

Yoga Basics

APMP

Courtney

- Started practicing yoga 3 years ago
- Graduated Yoga Teacher Training 2014
- Teaches 10 classes a week at LifeTime Fitness, EPA & private groups.

All levels, ages & styles

- Favorite style of yoga: Vinyasa & Yin
- Favorite pose: Dancer Pose (PIC)
- “Yoga is for everyBODY!”

Why practice yoga?

Yoga does the body & mind good!

Helps depression & anxiety, diabetes, chronic pain and inflammation.

How? The vagus nerve, the largest cranial nerve in the body, starts at the base of the skull and wanders throughout the whole body, influencing the respiratory, digestive, and nervous systems. Researchers hypothesize yogic breathing techniques improve vagal tone based on investigative practices.

Yoga also helps maintain a healthy weight, increases flexibility by 35% in 8 weeks of practice, improves bone strength, lowers blood pressure, greater lung capacity (more oxygen to the brain), peace of mind, better posture and sense of balance.

Roots of Yoga

The physical form of yoga as we know today is not as ancient as we think!

Yoga originated in India 5 thousand years ago. It's first mentioned in the Rig Veda, India's ancient sacred text.

There weren't any poses mentioned or breathing techniques. Just the word "yuj" meaning to yoke, or to unite. The word yoga derives from yuj.

Over centuries yoga has evolved. Philosophies were passed down from sages. A later text, called the **Yoga Sutras**, was created by Patanjali, the "father of yoga". It provides a kind of *philosophical guidebook* for dealing with the challenges of being human. The only pose, or *asana*, mentioned is a **seated posture for meditation**. Still no sign of Downward Facing Dog or other common postures. Yogic breath, *pranayama*, is making a debut.

Modern yoga teachings, still abide by the **Yoga Sutras**. The moral and ethical codes that are present in this text are very much relevant today as they were thousands of years ago.

The codes are the foundation to living a conscientious life, in regards to the relationship with yourself & others. **Non-violence, compassion, truthfulness, non-stealing, non-greed, with focus on divine pursuits & self-knowledge.**

Also including in these teachings is the relationship with yourself internally. **Observing cleanliness inside & out, the practice of being happy, self-discipline, self-study and surrender to a divine being and recognizing this divinity is all living things.**

Namaste, is a closing phrase in a typical yoga class. It translates to the divinity in me sees and honors the divinity in you. Teacher and student bow to each other as a sign of respect.

So where do the yoga postures come from?

A few centuries after Patanjali, yoga masters created a system of practices designed to rejuvenate the body and prolong life.

The exploration of these physical-spiritual connections and body centered practices led to the creation of what we primarily think of yoga in the **West: Hatha Yoga.**

Introducing the modern style yoga postures and breathing techniques used to build strength, increase flexibility, and circulation to heal ailments in the body and calm the mind.

Find your practice

How do I know which type of yoga is right for me?

Hatha Yoga

ALL yoga is considered Hatha. Hatha is a generic term that includes a series of yoga postures linked with breath. Usually beginner classes are titled Hatha Yoga.

Within Hatha Yoga there are many styles.

Vinyasa Flow- Series of poses linked together in a continuous “flow”. Inhales & exhales lead the body through fluid movement.

Bikram (hot yoga)- A challenging sequence of 26 postures in a heated room.

Power Yoga- Fast, high intensity practice that builds muscle.

Yin Yoga- Meditative. Breath work combined with floor stretches that are held for a period of time.

Restorative Yoga- Postures that are done on the floor with supportive pillows, blankets, blocks, straps, and other props. Aim is to restore the body with gentle postures and deep breath.

Gentle Yoga- Breath work with a slow pace. Holding postures for many breaths. Great for rehabilitation, range of motion exercises and breathing techniques.

Chair Yoga- Simple sequence of postures that can be done in or around a chair.

Great for corporate stress relief!

Helpful Tools

For Chair Yoga:

- **JUST A CHAIR** (preferably one without wheels or lock wheels)

For other types of yoga:

- Yoga mat (Thick vs Thin)
- Yoga mat carrier (Bag vs Sling)
- Yoga towel (non-skid vs sweat activated)
- Yoga block (Foam vs Cork)
- Yoga strap

Chair Yoga

How much time do you have to practice?

5 mins- (Just seated postures)- **Easy**

- Neck rolls, forward bends, twists, chest openers, hip openers & side bends

10 mins- (Seated and some standing)- **Medium**

- Easy postures with calf/quad/hamstring stretches,

30 mins- (Mostly standing)- **Medium**

- All of the above plus strength & balance postures.

Breathwork (Pranayama)

Prana=Life Force, Yama=Control

Before you start moving your body in yoga, you need to connect to your breath.

Most of our day consists of *shallow breathing*. Thoracic breathing, or chest breathing, is the drawing of minimal breath to the lungs. We use this breath when we talk, casually walk, and eat.

Now take a **DEEP** breath.

To breathe properly you have to use your nose!

The nose acts as your body's natural filter- the ultimate air cleaner!

- Warms the air to body temperature before it reaches your lungs.

Effects of mouth breathing:

- Allows germs, allergens and other pollutants to get inside your lungs, where they can damage delicate tissues. .
- Cold air makes your airways tighten up and constrict, so breathing becomes more difficult.
- Dryness thickens mucus and clogs the cilia, so your lungs are less able to process oxygen and move into your bloodstream.

Improper breathing can affect:

- Sleep
- Mood
- Digestion
- Heart
- Nervous system
- Muscles
- Brain

Benefits of proper breathing:

- Increased energy
- Improved health
- Greater harmony
- Less anxiety
- Less fear
- Better relationships and just a happier life in general.

***Pranayama-* the regulation of the breath through certain techniques and exercises such as yoga.**

Dirgha Pranayama: 3 Part Yogic Breath

1. The air you breathe in through your nose should go all the way down to your **belly**.
2. Feel the **ribcage** expand upward and out to the sides.
3. Continue to inhale up through the **chest** to the collar bones taking in the last sip of breath filling the lungs completely without forcing too much. You want to be comfortably full.
4. Continue this pranayama practice for 2-5 mins

Exhale slowly from the top to bottom contracting the abdominals at the end of the exhale to squeeze out all the air.

Dirgha Pranayama uses the full capacity of the lungs.

- Keeps the chest and lungs flexible and relaxed
- Increases overall energy
- Renews the entire system, and improves digestion and elimination

“HA” Breath

To relax:

1. Inhale deeply through the nose.
2. Exhale gently through the mouth saying "Haaaaaaa" until the lungs are completely empty.

Releases stress and tension from the body.

To energize:

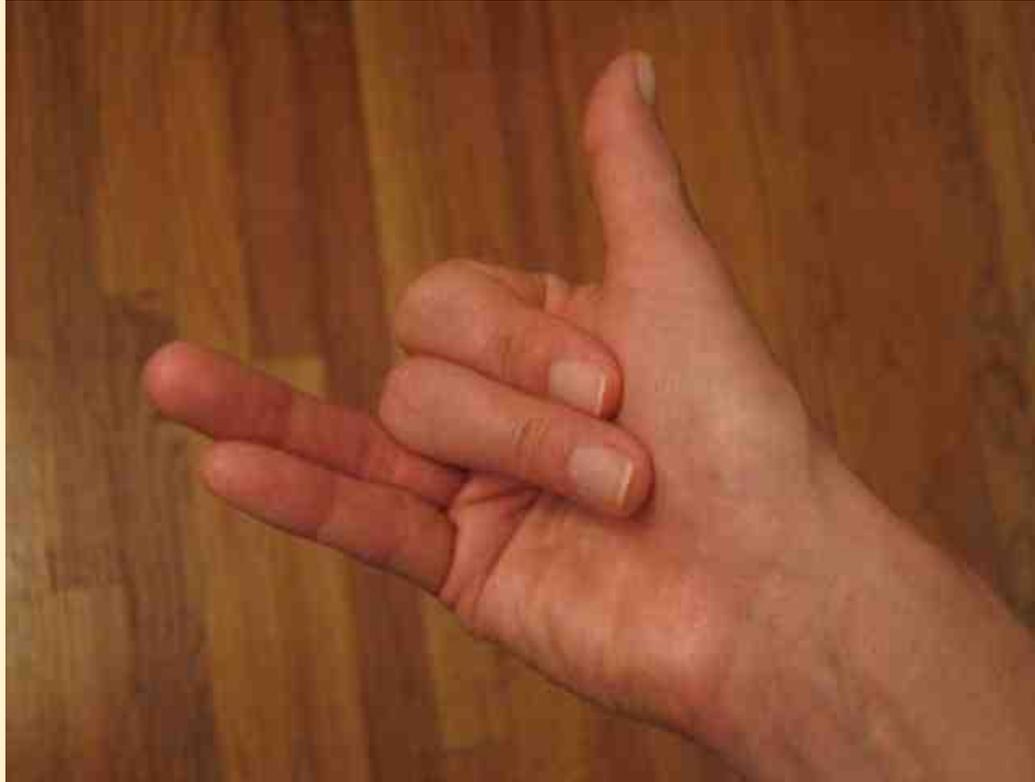
1. Inhale deeply through nose.
2. Exhale quickly and sharply while exclaiming "Ha!"

Brings energy into the body.

Nadi Shodhan: Alternate Nostril Breath

1. Gently close your right nostril with your thumb.
 2. Inhale through your left nostril, then close it with your ring finger.
 3. Open and exhale slowly through the right nostril.
 4. Keep the right nostril open, inhale, then close it
 5. Open and exhale slowly through the left. This is one cycle. Repeat 3 to 5 times, then release the hand and go back to normal breathing.
- Stimulates the brain side-to side
 - Synchronizes the hemispheres, and balances any dominance
 - Strengthens, calms, and regulates the nadis (the nervous system)
 - Eliminates wastes and increases energy.
 - If you experience dizziness during pranayama then slow down your breathing. If you are gasping, speed up the breath. Breathe less deep if there is nausea.

Vishnu Mudra- Hand Gesture



Ujjayi Pranayama: Victorious Breath

1. Bring your hand in front of your mouth. Say "haaa" as if you were fogging a mirror.
2. Now say "haaa" on the inhalation and the exhalation. Don't make the sound too loud and keep it smooth and even.
3. Whisper the sound through the mouth evenly in and out
4. Close the mouth and continue the "haaa" sound through the **nostrils** on the inhalation and exhalation. You will feel the back of the throat lightly constrict.
5. Continue with long deep breaths. 2-5 mins
 - Deeply relaxing and soothing
 - Breath is lengthened and the air is drawn to the bottom of the lungs.
 - Mind becomes absorbed and focused by the sound which induces meditation
 - Heightens awareness and enhances creativity.

5 min. (Just seated postures)- Easy



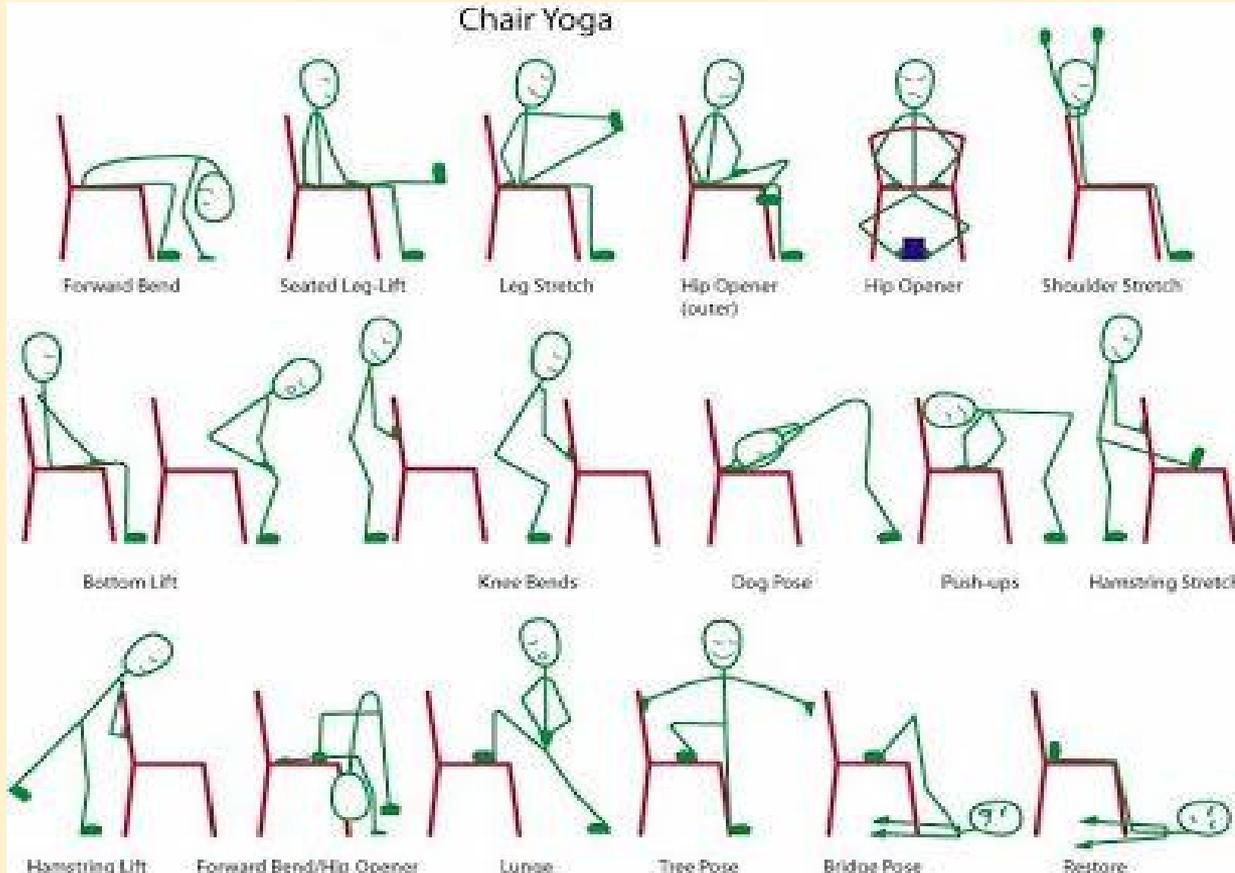
- Neck rolls
- Forward bends
- Twists
- Chest openers
- Shoulders
- Side bends
- Temple Rubs

Use 3 Part Breath

**10-15 breaths each
pose**

10 min (Seated and some standing)- Medium

Chair Yoga



Use same postures in previous slide and add:

- Calves
- Quads
- Hamstrings
- Hips

Use 3 Part Breath

10-15 breaths each pose



30 min (Mostly standing)- Medium

1. Sun Salutation A:

- Sequence of postures that flow with your breath.
- Dynamic stretching with easy strength postures to tone your arms, core and legs.
- Primarily used to awaken the body and warm up the spine. 4 repetitions

sun salutation » A



samastithi



1



2

uttanasana



3



4

chaturanga dandasana



5

urdhva mukha svanasana



6

adho mukha svanasana



7



8

uttanasana



9



10

samastithi

2. Sun Salutation B:

- A series of flowing postures that warm up the hips using postures like high or low lunge variations.
- Increases range of motion in the lower body and muscle tone. 4 repetitions Left & Right side



Strengthening your core is crucial in maintain proper posture and back health.

(After Sun Salutations to warm up the body)

Boat Pose

1. Sit on the floor with straight spine and extended legs.
2. Ground into your sits bones and lean back slowly reaching your arms straight and forward fingers reaching long.
3. Eventually start to raise your legs off the floor and extend them long to make a “V” shape with your body.
4. Hold for 10 breaths
5. Begin to lower & hover your legs and back an inch off the floor
6. Hold for 10 breaths and rise back up to the “V” shape.
7. Repeat 3x

After your strength work lay flat on the floor & stretch your arms over your head. Reach through fingertips and toes.

- **Bridge pose:** Press feet into floor with knees bent and heels near bum. Lift hips. Hold for 10 breaths. Lower hips, stretch out legs
- **Forward Fold:** Lift up to a seated position. Legs extended. With a long spine reach arms overhead. Ground into sits bones reach through fingertips. Then slowly bring chest to thighs and arms fall where they lay. Hold for 20 breaths. Slowly roll up and lay on the floor
- **Supine Twists:** Bring either one or both knees to chest and lower to other otherside crossing the midline of the body. Twist deep from the low back up the spine with arms at a “T” to open the chest. Look in the opposite direction of your knees for a full spinal twist. Hold for 10 breaths mins each side
- **Legs up:** While laying lift legs. You can also use a wall to prop your legs up. Hold for 10 breaths
- **Savasana:** Make time for a 2 min rest after your practice to rejuvenate & restore the body and mind.

You know the risks of sitting for a prolonged period of time and now you have the tools to counteract the sedentary office lifestyle!

- No need to whip out a mat after a meeting. Breathe and stretch in your chair!
- If you have at least 5 mins you can squeeze in yogic breathing techniques (pranayama) and simple chest openers, forward folds, hip openers and side bends to circulate the blood, release muscle tension and calm the mind.
- **Try to dedicate at least 5 mins ONCE a DAY.** You will feel so good you will want to do it more often and find more time!
- **Tell your coworkers the dangers of sitting for hours and show them some stretches! Get the whole office up and moving!**

Yoga Classes

Practice at home:

- YouTube: Yoga with Adriene <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>

Local Studios:

- **LifePower Yoga @ LifeTime Fitness Cary**
- 1700 Regency Pkwy (919) 467-7779
- **LifePower Yoga @ LifeTime Athletic Raleigh**
- 8518 Falls of Neuse Rd.(919) 582-7000
- **Hot Asana Durham**
- 8128 Renaissance Pkwy #206 (919) 544-9642

Private one-on-one lessons or Small group lessons with Courtney

<http://www.selfication.com/how-to-breathe/>

<http://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/a-z/yoga-workouts?page=1>

<http://life.gaiam.com/article/beginners-guide-8-major-styles-yoga>

<https://yogainternational.com/article/view/scientific-research-how-yoga-works>

<http://www.yogajournal.com/how-yoga-balances-out-our-desk-bound-muscles/>

<http://yogadork.com/2013/10/23/the-diaphragm-is-a-muscle-stretch-and-strengthen-it/>

<http://www.openculture.com/2015/08/why-sitting-is-the-new-smoking-an-animated-explanation.html>

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-price-we-pay-for-sitting-too-much-1443462015>

<https://yogainternational.com/article/view/relieving-neck-shoulder-tension>

<http://smartsafeyoga.com/stretchasana/>

<http://www.yogabasics.com/learn/history-of-yoga/>