



Utthita Trikonasana (Upward Rising Triangle Pose)

This is one of the most classic of the standing poses and clearest for seeing the geometry that underlies yoga asana. Notice the three angles that are created in the asana representing the trinity of creation through **Brahma, Vishnu** and **Shiva**. When the apex is pointed down it is a **Shakti** triangle symbolizing the movement of consciousness into form drawn by the earth's gravitational pull...or the embrace of a mother for her children. The **Shiva** triangle has the apex pointing up as form seeks illumination and meaning within the cosmos. In **Trikonasana** the upward hand becomes the antennae reaching for the light of Shiva consciousness to descend and enter into the body as Shakti from the foundation of the feet is irresistibly drawn upwards to circulate with Shiva in balance and union.

Guidance: Start in the base position with the feet about a leg length apart, the front foot straight and the back foot at a 30 degree angle. Begin breathing with the awareness at the feet, hands on the hips as you begin slowly breathing down into the belly and the back body. On the exhale, draw the shakti (primordial energy) in by lifting the arches of the feet as you simultaneously root down with the outside edges of the feet and press down on the hips. Watch the tendency to grip with the toes which affect the brain centers and instead focus on a relaxed energetic connection with the earth as you breathe through the feet. Take ten breaths at least before extending the arms out like wings and beginning to extend in the direction of the front foot.

Bend from the hip, lifting the torso before sliding the arm along a horizontal plane. Take several breaths to explore opening and lengthening without tension. If you find the breath getting faster or not as deep, slow down and make the breath the focus rather than the movement. When there is a natural desire to stretch then continue. When you reach as far as you can with your fingers of the front hand then allow the arm to swing down and touch your shin or ankle. You can also use a chair or a block if that allows you to relax and feel the prana moving through the circuitry of the triangles more easily. Stay in the posture and breathe moving the spine in toward the front body creating a slight back bend. Watch bracing with the front leg and locking so keep the back of the knee soft and be aware of extending through the crown of the head to release tension in the neck muscles. When ready to come out of the pose, bend the knee and allow the upper hand to lift the body up. Alternate on the other side. When you finish, stand in reflection in **Tadasana** (mountain pose) and feel as a conduit of energy between the earth and stars.

Sraddhasagar