



Finding That Sweet Spot

Sthira Sukham Asanam

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If you're anything like me, trying to find that sweet spot in life is paramount. I try to balance work and play, effort and acceptance, focus and flexibility, holding on and letting go. Once we find our balance, staying there requires open-minded vigilance, adapting and adjusting throughout our day. It can seem like balancing a stone with a feather.

Yoga calls us to find that same balance in our body and our mind, and *sthira sukham asanam* offers excellent guidance for doing so. This one-liner from *The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali* is one of the great guidelines for our yoga practice and our life.

The actual translation of *asana* is seat, and it generally refers to the seated posture for meditation. The word *sthira* means *stable*, firm, unchanged, still, engaged. The word *sukham* means *comfortable*, pleasurable, relaxed, soft. We are looking for an exact balance between comfortable and stable in our yoga meditation practice. When we find it, we find that sweet spot where sitting meditation can feel effortless. We enter into a state of equilibrium on every level.

Yoga practice is a practice for life. As we learn how to balance effort and ease on the meditation cushion, we learn how to encounter life, situations, and people with open-hearted strength as well as a relaxed frame of mind. We learn how to stay steady and true to ourselves, and we also learn how to be open, to remain calm and relaxed and to enjoy ourselves without slacking off and doing things half-heartedly.

There are several seated postures that one might choose for meditation. The important thing is that the chosen posture supports the experience of *sthira sukham asanam*, sitting steadily with ease. Following are a few options for seated meditation postures.

The posture for yoga meditation should be comfortable and stable.

—Yoga Sutra 2:46

EASY POSE (*Sukhasana*)



1. Fold a thick blanket into a firm support about six inches high. Sit close to one edge and stretch your legs out in front of your torso on the floor in *Dandasana* (Staff Pose).
2. Spread your legs slightly, bend your left knee and slide your left heel into your groin. Then release your left knee onto the floor, rotating from your hip joint.
3. Bend your right knee and place your right foot on top of your left foot, then release your right knee onto the floor, rotating from your hip joint. Place your right ankle on top of your left ankle and tuck your right foot between your left calf and hamstring.

FIRM POSE (*Vajrasana*)



1. Sit on your heels, knees hip-width apart, toes pointing behind you. Relax your legs completely. (*Add a small bench beneath sit bones for even greater ease*)
2. Place your hands, palms up, at the junction of your thighs and abdomen.
3. Leaving your legs relaxed—lengthen your spine up through the crown of your head.
4. Open your chest and shoulders. Relax your shoulders. Level your chin.

CHAIR SITTING

1. Choose a chair that is firm and allows your knees to be slightly lower than your hips when you sit at the front of the seat with feet flat on the floor.
2. Lengthen up through the spine, open chest and shoulders, relax torso, level chin to be parallel with the floor. 🙏

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Note: Always use your best judgment about which practices are useful for your unique situation. Consult with your physician if needed. Study with a hatha yoga instructor for more detailed practices.