

SALUTE YOUR BURPEE AND PREVENT INJURY

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In our sport, we train our muscles to move quickly and dynamically. Taking time to understand alignment within our gymnastics movements will not only help you be efficient but will also help you prevent injury.

Burpees are one of the areas where we see injuries occur due to the misalignment of the pelvis when the feet do not land at the same time, when bellies flop to the ground and put pressure on the lumbar spine—the list goes on. In yoga, the sequence of poses called a Sun Salutation A (Sun A) has very similar dynamics to a burpee. The sequence can help increase the efficiency of your burpee by creating muscle memory and increasing overall body awareness for gymnastics movements.

THE SUN SALUTATION A SEQUENCE



1. Start standing with your arms overhead.



2. Fold down to the ground.



3a. Step back into a high plank pose, or



3b. Jump back to into a low push-up.



4. Press up to upward facing dog pose.



5. Press back to downward facing dog.



6. Jump or step forward.



7. End the sequence standing with arms at your side.

On jumping or stepping back and forward (Steps 3 and 6)

Jumping back and forward in Sun A can help build strength for jumping to a squat in burpees. The focus on jumping back comes from pressing into the hands, engaging the core (drawing the navel up to the spine) and floating the legs behind you to land at the same time (similar to handstand).

If you are new, pregnant, or recently injured, it is okay to step back into your push up! In fact, stepping the foot back and forward into a lunge creates a stretch into the hip flexors.

Depending on your level of flexibility you may take one step or multiple strides to get your foot in-between your hands. This is a good starting place to prevent injury while you get into shape or recovering.

Lowering from high plank to low plank (Step 3)

The transition from high plank to low plank (*chaturanga dandasana*) trains our body to keep our shoulder girdle active and in alignment. Whether you're performing push-ups, overhead squats or snatches, you always want to maintain shoulder stability. The four muscles around the scapula should be trained to consistently pull the scapula down and slightly forward to help increase range in your shoulder and transfer any load from the joint to our core muscles.

To train these muscles in Sun A, maintain shoulder stability by hugging the elbows into the ribcage and lowering to 90 degrees. This will provide a controlled descent. Newbies can take knees on the ground while building strength. Practicing this slower transition will train the shoulder girdle to maintain this healthy, strong position when performing your burpees at a faster pace and prevent injury.

Like burpees, Sun Salutation A builds heat in the body creating suppleness. Add this flow to your routine to keep your muscles pliable with both static and active stretching.