

Monkey Pose Madness

with Aaron Styles



The Story Of Hanuman

A woman named Anjana desperately wanted a child and prayed daily to the gods to answer her prayers. Vayu, the god of wind, heard her prayers and sent birds with blessed grains of rice. As an offering of her devotion, Anjana held her hands to the sky in Anjali Mudra. When a few grains of rice fell into her hands she did not question it. She consumed the blessed rice and was soon pregnant.

She gave birth to Anjaneya who was half mortal and half god. When Anjaneya was a young child he was pretty mischievous. One morning he woke up and perceived the sun to be a giant mango. Mango is Anjaneya's favorite fruit. He jumped high into the sky getting ready to take a bite of the giant fruit. The sun god, Surya, saw this and was immediately infuriated. He struck Anjaneya in the jaw with a lightning bolt. Anjaneya fell back to earth lifeless.

Vayu was furious upon hearing of his son's death and demanded that Surya restore him back to life. Surya agreed under the condition that Anjaneya be watched under constant supervision and be cursed with short term memory loss so he could not remember his powerful divine abilities. He was to live with Sugriva the monkey king. To fit in to his new lifestyle he was transformed into a monkey himself and renamed Hanuman. This new name was fitting of his experience with Surya, "Hanu" means jaw in Sanskrit.

While Hanuman was living with the monkeys he met King Rama and they instantly became inseparable companions. Hanuman gave his full devotion to King Rama and swore never to leave his side. King Rama had a beautiful wife named Sita. The two were madly in love. An evil demon named Ravana grew increasingly jealous of the relationship Ram and Sita shared. Ravana declared war against Ram's kingdom and captured Sita. He brought her to his island of Lanka. Ram sent Hanuman on a quest to find where Sita was being held.

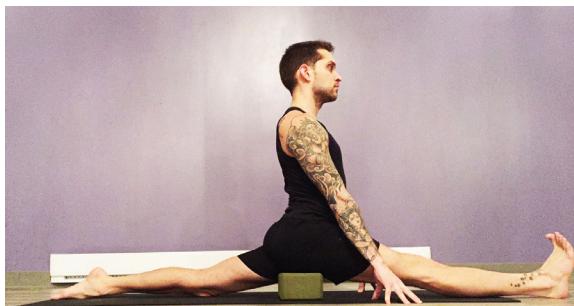
Hanuman traveled to the tip of the subcontinent and looked across the vast ocean towards Lanka. He knelt down in prayer. The position he took while praying was the first stage of the posture known as Virasana, he knelt with one leg folded under him and the opposite foot on the ground in front of him. After praying for some time, he stood up and with a mighty leap of faith, lunged across the ocean. While in the air he reached one leg forward and one leg back, resembling the pose now known as Hanumanasana. He landed safely on the island of Lanka.

He found Sita on the Island and gave her Ram's ring as a promise to her that she would be rescued. She gave Hanuman her hairpin to show to Ram. Once Ram was done restoring peace to his land he immediately went to Sita's rescue. The two were finally back in each other's company. Hanuman was awarded with Ram's gold and gem encrusted bracelet. Hanuman received the bracelet but did not exhibit emotions of happiness or gratitude. When asked what was wrong, Hanuman declared it was worth nothing without Ram's name on it. He knelt down and using his own hands ripped open his chest to expose his heart which had Ram's name written on every fiber. With every beat Hanuman's heart chanted Ram. His story is one of faith, devotion, and fearlessness.

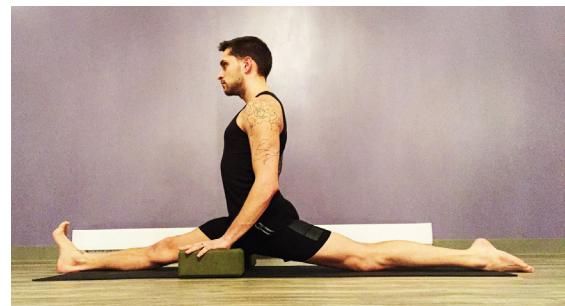
Hanumanasana

hah-new-mahn-ahs-anna

Monkey God Pose



Modification 1:
Slide a block underneath the buttock.



Modification 2:
Prop the hands on blocks or the floor



Queen Pigeon in Hanumanasana



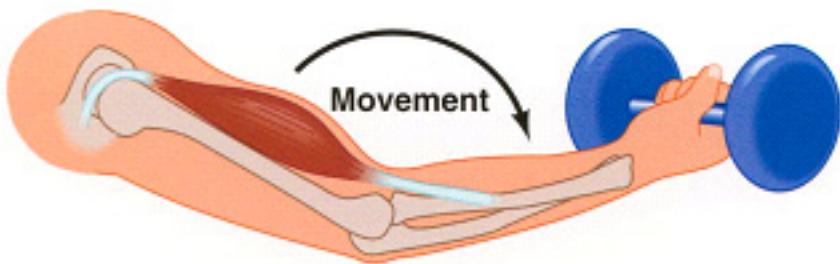
King Pigeon in Hanumanasana

Types of Muscle Contraction

Eccentric

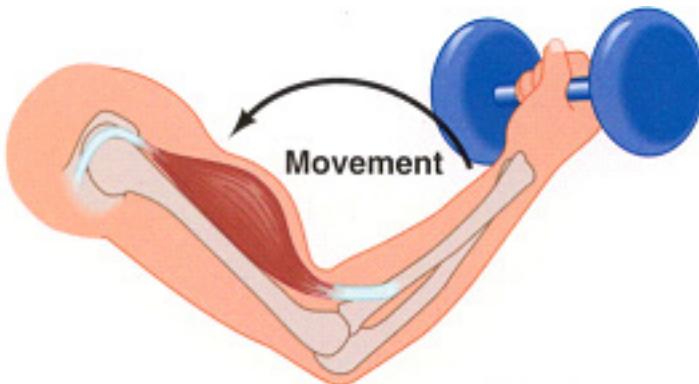
The muscle lengthens as the muscle contracts.

Usually with some form of resistance, such as gravity.



Concentric

The muscle shortens as the muscle contracts.



Isometric

The muscle length does not change as the muscle contracts.

No Movement



Anatomy of Hanumanasana

Front Leg

Lengthening:

- Semitendinosus, Semimembranosus, Biceps Femoris. (Hamstrings)
Action: Hip extension
Location: Back of the thigh
- Gluteus Maximus
Action: Hip extension & external rotation
Location: Buttock area
- Piriformis
Action: Hip external rotation, abduction. Piriformis works to internally rotate when the hip is flexed to 90°
Location: Deep buttock area
- Gastrocnemius
Action: Knee flexion and Ankle plantarflexion
Location: Calf
- Soleus
Action: Ankle platarflexion
Location: Calf

Engaging:

- Gluteus Minimus
 - **Action:** Hip internal rotation
 - **Location:** Outer hip
- Gluteus Medius
 - **Action:** Hip internal rotation
 - **Location:** Outer hip
- Tensor Fascia Lata (TFL)
 - **Action:** Hip internal rotation
 - **Location:** Front side of outer hip
- Tibialis Anterior
 - **Action:** Ankle dorsiflexion
 - **Location:** Front of the shin

Anatomy of Hanumanasana

Back Leg

Lengthening:

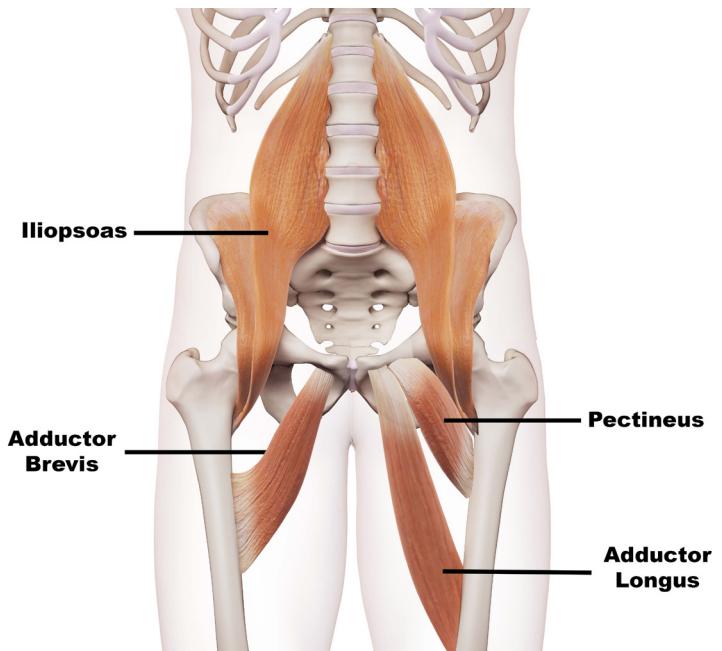
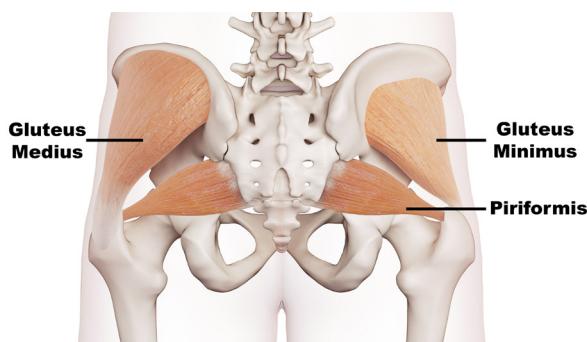
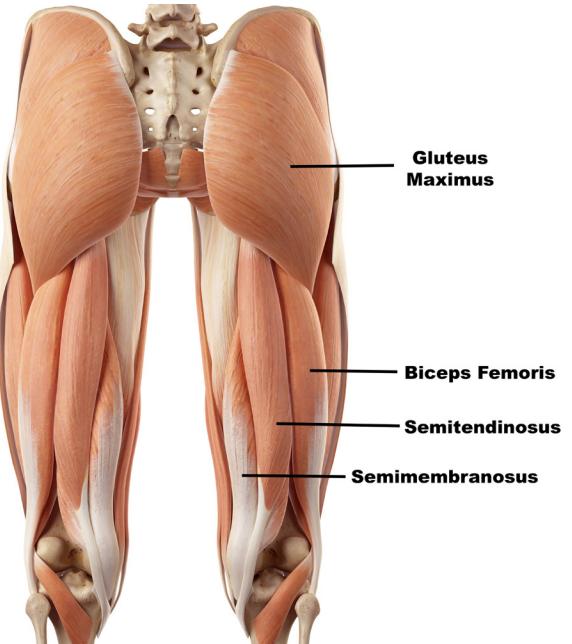
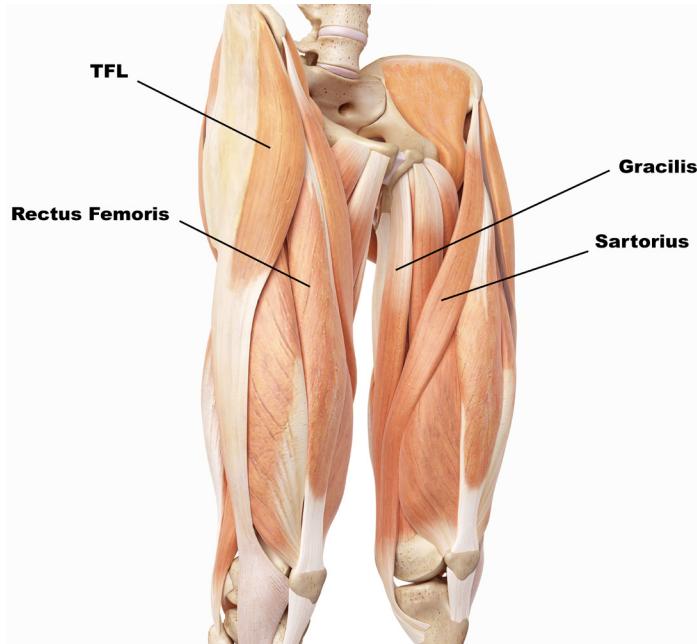
- Iliopsoas
 - **Action:** Hip flexion
 - **Location:** Deep abdomen
- Rectus Femoris (Quadriceps)
 - **Action:** Hip flexion
 - **Location:** Front of thigh
- Sartorius
 - **Action:** Hip flexion, external rotation, & abduction
 - **Location:** Front of thigh
- Tensor Fascia Lata (TFL)
 - **Action:** Hip internal rotation
 - **Location:** Front side of outer hip
- Pectineus
 - **Action:** Hip flexion & adduction
 - **Location:** Front of the inner thigh
- Adductor longus and brevis
 - **Action:** Hip adduction
 - **Location:** Inner thigh
- Gracilis
 - **Action:** Hip flexion, adduction, medial rotation
 - **Location:** Inner thigh

Engaging:

- Gluteus Minimus
 - **Action:** Hip internal rotation
 - **Location:** Outer hip
- Gluteus Medius
 - **Action:** Hip internal rotation
 - **Location:** Outer hip

Most of the muscles listed as lengthening are eccentrically contracting to stabilize the pose during entry. When holding in the posture the lengthened muscles are isometrically contracting

The eccentric and isometric contraction of the lengthening muscles helps to prevent injury by stabilizing the joints of the hip & knee.



Soleus

Gastrocnemius

Tibialis Anterior

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