

ASHTANGA PRIMARY SERIES

Printable practice map • Sanskrit names, English meanings, drishti & breath cues

HOW TO USE THIS SHEET

A compact study aid for learning the traditional sequence. Pose names and gaze points are common teaching conventions; teachers may vary in cueing and vinyasa counts.

1. Opening sequence

Sequence / pose	English meaning	Drishti (gaze)	Breath cue
Surya Namaskara A (5 rounds)	Sun Salutation A	Angustha / nose / navel / toes / upward	One breath per movement; hold Down Dog for 5 breaths
Surya Namaskara B (3–5 rounds)	Sun Salutation B	Thumbs / nose / navel / upward	One breath per movement; hold Down Dog for 5 breaths

2. Standing sequence

Sanskrit pose name	English translation	Common drishti	Breath cue
Padangusthasana	Big Toe Pose	Nose	5 breaths
Pada Hastasana	Hand Under Foot Pose	Nose	5 breaths
Utthita Trikonasana	Extended Triangle	Hand / upward	5 breaths each side
Parivrtta Trikonasana	Revolved Triangle	Hand / upward	5 breaths each side
Utthita Parsvakonasana	Extended Side Angle	Upward / hand	5 breaths each side
Parivrtta Parsvakonasana	Revolved Side Angle	Upward / hand	5 breaths each side
Prasarita Padottanasana A–D	Wide-Legged Forward Fold variations	Nose	5 breaths each variation
Parsvottanasana	Intense Side Stretch / Pyramid	Nose	5 breaths each side
Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana	Extended Hand-to-Big-Toe Pose	Side / toes	5 breaths per stage; balance steadily
Ardha Baddha Padmottanasana	Half Bound Lotus Forward Fold	Nose	5 breaths each side; modify knee position
Utkatasana	Chair Pose	Thumbs	5 breaths
Virabhadrasana A & B	Warrior I & Warrior II	Thumbs / hand	5 breaths each side

3. Seated sequence • Part I

Move through the sequence with steady breathing; traditional vinyasa transitions link the postures.

Sanskrit pose name	English translation	Common drishti	Breath cue
Dandasana	Staff Pose	Nose	Set-up / steady breath
Paschimattanasana A, B & C	Seated Forward Fold variations	Toes / nose	5 breaths each variation
Purvottanasana	Upward Plank / Intense East Stretch	Nose / upward	5 breaths
Ardha Baddha Padma Paschimattanasana	Half Bound Lotus Seated Forward Fold	Toes	5 breaths each side
Triang Mukha Eka Pada Paschimattanasana	Three-Limbed Forward Fold	Toes	5 breaths each side
Janu Sirsasana A, B & C	Head-to-Knee Forward Fold variations	Toes	5 breaths each side / variation
Marichyasana A, B, C & D	Sage Marichi Pose variations	Nose / side	5 breaths each side / variation
Navasana (traditionally 5 rounds)	Boat Pose	Toes	5 breaths per round; keep form controlled
Bhujapidasana	Shoulder-Pressing Pose	Nose	5 breaths; use a safe entry
Kurmasana	Tortoise Pose	Nose	5 breaths; do not force shoulders or hips
Supta Kurmasana	Sleeping Tortoise Pose	Nose	5 breaths; advanced bind
Garbha Pindasana	Embryo in the Womb Pose	Nose	5 breaths; lotus position is optional only if comfortable
Kukkutasana	Rooster Pose	Nose	5 breaths; arm balance

SAFETY NOTE Lotus-based postures, deep binds, arm balances and intense forward folds are not beginner requirements. Skip or modify any posture that causes sharp pain, joint pressure, numbness or breath-holding. Never force the knees into lotus.

4. Seated sequence • Part II

Keep the breath even and the transitions unhurried; adapt the range of motion to your body.

Sanskrit pose name	English translation	Common drishti	Breath cue
Baddha Konasana A & B	Bound Angle / Butterfly Pose	Nose	5 breaths each
Upavistha Konasana A & B	Wide-Angle Seated Forward Fold variations	Toes / upward	5 breaths each
Supta Konasana	Reclining Angle Pose	Toes	5 breaths
Supta Padangusthasana	Reclining Hand-to-Big-Toe Pose	Toe / side	5 breaths per side
Ubhaya Padangusthasana	Both Big-Toe Balance	Toes	5 breaths
Urdhva Mukha Paschimattanasana	Upward-Facing Seated Forward Fold	Toes	5 breaths
Setu Bandhasana	Bridge Pose	Nose	5 breaths; controlled entry and exit

5. Backbends & transition toward finishing

Sanskrit pose name	English translation	Common drishti	Breath cue
Urdhva Dhanurasana	Upward Bow / Wheel Pose	Nose / upward	Usually 3–5 breaths per round; follow teacher's count
Paschimattanasana	Seated Forward Fold (counterpose)	Toes	5 breaths

BREATH & VINYASA KEY

Held posture: commonly five steady breaths unless the teacher specifies otherwise.

Transition: often coordinated with one inhale or exhale; the exact count varies by movement and tradition.

Practical rule: never sacrifice smooth breathing or safe alignment to match a count.

6. Finishing sequence

The traditional closing sequence includes inversions and lotus-based shapes. Learn these under qualified supervision and use appropriate alternatives when needed.

Sanskrit pose name	English translation	Common drishti	Breath cue
Salamba Sarvangasana	Supported Shoulderstand	Nose / toes	5–10 breaths; only if appropriate
Halasana	Plow Pose	Nose	5 breaths
Karnapidasana	Ear-Pressure Pose	Nose	5 breaths
Urdhva Padmasana	Upward Lotus	Nose	5 breaths; lotus-based inversion
Pindasana	Embryo Pose in Shoulderstand	Nose	5 breaths
Matsyasana	Fish Pose	Nose / upward	5 breaths
Uttana Padasana	Raised-Leg Pose	Nose / upward	5 breaths
Sirsasana	Headstand	Nose / fixed point	Traditionally held; duration varies—supervised only
Baddha Padmasana	Bound Lotus	Nose	5 breaths; lotus-based
Yoga Mudra	Yogic Seal	Nose	5 breaths
Padmasana	Lotus Pose	Nose	5 breaths or seated breathing
Tolasana	Scale Pose	Nose	Lift with controlled breath; count varies
Savasana	Corpse Pose / Final Rest	Eyes closed	Rest quietly; no fixed count

Drishti quick key

Term	Meaning / gaze point
Angustha madhye	Thumbs
Nasagrai	Tip of the nose
Nabhi chakra	Navel
Hastagrai	Hand / fingertips
Padayoragrai	Toes / feet
Parsva drishti	To the side
Urdhva drishti	Upward
Bhrumadhya	Between the eyebrows

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Use this chart as a quick reference while learning the Ashtanga Vinyasa Primary Series. Practise under the guidance of a qualified teacher, follow a gradual progression, and adapt postures to your individual needs. Traditional pose sequences, drishti, and breath counts may vary slightly between teaching lineages.

Editorial note: Pose order, transliterations, gaze points and counts can differ slightly across lineages and teachers. Follow your teacher's method and choose safe variations.