

Yoga for Beginners

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The contents of this bibliography do not provide medical advice and should not be so interpreted. Before beginning any exercise program, see your physician for clearance.

NOTE: This bibliography contains citations for a selection of articles, books, and videos geared toward beginners.

Anderson, Sandra, and Rolf Sovik. *Yoga: Mastering the Basics*. Honesdale, Pa.: The Himalayan Institute Press, 2000. (Excellent.)

Ansari, Mark, and Liz Lark. *Yoga for Beginners: A Unique Hands-Free, Eye-Level, Step by Step Guide*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1999.

Austin, Miriam. *Yoga for Wimps*. Sterling, 2000.

_____. *Cool Yoga Tricks*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2004.

From a review by Phil Catalfo in the Sep/Oct 2004 issue of *Yoga Journal*, p. 162: Provides “easily doable modifications (employing props or walls) that will allow experienced beginners to enhance their yoga practice with a minimum risk.”

Bock, Paula. The yoga putz. *The Seattle Times*, 10 Jun 2001. Article available online: <http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/pacificnw/2001/0610/putz.html>.

Brahinsky, Rachel. Finding a yoga teacher in India. *My Yoga Mentor*, Jul 2005, no. 21. Article available online: http://www.yogajournal.com/teacher/1646_1.cfm.

“Traveling to the birthplace of yoga can be a rewarding experience—if you think ahead about what you’re really looking for.”

Carr, Rachel. *Yoga for All Ages*. New York: Simon & Shuster, 1972.

Carrico, Mara. *Yoga Journal’s Yoga Basics: The Essential Beginner’s Guide to Yoga for a Lifetime of Health and Fitness*. Henry Holt, 1997.

Chodron, Thubten. *Buddhism for Beginners*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 2001.

From a review by J.C. in *Bodhi Tree Book Review*, Winter 2001 - Spring 2002: “Here is an excellent introduction to Buddhism. Using a question and answer format, it offers about 150 pages of virtually everything a newcomer to Buddhism would want to know: Who was Buddha? What are the core Buddhist teachings? How do we understand Buddhist customs, rituals, prayers, mantras, and symbols? What is the relationship between Buddhist teachings and science? And can we practice Buddhism in the West, while leading busy lives in a non-Buddhist culture? . . . Most importantly, while the book serves as an introduction to Buddhism in general and Tibetan Buddhism in particular, it offers good advice for anyone who wants to lead a more sane, balanced, and compassionate life.”

Choudhury, Bikram. *Bikram's Beginning Yoga Class*. New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999.

Christensen, Alice. *The American Yoga Association's Beginner's Manual*. Fireside, 2002.

_____, and **David Rankin.** *The Light of Yoga Society Beginner's Manual*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972.

Corcoran, Nancy. How to evaluate a teacher. Article available online: http://www.yoga.com/ydc/enlighten/enlighten_document.asp?ID=310§ion=9&cat=0.

Deason, Suzanne. *Gentle Yoga for Beginners* video. Boulder, Colo.: Gaia. 30 minutes.

From the publisher: "Modifying basic yoga poses, Deason makes each posture comfortable and accessible to all students, paying close attention to one of the most important aspects of a yoga workout: proper breathing."

Falsani, Cathleen. On a mission to find the right yoga class—just keep it light. *Chicago Sun-Times*, 14 May 2004.

Farhi, Donna. *Yoga: Mind, Body & Spirit*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2000.

Feuerstein, Georg. *The Shambhala Guide to Yoga: An Essential Introduction to the Principles and Practice of an Ancient Tradition*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1996.

Contents: Introducing Yoga (includes ten pages on the history of Yoga); The Principal Branches of Yoga; The Teacher, the Disciple, and the Path; Happiness and the Moral Foundations of Yoga; Purification and Postures for Relaxation, Meditation, and Health**; Yogic Diet; The Breath: Secret Bridge to Vitality and Bliss; Pathways of Concentration and Meditation; Sacred Sounds of Power: Mantras; The Serpent Power: Kundalini-Shakti; Tantra Yoga; Self-Transcendence, Ecstasy, and Freedom; Yoga in the Modern World; Bibliography; Useful Resources; Index

** Various postures are briefly described and illustrated, but no instruction on how to perform them is provided.

_____, and **Larry Payne.** *Yoga for Dummies*. New York: John Wiley.

Finding the best yoga class for you. *Massage & Bodywork*, Apr/May 2003, p. 168.

Fraser, Tara. *The Easy Yoga Workbook*. England: Duncan Baird Publishers, 2002.

Gitananda, Swami. Easy as it goes! Non-strenuous yoga [for beginners]. *Yoga Life*, Sep 2002, 33(9):26-28.

Includes brief discussion of *jattis*, small units of body movements, like kicking, shaking, throwing, swinging that may be used to loosen up a stiff body and develop body awareness prior to taking up the practice of *âsana*.

Hall, Doriël. *Starting Yoga: A Step-by-Step Program for Health and Well-Being*. Delta, B.C., Canada: Cavendish, 1996/Ward Lock, 1996.

Hendrick, Lane. Yoga: A beginner's tale. Article available online:
http://www.yoga.com/ydc/enlighten/enlighten_document.asp?ID=295§ion=9&cat=0.

Herron, Tara. *Yoga for Beginners*. Devon, England: BSY Group. URL:
http://www.bsygroup.co.uk/accessory_list.asp?section_id=a.

Hirschi, Gertrude. *Basic Yoga for Everybody*. York Beach, Me.: Samuel Weiser, 1998.

Eighty-four cards with illustrated handbook.

Howell, Edith. Yoga for Beginners website. URL:
<http://www.mv.com/ipusers/howell/ejh>.

Integral Yoga Hatha Extra-Gentle audiotape. Buckingham, Va.: Shakticom.

From the publisher: "Designed for older adults, the physically challenged, or those who might find a regular Yoga class too difficult. This tape provides very gentle instruction in simple or modified poses. Ideal for beginners."

Introduction to yoga. *Australian Yoga Life*, Jul-Nov 2004, no. 9, pp. 4-5.

"People start yoga for a huge variety of reasons, some of the more common ones are to gain flexibility, relieve stress and increase general wellbeing. As yoga is non competitive in its nature it provides a welcome relief to most of the aspects of our daily life."

Discusses Sivananda, Satyananda, Ashtanga, Iyengar, Bikram, Bhakti, Jnana, and Karma Yoga, Yoga in daily life, and Your first class.

Johnson, Shaina. Yoga tips for beginners. WebMd, 15 Aug 2000. Article available online: <http://my.wedmd.com/content/article/1738.50827>.

Kent, Howard. *Yoga Made Easy: A Personal Yoga Program That Will Transform Your Daily Life*. A People's Medical Society Book. Quarto Publishing, 1995.

From the publisher: "A month by month course which builds confidence and enables even complete beginners to appreciate the benefits of yoga. Specially commissioned photographs and clear instructions guide you through the course as you gradually learn new postures and develop your daily program. Integrates the meditative side of yoga which helps build a calm, positive attitude in light of today's stresses and strains."

_____. *Yoga: A Basic Guide*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 2001.

Khalsa, Shakta Kaur. *KISS Guide to Yoga*. London: Dorling Kindersley, 2001.

Lasater, Judith. *30 Essential Yoga Poses: For Beginning Students and Their Teachers*. Berkeley, Calif.: Rodmell Press, 2003.

Longhurst, Margaret. Getting through the door the first time. *Australian Yoga Life*, Jul-Nov 2004, no. 9, pp. 24-25.

“During a conversation with a friend a couple of months ago I causally mentioned I might take up yoga. I could have suggested any sport foreign to my experience, maybe abseiling or ballooning. But I said yoga! I was being flippant, bemused so to speak. Me doing yoga? What a quaint thought; in actuality, quite frightening, as there’s not a degree of suppleness in my body. All my muscles, ligaments and sinews hurt and everything else I can think of. Thanks to sport.”

“I discover that progress in yoga sneaks up on you because the art is one of being kind to yourself and allowing the body to respond rather than pushing aggressively into and through asanas.”

MacGregor, Hilary E. A yoga novice searches for the best fit: Seeking physical and mental renewal, the writer gets off the sidelines and explores four styles of the popular discipline. *Los Angeles Times*, 24 Dec 2001.

Majumdar, Sachindra Kumar. *Introduction to Yoga: Principles and Practices*. New Hyde Par, N.Y.: University Books, 1966, 1971.

Malter, Rosalie. *Yoga for You: Introductory Level*. Education and Health Resources of Arizona, 2002. 55 minutes. URL: www.malterinstitute.com.

Marchesiello, Vandita Kate. Teaching yoga to those who [think they] “can’t” [do yoga]. *Kripalu Yoga Teachers Association Yoga Bulletin*, Summer 2001. Article available online: http://www.kripalu.org/kyta_artcl.php?id=32.

Marlon, Yogi. Choosing a teacher. Article available online: http://www.askyogimarlon.com/choose_teacher.html.

Maselli, Kristine M. Resisting yoga. *Yoga.com Newsletter*, Nov 2004. URL: www.yoga.com.

Discusses seven excuses people give for not trying Yoga.

McKee, Karen. Beginner’s mind: Lessons from the mat. *LA Yoga*, May 2005, pp. 14-15.

“Many times over the years of yoga practice, I’ve wondered at what point you stop being a beginner . . .”

Mehta, Mira, and Krishna S. Arjunwadkar. *Yoga Explained*.

From the publisher: “. . . *Yoga Explained* offers an accessible and authentic approach to the ancient art. By the end of the book, you will have the confidence to endlessly repeat and build on the foundation postures and relaxation techniques, as well as a strong, essential understanding of the overall purpose of yoga and its key doctrines.”

Miller, Elise Browning. *Life is a Stretch: Easy Yoga, Anytime, Anywhere*. Llewellyn Publications, 1999.

New to Yoga pages. *Yoga Journal* website. URL:
http://www.yogajournal.com/newtoyoga/162_1.cfm.

Rosen, Richard. Fast forward: Jump-start your home practice with these indispensable yoga videos and books. *Yoga Journal*, Winter 1999 – 2000. Article available online:
http://www.yogajournal.com/newtoyoga/162_1.cfm.

_____. How to find a yoga teacher. *Yoga Journal*, Winter 1999 – 2000. Article available online: http://www.yogajournal.com/newtoyoga/163_1.cfm.

_____. Sequences for beginners. *Yoga Journal*. Article available online:
http://www.yogajournal.com/newtoyoga/864_1.cfm.

_____. Sequences for your teaching. *My Yoga Mentor*, Jul 2004, no. 7. Article available online: http://www.yogajournal.com/teacher/1288_1.cfm.

“We asked how we could support your teaching, and you requested sequences you could use in the studio. So here’s a primer on sequencing a class, followed by nine routines that target different types of students, areas of the body, and physical conditions.”

Sequences include: 45-minute beginners, advanced beginners, headache, menstruation, depression, groins, shoulders, forward bends, backbends.

Sarley, Dinabandhu, and Ila Sarley. *The Essentials of Yoga*. New York: Random House, 1999.

From the publisher: Providing step-by-step guidance and warm inspiration, [this book] shows you:

- How to choose the right type of yoga for your age, for your physical condition, and for your spiritual well-being
- Powerful breathing techniques that enhance the vital connection between your body, your spiritual energy, and your health

- The yogic positions that leave you serene yet invigorated . . . energized yet free of stress
- How to successfully take the principles you have learned off the mat and into the real world

VanEs, Howard Allan. *Beginning Yoga: A Practice Manual*. 2002. URL: <http://www.letsdoyoga.com/yoga/thebook.html>.

Waesse, Harry. *Yoga for Beginners*. Sterling Publishing, 1999.

Yoga for Beginners website. URL: <http://www.yogaforbeginners.com>.

Yoga Northwest. She aid, He said column. Commenced in Sep/Oct 2002 issue.

A series of journal entries by raw beginners.

Zebroff, Karen. *Gentle Introduction to Yoga*. Foulsham, 2002.

Videos

Rollins, Kari. *Beginning Yoga: A Physician's Approach* video. Fort Worth: Kari Rollins. Tel.: 817-926-9642. 60 minutes.

From a review in *Yoga Journal*: "Kari Rollins is an osteopath and yoga and meditation instructor . . . This is an intelligent presentation. Rollins has a graceful, reassuring delivery and, as an osteopath, a keen understanding of the body. The yoga-based exercises are relatively mild, and would be just right for people who are recovering from an injury, are very stiff, or are looking for a gentle practice after a hard day."

Schiffmann, Eric. *Beginning Yoga* video. Yoga Media. Available online at www.movingintostillness.com or at www.yogamedia.com, tel.: 801-364-2608.

From Eric Schiffmann: "Designed for beginners and anyone who desires a gentle, well-rounded class. Includes seated opening poses, sun salutes, standing poses, lotus preparation, backbends, forward folds and twists, leading up to a deep relaxation. This video provides a safe introduction or valuable refresher in the art of moving into the stillness of yoga."

Vedaprajnananda, Dada. How to become regular in your yoga practice. 4Jul 2005. Article available online: <http://www.emaxhealth.com/62/2478.html>.

Walden, Patricia. *Yoga Journal's Yoga Beginner's Practice Introduction with Patricia Walden* video. Boulder, Colo.: Living Arts, 2001. Tel.: 800-2-LIVING, URL: www.gaiam.com. 70 minutes. (Excellent.)

Reviewed by Richard Rosen in *Yoga Studies*, Jan-Apr 2002:

“In my capacity as video review columnist for *Yoga Journal* I’ve watched and practiced with literally dozens of introductory Yoga videos over the past decade. This new video from Patricia Walden (a member of the YREC Senior Yoga Teachers Council) is a most welcome addition.

“The practice begins with a short warm-up sequence that includes a self-awareness exercise and simple sitting and reclining stretches, followed by a series of eight basic standing postures, sitting forward bends and twists, and a long closing series of passive restorative postures.

“Walden is one of the most inspiring teachers I have ever seen. In her effortless yet precise modeling of the postures, she fully incarnates the yogic ideal of skillful action. Her instructions reflect a profound understanding not only of the physical side of the *asanas*, but their spiritual meaning and intent as well. This is one of the best available introductions to the Yoga *asanas* for beginning students, or a relatively gentle but satisfying practice for more experienced students.”

Ward, Susan Winter. *Every Day Yoga for Every Body* video/DVD. URL: www.yogaheart.com.

From the producer: “. . . opens the world of yoga to all students, regardless of age or physical ability. Mature adults, baby boomers, and beginners of all ages, can now enjoy the life enhancing experience of yoga . . .”

Williams, Vivinne. *Start with Yoga* video. Doubleday, 2001.

From the Winter 2001 *Kripalu Yoga Teachers Association Yoga Bulletin*: “Beginning yoga practitioners will feel welcomed by Vivinne’s warm presence, simple instructions and sensitivity to the needs and abilities of less flexible bodies. The video starts with warm-ups and a few basic postures and then moves into a brief relaxation; beginners who wish to go further can continue with a second set of postures and a longer relaxation at the end. The benefits of each asana are listed on the screen as Vivinne demonstrates first silently and then with directions. She offers variations on the postures where appropriate and gently introduces breathing exercises and the concept of prana . . .”

Of Related Interest

Abrams, Erin. Bend together, stay together: Sharing the sacred experience of yoga with your loved ones. *Kripalu Yoga Teachers Association Yoga Bulletin*, Spring 2002, 11(1):1, 11.