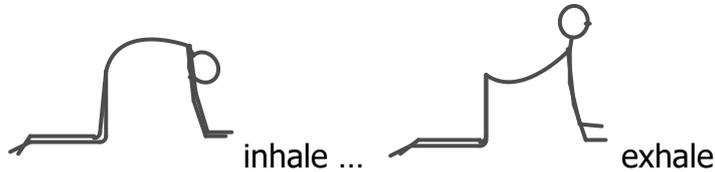
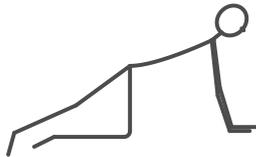


Three for: Hamstrings

First warm up. Come to all fours and take some easy movements with the breath in Cat to Cow:



Then stretch out the calves and backs of the knees:



Then add in some half sun salutations keeping the movements soft and the knees a little bent, from Tadasana inhaling the arms up and lifting the chest a little, and then gently exhaling to fold down, bringing the arms towards the floor or your shins. Repeat three or four times with steady breath.



Uttanasana (Intense Forward Fold) Stand with feet together or slightly apart. Plug into ground with balls of feet and heels and relax toes. Draw up through kneecaps to firm thighs, pull tailbone in, lift pelvic floor and draw navel into spine. If you are very flexible ensure you don't lock out through backs of knees as you fold forwards: instead push shin bone slightly forward (very small movement) to give a micro bend in back of knees. Keep spine as long as possible and

bring hands either to rest on shins or to floor if you can reach. Breathe into the stretch and come back up carefully and slowly. Do not hold if you suffer with high blood pressure.



Prasarita padottanasana (wide legged forward fold) Stand sideways on your mat, legs as wide as comfortable, with feet parallel to each other, big toes forwards or slightly angled in. Engage your thighs by pulling up through the knee caps and hugging the inner thighs together, and plug down firmly through the feet. Make

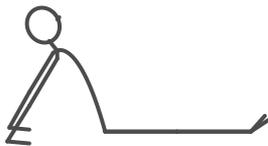
sure you're not over stretching the back of the knees, by putting a minute bend into them if necessary. Bring your hands to your waist and pull up tall through the spine as you inhale, then keeping shoulders back and leading with the chest, fold forward from the hip crease as far as your hamstrings will allow. Bring your hands to the floor, a block, or a chair if necessary. Take a few breaths (don't overstay if you have high blood pressure) and then come back up in reverse with hands on hips, taking it SLOWLY. Exhale to release and heel and toe the feet back together.



Ardha Hanumanasana (half split pose)

Come to all fours, hands under shoulders and knees under hips, padding your knees with a cushion or blanket if needed. Wiggle your right toes forward, keeping the left knee underneath the hip. Left toes can be tucked under or top of foot flat on floor, as preferred. Slide your right heel forwards until you come to a good stretch through the back of the leg (don't go too far), you can prop your hands onto bricks, blocks or

big books if necessary. Breathe here for several breaths trying to keep the back as straight as possible. Gently reverse and take the pose on the left.



To finish: take a simple seated backbend to counter the forward bending in your back; and then lie down onto your back.



Take a gentle lying twist keeping feet on floor, to release through knees, legs and back. Take knees over to the right first and plug the left shoulder into the floor, gazing towards the left if that doesn't hurt your neck. Breathe here for a few breaths and change sides, using your bandhas to lift the knees up to center and lower them to the left.

Finally, rest in Savasana for a few minutes

