

BEFORE YOUR CLASS

Yay you signed up for [your first class](#)! First step to becoming a yogi. Here's what to know as you prep before you get there. I've also made some extra notes specific to hot yoga*

- **Pack your bag:** I always bring a water bottle and obviously my mat. No shoes or socks required, you do every type of yoga barefoot. Don't have your own personal mat? Most studios allow you to rent them there.
- **What to wear:** I personally like long or cropped leggings & a tank top. Occasionally, I'll just practice in a sports bra and leggings depending on how hot it is.
- **Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate.** Doesn't matter what temperature your class is, drink lots of water beforehand.
- **Grab your props:** You can either buy your own personal props (Target has a great selection), but most studios have them for you to borrow. There are a number of different kinds but the most common ones are blocks & straps.

DURING CLASS

Once you've made it physically onto your mat, here are some things you can expect:

- **There may be some 'om-ing'.** "Om" is the universal sound of peace. Most [yoga practices](#) open and close with some sort of "om." If you're not comfortable joining, you can just listen, too.
- **Calling to mind an intention.** Most classes will open with setting an intention. It can truly be anything you want—a thought, feeling, [mantra](#), etc. It's something you can come back to during the class to refocus you.
- **Deeeep breathing.** There will be some sort of focus on your breath. Whether the teacher has you do some breathing exercises in the beginning or reminds you about it during class, you'll be paying attention to your breath a lot.
- **Some sanskrit words.** Depending on the teacher, he/she may name poses in English, [Sanskrit](#) or a mixture of both. Usually you'll be given instruction on how to get into each posture, but if you're confused, just look around. You can usually figure it out.
- **Adjustments.** Again, depending on the teacher, they may physically adjust you during your practice. This is just to help you get into a posture correctly so you don't hurt yourself or to help you get deeper. If you don't want to be touched/have an injury, just let the teacher know ahead a time.

AFTERWARDS

You'll feel super, duper zen (hopefully). Class usually ends with some form of Savasana (the best part) and a closing "namaste." [Namaste](#) has a bunch of different translations, but my favorite is, "the light in me recognizes, honors, respects the light in you." Right after class ends, I usually dedicate my practice to someone to send them some good vibes (optional, of course). If you do hot yoga, make sure you drink lots and lots of water afterwards—sometimes I even drink coconut water after just to replenish my electrolytes.

TIPS FOR BEGINNERS

And finally, just some general tips that I wish I had known when I [first started practicing](#):

- **You don't have to be flexible to be "good" at yoga.** Fun fact: I couldn't touch my toes when I first started yoga. (So when I try to drag my friends to a yoga class & that's their excuse, I make them come anyway :)) The most amazing thing about yoga is that **there is no "being good at it."** There are correct ways to do certain poses (mostly so you don't hurt yourself!), but every person's practice is different, and **they are all good.** I totally understand that it's intimidating to see someone pop a handstand next to you (trust me, I've been there), but out of any physical activity/sport, yoga is the *least* judgmental atmosphere so don't get too caught up in where you are in your own personal practice.
- **Don't worry so much about what you look like, focus on your breath.** Breath = the most important. It doesn't matter if you can contort your body into the most amazing shape, if you can't breathe in it, it's not worth it. At its core, yoga is a moving meditation & it's all connected to the breath.
- **Ask questions.** That's what yoga teachers are there for! Most teachers have to go through 200+ hours of training so they are *super* knowledgeable about all things yoga. Ask about how to get into certain postures, where the names/tradition comes from, the correct way to do a pose if you have an injury, etc. The more you ask question/get to know yoga, the more you'll enjoy it.
- **Don't take yourself too seriously.** [Yoga is fun](#). Smile. Laugh. If you fall on your face (hint: you will. Multiple times.), get back up. It's just yoga. Some days I get frustrated because I can't get into a certain pose that I could do the day before, but that's okay. Some days you can hold crow for 5 whole seconds and other days downward facing dog makes your legs shake. Don't be too hard on yourself—it's **all about practicing as you are, where you are.**
- **Be as present as you can.** The main reason I love yoga because it's more than just a physical practice. It's a chance to slow down & just b r e a t h e. Take an hour for yourself & stay present.

Yoga is definitely not for everyone, but I do think everyone can benefit in some way from doing yoga. If you're nervous about going to a class, I encourage you to just try it. What do you have to lose?

Feel free to ask me any questions in the comments below & I'll try to answer them the best I can. Namaste future yogis. &

As a final note... Yoga isn't about all the "cool" poses that are super Instagram-worthy. Obviously the pictures in this post have been edited & only represent a small number of many, many photos taken. And in some cases, it's taken me years to get into those postures.

Wherever you are & however you practice, honor yourself always.