



# INTRODUCTION TO YOGA FOR WOMEN

Week 4: Exploring different styles of Yoga

## Yoga Styles

There are many **different styles of yoga**, which use the asanas (poses) in a slightly different way. This enables you to find a style that suits your needs and preferences. These might change throughout the week, month, year as well as throughout the different stages of your life, to help you practice in a way that respects your body, your energy, your lifestyle as well as supporting your goals.

For instance, if you're sitting down at a computer all day, you might want to practice a **yoga style that offers more movement**, whereas when you've had an active day, or are feeling a bit tired, you might benefit more from a style of **yoga that invites stillness and relaxation**. Different practice styles can also focus on **achieving a different goal**, such as **energising, calming, increasing flexibility, building strength**.

Many yoga teachers, including myself, **combine different styles of yoga** in one class to help us meet the needs of a wider group of individuals that come to our classes. Some classes chose a style of yoga depending on the time of day the class is held e.g. in the morning you might want a class that is energising, in the evening a practice that is calming, promotes stretching and release.

Read on to learn about few of the more common styles of yoga.

## Hatha Yoga

This is a traditional, **slow pace style of yoga**. The practice **focuses on slow movements and holding poses** by engaging the muscles for longer periods to **build strength and flexibility**, and incorporate controlled breathing to calm the mind and channel energy. The term "Hatha" combines the Sanskrit words for "sun" (ha) and "moon" (tha), symbolising the balance of opposing energies within us. This style is great for beginners as allows time for you to explore the poses and move between them.

## Vinyasa Yoga

This style of yoga **connects breath with movement in a dynamic, fluid sequence of postures**, transitioning from one to the next without holding the poses. Each movement is often synchronised

with an inhale or exhale, creating a continuous, flowing practice that builds heat, strength, and flexibility. It's a faster practice to Hatha yoga.

## Yin Yoga

This is a **slow-paced style of yoga** that targets the **deep connective tissues** (fascia, ligaments, joints) of the body through long-held (3 to 5 minutes), passive postures where you relax your muscles. The practice is meditative, **increasing flexibility and range of motion** while promoting mindfulness, reducing tension, and improving circulation by stimulating the body's subtle energy channels. The practice is done **mostly sitting or lying down** and uses props like blocks, belts, bolsters to support the body and allow you to relax.

## Key Postures Explored

I've recorded a short video for you covering the key differences of the different styles of yoga and offering a practice combining Hatha, Vinyasa and Yin yoga practice and covering the key postures we have been exploring:

- Worrier 2
- Reverse Worrier
- Side Angle
- Baby Wild Thing
- Child
- Cat and Cow
- Downward Dog
- Tree
- Bridge

## Next Steps

Congratulations on completing your four week Introduction to Yoga. In the course we've covered:

- Connecting your body, mind and breath
- Yogic breathing deep into the belly
- Moving with your breath and body control
- Adjusting our body positioning to suit your unique body
- Using blocks and blankets for support

I hope you've found the course informative and will want to make yoga a part of your life, whether it will be with me in the second part of the course or my other weekly classes, other yoga teachers or through online practice.