

BUDDHA'S PRAYER

The starting position looks similar to a meditating Buddha. The challenge is to keep the torso stable and braced while lifting the arms upward.

Benefits »

- ⦿ Improves posture and core stability.
- ⦿ Strengthens torso muscles, especially the back extensors.
- ⦿ It's easy to remember because the name is fun.

Set It Up »

You will not need any special equipment. Some variations use a Thera-Band or a balloon on the floor.

How to Do It »

The Start

- ⦿ Participants sit tall in the chair, feet on the floor, abdominals braced, ribs lifted, and shoulder blades back and down.
- ⦿ They place their palms together, fingers pointing up, almost resting against the sternum (midchest).
- ⦿ Lift forearms until parallel to the floor. This is the meditating Buddha look.
- ⦿ Inhale to prepare.



The Moves

Use the following cues.

- ⦿ Exhale, begin moving the hands skyward and pressing the forearms toward each other.
- ⦿ Keep the arms and hands close to the body throughout the lift. Movement is directly upward, not out.
- ⦿ At the top of the movement, the hands are almost directly overhead.
- ⦿ The eyes and face can follow the hands, if comfortable for the participant.
- ⦿ Inhale in the up position.
- ⦿ Exhale as you lower the hands.
- ⦿ Repeat six to eight times, as tolerated.

Take It Further »

- ⦿ Use slightly longer holds at the top.
- ⦿ Increase the number of repetitions.
- ⦿ Good Mornings With a Thera-Band. It is this same exercise, but with a Thera-Band for extra resistance.
 - Place one end of a Thera-Band on the ground and secure it under both feet.
 - Clasp the other end of the band in both hands.
 - Bring the hands up under the chin, as if pulling covers up on a cold morning.
 - Sit with the hands together and the forearms parallel to the floor; this is the beginning position for Buddha's Prayer.
 - Inhale and lift the hands (and the band) upward until the arms are straight above. Lift the eyes and chin skyward, too, if possible.
 - Keep the abdominals pulled in; but let the ribs and shoulders lift.
 - Hold for a moment.
 - Exhale and return to the starting position.
 - Repeat 6-8 times; progress to 12 times, as tolerated.



Give It More Balance »

- ⦿ Sit closer to the edge of the chair.
- ⦿ Sit with feet offset or in tandem.
- ⦿ Do Buddha's Prayer with feet on a balloon.

Keep It Safe »

Keep the arms close to the body throughout the exercise. They only need to lift as high as is comfortable for them. Keep the spine tall and stable. Nothing should hurt or cause any pain.

Live It »

Reaching up and looking up is much easier in slow motion and with core stability.