

## TERMS AND ACTIONS

### *Groin depth*

The groin is the crescent-shaped crease between the thigh and hip. If the femur is towards the quadriceps, the groin will feel tight and full. The natural placement for the femur is toward the hamstring. This placement creates depth to the crease of the groin.

### *Groin length*

Once the groin depth has been established, length can be created between the pelvic rim and the thigh without disturbing the depth of the groin.

### *Femur grounding*

Bringing the head of the femur into the center of the back of the hip socket.

### *Extension*

In asana terms, extension can be used generically; it can be used to describe the lengthening of any body part. When referring to the spine, extension means that the front of the spine is longer than the back of the spine.

### *Flexion*

More generically, flexion can be used to refer to any muscular contraction. When referring to the spine, flexion means that the back of the spine is longer than the front of the spine.

### *Internal rotation*

Referencing from the front body, internal rotation of the legs is when the outer leg rotates towards the inner leg. Often, in asana terms, this term is also used to refer to the neutral position of the legs.

### *External rotation*

1. Using the front of the body as a reference, external rotation of the legs is when the inner leg rotates towards the outer leg.
2. Using the front of the body as a reference, external rotation of the shoulder is when the inner arm rotates towards the outer arm. If the arms are extended over the head,



the action of the arms is reversed, though the action in the shoulder joint is the same. This seeming reversal of the action is only perceptual, caused by the change in arm position.

#### *Lordosis*

This is the natural concavity of the lumbar and cervical spine. If the concavity is greater than normal, the term “hyper” is used as a prefix. If the concavity is less than normal, the term “hypo” is used as a prefix.

#### *Kyphosis*

This is the natural convex state of the thoracic and sacral areas of the spine. If the convexity is greater than normal, the prefix “hyper” is used. If the convexity is less than normal, the prefix “hypo” is used.

#### *Scolliosis*

This is a lateral curvature of the spine. It is an anomaly of the spine of which there are many variations.

#### *Muscle tone*

Good muscle tone is a muscle’s ability to hold a partly contracted state for a given period of time and then relax again. If a muscle cannot fully relax, it is said to be hypertonic. If a muscle cannot flex effectively, it is said to be hypotonic. It is possible for a muscle to have some element of both hyper and hypo tone.

#### *Action and resistance*

In order to control any action, some form of resistance is needed. Begin to observe throughout your asana practice where the resistance comes from to stabilize each action.

#### *Action*

This term implies an isometric movement. This means that there is no overt movement of any part of the body, but there is still activity in the musculature.

#### *Movement*

This term implies that some part of the body is actually changing its position.