facing forward. Keep your hips level, spine vertical and shoulders relaxed.
3. Inhale and lengthen your neck, glide your chin in, then exhale and rotate your head to look out over your extended left arm.
4. Grounded at the base, balanced thru the sacral center, allowing space and lift through the spine—breathe smoothly and naturally as you hold the pose for three to six breaths.
5. Inhale and straighten your left knee as you rotate your head back to center. Once upright, turn both feet forward. On the exhalation, release your arms to your sides and step your feet back into Tadasana.
6. Pause to integrate the effects of the pose, and then repeat to the right side. 🕊

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