

Crane/Crow

Benefits

- Strengthens arms and wrists
- Stretches the upper back
- Strengthens the abdominal muscles
- Opens the groins
- Tones the abdominal organs

Sanskrit Name: Bakasana
English Translation: Crane

Instructions:

1. Begin in mountain pose, feet about hip distance.
2. Crouch down, with your heels flat on the floor.
3. Spread the knees wider than the hips, and move the arms in front of the body as the torso leans forward between the inner thighs.
4. Stretch the arms forward, and then bend the elbows, placing hands on the floor and the backs of the upper arms against the shins.
5. Activating mula bandha and keeping the lower body tucked against the arms, shift bodyweight forward as the heels come off the floor.
6. Contract the front of the torso as the back rounds, keeping the tailbone towards the heels. Squeeze the inner thighs and knees into the upper arms, and continue to shift the bodyweight to bring the feet off the floor, balancing on the hands.

Beginners: If heels don't reach the floor in your crouch, use a mat or blanket underneath. Keep balls of the feet on the floor. Practice staying tucked rather than lifting the pelvis. Try starting the pose from standing on blocks to support the feet as the body stays tucked.

Advanced: Work on straightening your arms and continue squeezing the thighs into the arms, tucking the body and holding the pose longer.

