

## Wide-Angle Seated Forward Bend

Upavistha Konasana

*Oo-pah-VEESH-tah Cone-AHS-anna*

*upavistha = seated, sitting*

*kona = angle*

Upavistha Konasana prepares practitioners for most of the seated forward bends and twists such as Janu Sirsasanathe (Head-to-Knee Forward Bend) as well as for wide-legged standing poses such as Prasarita Padottanasana (Wide-Legged Forward Bend).



### The blueprint:

The yogi sits bent forward at the hips, index and middle fingers wrapped around the big toes, elbows bent out to the sides and lifted away from the floor.

### How to do it:

1. Begin in Dandasana (Seated Mountain Pose). Press out through the heels and spread your legs away from one another, opening them to a 90-degree angle. Lean back slightly with your hands behind you, then lift your hips and push your butt forward. You should feel as if your hip and pubis bones are shifted forward.
2. Take a deep breath, elongate the spine and reach toward the ceiling with the crown of the head.
3. Use the hands to "walk" the torso down, bringing it closer and closer to the mat. Remember to work at your own pace. Exhale and relax into the pose. Encourage the stretch, but don't force it. Always listen to your body. If you can't stretch your legs to 90 degrees, bring them closer.

From this position, check your alignment

### Do:

- keep your back flat
- keep your thighs engaged
- keep your feet flexed, heels on the floor and toes pointing back toward your head
- make sure your knees are facing up toward the ceiling

### Don't:

- round or arch your back
- hyper-extend the knees

4. When you are ready to come out of the pose, gently walk your arms back up, C-curving your spine to a seated position. Bring your legs together.

### Benefits:

- stretches the hamstrings and inner thighs
- elongates and strengthens the spine
- opens the hips and groin
- promotes calmness
- stimulates circulation to the liver, spleen, and adrenals

### Contraindications:

- If you have a lower-back injury, sit up high on a block or folded blanket and keep your torso between vertical and 45 degrees bent forward.
- If you have lower back pain, place a folded blanket underneath the "sit" bones. Keep the spine long and the chest open. Lean gently forward into the stretch until you reach a spot that is comfortable for your back and that engages your hamstrings.