



IYT®-International Yoga Teacher 300 hours(Advance Level) Asanas-Part 2

By IYO® International Yoga Organisation



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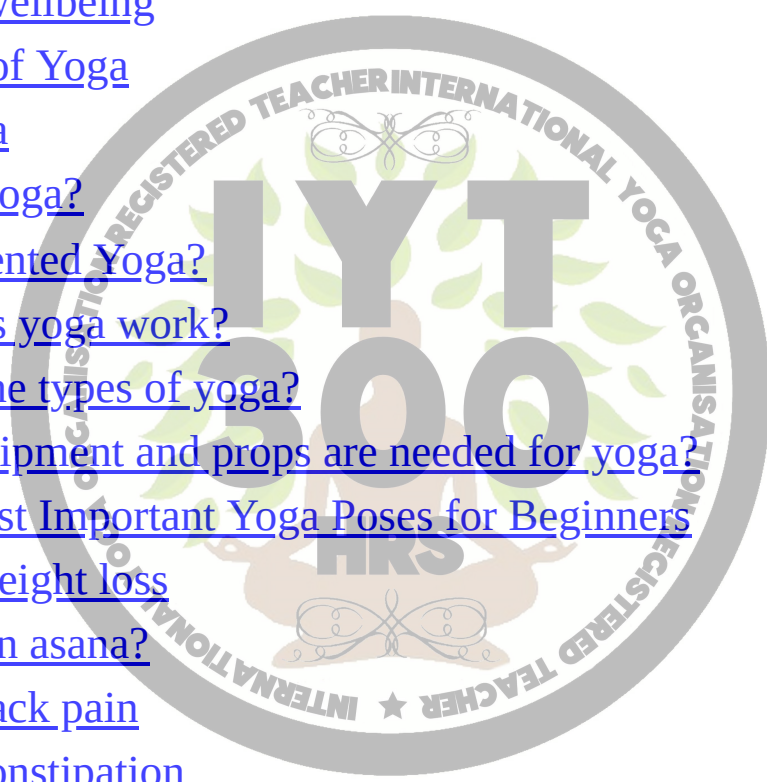
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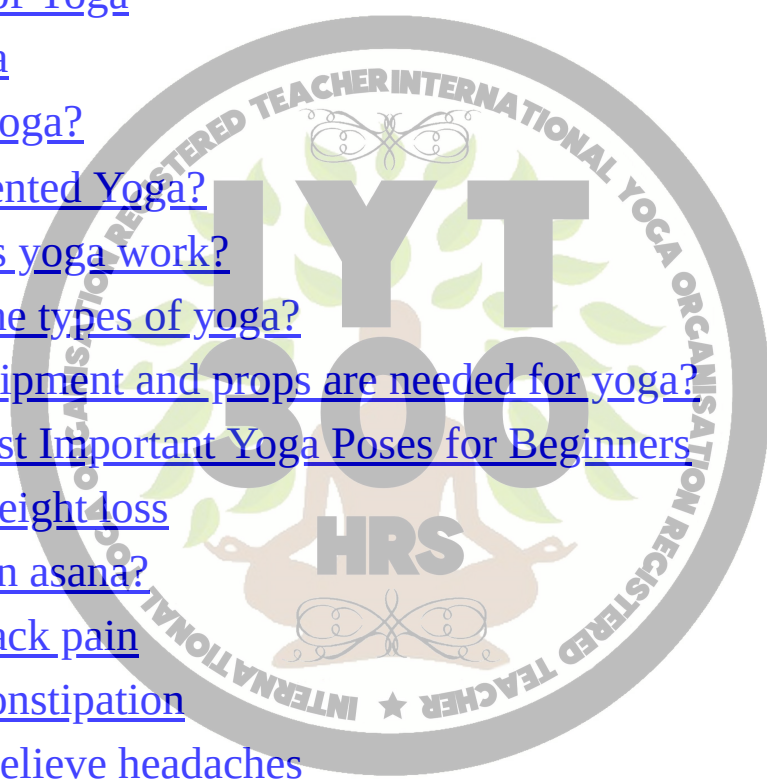
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What does well-being actually mean?

Wellbeing is when we have a positive life experience. Well-being is the state in which one is healthy, safe and happy. The study of wellbeing aims to discover and nurture the factors that enable individuals and communities to thrive.

However, what is wellbeing? To explain this, well-being can be divided into six aspects. It should be remembered that these aspects are not separate but are deeply connected pieces of the feel-good puzzle.

6 aspects of wellbeing

Physical well-being

Physical wellbeing is about being safe, protected and in good health. Moreover, it is closely related to mental wellbeing. When we are in good physical health, we will automatically experience better mental and emotional wellbeing. On the other hand, mental stress and anxiety will strain the internal organs, increase blood pressure, decrease immune function, and disrupt chemical balance.

There is a lot of information online and in books about how to achieve good health. It's basically about highlighting the positive (good habits) and eliminating the negative (bad habits). For this reason, it is best to teach children good habits from the beginning. These habits fall into a holistic system of physical health and include:

- A balanced, healthy diet,
- regular training,
- a healthy weight,
- adequate hydration, sunlight and fresh air,
- sufficient rest,
- good sleep.

Environmental factors such as pollution, toxic chemicals, germs, cold and moisture can affect our physical well-being. Even seemingly harmless things like atmospheric oxygen and sunlight harm our body. The following options are available to eliminate or mitigate all of these factors:

- Keep the home warm and dry
- Clean hands, teeth and body regularly,
- Use natural cleaning and personal care products,
- Take sufficient vitamins and minerals,
- Drink plenty of water.

Genetics play a role in our physical wellbeing, but probably less than you might think. Maintaining good, healthy habits can at least improve most genetic problems, and at best counteract them completely.

By maintaining good health, the body is better able to fight off disease. Prevention is always better than cure. When we are honest with ourselves, the cause of our illnesses is often the fact that we did not take care of our health.

When you do get sick, it is always best to try to address the cause of the illness long term, rather than just treat the symptoms, if possible.

It is best to use natural remedies and avoid prescription drugs as much as possible. Natural remedies are gentler on both humans and the planet.

Prescription drugs often only mask symptoms and usually have side effects, some of which are unknown.

In addition to cold and moisture, other factors can affect our wellbeing. Homes, buildings, and even clothing protect us from many dangers.

Peace is critical to well-being, but unfortunately wars, terrorism and violent crime are a constant threat around the world. We must do everything possible to stop these threats peacefully.

Intellectual wellbeing

Intellectual well-being arises when we use our intellectual abilities in a meaningful and satisfying way. It involves the pursuit of intellectually stimulating and challenging activities throughout life. This includes things like learning, creativity, communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and the pursuit of understanding and wisdom.

People are naturally curious and lifelong learning helps our wellbeing. This requires openness to new ideas and active participation in academic, creative and cultural experiences.

Using memory, imagination, and other cognitive skills to communicate, solve problems, generate new ideas, and think critically promotes wellbeing.

Expressing yourself in conversation, writing or art is an important path to intellectual wellbeing. Listening to and learning from others and respecting different perspectives is also a sign of intellectual well-being. Engaging conversation is one of the nicest things in life and doesn't require fossil fuel energy, just a little bit of mental energy.

Being able to concentrate is a critical skill for intellectual wellbeing. Concentrating on something challenging and fully engaging in what you are good at and enjoy is called "flow". "Flow" means when you are fully functional. You tend to lose track of time and lose your ego.

Developing skills for useful, practical purposes or simply for their own sake, improves well-being in several ways. Whether it's a craft, a musical instrument, a game, puzzles, public speaking, or anything else, knowledge and skill development is good for you.

The overall result of intellectual well-being over time is the attainment of wisdom.

Social wellbeing

Social well-being is when we have good relationships, social stability and peace.

Humans are social beings who are interdependent and rely on others for our well-being, just as they rely on us. To be healthy people must love and be loved. We have to belong and be connected.

The worst form of punishment is solitary confinement. People who are in solitary confinement for long periods of time are mentally damaged, which can lead to hallucinations. Panic attacks, overt paranoia, decreased impulse control, hypersensitivity to external stimuli, and difficulties with thinking,

concentration, and memory. While some people get along well with it, most people cannot cope with loneliness for long. We need other people to keep us healthy.

Social intelligence factors - including emotional intelligence, morality, parenting, empathy, adaptability, and altruism - are important in promoting social well-being. Social well-being is also based on things like freedom, trust and equality.

It is statistically proven that people with good social relationships tend to be healthier and live longer than those who don't.

Social health results from regular, positive social contact with family, friends, neighbors, work and school. Affiliation and social contact can also come from sports clubs, community groups, volunteer organizations, churches, political parties, interest groups and hobby groups, etc. Schools, gyms, swimming pools, libraries, and community events (such as fairs and markets) provide opportunities for social contact. In addition, local restaurants, cafes, bars, pubs and clubs are places to meet other people.

Much of the research into social capital over the past few years shows that social bonds affect not only our personal health, but also our social health. If one does not have social well-being, happiness decreases, we need to improve our social contact and camaraderie.

Our role and status in society also play an important role in our wellbeing. Status is a basic need, but actual status does not come from what we have but from what we do. In our materialistic and consumeristic world, we often judge a person's status by what they have. But people can acquire material wealth through all kinds of dysfunctional, destructive, immoral, and even criminal avenues. Conspicuous consumption is often dubious, there are no shortcuts to true status.

Professional wellbeing

Professional wellbeing is the ability to achieve personal satisfaction and fulfillment through work, maintain balance in our lives, and make a positive difference within the organizations in which we work and the communities in which we live.

What does “calling” include?

It is the answer to the question "What are you doing?" We prefer the word “calling” to alternatives like “job” or “career” because a “calling” implies that it is better than just being busy with paid work. We define calling as any type of work, whether paid or unpaid, including childcare, family care and housework.

It also includes volunteering and community work. Continuing education, professional training and other types of professional development are also included. It could also include any endeavor - such as playing music, writing, arts or crafts - that achieves personal fulfillment through the use of knowledge, skills, and talent.

It doesn't matter what your calling is. However, since a significant portion of our waking hours is spent at work or related to work, it is important that you find them fulfilling and rewarding for yourself. Your calling should align with your interests and values and match your talents, strengths, and abilities.

Your chosen calling should meet your inner needs and ambitions for achievement, usefulness, personal development, purpose, belonging, and mutual aspiration. Extrinsic rewards like money and status are good, but only up to a point. Everyone has to pay the bills and have sufficient material wealth for well-being, but this can be a surprisingly small amount. Be proud of what you do, not how much you make.

If one wanted to utterly annihilate and destroy a man in order to inflict the most terrible punishment on him, one would only have to get him to do a job that is wholly and wholly without utility or meaning.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- I am satisfied with my career or career choice.
- I look forward to work.
- My professional duties are in line with my values.
- My job gives me personal satisfaction and inspiration.
- I am satisfied with the professional and personal growth opportunities in my career or job.
- I feel like my job allows me to make a difference in the world.

While work is an important part of life and often adds significantly to a person's wellbeing, it can also cause problems. Long hours of work, commuting, insecurity and expectations can create anxiety and stress.

Studies have shown that people generally work longer than ever before, are more stressed and neglect other areas of their lives. It's a shame that a mom or dad is stressed out and working long hours to deliver the things a family wants when the family actually needs more stress-free parents who are around most of the time.

Part of the feel-good puzzle

Professional well-being is related to other dimensions of well-being and to the general well-being that someone experiences. A satisfactory working life has a positive effect on physical and emotional well-being. Professional development promotes intellectual well-being. The positive cooperation with others promotes social well-being. Achieving personal satisfaction and fulfillment in our own work deepens our meaning and purpose and thus our inner well-being.

The emotional well-being

Mental illness has long been a subject of the study, especially for clinicians trying to treat sick patients. Emotional (and mental or psychological) well-being has only recently become a field of study under the name “Positive Psychology”.

According to positive psychologists, there are two basic ways people achieve mental wellbeing.

The hedonic approach is to seek pleasure and avoid pain.

The eudaimonic approach focuses on meaning and self-actualization and defines well-being in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functional.

The difference between the two can be explained using the example of parenting. Surveys have shown that adults who don't want to have children are happier than adults who have children. In this case, happiness is hedonic.

While parenting is often difficult and sometimes even painful, it offers benefits that contribute to mental well-being, such as loving relationships and a sense of belonging, as well as intrinsic satisfactions such as purpose and achievement.

Similarly, long-distance runners are poised to experience significant physical pain and emotional agony in order to achieve their goals that bring them well-being through purpose and achievement.

This distinction between the hedonic and eudaimonic approaches to emotional wellbeing also illuminates the best path to sustainability. The hedonic path is essentially short-term and short-sighted, even selfish. While all people need some hedonic wellbeing in their life, the constant search for pleasure and avoidance of pain in the form of positive emotions leads to waste. Since it is selfish and irresponsible, it is not sustainable.

In contrast, the eudaimonic approach is much more likely to be sustainable. With good relationships, positive goals, and a sense of purpose that makes sense (and not just passive consumption), the eudaimonic approach encourages a long-term perspective and responsibility for others and the self.

Aspects of mental well-being:

Positive emotions

In order for us to experience well-being, we need positive emotions in our life. Any positive emotion like peace, gratitude, contentment, pleasure, inspiration, hope, curiosity, or love falls into this category. The point is that it's really important to have fun in the present, as long as the other aspects of wellbeing are there.

Engagement

When we are really occupied with what we are doing, we experience a state of flux: time seems to stop, we lose our consciousness and concentrate intensely on the present. The more we experience this type of engagement, the more likely we are to experience wellbeing.

Relationships

People are social beings and good relationships are at the core of our wellbeing. Usually, people who have meaningful, positive relationships with others are happier than those who don't.

Sense

Meaning comes from serving a cause greater than us. No matter what it is, we all need purpose in our lives in order to have a sense of wellbeing.

Power

Many of us strive to improve in some way, whether we want to master a skill, achieve a valuable goal, or win a competitive event. Hence, performance is another important thing that contributes to our ability to thrive.

Inner wellbeing

Inner well-being arises from the connection and harmony between our inner life and the outer world. In other words:

- It's the feeling of belonging and of being connected to the world.
- It is the feeling of being part of something bigger and more important than the problems, pressures and challenges of everyday life.
- It offers inner peace.

However, modern economies drivesystematically people away from inner well-being by manipulating their values, beliefs and behaviors.

By denying the soul [our inner selves], we treat each other as economic goods. Instead, if we want to change soullessness, we must pay due attention to the inner workings of the individual.

The path to inner well-being includes acceptance of the world and the transcendence of our everyday life. Commitment, creativity and practices such as meditation, rituals and yoga all contribute to the development of inner well-being.

The values, beliefs, principles and morals also help define and express the inner self. Take the time to consider what this is and whether your behaviors and actions correspond to these factors. By cultivating creative values and principles such as compassion, love, forgiveness, acceptance, trust, kindness, empathy, altruism, joy and fulfillment in our lives, we contribute to promoting our inner health and the inner health of others and the world.

Important questions

Do you feel:

- Content?
- Energy?
- Balance?
- Can you put the bad days in perspective and live purposefully?

If you answered “yes”, you experience well-being, a state of general satisfaction with life and the state of things. In this state we experience a balance in body, mind and spirit and feel connected to purpose, people and community.

But many of us are not there. Our lifestyle causes us pain, whether we are tired, stressed or overweight. We feel disconnected from others or stuck in a routine that has no meaning. We are dissatisfied with our daily life. We live in worry.

The good news is that with practice we can improve our well-being and achieve a state of balance and contentment. We can prosper!

Wellbeing starts with the simple question: what can I do to feel satisfied and balanced? When we ask this, our entire perspective changes - we no longer turn to our healthcare providers, government agencies, or food companies to tell us what to do. We enable ourselves to explore what we really need and to evaluate for ourselves what makes sense.

Well-being comes from within

Your path to wellbeing will be unique to you and will result from the awareness of where you are and what you need.

- Listen to the body and mind. Notice what's going on.
- Take small steps. Examine the results.
- Create a positive environment in which you can be successful.
- Include the support of others.
- Be compassionate to yourself
- Remember that wellbeing is our natural inclination. Trust the feeling of what is right for you.
- Enjoy your successes.

Yoga and wellbeing

Finding happiness or maintaining our wellbeing are two things that most of us would like to achieve. Fortunately, there have never been so many tactics, methods, or habits that helped us get there. One such example is yoga, a practice that has taken the world by storm. But what makes yoga so good for you?

Benefits of Yoga

Physical Health and Wellbeing Benefits

Blood pressure, circulation and heart.

Yoga lowers blood pressure through better blood circulation and oxygen supply. It lowers your heart rate, which means your heart is strong enough to pump more blood with fewer beats. By transporting nutrients and oxygen through the body, yoga makes your organs, skin, and brain healthier. A lower heart rate and improved oxygen supply to the body lead to higher cardiovascular endurance and a lower risk of heart disease.

Breathing and strong immunity

A lower breathing rate means the lungs are working more efficiently. This is achieved through the controlled breathing exercises of yoga and has an effect on improved fitness. Yoga has been linked to a stronger immune system.

Healthy organs

Yoga "massages" internal organs and helps the body to prevent diseases. Experienced yoga practitioners are better attuned to their bodies and recognize the first signs of problems, which enable a faster response to head-to-head diseases. The gastrointestinal functions have greatly improved. Yoga massages and stimulates healthy organs.

Pain, back pain and better posture.

Chronic and acute pain can be treated and sometimes eliminated with regular yoga. Many beginners cite back pain as the main reason for participating in yoga. Various practices can help relieve compression on the spine, relieve strain on muscles and help maintain overall body alignment.

Balanced weight and metabolism

A balanced metabolism helps maintain a healthy weight and control hunger. Consistent yoga exercises help to find balance and ensure a more efficient metabolism. It also acts on the thyroid gland. This can help keep the weight in check. Stretching the muscles lengthways helps reduce cellulite. Yoga can help lower cholesterol levels through increased blood flow and fat burning. There is evidence that yoga can also lower blood sugar levels.

Strength, endurance and muscle tone.

You use your entire body weight for the exercises. Core Strength - A strong core supports overall health and helps reduce injuries. Yoga acts on the entire body and improves endurance. It is often used by endurance athletes as a supplement to their sport-specific training. Consistent practice improves muscle tone.

Detoxification, improved lymphatic and endocrine functions

Your lymphatic system strengthens your immunity and reduces toxins in the body. The way to get the lymphatic system flowing well is through exercise. Yoga postures are designed to promote a strong lymphatic system and help flush out toxins. It also helps regulate and control hormone secretion. This balances hormones and promotes better overall physical and emotional health.

More energy and better sleep

Practicing regularly helps maintain a more consistent energy level. Because of the many mind and body benefits that yoga offers, many people sleep much better.

Aging and balance

An essential part of yoga is balance and control over the body. Your overall balance will improve. Yoga stimulates the detoxification process, which is believed to delay aging.

Lower risk of injury

Due to the low influence of yoga and the controlled aspect of the movements, there is a lower risk of injury compared to other forms of training.

Flexibility and increased movement in joints

Regular and gentle yoga practice can tremendously improve flexibility and joint movement in the body. Yoga is particularly recommended for those with arthritis of the joints, and most postures can be adjusted so as not to overload problematic joints with increased pain.

Emotional health benefits

Significant mood improvement, less anger

Yoga is believed to increase the neurotransmitter dopamine (natural antidepressant) and strengthen the nervous system. A strong mind-body connection, healthy body, and concentration can all contribute to greater

happiness. Most yoga practitioners report tremendous reductions in hostility and a sense of control when anger flares up.

Stress reduction

By removing tension from the body, relaxing, meditating, and controlling breath, stress is significantly reduced. The focus required during yoga draws attention to the now. It helps you get away from your problems.

Parasympathetic Nervous System

For most of the exercises, the sympathetic nervous system makes you feel like a fight or flight. Yoga does the opposite and stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, also known as the "relaxation system". This lowers blood pressure and slows breathing, which helps in relaxation and healing.

Anxiety and depression

One benefit of the controlled breathing of yoga is the reduction in anxiety. Often suppressed negative feelings are brought to the surface in yoga. When this happens, the negative energy no longer gets stuck in you, but is released. The regular release of this negativity leads to a reduction in depression in many people. Yoga helps convert negative thinking into positive thinking.

Self-acceptance and self-control

When one concentrates and realizes through yoga that perfection is not the goal, then comes the feeling of self-acceptance. Controlled movements teach you how to incorporate self-control into your life.

Concentration and memory

Just 8 weeks of yoga can lead to more concentration and motivation. Improved blood flow to the brain, stress relief and improved focus can all lead to better memory.

Quiet

Concentrating so intensely on what the body is doing brings calm. Yoga also introduces you to meditation and watches how you breathe and detach

yourself from your thoughts, which calms the mind.

Yoga is also believed to improve osteoporosis, Alzheimer's disease, type II diabetes, carpal tunnel syndrome, asthma, arthritis, migraines, scoliosis, chronic bronchitis, epilepsy, scoliosis, obsessive-compulsive disorder, constipation, allergies, and the side effects of menopause.

Benefits of Meditation

Researchers have found that long-term practitioners of yoga and meditation have more genes to fight disease. The changes were triggered by the so-called "relaxation effect", a phenomenon that is just as strong as any drug, but without any side effects. After two months, their bodies began to change. The genes that help fight inflammation, kill diseased cells, and protect the body from cancer began to turn on. The more they practiced, the stronger their immunity and the healthier their hormone levels and blood pressure became.

The health benefits of deep relaxation

These are just a few of the scientifically proven benefits.

Immunity

Relaxation strengthens immunity in the recovery of cancer patients. One study found that progressive muscle relaxation, practiced daily, reduced the risk of breast cancer recurrence. In another study, a month of relaxation exercises strengthened natural killer cells in the elderly, giving them greater resistance to tumors and viruses.

Fertility

One study found that women are more likely to get pregnant during times when they're relaxed and not stressed. Another study also found that stress decreased sperm count and motility, suggesting that relaxation can also increase male fertility.

Irritable bowel syndrome

In research, symptoms of gas, diarrhea, and constipation improved significantly when patients with IBS practiced relaxation meditation twice a

day. Researchers recommended it as an effective treatment.

Blood pressure

One study found that meditation lowered blood pressure by making the body less responsive to stress hormones. One report found that patients trained to relax had significantly lower blood pressure.

Inflammation

Stress leads to inflammation, a condition linked to heart disease, arthritis, asthma, and skin conditions like psoriasis, researchers say. Meditation can help prevent and treat such symptoms by turning off the stress response.

What is yoga?

Yoga is an ancient physical and spiritual discipline and branch of philosophy that is reported to have originated in India more than 5,000 years ago. The word "yoga" comes from the Sanskrit word "yuj", which means yoke (to join or unite). The Iyengar Yoga School defines "Yuj" as "connecting or integrating all aspects of the individual - body with mind and spirit with soul - to achieve a happy, balanced and useful life". The ultimate goal of yoga, they claim, is to attain kaivalya (emancipation or ultimate freedom).

Who Invented Yoga?

There are no written records of who invented yoga as it was practiced by yogis (yoga practitioners) long before a written record of it could have been made. Yogis passed the discipline on to their students over the millennia, and many different schools of yoga developed over time.

It is widely believed that Patanjali, an Indian yogic sage who lived 2,000 to 2,500 years ago, wrote the earliest written record of yoga and one of the oldest texts in existence. Patanjali is credited with writing the Yoga Sutras (Sutra means "thread" in Sanskrit), which are the principles, philosophy and practices of yoga that are followed to this day.

Although many schools of yoga have evolved over the centuries, they all follow the same basic principles. Buddhism and other Eastern spiritual traditions use many of the yoga techniques or derivatives of these techniques.

Dozens of types of yoga are practiced worldwide, but there is no place here to cover all of them. That's why we mention a few like Hatha, Kundalini, Bikram, and Ashtanga Yoga, the four most popular types practiced in fitness centers and in the area.

Yoga has been around for thousands of years. According to some records, it was developed in northern India over 5,000 years ago. People reported using yoga for wellbeing (stress relief, quality of life), health conditions, and certain ailments such as back or neck pain.

How does yoga work?

Yoga uses asanas (postures), focusing on specific parts of the body, and pranayama (breathing techniques) to integrate the body with the mind and the mind with the soul.

The body

Yoga asanas (postures or poses) help to condition the body. There are thousands of yoga poses, and in Sanskrit these poses are called "kriyas" (actions), "mudras" (seals) and "bandhas" (locks). A kriya focuses on the effort required to move energy up and down the spine. Yoga mudra is a gesture or movement used to hold energy or focus awareness.

The mind

Yoga focuses on the mind by teaching you to focus on specific parts of the body. This awareness keeps the mind-body connection sharp and doesn't leave much time for external situations (e.g. worrying about what you're

going to cook for dinner or the presentation in the office that you need to prepare for).

Instead, the focus is internally between the head and the body. An example is Savasana (the corpse pose), which is practiced by practically all yoga schools. During the Savasana you lie on your back with your eyes closed and let your whole body sink to the floor. The idea is not to fight thoughts that you have but to let them come and go while the yoga master's voice guides you through visual images so you can focus on how your muscles feel. The desired and often achieved result is a peaceful, calm and relaxing state. Savasana is generally the last pose of a yoga session before the last breathing exercises.

The ghost

Yoga uses controlled breathing to connect mind, body and spirit. The breathing techniques are called pranayamas; "Prana" means energy or life force and "Yama" means social ethics. It is believed that the controlled breathing of pranayamas controls the flow of energy in the body. Controlled breathing helps focus on muscles that are working.

During Savasana, it slows the heart rate, calms the mind, and leads to a deep, inner calm and a feeling of relaxation.

What are the types of yoga?

There are dozens of styles or schools of yoga. They developed over the centuries as various yogis developed their own philosophies and approaches and taught them to eager students who then passed them on to their own students. For example, hatha yoga, arguably the most popular type of yoga, was developed in the 15th century by Yogi Swatmarama in India and is a

preparatory stage of physical cleansing that prepares the body for the practice of higher meditation.

Likewise, Kundalini Yoga, which is reported to be more than 5,000 years old, was introduced in the west by Yogi Bhajan in 1969.

Basically, all yoga types strive for the same result, a union of mind, body and soul, although they can differ in their philosophy and even in the asanas.

Here is a list of the different types of yoga (this is not an all-inclusive list): Purna, Ashtanga, Jnana, Bhakti, Bikram, Karma, Raja, Hatha, Kundalini, Mantra, Tantra, Iyengar, Astanga, Vini, Ananda, Anusara, Integral, Kali Ray Tri, Kripalu, Kundalini and Sivananda.

There is also yoga on the Physioball (an American invention), and even nude yoga! Some of the most popular ones you are likely to find in yoga and fitness centers are Hatha, Iyengar, Astanga (or Ashtanga), Bikram, and Kundalini. Your local center may teach other species. We will briefly describe the most popular types of yoga. Many other types of yoga are searchable online.

Hatha yoga is the most widely used type of yoga and is great for beginners. It's gentle with slow and gentle movements and the focus is on holding the poses and incorporating breathing into the movement. It is a great introduction to yoga as it includes many different asanas as well as pranayamas. Hatha yoga prepares you for other types of yoga. Hatha is a great way to stretch, tone up your muscles, connect with the body, relax and relieve stress.

Iyengar yoga is a form of yoga that uses poses similar to Hatha but focuses more on body alignment and balance, holds poses longer, and uses props such as straps, blankets and blocks. It's also a great choice for beginners.

Kundalini Yoga emphasizes rapid movement through the poses and breathing, singing and meditating. It feels more spiritual than hatha and focuses on the energy balance in the body. If you are a beginner and unfamiliar with yoga poses and meditation, Kundalini can be physically and mentally challenging. Hence, hatha or a beginner class is probably the better way to go.

Bikram Yoga is derived from traditional Hatha Yoga but it is practiced in a room (sometimes not ventilated) that is heated to around 105 degrees 40.6 ° C. The aim is to loosen up muscles and sweat to cleanse the body and eliminate symptoms of illness and chronic pain.

There is no research into the safety or effectiveness of Bikram, so we do not recommend it because of the risk of dehydration, hyperthermia (overheating), changes in blood pressure, and heart problems with exercise. This is especially true for people who may have a pre-existing heart problem or high blood pressure but don't know it. Bikram has grown in popularity and some people swear by it. However, one should speak to the doctor first if you are determined to give it a try.

Ashtanga Yoga or Power Yoga is an ancient yoga system taught by Sri K. Pattabhi Jois at the Ashtanga Yoga Research Institute in Mysore, India. It is taught as an aggressive workout in which you quickly switch from one pose to the next to build strength and endurance. There is little emphasis on meditation with Ashtanga, and by the end of the session you will feel more like you have done traditional strength training or callisthenic training than any other type of yoga. Ashtanga is for you if you are looking for a hard, physically demanding workout.

What equipment and props are needed for yoga?

Mats: You don't need a lot to practice yoga, but in modern yoga studios with wooden floors or in your own home, you need a sticky rubber mat to keep it from slipping.

In the good old days, there were carpeted studios where you only had to bring a towel, but mats are a necessity in most studios today.

Towel: This ensures that you can wipe away your sweat or even roll it up under your neck for support.

Blanket: A blanket is helpful for folding up and sitting down if you have difficulty sitting flat on the floor with your legs crossed, such as in a pose called sukhasana. A blanket is also useful to cover yourself with if you are lying still during savasana when the room is cool.

Blocks and Wedges: Blocks are brick-sized pieces of foam that help with body alignment and getting into some poses.

Straps: The straps are made of cotton and are great for stretching and holding poses, especially for poses with the legs.

What should be worn in yoga?

Any clothing that is not restrictive will work. Tank tops, t-shirts, leggings, tights or shorts are sufficient. You will bend, twist and possibly stand on your head during the yoga session. So wear clothes that don't expose more of you than you want. You won't wear socks during the session, although you may want to have them on hand for Savasana at the end if your feet get cold.

Is It Safe To Do Yoga?

You should discuss yoga with your doctor before starting if you have any medical condition such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetic eye disease (diabetic retinopathy), orthopedic problems (low back, neck, etc.), or other medical conditions. Some of the poses may be unsafe and the doctor can advise you. For example, people with diabetic retinopathy should not do exercises with their head under their heart, such as dog pointing downward (adho mukha svanasana), bending forward (konasana), handstand (adho mukha vrksasana) and other inversion poses. Some of you may have back problems that should be discussed with your doctor and yoga teacher before you begin.



The 10 Most Important Yoga Poses for Beginners

If you are brand new to yoga, there are certain postures that you absolutely need to learn so that you can feel comfortable in the studio or practice alone at home.

It is not easy to narrow everything down as there are over 300 positions in physical yoga practice (asana), but these poses can get you on the right track. Doing each of these exercises for 5-10 breaths also creates a great beginner yoga program that you can do every day.

Here are our tips for the 10 most important yoga poses for beginners. Note: You don't have to be able to perform all of these poses exactly as shown. ALWAYS listen to your body and change the pose if necessary.



1. Mountain maintenance

Mountain posture is the basis for all standing poses. It gives you a sense of how to dip your feet in and feel the earth below you. The mountain pose may seem like "just standing" but it's much more than that.

This is how it works: Stand with your feet together. Pinch all ten toes as you open them. Activate your quadriceps to raise your kneecaps. Contract your abs and pull up as you lift your chest and push your shoulders down.

Feel your shoulder blades come together and open your chest, but keep your palms facing inward toward your body. Imagine a string that pulls your head up to the ceiling. Hold it for 58 breaths.



2. Downward facing dog

Downward facing dog is used in most yoga postures and yoga classes and it stretches and strengthens the entire body.

Here's how it works: Get on all fours with your wrists under your shoulders and knees under your hips. Lift your hips off the floor as you pull back toward your heels.

Keep your knees slightly bent when the hamstrings are tight. Otherwise, try straightening your legs while holding your hips back. Move your hands forward to add more length if necessary.

Firmly press your palms on the mat and twist your elbows towards each other. Hollow out the abdominal muscles and keep reaching into your legs

so that the upper body moves back towards the thighs. Hold this position for 58 breaths before dropping onto your hands and knees to rest.



3. Plank

Plank teaches us how to balance on our hands while using the entire body to support us. It's a great way to strengthen your abs and learn to use your breath to stay in a challenging posture.

Here's how it works: Lie on the mat, then use your toes and elbows to lift yourself off the mat. Push your heels far back.

Pull your shoulders down and away from your ears, contract your stomach, and take 8-10 deep breaths.



4. Triangle

Triangle is a wonderful standing position for stretching the sides of the waist, opening the lungs, strengthening the legs, and toning the entire body.

Here's how it works: Stand with your feet apart. Open and straighten your arms to the side at shoulder height. Rotate your right foot 90 degrees and your left toe about 45 degrees.

Engage the quadriceps and abs as you twist your right leg to the side. Put your right hand on your ankle and raise your left arm towards the ceiling. Turn your gaze to the upper hand and hold for 5-8 breaths. Repeat on the other side.



5. Tree

Baum is a fantastic standing balance for beginners to work on to gain focus and clarity and to breathe while standing and keep the body balanced on one foot.

Here's how it works: Start with your feet together and place your right foot on your inner left thigh. Clasp your hands together as if in prayer and find a point in front of you that you can hold in view.

Hold your tension and breathe for 8-10 breaths, then switch sides. Make sure you are not leaning on your standing leg and keep your abdominal muscles tensed and your shoulders relaxed.



6. Warrior 1

Warrior poses are essential to building strength and endurance in a yoga practice. They give us confidence and straighten the hips and thighs while building strength throughout the lower body and core.

Warrior 1 is a gentle bend back and a great pose for opening up the front body while strengthening the legs, hips, buttocks, core and torso.

Here's how it works: For Warrior 1, you can take a big step back, bending your left foot, then turning your left heel back and tilting your left toe 75 degrees forward.

Lift your chest and press your palms up. Repeat on the other leg.



7. Warrior 2

Warrior 2 is an extreme hip opener and opens the inner thighs. It's a great starting point for many side poses, including triangle, extended angle and crescent balance.

Here's how it works: Stand with your feet apart. Rotate your right toes 90 degrees and your left toes 45 degrees. Bend your right knee until it is just above your right ankle while positioning your torso evenly between your hips.

Extend your arms outward and look over your right hand. Hold for 8-10 breaths before extending your right leg and rotating your feet to the other side to repeat on the left side.



8. Seated forward bend

It is important to include a forward bend in yoga practice to stretch the hamstrings, lower and upper back and sides. The seated forward bend is the perfect hold posture for everyone to open the body and learn to breathe through uncomfortable positions.

If you feel sharp pain, you need to withdraw. However, when you feel the tension when you push yourself forward and can continue to breathe, you will slowly relax and let go. You can also keep your knees bent in the pose as long as your feet stay bent and together.

Here's how: Sit with your legs together, feet firmly bent that won't twist in or out and your hands on your hips. Lift your chest and begin to twist

forward from the waist. Reach your abdominal muscles and imagine your belly button moving towards your thigh.

Once you have reached your max, stop and breathe for 8-10 breaths. Make sure your shoulders, head, and neck are clear.



9. Bridge posture

A counter-posture to a forward bend is a backward bend. Bridge position is a good back flex for beginners that stretches the front body and strengthens the back body.

This is how it works: Lie on your back and place your feet hip-width apart. Press your feet firmly on the mat and lift your butt off the mat. Clasp

your hands and press your hands on the floor as you open your chest even more.

Imagine pulling your heels on the mat towards your shoulders to touch the hamstrings. Hold for 8-10 breaths then lower your hips and repeat twice more.



10. Child pose

Everyone needs a good resting pose and the child pose is a great not only for beginners but also for yoga practitioners of all levels.

It is good to learn a child's pose when you are tired, at night before bed, or when you need a mental break and stress or tension relief.

Here's how it works: Start on all fours, then bring your knees and feet together as you sit your bum back on your heels and extend your arms forward. Lower your forehead to the floor (or pad, pillow or blanket) and let go of your entire body. Hold as long as you want!



Yoga for weight loss

Yoga rejuvenates the system and can keep you from overeating. Once a certain awareness arises in your body, you will only eat what is needed.

This is not because you need to control or regulate your life anyway or because someone tells you to diet. When doing other exercises or diets, you are always trying to control yourself. With yoga practices, you don't have to do that. You just do the exercises. This will take care of the system so that you won't eat more than you need to.

Yoga, Weight Loss & Strength Training

The human muscles are very special. What our muscles can do is fantastic. And this can be improved by strengthening them while being very flexible at the same time. When you lift weights, the muscles look big, but with no flexibility. If you see people who have built large muscles, they will not be able to do some yoga poses properly. You can't even bend.

Yoga is just as effective in building the body as any strength training, and it won't put unnecessary strain on the system.

If you just want muscles that look great, there are easier ways to do it these days. You can get bicep implants. The silicone doesn't just go into the chest, it goes into the biceps, the calf muscles, everything. It doesn't matter that it's useless. You don't have to work hard, take hormones, and keep pumping iron. There are easier options when it comes to looking your best.

Yes, bodybuilding gives you raw strength. But you can build up the same strength in a completely different way and most importantly, keep the body flexible, which is very important. Well-being has different aspects: health, energy, psychological and spiritual aspects. If we invest 30 minutes to an hour in the morning, we want to see that the benefit for us lies across the board, not just in tense muscles.

Yoga involves using your own body weight to do exercises. Then you have no excuse for not having a gym. You can train wherever you are because you only need your body. This is just as effective in building the body as any strength training, and it won't put unnecessary strain on the system. It will make you look like a reasonable person and it will make you strong too - very strong.

Can Yoga Really Help You Lose Weight? The basic fact of yoga is that it is an aerobic exercise that at a moderate pace can help you get in shape. If you are looking for serious weight loss it must be done over a period of time and under the supervision of a yoga expert. The advantage of yoga is that it makes you fresh and new every time you finish exercising. The reason for this is the fact that yoga puts mind, body and breath on the same platform. This phenomenon makes it more interesting, easier and more effective compared to other workouts.

Those looking to lose weight should come up with a proper plan and set small achievable goals for themselves. When these goals are achieved, they give a lot of self-confidence and serve as fuel to achieve the next goals.

The secret to weight loss is getting your action clear. We tend to find the solution to weight loss in pills and crazy diet plans. But the truth remains that there is no alternative to hard work. And flaring away those unwanted calories can be fun too. First of all, you have to adjust your mindset correctly.

Check the weight before it controls you:

Age also plays an important role in losing weight. When you're young, chances are you can get in shape with minimal effort. It's more difficult for those who are over thirty. Once you are over 30 years old, you need to pay special attention to eating habits. Fats, carbohydrates and proteins are the main content of every meal.

If you choose them wisely over the different meals of the day, you can achieve your goals in the long run. Complex carbohydrates and healthy fats can be part of breakfast, but doing the same for your dinner may not be a good idea.

By tracking your diet, you can also get an idea of where the macronutrients are coming from. Make sure to keep track of everything that goes in. This will make you aware of what you are eating throughout the day. The more you educate yourself, the more careful you will become and the healthier you will make choices. It's all about awareness.

Yoga has many benefits including helping you lose weight!

Aside from the physical side, which helps you burn calories, the main reason yoga can help you lose weight is actually from the mental side.

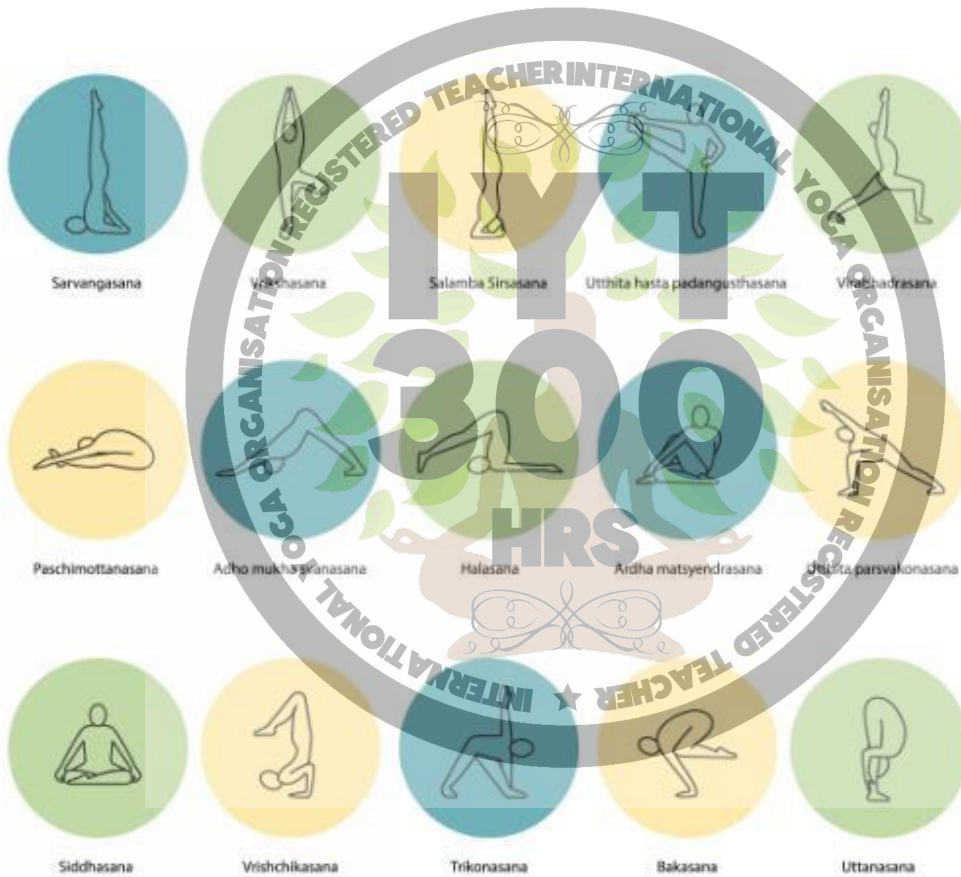
We all know that stress leads to poor nutrition. Yoga helps to greatly reduce stress, which not only helps you make better decisions, but also lowers cortisol levels.

Cortisol is the stress hormone that causes weight gain. If you can lower your cortisol levels, then you will lose weight naturally.

As for the physical aspect ... we want to remind you that what you put in is what you will get out of it.

Anyone can go through the movements in yoga without actually trying. Yoga is about the mind and body

to challenge and bring it to a new length. When you challenge yourself, you burn more calories and lose more weight.



What is an asana?

Asana is roughly translated from Sanskrit as "pose" or "posture". This simply means a "yoga pose".

The literal translation actually means "to be in a comfortable sitting position". This comes from the branch of yoga called Ashtanga Yoga and refers to the physical exertion and also the mental relaxation that happens in yoga. Practicing these asanas brings you awareness both internally and externally.

Many of the poses that follow include instructions to “repeat on the other side”. This means that it is a two-sided pose and only muscles on one side of the body are trained at a time. Always repeat the pose on both sides of the body to build strength and flexibility in the body equally.

Legs apart, forward flexion

Your hands should be touching the floor in front of you in this pose but we'll do the extra shoulder stretch!

Spread your feet apart and bend your hips forward, not your waist. This means that when you bend, your back should be as straight as possible and not just "arching" forward.

If you don't bend properly, you will actually feel a major stretch in your hamstrings. Practice in front of the mirror to get the right shape.

Hold it for 5-6 breaths. When you are comfortable, fold your hands behind your back. Try bringing them up to the ceiling to give extra stretch to the arms and shoulders.

Lunge (Anjaneyasana)

This is one of the best poses for stretching your hips. Many people tend to have tight hips when they sit in front of a computer all day. It will also help increase flexibility for the waistline, if that's one of your goals.

Remember that your hands can be wherever you want in this asana, and their position often determines which muscles you are stretching.

When you lift your arms up and tilt them back, you bring that stretch into both your back and your hips. You can also bring your arms down and a little behind you to stretch your lower back. The third option is to put it on your knee in front of you, although your hips won't stretch as low.

Make sure your front knee is as close to 90 degrees as possible.

Hold for 30 seconds and repeat on the other side.

Half boat (Ardha Navasana)

This is a great yoga asana for weight loss as it works directly on the stomach! You will feel the abs work hard as you try to hold this pose.

Put your palms on the floor for balance and lift your legs first. When you feel stable enough, raise your arms so they are parallel to the floor.

If you think this is too "easy," increase the distance between your knees and your chest by leaning back a little and moving your knees a little further away from you. You should feel your abs burn if you do it right!

Hold for **30 seconds**

When you feel comfortable in this position, straighten your legs for added challenge. This is a full boat pose, and it's much harder to keep your balance.

Side plank (Vasisthasana)

It's no wonder that some form of "plank" is good for weight loss. Plank and all of its variations are great for the abs!

Start in a normal plank position with palms down on the yoga mat, shoulder width apart, and toes together on the mat.

Lean your feet to the left, so that the far right side of the right foot touches the mat and the left foot is on the top right.

Shift your weight onto your right hand as you remove your left hand from the floor. Slowly raise your left arm towards the ceiling in front of you.

The hips and shoulders should be "stacked" in this pose, which means they should be directly in line with one another and not lean forward or

backward.

Hold for 30 seconds and repeat on the other side.

Chair Posture (Utkatasana)

Keep your feet together and arms straight over you as you crouch.

Make sure you can still see your feet in front of your knees. If you can't, your knees are bent too far forward.

Try to pull your hips in slightly and avoid arching your back too much.

Try to keep your thighs as close to the floor as possible without compromising shape.

Hold for 30 seconds.

Warrior III (Virabhadrasana III)

Warrior III is the toughest of all. It may look simple, but it can be quite difficult for beginners to hold this pose with the correct form for more than a few seconds!

The chest should be facing forward. Bring your arms straight in front of you to keep your balance.

Beginners to yoga will likely need to bring the back leg closer to the front in order to maintain balance before lifting it up. Bring your palms together on your chest as you begin to lift your leg in the air, as this will add a huge amount of balance.

Once you are in the position, slowly raise your arms out in front of you.

It will take time, strength, and flexibility to improve form in this asana. Practice in front of a mirror and practice often.

Try holding it for **30 seconds** then repeat on the other side of your body.

Shoulder Stand (Sarvangasana)

This is considered a reversal because the body is upside down! Inversions like the headstand, forearm stand, and handstand can make practicing yoga

very fun!

Start with your back on the floor, knees slightly bent, and feet in the air. Press your hands flat on the floor and use them to roll back on your upper back. Bring your hands to your lower back just above your hips to keep yourself upright.

Slowly stretch your legs towards the ceiling.

Beginner Modification: If you are having difficulty, put your hands on your hips to better support the weight.

Hold for **5-6 breaths**

Dance Pose (Natarajana)

This is one of the beginner yoga asanas for weight loss, but it works and feels great to stretch!

While standing, grasp the left ankle with your left hand. Shift your weight forward and place your right hand on your right knee for support.

As you lean forward, arch your back and push outward with your left foot. Tilt your tailbone back to support the arch in your back.

Slowly raise your right arm forward when you feel comfortable in the position. Make sure your left leg is completely straight. Hold for **30 seconds** . Repeat on the other side.

Crow pose (Bakasana)

While this is one of the more advanced yoga poses for weight loss, practicing will help you burn calories and build arm strength!

Start in a low crouch with your hands on the mat in front of you and fingers spread wide. The knees should be wider than the arms.

Get on tiptoe and position your knees at the edges of your upper arms. The knees shouldn't be right next to the upper arms, but closer to the edges or outside of the upper arms.

Slowly shift your weight forward until your toes are barely touching the ground. Try to put one foot in the air first, then the other. Keep your back

rounded.

The goal is to hold the pose and fully straighten your arms.

Practice this several times a day and you will build the strength and find the balance to hold it!

Those were yoga asanas for weight loss! In the end, you can round everything off with the child pose.

Yoga can put a lot of strain on the muscles and body when you stretch muscles that aren't used often. Make sure you get into the child pose whenever the body feels it needs a break.



Back pain is one of the most common reasons people start practicing yoga.

Imagine a morning when you wake up and your back doesn't even hurt a bit! Is such an invigorating dream, right? Back pain has become an epidemic that affects everyone regardless of age or gender. Here's a simple tip for back pain relief: yoga. You may never believe that there are numerous types of yoga that can be used to relieve back pain. It loosens the tight muscles in your back and relieves pain, making you healthy and happy.

It has been proven that yoga benefits our bodies in many ways. It plays a role in our physical and mental health, relieves our stress, increases our concentration and so on ... Yoga for back pain is the intact and regular capsule that you can take without a break. Yoga, a mind-body therapy known for its various postures and poses, is the main drug out of the trauma of infinite back pain.

The poses, performed correctly, loosen the muscles and strengthen the body, thereby relieving pain. When you practice yoga daily, the mind can listen to the body and its whispers. This distinct power of focus is used by the mind to keep track of body aches, where you hold your tension and where you have imbalances. That is why yoga for back pain is an inevitable exercise.

In the vast ocean of health products and exercises developed by a world of unhealthy or fitter freaks, there are various other methods to alleviate back pain. It could be other exercises, medication, belts, or anything.

But why does yoga help against back pain? This is an everlasting question which can pop into your head. Here is the answer to that.

This ancient traditional practice, unlike other strenuous exercises, lends itself not only to physical pain, but also to the perception of pain and mental health. Using different postures involved different muscles, which in turn strengthen those muscle groups and give the bones the strength to be alive.

Most postures strengthen our back muscles and help the spinal cord maintain an upright position without causing a lot of stress. When spines relieve stress, you relieve stress muscles, which leads to the birth of healthy muscles and relieves you of back pain. A healthy spine and a painless life would be almost everyone's dream. So let's dive into the best pose of yoga for back pain to make your life easier!

Back stretch

You can practice this yoga exercise comfortably anywhere (in the office on the chair at the desk, on the plane, in front of the TV during a break, or on the yoga mat).

Sit comfortably in Sukhasana (cross-legged pose). Keep your back straight and your shoulders relaxed. Most importantly, smile. If you prefer to practice these yoga positions while standing, keep your feet parallel.

- Inhale and raiseslowly your arms from your sides.
- Interlace your fingers so that the thumbs are gently touching.
- Stretch as much as you can. Keep your elbows straight and make sure your biceps are touching your ears.

- Hold this pose for 2-3 long deep breaths.

Tip to deepen the stretch of the back: pull the navel carefully (inward) towards the spine.

- Turn your back to the right and left
- The fingers remain intertwined above the head.
- Exhale and turn right carefully. Hold this position for 2-3 long breaths.
- Inhale, come back to the mat.
- Exhale, turn to your left side and hold this position again for 2-3 long breaths.
- Inhale and return to the center.
- Bend the spine to the right and left

The fingers remain intertwined above the head.

- Exhale and bend slightly to the right. Hold the pose and keep breathing.
- Inhale and return to the center.
- Exhale and bend to the left a little. Make sure that you are not bending forward or backward and that one hand is not extended more than the other.
- Inhale, come back to the center.

Tip for deepening the stretch of the back: Tense the abdominal muscles while stretching.

- Bend the spine back and forth.
- Exhale, put your hands forward.
- Inhale and stretch forward as you exhale.
- Inhale and turn right as you exhale. Make sure both hands are parallel to each other and stretched evenly, otherwise correct your posture carefully.
- Inhale and return to the center.
- Exhale and repeat the stretch and twist to the left.

- As you inhale, return to the center and slowly raise your arms.
- Unlock your fingers and stretch back.
- Inhale and return to the center. As you exhale, bringslowly your arms down from your sides.
- Keep your left palm on your right knee. Take a deep breath and slowly turn to the right as you exhale. You can keep your right hand on the floor next to your right hip.
- Stretch up by pressing your right palm on the floor. Don't lean forward or backward.
- Inhale and return to the center.
- Exhale and repeat the stretch on the left side. Keep your right palm on your left knee and your left palm on the floor. Make sure to keep your back straight and straighten up.
- Inhale and return to the center.
- Change positions with your legs crossed. With your right leg placed over your left, place your left leg over your right and repeat the stretch as described above on the right and left sides.

Tip to deepen this stretch: In addition to the hip muscles, activate the abdominal muscles to keep turning.

Advantages of the pose:

- Helps improve posture.
- Strengthens the back and abdominal muscles.
- Completely relaxes the tired back.
- Great way to warm up the body before doing other yoga postures
- Helps open the lungs so that they can be used to the full

Yoga for constipation

At least once in our life, we each have indigestion - the reasons may depend on diet, daily habits, stress, travel or lack of physical activity.

Everything comes and goes. So life is! And it applies to everything: Thoughts come and go, breath comes and goes ... even the food you eat should be out of the digestive system at some point. Since the food we eat has to come back out, the same goes for thoughts.

There is a tendency to get hold of certain thoughts, especially during times of stress and anxiety. If you don't let these thoughts go, they will stay in the system and change the right function. Things start to go upside down in our bodies, food gets stuck in the body and we can have gases, pain and constipation.

What causes constipation?

These are some of the reasons for constipation:

- Poor diet. Not enough fiber and lots of processed foods and foods high in sugar.
- Don't eat on time or skip a meal.
- Not drinking enough water or other fluids. When the daily amount of water in the body is insufficient, the intestines are dehydrated and this leads to constipation. Ideally, 12 glasses of liquids such as herbal tea, water, juices, buttermilk, etc. are recommended.
- Sedentary lifestyle. With our busy schedules, we forget that exercise creates energy and helps the body stay strong and healthy. You don't have to run a marathon, a 15-minute walk will help your metabolism!
- Depression and stress. When someone is depressed or too stressed out, it is common not to release emotions, anger, and fear. In addition, one tends to get stimuli from ingesting unhealthy, high-sugar foods, which often increase weight or lead to constipation.

- Resist the urge to empty your bowels. This causes the stool to become hard and dry and is the most common cause of constipation in adults.
- Constipation from pregnancy. Very often due to hormonal changes.
- Diabetes. Uncontrolled diabetes, in which insufficient levels of insulin hormones affect blood sugar, which in turn leads to constipation.
- Hypothyroidism -- An underactive thyroid or hypothyroidism leads to improper metabolic activity and can cause problems such as constipation.
- Some medication. Excessive use of drugs such as calcium tablets, iron supplements, etc. However, excessive use of laxatives also makes the digestive system weaker and does not function properly.

Yoga for Constipation Relief

Yoga is an excellent way to relieve constipation.

Start your day yogically with a simple cleansing action: drink a glass of warm water every morning and add fresh organic lemon. It will help you empty your bowels.

According to Ayurveda, the science of life, the food we eat absorbs our internal mental and physical health. Good nutrition and healthy eating habits are important to our well-being, but are often ignored due to a stressful and fast-paced daily schedule.

Ideally, avoid fast food, refined flour, pizza (there's nothing wrong with enjoying a pizza every now and then), pasta, and processed foods.

Include more fruits and vegetables in your diet. Make sure you consume at least one serving of fruit each day, ideally between breakfast and lunch.

Add more seasonal vegetables and a serving of leafy greens to the meal every day.

Some other foods that naturally help with constipation include yogurt, watermelon, flaxseed, and sunflower seeds.

Drinking a good amount of water is essential. Add 1-2 glasses of warm water in the morning, maybe some organic lemon juice or a pinch of salt. The water should be drunk at least 30 minutes before and an hour after a meal. Even so, you can drink broth or lentil soup during the meal.

Yoga asanas for the relief of constipation

Agni Sara

Agni Sara involves activating the core muscles to stimulate movement in the midsection.

- Start in a standing pose with your feet wider than hip-width apart.
- Put your hands on your knees and bend forward.
- Exhale all of the air in your stomach.
- Tighten your abdominal muscles and pull your belly button towards your spine, much like you would when sucking in the intestines. The movement should be pulled up or down, creating a wave motion.
- Do the opposite movement, releasing the muscles and pushing them outward so that the stomach protrudes.
- Hold your breath and repeat the steps until you have to breathe again.

Repeat three times. These movements may look and feel strange, but they give great results. Make sure to practice on an empty stomach.

Gas discharge pose

The gas-relief pose is so named because it can induce you to relieve gas, especially if you are bloated. It activates the entire muscles of the colon, thus promoting peristalsis and relieving constipation.

How it goes:

- Lie on your back with your feet straight and hands next to your body.
- Pull both knees towards your chest and hug them with your nested fingers or elbows.
- Keep your shoulders, neck, and head on the floor.
- Hold the pose for 10-20 breaths.

If you're flexible and looking for a more advanced variation, hug both knees tightly, lift your shoulders and neck off the mat, and bring your head towards your knees.

Sitting supine position

As you turn, the kidneys, intestines, pancreas, and liver are gently squeezed and massaged, which promotes toxin elimination and bowel movements. This posture also increases blood flow to the digestive organs.

How it goes

- Sit up straight in front of you with your legs stretched out.
- Bend your right knee to point up.
- Hug your left knee with your right elbow.
- Twist carefully and place your left hand behind your sit bone.
- With each inhalation you lengthen your upper body more and with each exhalation you lengthen your upper body more.
- Hold the pose for 10 breaths.
- Switch sides.

A more advanced option would be to keep the elbow outside of the bent knee.

An easier way is to pull in your knee with your hand instead of your elbow.

Supine position

This pose activates the abdominal organs, which promotes the excretion of toxins and blood circulation. Since you have to lie down, this position puts

less strain on the spine.

How it goes

- Lie on your back with your legs straight out.
- Bring your right knee to your chest.
- Take your right knee over your stomach to rest on the mat on your left side.
- Use your left hand to press the top of your left knee to keep it down.
- Adjust your upper body so that it stays straight - both shoulders are on the floor.
- Extend your right hand.
- Turn your head towards the outstretched hand
- Hold the pose for 10 breaths.
- Switch sides.

Plowing

The plow pose is an inversion that increases blood flow to the brain and calms the sympathetic nervous system, thereby promoting relaxation. It activates and tones the abdominal muscles and organs. The gentle compression in the waist area massages the abdominal organs and promotes digestion.

How it goes

- Lie on your back with your legs straight out.
- Bend your knees and bring them to your chest.
- Move your hips up and put your feet above your head so your weight is supported by your shoulders (not your neck) and your toes are on the floor.
- Hold the pose for 10 breaths.
- To get out of the pose, gently roll yourself down until your entire back is on the mat.

Instead of bringing your feet all the way over your head, lie back and lift your legs so they are at right angles to your torso.

Crescent rotation

The crescent rotation is a full body vitality pose that increases blood flow throughout the body. The twisting aspect of the asana is particularly beneficial for constipation as it applies light pressure to the abdominal organs, tones them and promotes the wringing out of toxins.

How it goes

- Start in a lunge pose on your right leg.
- Put your hands in the prayer position in the heart center.
- Lean forward slightly and place your left elbow on the outside of your bent right knee.
- Lengthen your torso, squeeze your palms and twist it.
- Look past the right shoulder.
- Hold the pose for 10 breaths. Turn more with each exhale.
- Loosen and switch sides

Bow hold

This pose is known as the bow pose because it makes the body resemble an archer's bow. Your stomach is pressing on the floor; As a result, breathing is more difficult. The tight deep breathing causes you to contract the abdominal muscles, which causes the contents of food and feces to enter the gastrointestinal tract. The floor also massages your abdominal organs, thus promoting bowel movements.

How it goes

- Lie on your stomach - face down, palms next to your hips, legs straight, and toes on top of the mat.
- Bend your knees so your feet are pointing up.
- Reach back with your hands to grab your knuckles.
- Lift your chest and thighs off the mat - your shoulder blades are pressing together and your chest is pointing forward.
- Hold the pose for 5-10 breaths.

Change and use props if it is necessary to maintain posture. If one of the poses is too difficult for you, don't push your body through. Rather, identify those that are easier to do.

YOGA to relieve headaches

A headache! Would you prefer to take counter-pain relievers like ibuprofen or paracetamol or would you rather find relief through yoga?

Most of us have to deal with headaches occasionally or regularly. For some, it is there when they wake up, or it can start later in the afternoon or evening, and it is sometimes a challenge to bear the headache discomfort.

A pounding head can also prevent us from falling asleep at night, attending an important event, or it can irritate our mood.

Whether it's from dehydration, stress, tension, sinus problems, drinking too much, or anything else - when you experience a headache, all you want to do is knock the pain away - and quickly.

But don't use the ibuprofen yet. Yoga Can Help Get Rid Of A Headache! Medical studies have shown that yoga helps relieve tension and stress in the body, and most headaches have a tension-related component.

LOCATIONS AND TYPES OF HEADACHE

There are types of headaches based on the location of the pain. Which of them do you experience?

At the temples in front of the ears - temporomandibular joint pain.

Behind the forehead bones or cheekbones - sinus headache.

In and around one eye - cluster headache.

Feels like a ligament pinching your head - tension headache.

Pain, nausea and visual changes - migraines.

Upper or back of the head.

Here are 5 postures that are used to gently stretch and open the areas in the body (such as the neck, shoulders, or back) and to circulate blood to the head. The next time you have a headache, you might walk past the medicine cabinet and straight to the yoga mat instead.

As you practice these poses, make a conscious effort to take deep breaths. This will help circulate plenty of fresh oxygen through the blood and help you relax.

1) Legs up on the wall: Viparita Karant i

When you position your legs up against the wall, the muscles in the neck are gently stretched and you are relaxed at the same time. In fact, it can relieve the throbbing headache in just a few minutes.

Sit close to the wall with your right hip touching the wall.

Lean back, turn around, and lie flat on your back on the mat. Stretch your legs up against the wall. Make sure your butt is almost touching the wall and your legs are relaxed and together.

Place your hands on your stomach or on the mat, then close your eyes, relax your jaw, and let your chin drop slightly. In this position, inhale deeply and slowly for 3-10 minutes.

2) Seat neck release

Since the neck is often the starting point for tension headaches, it's important to stretch it out with a basic yoga exercise.

Sit in a comfortable position with your spine straight and your neck elongated.

Then place your left hand on the right side of your head and gently tilt your head to the left.

Hold a few deep breaths then slowly switch sides.

Repeat this a few times on both sides to lessen the intensity of the headache.

3) Downward facing dog: Adho Mukho Svanasana

This is one of the most famous yoga postures, also known as the downward facing dog pose. It will help provide extra blood flow to the head, which is often ONLY the means to relieve the headache, and will help you feel energized.

Start on your hands and knees. Move your hips up and arms forward, forming a V-like shape with your body.

Simply hang your head between your shoulders and take a deep breath as you practice this pose.

Hold the pose for a few minutes.

The pose also helps get rid of fatigue, back pain, and stiffness by stretching the hamstrings and chest and lengthening the spine.

4) Happy baby: Balasana

If the headache is due to pain in the hips, upper body, or back radiating from the spine, or if you just need to relax for a few minutes, try the baby pose. This recovery post gives a sense of calm.

Lie on your back with your knees raised and bent, and hold on to your thighs or the outer edges of your feet. The spine should be comfortably on the floor or mat.

You can rock slowly from side to side to increase the stretch in the hips and lower back and gently rock the mind into a state of relaxation.

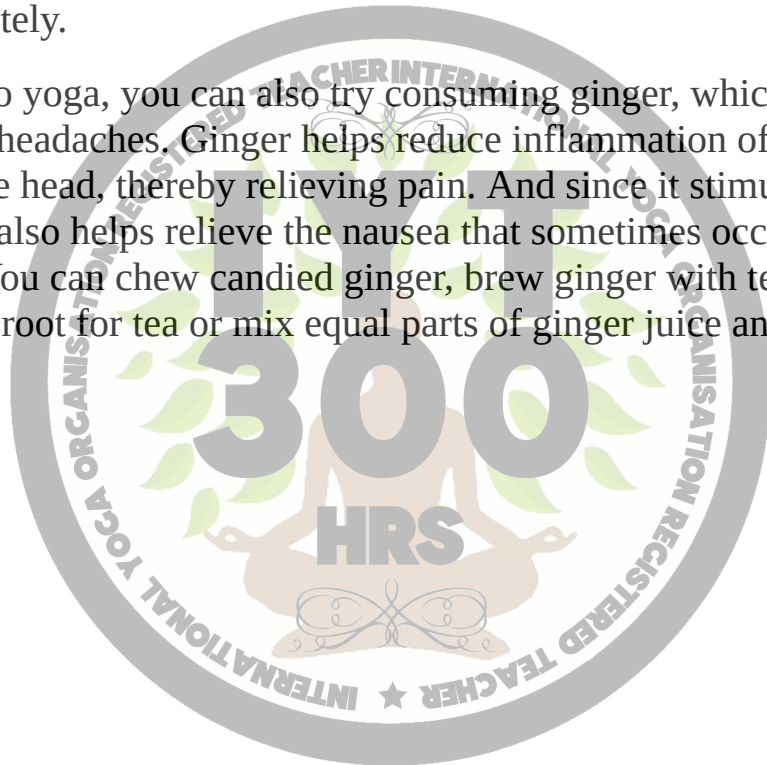
5) Forward fold: Uttanasana

A simple forward crease is one of the most basic ways to get headache relief. Uttanasana invigorates the nervous system by increasing the blood supply to the brain and calming the mind.

Stand with your feet hip-width apart, bend forward and try to fold from your hips. Relax your head towards the floor. If your hands do not reach the floor, bring the floor towards you with a support or object so the body can relax.

Or: Grasp the opposite elbow, soften your knees and relax your head and neck completely.

In addition to yoga, you can also try consuming ginger, which is touted as an elixir for headaches. Ginger helps reduce inflammation of the blood vessels in the head, thereby relieving pain. And since it stimulates digestion, it also helps relieve the nausea that sometimes occurs with migraines. You can chew candied ginger, brew ginger with tea packets or steep ginger root for tea or mix equal parts of ginger juice and lemon juice and drink.



Things Every Beginner Should Know About Yoga

The beginning of a yoga journey is a wonderful and special time. You begin to explore and understand your many levels so that you can discover your unique rhythm and dance to your own beat. Ideally, this time is best experienced with open arms, open mind and open heart but as adults we sometimes lose sight of the beauty of a beginner. Here are things every beginner should know:

1. You won't be a beginner forever.

This is your chance to be a complete newbie! The more you practice, the more experience you gain, so your time in the beginner phase is limited.

2. Avoid comparing yourself to others in the room.

We are all drawn to yoga for our own reasons. When you practice, you are in your body, on your mat and in your own experience. Looking at other people to see if you are in the right pose is different from comparing yourself with others and judging your own expression of a pose. Instead, listen to the teacher, check your alignment, find your breath and then have your own experiences.

3. Your breath is undoubtedly the most important aspect of yoga.

If you've pushed yourself into a pose and your breath is restricted, you've lost yoga. It is better to withdraw, reconnect with a steady flow of breath and move forward with that level of awareness and connection.

4. The ability to do pretzel poses does not symbolize an advanced yogi.

If it were only about how flexible we are, we would qualify as advanced yogis as children! When it comes to yoga, I can promise you that the level of flexibility is not symbolic of how advanced you are. Yes, it can take years of disciplined practice to master a loose pose, but if the mind is distracted and the breath is irregular or if your ego takes over to get you there, yoga is lost. Yoga is about creating an inner union that can take place in any posture, from sitting cross-legged to the scorpion pose.

5. We can store a lot of emotional energy in the physical body.

Emotional tension can easily be stored in the physical body, especially around the hips and shoulders. When you start releasing and opening up these areas it can be very unsettling at times. If you feel angry, restless, or want to burst into tears after practicing, that's fine. Don't suppress these feelings, let them be there and then let them go so that you can make space for light and love.

6. Bending backwards is a serious heart opener.

Bending over in yoga can feel strange at first as we spend most of our lives facing forward when we walk, drive, sit at desks, eat and watch TV. When

we bend forward, the heart space is also energetically protected. When we bend back, we can feel exposed and vulnerable. But after a while you will feel a lot of love entering your life, coming from within and literally changing your world.

7. Hug yourself as yourself.

You are the only person on the planet that you can be! Yoga is a journey that will help you learn more about your body, heart, and mind. Discover who you are and have the courage to show the world your authentic, unique, great self.

8. Yoga consists of 1% theory and 99% practice.

That is, roll out the mat and practice and roll it out again the next day. It doesn't have to be a super long session, but maintaining a regular practice can have an incredibly positive effect on your life.

9. Always, always, always make time for Savasana.

It is quite common for people to skip Savasana thinking it is just lying down at the end of the session, but it is an all-important pose, in fact. This is where your physical body and nervous system can relax, rejuvenate and remember the greatness of the last 60 minutes you spent moving through various asanas. When you skip savasana you are cutting out such an important part of the yoga process. You take a load off yourself at the end of your workout, even if it only lasts a minute or two.

The mechanics of the breath

The first thing to understand about the connection between breath and asana (i.e. the posture of yoga) is the basic mechanics of breathing. An entire book can be written on this subject alone but a brief summary will do for this book.

You probably recall that the muscles of the diaphragm and those of the nucleus work complementarily - that is, when the abdominal muscles contract, they tighten the abdomen, push air out of the lungs and in turn

stretch the diaphragm; When the diaphragm contracts, it expands the lungs and draws in oxygen, pushing the abdomen outward.

Therefore, in order to fully breathe, the diaphragm and the muscles of the core, including not only the abdomen, but also the sides, back, and upper chest, must work together. When any of these muscles are either weak or tense, both the inhale and the exhale are incomplete. If one of the muscles is allowed to be unconsciously held, restricted or just inactive, we breathe less fully and in turn limit the benefits of breathing.

Breath & movement

Because of this connection between the core and the diaphragm, the next step in understanding the location of the breath in the asana is to establish a natural connection between breath and movement of the torso. In its simplest form, "closing" movements of the torso, in which we bend forward at the waist, naturally aid exhalation. Likewise, the "opening" movement of the torso, in which we bend backwards or move out of a forward fold, naturally aids inhalation. These are movements that we naturally experience throughout the day, for example we bend over when we sneeze or cough or we stretch back and arms raise arms while we yawn.

Because of this connection, many types of yoga exhale stress whenever we bend or close (e.g. a forward bend) and breathe in whenever we open or expand. While this has its merits, it is also a drawback - a drawback that you've likely experienced if you've taken a breath-based class.

The problem with this approach is that the speed at which we naturally breathe and the speed at which we want to move in or out of a pose don't always match. Therefore, if we have to strictly adhere to this approach, we will either move at a speed that is not optimal for us or do the same with our breath. Accordingly, we can easily end a session feeling like we have not really honored our bodies or breath.

Synchronization versus breath-informed movement and why the distinction is crucial

Instead of strictly synchronized breathing, we recommend breathing-informed movement - that is, using the breath to initiate movement, while

movement and breathing can continue at the speed that feels healthy to us. To make this clear, let's take the simple example of forward diffraction.

Since the forward bend is a closing movement, we would begin the movement on the exhale, but then we would breathe freely at our own pace, even if the forward fold should lead us to inhale or even to the next breath. Once we were in the forward crease, we allowed ourselves to breathe fully within the pose as it was comfortable. Finally, when the time came to get out of the pose, we would reverse the process and begin our movement from forward flexion (which is a relative "opening" of the torso) as we inhale.

Breath in Asana as a key to assessing effort and relaxation

In addition to initiating movement, the breath fulfills several equally important key functions within the asana, one of which is the balance between exertion and relaxation. If you have been practicing yoga for a long time, you know that one of the most important aspects is finding the balance between effort and ease. Too much exertion and we actually waste energy or cause damage, while too little exertion means we don't go beyond our limit patterns. However, evaluating the balance of the two can be difficult, which is why breathing can provide invaluable information.

In order to breathe fully again, we have to actively use some muscles and relax others. When we exert ourselves in a pose - that is, when we use too much force - our breath is shallow. If we don't have enough strength or are less focused, our breathing is also less deep than it could be.

Accordingly, in any asana, by observing the quality of our breathing, we can ask two important questions: 1. "Are there muscles that I could just relax and that in turn cause my breath to become fuller?" And 2. "Are there muscles that I could deal with right now and that are able to breathe more deeply?" Interestingly, this applies to literally every category of asanas. By staying in touch with these two questions, not only can we get the most out of each specific pose, but our overall practice as well.

Breath as the key to determining the holding time

Another role of the breath in the asana is that it provides an excellent indicator for determining the healthy holding time within a certain pose,

especially for "active" (i.e. strengthening) poses. This link is also subtle but powerful.

We know that ideally we want to breathe deeply, slowly and purposefully in all of our poses, even the most demanding. The more challenging a pose, the more difficult it is to do it for a long period. Therefore, mindful breathing actually gives us perfect feedback to determine when it is time to step off a pose. Basically, the moment when we cannot fully breathe despite conscious exertion, it means that we lack the strength to continue holding the pose in a constructive form, and therefore it is time to step out of the pose.

The joining of the three elements looks something like this:

1. We start entering each pose with the breath to initiate the movement and begin again with the closing movement on the exhale and the opening on the inhalation.
2. After confirming that our alignment is healthy, we wonder what muscles need to be worked or relaxed to make our breath full.
3. We then inhale fully and slowly while holding the pose in proper alignment. As soon as we notice that the breath is becoming shallower or faster despite our best efforts, we find that this indicates that we have held the pose for as long as it is beneficial to us at the time and that we are then mindful release from the pose.

A note for advanced practitioners: ujjay breathing

When talking about breathing during the asana, many long-term practitioners naturally think of ujjay breathing, that is, the deliberate, gentle narrowing of the glottis. Ujjay breathing is used in many traditions to slow down breathing, especially breathing out and to make breathing more mindful. These are important components of healthy breathing in general, much less during the asana, which is why some traditions encourage their use throughout the practice.

Classically, however, ujjay breathing has not been recommended as part of the asana. We strongly advise against breathing ujjay during the asana for several reasons. First, while it encourages mindful and slow breathing, it is an artificial way of achieving these goals - goals that can easily be achieved all by yourself. Second, ujjay breathing is a waste of energy - even very gentle glottic intervention is still wasted prana that could be better used elsewhere. Finally, and most importantly, ujjay breathing is a distraction of consciousness. That is, by focusing only a small part of our mind on the process of maintaining this restriction, we are actually distracting ourselves from being fully aware of what we are in the pose experience. Because Asana is about creating greater awareness of what we are experiencing, we want to minimize distractions, especially if we want to safely engage in poses in a way that honors our bodies.

Breath in asana versus pranayama

A final topic worth mentioning is the distinction between mindful breathing during asana and the formal practice of pranayama. As you can see, breathing actually plays a crucial role in a healthy asana routine. However, the power of the breath - especially when it connects with the mind - is so deep that the yogis saw additional, separate practices of conscious breathing as essential to growth. In other words, as much as the breath can assist asana and vice versa, the breath work is so powerful that the yogis felt it should be studied and practiced all by yourself so that it can receive full attention and effort.

This type of practice is known as pranayama or "liberation of the life energy of the body" and is so important that it is classically performed independently of asana. This enables us not only to focus our full effort on the breath, but also to focus our full attention on the thoughts and emotions that arise from various forms of breathing. In fact, pranayama has traditionally been viewed as so important that students have long been encouraged to make it a priority over asana itself. That is, when time is short, it is better to skip asana entirely and focus solely on meditation and pranayama, rather than allowing asana to "squeeze out" this crucial form of work.

The power of breathing: 3 pranayama techniques

Breathing is something we do every day. In a living state, the body breathes involuntarily, regardless of whether we are awake, sleeping or actively exercising. It is an important function of life. In yoga, as mentioned above, we refer to this as pranayama. Prana is a Sanskrit word that means life force, and Ayama means stretching or stretching. So the word "pranayama" means the control of the life force. It is also known as the extension of breath. Every cell in our body needs oxygen to function properly. No wonder, then, that research shows that regular practice of controlled breathing can reduce the effects of stress on the body and improve overall physical and mental health.

Have you ever noticed how calming your breath can be at the end of a long day? There are a variety of breathing techniques that are known to reduce stress, aid digestion, improve sleep, and keep you cool. Here are instructions on four pranayama exercises worth practicing and the most favorable times to do them.

1. Nadhi Sodhana aka Anuloma Viloma

Nadhi Sodhana, also known as alternative nasal breathing, is a very relaxed, balancing breath that calms the nervous system and enables restful sleep. It is believed that by increasing the amount of oxygen the body absorbs, this breath can also purify the blood, calm the mind, reduce stress and help focus.

How to do it: Nadhi Sodhana can be done sitting or lying down. First, purge all of the air from your lungs. Block your right nostril with the thumb of the dominant hand and only inhale through the left nostril. Be sure to breathe into your stomach, not your chest. Once you are full of air, close your left nostril with the ring finger of the same hand, keep your right nostril closed, and hold your breath for a moment. Then let go of your thumb and breathe out through your right nostril only.

Be sure to exhale all of your breath from the right side and pause before inhaling from the same side again. Once you've inhaled on the right side and exhaled on the left, close both nostrils. A full breathing cycle involves inhaling and exhaling through both nostrils. If you're just starting out, you can inhale four times, hold your breath four to eight times, and then exhale four times. Perform up to ten cycles and watch your body react. You may feel more relaxed and calm in both your mind and body.

When can you practice it: Nadhi Sodhana is a calm, calming breath that can be taken at any time of the day. Try practicing this technique when you are anxious, nervous, or having trouble falling asleep.

2. Kapalabhati Pranayama

Kapalabhati means skull of radiant breath. It is a pranayama practice as well as an internal kriya or purification technique. Kapalabhati practitioners believe that this breath helps clear the mucus in the airways, relieve congestion, reduce gas and improve lung capacity. Kapalabhati is an invigorating breath that can build warmth in the body.

Here's how it works: First, sit on a comfortable seat with a high, straight back and breathe out completely. Inhale briefly through both nostrils and then exhale sharply (again from your nose) as you pull your navel towards your spine. The exhale is short and quick but very active, while the inhale is short and passive. Pull your navel back in as you exhale and soften it as you inhale. Do a round of 30 (count exhalations) and rest for a minute with a few deep breaths in between. Repeat this process. If this seems exhausting to you, start with 15 rounds and gradually work your way up.

When can you practice it: Kapalabhati is ideal for the morning when you are feeling sluggish. You can also try if you feel constipated or bloated, but don't try on a full stomach. Avoid this technique if you are pregnant, have blood pressure problems or have heart disease.

3. Sitali Pranayama

Sitali also means cooling down, which explains the effects it can have on the mind and body. This breath promotes heat cleaning with coolness. It is especially helpful in summer and in hot climates.

How to do it: Roll your tongue until the outer edges touch and form a tube. If you can't curl your tongue, make an oval shape with your mouth and keep your tongue flat. Inhale through your mouth and take in the air you can. It can make a hissing sound. After inhaling, bring the tip of your tongue to the roof of your mouth and seal your lips. Feel the coolness of inhaling and then exhaling through your nose. Repeat 5-10 times or as needed.

When to Practice: If you are feeling overheated, irritable, or are waiting impatiently in hot weather, Sitali is a great tool to cool you down and relax!

Breathing is one of the most natural things we do as humans. It is a gift and a very powerful tool with which we can create more ease and balance in our lives. Taking time to focus on the breath can help us take a break from daily stresses, physical symptoms, and emotions that have taken over the mind. In this moment, when we focus on the breath, we can return to a neutral state of being, gain clarity, feel rejuvenated and improve general wellbeing. These are just some wonderful reasons to invite a pranayama practice into everyday life.

Helpful tips to get you started

You decide. If you feel uncomfortable or light-headed, stop immediately and return to normal breathing. Contact an instructor for guidance and supervision.

Never force or restrict your breath. Do not compromise the quality of the breath. Do the best you can. The more you practice, the longer you can do the exercises, and eventually you can use more of the lung capacity.

Patience and practice. Pranayama should be done with great care and attention. Try to focus on the journey, not the destination! Over time, you will notice the benefits of the practice.

Precautions. If you are pregnant or you have diabetes, high or low blood pressure, heart disease, epilepsy or dizziness, please consult your doctor before doing any of these breathing exercises.

30 minutes of yoga a day for beginners and professionals

Ten Simple Chair Yoga Poses You Can Do At The Desk.

Each yoga pose listed below is designed to make you feel better, more energetic and ready to face new business challenges. If some movements don't feel right or feel worse, stop immediately.

Even if you have any existing or previous injuries, don't do this to your body! Ask your doctor or physical therapist about possible options for a lunch break exercise routine.

These ten yoga stretches are pretty straightforward in terms of instructions. You can do almost any of them without getting up from the chair. While any pose can be done from a sitting position, I recommend that you try to do most of the poses while standing. What's the use of sitting all day anyway?

You can do these yoga poses in a sequence as a daily routine. You don't have to change the order, just do what is stated here. On days when you're a very busy bee, just break this yoga routine into pieces or do each pose individually if you have a free minute.

Let us begin!

Wrist and hand stretches

Why:

- Increases mobility in fingers, forearms and hands.
- Reduces the stiffness in the wrists.
- Reduces the risk of repeated exposure.
- Builds strength in the small muscles of the fingers and wrists.

How:

Start in a comfortable sitting position with a straight back and feet on the floor.

Inhale and stretch your arms out in front of you, palms facing down. Flex and spread your fingers as far as possible. Notice when your shoulders roll forward and your upper back is bent. Try to keep your chest open.

Breathe in and out naturally through your nose.

Remain in the position for approximately three long full breaths.

The next time you exhale, raise your fingertips toward the sky while keeping your arms in the same position. Imagine you have a wall in front of you that you want to push. Spread your fingers further.

Hold the pose for approximately three long full breaths.

Drop your fingertips so they are facing the floor. This may feel uncomfortable at first, but just try pulling your fingers down until you feel the stretch in your wrists and forearms.

Hold the pose for approximately three long full breaths.

Clench your fingers into fists. Move your fists in circular motions for about a breath.

Change the direction of movement. Try to move away from your wrists and stay calm in your forearms if possible.

Sitting neck stretch

Why:

- Elongates the muscles of the neck, shoulders and upper back.
- Relieves tension.
- Might be helpful for headaches.

How:

Sit in a chair in a comfortable position. Keep your spine upright, shoulders relaxed and chest open.

As you exhale, relax your neck and drop gently your head to the right. When you relax, the head tilts more to the right. You should feel a stretch in the left side of your neck and upper shoulder.

Hold the pose for about three full breaths and repeat on the other side.

Slowly bend your head forward slightly and drop your head as if trying to reach your chest with your chin. Make sure you keep your neck relaxed and your spine upright.

You should feel a slight stretch in your neck and most likely your upper back as well. Hold the pose for about three long breaths.

Sitting mountain pose with arm and side stretching

Why:

- Open your shoulders.
- Stretches the sides of the torso, armpits, and upper arms.
- Relieves muscle tension in the shoulders and upper back.

How:

Start sitting upright.

As you exhale, straighten your arms to your sides and hold them above your head with your palms facing each other.

When the shoulders are fairly open, you fold your hands together and turn your palms toward the sky. Keep your abdominal muscles active to maintain a straight spine without collapsing forward.

Hold it for about three full breaths.

Inhale and as you exhale, bend to the right and straighten the left side of your torso. Sit tight with your buttocks in the chair and don't let your left sit bone rise.

Hold the pose for about three full breaths and repeat on the other side.

Sitting eagle arms

Why:

- Relieves tension in the shoulders and upper back.
- Stretches the upper spine, arms and wrists.

How:

Start in a sitting position. Inhale as you stretch your arms sideways with your elbows slightly bent and your fingertips pointing toward the sky. Bring your arms over your body on the opposite side as if you were hugging each other tightly.

When this feels comfortable, cross your arms and stretch them to the side. Exhale and put your right arm under your left arm, squeezing your hands together. Keep your shoulders away from your ears. Experiment with stretching by raising and lowering your elbows. Hold about three full breaths on each side.

Sitting cat-cow stretching

Why:

- Stretches the back and front of the body.
- Frees the breath by opening the chest and lungs.
- Neutralizes the spine position.
- Therapeutic against back pain and sciatica.

How:

Start in a sitting position with your spine straight and your hands on your knees.

Inhale, feel with your heart, and tilt your pelvis forward as you roll your shoulder blades back. Gently look up. This is known as the seated cow pose.

Exhale and lean back, rounding your spine and upper back. Put your chin on your chest and look down to get inside the sitting cat.

Expand and round at least three times. Adjust the movements to suit your breath.

Sitting twist pose

Why:

- Improves the flexibility of the spine.
- Relieves stiffness in the shoulder and upper spine.
- Stretches the upper body.

How:

Begin sitting on the side of the chair with the right side facing the back of the chair.

As you exhale, turn carefully your upper body to the right as you grasp the back of the chair with your hands.

The abdominal muscles remain firm. You should rotate from the base of your spine, not just your upper back and neck.

Try to lengthen your spine each time you inhale and rotate it a little deeper with each exhale.

Hold for about three full breaths and switch sides.

Sitting pigeon keeping

Why:

- Stretches your lower back and hips.
- Therapeutic against back pain.

How:

Start in a neutral sitting position with your feet firmly on the floor.

Inhale and cross your right ankle over your left thigh. Place it slightly above your left knee. Bend your right foot to protect your right knee.

Once you are comfortable in the position, exhale as you bend forward to go deeper into the stretch.

Hold the pose for about three breaths. Repeat on the other leg.

Chair pose

Why:

- Builds strength in the lower body.
- Strengthens the core muscles.
- Increases the mobility in the upper body.
- Therapeutic for flat feet.

How:

Start standing with your feet hip-width apart.
Reach over your head with your arms as you inhale.
Exhale, bend your knees, and move your buttocks back as if trying to sit in a chair behind you. Make sure to put the weight of the body on your heels. You should be able to lift your toes and wiggle them.
Keep your chest open and core muscles tense.
Remain in this position for about 3 breaths.

Assisted dog ownership

Why:

- Stretches the back of the body including the legs, back, and shoulders.
- Relieves tension after long periods of sitting.

How:

Place the chair against the wall so it doesn't move during the pose.
Put your hands on the chair seat as you lean forward.
Step back until your arms are straight and your feet are at a 90-degree angle below your hips. You can keep moving your feet back if that feels better.
You will feel a stretch in your legs, calves, back, armpits, and even the sides of your torso.
Hold the pose for about three full breaths.

Sedentary relaxation

Why:

- Increases self-confidence.
- Improve focus and concentration.
- Relieves stress and anxiety.
- Improves the quality of sleep.

How:

Sit in a chair in a comfortable position with your palms resting on your thighs.

Close your eyes and focus your attention on your breath. Notice how the body expands with each inhale and contracts with each exhale. Try to completely release tension from every part of your body. Remain in this position for at least 2 minutes.

It would be an obvious lie to convince yourself that a few minutes of yoga a day can reverse the effects of a sedentary lifestyle and long hours in front of the computer.

But as I mentioned earlier, any move is a good move.

If you can afford a few minutes a day now, so be it. I guarantee that you will soon feel the difference in how your body and mind work. If you enjoy this new feeling, consider adding a few minutes of yoga to your morning and evening routine.

BONUS: SIMPLE YOGA AND MEDITATION POSES

When we talk about yoga and meditation, it is often referred to as mindfulness yoga.

Mindfulness has always been an essential aspect of the physical practice of yoga. The difference between mindfulness yoga and the multitude of yoga practices is that in mindfulness yoga the main focus is on awareness of the body and mind, as opposed to alignment details and precise posture. It's about cultivating mindfulness and using asana as a vehicle.

When you become aware in any physical activity, an attentive focus is placed on everything you are doing at that precise moment, and the movement is converted into a form of meditation. Therefore, mindful yoga is viewed as a form of meditation or it is very often practiced prior to a formal meditation session.

Another characteristic of this type of yoga is the emphasis on observation rather than reaction. Although this should always be the case with yoga, this

practice places great emphasis on observing the mind and emotions as you do the yoga pose.

Mindfulness yoga is designed to help people with stress, anxiety, depression, and pain.

Most strikingly, mindful yoga applies traditional Buddhist mindfulness teachings to the physical practice of yoga in order to increase awareness and presence both on and off the yoga mat. In particular, this type of yoga applies the four foundations of Buddha's mindfulness to systematically promote self-awareness and compassion through nonjudgment, patience, novice spirit, trust, non-aspiration, letting go and gratitude.

What is the best practice approach?

The best practice approach to mindful yoga is a systematic approach with clearly defined and repeatable steps. Rather than just "practicing mindfulness," which generally means paying attention to the details of breathing and alignment throughout the practice, it is suggested that the four principles of mindfulness be applied.

These detailed instructions can be used in any pose. In this way, one can systematically identify certain behaviors and make positive changes. For example, behaviors such as recording the result of a pose, avoiding certain poses altogether or excluding them from practice.

Body scans

When practicing mindful yoga, one should scan the body and look for the many possibilities - some subtle, some not so subtle - that if you change your posture, your view of your body, your thoughts and your entire self-esteem can change. Practicing in this way is immensely enriching and goes way beyond the physical benefits that stretching and strengthening naturally brings.

The main point in mindful yoga is to be curious and open to what you are noticing - without judgment - to examine your body sensations as fully as possible and then deliberately release the focus of attention before moving on to the next area to be explored. Remember to be curious. When the mind

wanders, you notice irritation or judgment and then bring the mind back to the breath and the body.

As you practice, you can ask yourself questions such as:

How is your breath? Is it shallow or deep? Is it fast or slow?

Where does a sensation arise in your body?

Are you staying present or are you wondering when this pose will end?

Do you stay present or do you compare yourself to someone in the room?

One should keep reminding oneself to return to the present moment and observe the truth about what is happening in that moment. This will help you learn that your thoughts are not the truth, but things that you have conditioned yourself. By practicing mindful yoga one begins to notice the pattern, name it, and then examine it.

Applying the four principles of mindfulness

When you apply the four principles of mindfulness to the asana practice, it becomes a fully integrated mindfulness practice. On a certain day you can choose whether you want to dedicate your practice to one of the four basics or work through it one after the other.

1. Mindfulness of the body

This is awareness of the body as a body; a reminder that the body is actually a collection of many parts. Skin, bones, teeth, nails, heart, lungs and all other parts; Each part is actually a small "body" that resides within the larger entity that we call a "body".

With this in mind, we train ourselves to observe the body part by part rather than trying to observe the whole body at once, which makes mindfulness much more accessible.

When we see the body as composed of many parts, it also helps us to see the body as a body and not as “my” body or “myself”. It is just a physical form like any other physical form. Since it is not "I", the body can also be called "selfless". This foundation helps us to see that the body is volatile, subject to injury, disease, and death, and is therefore not a source of lasting

happiness. In the words of the Buddha, it teaches us "to know the body for what it really is".

2. Mindfulness of feelings

Mindfulness of feelings relates to both physical sensations and emotions. Similar to the body, feelings can also be divided. Here the Buddha tells us to look at "the feeling in the feelings." Whether they are pleasant, uncomfortable or neutral, we learn to observe and fully acknowledge our feelings, and that they always eventually resolve.

With this foundation, one learns to simply observe feelings as they arise and not identify with or judge them. They don't define who you are, they are just feelings. When we see a feeling as an emotion or a sensation as "my" feeling, we learn that feelings are selfless. This is how the Buddha says that we know the truth about feelings. In other words, we "know feelings for what they really are".

3. Mindfulness of the mind

Mindfulness does not refer to the thinking mind, but rather to awareness. Again we talk about the mind as if it were a single object.

This foundation of mindfulness teaches us that moment-to-moment awareness arises based on information that comes to us from the senses as well as from internal mental states. The mind alone cannot exist, only certain states of mind that arise depending on internal or external conditions.

If we pay close attention to how each thought arises and then disappears, we gain some understanding that we are not our thoughts. We learn not to tie our identity to our thoughts and learn to "know spirit as it really is".

4. Mindfulness of the Dharma

The word "Dharma" is another Sanskrit word that is as difficult to define as the word "Yoga". It can be described simply as "law of nature" or "as things are".

This foundation of mindfulness is sometimes referred to as "mindfulness of mental objects". With this teaching we learn that everything around us

exists for us as mental objects; Manifestations of reality. They are what they are because that's how we know them.

Mindfulness of Dharma consists in practicing the awareness of the interexistence of all things and the awareness that they are transient, devoid of self-essence and conditioned by everything else.

Five Proven Benefits

The unique benefits of mindful yoga are numerous and have been recognized by top researchers.

Below are some of the main benefits of practicing mindfulness on the yoga mat.

1. A deep sense of awareness / opening into self

In general, the practice of mindfulness leads to an expansion of perspective and understanding of who you are. With mindful yoga we learn to become aware of habitual patterns of reactivity. For example, do you hold your breath when you get deep into a turn? Do you get excited or angry during challenging poses and want them to be over?

This kind of keen mind-body awareness becomes a tool for transformation outside of yoga practice because through awareness we increase our ability to see and be with things as they are. Training our awareness helps us turn away from traits that inhibit our growth, such as resistance to what is, playing the victim and reacting to things.

2. Helps to face the challenges of everyday life and to show less reactivity

Mindful yoga exercises encourage patience and discourage reactivity on the mat, which in turn leads to more patience and less reactivity on the mat. This shows up in all areas of one's life, including work, relationships, social life, and leisure activities. This heightened sense of patience can make navigating conflicts and confrontations easier, as with practice we learn to stop and reflect before reacting according to our patterns.

3. Acceptance

Through mindful yoga practice we learn to let go and to accept situations for what they are in this moment. Bringing this into everyday life can be incredibly valuable when we accept a perception.

It is even known that acceptance helps people with depression, for example, when you start to accept your depression, you start to deprive it of its strength and also realize that it is only thinking and feeling, not yourself.

Practicing acceptance on the mat prepares you for real life as you really cannot decide what to do next.

4. An increased sense of compassion and nonjudgment for yourself and others

Increased compassion, kindness, and understanding are all things that we can take off the mat and carry into our daily lives through regular practice of mindful yoga. As mindful yoga increases your awareness and understanding of the truth - of body, feelings, mind, Dharma - it deepens your appreciation of the fundamental goodness in yourself and in others.

Specific "heart opening" poses throughout yoga practice are also aimed at supporting a healthy, open heart (this is in the emotional sense, not the physical heart). Since the heart chakra is related to our ability to give and receive love, regular mindful yoga practice helps to heal emotional blocks and let go of negative beliefs.

5. Deepening personal yoga practice

Another benefit of mindful yoga is that it can deepen and add meaning to your personal yoga practice. For some, after many years of practice, yoga can become part of a daily checklist or just a form of exercise. When the exercise becomes something that you do through routine movements and not through conscious thinking, it is no longer yoga.

Mindful yoga naturally disconnects you from the “autopilot” and opens you up deeper in your practice. It can also act as a bridge between the practice of asana and the practice of meditation for those who do not have much experience with or understanding of meditation techniques.

Why yoga and mindfulness go together

Yoga and mindfulness go together because the goal of both is to achieve a higher level of connection, awareness or union between mind, body and soul. Indeed, without mindfulness, yoga cannot be yoga. Both yoga and mindfulness aim to calm the mind in order to cultivate a deeper connection and understanding of self. Both teach you to tune into your breath, pay attention to physical sensations and learn to accept reality as it is in that moment.

Mindfulness is something we practice through yoga. The yoga studio is also the perfect place to learn to become more mindful as it is full of conditions that are beyond our control. On some days, you may feel restless, bored or aroused by the noises outside of the yoga studio or perhaps by the person on the mat next to you. Mindful yoga trains you to redefine these conditions and feel less reactive towards them.

Finally, yoga helps prepare the body for mindful meditation. The two have always been inextricably linked, with a physical yoga practice only leading to increased mindfulness and a regular mindfulness meditation practice only leading to a stronger yoga practice.

So yoga and mindfulness are not just two things that go well together but two parts of a whole, ancient model of wisdom to reach a higher level of consciousness.

Four mindful yoga poses

Mindful yoga is a type of yoga that is most commonly practiced before meditation. Just as there are certain poses that stretch or strengthen the body and poses that give you energy, there are also poses that prepare the body for meditation. These mindful yoga poses are purposely simple as they help slow the breath and body, calm the mind, and, of course, raise awareness.



1. Tadasana - also known as "Mountain Pose"

This pose is the basis for all standing postures. It is so simple that it is often not practiced mindfully. It is an excellent posture for raising awareness in all areas of the body as well as the mind and seeing if it drifts.

How:

Stand with your arms raised by your sides. Press your feet into the ground and distribute the weight evenly between both feet. Think of your stomach as a bowl rim-level, both side-to-side and front-to-back. Stretch the spine, prevent the lower ribs from protruding, gently lift the chest and open the heart. Relax your shoulders. Keep your chin parallel to the floor and your ears centered over your shoulders.



2. Vrikshasana - also known as "Tree Pose"

We've talked about this pose before, but this becomes much stronger along with mindfulness meditation. The classic balancing posture helps you find balance on a standing leg. This is another easy pose that tends to let go of the mind. Since this is a balancing posture, the loss of balance can lead to feelings of defeat or judgment when unable to maintain balance.

How:

Stand with your arms by your sides and put your weight on your right foot. Inhale as you lift the other leg and twist it outward. Use your left hand to guide the sole of your left foot onto your inner right thigh. Bring your hands to your chest in a prayer position.

Your left foot should press firmly into your right thigh and your right thigh firmly into your left foot. Maintain this posture as you inhale and exhale.



3. Anjaneyasana - also known as "Low Lung"

This is a stretching pose that improves balance, focus and core awareness. During this pose, it is common to lose consciousness of the breath or a desire for the pose to be over, which makes it a great exercise in mindfulness.

How:

Starting in the downward facing dog pose, step forward with your right foot and place it next to your right thumb, with your right knee over your right ankle. Lower your left knee to the floor, making sure to place it behind your

hips. Lift your upper body and stroke your arms over your head, palms facing each other, biceps next to your ears.

Move your hips forward and down until you feel a stretch in the front of your left leg and psoas muscle. Pull your tailbone down, lengthen your lower back and use your core muscles. Start pulling your thumbs into the back of your body as you reach up with your hands and look up for a slight back flexion.



4. Supta Baddha Konasana - also known as "Restoration Posture"

As a classic recovery posture, this is a great ending posture for mindful yoga that brings awareness inward. In this posture, the mind may begin to wander due to physical discomfort in the inner thighs and groin.

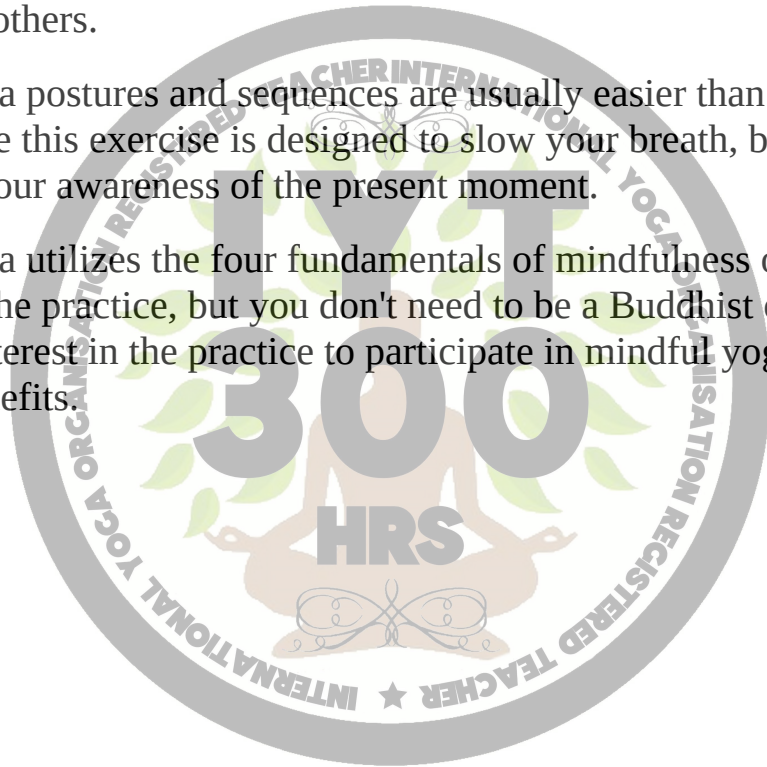
How:

Bring the soles of your feet together. Imagine your inner groin sinking into your pelvis. Extend your arms at your sides, angled about 45 degrees from the sides of your torso, with your palms facing up. Relax your face, chest, shoulders, hips and feet. Drop your knees as you dive deeper into the pose.

An important finding is that the combination of mindfulness and yoga can bring even more benefits than any exercise on its own, including an even deeper sense of self-awareness and acceptance, as well as compassion for oneself and others.

Mindful yoga postures and sequences are usually easier than other styles of yoga because this exercise is designed to slow your breath, body, and mind to sharpen your awareness of the present moment.

Mindful yoga utilizes the four fundamentals of mindfulness of Buddhism throughout the practice, but you don't need to be a Buddhist or have a particular interest in the practice to participate in mindful yoga and reap its amazing benefits.



Conclusion

It is something that one is really grateful for to have a place to practice yoga for 10 to 30 minutes one to several times a week. Even the ability to have the time, space, etc. to practice from home is a huge asset. The benefits of practicing yoga are sure to go off the mat at some point, and for many, the ultimate goal is for their everyday wellbeing to improve.

Imagine if you could allow a whole week, or maybe ten days or even two weeks, to fully immerse yourself in your practice and reconnect with yourself. Yoga makes this possible.

Yoga allows us to step out of our everyday reality, slow down and get back to basics. The basics are our physical, emotional and mental states. This opportunity to be free from our plans, our digital devices and all other distractions and responsibilities provides a unique space to be more aware.

Although we can cultivate this through our regular practice, be it an hour a day or an hour a week, yoga is a fully immersive space in which you can allow yourself to just be there.

One of the best things about yoga is that it can be done almost anytime, anywhere - including at home.

Yoga is more than just bending, twisting, and stretching muscles. Basically, yoga is about self-love and self-care. When you practice, you choose to groom yourself - and that's something to celebrate.

Regardless of what you see or hear, try not to equate yourself with flexible friends or professional yogis.

The reality is you won't be good at yoga - at least not at first. You'll fall, stumble, lose your balance, and collapse on the mat when it's over. In those moments, it's easy to think, "I'm so out of shape - I'm terrible at it".

However, I want to encourage you to change these thoughts: "I am getting better at this. I'll do this for myself".

Yoga is one of the few activities that you can only do out of self-love and regardless of how "good" you are at it, choosing to do it at all is a positive step.