

Drawbridge



1. Begin with both partners sitting facing each other with knees bent, and feet flat on the floor, hip-width apart.
2. Partners should lie close enough so that their toes touch their partner's toes.
3. Both partners roll down to the floor slowly, keeping their feet connected on the floor.
4. Once on the floor, both partners scoot their hips as close to their feet as they can.
5. Feet and knees both stay hip-width apart and the heel lines up behind the second toe.
6. Both partners engage their abdominals by pulling their navel down towards the floor.
7. Keeping the strength in the belly, both partners lift their hips, then peel their backs off the floor one vertebrae at a time.
8. Both partners roll to the outside of their right shoulder, then to the outside of their left shoulder, clasping their hands underneath their back to add a chest opener.
 - If a partner needs additional support to hold the hips up, that partner can take the hands onto the backs of the hips instead of clasping them together.

9. The chin stays slightly away from the chest so the neck rests comfortably on the floor.
10. The eyes look straight to the ceiling; because the neck bears weight in this pose, each partner must keep the head centered and avoid turning the head.
11. Partner A lifts her left foot straight up to the sky as Partner B lifts his right foot straight up to the sky.
12. After both partners have a foot in the air, partners reach their lifted feet toward each other until the soles of the feet touch.
 - An option is for both partners to hold a solo Bridge pose next to each other, without the leg lift.
13. After holding for eight complete breath cycles, partners lower their feet, then lift the other leg to switch sides.
 - An advanced option is to have partners bring both feet together and lift both legs higher while their hands support the back, but they should attempt this only if they have been practicing solo Shoulder Stand for a long time and feel comfortable with Shoulder Stand; finding a comfortable balance point may require one or both partners to bend their knees.



Drawbridge is a gentle inversion and a supported chest opener. This also strengthens the quadriceps muscles in the thighs. In this pose, you place the heart above the head, changing the normal gravitational resistance for your blood flow. This change of scenery does wonders for the mind as you look at the world from a completely different angle.

Symbolism: The symbolism in Drawbridge is in the inversion. We spend most of our day with our head above our heart, but in this pose we put our heart above our head. Though medically our emotions all stem from our brain, symbolically the heart represents our capacity for compassion. In Drawbridge we gesture that we place love above all else by placing our emotional center above our cognitive center.

This pose is a variation on Bridge (*Setu Bandha*), and Shoulder Stand (*Salamba Sarvangasana*) in the advanced option.