



Three Yoga Poses to Jumpstart Your Morning

by Diane Kovanda

I love yoga. The great thing about yoga early in the morning is that you don't have to get out of bed to do it. It is a great start to any day.

Some yoga purists may look down upon this concept of bed yoga, but I believe yoga can become a part of your lifestyle – not only a practice relegated to a mat.

Most mornings I tend to feel a bit creaky. While still in bed, I get myself going with my favorite slow and sleepy yoga poses.

One of the first things I do as I wake up is bring my knees into my chest. This stretches out the lower back, hips, and gives the knees a good gentle wake-up call.

I usually follow it with a twist – this can be knees side to side or a knee down twist. The last posture I do while still in bed is a bridge pose – this involves bending your knees, placing the soles of your feet on the bed and slowly lifting your hips. Take a few deep breaths while your hips are reaching for the sky and then slowly on your exhale, lower one vertebra at a time.

When I wake up with these three yoga poses, I feel better and more energized all day. It also seems to be what my back craves after sleeping all night. Below are the instructions to the 3 poses. I've also included [a link](#) to a corresponding video of the three poses, I made on the dock earlier in the year.



1. Knees to Chest: Start on your back and gently draw your knees into your chest. You can wrap your arms around your knees and rock side to side to massage your back muscles.

Photographs courtesy of Diane Kovanda



2. Twist: Start by taking a few deep breaths and then draw your knees in to your chest. Stretch your arms out away from your body. Let your knees go slowly side to side a couple of times. Then stretch out the right leg letting it rest along the bed.

Take your bent left leg with your right hand and give yourself an assist by pressing it over to the right side. As you gently press the leg to the right side, also press your left shoulder blade down into the bed. This creates the most wonderful stretch along your spine and rib cage – feels like you are making room for your heart and lungs at the same time. Now breathe deep again and repeat on the other side.



3. Bridge pose: Bend your knees, placing the soles of your feet on the bed, directly under your knees. Slowly lift your hips. Take a few deep breaths while your hips are reaching for the sky and then slowly lower down on your exhale, one vertebra at a time. Do the bridge three times and as you come down the last time, roll your head gently side to side to stretch out your neck.

As you practice these poses a few times, they will become second nature to you as you wake up. You will notice a wonderful difference the very first day you do this, and an amazing difference of walking tall within a week.

After you practice your three yoga poses, you might try a few minutes of breathing meditation. Or as my friend Licia calls it: Beditation. Sit up in your bed, get a pillow under your seat so you can be supported as you sit, and focus on your breath for the next five minutes.

When distracting thoughts come in, just return non-judgmentally back to witnessing your breathing. When you are done, stretch, and tell the world you are READY!

Now here is the start of a good day!

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