

Toe-ga

Yoga for the Toes!

1. Standing upright, PRESS your big toes into the floor and attempt to LIFT the rest of your toes (toes 2-5). Hold for 10-20 seconds.



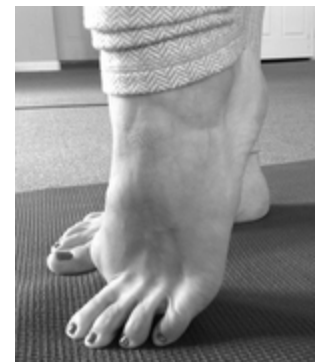
2. Standing upright, PRESS toes 2-5 into the floor and attempt to LIFT your big toes. Hold for 10-20 sec.



3. Standing on one foot, curl all the toes of your other foot under, heel up, and hold for 10-20 seconds. Repeat on the other foot.



4. Standing on one foot, curl the big toe of your other foot under while rest of toes stay forward facing. Keep your heel up. Hold for 10-20 seconds. Repeat on the other foot.



5. Standing on one foot, curl the 4 smaller toes under while your big toe stays forward facing. Keep your heel up. Hold for 10-20 seconds. Repeat on the other foot.



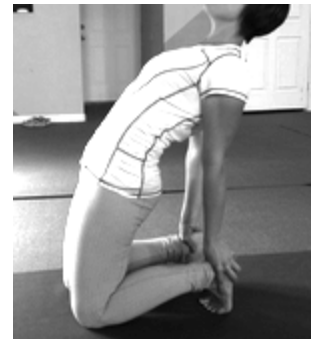
6. From a standing position squat down and rest the tops of your feet on the floor and sit back on your heels. You will feel a stretch down the front of your shins and quite possibly in the front of your thighs.



7. While keeping your knees on the floor come up on your toes. Heels should be straight up and your toes curled under you on the floor. Sit back on your heels and hold 10-20 seconds. You should be feeling this stretch mainly in the arches of your feet.



8. Keeping your knees on the floor and your toes tucked under, place your hands on your heels and lift your hips toward the ceiling arching your back. This stretch is similar to the "camel" in Yoga. Hold for 10-20 seconds.



9. Return to the kneeling position. Rock back bringing your knees off the floor and coming up to balance on your toes. Take your knees back to the floor and rock back and forth 4-5 times balancing on your toes for several seconds each time. You will begin to feel your toes gripping the floor to help you balance.



10. The most basic and beneficial intrinsic and extrinsic muscle strengthening exercise for the feet and lower legs up to your core is called "short foot". Push your big toe into the floor and evenly distribute your weight under your big toe and heel. Do this on both feet while standing and on each foot separately while balancing.



You will notice the muscles in the arch of your foot as they activate and lift the arch. Engage your core by bracing, as if you are getting ready to protect yourself from a punch in the stomach.

Practice standing like this whenever it comes to mind. This is the beginning of teaching your body movement from the ground up.



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