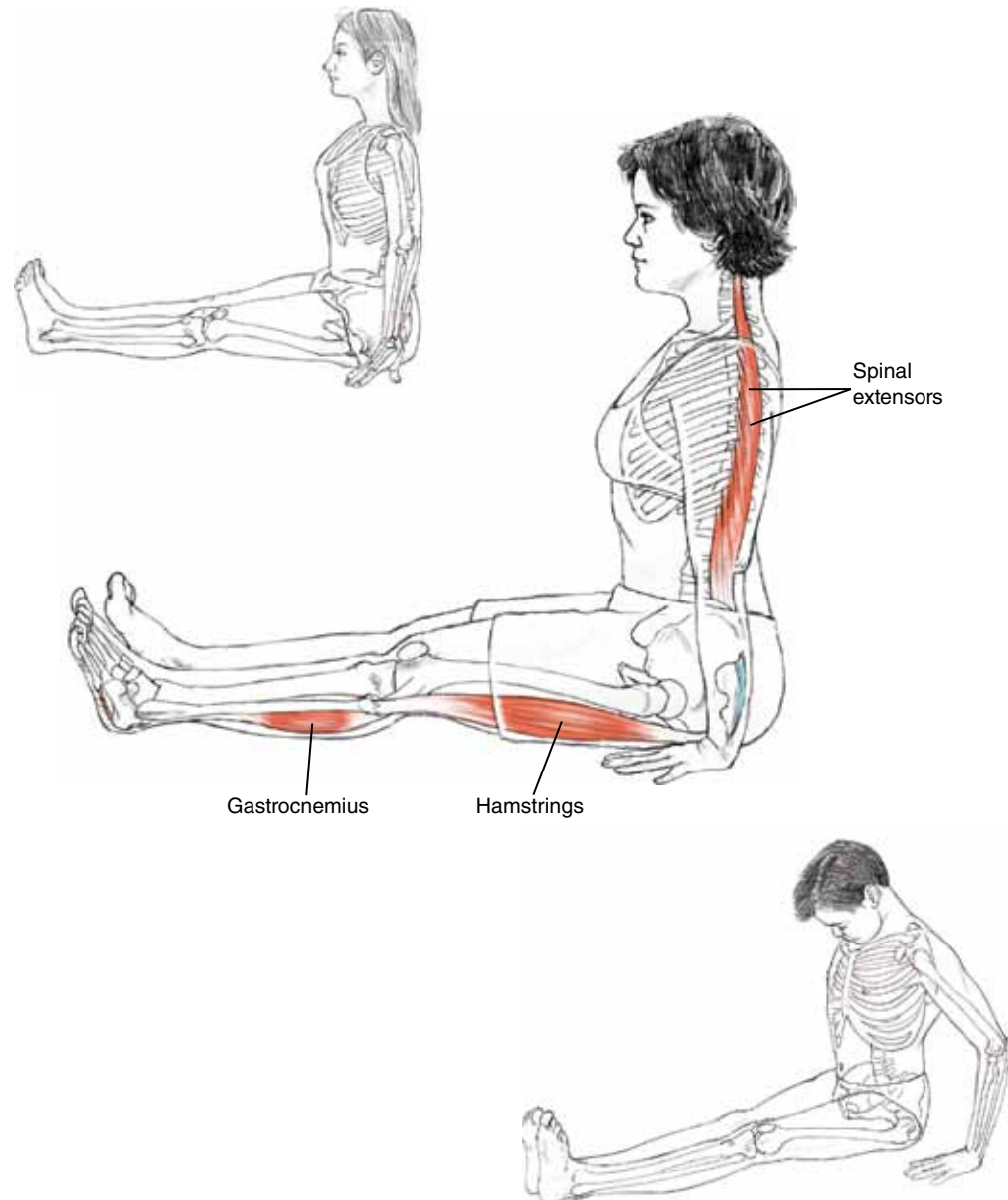


Dandasana

Staff Pose

dan-DAHS-anna
danda = stick, staff



Arm and torso proportions: short, neutral, and long.

Classification

Symmetrical seated pose

Skeletal joint actions		
Spine	Upper limbs	Lower limbs
Neutral or axial extension	Neutral scapula, shoulder adduction, elbow extension, wrist dorsiflexion	Hip flexion and adduction, knee extension, ankle dorsiflexion
Muscular joint actions		
Spine		
To calibrate concentric and eccentric contractions to maintain neutral alignment of spine: Spinal extensors and flexors		
Upper limbs		
Concentric contraction		
To resist adduction of scapula resulting from push of arm: Serratus anterior	To extend elbow: Triceps brachii	
Lower limbs		
Concentric contraction		
To flex hip: Iliacus	To extend knee: Articularis genu, vastii	
To adduct and internally rotate leg: Pectineus, adductor magnus		

Notes

While the legs are neutrally rotated in this position, against the pull of gravity most people need to actively use muscles of internal rotation to resist the legs falling open. This pose clearly reveals how tightness in the legs can create spinal flexion. Obstacles that show up in this pose are often the cause of difficulties in more complex poses, where the restrictions are less obvious. For example, tightness in the legs can affect downward-facing dog in a way that appears to be more about shoulder or spinal restriction.

Because proportional differences exist in arm-to-body length, not everyone can use the arms to help create the neutral spinal extension in dandasana. Conversely, what appear to be different arm-to-body proportions can sometimes be the result of chronically elevated or depressed positioning of the scapulae on the rib cage. In addition, if the spine is unable to extend into a vertical position because of tightness in the hips and legs, the arms may also seem too long.

Breathing

This is a straight-legged opportunity to breathe into an axially extended spine (mahamudra). All three bandhas can be employed here, and it is quite a challenge to take even 10 breaths while maintaining the bandhas with the spine in axial extension.