

Desktop Yoga

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What is Yoga?

According to the teachings of yoga, human nature is divine, perfect, and infinite. However, people are not aware of this because they falsely identify themselves with objects of the external world. This false identification makes people believe they are imperfect, limited, subject to sorrow, decay, and death.

The techniques of yoga provide us with the tools to enable us to cast off this false belief and become aware of our own true self, which is pure and free from imperfections. The process of yoga is to unite the individual self with the Universal Self. It is a journey of ascension into the purity of absolute perfection, which is the original state of human-kind. To accomplish this, one must remove the impurities in both body and mind so that the true Self can shine through. Yoga is the process of removing thoughts from the mind so that it can focus on a single point and turn inward towards the center of consciousness. The mind cannot be totally separated from the body because one influences the other. A sound mind can only thrive in a health body. Conversely, a body cannot thrive without a healthy mind. The ancient yogis developed the techniques of asana and pranayama (postures and breathing) in combination with meditation to cleanse the body and strengthen the nervous system.

Yoga is a powerful tool for releasing the fear and anger locked in the body's tissues, reducing cravings, and addictions.

When your heart is open and you are experiencing turmoil around you, it can be devastating. Meditation practice gives us the tools for letting it in without getting swept away by it. In yoga, the journey "is" the destination.

Desktop Yoga

A modern style for those who have little time and for those who have little energy

One of the primary purposes of yoga and meditation is to "still" the mind. This was difficult even for the sages that developed yoga. Today's society is 100 times more stressful than our grandparents. With radio, television, computers, e-mail, cell phones, and other technologies, minds are constantly being stressed. When traditional yoga is performed in a stressful society,

the stressful mind may continue to “chatter,” even within the postures. Furthermore, most people don’t have the time to practice yoga.

The Desktop Yoga style was developed by Dr. John A. Allocca in response to the growing need for a yoga style that can be performed successfully in a stressful society. It brings the scattered, stressful, chattering, mind into focus by integrating coordinated breathing and slow movements within each posture. The mind must focus its attention on coordinating the breathing and slow movements, which removes it’s attention from the “chatter.” The result is a yoga practice that “stills” the mind and creates relaxation. The bilateral movements are also designed to stimulate the release of stored emotional traumas from the limbic system in the brain, creating a greater sense of peace and well-being. The slow movements thin the fluid in the joints and allow even better stretching than postures without movements. Desktop yoga can be performed while sitting in an armless chair. It is a low-intensity, short-duration series of postures for those who have little time and for those who have little energy. The routine will take approximately 15 minutes to perform, not including the meditation.

Breathing

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Slowly and deeply inhale from your abdomen first, then your chest.

Slowly exhale completely and push from your abdomen.

During Asanas, you can keep your eyes closed or open. I prefer closed. I prefer to take 3 slow, deep breaths for each posture. Three breaths will take about 15 seconds. As you advance, your breaths can be longer.

Relaxing Into A Posture

Don’t push your muscles into a stretch. Allow them to stretch by relaxing your muscles. Don’t stretch to the point of pain. If you experience pain, release a little or come out of the posture.

Counting Your Breaths

I count my breaths by saying (mentally) “Om” during the inhalation and the number during the exhalation. For example, Om (inhale), one (exhale), Om (inhale), two (exhale), Om (inhale), three (exhale). If you are in a group, just say (mentally) Om (inhale), then (exhale) and allow the instructor to tell you when to release.

Movement Cycles

All movements should be done slowly while concentrating on your breaths. Do not move quickly. This is not an aerobic exercise. If, for example, you are rotating your head from center to the left, you should inhale as you are rotating your head. The inhalation should take the entire time that you are slowly rotating.

Warm-up Exercises

Rubbing Hands

Rub hands together vigorously.

Neck Roll

Roll neck clockwise one complete rotation. Roll neck counter clockwise one complete rotation. Repeat 3 times.

Small Arm Circles

Hands and arms out to the side. Make small circular rotations with hands 3 times. Reverse direction and repeat 3 times.

Shoulder Roll

Roll shoulders forward 3 times.

Roll shoulders backward 3 times.

Lift shoulders up and down 3 times.

Waist Twisting

Arms horizontal and to the front at shoulder level. Rotate from side to side, keeping head and hips forward 3 times.

Arms Up and Down

Inhale, arms to the front and up to the sky. Exhale arms down to the side. Repeat 3 times.

Horizontal Adduction Arm Cross

Arms out to the sides. Then move to the front and back, alternating which hand is on top each time. Repeat 3 times.

Desktop Yoga Postures (Asanas)

Neck Rotation Posture

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Inhale deeply.

- a. Exhale as you slowly rotate your head to the left while pushing your chin gently with your right hand.
- b. Inhale as you slowly rotate your head to the center.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Inhale deeply.

- a. Exhale as you slowly rotate your head to the right while pushing your chin gently with your left hand.
- b. Inhale as you slowly rotate your head to the center.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Neck Stretch Posture

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Inhale deeply.

Bring your left hand up and around to the right side of your head.

Inhale deeply.

- a. Exhale as you slowly pull your head to the left with your left hand.
- b. Inhale as you slowly bring your head to the center.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Inhale deeply.

- a. Exhale as you slowly pull your head to the right with your right hand.
- b. Inhale as you slowly bring your head to the center.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Seated Posture With Arms Stretched Up

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Extend your arms along the sides of your body with palms facing your thighs and fingers pointing down.

a. Inhale as you raise your arms to the sky with palms facing forward.

b. Exhale as you allow your shoulders to lower slightly, while keeping your arms vertical.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Seated Posture With Bound Hands

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Raise your arms just above your head, interlock your fingers and rotate your palms facing up.

a. Inhale as you push your hands and arms up to the sky.

b. Exhale as you allow your hands and arms to lower slightly, while keeping your arms vertical.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Elevated Arm Stretch Posture

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Bring your left arm straight up.

Bend your elbow and allow your left hand to come down behind your head.

Hold your left elbow with your right hand and pull slightly.

a. Inhale as you slowly lean slightly backward.

b. Exhale as you slowly lean forward.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Repeat for the other side.

Posterior Hand Clasp Posture

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Clasp your hands behind your back.

a. Inhale as you lift your chest.

b. Exhale as you drop your shoulders and hands.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 to 7 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Horizontal Adduction Posture

(Adduction is towards the body, Abduction is away from the body)

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Bring your left arm across your chest parallel to the floor with your palms facing downward.

Bring your right hand to your left arm between your shoulder and elbow.

a. Inhale as you pull slightly.

b. Exhale as you slowly release your arm slightly.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Repeat for the other side.

Seated Cobra Posture

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Place your palms on the seat.

a. Inhale as you sweep up, arch your back, and tilt your head back if possible.

b. Exhale as you lower your head down and arch your back down.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Seated Back Bend Posture

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together and your hand on your hips.

Inhale as you lift your chest and shoulders.

Exhale as you lean back as far as you can go without pain or falling back with your head gently tilted back.

Inhale deeply.

a. Exhale as you slowly swing your torso in an arc to the left.

b. Inhale as you slowly swing your torso in an arc to the center.

c. Exhale as you slowly swing your torso in an arc to the right.

Repeat movement cycles a, b, and c, 3 times - always returning to center before moving left or right.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Seated Leg Elevation Posture

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Place your arms to the side with your palms resting on the seat.

- a. Inhale as you slowly raise your legs.
- b. Exhale as you slowly lower your legs.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Seated Spinal Twist Posture

Sit straight facing forward with feet together.

Rotate your torso to the left.

Place your left palm on the seat behind you.

Bring your right hand over your left leg and rest your palm on the seat behind you with your head up.

- a. Inhale as you slowly rotate your torso to the left.
- b. Exhale as you slowly rotate your torso to the center.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Repeat for the other side.

Seated Forward Fold Posture

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

- a. Inhale as you raise your arms straight up to the sky with palms facing forward.
- b. Exhale as you slowly bend forward with your arms down and forward as far as possible while keeping your head down.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Seated Leg Stretch Posture

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Grasp your right ankle and bend your knee.

- a. Inhale and bring your ankle as far back as possible.
- b. Exhale and release slightly.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Seated Half Lotus Posture

Sit straight facing forward with your feet together.

Bend your left leg and place your left foot over your right thigh.

a. Inhale as you raise your knee up.

b. Exhale as you allow your knee to push down while keeping your head up.

Repeat movement cycles a and b 3 times.

Relax and breathe into the posture.

Concentrate on your breathing.

Repeat for the other side.

Pranic Breathing Meditation

Sit straight facing forward with your feet apart.

Begin meditating by closing your eyes and imagining someone who will help you to feel love. Open your heart and feel love, unconditional love for people, animals, plants, and all of God's creations. Feeling love is the most important part of this meditation.

Imagine that there is a hollow tube about 1-1/2 inches in diameter that extends from the top of your head, through your body along your spine to the bottom of your spine.

Inhale slowly and deeply. Expand your diaphragm and belly first, then allow your chest to expand as you draw in prana through the top and bottom of the hollow tube.

The inhalation should take about 7 seconds.

Exhale slowly and deeply by contracting your diaphragm and belly first, then allowing your chest to contract as you concentrate the prana in your hara.

The exhalation should take about 7 seconds.

Repeat the inhalations and exhalations deeply for 7 breaths. After the 7 deep breathes, begin to breathe normally and regularly.

Concentrate on the regularity of your breathing and the flow of prana through the tube from both directions and the concentration of prana in your hara. It is not unusual to feel palpitation in your heart as the energy flows through your body. This is the life-giving energy that cleanses and rebuilds your mind and body.

As thoughts or pictures come into your mind, allow them to be the focus of your attention. Allow them to enter and exit your consciousness freely.

In meditation, you will meet and melt away emotional and mental blocks, as well as physical tensions. You will generally feel peaceful and refreshed after meditating.

It is beneficial to meditate at least a few times per week. The actual time of each meditation will vary - don't be concerned with time.

In this altered state of consciousness you will be able to be in contact with nature, and the universe around you. The possibilities of what you can do in this state are limitless.