

Cyclist's Lunge

Joëlle Sleebos really hopes that you enjoyed her introduction to yoga in the June/July issue of Full Sus and that you've been doing the Sun Salutation series every day. This time though she's got something a little more cycling specific for you...

Teaching at The Concept Studio – an altitude cycling, functional training and yoga facility in Sea Point – I work with cyclists on a daily basis. So, I'm all too aware that riding your bike can lead to uncomfortable tightness in key areas of your body.

Peddalling long hours astride a saddle with your neck up shortens the spine and causes tightness in the lower back, sacrum, and hips. The neck and jaw can lock up, too. Good posture and stretching will help diminish these after-effects.

But first, look at your posture in the saddle. Focus on lengthening your spine, be conscious of maintaining broad shoulders while riding and lift your navel to engage your lower abdomen too. This last tip will strengthen your core and in turn will protect your lower back.

Secondly: do yoga! There are so many benefits of practicing yoga that I do not even know where to start... Initially you will probably only be aware of the physical benefits: an improvement of your flexibility, stronger muscles, a better posture, a decrease or even disappearance of injuries etc etc...

But the magic about yoga for me is that it can also change your mind, influence your nervous system,

and improve your focus and ability to concentrate. If that has not convinced you yet; what about a deeper sleep and better sex-life!

Simple Yoga Poses for Cyclists

The following series of poses are beneficial to anyone, but focuses specifically on those areas cyclist need to stretch and strengthen. The poses will help you:

- ◆ open your hips.
- ◆ stretch your thighs, hip flexors, hamstrings and groin.
- ◆ open your chest.
- ◆ strengthen and stretch your spine.

Remember the breath is highly important in yoga. Breathing leads the body from pose to pose. Try to slow down your breath – around 4 counts/seconds to inhale and 4 counts/seconds to exhale.

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Before starting the next series of yoga poses, please warm-up with

Suryanamaskara A series – as described in the June/July issue of Full Sus, or scan this QR code to view it online.



Inhale: Reach arms up



Exhale: Bend your body forward (Easier: With bent knees. Harder: Legs extended)



Inhale: Look forward, lift chest halfway up, with a straight spine (Easier: Hands on shins. Harder: Hands on the mat)



Exhale: Step your left leg back and place left knee on the mat (Easier: Hands on hips. Harder: Hands on the mat)
Hold Runner's Lunge Position
Breathe deeply and slowly 3-5 times



Inhale: Lift your arms up
Hold Crescent Moon
Breathe deeply and slowly 3-5 times



Exhale: Hands down and move hips straight back, flex front foot until you feel your hamstrings stretch (Easier: Hands on hips. Harder: Hands on the mat).
Hold Half-Split
Breathe deeply and slowly 3-5 times



Inhale: Lift your arms up



Exhale: Step your left leg back and place left knee on the mat (Easier: Hands on hips. Harder: Hands on the mat)



Inhale: Look forward, step forward with left leg, lift chest halfway up with a straight spine

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Exhale: Bend your body forward (Easier: Hands on shins. Harder: Hands on the mat)



Inhale: Reach arms up/Stand-up

Exhale: Samasthithi/Relax
Now repeat with the right leg

More Online
Find alternative options and more yoga poses on the Full Sus website.

Some of us just aren't that flexible, or some days we're more flexible than others, so there are various levels of most poses achieved online.

Find out more at:
www.fullsus.co.za/category/yoga/



Joëlle Sleebos has 16 years of experience in the fitness industry as a group fitness instructor and became a personal trainer in 2012. She's been teaching yoga since 2010, when it also

became her main form of exercise. Follow Joëlle on Twitter at @JoelleSleebos or on Facebook: Joelle Sleebos – Getting Personal.