



EASY POSE

TOOLS
FOR
BEGINNERS

Making Easy Pose Easier

By Sada Sat Singh Khalsa

In a recent class, as I told the students to sit up and relax into Easy Pose, I heard a chuckle from the back of the class as someone said, “Easy for you to say.” Looking up, I noticed a new student sitting in a very uncomfortable cross-legged posture: legs crossed at the ankles with the knees at least eighteen inches off the floor, the spine well slumped, and the shoulders hunched and rounded forward. His knees and shoulders were at just about the same level. Trying to sit in that posture was far from relaxing and as far from easy as one could get.





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Not every beginner is so challenged by this posture, but even many intermediate students find sitting in Easy Pose uncomfortable without props or a wall to lean against. Students frequently ask me, "If it's called Easy Pose, how come it's not easy for me?"

What is Easy Pose? Easy Pose¹ is a comfortable seated position for meditation. This pose opens the hips, lengthens the spine, and promotes inner calm.

How to do it: With the buttocks on the floor, cross the legs, placing the feet directly below the knees. Rest the hands on the knees. Press the hipbones down into the floor and reach the crown of the head up to lengthen the spine. Drop the shoulders down and back, and press the chest up and forward. Feel comfortable and relaxed in the posture.

The Conundrum: How do you feel easy and comfortable when you're not comfortable?

The Solution: One of the keys to sitting comfortably in Easy Pose is to work on stretching the hamstrings in the back of the thighs and to open the hips so the knees can relax down towards the floor, taking the pressure off both the knees and ankles. If the hips are very tight and inflexible, then the legs cannot relax down and the pressure is felt in the hips, knees, and ankles.

Another foundation of the posture is to be able to sit with the pelvis slightly rotated forward so you are directly on the sits bones.² If you put your hand on your low back, you should feel the lower vertebrae curved slightly forward rather than backward. When the hamstrings are too tight, this forces you to sit on the back of the sits bones

which rounds the back and puts pressure on the discs of the spine.

If you are unable to sit up with a straight spine in Easy Pose, use a blanket or cushion under your buttocks to help rotate the pelvis forward and aid you in having a straight spine. This will allow you to sit balanced on the sits bones and be more comfortable in the posture. It will also take some of the pressure off the knees and ankles.

¹ Also called *Sukhasana*. *Sukh* means "easy"; *asana* means "way of sitting."

² *Sits bones (ischial tuberosity)* are the bones in the buttocks felt when sitting straight. When you slouch you are sitting on the sacrum.

