

TREE POSE

- Standing in Mountain Pose.
- Slowly raise and bend your left leg, taking the heel to the inside of your upper thigh with toes pointing toward the ground. To assist the leg into the thigh, use your left hand.
- Maintain the balance by pushing the raised foot into the inner thigh. The aim is to take the left knee out toward the side whilst keeping the hips facing forward.
- Balance can be assisted by focussing on a spot, one metre in front of the support leg.
- Once balance has been achieved, take the hands to prayer position in front of the chest and raise them overhead. The hands can then separate and palms face each other. As in Standing Overhead Arms.
- Create length from the top of your fingers to the base of the support foot.
- After a few breathes, come out of the pose with control, and repeat using the other leg.

Benefits

- Improves balance
- Proprioception particularly through the support leg
- Creates stability in the mind
- Calms emotions
- Indicator of our distractions by mirroring our ability to balance

Beginners Advice

- If balance is challenged, take one foot to rest on the top of the supporting leg's foot. Once, or if stability occurs, take the foot higher up the support leg.

Challenge

- Remain in this posture for more breaths and try to deepen the posture with each exhalation.
- Repeat the posture a few times to challenge the mind and body, attempting to allow the two to unite.
- Alternative arm positions:
- Prayer position above the head;
- Arms outstretched overhead with palms facing in
- Look up to the sky through the palms, or the thumbs in prayer position.

Adjustments/What to look for

- Shoulders 'crunching' up near the ears. Allow the shoulders to relax and the shoulder blades to slide down the back.
- Sinking into the lower back. Lift up through the spine, creating length.
- Work on rotating the bent leg hip to the outside, whilst maintaining balanced hips. This can be achieved by pressing into the support leg.
- The pose requires a solid foundation so the support leg must be strong and straight.
- 'Grabbing' the ground with the support leg toes. Allow the toes to relax and work on grounding down with the knuckle of the big and little toe, and the mid-point of the heel.