



Yoga For You

Ray Madigan and Shelley Choy

Paripurna Navasana

(Full Boat Pose), Stage 2 » "Paripurna" means "complete" or "full," and "nava" means "boat." Two weeks ago we presented the first stage in which practitioners balance on the buttock bones, aided by the hands on the floor. In this final stage, the hands are off the floor, and the pose is held by the work in the abdomen and back. Regular practice of this pose will strengthen the lower back and tone the organs related to digestion and elimination.

1. Sit in Dandasana on the floor with legs out straight (see previous column at starbulletin.com/2006/04/09/features/yoga.html).
2. Move your hands a few inches behind the buttocks, shoulder width apart. Point the fingers toward your feet.
3. Press your hands into the floor to firmly straighten the arms. Turn your upper arm bones out to help open the chest.
4. Press your legs and buttock bones down and, as you press the palms down, lift and fully open the chest. Bring the lower spine into the body and lift the lower back up. Do not let your back slump and round.



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Ray Madigan, co-director of Manoa Yoga Center,
demonstrates Paripurna Navasana, Stage 2.

5. Maintain the action of the chest and spine as you bend the knees and bring your feet closer to the buttocks. Now, with an exhalation, slightly bend the elbows and lean back as you lift the shin bones up until they are parallel to the floor. Balance on your buttock bones. Work to maintain the lift of the spine and keep the chest open.

6. Stay in this position for a few breaths, then, with an exhalation, slowly straighten the legs. Tighten the legs and keep your back lifted. This is Stage 1.

7. Now, as you exhale lift the hands and extend the arms so that they are parallel to the floor. Keeping your arms straight, pull the upper arm bones into the shoulder sockets and lift the chest. Remain on your buttock bones and do not let your lower back slump.

6. Hold for a few breaths, then bring your hands back to the floor. Bend your knees, bring your feet down and relax.

In the beginning, the weight of your legs will cause your back to slump as you struggle to lift your chest with arms extended. With regular practice you will become stronger and steadier, able to hold your back in and up without strain.

Ray Madigan and **Shelley Choy** are certified Iyengar Yoga teachers and co-direct the Manoa Yoga Center at Manoa Marketplace. Visit www.manoayoga.com or call 382-3910. Manoa Yoga Center, the authors and the Star-Bulletin take no responsibility for any injury arising from the practice of these yoga postures. Readers should seek a doctor's approval before commencing this yoga practice.