



Integrity. Diversity. Community.

Choosing the Right Yoga Class for You

With so many yoga teachers around, it may be difficult, especially for a beginner, to choose the yoga class that best suits. The following are a few guidelines for choosing a yoga class that's right for you.

1. Choose a style of yoga that suits you

You can find out about different styles of yoga by conducting an internet search, or searching a yoga-oriented website, such as Yoga Journal's, for descriptions. A recent article on that site describing different styles may be found at http://www.yogajournal.com/newtoyoga/165_8.cfm.

There is no point in signing up for an Ashtanga class if you are sixty five, slightly overweight, and only want to relax, or to go to a Viniyoga teacher if you are taking up yoga as an alternative to jogging or weight lifting to keep fit. If in doubt, ask to watch or participate in a class before enrolling. Even better, most teachers will actually let you attend one trial class, perhaps at a reduced rate, before asking you to commit for a term. This gives you a chance to see for yourself if their style of teaching, and the style of yoga they teach, suits you.

2. Choose your teacher carefully.

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Here are a few points you should clarify with any teacher before enrolling in his or her class:

Do they practice themselves? How often? Someone who doesn't practice yoga regularly (i.e., at least three times a week, preferably 5 or 6 times a week) may not be suitable as a teacher.

How long have they been practicing yoga? Someone who hasn't been practicing regularly for at least three years may not have enough experience to teach yoga.

With whom did they train, and for how long? Training as a yoga teacher takes a lot of time and effort. Ask your prospective new teacher about his or her training – how the teacher obtained the training, if the teacher went to a yoga teacher training school or program, and what certification(s) he or she holds.

Are they registered with Yoga AllianceSM? Yoga AllianceSM sets minimum training standards for yoga teachers, and supports yoga teachers in their professional development. Yoga AllianceSM's registry of Registered Yoga Teachers can assist the general public as well as potential employers of yoga teachers in finding teachers with adequate training and experience to help assure the safety and satisfaction of yoga students.



Integrity. Diversity. Community.

Are they still studying yoga? Some yoga teachers, once certified, stop studying. This goes against the philosophy of yoga. Anyone who teaches yoga should be continuing his or her own yoga education by attending regular classes or seminars with more senior teachers. There's a saying that to be a teacher, you need a teacher, a practice, a love and knowledge of the subject you teach, and students. Make sure the teacher you choose meets the first three requirements before becoming one of their students!

3. Choose a teacher you respect.

The yoga student-teacher relationship should be more than a commercial one. Make sure you study yoga with someone you can trust and respect.