

# Cobra

sanskrit: Bhujangasana

✦ WRITTEN BY PAGE FREER ✦ PHOTO BY BRIAN FREER

## Buttocks

Firms and engages the glutes and surrounding muscles.

## Back

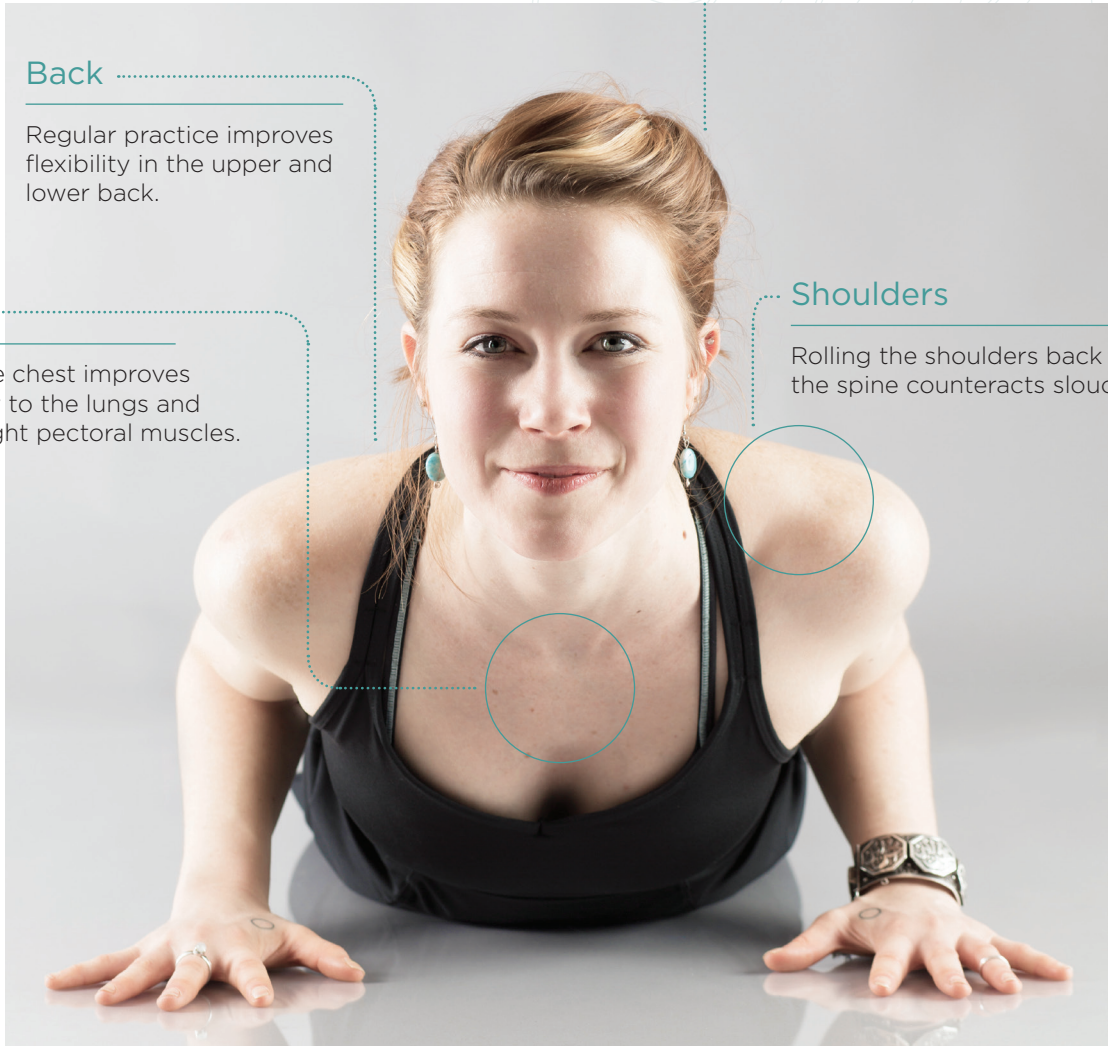
Regular practice improves flexibility in the upper and lower back.

## Chest

Opening the chest improves oxygen flow to the lungs and stretches tight pectoral muscles.

## Shoulders

Rolling the shoulders back and down the spine counteracts slouching.



## ready?

Begin on your stomach with your chin or forehead on the mat. Place your hands directly under your shoulders. Point your toes with legs and feet close together. Press the tops of your feet into the floor. As you inhale, lift your torso off the mat using your upper back muscles—squeezing the space between your shoulder blades—to lift your chest off the mat. There should be no pressure in the hands. Your neck should stay in a neutral position in line with your spine. Slowly lift your gaze and rise a little higher, breathing as you hold the pose for 15 to 30 seconds. Exhale and slowly lower down to the mat, reversing the steps.