

FLOW 16 OF 18 | ADVANCED

Deep Heart

Backbending with strength and tenderness



inhale - exhale

CLASS MAP

A complete advanced practice progressing toward Wheel Pose with optional forearm preparation. Every peak is optional; the quality of attention is the real practice.

INTENTION

I support openness with strength.

45-MINUTE ARC

ARRIVE	5 min
MOBILISE	7 min
STRENGTH	10 min
BACKBEND ARC	10 min
NEUTRALISE	8 min
REST	5 min

PROPS AND SETUP

Mat, two blocks, strap and wall.

ACCOMPANYING MUSIC

Open the matching private Spotify playlist as students settle. Let the final track continue beneath Savasana.

OPEN PLAYLIST IN SPOTIFY

MOVEMENT SEQUENCE**Arrive | 5 min**

- Constructive rest
- Breath into side ribs and back ribs

Mobilise | 7 min

- Cat-Cow and thoracic rotation
- Puppy Pose with blocks
- Low Cobra

TEACHING RHYTHM

Demonstrate complex transitions before adding pace. Cue one action at a time, repeat both sides, and leave enough silence for practitioners to sense their own response.

MOVEMENT SEQUENCE**Strength | 10 min**

- Locust variations
- Low Lunge quad stretch
- Camel preparation

Backbend arc | 10 min

- Bridge twice
- Wheel preparation or full Wheel
- Optional wall-supported forearm pathway

TEACHING RHYTHM

Demonstrate complex transitions before adding pace. Cue one action at a time, repeat both sides, and leave enough silence for practitioners to sense their own response.

MOVEMENT SEQUENCE**Neutralise | 8 min**

- Knees-to-chest
- Supine twist
- Seated forward fold without forcing

Rest | 5 min

- Savasana with knees supported

TEACHING RHYTHM

Demonstrate complex transitions before adding pace. Cue one action at a time, repeat both sides, and leave enough silence for practitioners to sense their own response.

PEAK PATHWAY

Wheel Pose with optional forearm preparation.

SAFETY AND ALTERNATIVES

Requires pain-free shoulders and backbending experience. Avoid forcing the lumbar spine or neck. Choose Bridge, supported Bridge or Camel if Wheel changes the breath or creates compression.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

Builds posterior-chain and shoulder strength, expands active range and develops the ability to stay calm in intense sensation.

PROGRESSIVE-PRACTICE CHECKLIST

- Breath remains steady and available.
- Joints feel supported rather than compressed.
- You can leave the pose calmly at any time.
- An easier variation is treated as a complete practice.
- Pain, dizziness, numbness or visual disturbance means stop.

A SHORT HISTORY

Urdhva Dhanurasana is often called Upward Bow or Wheel. Deep backbends became prominent in modern asana lineages and should be understood as specialised skills rather than essential spiritual achievements.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

The heart opens safely when the whole body participates. Tenderness without support becomes strain.

CLOSING PRACTICE

Sit for three natural breaths. Notice what changed without judging it. Offer the benefit of practice beyond yourself through one patient, generous action.

TEACHER NOTE

Advanced shapes are specialised skills, not proof of spiritual attainment. Adapt for the person in front of you and refer to qualified medical or therapeutic support when appropriate.