



FORWARD BEND

paścchimottanaṣāna

KEY INTENTION

**TO REPLENISH YOUR ENERGY
BY LETTING GO OF PAINFUL
EMOTIONS**

Literally translated, this is 'the west-facing posture'. Like the setting sun, it soothes and calms your mind and emotions. As your back stretches forward, old habit patterns are released. This means they lose their hold on you so that your natural intuitive sense can unfold.



Visualise light in the heart centre.



Visualise light flowing from the heart to the crown and down the arms.

1
NORMAL

Sit upright with your legs extended, your hands on the ground beside your hips. Lengthen your spine.

INHALE

With your palms facing in, slowly raise your hands to heart level, lifting the sternum as you do so.

2
EXHALE

At heart level, rotate your palms to face forward. Gently stretch forward from the base of your spine and extend your arms as far as is comfortable along your legs. Bend your knees if necessary.

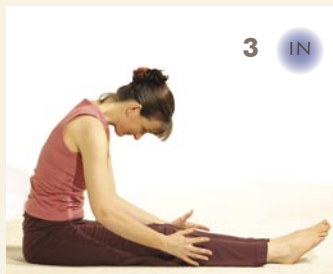


Avoid this posture if you have:

- ☞ a slipped disc
- ☞ sciatica.

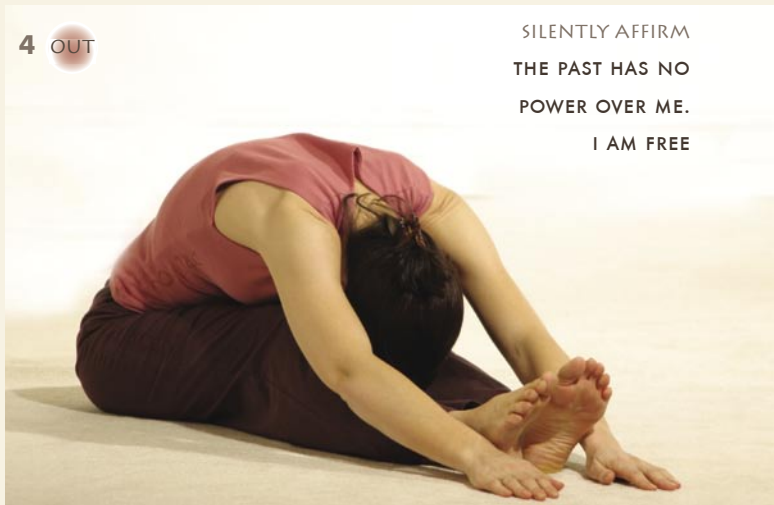
While doing the forward bend posture:

- ☞ sit on a cushion if necessary to help tilt the pelvis forward
- ☞ bend by stretching up and forward from the lower back
- ☞ relax your head down last.



Visualise light flowing up the legs to the heart.

4 OUT



SILENTLY AFFIRM
THE PAST HAS NO
POWER OVER ME.
I AM FREE

3 INHALE As you uncurl from the base of your spine, draw your hands along the sides of your legs and up to heart level, raising the sternum and keeping your shoulders relaxed.

Repeat stages **3** and **4** several times creating a flowing rhythm, bending forward a little more each time.

4 EXHALE For the final forward bend, extend your arms until your palms are flat on the floor and your forehead lowers towards your legs. Relax.

5 INHALE In your own time, rise into an upright position and rest your hands on your legs.

Pause for a few moments to enjoy the stillness.



The forward bend:

- ☞ releases back tension by stretching the hamstring and lower back muscles
- ☞ stimulates the digestive and reproductive systems by massaging the abdominal area
- ☞ promotes emotional well-being by calming the nerves.