

SHOULDER STAND

What do I need?



1. Go to Home Depot and buy a piece of [insulation foam](#) -- should be ~ \$15.
2. While in the store, score the foam with a scissor or knife into three square pieces (approx. 24" x 24").
3. Gently break the foam where it is scored, making sure you have your duct tape ready to go. Once each piece is split, place duct tape around all four sides of every piece. Be sure to do this while you are still in the store. **If you skip this step, you will have little tiny insulation balls all over your car.**
3. If your shoulders are extra tight, get a [yoga strap](#).
4. Be sure to use a good quality, non-slip yoga blanket. ([These](#) are not yoga blankets. [These](#) are.)

The foam is sturdy and will last forever (mine is still going strong after 15 years).

Congratulations. You now are ready to fully experience a full-on power shoulder stand!

How do I do it?

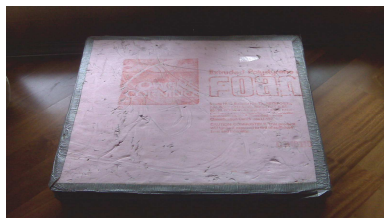


Every yoga class I've ever taken executes shoulder stand the [same way](#), with your cervical vertebrae crushing into the floor.

Once you do it the right way, you will never go back. My teacher Loretta Pharo, RN, recognizes the importance of fully releasing the [scapula's](#) down the back so that the neck can be free, as well as fully releasing the [trapezius](#) and [deltoid](#) muscles, which can only be done with the support of the insulation foam.

Here's how:

1. Place two pieces of [insulation foam](#) flat on the floor but up against a flat wall (you can get this at Home Depot... follow these simple instructions).



2. Fold a yoga blanket on top of the foam so that it is the same size, making sure the folded edge is on the outer edge where your shoulders will go. The purpose of the blanket is for a slight cushion.



3. If your shoulders are super tight, you will need a yoga strap. Before you go up, check the size of the strap by sliding it just below your elbows, making sure the buckle is not on your skin. Adjust it so that it is shoulder-width apart. Slide it off and place it within reach of your foam.



3. Lay with your back flat on the foam, gently placing the back of your head on the floor taking care that the cervical vertebrae in your neck are not pushing into the edge of the foam.



5. Bend your knees and place your feet on the wall. If you are going to use a strap, carefully reach around to grab it, slide it back onto your forearms so that it is where the purple line is in the picture below. Your arms should be parallel.



Grab the outer edge of the foam from the back with your hands so that you can feel your scapulas sliding down the back, freeing your neck and the trapezius muscles around the neck.

While in the inversion take deep abdominal breaths, making sure to push the belly out when you inhale, hold, and pull the belly in towards the inside of the spine when you exhale. This is very important, as it massages the 23 feet of intestines and also releases the diverticuli in the gut where toxic pockets can form.

7. After you have done your abdominal breathing (I do one breath in & out for each year I have been on the planet, you may want to work up to this depending on how old you are), slide the strap off and either go up:



...or bend into halasana for a deeper stretch (and glimpse into your heart),



...and when you're ready to come down, roll the spine onto the foam and cross the legs against the wall:



You can twist to either side if you want an extra stretch, and then slowly roll off of the foam to one side and rest before getting up.

When I was pregnant, I did inversions through my eighth month, which I HIGHLY recommend. No sciatica, and at 45 years old! Here I am at four months pregnant in shoulder stand:



Find what's right for you. Email me if you have any questions, and good luck!