



## **Boosting Our Bandhas**

*Explore the sensation of creating internal strength while maintaining external softness. We are only as strong as we are flexible, boosting our bandhas while at the same time softening into our poses creates a physical balance to the body and mind that is difficult to find anywhere else.*

### **Three Primary Bandhas/Locks**

#### **Mula Bandha/Root Lock**

The root as in the base of our spine refers to the exact location and sensation of drawing up our pelvic floor muscles. In fitness, we understand the importance of these muscles to fully integrate our core and provide stability for our low back.

#### **Uddiyana Bandha or Belly Lock**

Is how both the belly draws in towards the spine while the spine pulls towards the belly. Creating a sandwich effect to fully support the spine through all movements. Once again in fitness, an alignment cue we use for core strength and support.

#### **Jalandhara Bandha or Throat Lock**

This is the light contraction of the muscles of the neck and throat as a means to align our cervical spine. As we find ourselves often holding positions that defy gravity, ensuring that our head and neck are supported is important to ensure safety for the delicate muscles of our neck.



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## **Two Secondary Bandhas/Locks**

### **Pada Bandha/Foot Lock**

The foundation for every standing pose starts in our feet. We want to feel all 4 corners of our feet: base of big toe, baby toe, inside and outside of our heel connected firmly to the mat. The arches of our feet lift giving the sensation of a suction cup, pressing down to pull more energy up.

### **Hasta Bandha/Hand Lock**

Similarly, for all poses where our hands are on the floor (plank, downward dog, all 4s) we stretch out our fingers and press down into our finger pads. We feel the full outline of our hand pressing down and then countering this strength by drawing up through the centre webbing of our palm. This also helps to distribute weight into our hand rather than being locked in our wrist.

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### FURTHER READING:

- **Key Muscles of Hatha Yoga** by Ray Long
- **Anatomy + Asana** by Susi Hatley Aldous
- **Yoga Anatomy** by Leslie Kaminoff

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