



Tips on Developing a Yoga Practice By Mary Beth Harnett

Yoga postures, breathing and relaxation exercises can be taken up by anyone who wants to improve his or her physical or mental condition. Each person can practice Yoga according to his or her needs, moving on to more advanced stages at their own pace.

- 1) It is best to practice Yoga during the same time each day, when you feel fully awake and when the stomach is light. Tradition sets the best times for Hatha Yoga at dawn, noon and twilight.
- 2) Create a special place in your home that invites you in and inspires you to spend time practicing Yoga and meditation. You may wish to include a blanket, pillow, candle, flowers, inspiring pictures and books.
- 3) The temperature of the room should be warm- not too hot or cold.
- 4) Soft, relaxing music can help you turn your attention inward.
- 5) A typical one-hour practice can begin with a 5 minutes relaxation focusing on breath, 10 minutes of warm-ups focusing on neck, shoulder, hip, wrists and ankle movements, 25 minutes of postures including floor, standing and balance postures, 5 minutes of breathing-- such as alternate nostril breathing, 10 minutes of relaxation/meditation, and 5 minutes of closing with a sound meditation.
- 6) To learn the postures, you can rent a video, read one of many Yoga asana posture books available, or take a Yoga class. Many people take a Yoga class once or several times a week to meet like-minded people and bring new techniques home to their personal Yoga practice.
- 7) The beauty of developing your own Yoga practice is that it can be done anywhere. You don't need a gym or special equipment- just your body and a positive attitude.