



Iyengar yoga classes Q&As

What is Iyengar Yoga?

Yoga, or more properly Ashtanga Yoga, is an ancient art which helps to promote a sense of physical and emotional well-being. Iyengar Yoga is a form of the classic Ashtanga Yoga as practiced, researched, and taught by B.K.S. Iyengar, one of the most respected and well-known yoga teachers in the world.

B.K.S. Iyengar has written a number of definitive yoga texts including 'Light on Yoga', and 'Light on Pranayama', introducing yoga to the West, where it became known as Iyengar Yoga. Until the age of 96, he continued to play an active role, deliver yoga classes and training at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune, India together with his daughter, Geeta. His son, Prashant, granddaughter, Abhijata, are renowned teachers who carry on his work.

In a yoga class you will be introduced to the postures of yoga, known as asanas, which include standing, sitting, inversions, forward extensions, backbends, twists, abdominal and recuperative postures. These asanas not only tone the muscles, tissues, ligaments, joints, and nerves, but also contribute to maintaining the smooth functioning and health of all the body's systems. They both energise and relax the body and mind and help recover from fatigue, weakness, and the stress of daily life. The practice of these asanas brings vitality, flexibility, strength, balance, concentration, self-confidence, and mental calm. Each class ends with a period of relaxation.

The classes are all different and put emphasis on particular groups of asanas, working in a focused way to open, energise or relax specific areas of the body.

The distinctive features of Iyengar yoga include:

- A methodical and progressive system of teaching with emphasis on alignment and safety, with beginners working on simple postures according to their capabilities.
- Attention to correct posture and precise alignment of the body parts, use of breathing to assist stretching and relaxation.
- The creative use of equipment such as blocks, belts, bolsters, blankets, and chairs, used initially to help the practitioner to achieve a better and safer posture.

Who is your teacher?

Pascale started Iyengar yoga in 1994. She qualified as an Introductory level Iyengar yoga teacher in 2007 and has been holding a Level 3 (Junior Intermediate level 3) certificate since 2011.

She now work as a full-time yoga teacher, running several adults' daytime and evening classes of various levels from her little studio (A Yoga Room - currently delivered online) and teaching an intermediate class at the Sheffield Yoga Centre (also online at present). In addition, she teaches monthly weekend workshops and offers 1:1 and 1:2 tuition on request. Occasionally she covers classes elsewhere.

She is also a member of the SADIY committee, the local Iyengar yoga group, acting as Treasurer, maintaining the [website](#), and helping organise yoga events.

She has a particular interest in anatomy and the understanding of the physical structures and principles underlying movement to enhance the safe and efficient practice of yoga poses and to improve strength, flexibility, balance and posture.

Who is yoga for?

The answer is simple: **everyone can practice yoga**. If you are not very fit or flexible to start with it does not matter. You work within your own capabilities, which will improve with regular practice.

However, mainstream yoga classes may not be suitable for people with certain **medical conditions** such as high blood pressure, heart diseases or other heart problems, epilepsy, cancer or benign tumours, diabetes, Meniere's disease, detached retina, AIDS, MS and ME. There are some other therapeutic classes in which appropriate support and guidance will be provided – please ask for details.

As part of your registration, you are expected to complete a [confidential registration and health form](#). All information you provide will be treated with strict confidence – it is required to ensure your own safety and by our insurers.

If you have recently been **ill** or have had an **operation**, if you have had an **injury**, if you are **pregnant**, or if you are **menstruating**, please inform your teacher before the class as some of the postures must be avoided or adapted during this time. Appropriate instructions will be provided to you.

If you have a **fever** or are **contagious** avoid attending classes until you are feeling better. Home practice will be safer and more beneficial at that time.

If you have **difficulties** or experience **pain, dizziness, breathlessness, or light-headedness** in any of the postures, please tell your teacher. Adjustments may be needed to continue the practice comfortably and safely.

Can we eat or drink before and during class?

It is advisable not to eat much more than a light snack for at least two hours before the class.

No drink should be taken while practicing – unless otherwise advised by your teacher.

What should I wear?

Please wear clean clothes that do not restrict your movement and allow your teacher to check your posture. Most people wear vest tops or T-shirts, shorts, or leggings (not too baggy – to adjust your body alignment your teacher will need to see your knees and ankles!). You may want to use an additional sweater, socks, a blanket to keep warm and a small light cloth to cover your eyes during relaxation at the end of the class.

Yoga is always practised bare feet. Please ensure that they are clean, and that any verruca or open wound is well-covered and if possible, use your own mat until they have healed.

Avoid jewellery, chewing gums and wearing perfume in class.

What equipment do I need?

We use props to assist in the postures. To get started you will need a mat, one or two belts, two bricks, four blocks and a couple of blankets. You may be able to borrow some of these from your teacher, who can also assist you in your choice if you prefer to purchase your own equipment.

If you have any question, please contact me (pascaleyog@gmail.com or 07941646418).

Looking forward to 'seeing' you soon.

Pascale