

yoga basics



Salutation to the Sun for Amputees

By Marsha T Danzig, Founder, Yoga for Amputees®

Salutation to the Sun is a series of yoga postures flowing from one to the next, each coordinating breath with movement. There are twelve yoga postures in the sequence. Salutation to the Sun parallels the twelve months of the year. The sequence of postures makes a complete cycle, mimicking the six months moving toward the sun and the six months moving away from the sun.

Healthy rituals like Salutation to the Sun create new brain and body patterns that

greatly enhance the lives of amputees. Practice each pose on its own before practicing Salutation to the Sun. Make adjustments according to your amputation. Yoga props support your practice, so use them often. Do not do the full Sun Salutation if you have injuries in the lower back or shoulders. Instead, practice standing or seated mountain pose, adding deep breathing.

All of the poses in Salutation to the Sun can be modified in a chair (shown below), or adapted for above and below elbow amputees (shown below). It helps to be near a wall when practicing sun salutation,

to avoid falling. Some people practice with their prosthesis on. Others prefer yoga without. Below are suggestions on how to approach sun salutation, based on your present needs. Pay attention to how you feel before beginning Salutation to the Sun, then immediately afterward. If you notice a positive change in your body, mind and spirit, know that this practice is always there for you, no matter what you are experiencing in life. All it takes is that first deep breath and a willing body, mind and spirit. Change your lifestyle means changing your life. Enjoy Salutation to the Sun.

Salutation to the Sun twelve yoga poses

- 1 Mountain
- 2 Standing Forward Bend
- 3 Lunge
- 4 Downward Facing Dog
- 5 Plank
- 6 4 Limbed Pose
- 7 Upward Facing Dog
- 8 Downward Facing Dog
- 9 Lunge
- 10 Standing Forward Bend
- 11 Half Standing Forward Bend
- 12 Mountain

Mountain pose ▼



- 1 Stand with feet hip width apart
- 2 Lift arms the above the head as you inhale
- 3 Grow tall to the sky
- 4 Sink deep into the ground

Standing forward bend ▼



- 1 Exhale as you bend forward from the hips
- 2 Fingers rest on either side of the feet or yoga blocks

Lunge ▼



- 1 Inhale
- 2 Step your right foot back into a lunge

Downward Dog ▼



- 1 Exhale
- 2 Step your left foot back to meet your right
- 3 Fold at the hips into an inverted V

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Salutation to the Sun for Amputees

Plank ▼



- 1 Inhale press forward into a push up pose

4 Limbed Pose ▼



- 2 Exhale
- 3 Hug the elbows into the ribs as you bend them
- 4 Slowly bring your body to the floor, keeping your spine lengthened

Upward Facing Dog/Cobra ▼



- 1 Inhale
- 2 Press into the palms
- 3 Lift the chest off the floor and press up

Downward Facing Dog ▼



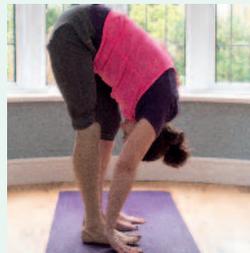
- 1 Exhale
- 2 Press from plank pose into downward facing dog

Lunge ▼



- 1 Inhale
- 2 Step forward with the right foot

Standing Forward Bend ▼



- 1 Exhale
- 2 Fold forward into standing forward bend

Mountain ▼



- 1 Inhale
- 2 Circle the arms up as you come back to a standing position
- 3 Place the palms in a prayer pose at the heart

Sun Salutation in a Chair

Prayer Pose ▼



- 1 Sit upright in a chair
- 2 Add support to lower limbs when needed, either resting residual limbs on a chair in front, or placing prosthetic feet on the floor
- 3 Breathe in
- 4 Breathe out
- 5 Acknowledge the present moment

Seated Mountain ▼



- 1 Inhale lift the arms overhead

Seated Forward Bend ▼



- 2 Exhale round forward over the thighs
- 3 Place a pillow under the belly if needed

Thigh to Chest Right Leg ▼



- 1 Inhale
- 2 Draw the right leg to the chest

Leg Extension Right Leg ▼



- 1 Exhale
- 2 Extend the right leg out if available
- 3 Or, lengthen through the spine and reach out from the right hip

Thigh to Chest Left Leg ▼



- 1 Inhale
- 2 Draw the left leg to the chest

Seated Forward Bend ▼



- 1 Exhale
- 2 Fold forward

Seated Mountain ▼



- 1 Inhale
- 2 Lift the arms up overhead

Prayer ▼



- 1 Exhale
- 2 Place the palms in a prayer at the heart, or close the eyes and look within toward the heart

Sun Salutation variations for above and below elbow amputees

For below elbow amputees, use the forearms for plank, four limbed pose, and downward dog, on the floor or rest your forearms on a chair (shown below)

For **above elbow amputees**, practice the following sequence:

Lunge right foot back (using the chair is optional) ▼



Lunge left foot back, hands on the floor ▼

Switch legs



Mountain pose ▼



Standing forward bend ▼



Standing forward bend ▼



Return to **Mountain pose**.

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Salutation to the Sun for Amputees

Above elbow amputees variation

Option leaning on a chair for below elbow amputees.

Mountain ▼



Half Standing Forward Bend ▼



Lunge Right Leg Back ▼



Downward Facing Dog (using the chair is optional) ▼



Plank/4 Limbed Pose ▼



Upward Facing Dog ▼



Downward Facing Dog ▼



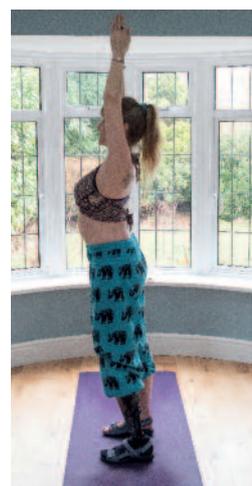
Lunge ▼



Half Standing Forward Bend ▼



Mountain ▼



Marsha T Danzig is a below knee amputee, cancer survivor, kidney transplant recipient, yoga practitioner, author and avid flamenco dancer. She is the founder of Yoga for Amputees.

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