

MOUNTAIN POSE

- Stand with your feet together - heels and big toes just touching.
- Spread your weight evenly lengthways and widthways through your feet using the image of 4 cars tyres with even pressure on each foot can help.
- Draw your kneecaps up to a point you can hold with minimal effort and visualise your long thigh bones spiralling outwards.
- Make your body as long as you can from your feet to the top of your head paying particular attention to your spine being long and wide.
- Nod your head slightly forward to lengthen the back of your neck.
- Have your arms energised just away from your thighs so that they are lengthened from shoulders to finger tips.
- Make the breath long, slow and even aiming for absolute stillness in this simple yet challenging posture and hold for a number of breaths before moving on.

Benefits

- Improves posture and length of spine.
- Stabilises thighs, knees and ankles.
- Relieves sciatica.
- Calms the mind.

Beginners Advice

- You can improve your balance by standing with your feet slightly apart 5 to 10 cm.
- Practice this posture using a wall or something similar to support and provide feedback.

Challenge

- Challenge the balance aspect of this posture by closing your eyes and learning to balance without visual feedback.
- Focus your attention on your breath - notice if your mind wanders to other thoughts, ideas or outside distractions and refocus back on your breath.
- Changing the position of your arms can further challenge this shape - try with your arms out to the side and/or straight overhead.

Adjustments / What to look for

- Alignment is important in this posture. From side on look for a long line through the ear, shoulder, hip, knee and ankle.
- Excessive swaying with eyes closed - therefore open the eyes.
- Lateral leaning (leaning to one side) ask the student to try and be as long and straight as they can.

