

Sample Poses Handout:

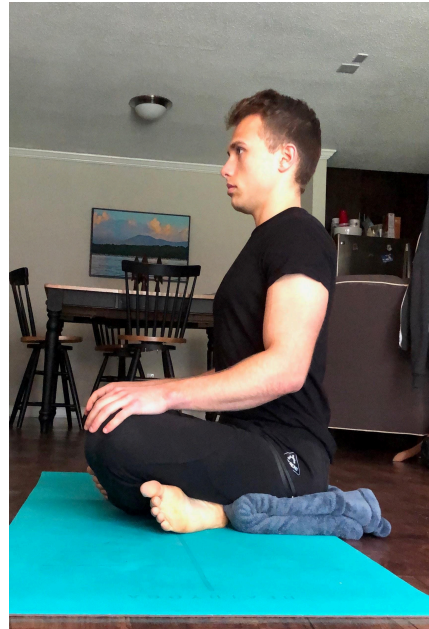
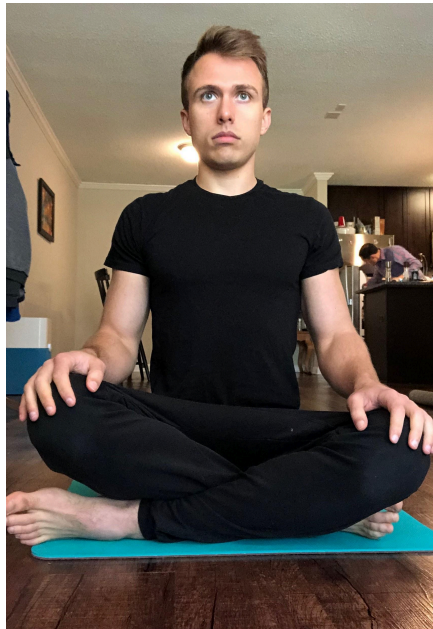
Here are examples of poses that could be incorporated into yoga/PT for people with knee OA. The intent of the pose is included (the purpose of performing the pose), as well as modification(s) when indicated.

The following poses have been rated as the “most helpful” for knee OA symptoms by people with knee OA:

1. Seated “easy” pose:

Intent: Grounding, centering, position of rest, elongation of spine.

Cues: Pelvis level like a bowl, ground through the sit bones and grow upwards through the crown of the head.



Modification 1: Rolled blanket under pelvis to keep spine long, prevent posterior pelvic tilt (e.g. if hamstrings or low back muscles are tight).



Modification 2: For reduced knee flexion, extend legs more in front in the direction of long-sitting. Support outside of knees with pillow, blanket, or blocks. Find a place where the spine can still be long.

2. Relaxation pose (corpse)

Intent: Relaxation, meditation, rest, decompression of spine. With legs elevated, can improve venous circulation, reduce edema, increase parasympathetic activity. Weight on abdomen can also increase activity of vagus nerve.

Cues: Relax into the ground, be heavy. Feel what parts of your body are being supported by the ground. Let your breath be slow, and turn off all muscles (can do body scan here to relax muscles starting at the feet and going up)



Modification 1: Rolled blanket or bolster under knees for comfort. Can reduce anterior tilt of pelvis, prevent end range knee extension. Try to keep palms up to open shoulders.



Modification 2: Legs elevated on chair or legs up the wall. Consider rolled up blanket under low back if hamstrings are tight.



3. Bridge pose

Intent: Strength of glutes, hamstrings, quads, spinal extensors without full weight-bearing through knee. Elongation of hip flexors. Helps teach segmental control of spine, as well as awareness of foot/ankle position in standing. Minimizing KAM.

Cues: Bend your knees and ground down through your feet as if you were standing. Push through the feet to slowly lift up the spine, starting with the pelvis and gradually lifting up to the backs of the shoulder blades. "Spine like a string of pearls". Keep navel to spine, abdominals engaged, arms pressing against mat. Keep knees hip width apart, weight evenly through both feet.



Modification 1: Gentle squeeze of block between knees to align hips, knees, and ankles to minimize KAM. Activates adductors to help stabilize hip/knee.



Modification 2: Block under sacrum makes the pose passive and restorative. Elongates hip flexors without muscular activation. Gentle inversion to help venous circulation from lower body and activate parasympathetic nervous system.

4. **Reclining twist**

Intent: Restorative pose to release low back muscles, increase spinal rotation, stretch lateral hip muscles. Can also be used to strengthen core (e.g. obliques and transversus abdominis) if repetitions are performed. Helps improve digestion.

Cues: Laying on back with knees bent, let knees slowly drop to one side, keeping belly muscles engaged, knees and feet together. Direct gaze towards opposite side. Lift knees back up with core muscles during an exhale.



Modification 1: Block between knee to prevent unwanted hip adduction/internal rotation, comfort if IT band is tight, helps to engage adductors and obliques to maintain positional control. Block underneath bottom leg for support.

5. Mountain pose

Intent: Grounding, centering, balance, transition, postural awareness, minimizing KAM, spinal elongation.

Cues: Feet hip distance apart, palms facing forward. Ground through feet by feeling the connection between the ground and all four corners of the feet (as if foot is a rectangle). Spread toes wide, push down through feet to grow tall through the crown of the head. Tuck the tailbone gently beneath you so that pelvis is right below the head. Find your breath here.



Modification: A block between knees to cue hip IR/adduction for stability of pelvis/hips, allow elongation of spine, and to maintain feet hip distance apart.

6. Chair Pose

Intent: Power pose, functional strengthening of quads, glutes, and core, minimizing KAM, transition.

Cues: Slowly lower hips down as if sitting back in a chair with slightly more weight in heels. Keep kneecaps pointing straight forward, weight even across the right and left sides of feet. Pull tailbone towards the floor and crown of head towards ceiling. Keep core muscles engaged and chest wide and open.



Modification: A block between knees to activate hip adductors for stability of hips and knees, keep knees in line with ankles, and maintain feet hip distance apart. *Additional modifications can be found in Prezi.*

The following poses were most adhered to by people with knee OA:

1. Standing forward fold

Intent: Transition, stretch of hamstrings, calves, and back muscles, relaxation, spinal elongation, inversion to activate parasympathetic nervous system.

Cues: Keeping a generous bend in the knee, bring the chest towards the floor by slowly hinging forward from the hips. Bring weight slightly forward towards toes. Let spine and neck be long and heavy here- breathe deeply.



Modification 1: Maintain greater bend in knee and elongation of spine, support upper body by placing elbows on knees. This is beneficial if hamstrings are very tight, or if inversions or spinal flexion is contraindicated.



Modification 2: Use blocks to support upper body as an alternative to previous modification.

2. **Reclining twist** (see above)
3. **Mountain pose** (see above)
4. **Chair pose** (see above)

5. **Warrior II**

Intent: Power pose. Strengthens front quad, hamstring, hip abductors, stretch and strength of back leg adductors, strength of quads and core. Builds awareness of knee position in relation to foot/ankle (minimizing KAM).

Cues: Slowly bend front knee, keeping knee cap in line with 3rd toe (press knee out towards little toe side). Keep weight evenly through the four corners of the front foot, and ground through the little toe side of the back foot, keeping back knee straight. Spread arms away from each other, finger tip to finger tip. Gaze over front finger tips. Keep legs and core strong and active.



Modification:
Less bending of front knee.



Modification 2: Perform pose seated in a chair if pain, mobility restriction, or balance impairment prevent successful standing pose. Also, try turning thumbs up or palms up with shoulder impingement.

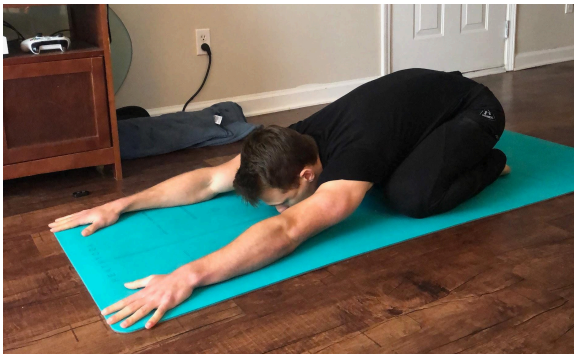
6. **Seated easy pose** (see above)

Others

1. **Child's pose**

Intent: Rest, relaxation, chest/shoulder opening, low back stretch, spine elongation.

Cues: From hands and knees, push back towards heels with knees spread wide, hands pressing forward on mat. Or for puppy, keep hips right above knees and walk hands forward, gaze forward or let forehead rest on mat. Keep spine long and breathe here.



Modification 1:

Puppy pose to keep spine elongated (e.g. if spinal flexion is contraindicated) and to reduce knee compression. Try with extra padding under knees!

2. Low lunge

Intent: Hip mobility, glute/quad strengthening, foot/ankle ROM, minimizing KAM, transition.

Cues: Keep weight even through both sides of front foot. Keep gaze forward, spine long, and chest pointing forward by using blocks under the hands. Keep back leg very active, back of knee pressing up to the ceiling, grounding through the big toe.



Modification 1: Use blocks under hands to maintain a long spine and to offload the knee joints.

3. High lunge

Intent: Power pose, glute/quad strengthening, back hip flexor stretch, ankle mobility, minimizing KAM, transition.

Cues: Same cues as low lunge, except trunk is now vertical. Tuck tailbone slightly under you, grow upwards from tailbone to crown of head. Keep glute of back leg very active, place hand here to ensure muscle is “on”.



Modification 1: Use a support such as a chair on the opposite side of the affected knee to offload the knee joint. Vary the amount of front knee flexion and the distance between the two feet to modify further.

4. Single Knee to Chest

Intent: Increase hip and knee flexion, abdominal engagement, parasympathetic activation, improve digestion.

Cues: Laying on back, extend left leg very long with foot flexed, heel pressing down. Bring right knee towards chest, grabbing the back of the thigh, and pulling leg towards outside of rib cage. Breathe here. Alternatively, interlock fingers around shin to further increase knee bending only if this is comfortable.



Modification 1: Use strap behind thigh if straining of upper body is evident. Can also keep opposite knee bent with foot on ground if hip flexors are tight.

5. Reverse Plank/Reverse Table Top

Intent: Strengthening of hamstrings, glutes, spinal extensors, upper back, improved posture.

Cues: From a long sitting position, press through feet and hands to lift hips towards ceiling. Maintain gaze forward, or let head tilt back only if this is comfortable.



Modification 1: Reverse table top starting with bent knees, knees over ankles. This will be easier and isolate glutes more than hamstrings.

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Link to Google Drive of Prezi video:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1brjPfpwnKlxG7JANuczt2S5l92shdJQx/view?usp=sharing>

Link to YouTube of Prezi video:

<https://youtu.be/rSBr-Rxy9p0>

Link to Prezi presentation:

<https://prezi.com/view/koluRigIil6Zh7uWWttB/>

Link to brochure:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAD3pkza5gg/mfHkWuRiHITjt8UFDs58tQ/view?utm_content=DAD3pkza5gg&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=sharebutton

Link to yoga practice:

<https://youtu.be/ujTIP0J7Yow>

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