

The Ultimate Balance



Picture Courtesy of One Fitness Sdn. Bhd.

of the Warrior III

Pearl Tan

The Warrior III is commonly thought to be a balancing pose, although it is the last of the poses of Vhirabhadrasana, which completes the entire range of poses from strength to durability.

Every one of the Vhirabhadrasana pose centers on strength, stamina and muscle potency. They provide their practitioners with strong legs and lean bodies. Warrior III improves balance, memory, concentration, and tones and invigorates the whole body.

It is often said that the Warrior Poses must be practiced in accordance to their sequence and relevance. This is because the poses require the body to prepare itself from the Warrior I, where focus is on the lower part of the body, to Warrior II, where focus is on the lower body whilst maintaining upper body alignment to Warrior III, where focus is on elongating or balancing the energies on the entire upper body.

Should this pose be challenging, it can be practiced by pressing your palms against the wall for balance. And as you build stamina and endurance, you can rely on your own alignment.

One of the better ways to prepare for this pose, is by practicing the locust and the bow poses, which involve the use of the muscles on the back of the body.

The anatomical focus of the Warrior III is in the regions of the thighs, hamstrings, calves, ankles, hips, shoulders and spine.

Benefits of the Warrior III pose:

- Strengthens the ankles and legs;
- Strengthens the shoulders and muscles of the back;
- Tones the abdomen; and
- Improves balance and posture.

Beginner's Tip:

The arm position of the Warrior III can be altered in accordance to the stamina level of the practitioner. Try stretching the arms out to the sides, like the wings of an aeroplane, or reaching them back, palms facing up, along the sides of your torso.

When you straighten the front knee by pushing the head of the thighbone back, imagine that the calf of the same leg is

resisting forward against the shin. These two opposing movements prevent the knee from locking or hyper-extending and further stabilizing the pose.

Since this pose can be very challenging for beginners, be prepared for the pose with a chair positioned in front of you, just a bit in front of your sticky mat (face the back of the chair towards you). When you stretch your arms forward take hold of the top of the chair. As you rise up into the full pose, push on and slide the chair away from you and use it to support your arms. Try to hold the chair as lightly as possible.

Also a partner can act as a support for your pose. Have him stand in front of you. When you reach your arms forward just before lifting into the full pose, he should grasp your wrists in his hands. He should guide you into position, not pull, and then support your wrists as lightly as possible.

This pose helps to remove sciatic, arthritic and rheumatic pains; corrects drooping shoulders and hunched back,

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expands the chest and increases endurance. For advanced students it is a matter of balance, for people recovering their health it will improve breathing and stamina. Attention is sharpened and drawn deeper with balances: the brain has to be attentive and the mind alert.

In this pose the mind, body and breath work together in unison. This pose cannot be done casually. It brings harmony, poise, power and a sense of equilibrium to the practitioner. It also stimulates the heart and digestive system, while decreasing the stress levels in the body.

Cautionary Notes/ Modifications

- Place more emphasis on keeping the arms, torso and leg in alignment than on attaining the final posture of the body being completely parallel with the ground. You will gain more confidence in this posture the more you do it.
- Do not do this pose if you are suffering from any kinds of headaches or migraines. YL