

Blanket folding options for Pranayama

Beginner's set up:

Blanket is folded wide enough to support the sides of your body. Take a firm blanket and fold it in half, lengthwise. Another blanket or towel and fold it to make a pillow.

You may prefer a little more height to lift the chest away from the abdomen. Use two blankets and see if the added lift enhances the lift of the chest. If it irritates the back in any way then one blanket is better. When you lie down, support the entire neck on the pillow. The pillow should be high enough to lift the forehead slightly higher than the chin, but keep the throat long and free.



Slightly narrower and higher lift:

One blanket tri-folded with a thin blanket on top. Accordion fold the tri-fold to ensure that the sides of the blanket are even. Any variation of this is acceptable. You may place the second blanket a few inches away from the end of the first blanket so that, when you lie down, your back ribs are slightly higher than your abdomen. This is a step ladder set-up. Each set-up has its benefits. Try different ones until you find what works best for you. A higher lift is not always better, it may, in fact, be too aggressive. So observe the effect on your breath and on your nervous system.

Narrow set-up: Accordion fold a blanket four times, or so that it is narrow and high. This enables the shoulder blades to release to the sides. In this photo, an additional blanket is added but it is not necessary. If you find that the height creates any tension around our neck or throat, then take some support for the arms, as is pictured here.

It is worth it to experiment from week to week to see what works best for you. The end effect should be that the abdomen releases away from the chest and the arms release away from the chest.

Always end your practice with Savasana.

