

Introduction to Yoga Class #1 - Foundation of Symmetrical Poses

The traditional names of the yoga *asana* (**seat, poses or postures**), are in Sanskrit, and are given below each picture. The English translation follows; just add **pose** or **posture** to the end of each. For example, Supta Padangusthasana is Reclining Big Toe of the Foot *Pose*.



Supta Padangusthasana
Reclining Big Toe-of-Foot



Tadasana
Mountain



Tadasana Urdhva Hastasana
Mountain with Upward Hands



Uttanasana
Intense Stretch



Adho Mukha Svanasana
Down Face Dog



Prasarita Padottanasana
Spread Feet Intense Stretch



Viparita Karani
Inverted Lake



Parvatasana
Arm Stretch



Dandasana
Staff



Baddhakonasana
Bound Angle



Jathara Parivartanasana
Abdominal Twisting



Savasana
Corpse

The **physical** foundation of each pose is the point of contact with the floor, or with the earth. It provides the base structure and stability for the rest of the body, and inspires spinal extension, a sense of lift in the body and greater freedom of the breath.

The **philosophical** foundation of yoga is systematically outlined in the Yoga Sutra, 195 aphorisms attributed to Patanjali, a sage who is believed to have lived around 300 A.D. It is an elegant system delineating eight branches, or limbs of yoga practice, which include ethical principles and healthful practices for the body, mind and breath. The disciplines outlined in the Yoga Sutra inspire expanded thinking, emotional upliftment, and, as the ultimate goal, self-realization or union with one's true nature. "The primary aim of yoga is to restore the mind to simplicity and peace, and free it from confusion and stress." *B.K.S. Iyengar*

Namaste!

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