



Learning the handstand

Four steps, in order. Each one prepares the next.

1 Prepare your wrists

2 Hold the positions that prepare you

3 The wall, to build the shape

4 Finding the balance

10 times

as a drill

Before anything else

no exceptions

Bailing out without getting hurt

This is the first thing to learn, before you even go up. Until you know how to bail, you hold back instead of going for the balance, and fear blocks everything else. It takes one session to learn and lasts a lifetime.

- 1 When you go too far, don't fight it. Turn your shoulders to the side you choose, let go with that hand and step down. You land on your feet, sideways.
- 2 Drill that half turn on its own, without chasing the balance: walk up the wall, deliberately let yourself fall, and bail. Ten times, on both sides.
- 3 Never try to save it by bending your arms. That is how people land on their head, and it is the only real injury in this sport.
- 4 A flat, clear surface, and a metre of space all around. No soft mat: it makes the wrists roll.

The most costly mistake

Learning to go up before learning to come down. The body refuses to commit until it knows how this ends, and you spend weeks half-balancing.

When to move on

When the half turn happens on its own, on both sides, without thinking. Only then should you chase the balance for real.



The shoulders turn, one hand lets go, the feet land: the other hand stays on the floor.

1

2 minutes

per session

Before every session

no exceptions

Prepare your wrists

This is the step everyone skips, and it is the one that stops people after three weeks. Your wrists are about to carry your whole body at an angle they have never worked in. They need to get there slowly.

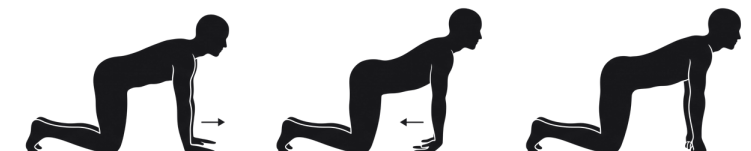
- 1 On all fours, palms flat under your shoulders, shift your chest forward to push the weight into your fingers. Come back. Twenty slow rounds.
- 2 Still on all fours, turn your hands so the fingers point at your knees. Lean back very slightly. Hold for thirty seconds, without forcing it.
- 3 Fists on the floor, press down on the back of your hands. Ten breaths.
- 4 Do this set before every session. Two minutes, never skipped.

The most costly mistake

Skipping this step. You can't see it, it doesn't tire you out, and that is exactly why people skip it. Then the wrists give out three weeks later, and everything stops.

When to move on

You never leave this one behind. It stays your warm-up for every session, even the day you hold a full minute upside down.



The weight moves onto the fingers, then comes back.

Hold the positions that prepare you

A handstand needs three things before the balance itself: shoulders that open, a body that stays straight without shaking, and a head that accepts being upside down. These four positions are held on the ground, with no risk of falling, and this is where you save the most time. Give them two to three weeks before moving to the wall.

- 1 The plank, on your hands or forearms, body in one piece from heels to shoulders. Thirty seconds, three times. This is the bracing that will later stop you arching into a banana.
- 2 Downward dog: hands and feet on the floor, hips up, ears between your arms. Ten slow breaths. It opens your shoulders, and they need it.
- 3 Feet on a wall at hip height, hands on the ground, body at a right angle, hips stacked over your shoulders. Twenty seconds. You are already carrying a good share of your weight on your hands.
- 4 The tuck: squat down, hands on the floor, knees resting on your bent elbows, feet off the floor. Five seconds is enough at first. This is your first balance on your hands, and it comes long before the handstand.

The most costly mistake

Rushing to the wall. These positions don't look like much, but they are what opens the shoulders. Without them, the body compensates by arching, and the habit sticks for months.

When to move on

When all four positions hold for thirty seconds without shaking, and being upside down no longer bothers you. Expect two to three weeks.



The four positions, in order: the plank, downward dog, the right angle at the wall, the tuck.

3

30 seconds

per hold

3 sets

to move on

The wall, to build the shape

The wall is not a crutch, it is a measuring tool. It teaches you the straight line before asking you to balance. Solving those two problems separately is twice as fast.

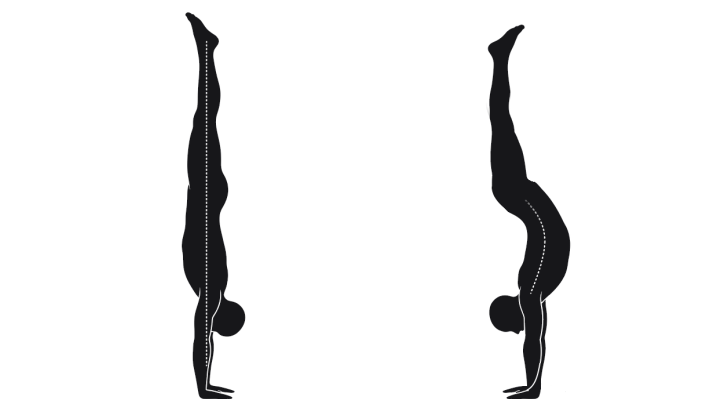
- 1 Back to the wall, hands on the floor twenty centimetres away from it. Walk your feet up until your stomach almost touches the wall.
- 2 Push the floor away as if you were trying to grow taller. Shoulders by your ears, arms straight, ribs tucked in.
- 3 Your eyes settle between your hands, never on the hands themselves. That is what holds the line, like walking on a beam.
- 4 Squeeze your glutes and your thighs. A plank, not a banana: that is the most common mistake.
- 5 Hold thirty seconds. Once three sets of thirty feel easy, move on.

The most costly mistake

The banana. The lower back hollows, the ribs flare, and the position looks held when it is not. Squeeze the glutes, tuck the ribs: a plank, not a banana.

When to move on

When three sets of thirty seconds feel easy, with no arch. That is the only criterion, and it is not negotiable.



On the left the correct line, on the right the arch known as the banana.

4

1 second

is plenty at first

10 seconds

the goal

Finding the balance

You don't correct your balance with your shoulders, you correct it with your fingers. That is the one thing to understand, and it changes everything. Your hands do exactly what your feet do when you stand.

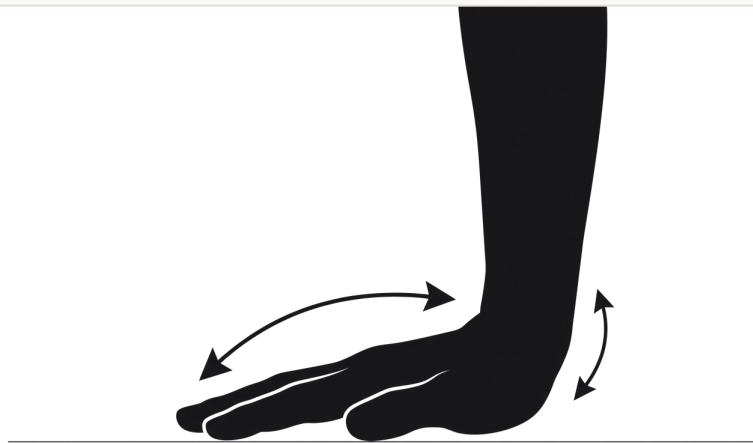
- 1 Facing the wall this time, walk up until your toes brush it. You are already almost balancing.
- 2 Lift one foot off, then the other. One second is plenty at first.
- 3 Tipping forward? Press into your fingers. Tipping back? Release the fingers and press into your palm. Nothing else moves.
- 4 Chase seconds, not perfection. Ten free seconds is already a lot.

The most costly mistake

Correcting with the shoulders. If you tip forward, the fingers catch you, never the upper body: the moment the shoulders move, the line breaks and you fall faster.

When to move on

There is no step after this one. Chase the seconds, not perfection: ten free seconds is already a lot.



The pressure shifts between the palm and the fingers, nothing else moves.

10 to 15 min

a day

1 day

fully off

A typical week

Ten to fifteen minutes a day beats an hour on Sundays. Balance comes from short, frequent repetitions, and wrists and shoulders need lighter days to recover.

Every session

Two minutes of wrist work. Always, no exceptions.

Three days a week

Full session: wrists, then your current step, twenty to thirty seconds per hold, with one minute of rest between holds.

Two days a week

Light session: wrists and floor positions only. The shoulders work, the joints recover.

The wall

Three times a week at most. It puts the most load on the shoulders, and that is where the aches start.

One day

Nothing at all. That is the day the progress sinks in.

The most costly mistake

Piling on long sessions because things are going well. Wrists give no warning: they hold, they hold, then they give out and you stop for a month.

10 to 15 min

a day

4 exercises

no more

The strength work that actually helps

Four exercises, no more. Anything else is time taken away from the balance itself. Each one targets a specific weak point that gives out during a hold: fingers, shoulders, core.

The hollow hold

Lower back pressed into the floor, shoulders and feet lifted, arms by your ears. Three sets of twenty seconds. This is the exact body line of a handstand, the one that stops the banana.

The plank

On your hands, body in one piece. Three sets of thirty seconds.

Finger holds

On all fours, lift your palms and stay on your fingers. Three sets of fifteen seconds. They are what corrects your balance, so they need to be strong.

Downward dog

Ten slow breaths, to open the shoulders. Do it on rest days too.

The most costly mistake

Loading up the shoulders with presses and push-ups in the hope it helps. What fails upside down is almost never raw strength: it is the core and the fingers.

The guide on one page

1

Prepare your wrists

Two minutes of wrist work before every session, never skipped.

2

Hold the positions that prepare you

Two to three weeks on the ground before you touch the wall.

3

The wall, to build the shape

Three sets of thirty seconds held straight, and the wall has done its job.

4

Finding the balance

Tipping forward, press into the fingers. Tipping back, press into the palm.

Before you start

One last thing: train on a flat, clear surface, and learn to come out of the position by turning to the side rather than letting yourself fall backwards. If a sharp pain shows up in a wrist or a shoulder, end the session.

Where to find me

The guides, kept up to date, on joris-dce.fr

The videos, every day, on [instagram.com/joris.dce](https://www.instagram.com/joris.dce)

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