# LOOKING FOR ‘BEGINNER YOGA NEAR ME’? READ THIS FIRST

If you live on planet Earth, you must have heard about yoga and all of its benefits. Someone even might have convinced you to try it out. But yoga is so much more than just an exercise that you try out. Before you set out to find a yoga instructor to help you align your mind, body, and soul, we thought we would give you a brief introduction about yoga and answer some of the common questions so you can make an informed decision.

## What Is Yoga?

The word ‘Yoga’ belongs to the Sanskrit language and it means ‘Union’. It can also be taken as something binding or a method to discipline yourself. A male yoga practitioner is called a yogi and a female practitioner is called a yogini.

Yoga has started trending lately, but in reality it has been around for more than 2000 years. Yoga consists of eight limbs:

* Yamas (restraints)
* Niyamas (observance)
* Asana (postures)
* Pranayama (breathing)
* Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses)
* Dharana (concentration)
* Dhyani (meditation) and
* Samadhi (absorption).

All of these eight limbs of yoga help us refine our behavior and focus inwards.

Most people who practice yoga today are involved with the third branch of yoga, asana, which impacts on your physical form by using different postures to cleanse your body and mind and provide you with stamina.

## What Does Om Mean?

You must have heard people chanting or saying this word before and after their yoga practice. Om is actually a chant or a mantra that refers to the sound of the universe.

The people of old were more in tune with the universe and nature than we are nowadays. The great ancient yogis knew what scientists are discovering now—that the universe is in a constant state of motion. Nothing is still. Everything is moving at all times. When things move, they make a sound or cause a vibration. The ancient yogis associated the word Om with that universal vibration. We may not be aware of it but it is all around us. It is there in the rustling of the leaves, the sound of the waterfall, and the noise of the birds.

When we chant Om, we are accepting that we are trying to be one with the universe and its vibrations. The chant is ever present in all our moves, our breathing and our feelings.

## How Many Times Should Yoga Be Practiced?

Yoga is an amazing activity and leaves an imprint on our minds and souls even if done once a week. If you can do more, that is more beneficial. As a beginner, you should start with two or three days a week for an hour and then gradually increase your time.

## What Is The Difference Between Yoga And Other Fitness Exercises?

Like we mentioned earlier, Yoga means union. It means uniting what’s in your body, mind, and in your soul. It is so much more than just a physical exercise. Even if you take it as just an activity, it unites our bodies with our breathing.

## Can I Do Yoga Even If I’m Not Flexible Enough?

Many people think that being flexible is a pre-requisite for Yoga, but that is not the case. You can begin Yoga right now. No matter what your physical condition, Yoga will make you flexible and agile.

So now that you know what Yoga really is, go out there and perform Yoga by being present in the moment. Om!