

Yoga while you Travel

Welcome friends. This yoga sequence was designed especially for those that travel ... by road, by rail, but especially by air. If you have been sitting in one place for many hours, be it a train station, airport or freeway, practice these poses when you get to your destination to help reduce cramps or aches, increase circulation, and decrease swelling. You can do it any time, anywhere as well as everywhere! Best of all, feel great even if you do only one or two of the poses. Click any exercise to begin or click the next button.



Let's get started with a quotation and several Travel Tips ...

"Having a proper attitude towards journey is essential. If we make a journey properly, than everything we encounter is considered part of it. We are fully involved in the process of journeying rather than being fixated on our destination. We are not looking for quick solutions, but are willing to be open, precise, and thorough in relating to ourselves as well as all the facets of our environment – the weather, the scenery, the landmarks, and the obstacles or sidetracks along the way. In entering the path to enlightenment, we are beginning the process of transforming confusion into wisdom. But in order to make this journey, we must first acknowledge that we are confused and that our environment is chaotic. Beyond that, we must understand that chaos and confusion are perpetuated because we do not have the training to see things as they are."

- Excerpt from Buddha in the Palm of Your Hand by Osel Tendzin

Megan's Flying Tips - 10 ways to avoid jet lag!

1. It is best to bring your own food. Snack on hydrating fruits and veggies. Oranges, grapes, cucumbers and celery are always refreshing. Unsalted almonds and raisins are my favorite.
2. If your flight is long enough that they do include a meal, be sure to order a special meal, twenty-four hours in advance to your departure time. Perhaps a fruit plate or a low sodium meal. You'll be glad you did.
3. If you have a laptop be sure to save YogaEverywhere's Flying Poses and Breathing Exercises to your hard disk so that you can use them without an Internet connection. This way you have reference at 35,000 feet.
4. Do yourself a favor and skip the soda and coffee. Drink lots of bottled water even though you'll need to check out the bathroom more frequently than you'd like. If you need hot liquids, bring your own herbal tea bags like chamomile or peppermint tea. It's soothing on the mind and easy on the belly.
5. Your designated flying clothing should be comfortable and non-binding with "comfy" shoes.
6. If you can rip yourself away from your laptop for a few moments, don't be shy to stretch your legs as often as possible.
7. Once you get your feet back on the ground, take a long shower or bath. Afterwards, refresh your skin with your favorite lotion or oil.
8. The altitude and recycled air of most plane trips take their toll on you by slightly dehydrating you inside and out. Continue drinking more water than you are use to, hydrating yourself to avoid jetlag.
9. Schedule some personal TLC time like a massage or a private yoga class for the day after you land. It's an effortless self-care technique.
10. Be sure to set your designated travel clothing aside for your return trip. The trip back home seems always to take less time.

Ankle Rotations



Balance on both feet standing tall and alert. Start in mountain pose breathing long and deep. Focus your gaze on a point that is not moving. Now shift your weight to your left leg (hold on to a wall if you need). Extend your right leg so that the right sole of your foot hovers off the floor. Pointing your right toes, slowly rotate your foot around your ankle clockwise five times. Then rotate your foot slowly around your ankle counter clockwise five times. The slower the better. Please rest the right sole of the foot on the floor standing on two feet. Now shift your weight on to the right side and begin with your left foot. Don't take balancing poses too seriously, they just play with your ego! To end, stand in mountain pose and take five more long deep breaths.

Mountain Pose



Like a mountain in the clouds, stand tall with your feet hip width apart. Roll the palms of your hands face forward lengthening your arms from your shoulders. Gather your attention around your heart and begin breathing long and deep. Rock to the balls of your feet lifting your heels off the floor, come high on your toes. Slowly lower your heels to the floor and stand taller in both legs. Lift your toes, spread them wide apart and slowly fan them out on to the floor. Draw your knees towards your hips by firming your thighs. Float your lower ribs away from your hips elongating the sides of your body, roll your shoulders down and back. Breathe. Allow your arms now to just dangle by your sides, letting go of any unnecessary gripping in your shoulders or your mind. Keep your face muscles soft.

Ascend the crown of your head up as your feet descend down. Take five long deep breaths and stay in attention to yourself as you go to the extended mountain pose.

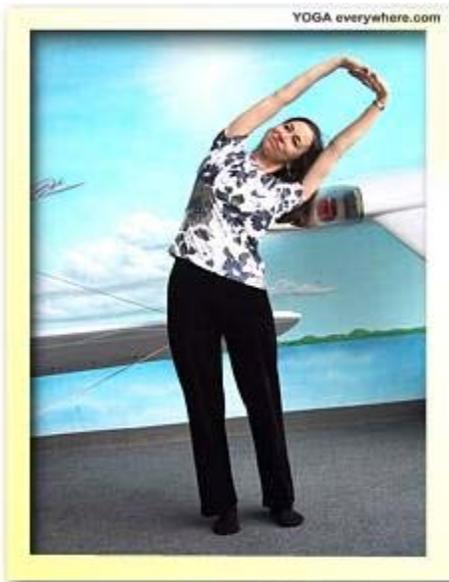
Extended Mountain Pose



Return to mountain pose, stretching your arms above your head with your hands interlaced, elbows extended long. Press the palms of your hands up as you sink the heels of your feet down. Draw your lower belly back towards your spine to support your lower back tilting your pubic bone slightly towards your chest. Get connected through out your entire body breathing long and deep for five deep breaths.

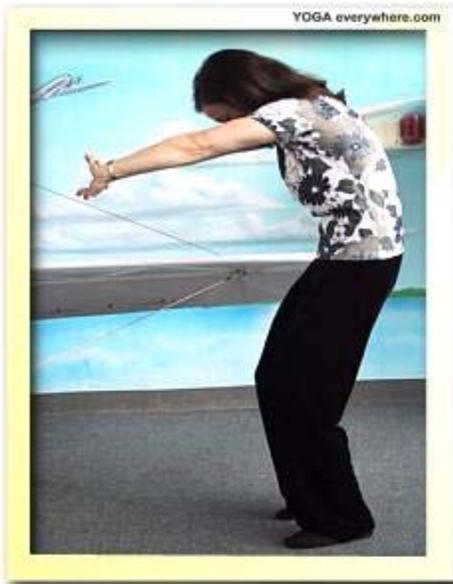
Continue to keep your face muscles soft, and your gaze easy. Take five long deep breaths and stay in attention to yourself as you go to the next pose.

Side Stretch



Maintaining Extended Mountain Pose, gently lean to one side. Stay mindful of your breath and do not strain. Let it feel good. Three breaths here and then do the other side.

Round the Back



Begin in Mountain Pose. Bend your knees, interlace your hands, pressing the heels of your hands away from your chest. Really round your back bowing your chin to your chest. Try pressing your belly in towards your spine with each complete exhale. Take five long deep breaths.

Chest Opener



Begin in mountain pose. Interlace your hands behind your back, firm your arms reaching the knuckles of your fingers towards the floor. Inhale deeply lifting your chest towards your chin and exhale slowly sliding the shoulder blades down your back. Take five long deep breaths. Lift your heart and envision it shining.

Hip Circles



Stand tall with your feet under your hips. Bend your knees floating your hands to your hips and slowly begin to rock your hips side to side like a sassy teenager. If that feels good continues starting with little circles building in to bigger ones. Slow and sensual circles at your body's pace not your minds! Get in to it, when it feels right, change directions. To finish, stand tall in mountain pose, still your body, smooth your breath and quiet your mind.

Spinal Flexes

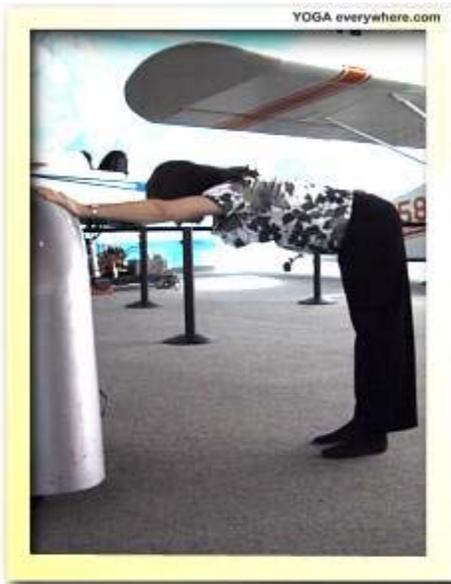


Part 1: Stand with your feet a little wider than your hips and bend your knees. Place your hands on your bent knees. On your exhale round your lower back like a Halloween cat dropping your head in traction and drawing your belly back towards your spine. Your pelvis is tilting towards your chest.



Part 2: Inhale slowly lift your chest away from your knees. Here your pelvis is tilting away from your chest. The action is similar to a dolphin through the ocean waters. Let the breath be the ocean as you move and breath like the grace of the dolphin. Continue smoothing out your breath and movement. You will know when to stop intuitively.

Half Dog Pose - *Ardha Uttanasana*



Place your hands on the counter a little wider than shoulder distance. Step back a few feet so that your hips are over your heels. Either straighten your legs by firming your thighs or bend the knees slightly depending on how tight your hamstrings are. If your legs are straight, continue lengthening your sit bones and tailbone away from your hands. Try to rest your torso parallel towards the floor. If your knees are bent, continue sliding your hips away from your hands. Take five to ten long deep breaths. Listen to your body and if it doesn't feel good, come out. To release the pose, bend the knees slightly and walk forward slowly uncurling one vertebra at a time.

Shoulder Shrugs



Stand tall in mountain pose. Press your feet evenly in to the floor like you were making footprints in the sand and you ascend the crown of your head.

Breathe naturally through your nose relaxing your lips and tongue. Inhaling shrugging your shoulders to your ears. Exhale completely lowering your shoulders away from your ears as your shoulder blades slide down your back. Do this five to ten time and then end with a few simple shoulder rolls.

Half Neck Circles

Standing up, slowly bow your chin to your chest. Begin with half neck circles, rolling your chin across your collarbone to your right shoulder. Now inhale here and exhale rolling your chin slowly across your collarbone to your left shoulder. Repeat this exercise five times. And please remember to slow down and take this exercise slowly.

Dancer Pose



A great pose after sitting a long time. If you feel this in your knees, skip it. Come standing in mountain pose merging the soles of your feet to the floor the crown of your head to the ceiling. Breathe long and smooth through your nose focusing your gaze on a point that does not move at eye level. Shifting all your weight to your right side, slowly float your left foot back and up in to your left hand. Your left hand is wrapped around your left ankle. Press out through the ball of your left foot and try to spread the toes. Begin to elongate the front of your left thigh, dropping your left hip begin to lengthen your right side. Take five long deep breaths. Hold on to the counter if you struggle with balance.

Relaxation Meditation

This meditation is ideal for the air because it allows time to pass without "doing". On a cellular level you are retraining your body to listen to your own inner guidance and just "being". Do not get discouraged if your body does not respond immediately. Please be patient in your mind, you have the time when you're flying to practice!

Take your seat breathing gently through your nose relaxing your lips and tongue. Notice which body parts make contact with your chair and with each exhale slowly surrender into the loving hands of gravity. Acknowledge your muscle tension and resistance, it's natural and let that be. Guide your awareness to the soles of your feet and relax them. Relax your ankles, shins and calves. Relax your knees, thighs and your buttock. Relax your lower back, middle back and upper back. Feel your shoulder blades sliding down your back as your shoulders soften.

Return your pelvis back to the earth and begin to relax more. Relax your belly, your stomach, chest and ribs. Relax your inhales. Relax your exhales. Relax your throat and neck. Relax the space where your neck meets your hair and your scalp too. Begin to relax all you face muscles. Forehead, eyebrows and eyes, nose and cheeks, relax. Lips, chin and mouth relax. Spaces under your cheeks, jaw, relax. Even your ears relax. Take a few more deep breaths and relax even more.

Relax your thinking, your thoughts. Relax your brain. With each exhale relax your thinking more. Relax your mind. Please take a few more restful breaths and observe the quiet mind and the message that lie between the silent pauses.

"May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. The rain fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, May God hold you in the Palm of His hand."

- An Irish Blessing for your Journey ... have an enjoyable flight.