

RESTORATIVE YOGA

For this practice, we recommend having one blanket, two pillows, and an eye mask.



1. Child's Pose

Lay a blanket on your mat, and then come onto hands and knees. We suggest putting one pillow behind your kneecaps, and the second pillow at the top of the mat where you can rest your head. Bring your big toes to touch, separate your knees about two feet, sit your hips back on your heels, and then crawl your hands and torso forward until your forearms and/or forehead are resting on the pillow in front of you. Close your eyes and enjoy the benefits of this pose which include calming the mind and activating your parasympathetic nervous system while gently stretching your spine and hips. Hold this pose for three minutes.



2. Prone Shoulder Opener

Keep the blanket on your mat and come down to your stomach. Extend your left hand out from your shoulder in a half T position with your palm facing down. Look towards the right and use your right hand to slowly and gently roll over to the left side of your body, gently putting pressure on your left shoulder. To deepen the stretch, you can allow your top leg to slide a few inches behind you. Close your eyes and breathe deeply as you focus on releasing built-up tension in the shoulders, neck, and chest. Hold this pose for two minutes, then come back to your stomach before you do the opposite side.



3. Supported Fish Pose

Lay one pillow on your mat, and then with your back facing the pillow, slowly recline until the back of your heart lands on the pillow. Your hands can rest on your stomach and heart—however, extending the arms out into a T shape (or even overhead) will activate a gentle chest opening stretch. Benefits of this pose include increasing airflow to the lungs, energizing the body, and stretching and lengthening your spine... which is especially important if we sit a lot! If you'd like to add a little more intensity to the posture, you can add two blankets instead of one. Hold this pose for five minutes



4. Legs Up the Wall

Bring your blanket to lay flush with your wall. Sit at the end of your blanket so that your left foot, left hip, and left shoulder are touching the wall. Lean back onto your right arm, and carefully and slowly walk your feet up the wall as you lay all the way down. Once lifted, press your feet into the wall so you can adjust your hips and spine to lay centered on the blanket—you should feel like you're sitting on the wall. Rest your hands on your stomach and chest, and then allow your legs to completely relax. It might feel nice to shake out your legs and roll your ankles. You are welcome to widen your legs a few inches to gently stretch the hips. Close your eyes and enjoy the benefits of this pose which includes stretching your hamstrings, calming your nerves, and increasing circulation throughout the body. Hold this pose for five minutes. You are welcome to cover your eyes with the eye mask as you rest.