

DEFINITION OF HATHA YOGA

HATHA YOGA, also called *hatha-vidya* (science of hatha), is a branch of yoga that historically refers to a "vast body of doctrines and practices geared toward Self-realization by means of perfecting the body" (Georg Feuerstein, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga* [EDY]). As such, hatha yoga sees the body itself as the primary vehicle for personal transformation. Its central practices include ritual techniques to purify the body and yogic postures (*asana*) and breath control practices (*pranayama*) to progressively culture and transform the body.

While all schools practise *asana* and *pranayama* while applying the *yamas* (moral principles) and *niyamas* (moral restraints), some contemporary schools of hatha yoga still retain a strong emphasis on the practice of purification techniques while others direct their teachings almost exclusively toward *asana* and *pranayama* as sufficient tools for mental and physical purification.

The literal meaning of the word "hatha" is "force" or "forceful," which derives from the intended difficulty and austerity of the practices. The word has further significance in that "its two component syllables, "ha" and "tha" are frequently explained as standing for the microcosmic "sun" (*surya*) and "moon" (*chandra*) respectively, while yoga is the "union" between these two principles." (EDY)

Hatha yoga is sometimes contrasted with *raja yoga* and *kriya yoga*; the former being directly associated with Patanjali's eightfold path (ashtanga yoga) as expounded in his Yoga Sutras. Many schools of hatha yoga adopt the higher stages of ashtanga yoga practice – concentration (*dharana*), meditation (*dhyana*) and absorption (*samadhi*) – and see the emphasis on practicing the first five limbs (*yama* and *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama* and *pratyahara* / sense withdrawal) as a steppingstone to *raja yoga*.

The teacher credited as its inventor is Goraksha (9th century C.E.). The two main texts that describe its principles and characteristics are the *Hatha-Yoga-Pradipika* (Light on Forceful Yoga) by Svatiarama (mid-14th century C.E.) and the *Gheranda Samhita* (Gheranda's Collection) by the sage Gheranda (late 17th century C.E.).

Among western practitioners hatha yoga is identified primarily with the yoga postures. All initial levels of teaching in hatha yoga concentrate first on *asana* practice, leading the student gradually toward breathing and meditation techniques.

MISSION STATEMENT AND CODE OF ETHICS**Mission Statement**

The Yoga Association of Alberta (YAA) is a non-profit organization that offers yoga activities to the public for the purpose of providing self-development opportunities. In order to develop yoga on a provincial level, the Association has representation from different regions of the province. This ensures that the Association can address the different needs of members through Alberta. The Association will establish the number of regions deemed appropriate from time to time to meet its goals. Initially, there will be three regions: Northern (Edmonton & north), Central and Southern (Calgary & south).

Code of Ethics

The YAA views its activities as promoting increased public knowledge and availability of yoga. All individuals in the association are encouraged to participate in these activities in an atmosphere of cooperation. The Code of Ethics as adopted at the 1979 annual meeting of the Association is:

- To treat others with dignity, respect and consideration of their circumstances
- To act in such a manner so as to maintain and honour the traditions of yoga
- To study, practice and expand the knowledge of yoga
- To improve the standards of yoga within the community

Guidelines for YAA Certified Teachers based on the above Code of Ethics

- Teachers agree to adhere to the Code of Ethics and these Guidelines with their YAA Certification and recertification. Failure to abide by these Guidelines may result in revocation of YAA Certification and membership, in accordance with the YAA Policies on Harassment and Abuse, Conflict of Interest, Dispute Resolution and Appeals.
- Teachers support the YAA in carrying out its Mission, Goals and Role of the Association.
- Teachers adhere to the policies of the YAA.
- Teachers provide accurate information regarding their credentials and training.
- Teachers deepen their knowledge, keep up to date with new developments in yoga and maintain and improve their teaching skills. This is a requirement for both receiving recertification and for maintaining Permanent Certification.
- Teachers adhere to traditional yoga principles as written in the yamas and niyamas and refrain from making any comment, gesture, or contact that is likely to cause offence or humiliation.
- Teachers conduct themselves in a professional and conscientious manner, follow all local and national laws that pertain to their yoga teaching and business, and act with ethical and financial integrity.
- Teachers refrain from making exaggerated claims about the benefits of yoga, acknowledge the limitations of their skills and scope of practice, and where appropriate, refer them to other teachers, suitable practitioners, or to the YAA office.
- Teachers do their best to create and maintain a safe, clean and comfortable environment for the practice of yoga.
- Teachers inform students of their personal yoga philosophy and style, practice tolerance and acceptance of the views of others, and encourage critical thinking and self-inquiry within their students.
- Teachers do not malign other yoga professionals.
- Teachers respect the rights, dignity and privacy of all students, and are respectful, compassionate and truthful with all practitioners of yoga – fellow students and teachers alike.
- Teachers avoid words and actions that constitute sexual harassment or harassment based on other legally protected characteristics.
- Teachers encourage diversity and do not discriminate against students based upon their race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual preference, age or physical ability (except in the interests of providing a yoga class suitable to the student's needs).
- Teachers practice some form of karma yoga (selfless service) based upon their skills.

Guidelines for YAA Members based on the above Code of Ethics

- Members of the YAA should be aware of the Code of Ethics and Guidelines, which will be published annually in the Fall issue of the Yoga Bridge.
- Members of the YAA should adhere to the Code of Ethics on an honour basis.
- Members are aware of and support the Mission, Goals and Role of the YAA.
- Members adhere to the policies of the YAA.
- Members with suggestions or input may convey their ideas in writing to the YAA for consideration by the Executive.
- Members with specific concerns regarding the conduct of a YAA certified teacher can convey these specifics in writing to the YAA Executive.
- Members interested in becoming teachers should familiarize themselves with the YAA Teacher Training Syllabus.

ASANA / PRANAYAMA REQUIRED PRACTICES

Applicants considering entering the YAA-TTP should already be familiar with most of the following required practices. They comprise the basis of study in the YAA TTP. By the end of their program, students are required to have a working understanding of these practices and be able to teach them safely in order to be eligible to apply for YAA Certification. Most descriptions and spellings for the list below have been taken from *Light on Yoga* by B.K.S. Iyengar and may differ from other books and traditions. Common names have been added for ease of reference.

200-Hour Level Asanas and Pranayama**Asanas:**

Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward Facing Dog)
Ananda Balasana (Happy Baby)
Anjaneyasana (Low & High Lunge)
Ardha Chandrasana (Half Moon)
Ardha Navasana (Half Boat)
Baddha Konasana (Bound Angle)
Bakasana (Crane or Crow)
Balasana (Child)
Bharadvajasana I (*Bharadvaja's* Twist)
Bhujangasana (Cobra)
Chaturanga Dandasana (Four-Limbed Staff)
Dandasana (Staff)
Dhanurasana (Bow)
Eka Pada Rajakapotasana (One-Legged King Pigeon)
Garudasana (Eagle)
Gomukhasana (Cow Face)
Halasana (Plow)
Janu Sirsasana (Head and Knee)
Jathara Parivartanasana (Revolved Abdomen)
Krounchasana (Heron)
Kurmasana (Tortoise)
Malasana (Garland)
Marichyasana I (Sage *Marichi* I)
Naraviralasana (Sphinx)
Padangusthasana (Big Toe)
Padmasana (Lotus)
Parighasana (Gate)
Paripurna Navasana (Full Boat)
Parivrtta Parsvakonasana (Twisted Side Angle)
Parivrtta Trikonasana (Twisted Triangle)
Parsvottanasana (Intense Side Stretch)

Paschimottanasana (Seated Forward Bend)
Phalakasana (Plank)
Pincha Mayurasana (Forearm Balance) - Preparatory
Prasarita Padottanasana (Wide-Legged Forward Bend)
Salabhasana (Locust)
Salamba Sarvangasana (Supported Shoulderstand)
Salamba Setu Bandha Sarvangasana (Supported Bridge)
Salamba Sirsasana (Supported Headstand) - Preparatory
Savasana (Corpse)
Setu Bandha Sarvangasana (Bridge)
Siddhasana (Sage)
Simhasana (Lion)
Sucirandhrasana (Eye of the Needle)
Sukhasana (Easy)
Supta Baddha Konasana (Reclining Bound Angle)
Supta Balasana (Reclining Child)
Supta Hasta Padangusthasana (Reclining Hand-to-Toe)
Tadasana (Mountain)
Trianga Mukhaikapada Paschimottanasana (Three Parts Forward Bend)
Upavistha Konasana (Wide Angle Seated Forward Bend)
Urdhva Mukha Svanasana (Upward Facing Dog)
Ustrasana (Camel)
Utkatasana (Chair)
Uttanasana (Standing Forward Bend)
Utthita Parsvakonasana (Extended Side Angle)
Utthita Trikonasana (Extended Triangle)
Viparita Karani (Legs-up-the-Wall)
Virabhadrasana I, II & III (Warrior I, II & III)
Virasana (Hero)
Vrksasana (Tree)

Asana Series: *Surya Namaskar* (Sun Salutations)

Pranayama: *Bhastrika* (Bellows), *Bhramari* (Bee), Complete Breath, Diaphragmatic Breath, *Kapalabhati* (Skull Shining), *Nadi Sodhana* (Alternate Nostril), *Ujjayi* (Victorious), *Viloma* (Against the Grain)

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

Although not a comprehensive list, the following books are highly recommended for study and suitable for the required book reports and other requirements outlined in the *Assignments List*. Please consult with your Mentor for other texts that may be suitable.

1. TEACHING RESOURCES:

- T.K.V. Desikachar, *The Heart of Yoga, Developing a Personal Practice*
- George Feuerstein, *The Deeper Dimensions of Yoga: Theory and Practice*
- George Feuerstein, *Sacred Paths*
- George Feuerstein, *The Yoga Tradition*
- B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on Yoga*
- B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on Pranayama*
- B.K.S. Iyengar, *The Tree of Yoga*
- B.K.S. Iyengar, *B.K.S. Iyengar Yoga: The Path to Holistic Health*
- Lucy Lidell with Narayani & Giris Rabinovitch, *Sivananda Companion to Yoga*
- Mira Mehta, *How to Use Yoga*
- Silva Mehta & Shyam Mehta, *Yoga: The Iyengar Way*
- Ken O'Donnell, *Pathways to Higher Consciousness*
- Mark Stephens, *Teaching Yoga: Essential Foundations and Techniques*
- Mark Stephens, *Yoga Adjustments: Philosophy, Principles, and Techniques*
- Mark Stephens, *Yoga Sequencing*
- Swami Radha, *Hatha Yoga: The Hidden Language*
- Swami Rama, *Joints and Glands Exercise Book*
- Swami Rama, Rudolph Ballentine, MD., Alan Hymes, MD, *Science of Breath*
- Vanda Scaravelli, *Awakening the Spine*
- Eric Schiffmann, *Yoga: The Spirit and Practice of Moving into Stillness*
- Swami Sivananda, *The Science of Pranayama*

2. YOGA SUTRAS OF PATAÑJALI:

- Roy Eugene Davis, *Life Surrendered in God*
- T.K.V. Desikachar, *Reflections on Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*
- Georg Feuerstein, *The Yoga-Sutras of Patañjali*, trans. and commentary
- B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali*
- Barbara Stoller Miller, *Yoga: Discipline of Freedom*, trans. and commentary
- Swami Prabhavanda & Christopher Isherwood. *How to Know God*
- Rama Prasada, trans., *The Aphorisms of Yoga: Patañjali's Yoga Sutras*, with the Commentary of Vyasa & the Gloss of Vachaspati Misra
- Swami Satchidananda, *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*
- Fernando Tola and Carmen Dregonetti, *The Yogasutras of Patañjali: On Concentration of Mind*, Part 1, 'Samadhi Pada', trans. K.D. Prithipaul

3. BHAGAVAD GITA:

- Roy Eugene Davis, *The Eternal Way: The Inner Meaning of the Bhagavad Gita*
- Eknath Easwaran, trans., *The Bhagavad Gita*
- Barbara Stoller Miller, trans., *Bhagavad-Gita: Krishna's Council in Time of War*
- Stephen Mitchell, trans. *Bhagavad Gita: A New Translation*
- Swami Nikhilananda, trans., *The Bhagavad Gita, or Song of the Lord*
- Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, trans., *Bhagavad-Gita: The Song of God*
- S. Radhakrishnan, trans., *The Bhagavadgita*
- Swami Rama, *The Perennial Psychology of the Bhagavad-Gita*
- Swami Satchidananda, *The Living Gita*
- Alladi Mahadeva Sastri, trans., *The Bhagavad Gita, with Text, Translation and Commentary by Sri Shankaracharya*