

summer break

Beat the heat with playful, confidence-building poses you can take to the beach.

Summertime, and the livin' is easy. You love yoga when it feels fun and free and joyful this time of year. To help keep your practice fresh, try the sequence vinyasa yoga teacher Kathryn Budig created on the following pages. Whether you luxuriate in them during a weeklong beach vacation or try them as a break from your daily routine, these poses will open your body and mind as they tone, strengthen, and prepare you for the beach.

Asana practice can help you to create space in your physical body and in your thoughts, beliefs, and choices. Budig encourages you to open up, let go, and find more freedom in all areas of your life. Her sequence includes backbends, core strengtheners, and hip openers to help you open as you build strength and confidence to work toward

expansive expressions of the variations on Vasisthasana (Side Plank Pose). The final pose feels playful, looks gorgeous, and creates confidence, says Budig. But **don't obsess** about perfection, she says, and don't worry if your top leg isn't perfectly straight in the final pose. Instead, focus on rooting your bottom foot and notice that you are able to lift up and expand the rest of your body more easily. And remember that the pose requires a willingness to be vulnerable and expose yourself. "You have to be open to falling and trying again, so drop your agenda and get out there and have fun." After all, having fun is what summer is all about. DIANE ANDERSON

to begin

Stand in Tadasana (Mountain Pose) with your palms at your heart in Anjali Mudra (Salutation Seal). Set your intention to trust that everything unfolds as it should when you loosen your grip and allow yourself to be open. Connect to your breath and move through 5 rounds of Surya Namaskar A (Sun Salutation).

to finish

Take Supta Baddha Konasana (Reclining Bound Angle Pose) lying on your back with one hand above your navel and the other on your heart. Seal in your commitment to both physical and mental space. Absorb this lack of resistance and let the opportunity to open up pour in. Rest for 2 to 3 minutes, then extend your legs into Savasana (Corpse Pose).



1 Virasana (Hero Pose)

Begin on all fours and drop your bottom between your heels to come to a comfortable seat. If you feel any strain on your knees or ankles, sit on a block instead. Gently press your pinkie toes into the mat. Root your tailbone and lift your frontal hip points up as you draw your front ribs into your body. Lift your sternum and roll your shoulders back. Prepare for Ujjayi Pranayama (Victorious Breath).

2 Three-Legged Down Dog, variation

From Hero, come to all fours and lift into Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward-Facing Dog Pose). Lift your right leg and roll your right hip open. Bend your knee and gently pull your heel toward the left glute, keeping your shoulders even and shoulder blades spread. Take 8 Ujjayi breaths. Straighten your leg, square your hips, and bring your foot down. Repeat with your left leg, and then come back to Down Dog.

3 Core Plank, variation

From Down Dog, lift your right leg, shift your shoulders forward above your wrists, and bend your right knee tight to your chest. Lower your hips in line with your shoulders, and round your upper back. Reach strongly through your left leg. Spread your shoulder blades around your side ribs to reach maximum rounding. Try to plant a kiss on your kneecap as you bring your thigh to your chest and your heel to your bottom. Hold for 5 to 8 breaths, then lift your right leg up and release it back to the ground. Take the left side.



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4 Balancing Tabletop

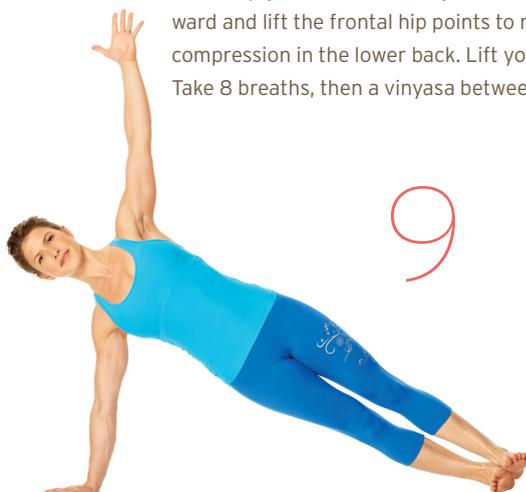
From Down Dog, come to all fours and extend your right arm forward, your left leg back. Create one long line of energy, pull your ribs in, and extend forward through your fingertips and back through your toes. Bend the left leg, internally rotate your right arm, and reach back to hold your left foot. Press your left shinbone back and lift your foot. Take 8 breaths, then release. Repeat on the other side. Pull back to Downward Dog.

5 Utthan Pristhasana (Lizard Pose)

Step your right foot forward between your hands. Place both arms inside your right leg and lower your forearms to the floor or onto blocks. Extend your sternum forward and melt your shoulder blades down your back. Keep the right knee close to the right shoulder. Hold for 10 to 20 breaths, then straighten your arms and step back to Down Dog. Take a vinyasa between sides by flowing from Down Dog to Plank to Urdhva Mukha Svanasana (Upward-Facing Dog Pose), then back to Down Dog.

6 Anjaneyasana (Low Lunge), variation

Step your right foot forward and drop your back knee to a Low Lunge. Keep your front knee over your ankle, place your right hand on your right thigh, and reach your left hand back to clasp your left foot. Roll your left ribs forward and lift the frontal hip points to release compression in the lower back. Lift your chest. Take 8 breaths, then a vinyasa between sides.



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A video of this Home Practice sequence can be found online at yogajournal.com/livemag.



7 Urdhva Mukha Svanasana (Upward-Facing Dog Pose)

From Down Dog, move into Up Dog. Bend your elbows slightly and hug your forearms toward the midline. Pull your torso through your arms and feel as though your kidneys spread and lift. Lift your kneecaps and press all 10 toes into the ground. Straighten your arms and keep your chest lifted for 2 more breaths. Release onto the floor.



8 Dhanurasana (Bow Pose)

Bend both knees and hold your feet or ankles. Open your chest and press your shinbones back. Imagine pressing your feet back until they stack over your knees. Lift your head and chest and keep your shoulders dropping down. Stay for 8 full breaths and then return to Down Dog.



9 Vasisthasana (Side Plank Pose)

Come into Plank, bring your feet together, and center your right hand on the mat. Roll onto the pinkie edge of your right foot. Reach your tailbone toward your heels and stack your hips. Reach your left arm to the sky. Gently draw your right shoulder blade down your back. Stay here for 5 breaths. Come back to Plank and do the other side.



10 Vasisthasana, variation

Take Vasisthasana on the first side. Externally rotate your top leg so your toes point up. Bend your left knee, grab the mound of your left big toe, and straighten your left leg up as you press the sole of your right foot down. Press your bottom big toe and hand down to lift your hips. Open your chest and stay for 3 to 5 breaths. Then release and rest in Balasana (Child's Pose) before taking the second side.

