

Introduction to Yoga

Weekly Exercises begin on page 5

Twists

Twisting poses release the tension in your spine, relieves backaches and makes your shoulders more flexible. It also facilitates in the circulation of blood and nutrients in the body.

Supine and Prone Poses

Done lying down on either your front or back, these poses release tension in your abdomen and increase the mobility of your spine. They restore strength in your back, arms and legs, and releases your hips and groins.

Inverted Poses

Inverted poses are where your head is moved to a position lower than your heart. Releases back tension, brings about calmness and quiet.

Backbends

Backbends benefit the adrenal glands and the kidney. They release tension in the front body and from your shoulders and pelvic area, and improves the flexibility of your spine.

Finishing Poses

These are the cooling-down practices.

Relaxation

At least a couple of minutes of relaxation, usually lying in the supine position without moving the body.

When doing yoga asanas, try to concentrate on each movement - the process of moving is just as important as attaining a given position. Remember you should not strain or continue holding any yoga posture if it causes pain. Yoga isn't a competitive sport, and the extent of the stretch is less important than the technique.

Each asana may be repeated up to three times in Vinyasa Hatha Yoga and you don't need to stay in the pose too long. Try to perform the poses in the prescribed order on the practice sheets, since the routine is meant to help balance the different muscle groups.

You'll know if your yoga practice is perfectly balanced if you remember the basic principle of practice is to bend in the different directions (forwards, backwards, side to side) and to twist -- and from the 3 planes (standing, seated, lying down). After practicing yoga you should feel energised, but not overstimulated, aware, alert, calm and quiet without feeling tired or drained.

The Fundamentals of the Breath

The complete breath, as defined by yoga, involves the entire respiratory system and uses all three portions of the lungs. The lungs are expanded to take in more air than the amounts inhaled by breathing normally or shallowly. The complete breath is not just deep breathing; it is the deepest possible breathing.

In this breath you hold your shoulders steady and focus on lifting your collarbones and expanding your ribs forward to expand your lungs to their fullest capacity.

The yoga complete breath is the foundation technique of all the different types of yoga breathing, and therefore should be mastered before you learn any other specific breathing exercises. It brings the whole lung capacity into play and is the basis of all other breathing techniques in yoga.

Learning to Breathe Correctly

In the Complete Breath, you start filling the lower part of the lungs first, then you fill the middle and upper part. When exhaling you first empty the upper part of the lungs, then the middle, and last of all the lower part.

This process, however, is not divided into three separate actions. Inhalation is done in one smooth continuous flow just as one might pour water in filling a glass. First the bottom is filled, then the middle, and finally the upper portion. But the process itself is an uninterrupted one.

Inhalation should be done in one continuous breath - slowly and in a most relaxed manner. No effort or strain should ever be exerted. This is very important. Keep your mouth closed unless your nose is blocked.

Inhaling

First, push the chest forwards as you breathe in.

Second, push the ribs sideways while still breathing in. The stomach will automatically go inwards slightly.

Third, lift the collar bone and expand ribs outward up while still breathing in.

Even though this is described as three separate processes, it should be done in a smooth, continuous rhythm with each part following smoothly on from the previous part. Try to avoid any jerky movements.

Exhaling

First, just allow the collar bone, chest and ribs to relax. Keep the shoulders steady.

Second, when all the air seems to be out, pull the stomach in slightly to expel any remaining air in the lungs.

Considerations for Breathing Exercises

Find a quiet place where you won't be distracted. Sit on a chair or if you prefer, cross-legged on the floor. Sit straight. Unless your spine is erect, some of the benefits of the breathing exercises will be lost. Breathe deeply and slowly, without strain.

You should do the exercises on an empty stomach. Wait at least three hours after a heavy meal, and about one and a half hours after a light snack.

There are two reasons for this. First, a heavy meal will reduce your concentration. Second, food in the stomach causes some of your blood and oxygen supply to be diverted to the stomach for digestion. This will reduce the blood and oxygen available for directing to the brain while you are doing the breathing exercises.

While doing deep breathing the spine should be kept straight, so as not to impair the free flow of the life-force, or prana. This also helps to develop correct posture. Yogis attach great importance to correct posture and use several different positions for their various advanced breathing practices as well as for meditation and concentration. One very popular pose for deep breathing is the lotus pose or cross legged posture.

When you sit down on the floor with your legs crossed, visualise a stream running through you in a straight line, starting at the top of your head and continuing into the ground. Imagine, too, that this is the axis around which your body has been molded. This will help you learn to sit up straight without being stiff and tense. You should, in fact, feel comfortable and relaxed as you sit this way.

Yoga Protocol

When you attend yoga at a dedicated yoga studio or ashram there is a certain protocol which is part of traditional and contemporary yoga practice.

Shoes

On arrival you will leave your shoes outside. This is for hygiene reasons and also because the removal of your shoes symbolises leaving the outside world behind as you enter in to a sacred space.

Quiet

The yoga studio is a quiet and meditative space and we try to maintain the sanctity of the environment by talking quietly and respectfully so as not to disturb other students. It is important to minimise distractions by ensuring mobile phones are off. If you are late enter quietly and find a space at the back of the room. Try hard not to rattle keys etc and roll out your mat quietly.

Greeting

We bring our hands together at our forehead and heart while saying either NAMASTE or NAMASKAR. This is a sanskrit greeting. Namaskar is a greeting used in India in a spiritual context. It means „with the charms of mind and the love in my heart I recognize the divinity within you“.

Week 1: home practices

Meditation & breathing

Sit on the floor or in a chair with a straight back. Breathe deeply into the lower ribcage. Expand the ribcage and lift collarbones as you breathe in. Then breathe out by drawing the abdomen in to gently engage the diaphragm. Breathe in and out 12 times slowly and with steadiness.

Yoga asanas



1. Auspicious Pose
Swastikasana



2. Anjali Mudra
Anjali Mudra



3. Revolved Easy Pos...
Parivrtta Sukhasana



4. Staff Pose
Dandasana



5. Caterpillar Pose



6. Easy Boat Pose
Sahaja Navasana



7. Balancing Bound A...
Dandayamana Baddha K...



8. Half Upright Seat...
Ardha Urdhva Upavist...



9. Spinal Column Pos...
Merudandasana



10. Bound Angle Pose
Baddha Konasana



11. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



12. Volcano Pose
Urdhva Hastasana



13. Standing Side Ben...



14. Standing Side Ben...



15. Standing Spinal T...



16. Waist Rotating Po...
Katichakrasana



17. Standing Backbend
Anuvittasana



18. Standing Forward ...
Uttanasana Variation...



19. Standing Forward ...
Uttanasana



20. Upward Forward Fo...
Urdhva Uttanasana



21. Volcano Pose
Urdhva Hastasana



22. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



23. Five Pointed Star...
Utthita Tadasana



24. Extended Triangle...
Utthita Trikonasana



25. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



26. Table Top Pose
Bharmanasana



27. Cat Cow Pose (com...
Chakravakasana



28. Balancing Table P...
Dandayamana Bharmana...



29. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



30. Child Pose
Balasana



31. Half Wind Release...
Ardha Pavan Muktasana...



32. Wind Release Pose
Pavan Muktasana



33. Roller Pose
Vat Nari Sansthan Sh...



34. Bridge Pose
Setubandha Sarvangas...



35. Supine Spinal Twi...
Supta Matsyendrasana...



36. Supine Spinal Twi...
Supta Matsyendrasana...



37. Corpse Pose
Savasana

Relaxation

Lie on your back. You may like to place a bolster under your knees. Hold the body completely still. Focus on relaxing each body part from feet to face. Focus on your breathing by noticing the rise and fall of your chest with every breath in and out. Stay for 5 minutes or more.

Week 2: home practices

Meditation & breathing

Sit on the floor or in a chair with a straight back. Breathe deeply into the lower ribcage. Expand the ribcage and lift collarbones as you breathe in. Then breathe out by drawing the abdomen in to gently engage the diaphragm. Breathe in and out 12 times slowly and with steadiness.

Yoga asanas



1. Auspicious Pose
Swastikasana



2. Anjali Mudra
Anjali Mudra



3. Revolved Easy Pos...
Parivrtta Sukhasana



4. Staff Pose
Dandasana



5. Caterpillar Pose



6. Easy Boat Pose
Sahaja Navasana



7. Balancing Bound A...
Dandayamana Baddha K...



8. Half Upright Seat...
Ardha Urdhva Upavist...



9. Spinal Column Pos...
Merudandasana



10. Bound Angle Pose
Baddha Konasana



11. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



12. Upward Salute Sid...
Parsva Urdhva Hastas...



13. Volcano Pose
Urdhva Hastasana



14. Standing Spinal T...



15. Waist Rotating Po...
Katichakrasana



16. Volcano Pose
Urdhva Hastasana



17. Standing Backbend
Anuvittasana



18. Upward Forward Fo..
Urdhva Uttanasana



20. Standing Forward ...
Uttanasana



21. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



22. Horse Pose
Vatayanasana



23. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



24. Five Pointed Star...
Utthita Tadasana



25. Extended Triangle...
Utthita Trikonasana



26. Pendulum Pose
Dolasana



27. Five Pointed Star...
Utthita Tadasana



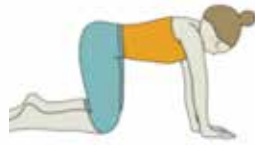
28. Revolved Triangle...
Parivrtta Trikonasan...



29. Intense Leg Stret...
Prasarita Padottanas...



30. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



1. Table Top Pose
Bharmanasana



32. Cat Cow Pose (com...
Chakravakasana



33. Tiger Pose
Vyaghrasana



34. Balancing Table P...
i...



35. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



36. Child Pose
Balasana



37. Corpse Pose
Savasana



38. Half Wind Release...
Ardha Pawanuktasana...



39. Wind Release Pose
Pawanuktasana



40. Roller Pose
Vat Nari Sansthan Sh...



41. Bridge Pose
Setubandha Sarvangas...



42. Supine Spinal Twi...
Supta Matsyendrasana...



43. Supine Spinal Twi...
Supta Matsyendrasana...



44. Corpse Pose
Savasana

Week 3: home practices

Meditation & breathing

Sit on the floor or in a chair with a straight back. Breathe deeply into the lower ribcage. Expand the ribcage and lift collarbones as you breathe in. Then breathe out by drawing the abdomen in to gently engage the diaphragm. Breathe in and out 12 times slowly and with steadiness.

Yoga asanas



1. Auspicious Pose
Swastikasana



2. Anjali Mudra
Anjali Mudra



3. Revolved Easy Pos...
Parivrtta Sukhasana



4. Staff Pose
Dandasana



5. Caterpillar Pose



6. Easy Boat Pose
Sahaja Navasana



7. Balancing Bound A...
Dandayamana Baddha K...



8. Half Upright Seat...
Ardha Urdhva Upavist...



9. Spinal Column Pos...
Merudandasana



10. Bound Angle Pose
Baddha Konasana



11. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



12. Volcano Pose
Urdhva Hastasana



13. Upward Salute Side...
Parsva Urdhva Hastasana



14. Standing Reverse ...
Tadasana Paschima Na...



15. Standing Spinal T.



16. Volcano Pose
Urdhva Hastasana



17. Standing Backbend
Anuvittasana



18. Upward Forward Fo...
Urdhva Uttanasana



19. Standing Forward ...
Uttanasana



20. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



21. Chair Pose
Utkatasana



22. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



23. Tree Pose
Vrksasana



24. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



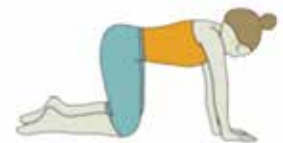
25. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



26. Table Top Pose
Bharmanasana



27. Downward Facing D...
Adho Mukha Svanasana



28. Table Top Pose
Bharmanasana



29. Child Pose
Balasana



30. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



31. Cat Cow Pose (com...
Chakravakasana



32. Tiger Pose
Vyaghrasana



33. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



34. Sphinx Pose
Salamba Bhujangasana



35. Cobra Pose
Bhujangasana



36. Child Pose
Balasana



37. Corpse Pose
Savasana



38. Half Wind Release...
Ardha Pavan Muktasan...



39. Wind Release Pose
Pavan Muktasana



40. Roller Pose
Vat Nari Sansthan Sh...



41. Bridge Pose
Setubandha Sarvangas...



42. Supine Spinal Twi...
Supta Matsyendrasana...



43. Supine Spinal Twi...
Supta Matsyendrasana...



44. Corpse Pose
Savasana

Week 4: home practices

Meditation & breathing

Sit on the floor or in a chair with a straight back. Breathe deeply into the lower ribcage. Expand the ribcage and lift collarbones as you breathe in. Then breathe out by drawing the abdomen in to gently engage the diaphragm. Breathe in and out 12 times slowly and with steadiness.

Yoga asanas



1. Auspicious Pose
Swastikasana



2. Anjali Mudra
Anjali Mudra



3. Revolved Easy Pos...
Parivrtta Sukhasana



4. Staff Pose
Dandasana



5. Caterpillar Pose



6. Easy Boat Pose
Sahaja Navasana



7. Balancing Bound A...
Dandayamana Baddha K...



8. Half Upright Seat...
Ardha Urdhva Upavist...



9. Spinal Column Pos...
Merudandasana



10. Bound Angle Pose
Baddha Konasana



11. Garland Pose
Malasana



12. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



13. Volcano Pose
Urdhva Hastasana



14. Upward Salute Side...
Parsva Urdhva Hastas...



15. Standing Spinal T...



16. Standing Backbend
Anuvittasana



17. Standing Reverse ...
Tadasana Paschima Na...



18. Standing Cow Face...
Tadasana Gomukhasana



19. Chair Pose
Utkatasana



20. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



21. Tree Pose
Vrksasana



22. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



23. Pyramid Pose Vari...
Parsvottanasana Vari...



24. Warrior Pose I
Virabhadrasana I



25. Warrior Pose II
Virabhadrasana II



26. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



27. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



28. Table Top Pose
Bharmanasana



29. Downward Facing D...
Adho Mukha Svanasana



30. Table Top Pose
Bharmanasana



31. Child Pose
Balasana



32. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



33. Cat Cow Pose (com...
Chakravakasana



34. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



35. Sphinx Pose
Salamba Bhujangasana



36. Cobra Pose
Bhujangasana



37. Child Pose
Balasana



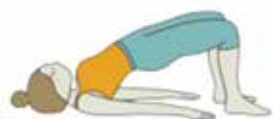
38. Corpse Pose
Savasana



39. Wind Release Pose
Pavanuktasana



40. Roller Pose
Vat Nari Sansthan Sh...



41. Bridge Pose
Setubandha Sarvangas...



42. Supine Spinal Twi...
Supta Matsyendrasana...



43. Supine Spinal Twi...
Supta Matsyendrasana...



44. Corpse Pose
Savasana

Week 5: home practices

Meditation & breathing

Sit on the floor or in a chair with a straight back. Breathe deeply into the lower ribcage. Expand the ribcage and lift collarbones as you breathe in. Then breathe out by drawing the abdomen in to gently engage the diaphragm. Breathe in and out 12 times slowly and with steadiness.

Yoga asanas



1. Auspicious Pose
Swastikasana



2. Anjali Mudra
Anjali Mudra



3. Revolved Easy Pos...
Parivrtta Sukhasana



4. Staff Pose
Dandasana



5. Caterpillar Pose



6. Easy Boat Pose
Sahaja Navasana



7. Balancing Bound A...
Dandayamana Baddha K...



8. Half Upright Seat...
Ardha Urdhva Upavist...



9. Spinal Column Pos...
Merudandasana



10. Bound Angle Pose
Baddha Konasana



11. Garland Pose
Malasana



12. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



13. Volcano Pose
Urdhva Hastasana



14. Upward Salute Sid...
Parsva Urdhva Hastas...



15. Standing Spinal T...



16. Standing Backbend
Anuvittasana



17. Standing Reverse ...
Tadasana Paschima Na...



18. Standing Cow Face...
Tadasana Gomukhasana



19. Chair Pose
Utkatasana



20. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



21. Five Pointed Star...
Utthita Tadasana



22. Extended Triangle...
Utthita Trikonasana



23. Five Pointed Star...
Utthita Tadasana



24. Revolved Triangle...
Parivrtta Trikonasan...



25. Five Pointed Star...
Utthita Tadasana



26. Intense Leg Stret...
Prasarita Padottanas...



27. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



28. Warrior Pose I
Virabhadrasana I



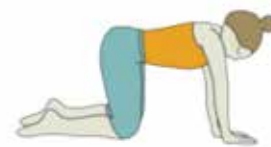
29. Warrior Pose II
Virabhadrasana II



30. Mountain Pose
Tadasana



31. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



32. Table Top Pose
Bharmanasana



33. Downward Facing D...
Adho Mukha Svanasana



34. Table Top Pose
Bharmanasana



35. Child Pose
Balasana



36. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



37. Cat Cow Pose (com...
Chakravakasana



38. Thunderbolt Pose
Vajrasana



39. Sphinx Pose
Salamba Bhujangasana



40. Cobra Pose
Bhujangasana



41. Locust Pose
Salabhasana



42. Child Pose
Balasana



43. Corpse Pose
Savasana



44. Wind Release Pose
Pavanuktasana



45. Roller Pose
Vat Nari Sansthan Sh...



46. Bridge Pose
Setubandha Sarvangas...



47. Supine Spinal Twi...
Supta Matsyendrasana...



48. Corpse Pose
Savasana