

Yoga Review

By Laura Marcott

Yoga: is a Sanskrit word meaning to yoke or unite. In the practice of yoga we unite mind and body with the breath.

Yoga is an ancient science dating back to around 3,000 BC. The system of yoga was passed from master to student for generations. In the 1960's Indian teachers began to travel to the west and gained popularity by teaching celebrities. Now yoga is popular because of its ability to increase flexibility, relieve stress and improve overall health.

Sanskrit: (San-skrit) is an ancient language of India.

Asana: (Ah-sa-na) is the Sanskrit name for yoga poses or exercises. The word itself means steady pose.

Prana: (Prah-nah) is the breath or life force. Exercises that focus on breath are called Pranayama.

Warrior I: is a standing posture with one knee bent and both arms overhead.

Warrior II: is a standing posture with one knee bent and one arm forward while the other is back. The gaze is over the fingers of the front hand.

Warrior III: is a standing pose with one foot off the floor and both arms forward. The warrior series gives the experience of power or inner strength.

Balance Posture: Develop strength, coordination and mental focus. A key to balancing poses is to engage the core and focus the eyes on a non moving object.

Mountain Pose: is the key to any standing pose, it improves posture, alignment while strengthening, hips, knees and spine with practice. Begin with the foundation of the feet, base of the big toes and center of the heel are pressing into the ground. Stack ankles, knees and hips over the feet.

Forward bend: can be performed seated or standing. The practitioner should retain a straight spine and fold from the hips. This provides a deep stretch to the legs and back.

Sun Salutations: are a basic series of postures practiced by every yoga tradition. It is often used as a warm up or foundation in yoga practice. The sun salutation consists of 12 positions. The exercise moves the body, focuses the mind and regulates the breath.

The 12 positions are:

1. Stand in mountain
2. Stretch arms overhead with backbend
3. Forward bend
4. Lunge one foot back
5. High plank or push up
6. Low plank or knees, chest, and chin to the floor
7. Cobra
8. Downward facing dog
9. Lunge opposite foot back
10. Forward bend
11. Arms overhead with backbend
12. Stand in mountain

Hatha Yoga: is the most widely known form of yoga, it takes the path of the physical focusing primarily on the body

Gyan Mudra: This is hand position in yoga where the index and thumb tip touch making a circle or lock. This is one of the most common mudras and is thought to bring in knowledge and wisdom.

Belly breath: is a slow deep breath through the nose. Inhale and expand the chest and belly. Exhale and let all the breath out.