

# PRACTICAL GUIDELINES



## ASHTANGA (MYSORE) YOGA

- Practice on an empty stomach. Do not eat at least two-three hours, or drink fifteen minutes before practicing.
- It is a good habit to take a shower before practice.
- Astanga yoga is practiced barefoot.
- Wear clean clothes and wash your mat every now and then. Clothing should be flexible and comfortable but not baggy.
- Inform your teacher of any injury or medical condition.
- It is very typical and integral part of Mysore teachings to receive hands on adjustments during the Mysore practice. But if for whatever reason on a given day you don't want to be adjusted or touched, please let your teacher know when you enter the room. Your decision will always be respected by the teacher.
- Avoid perfume. Some people are sensitive and allergic to strong odors.
- We recommended you attend at least 2-3 Mysore sessions per week. Traditionally in Ashtanga yoga the practice is done 6 days a week, resting only on Saturdays, Moon Days (and menstruation days if person feels the need to, and this can be different from month to month). But know that frequency of your practice is also something you decide and talk about together with your teacher.
- If you become pregnant ask your teacher for guidance!
- Learn to pay attention and discover what works for you and what doesn't, not just during certain days (menstruation cycle days, moon days or pregnancy) but every day.
- Benefits only come with regular long-term practice, but it's important to exercise healthy moderation, balance and common sense. We are not meant to perform the postures in exactly the same way every day.
- You may experience pleasant soreness, but any kind of sharp and/or continuous pain is always a signal of going beyond one's limits. Avoid using force in the postures and respect pain signals.
- Resist the urge to compare yourself to others, as everyone benefits from this system of yoga in his or her own way. You will progress at your own level and in your own time.
- Practice way more than you talk about yours or other's asana practice.
- Before, during and after practice, it is important that everybody contributes to the pleasant and focused environment, free from interruption or disturbance. Make sure your mobile phone is turned off and preferably outside the room. Refrain from idle conversations.
- The practice should not be done while sick with a fever or flu, or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or strong medicine.
- Practice in a healing manner. This is always possible, even with injuries and emotional distress. Practices that defy desires and expectations tend to be those that are most beneficial. Show up with whatever body and mind you have today, and at least simply sit on your mat, breathe and observe.
- Study the order of postures, the breathing and the movement system (vinyasa), and the names of the poses. This will clarify the practice, improve your concentration, and make it easier to communicate with teacher.
- Follow the Astanga sequence and what the teacher has taught you. Please do not adjust other people or do what they are doing if it's not part of your own personal practice, given to you by your teacher.
- Yoga should be a source of support and strength for your everyday life, and should improve the quality of your life in all levels. It is not the goal of yoga for you to forget the outside world and develop obsessive focus on the inner world of your mind and body.
- Often, the more you advance the less you obsess with the need to achieve. Patience is cultivated. With the right attitude, yoga is a genuine path towards meeting your true self, where you are happy and already content with the present moment, as it is.