

BEGINNERS GUIDE TO

STARTING YOGA PRACTICE AT HOME OR AT YOGA STUDIO



Yoga is a powerful tradition that helps us reconnect with ourselves, make the body more limber and calms down the mind.

Yoga is an experiential journey and lifestyle, it will feel totally different for each one of us. Because we are so unique and have different likes and needs I always recommend to new yogis to start with trying different yoga styles. You practice with different teachers until you figure out what works for you best.

You can choose to start your yogic journey at home with the help of online applications, YouTube, specialised Subscription Channels, Live Zoom Yoga Classes or down at Your Local Yoga studio.

However you choose to do your yoga the objective of the practice is to make you feel great and recharged once the job is done. Always look for a class which has a feel-good after-effect. Stay away from judging yourself, instead tune into your body and be aware of what your breath and mind's reactions are to what your body tells you.

Keep practice regular as this is the key to support your overall health on an ongoing basis.

Benefits that are frequently linked to regular yoga practice are included at the end of this article. Please, scroll down to view the benefits list.

In this article you will find out how to enjoy Yoga Asana (pose) practises at home or in the yoga studio, it is important to mention that there are many paths of Yoga, including Yoga of devotion (Bhakti), action (Karma), the eight limbs yoga (Ashtanga/Raja), knowledge (Jnana), Hatha and so forth. Yoga extends beyond the mat.

Yoga is the lifestyle aiming to bring goodness and wellness to your life and the universe. Give it a try and verify what Yoga can do for you!

When it comes to physical postural practices, the best way to find out what type/style of Yoga suits you most is to experiment with different styles until you find what suits your unique needs and resonates with you.

Because Yoga is about balance I always suggest to include asanas and practices that not only make your body more flexible but also elevate your strength.

It doesn't matter what other people can do on the mat, what matters is you and your personal safety, fun and life-enhancing yoga practice.

Don't worry about flexibility or your current fitness level, if you can breathe, you can practice yoga.

Now let's move to information which can help you before starting Yoga at home (perhaps with the aid of an online resource) or attending your first Yoga class at Yoga shala/studio.

How to get the most out of your first yoga experience?

Here's a list of things which you may want to consider so you can make the most out of your first yoga classes at home, outdoors or at a yoga shala:

Place and time of practice - If you practice at home try to find a quiet, clean, uncluttered, pleasant room with a flat surface. The room should be well ventilated but not drafty. Practising in a drafty, windy, heavily air-conditioned room or under a fan can upset the body temperature and cause chills. Practising in a hot or poorly ventilated space may cause unpleasant sweating, overheating or dizziness. Avoid practising in noisy places or in direct sunlight if you practice outdoors. If you wish you can light up a relaxing candle in your room and have the lights dimmed. When you light the candle, focus on the flame and picture burning away any negative thoughts or feelings you may hold – just burn them away. Traditionally yoga is practised in silence to facilitate a 'journey within' without outside noises and distractions (unless Kirtan or Sound Yoga is practised).

Nowadays, together with the Westernisation of Yoga, many practitioners prefer to play calming and relaxing music during their asana practice.

Yoga asana practice is a perfect morning energy booster. Having said that if you cannot practice in the morning fit your yoga into your day whenever you can. Even 5 - 10 minutes short daily practice can make a massive difference over time. If you practice at the studio, respect others, don't be late and support a calming and positive environment at all times.

Clothes - Wear loose or elastic form-fitting, breathable clothing which are comfortable. Choose clothes you feel good in. The body can be covered with a blanket or sheet when it is cold while performing the 'Savasana' known as the Corpse Pose. If you practice at

home you may want to have a blanket at hand. Shoes aren't necessary for Yoga. Most people prefer to be barefoot on their mat but if you wish to wear grippy socks you are welcome to do so.

Yoga mat - Ideally, have a good quality yoga mat or rug (preferably non-slip) which sticks well to the surface beneath and gives you good support and extra cushioning. Sliding with or on the mat can cause injuries. In turn, a very thin mat (i.e. travel mat with 3mm thickness) can make exercising rather uncomfortable or painful). Always position your mat/rug in a space so you have the freedom to perform a variety of yogic postures and remain far from the furniture which can be knocked over, can fall on you or you can fall on. Some applies to other yogis in the studio. If you find kneeling on the mat uncomfortable, use the blanket for extra cushioning. Accessories such as blocks and bolsters are great, however, they can be replaced with books or a stack of pillows. Yoga shalas usually provide yoga mats and props to students and also frequently distributes mats on the floor for you.

Food intake - Perform yoga practice on an empty stomach if possible. If you are very hungry and can't see yourself getting through the class without consuming something beforehand just have a small sip of warm water and mouthful of a little protein or carbohydrates. It could be something like a piece of fruit, some porridge oats, other cooked grains or a handful of nuts. If you can, it is good to leave 3 - 4 hours after a heavier meal and at least an hour after a light meal/snack. As a rule of thumb, I recommend staying well hydrated at all times to prevent fatigue.

Breathing - in yoga the rule of thumb is to breathe through the nose and not through the mouth (unless otherwise specifically instructed). The frequently used breathing technique in Yoga is called Ujjayi (Victorious) breathing. Ujjayi involves long, smooth breathing that generates a sound similar to the ocean or relaxed Darth Vader. This

specific sound of the breath is created by gentle constriction of the opening of the throat. The constriction creates resistance to the passage of air that is coming in and out and generates the soothing sound. Please note, there are various breathing techniques called Pranayama that you can explore over time during your yoga journey. Breathing practices are great tools to reconnect with yourself, relax, destress, energise or even cool down.

Avoiding Injuries!

Not all postures are suitable for everyone, we are all different and unique. Yoga asana practice, just like any exercise/movement program, can result in injury. Always honour what your body is telling you, listen to it. Yoga is a journey to be enjoyed for life, so if you do not feel good in the specific asana, modify it to suit you better or just don't do it. The rule of thumb is to leave the ego outside the radius of your yoga mat.

So to reduce the risk of injury, never force or strain. It is a good practice to take a few moments before you dive into practice on warming-up, mobilizing your joints including wrists, ankles, hips, arms so forth.

I encourage you to carefully listen to your body and to always take care when determining your ability to do poses offered during the class, particularly if you have a specific injury or condition.

Always tell your yoga instructor about any medical considerations that may affect your practice and your overall well being.

Hypermobility, for example, is a condition that features joints that easily move beyond the normal range expected for that particular joint e.g knees, elbows, shoulders, fingers and hips. If this applies to you always remember to keep a micro-bend in postures where weight is on straight arms, knees, shoulder etc. (for example in plank, downward-facing dog, wheel pose etc), also work on building up muscle strength so your hypermobile joints

can be supported. By micro-bending your joints you don't rest weight on your ligaments but instead, force your muscles to do the work. This action will help you keep your joints stable and protect them from injuries. Do not stretch to your 100% maximum during the Yoga practise as this can lead to overstretching and soft tissues in and around joints (cartilage, tendons, ligaments) tear.

If you feel pain, discomfort, dizziness during the class do not continue, lay down on your yoga mat and rest until you feel better.

Also, there are certain limitations for women who are menstruating or pregnant. If you are pregnant get clearance from your health professional before undertaking yoga practice and seek prenatal yoga guidance from your yoga instructor. Please remember to always let your teacher know if the above applies to you.

Takeaway

Remember that you do not need to be very flexible or super fit to start practising Yoga. Anyone can step on a yoga mat and start the Yoga asana journey one step at the time with no need for judgements or expectations. Your practice can take 10 minutes or be a sweaty vinyasa flow. It totally depends on what you like and your needs on the day.

Yoga is a journey, not a destination so take your time and be present when exploring its avenues.

Yoga at its core does not require you to practice physical asanas, you can choose meditation, breathing practice or other paths of yoga instead - they are all great in different ways and help in reconnecting with our inner self.

Experiment and choose what works for you and leave the rest.



Thank you for reading. I hope this piece of writing will help you enjoy the first steps of your yogic journey to mind-body-soul bliss ;)

I look forward to practising Yoga with you one day.

May all beings be happy. Namaste.

Contact

W: www.yoga-vagabond.com

E: ewa@yoga-vagabond.com

IG: [@yogavagabond](https://www.instagram.com/yogavagabond)

FB: [yogavagabond](https://www.facebook.com/yogavagabond) [@ewayogavagabond](https://www.facebook.com/ewayogavagabond)

T: 00393475328345

YOGA BENEFITS LIST IS ON THE NEXT PAGE



YOGA-VAGABOND

YOGA • AYURVEDA • TRAVEL

Benefits of Yoga

Lower stress and anxiety levels

Improve sense of balance

Strengthen muscles and bones

Improve flexibility

Improve blood circulation and lower the risk of heart disease

Improve lung capacity

Lose weight and gain a leaner body

Reduce chronic neck and back pain

Boost energy level and vitality

Develop a positive attitude towards life

Understand and accept your body

Increase mental calmness, attention and concentration

Improved digestion and metabolism