

5 Tips for a Better Yoga Experience



by Pam
Teves

Whether you practice yoga regularly, or just starting out, I hope this article will help answer a few questions you probably have regarding yoga class. Hopefully, it will also help you make the most out of your yoga practice. Here are a few tips and answers to the most common questions I come across.

1. What should I bring to class?

All you really need is a yoga mat and I recommend some water. Many places will allow you to use or rent a mat, but if you do purchase your own keep the following in mind:

How thick should the mat be?

Depending on your sensitivity to the floor you may want a thicker mat.



Make sure your mat is at least 68" long.

How sticky is the material?

Yoga classes put you on your hands and bare feet a lot. The stickier the material feels, the better it will be at keeping you in place and freeing your mind from thoughts of sliding off your mat.

How long should the mat be?

Pilates and yoga mats differ in length. Make sure your mat is at least 68" long.

2. What should I wear to yoga class?

Wear comfortable, breathable and fitted clothes. When practicing yoga, your head is often lower than your hips causing your shirt to ride up. Make sure you can comfortably tuck in your shirt, or wear something form fitting that won't move on you. Pants can fit a little less tightly, but when wearing shorts take the time to lift your leg and see if you expose anything you wouldn't want other people to see (please). It may be a good idea to wear bike shorts underneath your regular shorts.

3. Be respectful.

For most people yoga is a time to relax, reflect, and let go of some stress. There is nothing worse than sitting next to a "chatty Kathy" throughout your whole practice. Sorry Kathy, I don't really want to know that your cat is sick or that you are cooking potpie for dinner. Of course, sometimes something funny comes up and you laugh and talk about it, but let it go and try not to let it get in the way of other people's practice.



Everyone practices with different levels of flexibility and strength.

4. Don't over do it.

Everyone practices with different levels of flexibility and strength. Don't let your idea of having to perfect a pose get in the way of an otherwise great practice. My yoga instructor told me once that just because someone can do a headstand doesn't make him or her a better person. Try new things, but don't get to the point where you injure yourself or go past your edge. Know when to back off and enjoy what you can do that practice.

5. Have fun.

Stop thinking too much. It doesn't matter if you can't touch your toes, breath through your nose the whole class, or even keep up with the person next to you. All you have to do is be open minded, respectful of yourself and others, and be able to laugh at yourself.

Join me Tuesday nights all summer at Fort Taber in New Bedford for Sunset Yoga class. 6:30-7:30, \$5 a person. Please arrive 15 minutes early to get a parking spot and to walk over to the grass field behind the fort. All you will need is a mat or large beach towel, water, and sunglasses/sunscreen. Classes start June 5th. Head over to www.southcoastyoga.net for more details. Also, check out my other articles here on New Bedford Guide!

Behind the Pose



by Pam
Teves

Quite a few people recently asked me if I read the New York Times article, “How Yoga Can Wreck Your Body.” As a yoga instructor and practitioner, it was a tough article to ignore. In the wake of this article many people have written about its inaccuracy. Although it does give some over the top examples of yoga related injuries, it also brings up a good question: when is yoga harmful?

The article discussed various injuries that people suffered while doing yoga, but like all physical activities the risk of injury is real. In fact, walking into my living room is a risk when the light is off and if I forgot where I left my shoes (whoops). The point being, with mindfulness I won’t trip over my shoes. In a yoga class we ask students to be mindful; every day brings different thoughts, ideas, and even different levels of flexibility and strength.



In yoga philosophy, the term “ahimsa” means “non-violence” and is part of the 8-limbs of yoga in Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras. Ahimsa can be interpreted in many ways including non-violence to animals, the environment,

others, and/or one's self. You should bring the idea of not harming yourself into every one of your practices. Listening to the cues that your body is signaling to you is a way to keep yourself safe. While in a yoga class wanting to take the pose to the next level can be overwhelming, but with mindfulness and the thought of ahimsa you can take it to a place that can be a challenge, while at the same time keeping you from pain or injury. Looking inward and really defining your practice is a healthy way to keep you on your mat and advancing. Yoga is not just about getting into arm balances and crazy twists, but creating a healthy balance physically and mentally.

The most important part of a yoga class, for me, is to have a fun and safe practice. A yoga practice is something that is on going, so enjoy the journey and have fun. Otherwise, what's the point?

Please join me for classes on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 5:45pm at Synergy Physical Therapy (17 Sarahs Way, Fairhaven), and for more details please check out www.southcoastyoga.net.

New Year, More Yoga



by Pam
Teves

With a new year comes new resolutions. Hopefully, one of your

resolutions is to do more (or start) yoga! If your not sure where to start here is information on a few different yoga style options that are offered around the South Coast area.

Hatha Yoga – This slow, conscious practice emphasizes breath and a long hold in poses. This yoga style is perfect for beginners. Typically, a Hatha class starts with a longer meditation or relaxation period compared to other yoga practices. It will stretch and lightly twist its way into a full practice.

Vinyasa Yoga – Vinyasa takes the basic Hatha practice and incorporates movement to breath. This style is still a great introduction for beginners who want to break a sweat and feel great after practice. A Vinyasa class will incorporate Sun Salutations and breathing techniques, along with other pose-series that the teacher will create.



Power Yoga – This is like the Vinyasa practice, but sometimes includes a bit more muscular endurance. A power yoga class usually will have flow posture series, and then incorporate other muscle conditioning moves (crunches or extra chattarungas). Along with focusing on your breath, a power class is perfect for those who want to have fun, break a sweat, and feel they deserve the savasana (a relaxing posture intended to rejuvenate body, mind and spirit) at the end. Power classes are for all levels of yoga students.

Finding the right class for you is the best way to keep up your yoga practice. I encourage everyone to take classes in all styles and with as many teachers as possible. Finding what makes you happy, and feeling accomplished, will keep you on track and into those advanced poses before you know it. Check out the list of yoga studios and classes in the South Coast

area.

For some basic yoga terms, be sure to check my last article Nama-whatta and read my other articles [here](#).

Have any yoga questions? Please feel free to email me at southcoastyoga@gmail.com or check out my website www.southcoastyoga.net.

Nama-whatta? Some Basic Yoga Terms



by Pam
Teves

Although the ancient practice of yoga started more than 2,500 years ago, you can still stop in a class today and experience ancient traditions, which include poses, breathing techniques and group chants. Over the past year and a half of teaching yoga, I've found that until a student really understands the meaning of some Sanskrit terms, they will simply mouth the word, not making a sound, or bow their head a little deeper to shy away from speaking the word aloud.

In the hopes of making that OM chant a little louder, I will provide some background information and definitions that explain what the heck your yoga instructor is saying.

OM (or AUM) is the sound of the universal vibration, and it is said to be the sound from which all sounds started. It can be used in class for a way to unify the class and our practice.

Namaste is usually the term the teacher will say to end a practice. Simply put it means, "I respect and recognize your inner self and you respect and recognize mine."

However, the twist to these basic definitions is that they can be interpreted in many different ways. OM and Namaste have many translations, and once you start learning a little more you may add to or take away from the basic definition.

And, finally;

Asana essentially means, "pose." If your yoga teacher uses Sanskrit terms you may notice that they all rhyme, and most poses end in Asana.

For example:

- Adho Mukha Shvanasana (Downward Facing Dog)
- Bakasana (Crow Pose)
- Trikonasana (Triangle Pose)

So the next time you're in class chant that OM a little louder

and don't forget to end with a Namaste.

If you've ever been in a class offering arm balances and inversions (crow, headstand), but haven't been given enough time to work on them, Pam is holding a workshop to practice. Please check out www.southcoastyoga.net under Schedules and Events for more details, or e-mail her at southcoastyoga@gmail.com.

Arm Balance and Inversion Workshop!

Tuesday, November 29 · 6:00pm – 7:30pm

This will be an hour and a half workshop to practice arm balances and inversions! We can start with a short warm-up flow, then get into some arm balances then get upside down! All levels welcome and only \$10 a person!

Five Reasons Not to Practice Yoga



by Pam
Teves

People often come up with a variety of excuses not to do things. Here is a list of a few good reasons not to practice yoga:

- 1. You enjoy lacking energy and motivation.**

Like so many others, your desire to watch Oprah re-runs outweighs your motivation to get up and practice yoga. Yoga can offer energy and motivation to start a healthy habit, and provide benefits off your mat. Releasing some tension that you might have built up frees up your energy to be put to more useful things.

2. Sweating is icky.

Not all types of yoga will break a sweat, but if you do find yourself taking a vinyasa or hot yoga class it's probably going to cause your body to release toxins and nourish your skin from the inside. Sweating is useful in many ways, it is a natural way of regulating your body temperature, and creating that post yoga glow after a good class that wouldn't be possible without a little sweat.

3. You like looking older then you actually are.

There are many ways that we can take care of ourselves to keep us looking younger and healthy. Releasing toxins when twisting, stretching, and sweating in a yoga class can do this. Also, think about how you feel after doing something good for yourself. Do you walk away a little taller and with a smile? When you feel beautiful and confident, you naturally look younger and more radiant.

4. You want to be stressed out.

If you've ever been stressed most people will tell you to breath, and this is the first thing you do in a yoga class. We open classes this way to reduce the level of stress and clear the busyness of our minds. Now imagine over an hour of this. Think of all the stress that could be released, not to mention the endorphins that exercise releases into your body. But why would you want to be less stressed and happier?



5. You have a bad; back, knee, shoulder, hip, toe...etc. And you like the pain.

You've hurt yourself in the past and now you don't want to injure yourself any further ...well I don't blame you! When you're in a yoga class let your instructor know what your injuries are and they will work with you to offer variations or modifications that could work better for your body. I find that people who that listen to their body and do not pass their edge get the most satisfaction from Yoga. Please, don't compare yourself and your practice to others in class and take your time on your mat to appreciate what your mind and body can accomplish in the moment. Creating a safe practice is what will increase your ability to keep on practicing and, who knows, maybe even stretch out that hurt (back, knee, shoulder, hip, toe, etc).

Want to practice Yoga? Already do, but want to increase your time on the mat? Check out our Yoga Seven Days a Week article for the New Bedford and the South Coast!

The Benefits of Yoga



by Pam
Teves

I took my first yoga class in 2001 while I was in high school. Back then it was not quite as popular as it is now.

I showed up with a friend and searched for a spot as far in the back as possible. I looked around and thought, “Who are all these hippies?” and “If someone farts I’m totally going to loose it!”

Well, no one farted, but I realized that yoga wasn’t for me. Eight years later, and armed with some extra maturity, I decided to give yoga another shot and I found something that I truly love.

It would be difficult to point out the countless benefits of yoga in one article, so I will start with the first three that became most apparent to me along my journey.

Mindfulness. Yoga is more than simply touching your toes and twisting into weird poses. It’s about accepting yourself and working with what you have including all the potential that exists inside of you. The yoga term Svadhyaya means “the study of self”, and can describe the process you go through during a practice. When doing asanas (yoga poses) you constantly respond to your body and deal with how each pose makes you feel, and which emotions arise while you learn to use your breath, alignment, and mindfulness to carry you through your practice.



Strength. You may think that yoga is all about breathing and stretching (which is a huge part of it), but don’t forget about all those poses that you’re coming into when you’re taking a class. Coming down from high plank into Chaturanga

Dansasana (low plank) is a challenge each time, but with each repetition you gain strength and use muscles you may not know you have. Using the strength that you build up while working through asanas will awaken your spirit and muscles.

Flexibility. If you can't touch your toes, you most definitely can do yoga. When starting an exercise routine, you should work on 5 major areas that will help you achieve success; flexibility is one; strength, cardiovascular endurance, nutrition, and muscular endurance are the others. Three years ago, when I decided to take another chance at yoga, I thought I was a descendant of a T-Rex; my arms seemed so short. I found that with time and practice my toes really weren't that far out of reach (and my arms are normal length).

Yoga is not only about a one hour practice on your mat, but it is also about taking the feeling of strength, flexibility, and mindfulness off your mat into your everyday life.

Pam Teves hosts Sunset Yoga at For Taber and other classes in the Southcoast, Massachusetts. You can contact her at southcoastyoga@gmail.com with any questions, or check Southcoast Yoga on Facebook for more details.

Yoga in New Bedford, Seven Days a Week



by
Michael

Yoga was founded in India as a non-competitive, no-impact, safe way to get in shape and relieve stress. It has quickly become a mainstream way of staying healthy in America with 16 million Americans including yoga in their weekly workout routines. Stars like Madonna and Oprah Winfrey swear by the benefits of yoga. New Bedford and the South Coast of Massachusetts have seen a major growth in yoga studios and independent instructors.

This article provides a list of yoga classes in the South Coast area for each day of the week. I hope it will be a “living” document and grow with inputs from our readers. It is important for you to contact the yoga instructor to ensure the class schedule is still current. Below the schedule is a list of the the yoga studios in the area ad their contact information. If you know of a yoga studio or classes please e-mail info@newbedfordguide.com so we can include them on the list. Please include details like location, time, fee and contact information and any other details you feel will be useful. Thanks to Erin Macedo and Pam Teves who were major contributors to this list!

Monday

- 7:15-8:15 am: Yoga (YMCA New Bedford) – free with YMCA membership, \$7 per class for non-members.
- 9-10:30 am: In Love and Light Yoga – Heated Hatha – drop-ins \$15
- 8:15-9:15 am: Yoga (YMCA Dartmouth) – \$7 per class or \$55 for 10 classes.
- 4:30 – 5:45 pm: In Love and Light Yoga – Heated Flow – drop-ins \$15
- 6-7:30 pm: Yoga on Union – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for drop-ins.
- 6:30 pm: YOGA 101 (Dartmouth) – \$10 drop-in, 6 classes for \$50, or unlimited classes for \$65 a month



Erin Macedo showing off at Sunset Yoga at Fort Taber.

Tuesday

- 8-9 am: Yoga (YMCA Dartmouth) – \$7 per class or \$55 for 10 classes.
- 9:30 am: YOGA 101 (Dartmouth) – \$10 drop-in, 6 classes for \$50, or unlimited classes for \$65 a month
- 9:30-1045 am: In Love and Light Yoga – Gentle Hatha – drop-ins \$12
- 4-5 pm: Yoga on Union – Slow Flow -Jody (starts in April) – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.
- 5pm: YOGA 101 (Dartmouth) – \$10 drop-in, 6 classes for \$50, or unlimited classes for \$65 a month
- 5:30-6:4 5pm: In Love and Light Yoga – Gentle Hatha – drop-ins \$12
- 6:30 pm: Sunset Yoga at Fort Taber. Starts 5 June, 2012. Classes are only \$5 per person and will run every Tuesday night (weather permitting) rain date is always the Wednesday following.
- 6:30 pm: YOGA 101 (Dartmouth) – \$10 drop-in, 6 classes for \$50, or unlimited classes for \$65 a month
- 5:45-6:45pm – South Coast Yoga at Synergy Physical Therapy – Power Flow & Hip Hop Yoga – \$5 drop-in

- 6-7:30 pm: Yoga on Union – Basics – Jonna – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.
- 7-8 pm: Yoga (YMCA Dartmouth) – \$7 per class or \$55 for 10 classes.
- 7 pm: Be Yoga at Medium Studios (38 Bethel St.) – All Levels Hatha Yoga – \$8 drop-in, \$60 for 8 classes

Wednesday

- 6:00-7:15 am: Yoga on Union – Level 2 -Kayma – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.
- 9-10 am: Gentle Yoga (YMCA New Bedford)
- 9-10:30 am: In Love and Light Yoga – Heated Hatha – drop-ins \$15
- 12-1 pm: Yoga (YMCA New Bedford) – free with YMCA membership, \$7 per class for non-members.
- 12-12:45 pm: Power Yoga (Om Studios) – \$10 fee.
- 4:30 – 5:45 pm: In Love and Light Yoga – Heated Flow – drop-ins \$15
- 6:00-7:30 PpmM: Yoga on Union – Level 1/2 -Juliet – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.
- 6:30 pm: YOGA 101 (Dartmouth) – \$10 drop-in, 6 classes for \$50, or unlimited classes for \$65 a month
- 7:15-8:15 pm: Powerfully Peaceful Yoga (YMCA New Bedford) – free with YMCA membership, \$7 per class for non-members.

Thursday

- 5:45-7 am: In Love and Light Yoga – Heated Flow – drop-ins \$15
- 6:00-7:15 am: Yoga on Union – Level 2 -Juliet – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.
- 9-10:30 am: Yoga on Union – Level 2/3 -Juliet – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.

- 9-10:30 am: In Love and Light Yoga – Heated Hatha – drop-ins \$15
- 9:30 am: YOGA 101 (Dartmouth) – \$10 drop-in, 6 classes for \$50, or unlimited classes for \$65 a month
- 12-12:45 pm: Yoga on Union – LUNCH *Pay What You Can*
- 5 pm: YOGA 101 (Dartmouth) – \$10 drop-in, 6 classes for \$50, or unlimited classes for \$65 a month
- 5:45-6:45 pm – South Coast Yoga at Synergy Physical Therapy- Power Flow & Hip Hop Yoga (alternating Thursdays) – \$5 drop-in
- 6:30-8 pm: Yoga on Union – HEATED Yoga -Kayma/ Guest Teacher – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.
- 6:30 pm: YOGA 101 (Dartmouth) – \$10 drop-in, 6 classes for \$50, or unlimited classes for \$65 a month
- 7-8 pm: Yoga (YMCA Dartmouth) – \$7 per class or \$55 for 10 classes.

Friday

- 8:15-9:15 am: Yoga (YMCA Dartmouth) – \$7 per class or \$55 for 10 classes.
- 9:30 am: YOGA 101 (Dartmouth) – \$10 drop-in, 6 classes for \$50, or unlimited classes for \$65 a month
- 12-1 pm: Yoga (YMCA New Bedford) – free with YMCA membership, \$7 per class for non-members.
- 6-7:30pm: Yoga on Union – HEATED Yoga -Juliet – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.

Saturday

- 8-9:15 am: Yoga on Union – Level 2 -Juliet – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.
- 9 am: Be Yoga at Medium Studios (38 Bethel St.) – All Levels Hatha Yoga – \$8 drop-in, \$60 for 8 classes
- 9-10:15 am: In Love and Light Yoga – Heated Flow – drop-ins \$15

- 9:30-11 am: Yoga on Union – Level 2 -Jonna – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.
- 10:45 am – 12 pm: In Love and Light Yoga – Absolute Beginner's Hatha Series (warm) – drop-ins \$12

Sunday

- 8-9 am: Sunrise Yoga at Wing's Court (Om Studios) – \$10 fee.
- 8-9:30 am: In Love and Light Yoga – Heated Hatha – drop-ins \$15
- 10-11:30 am: In Love and Light Yoga – Heated Flow – drop-ins \$15
- 11 am-12:30 pm: Yoga on Union – Level 1/2 -Angela – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins.
- 11:30 am: Powerfully Peaceful Yoga (YMCA New Bedford) – free with YMCA membership, \$7 per class for non-members.

New Bedford Yoga Studios

- **Yoga Kids Inc. of New Bedford** – <http://yogakidsinc.org/>, e-mail: tidon3@comcast.net, phone: (508) 748-2025
- **Om Studios** – NewBedfordYoga.com, 752 Purchase Street, e-mail: info@newbedfordyoga.com, phone: 774-202-1189
- **Yoga on Union** – Yogaonunion.blogspot.com, Corner of Johnny Cake Hill & Union St, e-mail: yogaonunion@gmail.com, phone: 508-858-6786, 508-207-3966 – 5 classes for \$65, 10 classes for \$120 and \$15 for Drop-ins, UMD & BCC \$10 drop-in rate w/ student ID
- **Be Yoga** – beyoubeyoga.com – e-mail: jdowning@beyoubeyoga.com, phone: 508-728-8432 – \$8 drop-in, \$60 for 8 classes – Class cards must be used within ten weeks of purchase and can be used at any regularly scheduled class/location.
- **In Love and Light Yoga** – inloveandlightyoga.com, 1890 Acushnet Ave, phone: 508-998-2273 – drop ins \$12, Heated Classes \$15

- **New Bedford YMCA** – ymcasouthcoast.org, 25 South Water Street, phone: 508.997.0734 – free with YMCA membership, \$7 per class for non-members.
- **Work Out World (WOW)** – <http://www.wowhealthclubs.com/newbedford/>, 1024 Kings Highway, phone: 1-888-2-WOW-FREE, e-mail: wownewbedford@hotmail.com

Other local Yoga Studios or Places that offer Yoga

- HOPE Yoga – Dartmouth, MA
- YOGA 101 – Dartmouth (106 State Road)
- Marion Yoga Loft
- The Yoga Studio: Mattapoisett
- Mia's Yoga Cellar: Dartmouth
- Center for Holistic Arts: Acushnet
- Devine Power Yoga: Fall River
- Yoga With A Twist – 166 Main Street, Acushnet, MA – (508) 995-8652

Sunset Yoga at Fort Taber



by
Michael
Silvia

Yoga is one of those activities where you can get a great workout, relax and meet other people with similar interests. The amazing summer weather presents some fantastic opportunities to get out of the cramped Yoga studios and

perform Yoga at some New Bedford landmarks like Wing's Court, Buttonwood Park and Fort Taber.

Starting Tuesday (12 June, 2012) Pam Teves of Southcoast Yoga hosts "Sunset Yoga" at Fort Taber (on the grass behind the fort) in New Bedford. This series will be an hour-long Vinyasa-style Yoga session starting at 6:30PM each Tuesday and will run throughout the summer. Rain dates are always Wednesday nights. Yoga practitioners are asked to bring a towel or mat, and water. There is a fee of \$5 per drop-in. You can contact southcoastyoga@gmail.com with any questions, or check Southcoast Yoga on Facebook for more details. See you there!



