

Cultivating Earth Element Within **Five Element Yoga®**

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It's great to do these postures outdoors in the crisp fresh air where you can feel the Earth supporting you.



1. Goddess Deviasana Pose "I am strong, rooted and present."

Bring your feet wide apart. Turn your feet out 45°. With hands on hips begin bending and straightening your knees. Lunge five times with a pulse -- pulsing with your breath. Feel the strength in your legs. Now sink into the pose with knees bent out to the sides. Stay here. Relax and soften.

Press your knees back and make sure knees are over ankles, not toes. Reach tailbone straight down. Inhale your arms all the way up overhead to touch, then bend elbows and bring them down into cactus arms, with elbows the same height as shoulders.

Now release the work of the thighs and buttocks. Simply trust in the structure of your bones to hold you now. Soften thighs more. Sustain the pose, but relax and trust your bones to hold you. Let the Earth hold you. Feel your foundation. Allow the mind to be filled with the qualities of the Goddess - natural strength with easy openness. **Modification:** Hands on hips.

Deepen your breath. If it becomes too intense straighten and lunge legs again. As you breathe, envision energy flowing from the Earth's core all the way up through to your feet and legs. Inhale earth energy in. See earth energy as color -- terra cotta red, brown, black -- in the way that you sense it. Inhale Earth color & energy up through legs to root chakra (between sitting bones). Exhale soften back down trusting the earth. Continue to breathe in this way. Earth energy in, exhale soften downward. Slowly release the pose and feel the energy at the core of your being radiating to every cell. Feel the bliss of the Goddess within.

Benefits: Grounding and opening the heart and breath. Strengthens stability in leg, ankles and knees. Can improve circulation to legs and abdominal organs. May relieve varicose veins. Builds personal power and confidence. An opportunity to find balance between will and surrender. Embodiment.



2. Tadasana Mountain Pose "I am Here. I am Here."

Bring your feet hip distance apart and parallel like standing on train tracks. Anchor your feet into the earth. Softly bend your knees to feel the energy flowing through. Reach tail down. Activate the legs by hugging muscles into the bones. Lift up through crown. Lengthen body from earth to sky.

Deepen your breath. Inhale arms out to the sides and all the way up overhead in a big "V". Drop your shoulders back into your body. Feel your legs and your foundation. Feel embodied. Feel every cell, every part of your being. This is Earth element: feel your focus, stability, and safety. **Modifications:** Arms can be bent 90° in Goddess arms, hands can be on the hips, or arms alongside the body.

Deepen your breath. As you exhale feel deep roots growing down into the earth. Each exhalation goes down into your roots. Inhale and like a mountain reaching to the sun. Inhale lift. Exhale soften and deepen into the earth. Envision the mountain, yourself as the mountain, nourished by the earth. Feel how secure and stable your body feels. Feel how earth supports you every moment.

Supported by the stability of your bones and body, relax deeply into your center, tuning into the splendor of your True Self. When you are ready, exhale and release your arms slowly down, feel every sensation as you go. Shake your body loose and take a moment to feel.

Benefits: Alignment of spine, head, and entire skeleton. Improves overall posture and strength. Supports health in the joints. Expands breath in intercostals. Increases Earth Element qualities: grounding, stability, strength, focus, concentration, abundance, feeling embodied, and fearless.



3. Vrksasana Tree Pose "Rooted deeply in my True Self, I bloom outward into the world."

Begin in Mountain pose. Pour your weight over to your right leg and hug the muscles into the leg bones. Envision roots growing from your right foot deep into the Earth's core. Bend your left knee out to the side and when you find your balance, slide your foot along your leg up to your calf or thigh but not on the knee joint. Press your left knee back and sink into right leg.

Bring hands to prayer pose in front of heart and inhale lift them up overhead into a big "V". Soften shoulders back down into the body. Find a focal point for your eyes to help you balance. **Modifications:** Elbows bent 90° Goddess arms, or place hands on hips. Lean on a tree or wall for added stability.

Inhale grow tall like the tree. Exhale trust in the support of the Earth, feeling your strong foundation. Take a few more breaths until you soften into your tree without losing stability or length.

Release hands to prayer pose. Release left foot. Feel reverence for your body, the tree of life. Repeat on the other side.

Benefits: Empowering! Strengthens ankles, legs, and core. Opens hips. Creates sense of trust, peace and balance. Fosters connection with tree of life.

Yoga Models: Dale Semeniuk Jennifer's Mom, and Jennifer Reis.

These poses are guided on *Five Element Yoga: Rejuvenation and Relaxation CD or MP3 with Jennifer Reis*



4. Murti physical-body mudra

"The balance of steadiness and ease allows me to rest in complete harmony."

Murti Mudra helps you to find steadiness and comfort within your physical body, strengthening your 'container' so that thoughts and feelings have a ground within which to settle. Improves alignment of the spine, releases stress, lowers blood pressure, lengthens exhale, and supports treatment of anxiety.

Five Element Yoga is a vibrant and colorful flowing practice created by Jennifer Reis. She draws from Eastern traditions of Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese Medicine as well as Integrative Yoga Therapy and Kripalu Yoga. The result of practice both nourishes and balances your inner earth, water, fire, air, and ether elements to cultivate harmony and increase health. **Five Element Yoga** invites you to celebrate your body with yoga postures, balance your energy with breath and mudras, detoxify with self-massage, and find deep rest and inner peace with Divine Sleep Yoga Nidra. For more information please visit www.JenniferReisYoga.com.

Join Jennifer for retreats:

Tuscany in July

Kripalu Center

Martha's Vineyard and more!

Mudras presented here are modified from the book *Mudras for Healing and Transformation* by Joseph and Lilian LePage, *Integrative Yoga Therapy*. Always consult your physician before beginning any exercise or weight-loss program. The general information displayed here is not intended to substitute for or replace your healthcare professional.

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