



### **Full Boat Pose - Paripurna Navasana**

#### **Step 1**

Sit on the floor with your legs straight in front of you. Press your hands on the floor a little behind your hips, fingers pointing toward the feet, and strengthen the arms. Lift through the top of the sternum and lean back slightly. As you do this make sure your back doesn't round; continue to lengthen the front of your torso between the pubis and top sternum. Sit on the "tripod" of your two sitting bones and tailbone.

#### **Step 2**

Exhale and bend your knees, then lift your feet off the floor, so that the thighs are angled about 45-50 degrees relative to the floor. Lengthen your tailbone into the floor and lift your pubis toward your navel. If possible, slowly straighten your knees, raising the tips of your toes slightly above the level of your eyes. If this isn't possible remain with your knees bent, perhaps lifting the shins parallel to the floor.

#### **Step 3**

Stretch your arms alongside the legs, parallel to each other and the floor. Spread the shoulder blades across your back and reach strongly out through the fingers. If this isn't possible, keep the hands on the floor beside your hips or hold on to the backs of your thighs.

#### **Step 4**

While the lower belly should be firm, it shouldn't get hard and thick. Try to keep the lower belly relatively flat. Press the heads of the thigh bones toward the floor to help

anchor the pose and lift the top sternum. Breathe easily. Tip the chin slightly toward the sternum so the base of the skull lifts lightly away from the back of the neck.

#### Step 5

At first stay in the pose for 10-20 seconds. Gradually increase the time of your stay to 1 minute. Release the legs with an exhalation and sit upright on an inhalation.

#### **Contra indications and Cautions**

Asthma

Diarrhea

Headache

Heart Problems

Insomnia

Low blood pressure

Menstruation

#### **Pregnancy**

Neck injury: Sit with your back near a wall to perform this pose. As you tilt your torso back rest the back of your head on the wall.

#### **Modifications and Props**

Often it's difficult to straighten the raised legs. Bend your knees and loop a strap around the soles of your feet, gripping it firmly in your hands. Inhale, lean the torso back, then exhale and lift and straighten your legs, adjusting the strap to keep it taut. Push the feet firmly against the strap.

#### Deepen the Pose

Full Boat is often presented as an abdominal strengthener, which it is to a certain extent. But more importantly this pose strengthens the deep hip flexors that attach the inner thigh bones to the front of the spine. Learn to anchor the heads of the thigh bones deep in the pelvis and lift from that anchor through the front spine. Remember that the lower front belly should never get hard.

#### **Preparatory Poses**

Adho Mukha Svanasana

Uttanasana

Follow-up Poses

Adho Mukha Svanasana

Baddha Konasana

Halasana

Salamba Sirsasana

Utkatasana

### **Beginner's Tip**

You can practice a preparation for this pose periodically throughout your day without even leaving your chair. Sit on the front edge of a seat with your knees at right angles. Grab onto the sides of the seat with your hands and lean slightly forward. Firm your arms and lift your buttocks slightly off the seat, then raise your heels slightly off the floor (but not the balls of your feet). Let the heads of your thigh bones sink into the pull of gravity and push the top of your sternum forward and up.

### **Benefits**

Strengthens the abdomen, hip flexors, and spine

Stimulates the kidneys, thyroid and prostate glands, and intestines

Helps relieve stress

Improves digestion

Partnering

A partner can help you bring the shoulder blades into your back and lift your sternum by placing his/her hands gently on your back and upper chest to give you something to lift from.

### **Variations**

Ardha Navasana

From Full Boat Pose, clasp your hands on the back of your head and, with an exhalation, lower the legs slightly. At the same time round your back, so that you are now resting on your sacrum (though your lower back is still off the floor). Stretch your elbows out to the sides and bring the tips of your big toes in line with your eyes.

References - Yoga Journal Asanas