



# IYT®-INTERNATIONAL YOGA TEACHER CERTIFICATION TEACHER TRAINING MANUAL



## **Invocation for a successful training together**

Om.

May we both (teacher & student) be protected

May we both be nourished

May we work with full energy

May our studies together be filled with brilliance  
and be effective May there never be ill-will between

us

Om Peace Peace Peace

Om

saha navavatu

saha nau bhunaktu

saha viryam karavavahai

tejasvi navadhitamastu

ma vidvishavahai

om shanti shanti shanti



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## [1]

**Introduction: IYS®-International Yoga Schools**

IYS®-International Yoga School are registered with IYO® International Yoga Organisation to provide the IYT®-International Yoga Teacher course trainings that offers a dynamic Vinyasa Flow training, incorporating elements from many yoga traditions. Creative sequences are linked together using the art of vinyasa, to create a fluid, dance-like style. The joy of movement is explored as it takes its essential journey of *Movement into Stillness*. The IYS®-International Yoga School registered are created to bring the practice of yoga into students' everyday lives; making yoga accessible to everybody no matter their background, age or physical ability. It is a common turn of phrase that *Yoga means Union*, but many have decided to understand unity as similarity. We believe that through the practice of yoga we can encourage diversity, and help each student develop their own unique pathway.

We're not here to turn out cookie-cutter replicas of ourselves. Yoga is a personal practice, and both your teaching and your practice should always come from the heart. As you progress with your practice you should look more and more like yourself and less like anyone else. For this reason, the school is based on the founding principle: *Unity in Diversity*.

Yoga means different things to different people. To some it is a physical practice that brings balance and ease to their body. For others, it is a body-mind practice, bringing not only physical health benefits but also encouraging mental and emotional well-being. For those who choose to see it in its full glory, yoga is a practice for body, mind and spirit. It teaches us why we are here, what we should do with our days, and where we are going.

Stretching back thousands of years, the fundamentals of yoga have always stayed the same; but each generation brings a new slant relevant to their era. This evolution of the yoga tradition should be celebrated. It is a living, breathing philosophy that can foster:

***Confidence & Joy:***

The joy of moving the body, hearing the breath and setting free the voice are all things that free the spirit.

***Independence:***

Yoga is a self-contained practice in which you need nothing but your own commitment. Yoga can be taken anywhere in the world for the rest of your life.

***Change & Growth:***

Yoga has the possibility to change people's lives. Each tiny improvement on the mat can reflect a change in your life. Anything becomes possible.

Each student who becomes a teacher is responsible for the future vision of yoga. The responsibility of how yoga is perceived is tied in with the manner and skill with which it is taught, and with the integrity with which a yoga teacher lives. We hope the teacher's life will be lived with authenticity, truthfulness and joy.

# Group Rules

In order to create a harmonious course we offer the following group rules:

## **Commitment to the Training:**

- Please be ready to commence all lectures at the official start time. Being more than 15 minutes late will count as an absence from that class.
- If (through extenuating circumstances) you are unable to attend a session or will be late, contact the course leader via telephone. If there is no answer, a message must be left on the voicemail.
- Certification cannot be given until all hours are complete. Any classes missed will need to be deferred or taken privately, and both options incur a charge.
- Written homework counts towards certification on the training. Please submit all homework by the scheduled deadlines, including journals and observations.

## **The Centre:**

- Please abide by the rules of the centre in which you are training, and conduct yourself harmoniously with the people you meet there.
- It is the student's responsibility to keep the studio clean, including clearing wrappers, cups and crumbs after lunch.
- Shoes should be removed at the door, and all belongings neatly stowed.
- Store all yoga equipment in the relevant places at the end of each training day.
- Only leave designated items overnight at the studio.
- Refrain from bringing pungent foods into the studio space.

## **Equipment & Handouts:**

- Please look after your Teacher Training Manual and write your name in all of your set texts
- Refrain from using any of the electronic equipment located in the space without direct permission from the course leader.
- All handouts should be downloaded from the student portal.

## **Conduct:**

- Both speaking and listening are key skills for a yoga teacher. Encourage group discussion by actively participating in debates *and* giving others time to talk.
- During all classes please turn off your mobile phone.
- Developing a daily yoga practice is crucial. It is the student's responsibility to practice the techniques they have been shown between training weekends. If you are struggling, ask your course leader for guidance.

# History & Philosophy



# [1]

## What is Yoga?

*“A school of Hindu philosophy advocating and prescribing a course of physical and mental disciplines for attaining liberation from the material world and union of the self with the Supreme Being or ultimate principle.”*

Dictionary.com

*“A set of physical and mental exercises... which is intended to give control over the body and mind.”*

Cambridge Dictionary

The word Yoga comes from the Sanskrit root ‘*yuj*’, meaning "to yoke" or "to harness". This term is open to a great deal of interpretation and has changed in meaning through time. It is often considered to be the union of body, mind and spirit/soul. Some branches of yoga philosophy regard it to be the union of the True Self with The Supreme (in the form of a God or Universal Consciousness).

### 1. Is yoga a religion, a philosophy, or a science?

Many people are justifiably confused as to whether yoga is a religion, a philosophy, or a science. Indeed, many are confused as to what these terms really mean.

**Is yoga a philosophy?** Philosophy is not something that you ‘learn’, but something that you mentally ‘do’. Philosophy asks you to engage in a debate and to use logical arguments to reach a conclusion (or not!). While there are definitely philosophical schools and questions in the yoga tradition, yoga is not a theoretical concept to think about. This is why yoga cannot be learnt from a book. Yoga is 99% practice, 1% theory.

**Is yoga a religion?** Although born out of the Brahminical (Hindu) tradition, there is no requirement to believe in one particular deity. In fact, you need not have any religion at all to be a yogi/yogini. Many religions are based on the notion of *faith*. Yoga is instead based on *experience*. You may simply follow the yogic path and experience the results yourself. It should be noticed however that faith in the yoga practices, and in oneself, is necessary.

**Is yoga a science?** Science follows objective and repeatable processes to draw empirical results. As yoga is a process that goes on within (or perhaps even beyond) the mind, it is difficult to put it to such tests. However, there are some people who draw parallels between yoga and science, stating, "Just like science says experiment, yoga says experience."

Experiment and experience are the same; just their directions are different. Experiment is something you can do outside; experience is something you can do inside. Experience is an inside experiment." (OSHO, Yoga).

**Yoga is a method for being here now.** The practice is a way to encounter the reality of the present 'just as it is'. You'll notice that the mind is always dreaming about the future. It cannot enjoy today as it is constantly seeing the faults of the present and dreams about a better tomorrow. But when tomorrow comes it is no longer tomorrow, it becomes 'today'! The whole cycle begins again. Yoga teaches us to live in the present.

## 2. The True Self (Atman)

To some, yoga is the challenge of discovering your True Self (*atman*). What is the truth that underlies and pervades everything about you? What is real and unchanging? We can begin by looking at what you are not:

### ***Is the body your True Self?***

According to some yogic philosophy, we are all in a state of delusion (*maya*). We wrongly identify our bodies as being part of our True Self. When we look at our body, we think of 'my' hair or 'my' hand. But if we were to chop off our hair, or even our hand, would we be any less of a person? Yoga teaches us to break through this delusion; to see the body like an item of clothing that we are wearing, and to search out who that entity saying 'my' is.

### ***Is the mind your True Self?***

Many people will identify with their mind. However, the thoughts and emotions that you feel are constantly changing. They are the product of situations that you experience and the environment that surrounds you. Both emotions and thoughts are phenomenon that you experience, so who/what is feeling them?

### ***So who/what is your True Self?***

By identifying with the body, emotions and thoughts, we create a concept of ourselves as separate from anyone/anything else. From ideas such as *my* hand, *my* strength/weakness, *my* house/car, and *my* freedom/happiness, we develop the notion of 'separateness'; and from these concepts of '*my*', a feeling of suffering develops.

As you start peeling away these layers of ownership, who or what is left? Can you define yourself without clinging to notions of the body and the mind? This 'True Self' is what you are trying to discover through your yoga practice.

## 3. Universal Consciousness (Brahman)

According to Vedantic philosophy, *Brahman* is the 'Absolute Truth' or 'Universal Consciousness' which is the basis of everything. It is eternal, infinite and unchanging. Brahman is not a material reality, but rather a spiritual reality.

*"We all arise from Brahman, abide in it, and must eventually return to it. All the endless and innumerable universes are nothing but waves on the sea of this infinite being."*

-David Frawley, Yoga & Ayurveda

In different Hindu religions and philosophical schools, this Universal Consciousness is given different names (e.g. in Samkhya there is a similar concept called Purusha).

If Brahman exists in everything it must also exist within us. When referring to the Brahman that is within an individual, it is known as *Atman*. This does not mean that it is separate from Brahman. Brahman and Atman are essentially two ways of looking at the same thing, either universally or within an individual.

The method that is prescribed to discover (or become aware of) the Atman that resides in each individual, is to still the body and mind. When this

is achieved the Atman that resides within will shine through. This is extremely simple as a theoretical concept, but in reality is a huge challenge. This is the goal behind Yoga.

#### 4. Chitta Vritti Nirodha

*“The restraint of the modifications of the mind stuff is yoga.”*

Patanjali, The Yoga Sutras 1:2

Translation by Swami Satchidananda

*Chitta*: Mind Stuff

*Vritti*: Modifications or Thoughts

*Nirodhah*: Restraint

According to the sage Patanjali, the channeling (or focusing) of the fluctuating mind is yoga. If we can bring both the body and the mind to stillness, then we have the possibility to see the True Self. When we realise this True Self we have reached enlightenment (*Samadhi*).

The theory of yoga is very simple, but in practice it takes great discipline to achieve. Through all your endeavours in yoga, it is important to remember that there is nothing to be overwhelmed by, and nothing to fail at. You can't lose your Atman. That ultimate reality is always inside of you, and it is perfect just as it is. You just need to realise it.

#### 5. Yoga as a Health Management System

The Hatha yoga techniques that have been developed offer tangible benefits to everyone, regardless of whether the student has any spiritual aspirations. On the physical and mental levels, yoga is about balance: balancing the left and right side of the body, the work of the internal systems, the emotions, and the thoughts. It is through the yoga techniques that we can develop harmony in the body.

Physical yoga poses (*asana*) keep an overall mobility in the body that would otherwise stiffen up

with age. A simple, daily yoga practice will keep all of the joints supple, the muscles long, and will ward off degenerative conditions. Asana also works on the internal body. As the body is bent and stretched, it exerts an influence on all of the organs as well as the cardiovascular, endocrine and nervous systems. The organs are massaged, the cardiovascular system oxygenated and nervous system stimulated, to name only a few actions. In this way, yoga is a health management system.

Finally, the use of breathing exercises (*pranayama*) and mental focus (*Dharana*) helps to calm and soothe the mind. In an age of constant stimulation and action, these practices offer a welcome break. For many people, these will also be the most difficult techniques to master.



### Test Yourself

1. In one sentence answer the question: What is Yoga?
2. Define the terms Atman and Brahman.
3. Define the terms 'religion', 'philosophy' and 'science'.
4. How can yoga be used to create and maintain physical health?



## [1]

## The Five Main Ingredients of Vinyasa Flow Yoga

*Vinyasa*: Literally translated Vinyasa means ‘to place in a special way’. In the context of asana practice it means *linking movement with the breath*.

*Ashtanga Vinyasa*: A system of yoga popularised by Sri K Pattabhi Jois. There are six practices or ‘series’ in the Ashtanga Vinyasa system. Each series follows a set sequence of poses that are never altered. Once all poses from a series have been mastered the practitioner may move onto the next series.

*Vinyasa Flow Yoga*: A modern style of yoga derived from the Ashtanga Vinyasa, Iyengar and Viniyoga systems. The sun salutations and linking of poses through Vinyasa is retained; however the order of poses is open to change. Poses from any series may be offered at any time.

There are five main ingredients that make up Vinyasa Flow yoga: asana (poses), vinyasa (linking or flow), pranayama (breath), bandha (energy locks), and drishti (gaze). Each of these ingredients must be used together, and in the correct way, in order to develop true Vinyasa Flow.

### 1. Asana

*Asana* means ‘posture’ or ‘seat’. The asanas are the many postures you contort the body into during a yoga class. But it is worth remembering the early definition of asana made by the father of Classical Yoga, Patanjali. He stated, ‘Sthira Sukham Asanam’, which translates as ‘Asana is a steady, comfortable posture’ (The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali - Book 2, 46). Comfort and steadiness are vital in every practice.

It is also important to remember that the asanas aren’t the goal of yoga. They work to keep the body in optimal health, and to facilitate meditation. Some days you may find that the asanas come easily,

while other days everything is a struggle. The key is not to be discouraged by this and to keep working on the inner ‘feeling’ of the pose rather than what the pose looks like on the outside.

### 2. Vinyasa

*Vi* translates as "in a special way" and *Nyasa* as "to place". In the context of Vinyasa Flow Yoga it refers to the specific sequence of poses that is performed between each asana.

Unlike other forms of yoga, both Ashtanga Vinyasa and Vinyasa Flow place importance on the way in which poses are linked together. By choreographing movement with breath the whole practice becomes a moving meditation. There is no time to adjust the clothes or hair, or to check the time. Each asana develops into the next, with breath acting as the guide throughout.

The performance of Vinyasa also creates heat in the body, allowing the practitioner to move deeper into each asana.

### 3. Pranayama

While practising physical yoga the type of breath used is called Ujjayi breath. Ujjayi (*victorious breath*) is a heating breath which warms the whole body.

There is a direct link between the breath and the mind. When the mind is calm the breath remains steady and peaceful. When the mind becomes agitated the breath begins to change pace and rhythm. It is not only the state of mind that affects the breath, but also the breath that can influence the state of mind.

#### *Method: Ujjayi breath*

Ujjayi breath is practiced with the mouth closed and the air moving in and out through the nostrils. As you breathe a soft hissing sound is created in the throat. The nostrils, jaw and throat remain soft throughout and the breath is equally metered on the in and out breath.

During your practice retrain yourself to listen to the breath, so that you can drown out the internal dialogue. On each inhale hear the sound "so" and on each exhalation hear the sound "hum."

Each day, when you start your practice, work on stretching the breath first. Stretching out the physical body can follow.

#### *Benefits of Ujjayi Breath*

- This breath creates heat in the body. It works to detoxify the body with an internal fire (unlike Bikram Yoga which heats from the outside).
- This breath quiets the thinking mind.
- The focus is brought into the present moment.
- Breath is the food of the spirit. It nourishes the body and the mind. If you miss sessions from your six day practice you starve yourself and are

left running on empty. You may feel irritable or lack of concentration (just like when you're hungry).

### 4. Bandhas

Bandhas can be considered the intelligence of the practice. The three bandhas or "locks" are called:

Mula Bandha  
Uddiyana Bandha  
Jalandhara Bandha

These locks help guide energy (*prana*) through the body. They also work as vital cues for correcting alignment in physical yoga postures (*asana*). The application of bandhas during asana practice can help the practitioner balance in standing postures, find stability in inversions and maintain energy during seated poses.

### 5. Drishti

The final main ingredient to the practice is the focal point of the eyes known as drishti. It is used to create mental focus in the class/practice. There is a specific gaze in each pose and a total of 9 different placements of the gaze during asana practice.

*Method:* Each pose has its own official gazing spot. Get into the pose and then direct your eyes towards the desired spot. You should never strain your eyes to look in the 'correct place'. If you can't turn your head and eyes to that place with ease, then send your eyes in that general direction. Don't stare ferociously - keep the gaze soft.



## Test Yourself

1. What are the five main ingredients of Vinyasa Yoga?

2. What is the difference between Ashtanga Yoga, Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga, and Vinyasa Flow Yoga?
3. Give two benefits of performing Vinyasa
4. What type of breath is used during your yoga (asana) practice?
5. What is a Bandha and how many are there?
6. What is Drishti and how many are there?

## [2]

## Asana - Physical Yoga Postures

Asana was at first a simple seated position for meditation. All of the early texts on yoga actually define asana as the platform on which the practitioner should sit. When various 'asana' positions first began being described they were all meditative poses (e.g. *padmasana*, *siddhasana*).

It was only with the development of Tantra Yoga that different physical postures began to be developed. In Tantra the body is viewed as a divine temple, and as such asana were developed both to prolong the life of the body and to develop the life energy (*prana*).

Hatha Yoga, which developed out of Tantra, went on to outline these diverse asana, most notably in the text 'Hatha Yoga Pradipika' by Svatmarama (approx. 1450AD).

### 1. How Many Asanas Are There?

The ancient Goraksha-Paddhati states that there are an astounding 8,400,000 different asana – one for every creature on Earth. It is commonly taught that there are 84 traditional yoga postures; however hundreds of new variations exist.

#### The Traditional Ashtanga Vinyasa System

In traditional Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga practice, a student works their way through six series (almost like martial arts 'belts'). These are specific class sequences that remain virtually the same worldwide. The sun salutations, standing sequence and finishing sequence stays the same throughout the six different series. As you progress, it is the seated portion that is developed.

#### The Modern Vinyasa Flow System

The Vinyasa Flow system uses the same ingredients as traditional Ashtanga Vinyasa, but allows the teacher to create their own sequencing. Vinyasa Flow is rooted in the techniques of Ashtanga

Vinyasa, Viniyoga, and Iyengar but the outcomes are very different. If you compare the styles of the leading Vinyasa Flow teachers you'll discover unique styles for each (e.g. Baron Baptiste, Seane Corn and Shiva Rea). Appropriate poses can be picked from any of the series as well as other yoga traditions.

### 2. Overview of Class Components

#### Surya Namaskara

Classes begin with the repetition of sun salutations (*Surya Namaskara*) which develop heat in the body. These are then repeated throughout the class in the form of 'Vinyasa'. Both Surya Namaskara and Vinyasa shall be looked at in detail in the next chapter.

#### Standing Section

The traditional Ashtanga Vinyasa standing sequence is comprised of 19 poses. These poses remain the same no matter which series of Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga you happen to be practising. As the

practitioner becomes more and more familiar with the sequence the active, thinking mind can switch off and the sequence becomes a moving meditation.

Standing poses in Ashtanga Vinyasa yoga are sequenced after the sun salutations and before the seated poses. These poses continue to build both heat and flexibility in body, which allows the practitioner to move safely through the deep seated poses which follow. The standing poses are challenging as they demand both balance and strength in the legs.

Each pose in the standing sequence is traditionally held for 5 counts or breaths. You may find your breath to be faster or slower than this count, in which case you should alter the number of breaths you take accordingly (3 breaths if you breathe slowly or 7/8 breaths if you breathe more quickly). It is more important to spend the same amount of time on each side in a pose, than to stay for a specific number of breaths.

### Seated Section

The seated section of a class offers the chance to work deeply on flexibility without the added difficulty of balance. Seated poses allow students to work with a greater awareness of alignment and with more stability. Energy is increased through the use of strength poses and vinyasa.

In the primary series there are 31 seated poses sequenced in such away that they both counterbalance and develop on the one before. The primary series focuses on forward folds which are therapeutic, earning it the name *Yoga Chikitsa* (yoga therapy). In the second/intermediate series the focus moves to back-bending, working on the spinal column and nervous system. The 41 seated poses of the second series are known as *Nadi Shodhana* (nerve cleansing).

### Finishing Section

The finishing sequence offers the largest back and forward bends as well as a sequence of inversions to

quiet the mind. It requires a lot of stamina to perform these poses at the very end of a long asana practice, which typifies the challenging Ashtanga Vinyasa style.

Every practice ends in savasana (corpse pose) to allow the body full rest. Without this rest energy levels are depleted and the practitioner is left feeling tired and irritable. With proper savasana, both the body and mind are restored, and lightness fills the body.



## Test Yourself

1. What are the four main sections of a Vinyasa Yoga class?
2. What are the benefits of performing standing poses?
3. What are the benefits of doing seated poses?
4. Why do we do corpse pose (*savasana*) at the end of a class?

## [3]

# Vinyasa – Linking Poses in a ‘Special Way’

*“Come into a standing position facing the rising sun.  
For a few moments stand steadily.  
Visualise the rising sun within you.  
Become aware of the energy of the rising sun.  
The source of light, and warmth and vitality.  
And be aware of the sun as a symbol of the  
Emerging spiritual consciousness within you.”*

In the context of Vinyasa Flow Yoga, ‘Vinyasa’ is based on the Sun Salutation (Surya Namaskara).

### 1. Origins

The word Surya means ‘Sun’ and Namaskara means ‘Salutation’ or ‘Obeisance’. The ancient Vedic texts speak of the sun as the source of life. Many rituals were based around worshipping the sun and it could be from these rituals that surya namaskara evolved. However, there is a lot of disagreement over how old the sun salutations really are. Many believe that the vinyasa style of surya namaskara is no more than a few hundred years old and there is certainly no mention of them in the Hatha Yoga Pradapika.

The sun is linked with pingala nadi and its associated energy – rajas, activity and masculinity. The sun salutations are said to work on this nadi, bringing balance to your energy levels and vitality into your day.

The sequence is traditionally performed at sunrise facing the rising sun. The sun salutations are the perfect yoga sequence to start the day. They remove fatigue from the body, loosen all of the major muscles and joints, and expand the breath.

The vinyasa-based yoga styles take this further and add in whole/half sun salutations between all asana in the yoga practice. This keeps the energy and vitality running through the entire yoga practice.

### 2. Surya Namaskara Mantras

In the Satyananda tradition there are specific mantras for each of the positions of the sun salutation. They are known as the 12 names of the sun:

**Om mitraya namah**

*Salutations to the friend of all*

**Om ravayé namah**

*Salutations to the shining one*

**Om suryaya namah**

*Salutations to he who induces activity*

**Om bhanavé namah**

*Salutations to he who illumines*

**Om khagaya namah**

*Salutations to he who moves quickly through the sky*

**Om pushné namah**

*Salutations to he who gives strength*

**Om hiranyagarbhaya namah***Salutations to the golden cosmic self***Om marichayé namah***Salutations to the lord of the dawn***Om adityaya namah***Salutations to the son of Aditi, the cosmic mother***Om savitré namah***Salutations to Lord of Creation.***Om arkaya namah***Salutations to he who is fit to be praised***Om bhaskaraya namah***Salutations to he who leads to enlightenment***3. The Practice**

The key elements of the sun salutations are the five main ingredients of Vinyasa yoga (asana, pranayama, bandhas, drishti and vinyasa). This is why sun salutations are pivotal to your the daily practice. Through the systematic sequencing of both the sun salutation versions (A and B) each pose works to counteract the one before it, creating harmony in the body.

**4. Ode to Patanjali**

Before commencing Surya Namaskara in a traditional Ashtanga Vinyasa yoga class, the teacher will lead the students through a Sanskrit chant. This chant honours the teachers who passed down the ancient yoga wisdom. On a practical level the chant marks a decisive start to the class - the end of general day to day activities and the start of your yoga practice. By closing your eyes and feeling the vibrations of the chanting, you can prepare yourself mentally for the class to come.

Vande gurunam charanaravinde

Sandarsita svatmasukhava bodhe

Nihsreyase jangalikayamane

Samsara halahala mohasantyai

Abahu purusakaram

Sankhacakrasi dharinam

Sahasra sirasam svetam

Pranamami patanjalinam

Om

**Translation**

I bow to the lotus feet of the guru  
Who awakens insight into the happiness  
of pure Being,  
Who is the final refuge, the jungle physician,  
Who eliminates the delusion caused by the  
poisonous herb of samsara [conditioned existence].  
I prostrate before the sage Patanjali who has  
thousands of radiant, white heads  
[in his form as the divine serpent, Ananta]  
And who has, as far as his arms, assumed the form  
of a man holding a conch shell [divine sound],  
A wheel [discus of light, representing infinite time]  
And a sword [discrimination].  
Om

[4]

## Pranayama – Breath Control

Prana is often taken to mean “energy” but this definition does not quite do justice to the word. In Hindu tradition, prana is the life sustaining force which pervades not only all living organisms but the whole universe. It can be likened to the concept of chi in traditional Chinese medicine. When doing a yoga class each asana (posture) is designed to promote the flow of prana.

Prana is associated with breathing in and out; however, air itself is not prana. It is rather that breathing can be used to focus and control the life energy as part of a spiritual practice. That is why the breathing practices in yoga are called pranayama. You're using your breath, but you're actually controlling the flow of energy. This flow of prana is not located in the physical body, but in the more subtle ‘astral body’.

### 1. Types of Prana:

Prana can be subdivided into five types: *prana*, *apana*, *udana*, *samana* and *vyana*. The way in which prana is categorized is dependent upon its movement and direction.

**Prana Vayu:** Moves inwards. Governs the process of reception; not only of food, drink and air, but also sensory input. Prana vayu governs the area of the head.

**Apana Vayu:** Moves downwards. Governs the process of elimination; not only of urine, faeces, semen and menstrual flow, but also of negative mental and emotional experience. Apana vayu governs the lower abdomen.

**Udana Vayu:** Moves upwards. Governs the processes of speech and expression. Allows for growth, effort and enthusiasm. Udana vayu governs the neck and throat.

**Samana Vayu:** Spirals inwards. Governs the process of digestion to include the digestion of food, air and emotional/mental experience. Samana vayu governs the navel area.

**Vyana Vayu:** Spirals outwards. Governs the process of circulation to include the circulation of blood/oxygen, food, water and thoughts. Vyana vayu governs the heart and lungs.

It should be remembered that prana is like wind; we can feel its effects, but we cannot hold onto it or put it in a box. However we can become aware of its flow, where it is moving and the direction in which it is going.

### 2. Pranayama

Pranayama consists of specific breathing techniques or exercises that encourage the absorption of prana into the body's subtle energy channels (nadis) and energy centres (chakras). It is important to remember that just as there are different styles of asana there are different styles of pranayama.

Listed are a simple preparation and pranayama techniques along with their benefits:

### **Technique 1: Deep Abdominal Breathing**

*Benefits:* Deep abdominal breathing brings air to the lowest and largest part of the lungs. Breathing is slow and deep, and proper use is made of the diaphragm.

*Method:* Direct the breath down into the abdominal area. Inhale into the abdomen so that it rises like a balloon for 3-4 slow counts (about 1 second per count) exhale so that the abdominal muscles contract towards the lower back for 3-4 counts. The breath should be rhythmical and comfortable.

### **Technique 2: Full Yogic Breathing**

*Benefits:* In the Full Yogic Breath the inhalation happens in three stages. First the diaphragm moves downward drawing air into the lowest part of the lungs. Then the intercostal muscles expand the ribcage and pull air into the middle part of the lungs. Lastly the air comes into the upper part of the chest, this is called clavicular breathing.

*Method:* Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position with the spine straight and the eyes closed. Whilst you are learning this breathing technique keep one hand placed on the abdomen and the other on the ribcage, (once you are more comfortable with the practice you can keep the hands on the knees).

Inhale slowly and feel the abdomen expanding like a balloon, the hand on the abdomen will push out. Then draw the breath into the chest and feel the ribcage expand. Breathe right up into the clavicles filling the lungs to their full capacity. Exhale slowly right down to the base of the spine. Inhale and exhale with control for 6-8 slow counts.

### **Technique 3: Kapalabati**

*Benefits:* Good for cleansing the lungs of stale air and toxins. A stimulating exercise that purifies the nasal passages bronchial tubes and lungs, eliminates excess carbon dioxide bringing an invigorating fresh supply of oxygen into the blood stream and to the body tissues and brain hence the name 'Kapalabathi' means 'Shining Skull'.

*Method:* Sitting cross-legged with a straight spine shoulders back and relaxed and the eyes closed. Take a couple of full yogic breaths and then begin a pumping breath through the nostrils rhythmically contracting the lower abdomen quickly and sharply with the exhalation and relaxing the abdomen for a passive inhalation.

Each active exhalation should be as short and sharp as possible; the lower abdomen is drawn in as the air pushes out. Each inhalation is passive, noiseless and effortless as the abdomen relaxes.

After pumping the breath for between 30-100 counts take a few full yogic breaths. Practice three to five rounds in a session, increasing the number of pumps only so far as feels comfortable.

### **Technique 4: Anuloma Viloma/Nadi Shodhana**

*Benefits:* Alternate nostril breathing corrects any negative habits of shallow breathing. It helps to balance how we use the two sides of the brain - the logical left side and the creative right side - as well as having a balancing effect on the energy system. It prepares the practitioner for more advanced pranayama practices and meditation.

*Method:* Sitting cross-legged with a straight spine shoulders back and relaxed and the eyes closed. Bring the right hand is in Vishnu Mudra with the index and middle fingers tucked into the palm of the hand.

- Exhale fully through both nostrils to begin.

- Keeping the right hand in Vishnu Mudra bring the right thumb to close the right nostril and inhale deeply through the left nostril to the count of 4.
- Pinch both nostrils with the thumb and ring and then release the thumb and exhale fully through the right nostril to the count of 8.
- Inhale through the right nostril to the count of 4.
- Pinch both nostrils again, and immediately exhale through the left nostril for the count of 8.

This is one round of Anuloma Viloma. Repeat for 8-12 rounds.

### **Technique 5: Sitkari & Sitali**

*Benefits:* Cools the system and reduces acidity in the body.

*Sitkari - Method:* The tip of the tongue touches the upper palate. Inhale through the tongue slowly and deeply. Close the mouth release the tongue and exhale slowly through both nostrils.

*Sitali - Method:* Fold the tongue into a tube and poke it out the mouth. Inhale slowly through the tongue tube. Release the tongue close the lips and exhale slowly through both nostrils.

### **Technique 6: Bramari (humming breath)**

*Benefits:* Vocal chords and throat muscles are strengthened and toned, the voice becomes sweet and a meditative state is induced.

*Method:* Inhale slowly through the nose to prepare. Exhale with a long slow hum for as long as you can and repeat. Practice about 10 rounds.

## [5] Bandhas –Energy Locks

*“Jalandhara Bandha, Uddiyana Bandha and Moola Bandha are situated respectively in the throat, abdomen and perineum. If their duration can be increased then where is the fear of death?”*

Yogataravali (Sutra 5, Sri Adi Shankaracharya)

The Sanskrit word ‘*bandha*’ means to lock, bind or tighten. Bandha is therefore an action; a method of redirecting and guiding energy through the body. It is useful to think of the bandhas as valves rather than locks (like in veins), ensuring the flow of energy is directed in the right way.

### 1. The Three Bandhas

1. Jalandhara Bandha – Stops upward moving energy (Prana) escaping from the upper body
2. Uddiyana Bandha – Moves energy upwards through the body
3. Mula Bandha – Stops downward moving energy (Apana) escaping from the lower body and redirects it upwards.

### A Fourth Bandha?

There is a fourth bandha called Maha Bandha (or maha mudra), which is a combination of all three bandhas performed at the same time. Just like a dam in a river, the use of maha bandha builds up energy. It is when you release maha bandha that the energy flows.

The Hatha Yoga Pradapika states:

*“For one who practices maha mudra, there is nothing wholesome or unwholesome. Anything can be consumed; even the deadliest of poisons is digested like nectar.”* (Chapter 3, Verse 16).

### 2. Mula Bandha - Root Lock

*“By contracting the perineum the downward moving Apana Vayu is forced to go upwards. Yogis call this Moola bandha.”*

- Hatha Yoga Pradipika (Chapter 3, Verse 62)

The action of mula bandha is a contraction of the space between the genitals and the anus. It is not a contraction of the whole pelvic floor, nor should it involve any contraction of the anus itself.

During an asana class, mula bandha may be performed constantly, or increased with each exhale. It may also be held in constant, light contraction when there is a need for a sense of lift (during balances) or flight (during jumps).

Mula bandha is a great tool for being present in your practice. It cannot be performed unconsciously. As soon as your mind wanders you lose mula bandha.

By using mula bandha you automatically activate uddiyana bandha in lower abdomen, which keeps

the lower abdomen taut and the breath in the ribcage.

**Use in Asana:**

Every time you breathe out in the yoga class you lift mula bandha. It is especially useful to use mula bandha during the seated poses as it stops energy dissipating down into the floor. Janu Sirsasana B works directly on mula bandha.

**Benefits:**

The use of mula bandha regulates the uro-genital and excretory systems. It relieves constipation and piles, can minimise depression, and aids sexual restraint (*bramacharya*).

**Contraindications:**

The use of mula bandha can cause hyperactivity. It can also feel counter-intuitive for women to use mula bandha during their menstrual cycle.

**2. Uddiyana Bandha - Abdominal/Upward Flying Lock**

*“Draw the belly backward and the naval upward. This uddiyana bandha is surely the lion that kills the elephant of death.*

*One who constantly practices uddiyana as described by a guru until it is natural becomes young, even if old.”*

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- Hatha Yoga Pradipika (Chapter 3, Verses 57-58)

This practice is known as the ‘*upward flying bandha*’ as it redirects energy upwards. In the full physical practice the abdominal muscles, organs and diaphragm are pulled inwards and upwards. This action is performed along with complete exhale retention and jalandhara bandha. In this way the abdominal pressure allows the belly to become completely concave. This is known as uddiyana bandha kriya.

During an asana class a subtler version of uddiyana bandha is used. There is still a sense of lift and of drawing the lower abdomen inwards, however the breath should not be held. The diaphragm and ribcage should be allowed to move freely with the breath, while the lower abdomen remains still.

**Use in Asana:**

This bandha is widely used throughout an asana class. It is especially useful during balance poses, inversions (including partial inversions such as downward dog) and when moving through a vinyasa.

**Benefits:**

Uddiyana bandha can relieve stomach disorders such as constipation and indigestion. By performing this bandha you remove fatigue and reduce tension in the body. There is also an improvement of circulation.

**Contraindications:**

This bandha is not to be practiced during pregnancy. Conditions such as high blood pressure, heart disease, stomach ulcers, glaucoma and hernia can be exacerbated through full uddiyana bandha kriya.

**3. Jalandhara Bandha - Throat lock**

*“After contracting the throat, place the chin firmly on the heart. This is jalandhara bandha. It destroys old age and death.*

*It binds the web of nadis and halts the downward course of the water of the sky. Thus jalandhara bandha. It destroys the flood of maladies of the throat.”*

- Hatha Yoga Pradipika (Chapter 3, Verses 70-71)

This bandha is performed by drawing the chin and chest together. It is important to think of moving the chin and chest towards each other, rather than just dropping the head down. The chin should be in line

with the centre of the chest. This bandha is typically performed during pranayama breath retention.

**Use in Asana:**

Jalandhara bandha is more often used during pranayama exercises than in asana class. It does appear spontaneously during shoulderstand (sarvangasana); and it is utilised in staff pose (dandasana) in the form of maha mudra. Traditionally it is also used in every seated forward fold.

**Benefits:**

Jalandhara bandha regulates the circulatory and respiratory systems. Stress, anger and anxiety are greatly reduced and both the thyroid and metabolism are balanced.

**Contraindications:**

People with high blood pressure, vertigo, heart disease or cervical spondylosis ('wear and tear' of the vertebrae/discs in the neck) should take care practicing Jalandhara bandha.



## Test Yourself

1. What is a bandha?
2. Name the three bandhas and their locations.
3. Describe the fourth bandha.
4. Give two reasons for using the bandhas during an asana class.
5. When do you use mula bandha?
6. When do you use uddiyana bandha?
7. When do you use jalandhara bandha?

## [6] Drishti - Gaze

Drishti is one of the five main ingredients of Ashtanga Vinyasa yoga. When directly translated drishti means 'Vision'. In terms of your yoga practice it is an outward focal point for an inward gaze.

Drishti is a technique for seeing the world as it really is. The gaze should be directed on specific points, but the focus should be soft. The mind can then be directed inwards to the internal feel of each pose. In this way drishti is a method of developing sense withdrawal (*pratyahara*). It should be remembered that as seeing the actual drishti point is unimportant - this technique is even to be used by practitioners who are blind.

### Should the eyes be open or closed during asana?

It is best to keep the eyes open during asana practice. When the eyes close it is easy to become lost in a day dream or incessant thoughts. But the gaze should not be left to wonder around, checking out who is 'best' in a pose or looking for the clock. By focusing the eyes on specific drishti points in each pose you focus both the outward gaze and the mind.

On some occasions it is useful to close the eyes during asana practice. If you notice that students are getting competitive in seated poses it can help them focus on their own practice. It could also be used to add difficulty in standing poses. Most often it is employed at the beginning of a class in order to make the ears more receptive.

Tip of the nose

The navel

The hand

The toes

The thumbs

Up to the sky

Far to the right

Far to the left

Between the eyebrows

### 1. Traditional Drishti

Every asana from the Ashtanga Vinyasa system has a prescribed drishti. As you move from pose to pose you're constantly changing the gaze, but consciously. In total there are nine different looking places, as listed below:

### 2. Benefits of drishti

There are a number of benefits to utilising drishti within an asana practice, including:

- A holiday for the mind - most of our daily life is spent constantly analyzing our surroundings;

searching out and being ready for any danger that may arise.

- Relieves repetitive strain – for students who are constantly looking at a computer screen it exercises the eyeballs by focusing both in different directions and at different distances.
- Aids balance - The walls, floor and ceiling can be used as reference points to keep balance and alignment.
- Reduces identification with the body – In many gym settings a mirror will span a whole wall. Using drishti can help students remove the focus from the outer image of their body.



## Test Yourself

1. What does the term drishti mean?
2. Give three benefits of using drishti
3. In what situations might you ask students to close their eyes?
4. Name the nine traditional drishti.

## [6] Developing a Personal Practice

*“The hatha yogi should... practice in a place the length of a bow (one and a half metres), where there is no hazard of rocks, fire or water.”*

Hatha Yoga Pradipika

One of the best things about asana practice is that it can be done anywhere and at any time. There is no need for a lot of equipment, for specialist clothes or for expensive membership to a club. All that is required is the discipline of a consistent practice.

### 1. Optimal time for your personal practice

Traditionally asana practice is done at sunrise and/or sunset. These times are considered optimal for asana practice as they bridge the stillness of night (tamas, inertia, heaviness, rest) and the activity of day (rajas, buzzing activity, and lightness). While these are the optimal times for practice, it is more important to find a practical time that will work for you; and that you can do daily.

A morning practice can wake up the mind and set a rhythm for the day. The mind tends to be more receptive and alert in the morning, but the body can be more stiff and lethargic. During afternoon and evening practices you may find that the body is suppler, however the mind may be easily distracted by the events of the day or fatigued and ready to switch off.

Having a fixed time of day that you do asana can greatly help to create a consistent practice. Regularity of practice is of paramount importance, and by setting a routine you can build a healthy habit that will last. On the other hand, flexibility is of key importance. If the regular slot is missed it

should not deter the student from practising that day.

#### Common times for yoga practice are:

- Within 60 minutes of waking
- Lunch hour (before eating)
- To transition from work to evening

Asana practice is traditionally done six days a week (Saturdays off), with an additional day off for new and full moon. Female practitioners may also choose to take one or two days off during menstruation.

### 2. Optimal environment for your personal practice

- Quiet (phone off the hook, no people to disturb you).
- Clean (room free from clutter and on a clean surface).
- Naturally lit (or if at night, softly lit – but not too dark).
- Ventilated, but not draughty.
- Warm (warm enough that you can rest in savasana without becoming cold).

- Even floor surface.

### 3. Food & Drink

You should avoid eating a main meal for at least two hours before practice. When the stomach is empty, asanas can work on purifying the system, and your practice has a sense of lightness and ease. You should also refrain from drinking any water during practice, as it extinguishes the internal heat that you are trying to create.

### 4. Clothes & Hair

Asana practice should be done with bare feet. Choose clean and simple clothes that won't distract you as you move. Ideally, remove all jewelry and watches, and if possible remove eye glasses.

If you have long hair, the best hairstyle for yoga practice is two bunches or plaits. This keeps the hair off of the face, but does not get in the way when lying down.

### 5. Don't Burn Out

So many yoga practitioners, especially of Ashtanga Vinyasa yoga, burn out young. Filled with ambition to nail all of the poses, they push their bodies too far, too fast; and often incur pain and injuries. It is easy to become an adrenalin junky (pain releases adrenalin), and before you know it, you've taken a body that worked really wonderfully and wrecked it!

*Keep a long-term view:* When you approach your practice keep in mind that you want to do yoga when you're 90. Do the poses for the long term benefits, rather than what you might achieve today.

*Make your practice a pleasure:* Pain and injury will create bad associations in your mind regarding your practice. You'll associate the practice with hard work and discomfort; and you won't be able to keep a practice going very long. Pain and injury also

reduces your pranic energy. So let your yoga practice be a joy that you want to return to each and every day.

### 6. Never Give Up

A 'good' yoga student isn't the one with the greatest flexibility or strength, but the one who can achieve disciplined practice. Yoga requires 100% dedication on the part of the student which brings them to the mat every day – no matter what.

This may seem like a daunting proposition to the beginner. Every day? Forever? However, there are a myriad of rituals we undertake every day, from brushing our teeth to combing our hair. The difference between these and our yoga practice is that we have categorised them as 'daily essentials', and will prioritise them over other activities. If we prioritise our practice in the same way, there will always be time to fit it into our lives.

### Certification

**After completing this course, students receive both soft and hard copies of their IYT®-International Yoga Teacher certification from the IYO® International Yoga Organisation. This helps obtain employment as lead yoga trainers and yoga teachers in both the public and private sectors. Furthermore, 195 nations accept this accreditation.**

# Teaching Yoga



## SEQUENCE A: Beginners Modified Primary Sequence (60 minute class)

**OPENING & SUN SALUTES – 15 minutes**

Selection of warm up postures  
3 Surya Namsakara A & 3 Surya Namaskara B

**STANDING POSES – 15 minutes**

Utkatasana into Ardha Utkatasana  
Padangusthasana into Padahasthasana  
Utthita Trikonasana (right side and then left side)  
Parsvottanasana into Parivritta Trikonasana, (right side and then left side)  
Virabhadrasana 2 into Utthita Parsvokonasana, (right side and then left side)  
Parivritta Parsvokonasana (right side and then left side)  
Prasarita Padottanasana A into Prasarita Padottanasana C  
Vrksasana (right side then left side)

**SEATED POSES – 15 minutes**

Dandasana into Paschimottanasana A and B into Purvotanasana  
Navasana into Vinyasa  
Janu Sirsasana A (right and left side)  
Navasana into Vinyasa  
Marichiasana A into Marichiasana C (right side)  
Navasana into Vinyasa  
Marichiasana A into Marichiasana C (left side)  
Navasana into Vinyasa  
Baddha Konasana A into Baddha Konasana B

**FINISHING POSES – 15 minutes**

Bridge/Urdhva Dhanurasana x 2 into Paschimottanasana  
Salamba Sarvangasana into Halasana into Karnapidasana into Matsyasana (modified)  
Baddha Padmasana into Padmasana into Savasana

**SEQUENCE B: Improvers Modified Primary Sequence (60 minute class)**

**OPENING & SUN SALUTES – 15 minutes**

Selection of warm up postures and sun salutations

**STANDING POSES – 15 minutes**

**Utkatasana into Ardha Utkatasana**

**Padangusthasana into Padahasthasana**

**Utthita Trikonasana into Ardha Chandrasana** (right side and then left side)

**Parsvottanasana into Parivritta Trikonasana into Parivritta Ardha Chandrasana**  
(right side and then left side)

**Virabhadrasana 2 into Utthita Parsvokonasana**, (right side and then left side)

**Parivritta Parsvokonasana** (right side and then left side)

**Prasarita Padottanasana A into Prasarita Padottanasana C**

**Ardha Baddha Padmottanasana** (right side then left side)

**SEATED POSES – 15 minutes**

**Dandasana into Paschimottanasana A and B into Purvotanasana**  
**Navasana into Vinyasa**

**Ardha Baddha Padma Paschimottanasana** (right and left side)  
**Navasana into Vinyasa**

**Marichiasana A or B into Marichiasana C or D** (right side)  
**Navasana into Vinyasa**

**Marichiasana A or B into Marichiasana C or D** (left side)  
**Navasana into Vinyasa**

**Baddha Konasana A into Baddha Konasana B**

**FINISHING POSES – 15 minutes**

**Urdhva Dhanurasana x 3 into Paschimottanasana**

**Sirsasana**

**Salamba Sarvangasana into Halasana into Karnapidasana into Matsyasana** (modified)

**Baddha Padmasana into Padmasana into Savasana**

**SEQUENCE C: Turning Modified Primary into a 90 minute Vinyasa Flow Class**

**OPENING & SUN SALUTES – 15 minutes**

Selection of warm up postures and sun salutations

**STANDING POSES**

**Utkatasana into Ardha Utkatasana  
into Parivritta Utkatasana**  
(right side and then left side)

**VINYASA**

(walk hands back to)

**Padangusthasana into Padahasthasana into  
Bakasana**

**VINYASA**

**Virabhadrasana 2 into Utthita Trikonasana  
into Ardha Chandrasana** (right side)

**VINYASA**

**Virabhadrasana 2 into Utthita Trikonasana  
into Ardha Chandrasana** (left side)

**VINYASA**

**Parsvottanasana into Parivritta Trikonasana into  
Parivritta Ardha Chandrasana** (right side)

**VINYASA**

**Parsvottanasana into Parivritta Trikonasana into  
Parivritta Ardha Chandrasana** (left side)

**VINYASA**

**Virabhadrasana 2 into Utthita Parsvokonasana  
into Bird of Paradise** (right side)

**VINYASA**

**Virabhadrasana 2 into Utthita Parsvokonasana  
into Bird of Paradise** (left side)

**VINYASA**

**Parivritta Parsvokonasana**  
(right side and then left side)

**VINYASA**

**Prasarita Padottanasana A  
Prasarita Padottanasana C**

**Samakonasana and variations**

**Surya Namaskara** transition to seated

**SEATED POSES**

**Dandasana into Paschimottanasana A and B  
into Purvotanasana**

**Navasana into Vinyasa**

**Janu Sirsasana A into Parivritta Janu Sirsasana**  
(right and left side)

**Navasana into Vinyasa**

**Marichiasana A and Marichiasana C** (right side)

**Navasana into Vinyasa**

**Marichiasana A and Marichiasana C** (left side)

**Navasana into Vinyasa**

**Baddha Konasana A and Baddha Konasana B**

**FINISHING POSES**

**Bridge/Urdhva Dhanurasana x 2  
Paschimottanasana**

**Salamba Sarvangasana into Halasana into  
Karnapidasana**

**Matsyasana** (modified)

**Baddha Padmasana into Padmasana**

**Savasana**

# Modified Primary Sequence

Utkatasana into Ardha Utkatasana

Padangushthasana into Padahastasana

Virabhadrasana 2 into Utthita Parsvokonasana (R & L)

Prasarita Padottanasana A and C

Parsvottanasana into Parivritta Trikonasana (R & L)

Utthita Trikonasana (R & L)

Tadasana

Tadasana

Parsvottanasana into Parivritta Trikonasana (R & L)

Parivritta Parsvokonasana (R & L)

Tadasana

Vinyasa to seated

Dandasana into Paschimottanasana A and B into Purvottanasana

Navasana - Vinyasa

Janu Sirsasana (R & L)

Navasana - Vinyasa

Marichyasana A into C into Navasana - Vinyasa (R & L)

Urdhva Dhanurasana x 2 (modified or full)

Baddha Konasana A and B

Baddha Padmasana into Padmasana

Paschimottanasana

Salamba Sarvangasana into Halasana into Karmapidasana into Matsyasana (modified)

Savasana