

Which Yoga Style Is Right for You?

As yoga continues to increase in popularity, new forms of yoga are developed. In many cases, these new forms are combinations of older forms, designed to offer maximum benefit. There are literally dozens of different yoga styles. Here's a quick guide to help you decide which yoga style is right for you.

Calm and Restorative

Some people seek a yoga practice as a way to detoxify, soothe daily stresses, and become more centered. If that is a goal you're seeking then you may want to try a yoga style that is calm and restorative. The following styles may suit your needs:

Restorative ? Yes, the name of this yoga style identifies the primary benefit ? it's designed to help repair and restore. You'll move through about five different poses and you'll hold them for extended periods of time.

Viniyoga ? Vini means adaptive and that's exactly what this style is. It's adaptive to your needs and goals. It's perfect for people who are working with injuries or limitations. It's usually practiced in a small group or one on one so your instructor can create a practice that's just right for you.

Ananda ? This style focuses on utilizing gentle postures which are designed to move energy and prepare your mind and body for a calm state and meditation.

Powerful and Intense

If you're looking for a yoga style that challenges you, helps you build strength, and improves your fitness, then the following styles may best suit your needs:

Ashtanga?(or Astanga)?Yoga ? This style of yoga is physically demanding. You'll move quickly through series of postures. It's designed to build strength, flexibility and endurance.

Power Yoga or Power Vinyasa – Power yoga is a physically demanding yoga style. The goal is to improve strength and flexibility. It's also often practiced as hot yoga which means you'll be in a room that's around 100 degrees F. The goal with hot yoga is to detoxify ? it can be great for weight loss.

Bikram Yoga ? This yoga style provides a complete workout. You'll move through 26 poses that include strength, endurance, cardiovascular, and flexibility. Classes are always in a hot room.

The Best of Both Worlds

You don't have to choose one end of the spectrum or the other. There are many yoga styles that are designed to offer both mental benefits as well as physical benefits. They include:

Ivengar ? This is one of the most popular types of yoga. The poses are active and they include the use of props which makes it great for beginners and advanced practitioners alike.

Hatha ? Hatha is the foundation for most yoga styles. Traditional hatha is easy to learn and suitable to all fitness levels. You'll enjoy both active poses which challenge you and help you increase your strength, flexibility, and endurance?and you'll enjoy restorative and calming poses as well.

These styles are just the beginning. There's prenatal yoga for those who are pregnant or just had a baby. There's yoga for people who want to tap into their creative side and yoga for those who are competitive. If you're just getting started with a yoga practice, start with a basic form that meets your needs and allow yourself to grow and change as you become more proficient.