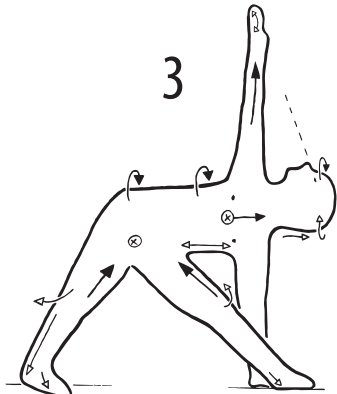
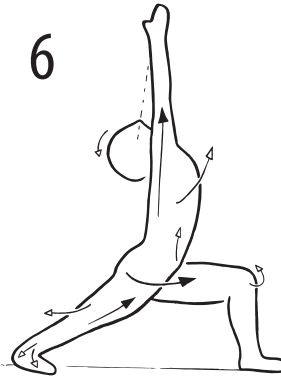


Program 1

The postures are arranged left to right, top to bottom.

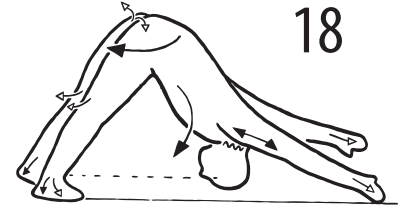


Utthita Trikonasana

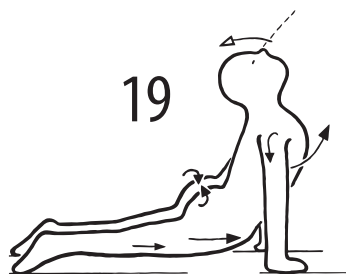


Virabhadrasana I

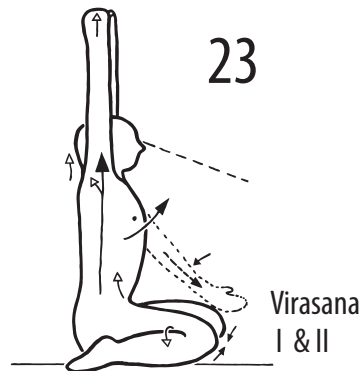
This is the *posture number*. It is the number at the top of each posture's page.



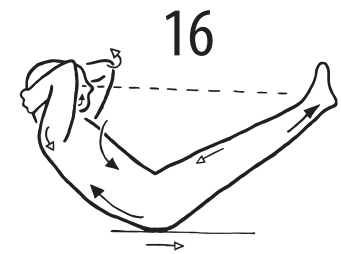
Adho Mukha Svanasana



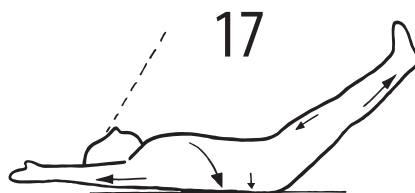
Urdhva Mukha Svanasana



Virasana I & II



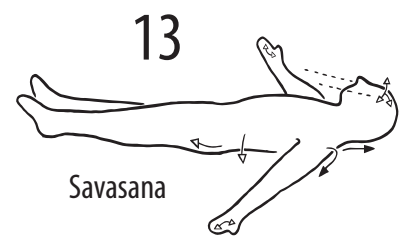
Ardha Navasana



Urdhva Prasarita Padasana



Bharadvajasana I



Savasana

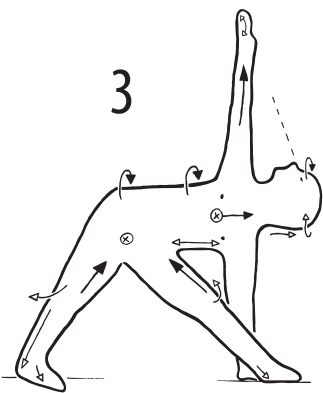
TIPS: Watching your body is *the secret* of yoga. So simply mimicking the drawings in a relaxed watchful way works well. Watching is best; thinking is problematic, so save that and the details for later. For the details (and for easier variations) turn to the *posture number* page (the number by the postures) every now and then to recall what you're aiming for. Also, review the introductory pages. Having a 'gut' sense of these principles will be your best yoga teacher in the long run. For more detailed steps, study the **Step By Step Lessons**, page 177.

Most yoga postures are done twice. First turn, twist or bend the body in one direction, then repeat the posture in the other direction. One side will often be stronger (or more flexible) than the other. One long term goal / benefit of yoga is bringing the 'weak' side into balance with the 'strong' side. By the way, do skip any that are painful. You'll grow into them over time.

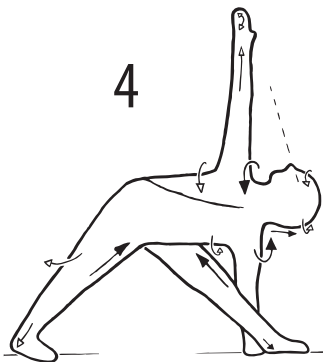
Please adapt to suit your own style and need. Remember, these illustrations show you the ideal you are aiming for. It will be years, if ever, before you reach that. The quality of yoga is not determined by how closely you match the ideal, but rather by the moment to moment nature of your practice, i.e, careful, attentive, self honest, persevering, timely, patient... In a word, watchful.

When you understand how to do the postures in Program 1 fairly well, begin adding postures from Program 2 into your daily routine.

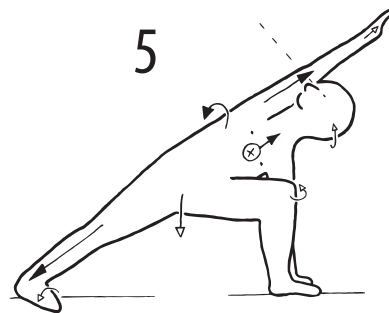
Program 2: First Day



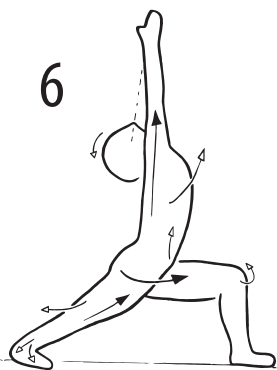
Utthita Trikonasana



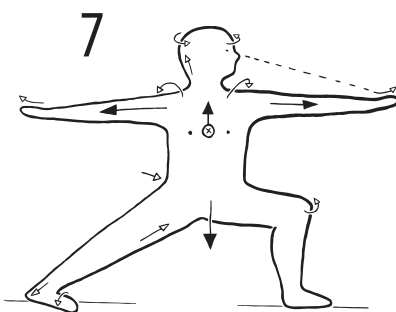
Parivrtta Trikonasana



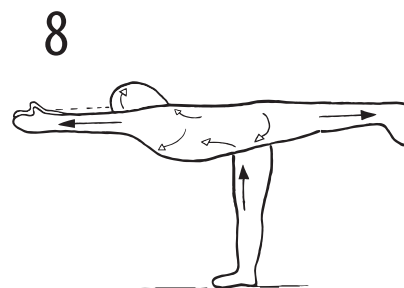
Utthita Parsvakonasana



Virabhadrasana I



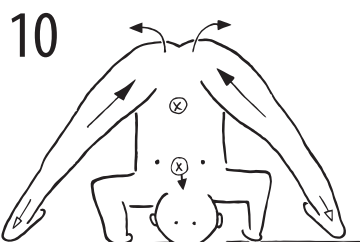
Virabhadrasana II



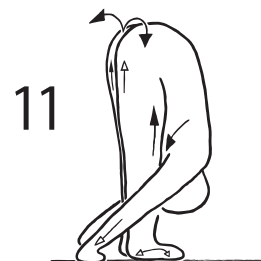
Virabhadrasana III



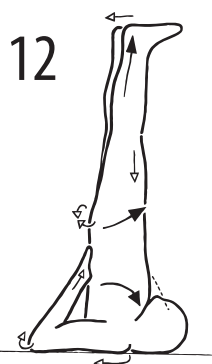
Parsvottanasana



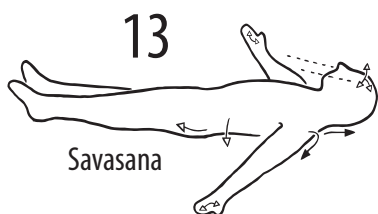
Prasrita Padottanasana



Uttanasana



Sarvangasana I



Savasana

TIPS

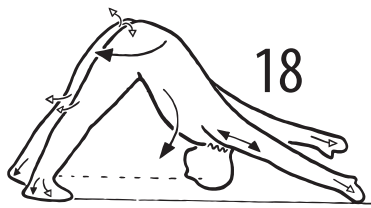
Begin Program 2 once you feel secure doing Program 1. You can also just keep doing Program 1, adding postures from 2 as you are able.

It is not necessary that you 'master' the postures in a program before going on to the next program, or even that you do all of them before going on. Some postures can take much longer - years - than others, depending on the person (body type, innate strengths and weaknesses, 'luck'). Also, what's the hurry? Proceed at your own pace.

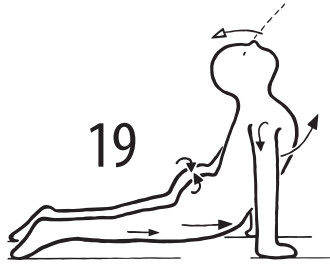
In truth, you can remain on any Program for as long as you like before taking on more postures. If yoga is a lifetime gift you are giving yourself, there is no rush. Take a lifetime to give it, but do continue to give. A steady gradual giving of yoga to your body and mind wins the day.

Program 2: Second Day

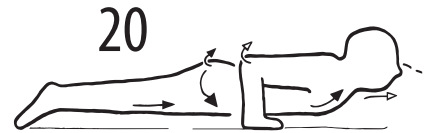
(or combine with First Day postures for a more intense daily routine)



Adho Mukha Svanasana



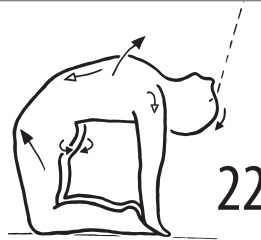
Urdhva Mukha Svanasana



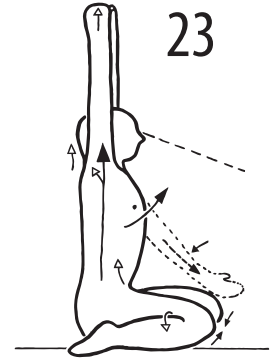
Chaturanga Dandasana & Nakrasana



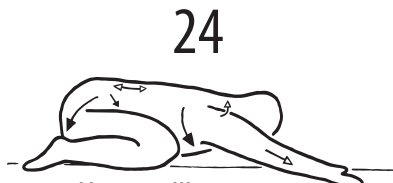
Salabhasana



Ustrasana



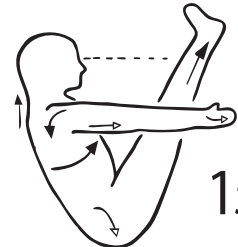
Virasana I & II



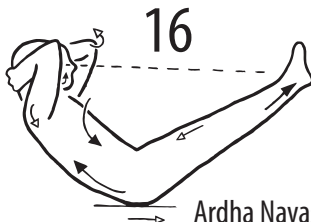
Virasana III



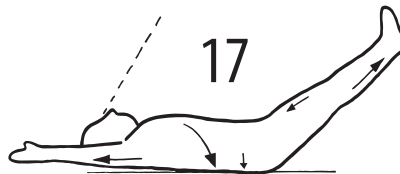
Janu Sirsasana



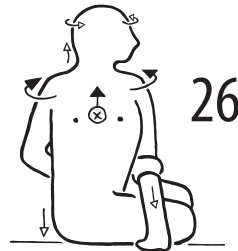
Paripoorna Navasana



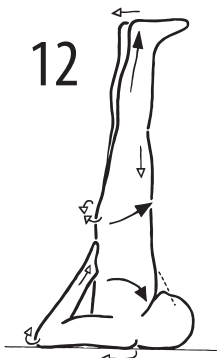
Ardha Navasana



Urdhva Prasarita Padasana



Bharadvajasana I



Sarvangasana I



Savasana

TIPS:

Feel free to try doing the postures in a different order. Now a days, for example, I do posture #12 first. Then I do #18, through #26, and then #15 through #17. 'Listen' to your body; it may feel another order feels better.

Again, I must emphasis how the quality of your yoga practice lies not in how flexible or strong you are, but by how conscientious your work and rest (Ha and Tha). Gymnasts and contortionist may easily do these postures (as a sport, or for show), and yet not be doing yoga. The postures are simply a means of self discovery; finding self harmony (balance) is the destination. We are innately drawn to 'judge books by their covers' and 'look good', so it is easy to overlook this deep, subtle, true side of yoga.

Tadasana

(1)

tada = mountain, asana = posture

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

EXTEND BACK OF
THE NECK IN THIS
DIRECTION

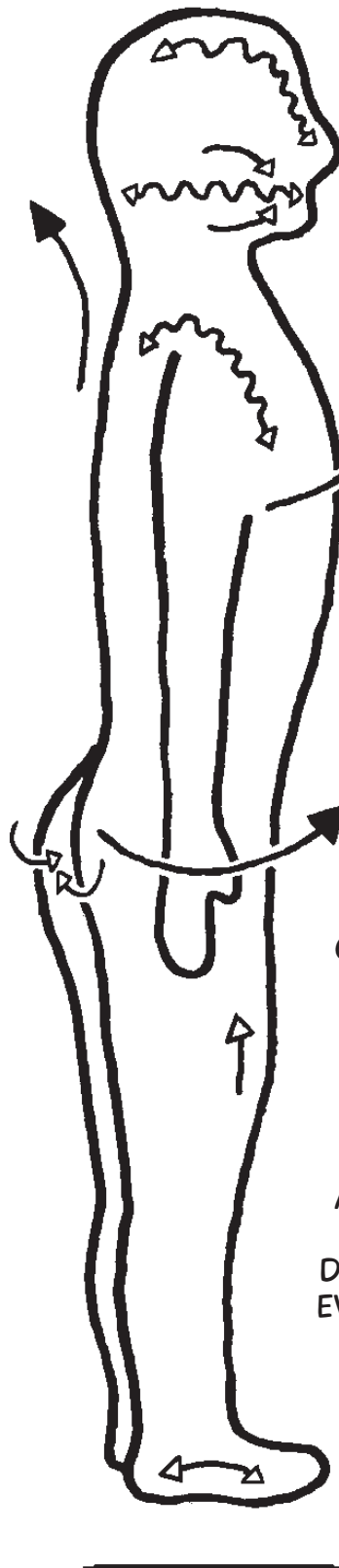
GENTLY ROLL
SHOULDERS BACK
AND DOWN

GENTLY
KEEP ARMS
STRAIGHT

ROTATE PELVIS
FORWARD

CONTRACT THIGHS TO
PULL KNEE CAPS UP

KEEP ANKLES, HEELS
AND BIG TOES PRESSED
FIRMLY TOGETHER AND
DISTRIBUTE BODY WEIGHT
EVENLY BETWEEN THE BALL
AND HEEL OF THE FEET



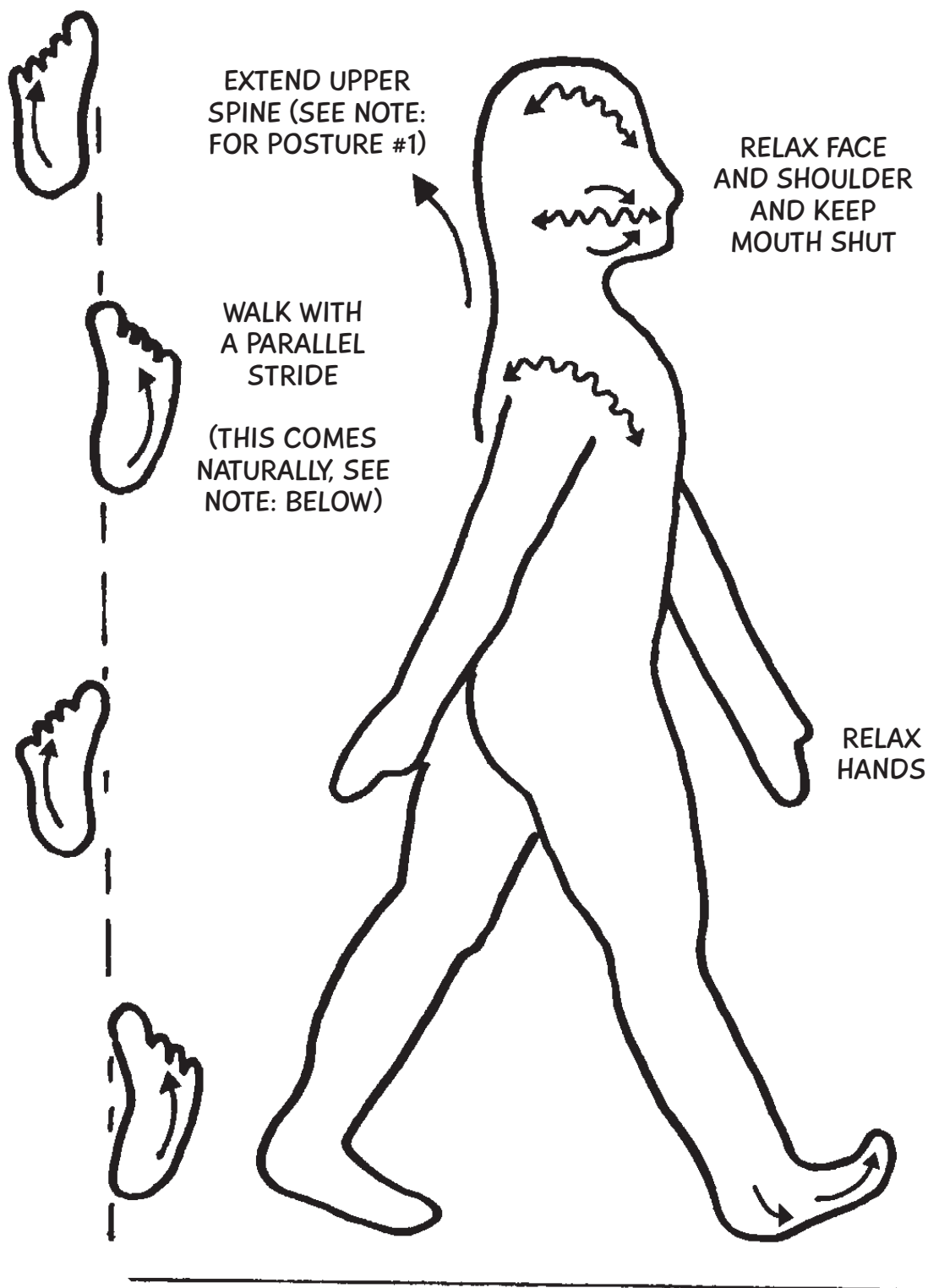
Note: to get an idea of neck extension, stand with back to a wall and thrust back of neck toward wall. Now imagine the body suspended from the ceiling by a string connected to top of the head

Practice this extension 24 hours a day, every day in all activity.

This extension is a vital root of Yoga - a key to constant watchfulness.

Walk, Walk-Run, Run

(2)



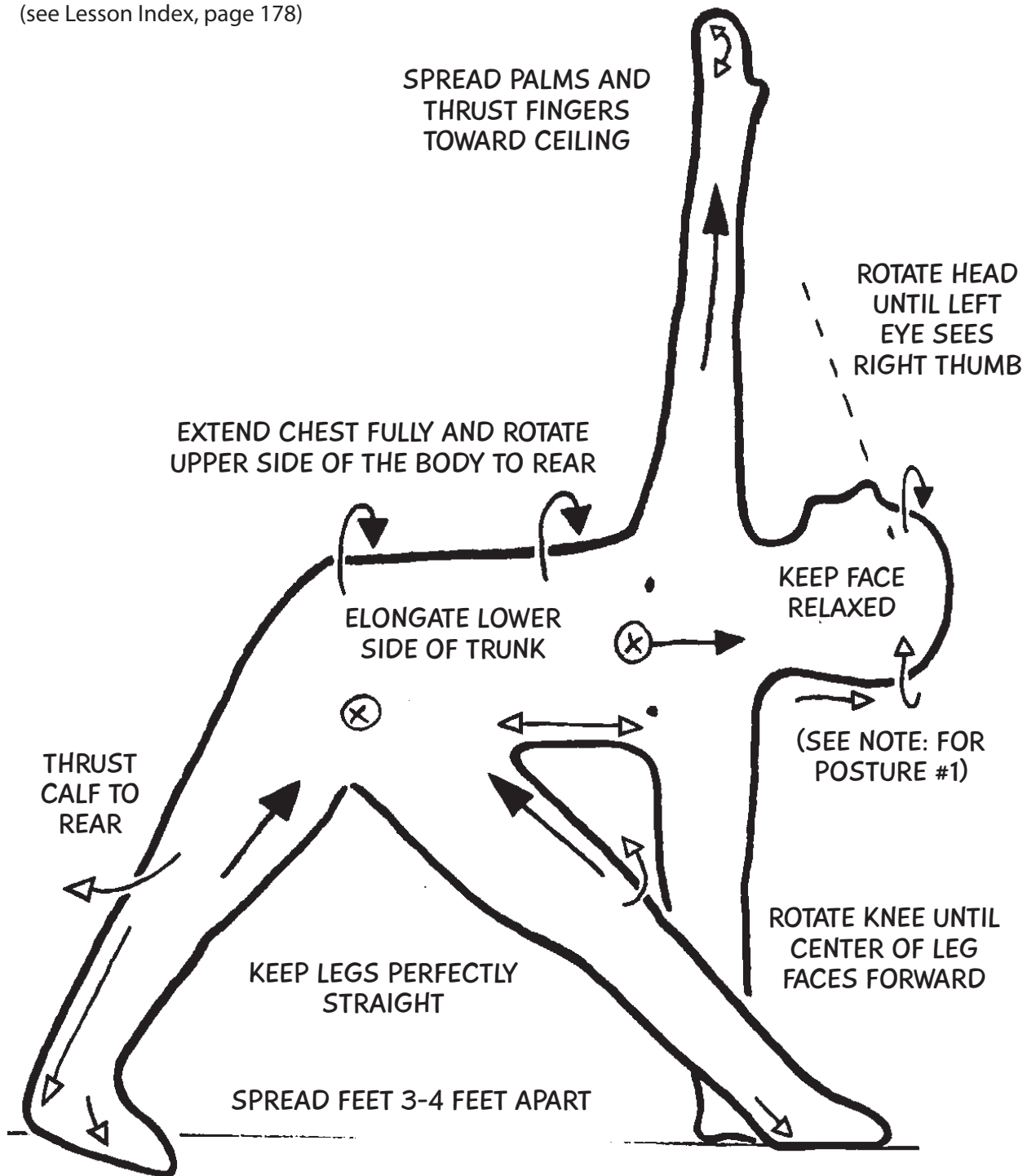
Note: This shows some general principles to consider. For example, the heel touches the floor first, then the outer sole, then the ball of the foot, then the outer toes and finally the big toe, but almost simultaneously when barefoot.

Utthita Trikonasana 20-60s

(3)

extended three angle

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



THRUST HEEL AND OUTER EDGE OF FOOT FIRMLY INTO FLOOR

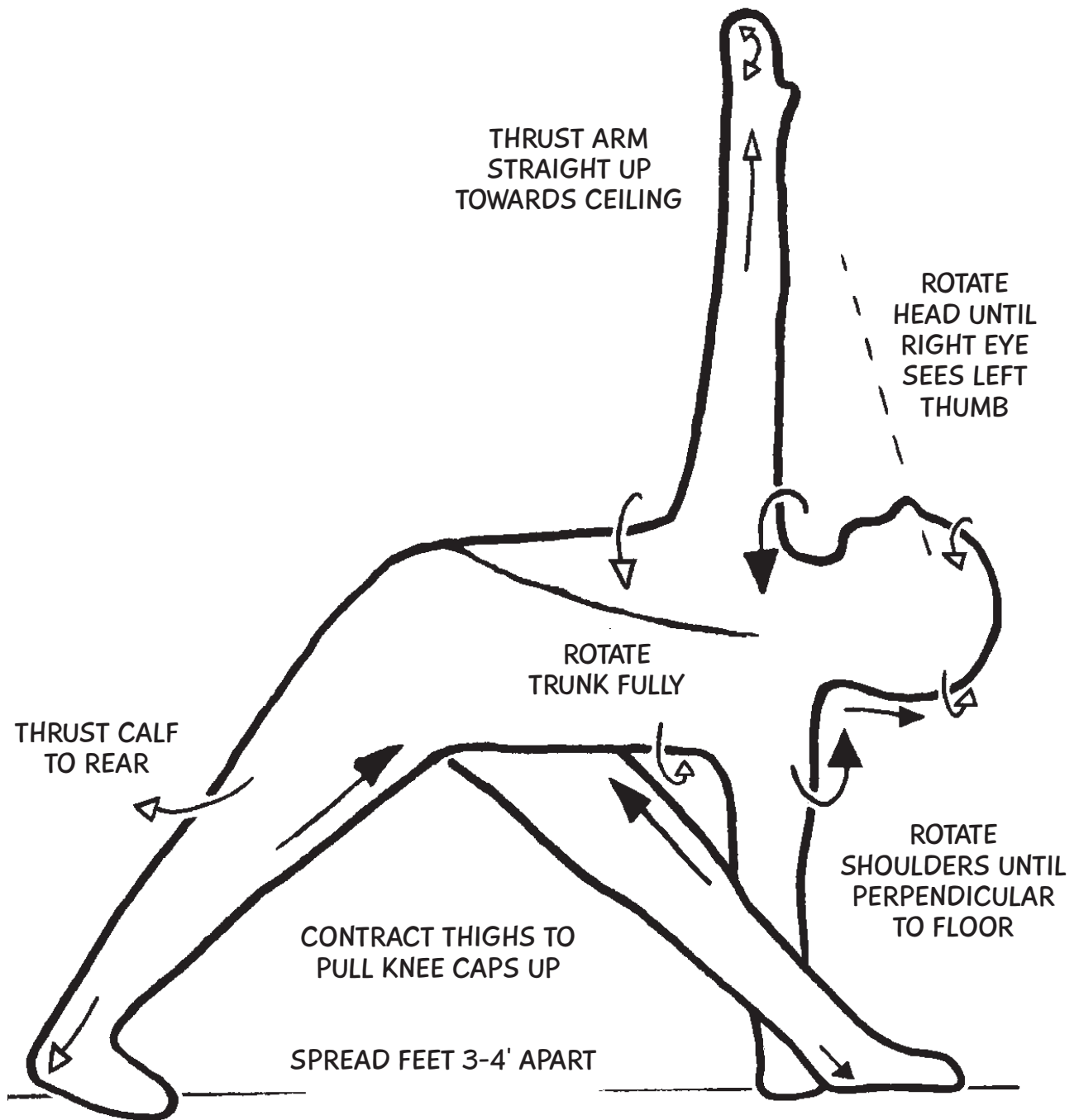
Var: you may grasp the ankle or shin bone instead of placing it on the floor. Contracting the thigh muscle to 'pull up the knee caps' and reaching for the ceiling are the essentials.

Parivrtta Trikonasana 20-60s

(4)

revolved three angle

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



Note: you can place the rear foot firmly against a wall to help you stabilize the balance. Reach for the 'stars'.

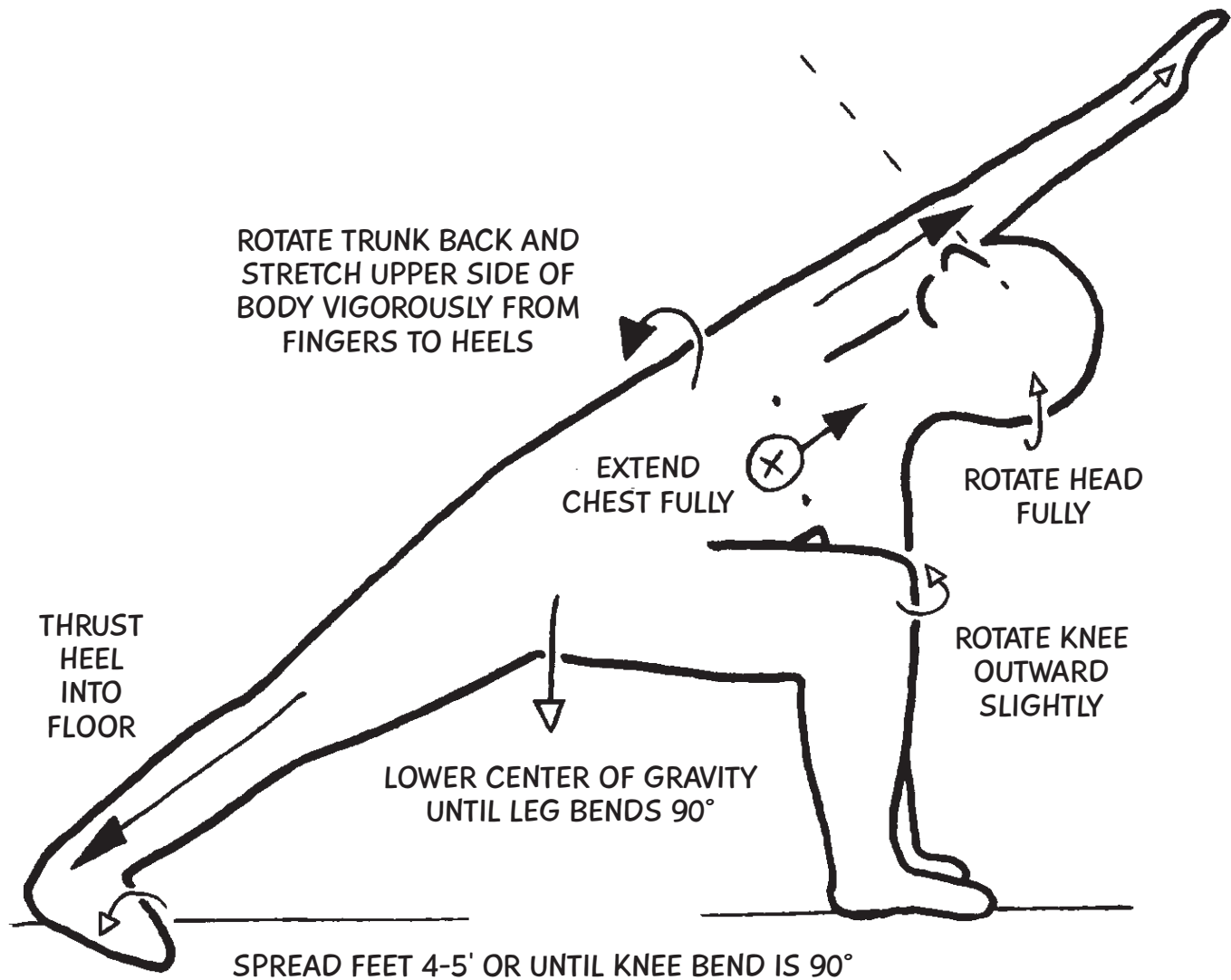
Again, for help in learning how to move into or out of the Yoga postures, take a Hatha Yoga class from a competent teacher and/or refer to B.K.S. Iyengar's most excellent book, *Light on Yoga*.

Utthita Parsvakonasana 20-60s

(5)

extended side angle

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



Var: If you need to, rest the upper arm along the upper side of the trunk instead of extending it outward.

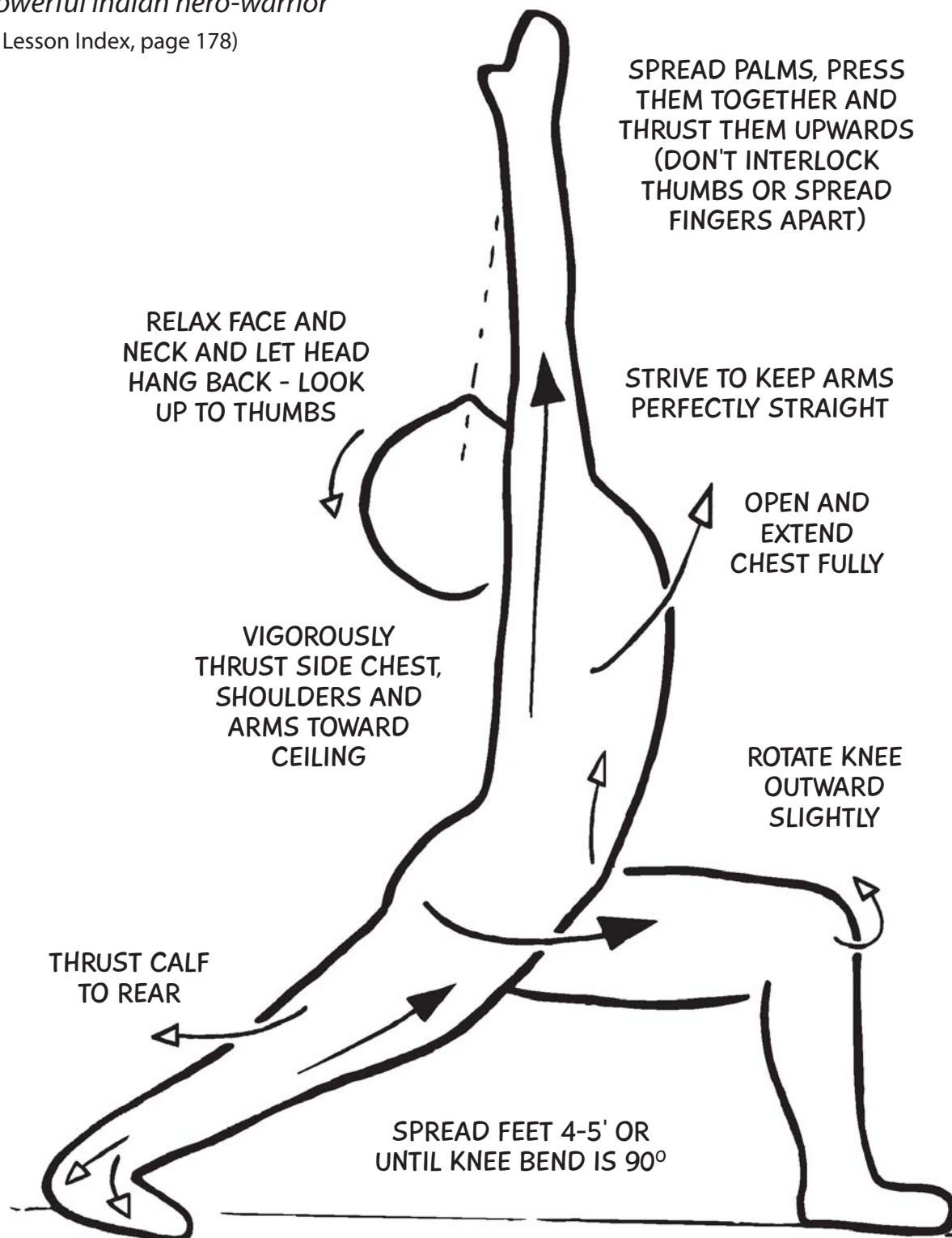
Note: For added stretch, do this posture with the lower arm placed in front of the bent knee instead of behind it. Feel you're being stretched apart by two giants, one grabbing your foot, one grabbing your arm.

Virabhadrasana I 20-30s

(6)

a powerful Indian hero-warrior

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



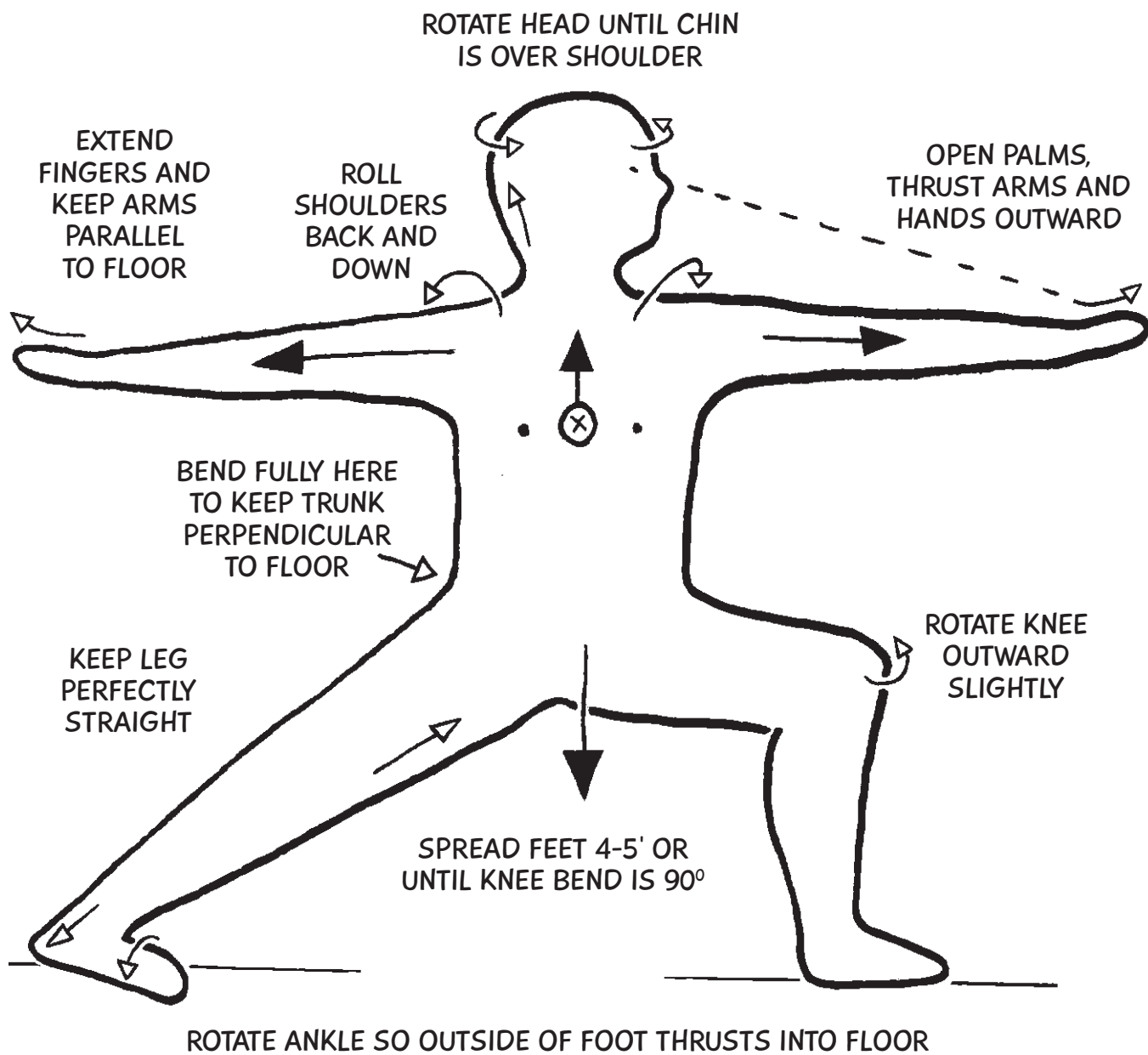
Var: Place the hands on the hips and concentrate on rotating the pelvis. Also, you may separate the palms 12" or so and then thrust them upward.

Note: You're reaching up to touch the sky; you're rotating forward and sinking down into the earth.

Virabhadrasana II 20-30s

(7)

a powerful Indian hero-warrior



Note: In this and other postures, never use strained exhalations. Breathe fully from the diaphragm and keep the chest 'proud', extending it fully. You allow the diaphragm to relax naturally, while still keeping chest fully extended.

Virabhadrasana III 20-30s

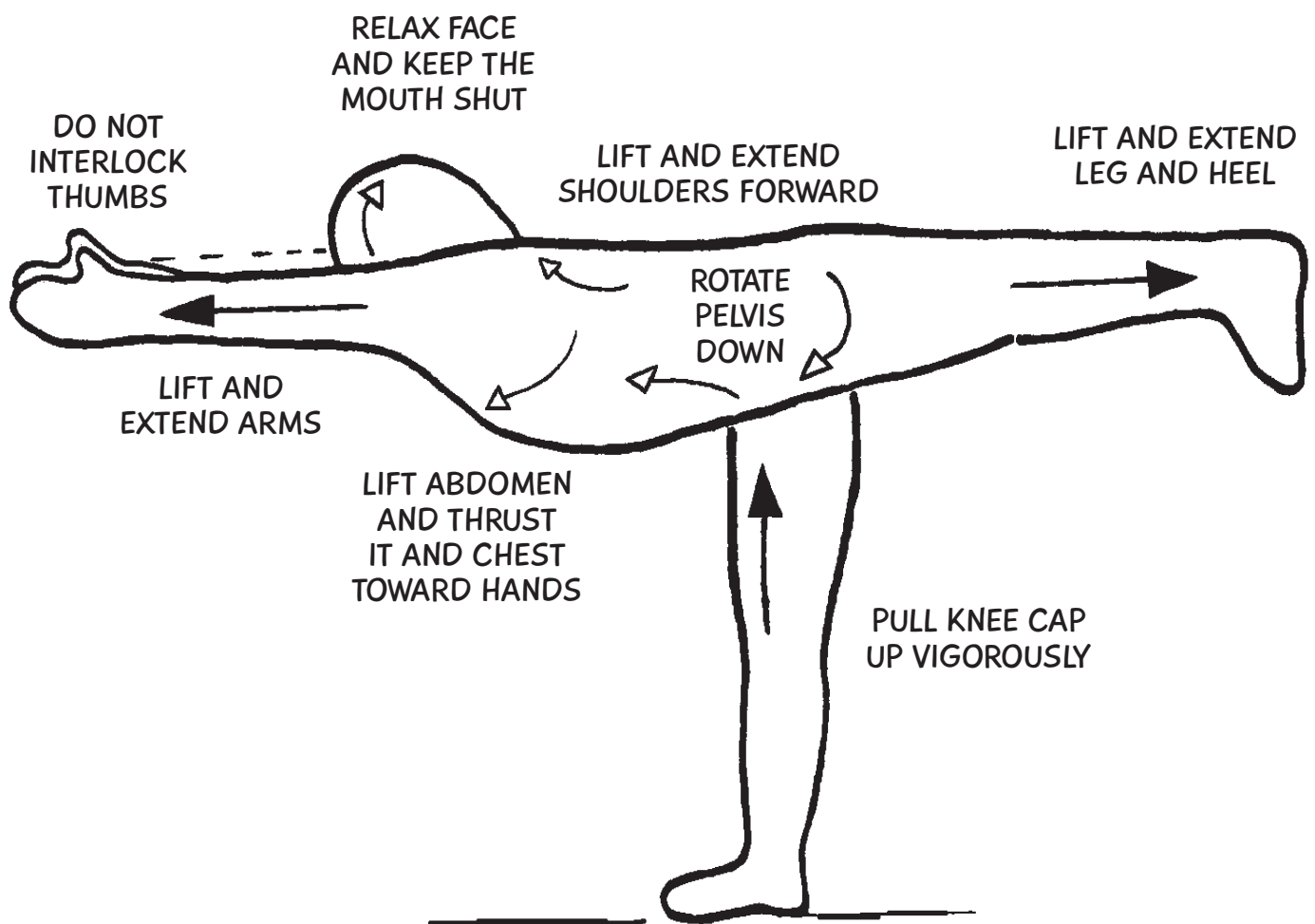
(8)

a powerful Indian hero-warrior

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

Var: place the hands on the hips and concentrate on balance while lifting the trunk and leg upward. You can also use the hands to hold on to something to help with the balance in the beginning, if you really need to. Hold hands apart at shoulder width, but do keep the arms extended.

Later, focus on vigorously reaching out to 'touch' the wall as you lift the arms and bring the palms together until they touch.



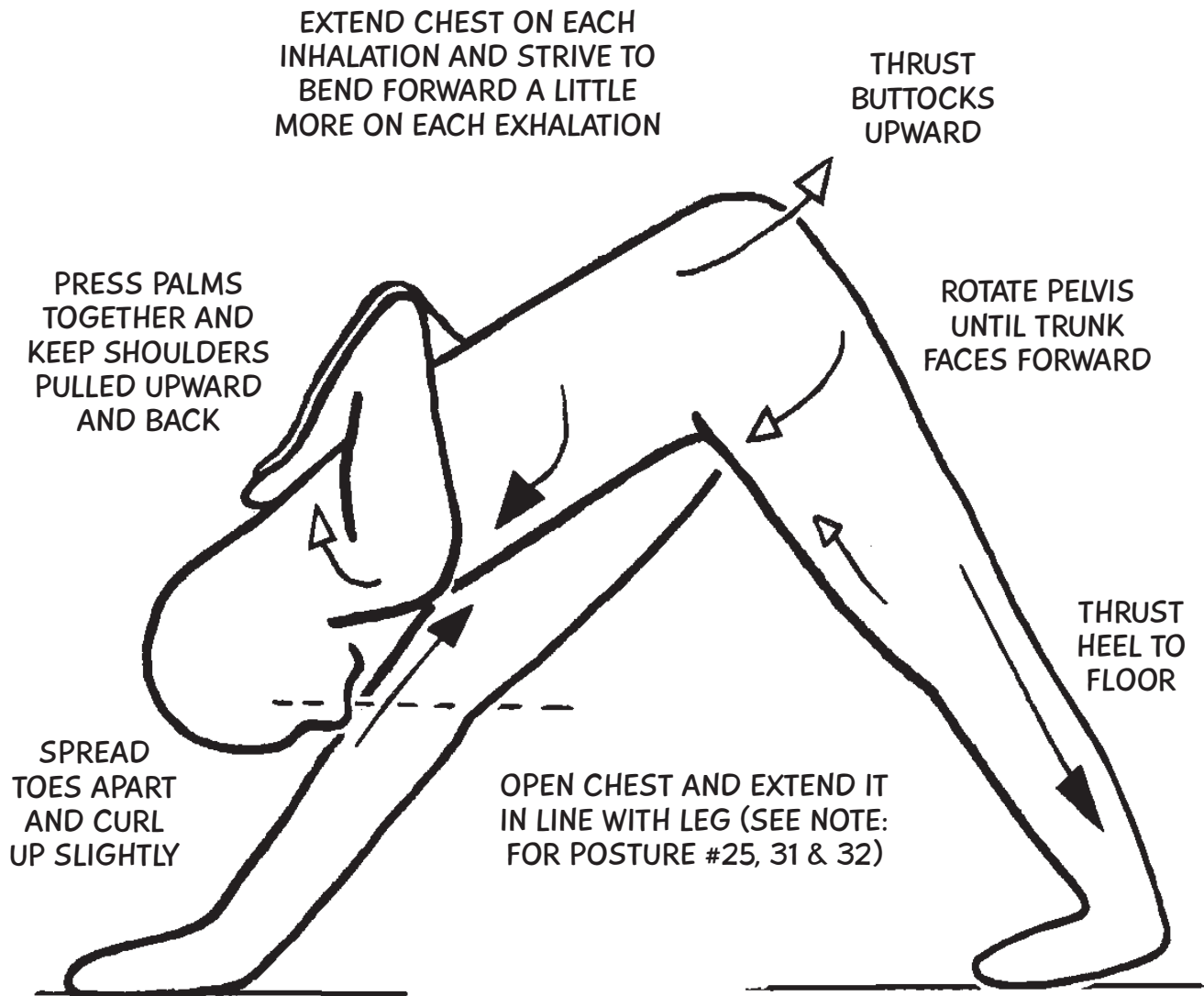
Note: Where you balance on one leg, concentrate primarily on keeping this lower leg perfectly straight by pulling the knee caps upward vigorously. Also keeping the ankle firm and feeling it rooted to the floor will increase stability and balance greatly.

Parsvottanasana 20-30s

(9)

side intense stretch

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



Var: place the hands on the hips and concentrate on keeping the legs straight and the chest extended. Don't worry about not being able to bend very far. Do 'worry' about keeping those thigh muscles working fully, locking the legs straight as an arrow with knee caps pulled as high as they will go.

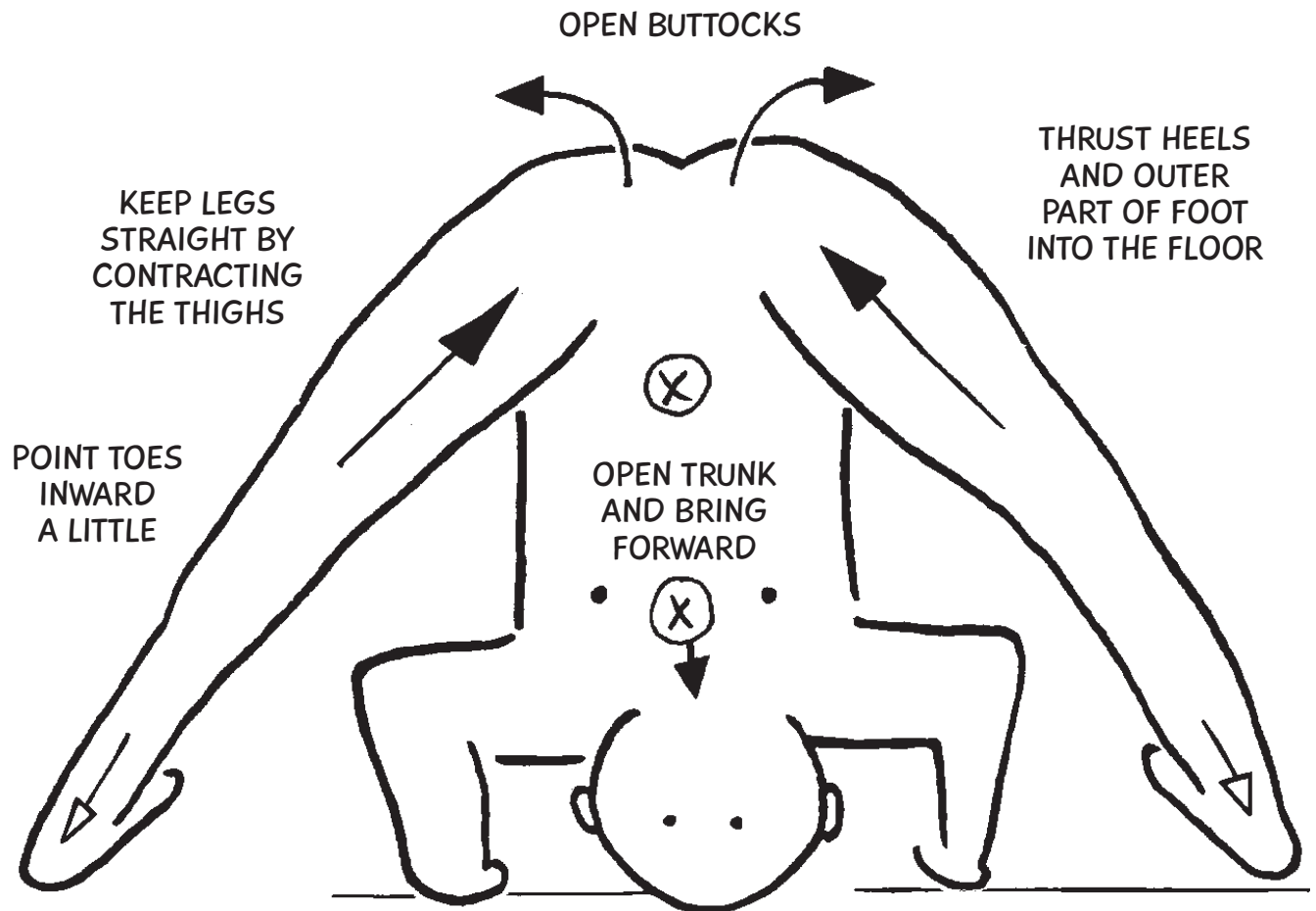
In you can't press the palms together, interlock the fingers and straighten the arms upward toward the ceiling as you bend forward.

Prasarita Padottanasana 30s.

(10)

spread leg stretch

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



KEEP THE FOREHEAD AND THE REST OF THE FACE PERFECTLY RELAXED

Note: this posture can be more effective if you press palms together behind your back as in the previous posture.

In this and other forward bends, vigorously lift the sternum and thrust the chest forward on the inhalations. On the exhalations strive to bend forward a little more each time. Bend as little as possible from the upper spine. Instead bend from the lowest part of the spine (lumbar vertebrae). Eventually your feet, head and hands will be in line.

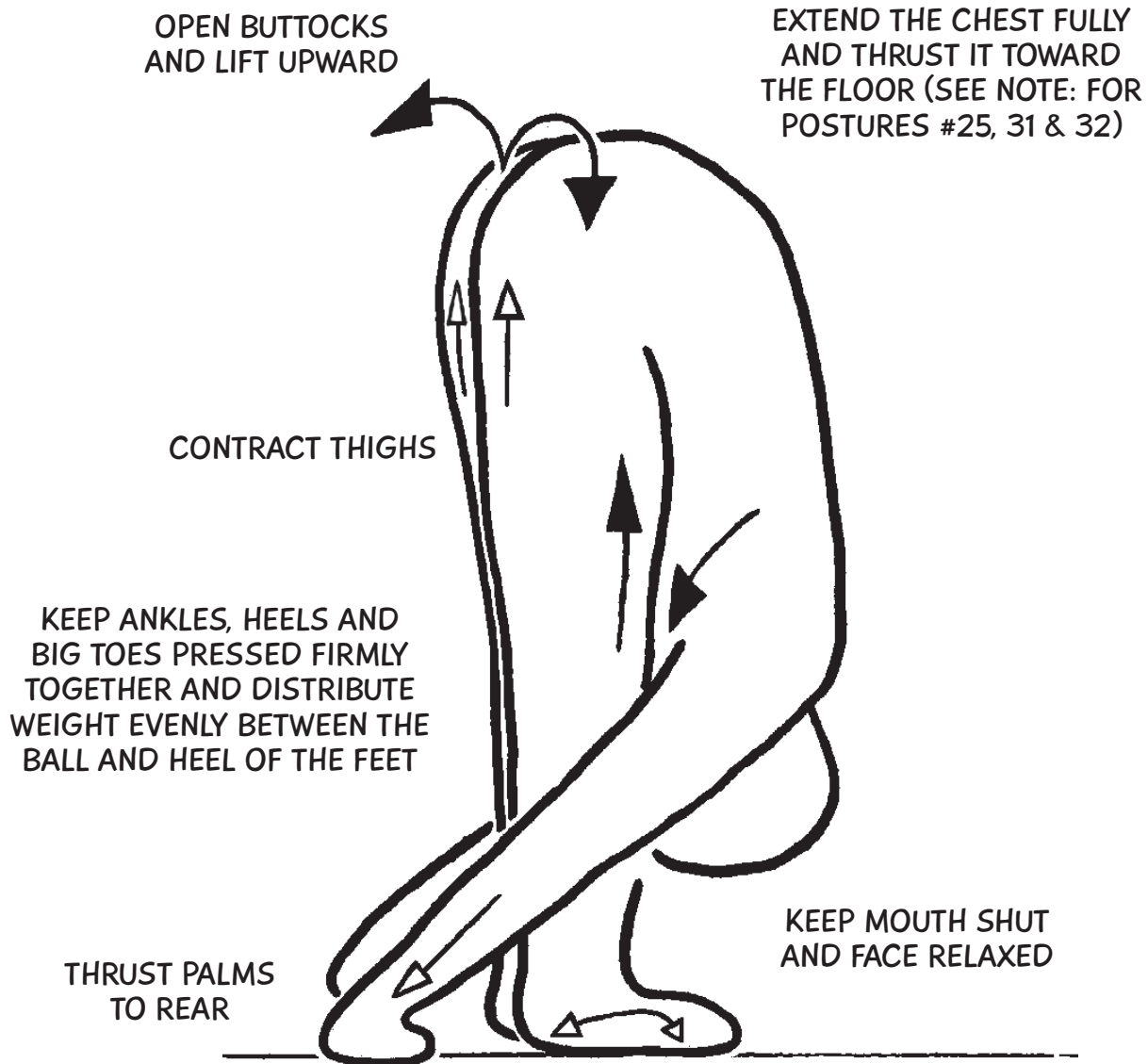
For added stretch, do a Hanumanasana [138] type movement, but with legs sliding out directly to the side. Keep the feet flat on the floor and perpendicular to the shins.

Uttanasana 60s.

(11)

intense stretch

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



Var: place the palms on the knees and gradually thrust them down along the shins towards the floor. Concentrate on extending the chest and keeping the legs perfectly straight throughout the entire movement.

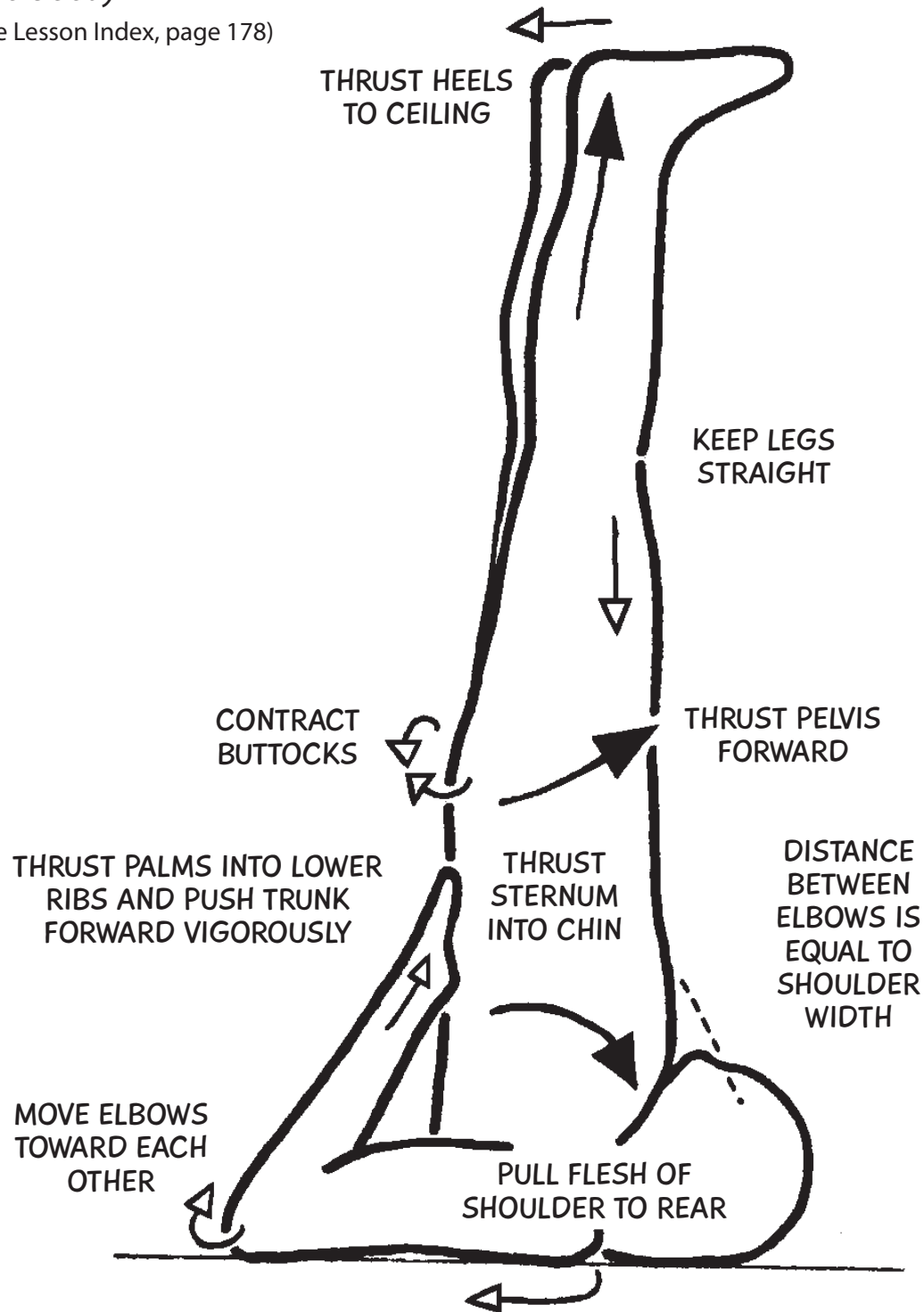
Note: it is not important whether you touch the toes or not. Vigorously extending the chest and thrusting it toward the floor is what is vital.

Sarvangasana 5-15min

(12)

whole body

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



Var: place one or two folded blankets under the shoulders and arms so that only the head rests on the floor. This decreases compression on the neck.

Later on, train your 'dead' and usually shoe-bound toes to spread apart like you can do with your fingers. While your at it, go barefoot when possible to resurrect the rest of your 'dead' feet. Barefoot is natural.

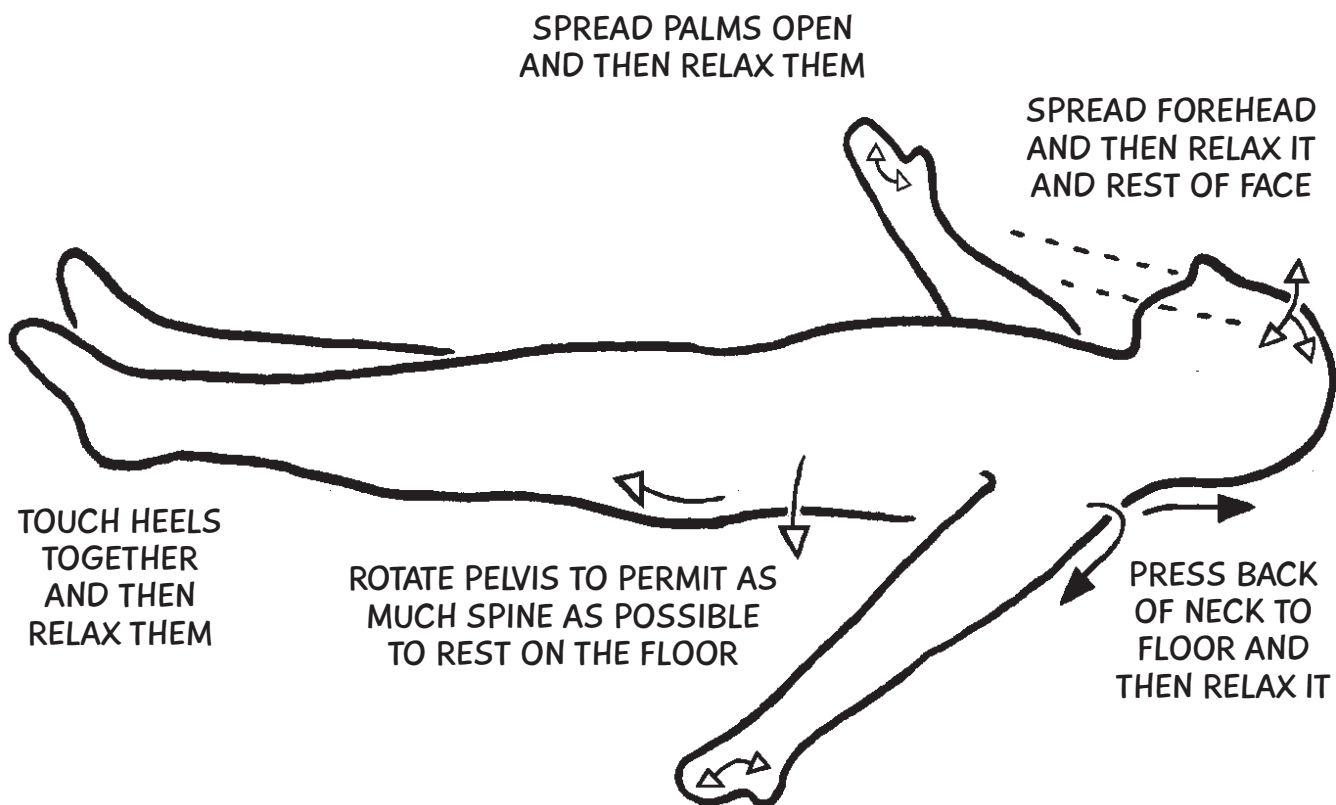
Savasana 5-20min

(13)

corpse

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

Note: arrange body in this manner and then relax totally. Feel each part of body as heavy as clay sinking into the floor. With each exhalation imagine yourself exhaling all thoughts, emotions, and even your very body, until all is empty and silent and you are no more. Feel now the eternal nature of creation.



Note: breathing in this posture is gentle and even using just the diaphragm. The chest remains perfectly relaxed. Don't try to slow your breathing rate - just breath naturally and feel stillness throughout the entire body, emotion and mind.

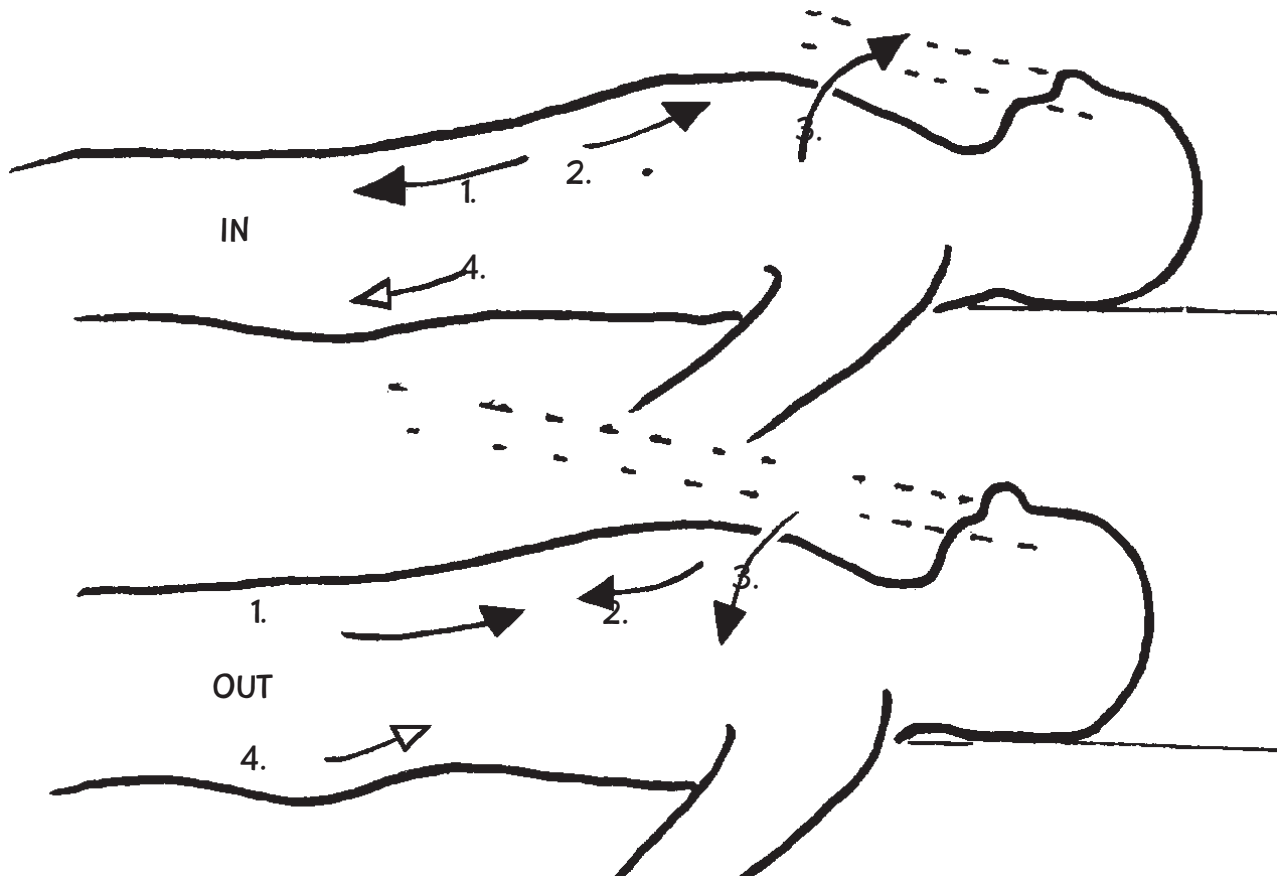
Pranayama (in Savasana) 5min

(14)

nerve energy control

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

Note: numbered arrows show sequence and location of the stages in inhalation and exhalation. Don't 'try' doing it correctly. Merely find an intuitive sense of the process and let nature take its course gradually. Simply said, once you intuitively know, you can't help but do it correctly. No effort needed. Avoid "egging on the breathe", as the Tao Te Ching puts it.



Note: in this or in upright Pranayama, never force exhalations, i.e., by depressing chest and/or contracting air passage (or abdominal) areas. Instead, try to allow diaphragm to return to a completely relaxed and natural state.

Hold the eyes at nose level. This means the eyes gaze downward past the tip of the nose. The focus of the eyes is either at infinity or 3-5' in front of you (not crosseyed or focused on the tip of the nose). You can occasionally close the eye lids momentarily to help keep the muscles around the eyes relaxed totally.

Also Note: I prefer sui Zen (blowing Zen) for doing the pranayama side of yoga. This is done using a shakuhachi (end blown Japanese bamboo flute).

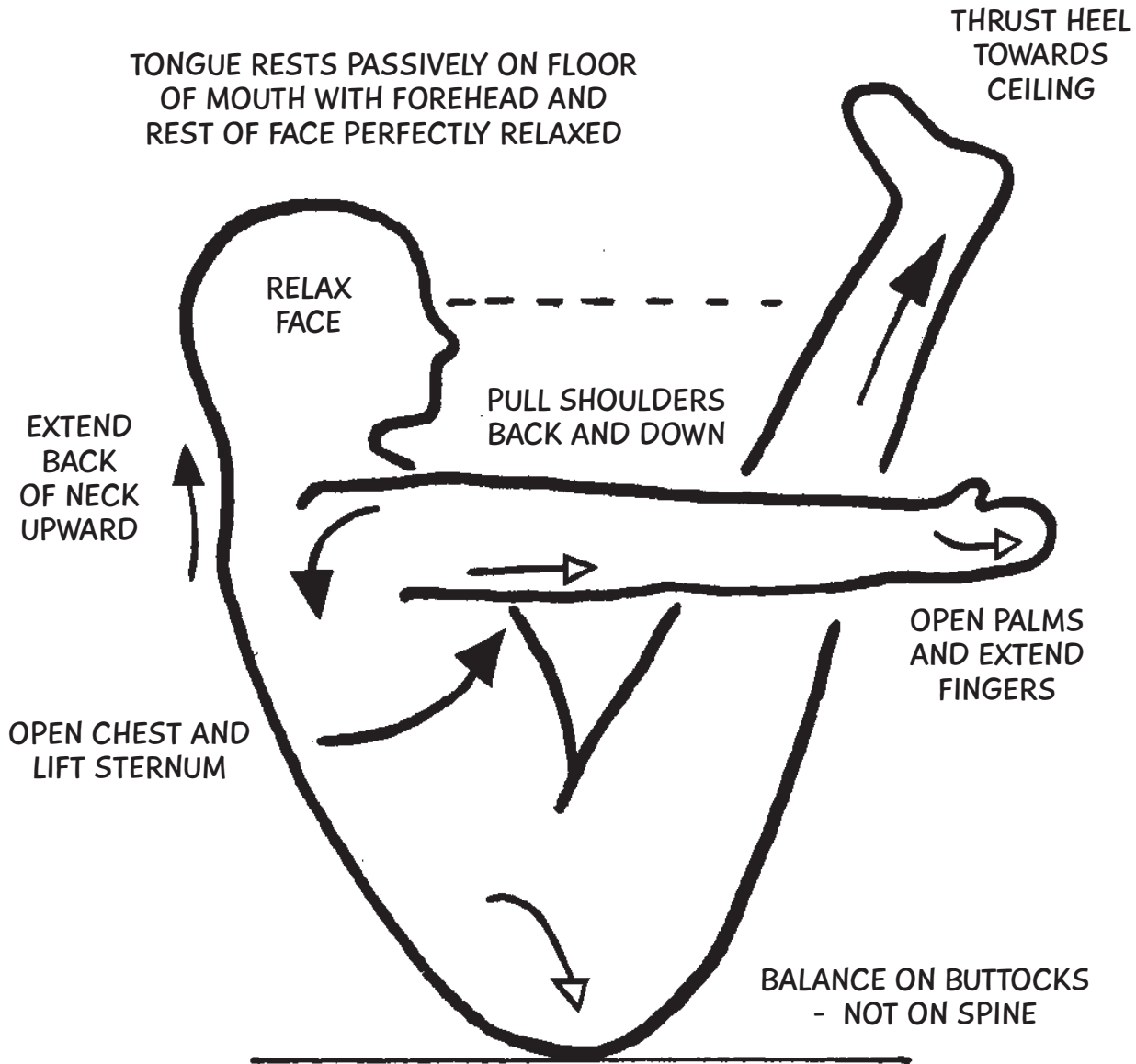
For more information, go to centertao.org/essays/blowingzen

Paripurna Navasana 30-60s

(15)

complete boat

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



Var: you can rest your legs on a chair and/or hold the legs up by the back of the knees with your hands. Concentrate on extending the chest and pulling the shoulders back and down.

Later on, raise your arm until the palms are level with the feet, as though doing a forward bend.

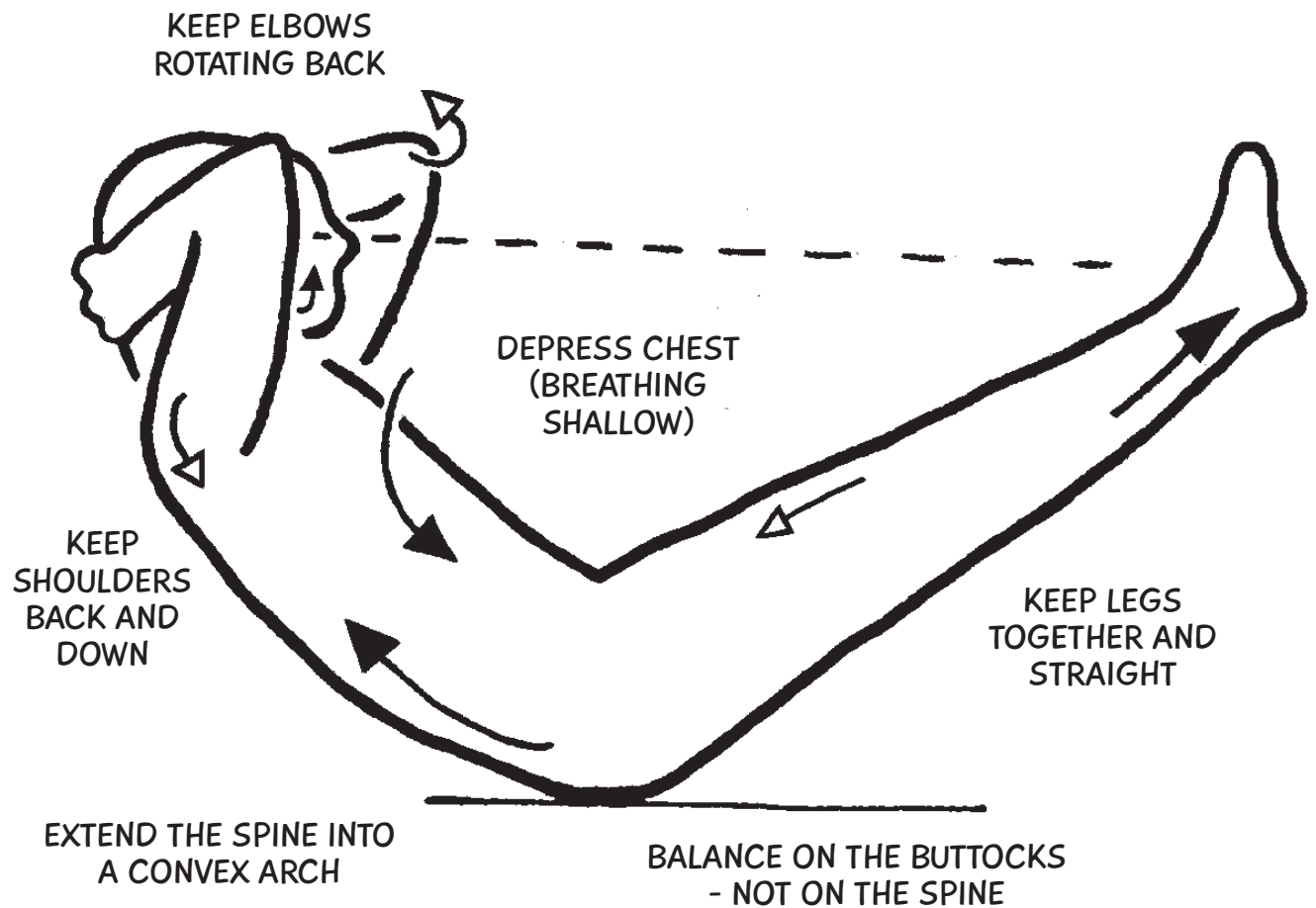
Ardha Navasana 30-60s

(16)

half boat

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

Var: you can extend the arms out straight and position the hands on the thighs. Keep the legs on the floor and slide the hands down the thighs as you lift the upper trunk off the floor a few inches.



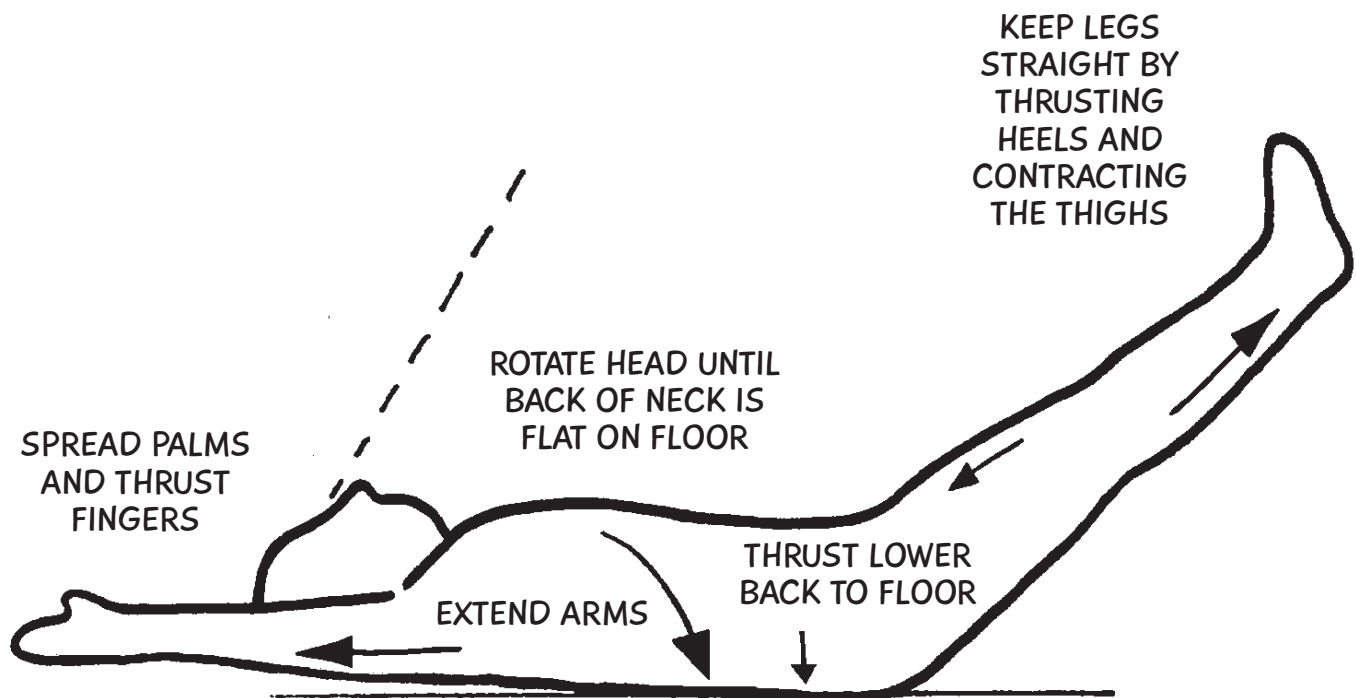
Urdhva Prasarita Padasana 30-60s

(17)

up stretched out foot

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

Var: first extend the legs perpendicular to the floor. Gradually lower the legs to increase the challenge, but never any further than you can keep the lower back pressed firmly to the floor.



Note: in this and most other postures in this manual, the eyes are held at nose level. This means the eyes gaze downward past the tip of the nose. The focus of the eyes is either at infinity or 3-5' in front of you (not crossed or focused on the tip of the nose). You can occasionally close the eye lids momentarily to help keep the muscles around the eyes relaxed totally.

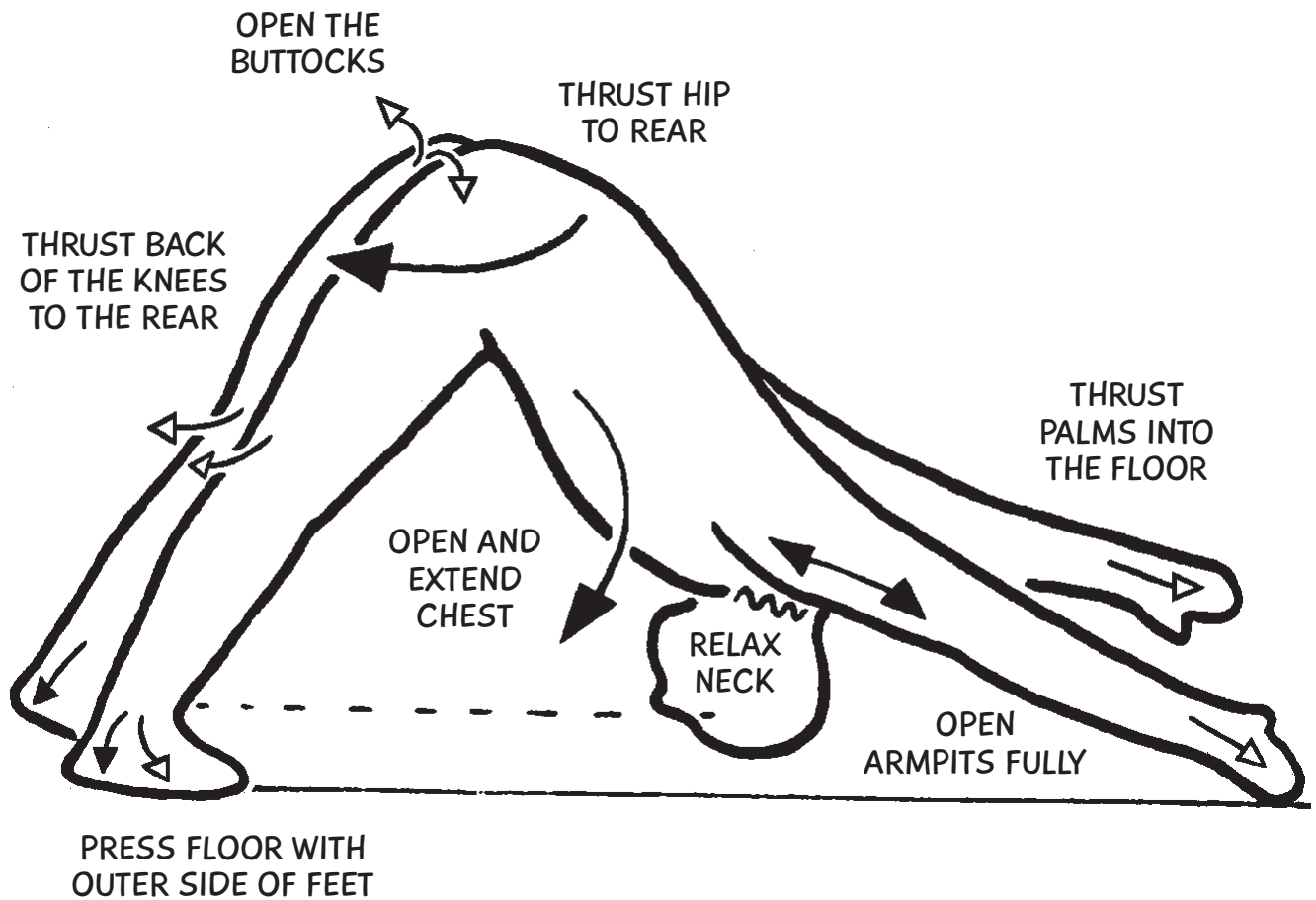
Adho Mukha Svanasana 60s

(18)

downward face dog

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

Var: place hands next to a wall and thrust them into it to help stabilize the posture.



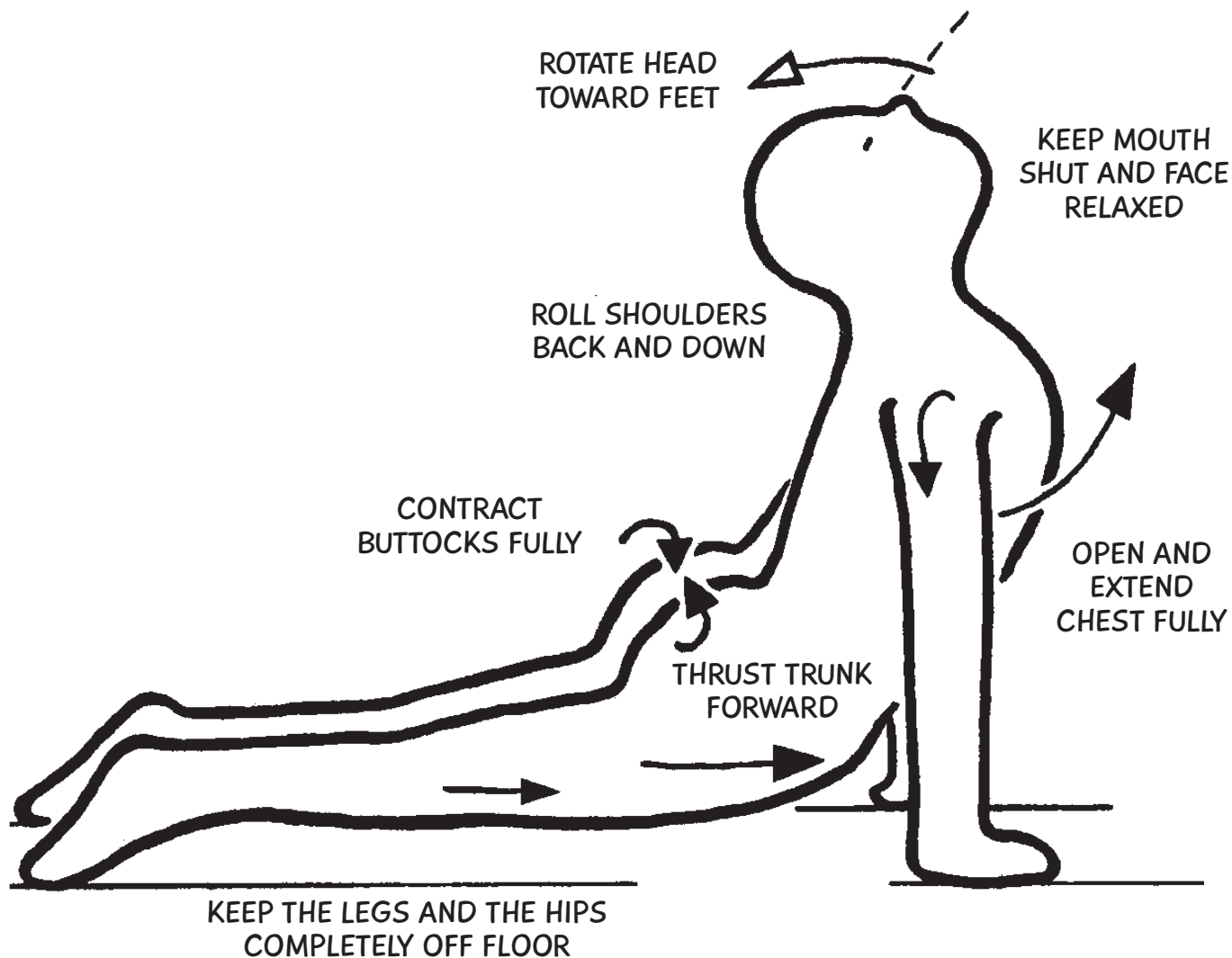
Note: You should strive to keep the chest open and vigorously extended at all times, even during exhalations. Breathing is done with the diaphragm. This is true for all postures - but it may take some time before you can accomplish this.

Urdhva Mukha Svanasana 30-60s

(19)

upward face dog

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



Note: support the legs on the upper side of the feet and toes - not on the tips or underside of the toes. Pull the hips toward the arms until the bend is greatest and you are at the edge of balance.

In this and other postures, never use strained exhalations. Instead, allow diaphragm to relax naturally - while still keeping chest fully extended.

Hold the eyes at nose level, gazing downward past the tip of the nose. The focus of the eyes is either at infinity or 3-5' in front of you. Occasionally close the eye lids momentarily to help keep the muscles around the eyes relaxed totally.

Chaturanga Dandasana 30-60s

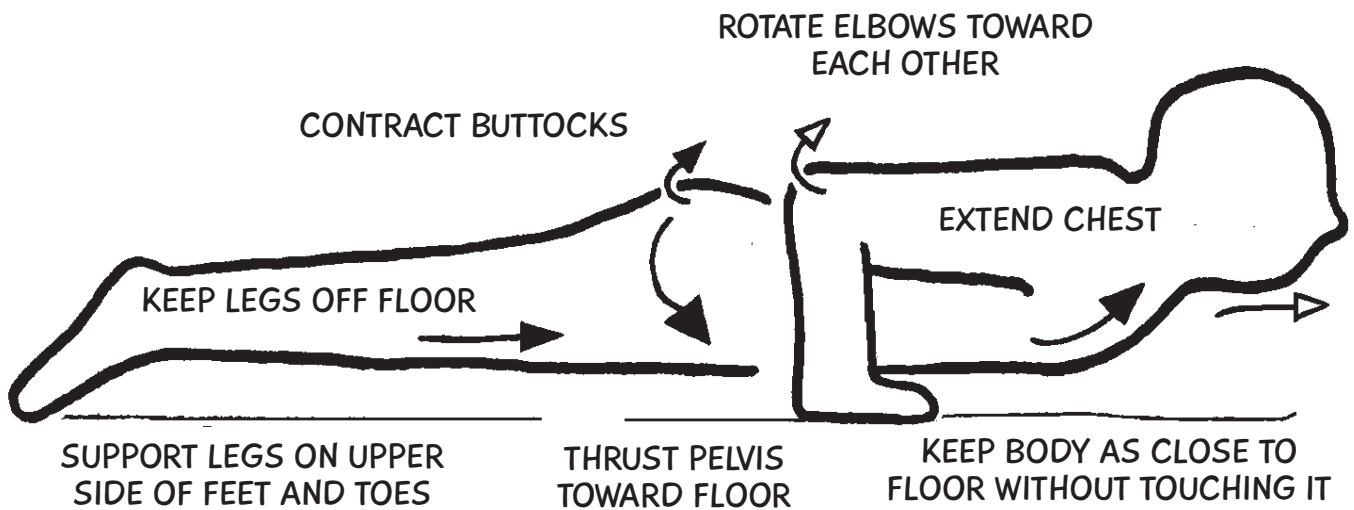
(20)

four limb staff

Rest your whole body on the floor, then raise it up evenly, keeping it parallel to the floor. Again, for help in learning how to move into or out of the Yoga postures, take a Hatha Yoga class from a competent teacher and/or refer to B.K.S. Iyengar's most excellent book - *Light on Yoga*.

Var: you can rest the knees on the floor during the posture, and keep the rest of the body off the floor.

Note: for *Nakrasana*, support the legs on the underside of the toes. On the exhalation, jump forward a foot or so on all fours. Use a hopping motion but keep the body as straight and close to the floor as possible.



Note: as in all postures, the tongue rest passively on the floor of the mouth, with the forehead and the rest of the face perfectly relaxed.

Salabhasana 60s

(21)

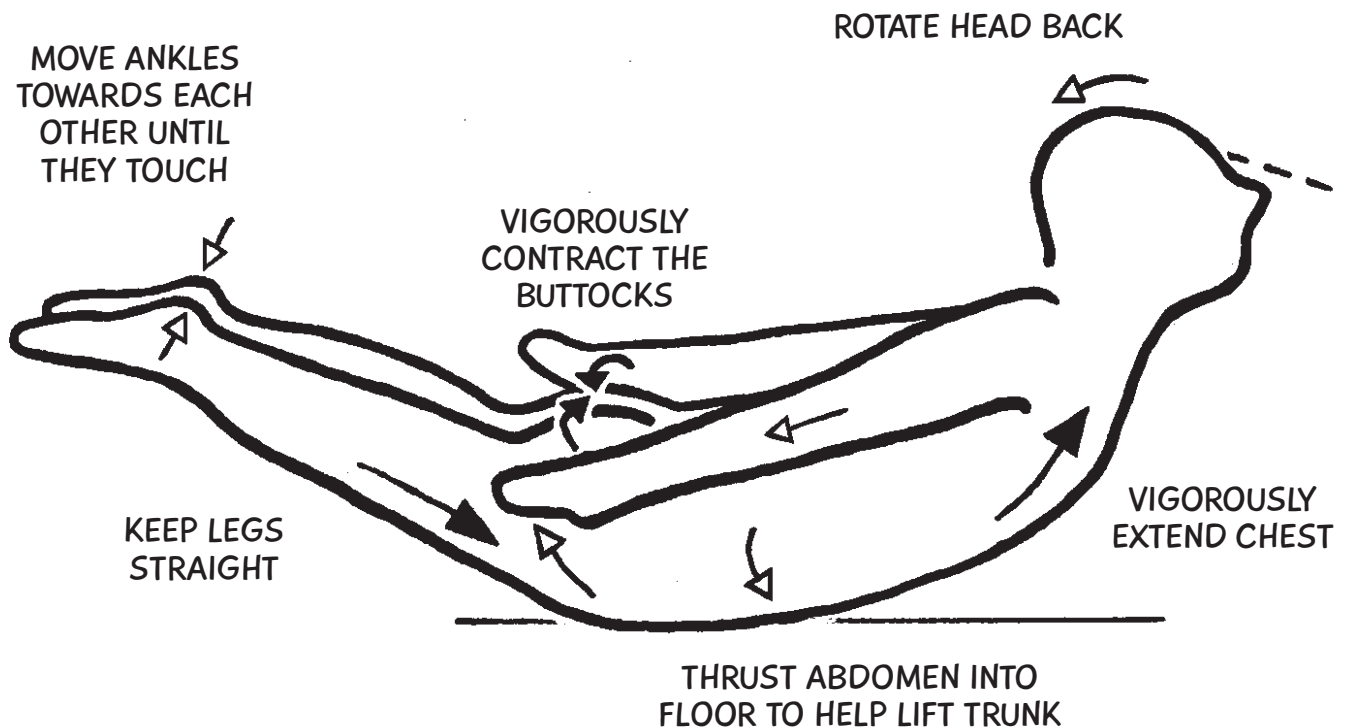
locust

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

Var: lift only the legs or the trunk off the floor.

Note: first extend the chest and lift the trunk off the floor. On the next exhalation lift the legs off the floor.

Needless to say, you are unlikely to ever match the lift shown here. All these drawings show the 'ideal' you are striving towards. If and when you actually match the drawing, you'll have to figure out a way to make it still work. The goal is not to become strong and flexible; the goal of yoga is to balance work and rest. The more flexible and stronger you become, the more you need to find ways to make the posture work (challenging) enough to keep you as a 'beginner' on the frontier of your own personal limits.

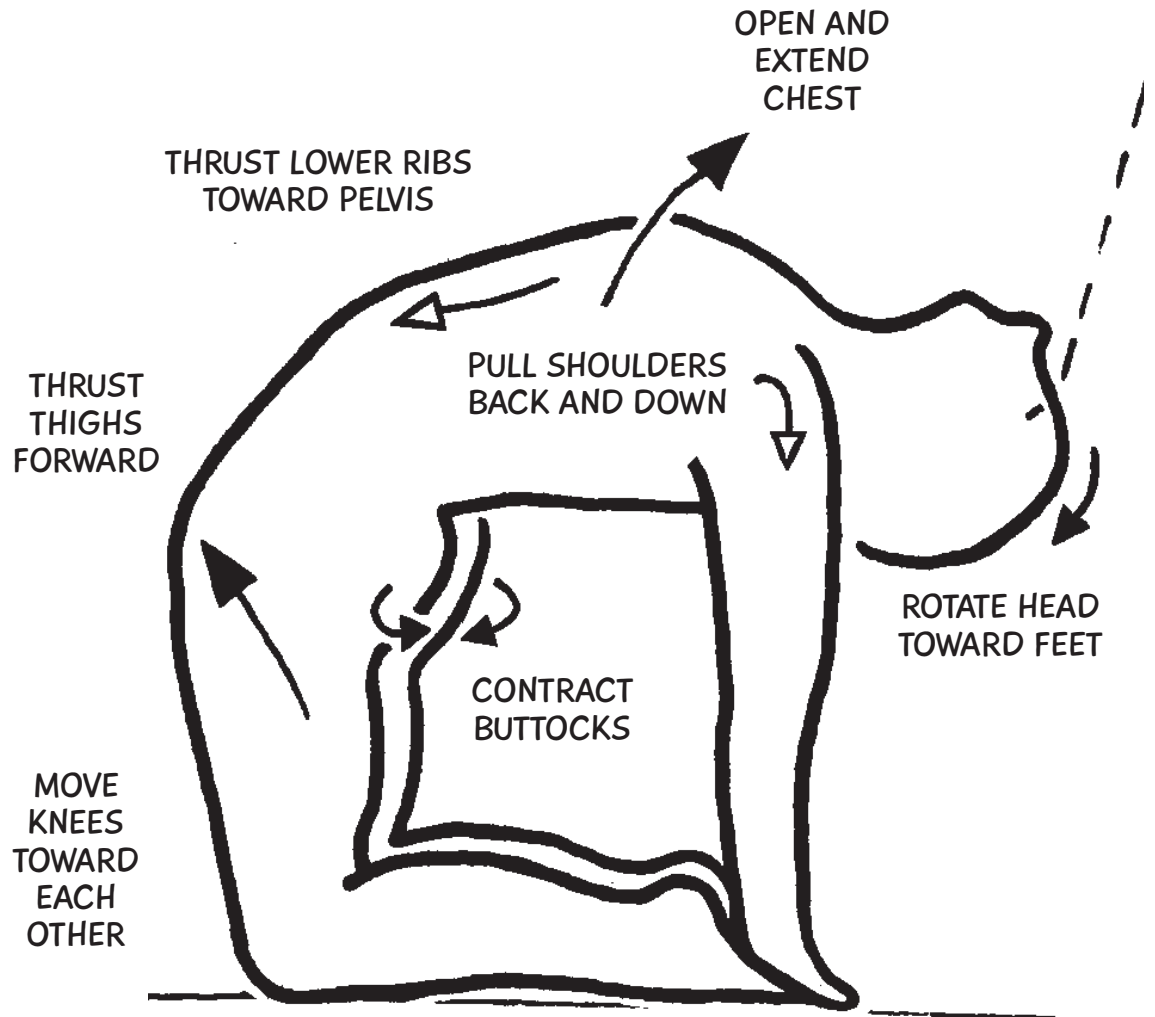


Ustrasana 30s

(22)

camel

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



Var: you can first do this posture with the knees spread apart 12" or so. Then repeat it with the knees as close together as possible.

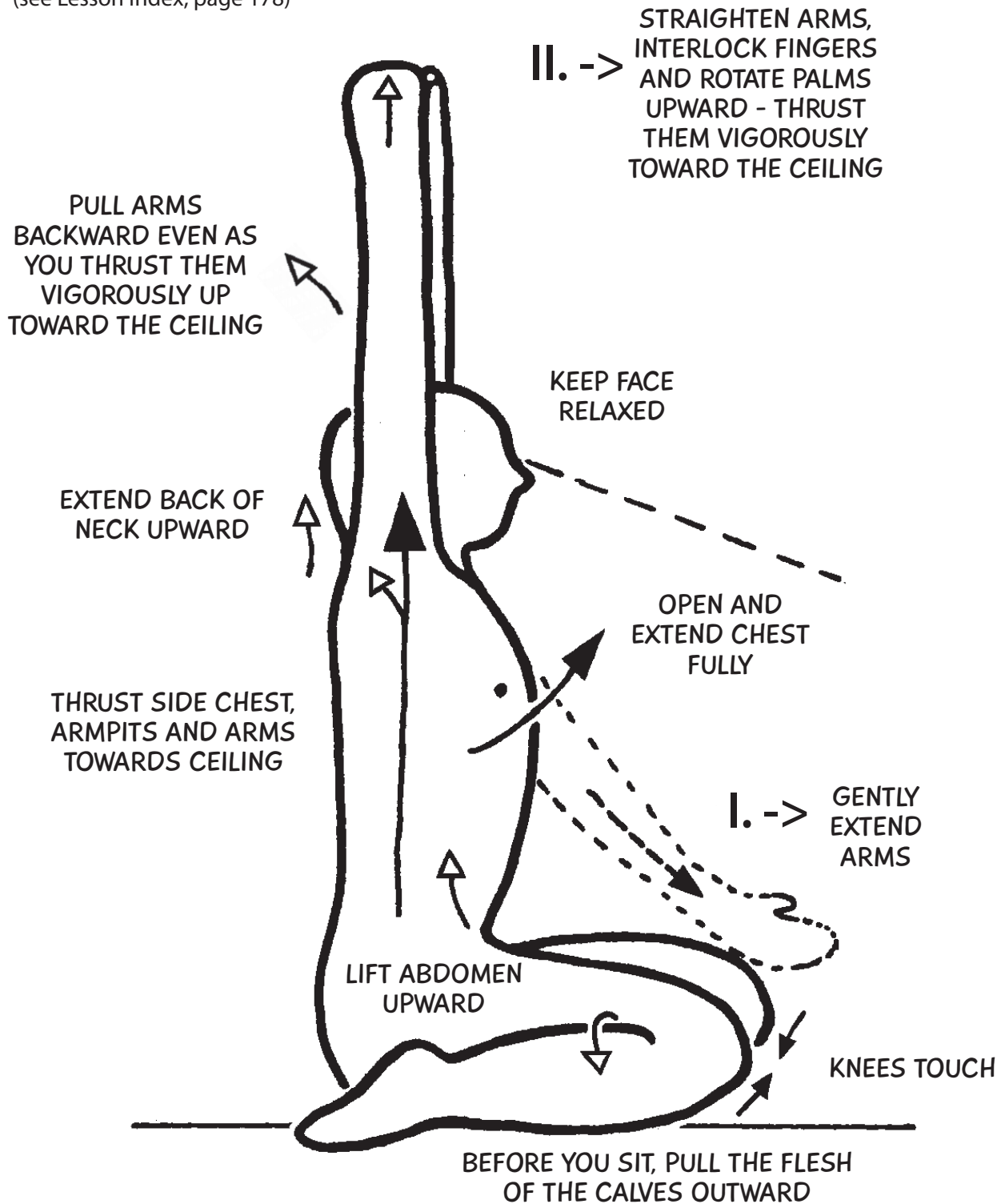
Note: in this and other back bend postures, keep the buttocks contracted as firmly as possible while moving into or out of the posture.

Virasana I and II 60s

(23)

(hero)

(see Lesson Index, page 178)



Var: if the knees are very stiff, place a folded blanket under the buttocks.

Virasana III 60s

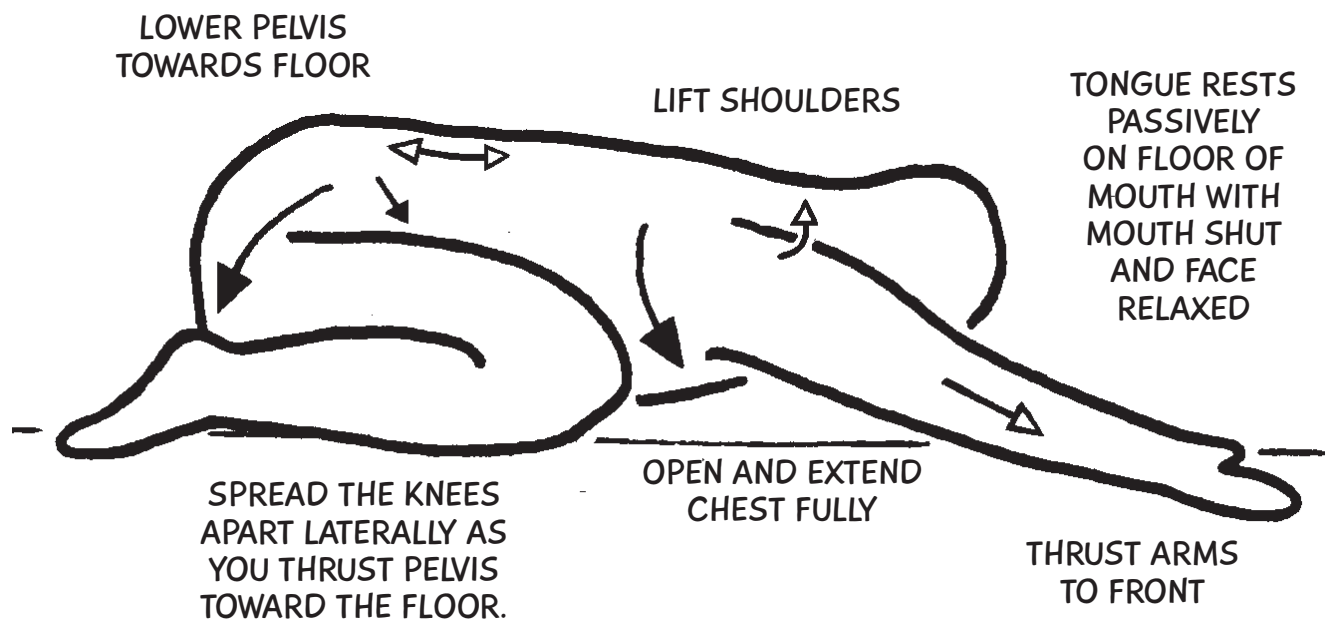
(24)

hero

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

Note: in this and other postures, never use strained exhalations.

As this becomes easier, raise your arms so only your finger tips, knees, and lower legs touch the floor. You press yourself as close to the floor as possible, while making as minimal contact as possible.



Janu Sirsasana 30-60s

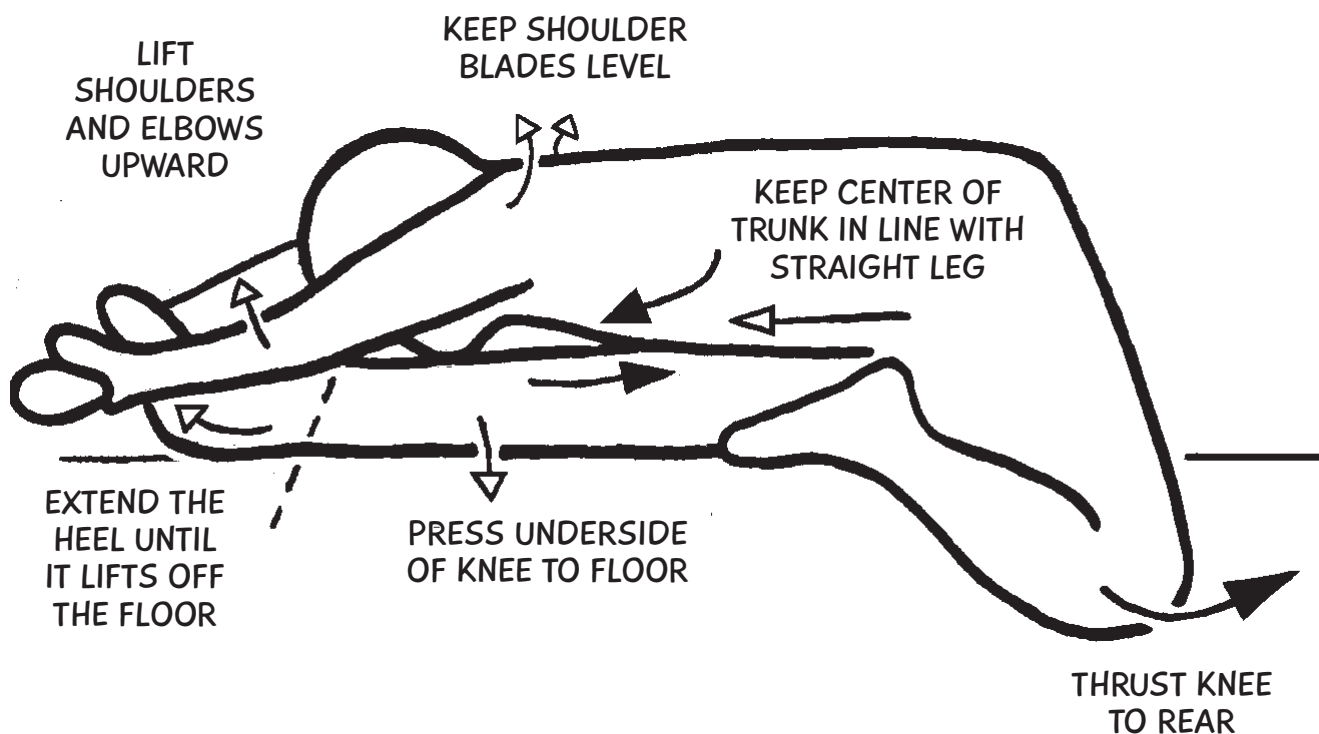
(25)

knee head

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

Var: if you can't grasp the toes, you can grasp the knees and strive to slide the hand down the shin toward the foot. Concentrate on keeping the chest extended and the leg straight.

Note: in this and other forward bends, gently rotate the head upward slightly and with the gaze at nose level, look out beyond the feet throughout the posture. Later, when you can lay the trunk on the legs, rest the forehead on the shins. Rather than grasping your wrist, you can simply thrust your arms forward as far as they can go. You are effectively reaching to touch the wall beyond your reach!



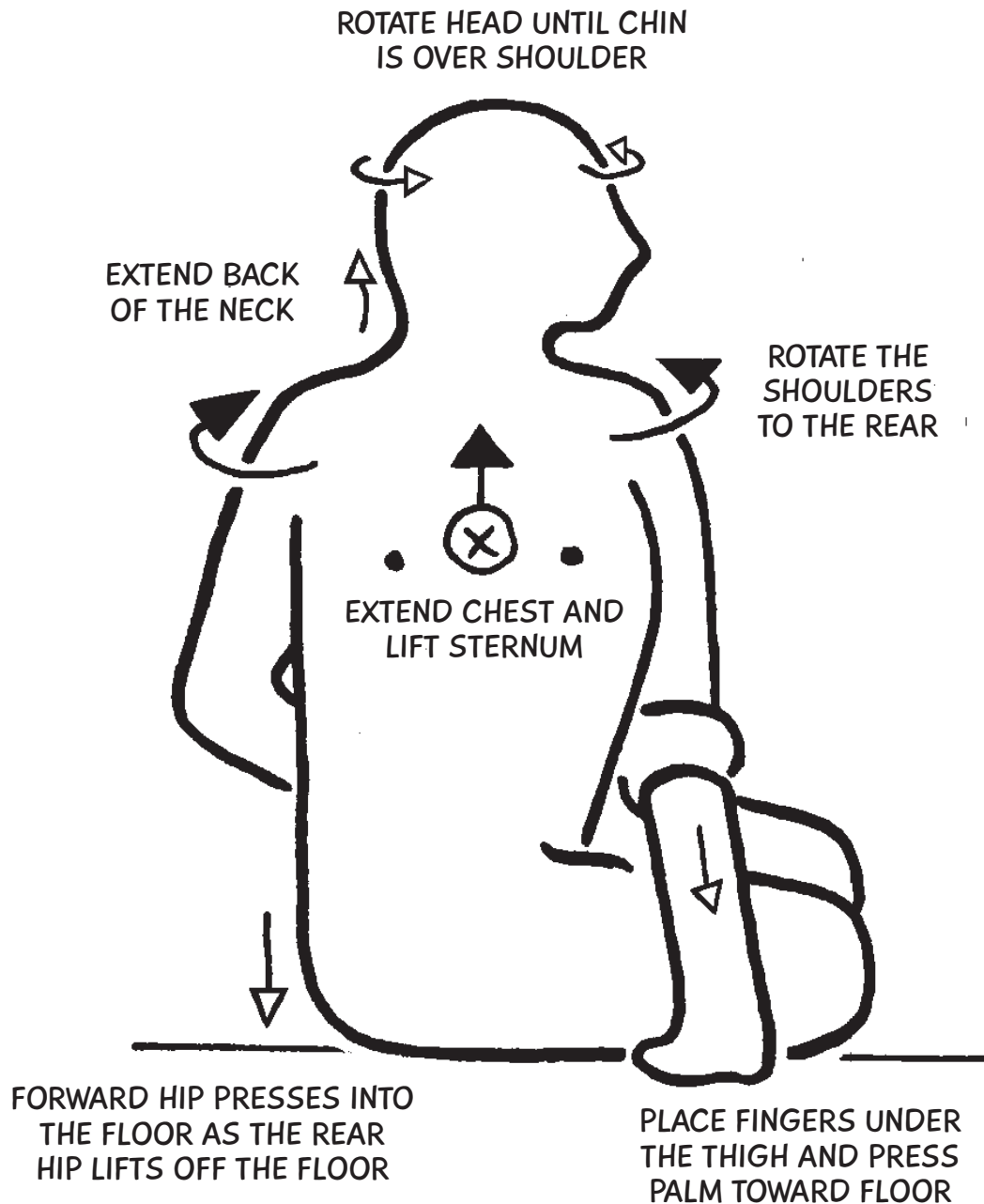
Bharadvajasana I 30s

(26)

father of Drona

(see Lesson Index, page 178)

Var: place bent arm a few inches behind buttock and straighten it, thrust its palm into the floor. Use this arm to pivot the trunk around.



Note: In this and other twist postures, avoid looking out of the side of your eyes when rotating your head side ways. Instead look straight ahead. Review Note for posture #17.