

# Principles of Yoga

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## 1. Yamas (Ethical Restraints)

The *Yamas* are moral principles that govern interactions with others, promoting a harmonious society.

- **Ahimsa (Non-violence):** Practicing kindness and avoiding harm in thoughts, words, and actions.
  - **Satya (Truthfulness):** Being honest and authentic in all aspects of life.
  - **Asteya (Non-stealing):** Avoiding theft or exploitation, respecting others' rights.
  - **Brahmacharya (Moderation):** Practicing self-control and balance in desires.
  - **Aparigraha (Non-possessiveness):** Letting go of greed and attachment to material possessions.
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## 2. Niyamas (Personal Disciplines)

The *Niyamas* focus on self-discipline and personal growth.

- **Shaucha (Cleanliness):** Maintaining physical, mental, and environmental purity.
  - **Santosh (Contentment):** Cultivating gratitude and acceptance of life's circumstances.
  - **Tapas (Discipline):** Practicing self-control and perseverance.
  - **Swadhyaya (Self-study):** Engaging in introspection and studying spiritual texts.
  - **Ishwarapranidhana (Surrender to a Higher Power):** Trusting the universe and letting go of ego.
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## 3. Asana (Physical Postures)

- Focuses on steady, comfortable poses to develop strength, flexibility, and balance.
  - Prepares the body for prolonged meditation by enhancing physical endurance and calming the mind.
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#### **4. Pranayama (Breath Control)**

- Involves controlling the breath to regulate energy flow and calm the nervous system.
  - Balances the *prana* (life force) within the body, supporting mental clarity and emotional stability.
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#### **5. Pratyahara (Withdrawal of Senses)**

- Encourages detachment from external distractions to focus inward.
  - Develops self-awareness and control over sensory impulses.
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#### **6. Dharana (Concentration)**

- Cultivates focused attention on a single object, mantra, or thought.
  - Prepares the mind for deeper states of meditation.
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#### **7. Dhyana (Meditation)**

- Involves sustained mindfulness and deep contemplation.
  - Enhances mental clarity, emotional stability, and spiritual awareness.
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#### **8. Samadhi (Union with the Divine)**

- Represents the ultimate goal of yoga: achieving a state of blissful union with the universe.
  - Transcends individual ego to experience oneness with all creation.
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#### **9. Discipline and Regularity**

- Yoga requires consistent practice to reap its full benefits.
  - A disciplined approach ensures steady progress in physical, mental, and spiritual growth.
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### **10. Balance and Moderation**

- Promotes a balanced lifestyle, avoiding extremes in behaviour, diet, and thought.
  - Encourages harmony in work, relationships, and self-care.
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### **11. Awareness and Mindfulness**

- Teaches living in the present moment with full awareness.
  - Helps develop a deep connection between the body, mind, and breath.
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### **12. Connection with Nature**

- Yoga emphasises the interconnectedness of life and encourages harmony with the natural world.
- Many practices align with natural rhythms, such as sunrise meditation or seasonal detoxes.