

## SŪRYANAMASKĀRA

*Sūrya* is the Sun, and *namaskāra* the salutation. The salutation to sun is a gateway into life. Expanding life, brightening life, illuminating life.

The Sun Salutation is an awakening—a gesture of reverence for life on all levels of human existence. Few exercises in yoga are as universally adaptable: whether young or old, healthy or unwell, it can be practiced safely and meaningfully throughout all stages of life.

*Surya namaskāra* illuminates and strengthens body, mind, and soul. Its effects are both grounding and elevating, making it a foundational practice in many yoga traditions.

There are also various forms of the Sun Salutation, each adapted to suit different styles of practice and to stimulate specific *kośas*—the layers of human existence, from the physical to the energetic and mental realms. Let us briefly explore some of the different forms of *surya namaskāra*.

The 12 positions of the classical sun salutation:

*Pranāmāsana – Prayer Pose*

*Hastottānāsana – Raised Arms Pose*

*Pādahastāsana – Hands-to-Feet Pose*

*Aśva Sañcalanāsana – Equestrian Pose*

*Parvatāsana – Mountain Pose*

*Aṣṭāṅga Namaskāra – Eight-Point Salutation*

*Bhujāṅgāsana – Cobra Pose*

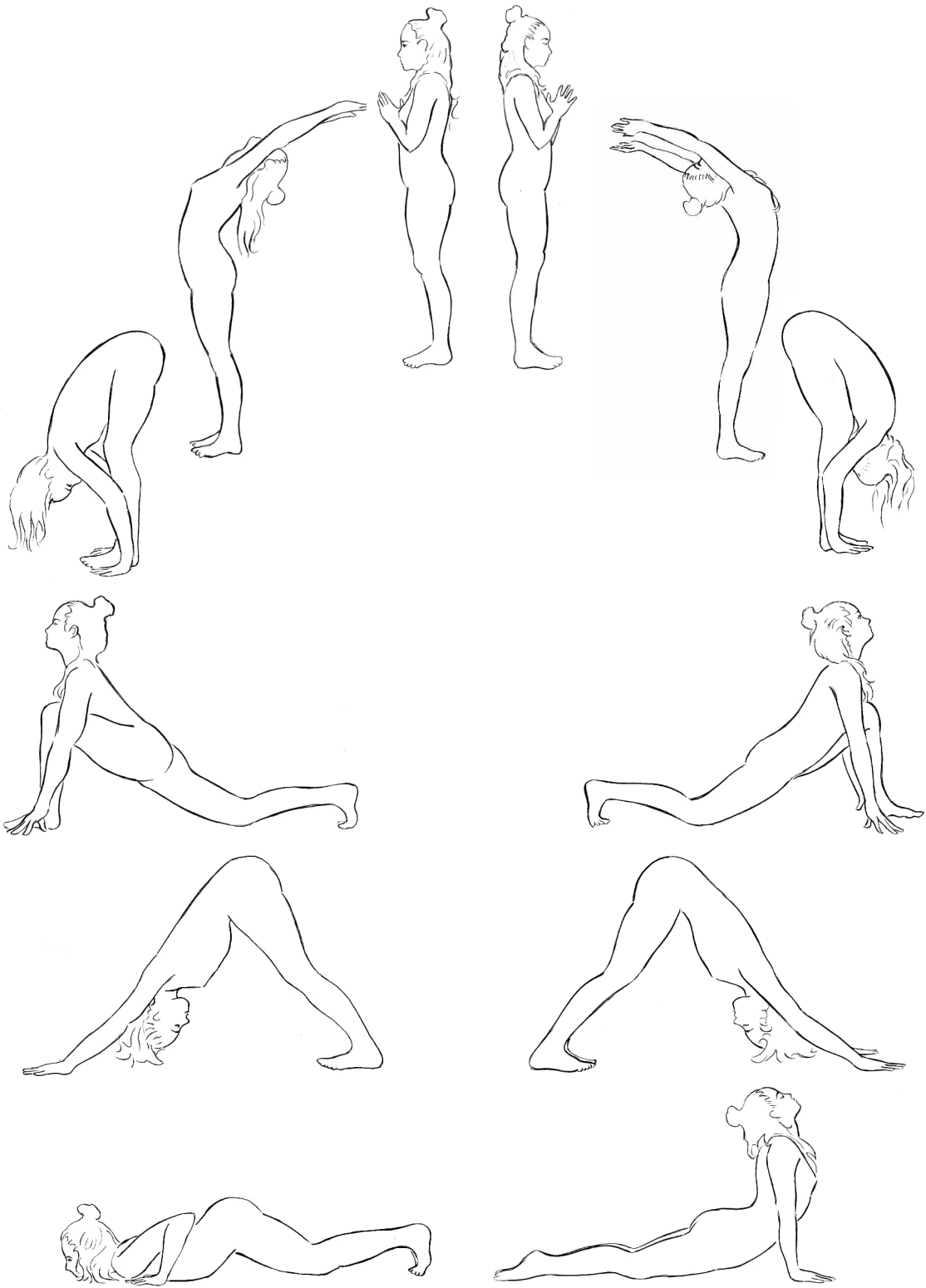
*Parvatāsana – Mountain Pose*

*Aśva Sañcalanāsana – Equestrian Pose*

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*Hastottānāsana – Raised Arms Pose*

*Pranāmāsana – Prayer Pose*



### *One breath per posture – Flowing Breath*

The simplest and at the same time most beautiful form of the Sun Salutation is the one where the breath carries the movement. Not every posture is rigidly assigned one breath – rather the breath leads, and the movement follows.

*First comes prāṇa, then follows the body. The breath is the  
soul of the body.*

This form can be practiced quickly or slowly – as the flow of your breath dictates. In the last position, you can guide your hands from the cosmos back to the heart – accompanied by a loud or silent *OM*.

Breathing sequence (orienting):

<i>Pranāmāsana</i>	Exhale	<i>Bhujāṅgāsana</i>	Inhale
<i>Hastottānāsana</i>	Inhale	<i>Parvatāsana</i>	Exhale
<i>Pādahastāsana</i>	Exhale	<i>Aśva Sañcalanāsana</i>	Inhale
<i>Aśva Sañcalanāsana</i>	Inhale	<i>Pādahastāsana</i>	Exhale
<i>Parvatāsana</i>	Exhale	<i>Hastottānāsana</i>	Inhale
<i>Aṣṭāṅga Namaskāra</i>	Hold breath in emptiness	<i>Pranāmāsana</i>	Exhale – OM

### *Two breaths per posture – Mūla Bandha*

In this form, you take your time to immerse yourself in each posture. The gaze is directed inward, the breath becomes calm and controlled.

*Mūla bandha* will transform the meditative effect of the exercise into a strengthening one. As soon as *mūla bandha* is drawn at the end of each exhalation and each inhalation, the *prāṇa* expands. After just three rounds, a feeling of magnetic power gently sets in.

Where *mūla bandha* is precisely located is less important than the sensation of the root lock itself. The muscles of the anus, genitals, perineum, and cervix are all equally involved in what constitutes the lower lock of power. Imagine drawing the power to the center in the middle of breaths. If you feel the power rising, you have found the *bandha* correctly.

*This is the gateway to Kundalini Yoga.*

- Inhale – You go into the posture.
- End of inhalation – Draw *mūla bandha* in fullness.
- Exhale – You expand the posture and relax.
- End of exhalation – Draw *mūla bandha* in emptiness.

Each posture becomes more present. Immersion in stretching and stillness becomes possible. The practice with two breaths per position is calm, meditative, and regenerating. It works on the level of *manomaya kośa*.

*Mūla bandha* expands the *prāṇa*; when the mind remains calm, without agitation, the gateway to power opens.



## *Kapalabhāṭī – The Fiery Purification*

This beautiful practice come to me from the lineage of my teachers. In each posture, a short *kapalabhāṭī* impulse is set from the navel.

This form is energizing, purifying (physically & mentally), and freeing from unnecessary thoughts and emotions. The focus is on *uḍāna prāṇa*, the ascending life force. The movements are gentle and quick – like a dance, not like stretching. Each posture is fleetingly touched, almost like a kiss.

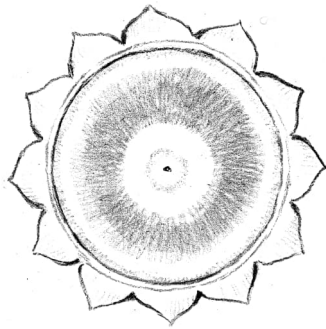
Speed: Start slowly and carefully, setting each *kapalabhāṭī* impulse mindfully. When you feel confident in the movement sequence, you can gradually increase the speed so that the movement becomes a fiery dance around the center.

*The mind often have two forms of blockages: Either the mind is afraid to sink into the depth and cannot perform a movement slowly and consciously. Or the mind stiffens and cannot let go in the flow of speed.*

This practice invites you to yield to the flow of power. It is like a shower of light, a fire ceremony of breath.

At the end of each round, when you return to *pranāmāsana*, you chant a mantra – the mantra brings you back to your center:

*Om Śrīma Sūryāya Nārāyaṇāya Namaḥ*



### *Mantra - The Sonic Form of the Goddess*

The sun is the origin of life: All things move around it, everything will dissolve in it again. Every gust of wind, the waves of water, the growth of plants – everything goes back to its life-giving rays.

This form is not exclusively used in Kundalini Yoga; however, Kuṇḍalinī is Mantra-śakti She God in the form of sound (Śabda Brahman). Therefore, She is also the vitality of all mantras. In this way, when movement and mantra are united, it is a powerful tool to honor the Goddess.

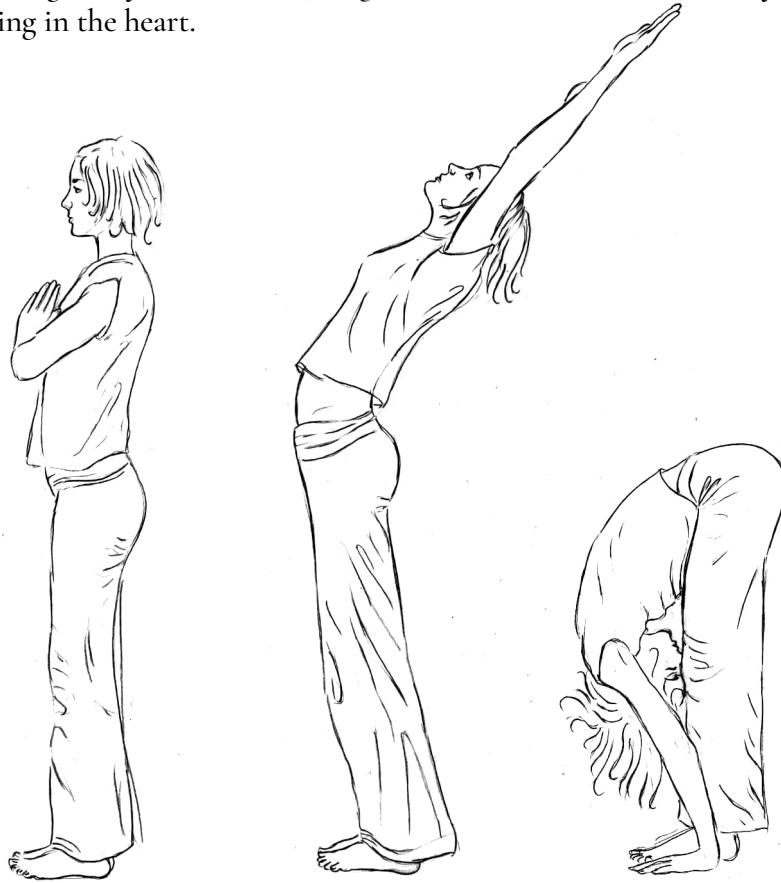
The sun is typically worshiped through its 12 names. Each name corresponds to a flavor of the sun's soul. You can recite one of the 12 names in each of the 12 postures, or sing a mantra in *pranāmāsana* before each new round to center yourself.

At the end of each round (from *hastottānāsana* to *pranāmāsana*), you can sing the corresponding *bija* Mantra (*Hrām*, *Hrīm* ...) during exhalation.

<i>Oṃ Hrām Mitrāya Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, great friend!
<i>Oṃ Hrīm Ravaye Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, radiant source of light!
<i>Oṃ Hrūm Sūryāya Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, supreme sun and light!
<i>Oṃ Hraim Bhānave Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, radiant sun!
<i>Oṃ Hraum Khagāya Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, wanderer of the sky!
<i>Oṃ Hraḥ Pūṣṇe Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, the nourishing one!
<i>Oṃ Hrām Hiranyagarbhāya Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, golden womb of life!
<i>Oṃ Hrīm Marīcaye Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, shining ray!
<i>Oṃ Hrūm Ādityāya Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, son of Aditi, beginning of all!
<i>Oṃ Hraim Savitre Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, life-giver, creative power!
<i>Oṃ Hraum Ārkāya Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, worthy of worship, radiant one!
<i>Oṃ Hraḥ Bhāskarāya Namaḥ</i>	I greet you, illuminator of the universe!

### 1. *Pranāmāsana – Prayer Pose*

Stand tall with feet together. Press the palms lightly together in front of the heart. Feel the strength of your center. *Dṛṣṭi* (gaze): Toward the horizon, with your inner focus resting in the heart.



*Om Śrīma Sūryāya Nārāyaṇāya Namaḥ*

### 2. *Hastottānāsana*

Raised arms pose. Inhale and lift your arms above the head, opening your palms to the cosmos. Keep the legs active, the chest open, and the arms slightly spread. *Dṛṣṭi*: Into the cosmos

### 3. *Pādahastāsana*

Hands-to-feet pose. Bend forward from the hips. Place your hands beside your feet, fingers aligned with your toes. Bend your knees if needed to bring the belly to the thighs. Then gradually straighten the legs, bringing the forehead toward the knees. *Dṛṣṭi*: Toward the navel



#### 4. *Aśva Sañcalanāsana*

Equestrian pose. Step the right leg back. Fingertips remain on the ground next to the toes, palms slightly lifted. The pelvis sinks, and the right knee stays above the ankle. Open the chest forward, head gently tilted back.

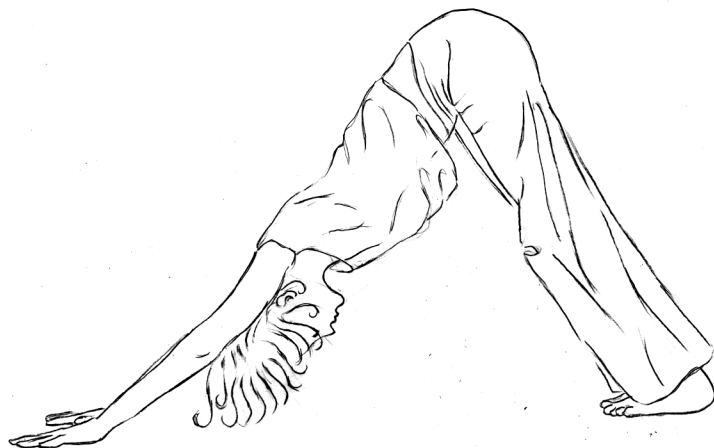
If you are firm in the posture you can slowly raise the arms, with the palms facing inward, holding the golden disk of the sun, this is *ardha candrāsana*.



*Dr̥ṣṭi*: *ajñā* chakra (between the eyebrows)

#### 5. *Parvatāsana*

Mountain pose. Step the left leg back into Mountain Pose. Feet together. Hands, shoulders, and hips form one line—avoid hollowing or rounding the spine. Knees may remain slightly bent to free the pelvis.



*Dṛṣṭi*: Toward the navel – feel the strength and spaciousness

### 6. *Aṣṭāṅga Namaskāra*

Eight point salutation. Lower the knees to the floor, then the chin between the hands. Slide the pelvis slightly forward until the sternum touches the ground. Eight points now meet the earth: feet, knees, chest, chin, and hands.



*Dṛṣṭi*: Toward the horizon – not down

### 7. *Bhujāṅgāsana*

Cobra pose. From the Eight-Point Salute, slide the chest forward and extend the arms, lifting the upper body until the pelvis rises gently. Gaze upward toward the sky, then bend the elbows so the pelvis rests again. Elbows remain close to the ribcage.



*Dṛṣṭi*: Into the cosmos – open yourself

### 8. *Parvatāsana*

Mountain pose. Push the upper body back into Mountain Pose again, feet and legs together. Slightly bend the knees if needed to maintain a straight line between hands and hips.



*Dṛṣṭi:* Toward the navel – turn your gaze inward

### 9. *Aśva Sañcalanāsana*

Equestrian pose. Step the right leg forward (switch legs in the next round). Fingertips touch the ground, palms lift slightly. The hips sink, the chest opens, and the gaze rises.

*Dṛṣṭi:* *ajñā* chakra



### 10. *Pādahastāsana*

Hands-to-feet pose. Step the left leg forward. Keep the knees bent if it helps to bring the belly close to the thighs.

*Dṛṣṭi:* Inward – into stillness

### 11. *Hastottānāsana*

Raised arms pose. With bent knees and a straight back, rise up. Open the chest, spread the arms slightly, and turn the palms to the sky.

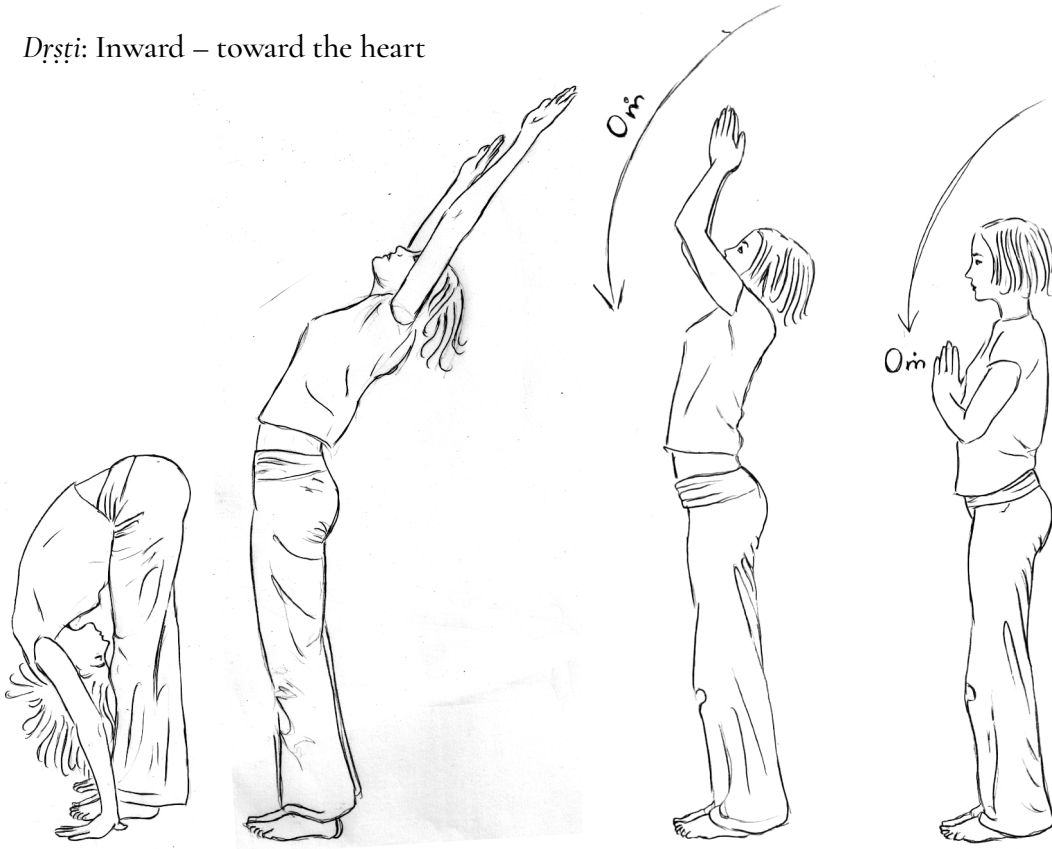
*Dṛṣṭi*: Into the cosmos – it is your home

### 12. *Pranāmāsana*

Prayer pose. Bring the palms together above the head and slowly lower them in front of the heart.

As the arms descend to the heart, you may chant the *bija* Mantra of one of the sun's aspects, or simply OM, to honor the connection between cosmos and heart.

*Dṛṣṭi*: Inward – toward the heart



This completes one round of *sūrya namaskāra*.

*Om Śrīma Sūryāya Nārāyaṇāya Namaḥ*