



# INTRODUCTION TO YOGA FOR WOMEN

Week 3: Technique and Alignment in Yoga Practice

## Technique

Technique in yoga practice is all about **getting into and out of the different poses (asanas) safely**. These are the steps you can take to help you to do so. The steps will be different for beginners, those more experienced, as well as those with any body sensitivities, injuries or medical conditions. They can include the use of props.

Although there are some common techniques in yoga, us teachers also develop our own, based on our experience and to help support our students as we get to know them. As you journey through your practice and deepen your understanding of yoga and your own body, you'll also find that you develop your own techniques.

My best advice, is to **always take it slow**, and **step by step**, as directed. And as you become more experienced, you'll be able to perhaps skip some the suggested steps to get into and out of your poses.

## Alignment

Alignment is all about **positioning of the different body parts in our yoga practice**. There are certain principles to help the energy to flow freely in our bodies, achieve the designed purpose of the poses and maximise our progress. However, **our anatomy is different, our bodies go through different experiences** - that's why the most important thing is to **try the different alignments, notice your body's reactions** (holding breath, tensing muscles) **and sensations** (pain, discomfort), to help **find what works best for you**. If unsure, discuss your sensitivities, injuries and illnesses with your yoga teacher to help you work out your alignment.

- Get to know your body and your anatomy, we're all built differently and our yoga will be too
- Let the body sensations (not the mind's desire - the ego) to guide you in how far to go
- Never practice anything that causes pain - adjust your body to feel comfortable and safe
- Focus on function of the poses e.g. opening the chest, rather than wanting to look perfectly
- Use props to support your body to find comfort
- Looking for straight lines (square) - ears over shoulders, shoulders over hips, feet under hips
- Keeping the spine and neck long
- Connecting to the ground with hands and feet

- Spreading the fingers to distribute body weight and find stability
- Spreading the toes to distribute body weight and find stability
- Stacking joints for support of body weight
- Try the different options to find positioning of body that works for you

## Key Postures Explored

I've recorded a 20 mins video for you summarising the focus of the second class that includes a short practice covering the key postures we have been exploring:

- Worrier 2
- Reverse Worrier
- Side Angle
- Butterfly
- Cat and Cow
- Downward Dog
- Tree
- Bridge

## Next Steps

Congratulations on completing your third yoga class! Next session will be all about exploring the different styles of yoga practice to help you navigate the world of yoga. In the meantime, I recommend making yoga a part of your life by practicing:

- diaphragmatic breathing (slow, deep breathing into your belly)
- noticing sensations in your body (body scan)
- spotting when your thoughts take you away from where you are and what you're doing
- the recorded short yoga practice