

## Top Alignment Cues for Wide Legged Forward Fold (Prasarita Padottanasana)

- Stand in Tadasana (Mountain Pose)
- Then step or lightly hop your feet apart anywhere from 3 to 4 1/2 feet (depending on your height: taller people should step wider).
- Rest your hands on your hips. Make sure your inner feet are parallel to each other. Lift your inner arches by drawing up on the inner ankles, and press the outer edges of your feet and ball of the big toe firmly into the floor.
- Engage the thigh muscles by drawing them up. Inhale and lift your chest, making the front torso slightly longer than the back.
- Exhale and, maintaining the length of the front torso, lean the torso forward from the hip joints. As your torso approaches parallel to the floor, press your fingertips onto the floor directly below your shoulders
- Push your top thighs straight back to help lengthen the front torso, and draw the inner groins away from each other to widen the base of your pelvis
- Walk your fingertips between your feet
- Take a few more breaths and then, with an exhalation, bend your elbows and lower your torso and head into a full forward bend. Make sure as you move down that you keep your front torso as long as possible. If possible rest the crown of your head on the floor.
- Press your inner palms actively into the floor, fingers pointing forward. If you have the flexibility to move your torso into a full forward bend, walk your hands back until your forearms are perpendicular to the floor and your upper arms parallel.
- To come out, bring your hands back on the floor below your shoulders and lift and lengthen your front torso. Then with an inhalation, rest your hands on your hips, pull your tail bone down toward the floor, and swing the torso up.

## Benefits of Prasarita Padottanasana

- Strengthens and stretches the inner and back legs and the spine
- Tones the abdominal organs
- Calms the brain
- Relieves mild backache