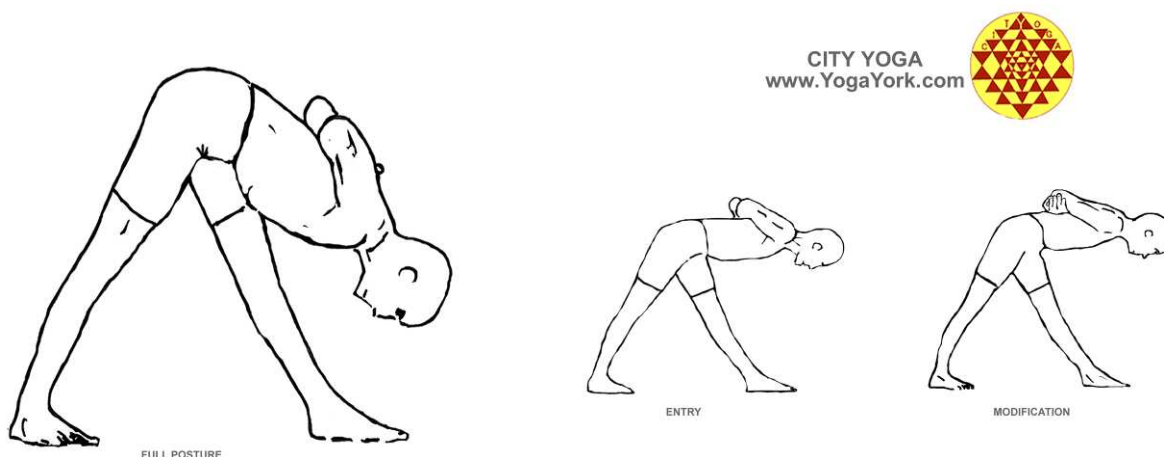


# Parsvottanasana

## Side Forward Bend

This posture prepares the body for the balanced leg raises that follow, as it develops the alignment, symmetry and balance of the pelvis. The hips are held square and level by the position of your front and back leg, while the torso is stretched over the front leg. The arms are behind the body with hands in reverse prayer position. The arm pressure promotes a lengthening of the spine. The hand position also acts to open up the shoulder joints. The position also helps the chest to open and the body to release over the front leg. This action deeply stretches the hamstring of the front leg. The posture stimulates circulation, deepens breathing, improves posture – especially hunching of the back – and unlocks tension.



### Entering the posture

From samastithi step the right foot back approximately 3 foot. Turn the right foot toward the end of the mat and the left foot in 35°. Take the hands behind the back into prayer position (eventually the little fingers will be in a position between the shoulder blades) On the inhale lift the chest. Keep length in the body as you exhale and find a parallel position with the upper body and the floor. Then as you take the next exhale move the abdomen down toward the upper thigh. Take care to keep the hips square as you fold forward. Gaze to the middle toe of the front foot.

### Working within the posture

- Roll the shoulders away from the ears.
- Lift the inner arches and spread the toes.
- Keep the hips square and shoulders balanced evenly over the leg.
- Press the palms together to develop a feeling of strength and opening in the shoulders and chest.
- Keep the neck in line with the spine.
- Don't bend the front knee but do take the tension out of the back of the knee to avoid hyper extension.
- Lengthen the lower ribs away from the pelvis.
- Feel that each inhale lengthen from the base of the spine to the crown of the head.

### Modified posture

If the hand position in the full posture is too intense then fold the arms behind the back hold the elbows. Create a feeling of strength within this alternative by resisting the outward movement of the elbows with the hands. The posture demand strength, balance and flexibility so lighten the posture by not going too deep too early. As balance improves so will the ability to drop deeper into the posture.