

Yoga

Yoga is a practice that aims to bring balance to the mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional health of individuals. Yoga practices can be traced back thousands of years to people living in what's now known as India. Hatha yoga, a common type of yoga practiced in many parts of the world today, including the United States and Canada, incorporates physical exercises and postures (asanas), controlled breathing (pranayama) practiced in conjunction with asanas, [meditation](#) (dhyana) for peace of mind and deep relaxation, and chants or songs (mantras) in certain forms of yoga.

Health benefits of yoga

- Better mood
- Better sleep
- Decreased lower back pain
- Improved digestion
- Improved flexibility
- Improved recovery from injury
- Increased muscle strength
- Reduced stress and improved relaxation



Different types of yoga



Hatha yoga

Hatha yoga is often used to describe basic yoga classes that are appropriate for beginners and that focus on alignment, strength, and flexibility.



Vinyasa yoga

Vinyasa yoga is a moderate-intensity style of yoga that incorporates various traditional approaches. Postures flow from one to another, can vary from easy to difficult, and should be performed at the ability level that's appropriate to the individual.



Power yoga

Power yoga is an athletic form of yoga that builds strength and endurance through asanas and is sometimes practiced in a heated room.



Ashtanga yoga

Ashtanga yoga is an athletic style of yoga that involves synchronizing a series of postures with the breath. An instructor typically moves around the room, providing support and feedback to class participants.



Iyengar yoga

Iyengar yoga focuses on accessibility, and postures are modified to meet the needs of individuals with various levels of experience and ability, sometimes using props such as chairs, straps, and blankets.



Bikram yoga

Bikram yoga is a series of 26 specific yoga postures completed in a particular routine, accompanied by breathing exercises and performed in a room heated to 105°F (40.5°C).



Kundalini yoga

Kundalini yoga is a dynamic form of yoga that is both physical and spiritual. Kundalini focuses on tuning in with your higher consciousness through pranayama, asanas, mantras, relaxation, and meditation.



Restorative yoga

Restorative yoga focuses on relaxation and breathing, and the positions utilize supportive props such as yoga blocks, straps, blankets, and bolsters in order to avoid discomfort and ensure very little strenuous movement or intense physical sensation.



Yin yoga

Yin yoga is a slow and passive style of yoga with relatively accessible postures that are held for a minimum of 30 seconds. The focus of yin yoga is more on mindfulness than movement.



Tips for starting a yoga practice

- Purchase a yoga mat or borrow one from a friend.
- Dress in comfortable, form-fitting clothing.
- Start by taking a beginner yoga class with the support of a qualified instructor.
- Consider practicing yoga at home using a phone app or Youtube videos.
- Seek out affordable yoga classes at community centres. Some studios also offer more affordable rates during certain hours or days of the week.
- Start slow, and move within your comfort zone.
- Take breaks during your practice as needed.

Yoga apps

- Find What Feels Good ([App Store](#), [Google Play](#))
- Yoga | Daily Yoga for Everyone ([App Store](#), [Google Play](#))
- Yoga for Beginners | Mind+Body ([App Store](#), [Google Play](#))



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