



# Dance Well

## Resource book for participants



# Welcome

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We are delighted to have welcomed you to one of Akademi's Dance Well workshops and hope you enjoyed learning from one of the many South Asian Dance Styles that include Kathak (KAT-THAK), Bharatanatyam (BARA-TA-NAT-YAM), Bollywood, Odissi (ODD-IS-EE) and Kuchipudi (KOOCH-I-POOD-EE).

This booklet is designed to help you continue to enjoy South Asian dance at home, with family and friends. In it you will find some of the mudras (hand gestures) you have learned during workshops and a few exercises.

Always ensure you warm up before exercising by gently moving your joints and raising your heart rate slightly.

We hope you enjoy it and look forward to seeing you at another workshop soon!



# Learning the mudras (hand gestures)

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Mudras (MOOD-RAAs) are very useful for exercising the joints of the fingers and wrists, especially if you have arthritis in any of these joints. You can also use the mudras to help tell a story about your holiday, your garden and more.

If you find it difficult to reach your fingertips together you can use a soft ball in between to help.

## **Garuda “eagle”**

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Garuda (GAA-RU-DA) can be used to represent a bird. Gently move the hands to show the bird flapping its wings as it flies.



### **Kataka-Mukha “link in a chain”**

Kataka-Mukha (KAT-AR-KA-MOO-KA) can be used to represent picking a flower, putting on a necklace or earrings.



### **Ala-Padma “fully opened lotus”**

Alapadma (ALLA-PAD-MA) can be used to represent a blooming flower. You can also hold both hands together with the insides of the wrists touching to create a larger flower.



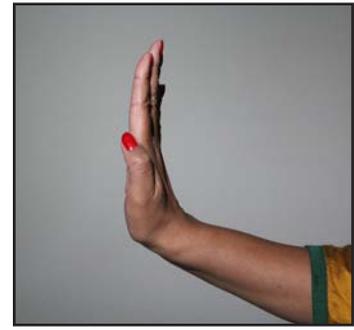
## **Hamsasya “swan’s face”**

Hamsasya (HAM-SAS-YA) can be used to demonstrate drops of water, moonlight or drawing a picture (as if you are holding a pen).



## **Pataka “flag hand”**

Pataka (PAT-AR-KA) can be used to represent the sea, a book, a stop sign or giving.



## **Bhramara “bee”**

Bhramara (BRAMA-RA) can be used to represent a male bee.



## **Matsya “fish”**

Matsya (MAT-SYA) can be used to represent a fish.



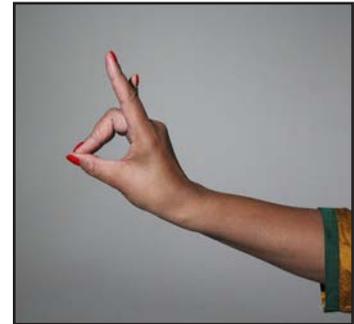
## **Tripataka “three parts of the flag”**

Tripataka (TREE-PAT-AA-KAH) can be used to demonstrate a tree or plant growing, moving the hands in an upward motion.



## **Simhamukha “lion face”**

Simhamukha (SIM-HA-MOO-KAH) can be used to represent a lion, deer or rabbit.



# Exercising the face

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Exercising facial muscles is not only good for loosening the tension in the face, but also in the neck and shoulders.

The face has more than 40 muscles that need to be taken care of.  
**Exercising our eyes is also very important.**

In the exercise below, Somita is keeping her eyes wide open and rotating her eyeballs clockwise and anticlockwise.



# Bols: Kathak Tatkaar beats

Bols are used to keep the beat of a particular rhythm and therefore the rhythm of the dance. Below is the Kathak Tatkaar (16 beat rhythm) that you may have come across during your workshops.

This is often performed with walks or steps on the spot, beginning with the right foot.

<b>Ta</b>	<b>Thei</b>	<b>Thei</b>	<b>Tat</b>
(TAR)	(TAY)	(TAY)	(TAT)
Right	Left	Right	Left

<b>Aa</b>	<b>Thei</b>	<b>Thei</b>	<b>Tat</b>
(AH)	(TAY)	(TAY)	(TAT)
Left	Right	Left	Right

<b>Ta</b>	<b>Thei</b>	<b>Thei</b>	<b>Tat</b>
(TAR)	(TAY)	(TAY)	(TAT)
Right	Left	Right	Left

<b>Aa</b>	<b>Thei</b>	<b>Thei</b>	<b>Tat</b>
(AH)	(TAY)	(TAY)	(TAT)
Left	Right	Left	Right



# Bharatanatyam sequence

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This is a dance sequence from the Bharatanatyam dance style.

In this sequence legs are parallel and feet are together. Feet can also be hip-width apart for better balance and control of the movements.

You can also do this seated if you prefer, or just perform the arm movements on their own. Only raise the arms as high as you feel comfortable.

For this sequence we are using the Kataka-Mukha (bracelet) and Ala-Padma (lotus flower) mudras





# Stretches

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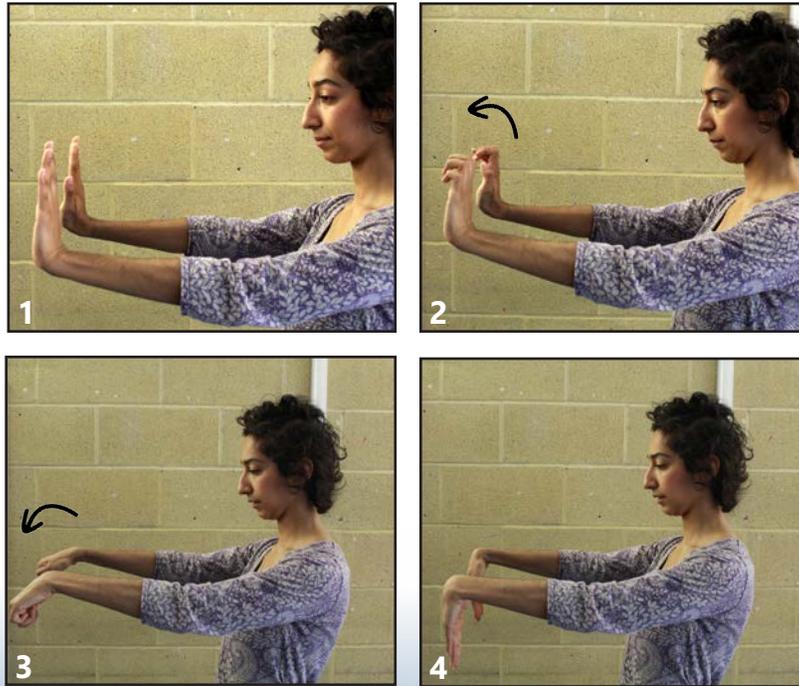
It is a good idea to make sure you include some stretches in your weekly routine to keep your limbs flexible and mobile.

Here are a few gentle stretches you can try at home. Try to always do these stretches after some gentle exercise when your muscles are warm.



Reach your arm out in front of you then gently move it across your body. Softly hold in place with your other hand, being careful not to hold onto the elbow joint. Repeat on the other side.

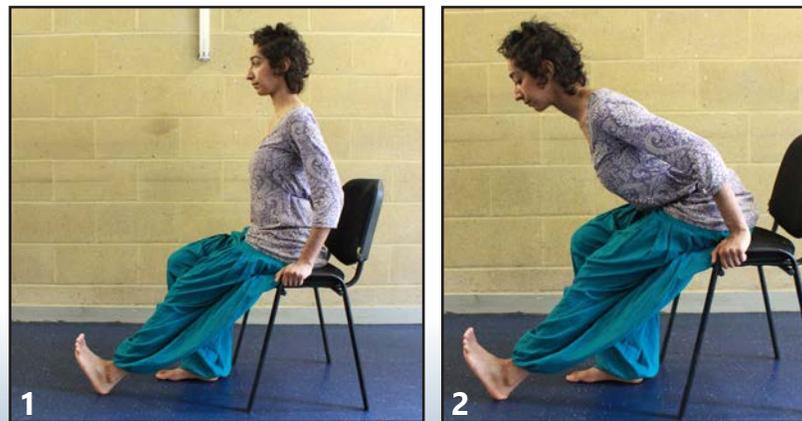
This is a good exercise to stretch the wrists and fingers. Starting with the hands flexed, curl your fingers inwards, ending with your fingers pointing towards the floor. Repeat in reverse.



It is also important to stretch the lower body, particularly the hamstrings in the back of the legs. You can do this sitting in a chair with one leg stretched out in front, and the other planted firmly on the floor.

Holding on to both sides of the chair tilt your torso forwards until you feel a gentle stretch.

Be careful to only tilt forward as far as you feel comfortable and where you feel secure in your balance.



# Ghungroos and dandiya sticks

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Ghungroos or ankle bells can be a nice addition to your movement.

You can purchase ghungroos online, some come with beautiful velvet cushioning.



Dandiya sticks are available online or at Indian shops for less than £1 per pair.

They are available as painted wood, decorated with fabrics or as metal sticks embellished with coloured stones.



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