

Restore Activity Series

Practice Yoga



**Energize Your Body
With Gentle Movement**

It Starts With One Step

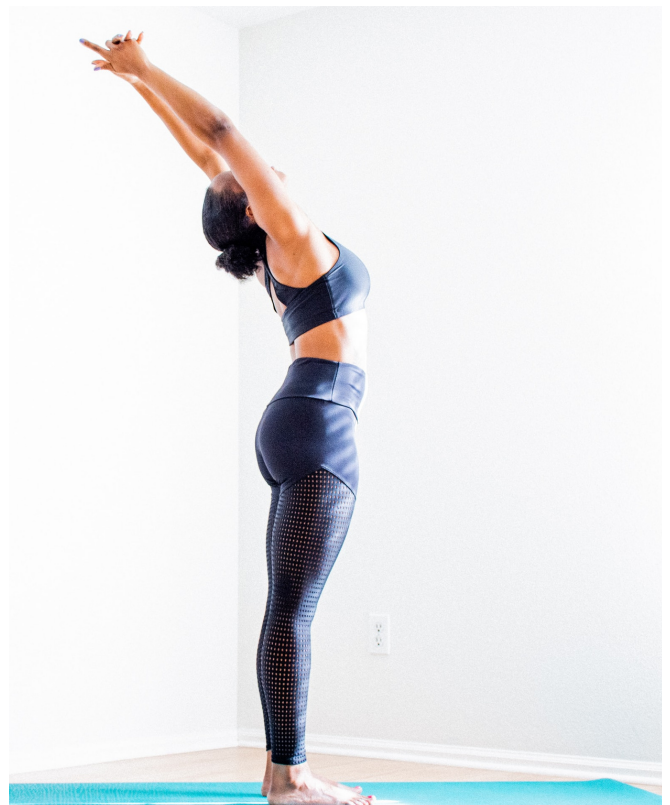
Yoga is one of those exercises that a lot of people are afraid to try because they don't think they can do it. On the contrary, yoga is one of those exercises that almost anyone can do! With classes for anyone from beginner to expert, yoga is available in many styles, durations, and complexities to meet the needs of any student. This guide will help you understand the different styles of yoga, some tips to get started, and notes about safety.

What Do I Need?

Mat - any mat will do, no need to spend a ton on one

Block - these are good for modifications if you can't do certain moves, especially when you're getting your body moving again

That's it! Different styles may use different equipment but they aren't needed to get you going!



Styles of Yoga

Anusara

Anusara yoga is a form of Hatha yoga that focuses on heart-opening flows to achieve alignment. It is heartfelt and accepting, meaning “flowing with Grace.” Students are led into practice energetically and guided to express themselves through poses to their best ability. This style of yoga is ideal for students who want to improve their physical and emotional well-being. Anusara was created by John Friend in 1997 and was derived from Iyengar yoga.

Ashtanga

Ashtanga yoga is the most popular style of yoga in the United States. This type includes six strenuous pose sequences that are practiced sequentially as a student progresses. Ashtanga encourages linking breath with vinyasa movements with the expectation that students will master poses. Ashtanga was developed by Sri K. Pattabhi Jois and T. Krishnamacharya in the 1900s.

Bikram

Bikram yoga consists of a series of 26 basic yoga postures performed twice in a hot room, typically humid and set between 95-105 degrees. This is a good style of yoga for those who do not enjoy a lot of vinyasa but, students should be mindful of pain, numbness, dizziness, and other red flags during a class. Bikram yoga was founded by Bikram Choudhury in the 1970s.

Hatha

Hatha is all physical yoga practice, encompassing all types of modern yoga. Typically if a class is described as hatha it is a basic and classical approach to yoga breathing exercises and postures. Hatha comes from ha, meaning sun, and tha, meaning moon and focuses on balance between a student's physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing.

*Yoga style details provided by my good friend, Samantha Parker, Founder & Lead Movement Therapist of Neoteric Movement Systems (www.samparkernmstraining.com)

Styles of Yoga

Iyengar

Iyengar yoga, a purist Hatha yoga style, focuses on proper alignment so that students can progress through their poses safely. Students often use props for a perfectly aligned asana and it is accessible for all ages and abilities. Iyengar Yoga was developed by B.K.S. Iyengar in 1936.

Jivamukti

Jivamukti yoga is an intensive yoga style with five basic principles of meditation, music, non-violence, devotion, and scripture. Created by Sharon Gannon and David Life in 1984, jivamukti translates to liberation while living on Earth.

Kundalini

Kundalini yoga involves constantly moving and invigorating poses. The fluidity of the practice, along with meditation, and breathing is used to release the kundalini or serpent energy at the base of the spine. It was introduced to America by Yogi Bhaajan, Ph.D. in 1969.

Prenatal

Prenatal yoga is a practice carefully adapted for expectant mothers. It is tailored to help women in all stages of pregnancy by mixing stretches and breathing. It can provide stress relief, better sleep, relief to pain and discomfort, and can assist with childbirth due to the woman's increased strength and flexibility.

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Styles of Yoga

Restorative

Restorative yoga, often called relaxation yoga, is a practice of four to five simple poses meant to help those in need of a gentle practice. Props are often used such as blankets, bolsters, and soothing lavender eye pillow. It was introduced to America by Judith Lasater in the 1970s.

Vinyasa

Vinyasa or power yoga is an active and athletic style of yoga adapted from the traditional ashtanga system in the late 1980s. Power yoga doesn't stick to the same sequence of poses each time like ashtanga does, so the style varies depending on the teacher. Classes called "vinyasa" or "flow" in gyms or studios can be vastly different but in general stem from this movement and from ashtanga as well. Vinyasa generally means to link movement with breath.

Yin

Yin yoga, also called taoist yoga, is a quiet, meditative practice. Yin focuses on lengthening connective tissues and is meant to complement yang yoga (your muscle-forming Anusara, ashtanga, Iyengar, or what have you). Yin poses are passive, meaning you're supposed to relax your muscles and let gravity do the work. And they're long, forcing students to practice patience.

Yoga Therapy

Yoga therapy is the application of Yogic principles to a particular person with the objective of achieving a particular spiritual, psychological, or physiological goal. Yoga therapy respects individual differences in age, culture, religion, philosophy, occupation, and mental and physical health, and uses yoga therapy principles according to the period, the place, and the practitioner's age, strength, activities, and goals.

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Next Steps

Getting to a class can be difficult as a new mom. But, taking a class is easy and can be inexpensive or free! There are a number of free videos online (YouTube) and many studios have subscription-based classes either live or pre-recorded that you can sign up for. Check sites like Groupon for deals on memberships or subscriptions.



Safety Tips

Even after you're cleared to work out, your body is still healing. Make sure you take it easy, especially if you've never done yoga before. While most movements are gentle and slow, you can still over-exert yourself and move in a way that does more harm than good. Here are some tips to practice safely.

- Move slowly - especially when trying new moves
- Not every body can do every move - don't attempt a move you know you aren't ready for (you may never be ready for it and that's okay!)
- Use blocks or modifications when needed - there's no shame in taking it easy
- Use the breathing to open up your body - it really does help for flexibility

Keep Track

Use the space below to make notes about the styles you'd like to try, places you'd like to try them, or sites/subscription services you'd like to use. You can also keep track of your progress with different classes and moves.

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