

# How to use the Back Arch & Easy Arch

## WHAT IS IT USED FOR

Lie over this arch every day and allow the chest to open. You will notice a great improvement as your back begins to straighten. Stretching and opening this vital area affects heart, lungs and thyroid. When they begin to work more efficiently, energy levels rise. Used in different ways it also works to release sacrum, lumbar and cervical spine.

If you are stiff you may at first need to use blocks and blankets to reduce the curve and stretch, you can add blocks or a blanket to your head and feet (see figure 7 on the instruction sheet), then as you loosen up and become more flexible you may be able to remove some of the supports like the blocks and increase the amount you curve your back.



## HOW DO I USE THE ARCH?

Place a thick rug over the Backarch. Sit on the floor square and close to the arch on the less arched side. Roll slowly and carefully back so that you are stretching the sides of the body equally, neck relaxed, head hanging straight. Stretch the legs in all these suggested stretches, feet parallel to each other and backs of the legs straight. These are strong stretches - hold for a short time - half to 1 minute at first, then as resting postures when the back is used to stretching and relaxing up to 10 minutes. Support the head if the neck is painful. If the small of the back / lumbar is painful, then reduce the stretch by placing blocks under the heels. **Pregnant woman**, please practice figure. 1 and 4 ONLY. Not to stretch from pubis to navel but alright to stretch from navel to top breast bone.

## CHEST OPENER (figure 1)

(removes dowager's hump!) Helpful for neck problems. If neck is over stretched, work with a block (or two) under the head or fold arms to rest head. Head just off floor, bottom on the floor. If there are pains in the shoulders or arms, please keep arms passive and to the sides, palms up, as in figure 1.



## CHEST OPENER (figure 2)

Use this method if suffering from breathing problems or have had heart problems. Note arms to the sides, palms up.

Roll the top of the shoulders to the floor or to blocks, buttocks off floor, relax neck. Allow chest to open to the maximum. If this is too strong, place blocks under the heels and stretch the legs as in figure 7. Relax neck. Helps remove fatigue and releases back aches.



### **HIP OPENER (figure 3)**

Hips on top. Relax neck and top back. Heavy legs descending, strong pelvic floor lift, tail bone up. The stretch is strongest with arms over head. Helpful for bladder disorders. I suggest women leave this one out if you have a heavy period. Also helpful for those suffering from pain in the sacro-iliac joints. All the hip openers are helpful for stiff hips and lumbar pain. Please place blocks under the heels at first as in figure 7.



### **LEGS RESTING UP WALL (figure 4)**

Top of shoulders on floor, back legs and buttocks close to wall. Not this one if you have a period - any back archings can accentuate a period: try squatting postures at these times. Can be used when pregnant or with a lesser lift such as one or two blocks under the buttocks against a wall. Recuperative posture opens chest. Helpful for swollen legs, varicose veins and prolapses. Quiet, resting stretch.



### BACK ARCH WITH HEAD SUPPORT (figure 5)



### BACK ARCH (figure 6)



### BACK ARCH WITH SHOULDER & FOOT SUPPORT (figure 7)



### EASY ARCH (figure 8)



### EASY ARCH WITH HEAD SUPPORT (figure 9)



## EASY ARCH WITH HEAD SUPPORT (figure 10)



## ADVANCED (figure 11)

Very strong backbend for advanced students ONLY. Place the archer on a stool so that your heels and back of hands are on the floor. Extend the arms and legs to accentuate this front body stretch. Arms can be folded behind the head as in figure 11. Relax neck. Neck released and head hanging free. Centre of the back of the knees down. Lift from the inner body towards the chest, allow chest to open. Help stiff backs, opens front body, especially groin and chest area. Strengthens the legs if they are held straight.



It is quite natural that the back will ache at first as the stretches are strong. Do make allowances by using blankets and blocks. You will notice a great improvement within a few weeks.