

RANJANA YOGA CLASS

Strength-Building Yoga

A Beginner's Guide to Sequences

Three simple strength-focused sequences, how to progress, and how to rest and recover

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General education only. Not medical advice. Speak with your doctor before starting any new practice.

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1. What a strength sequence is

Yoga can build strength when poses are held longer, the body is used as resistance, or flowing sequences are repeated. Common strength poses include plank, chair, warrior and boat.

Yoga alone may not meet all strength goals, especially for building bigger muscles, but it is a good form of bodyweight exercise for beginners.

The short answer

Use three short sequences, two to three times a week, with rest days. Hold strength poses for 3 to 5 breaths, keep form steady, and rest in child's pose when needed.

2. Before you begin: safety first

General education only. Check with your doctor first if you are pregnant, have high blood pressure, a heart, lung, joint or spine condition, osteoporosis, an eye condition such as glaucoma, or have had recent surgery or injury.

Stop and rest if you feel:

- sharp, pinching or burning pain (a mild stretch is fine, pain is a stop sign);
- dizziness, nausea or breathlessness;
- numbness or tingling, or pressure in the head or neck.

Move within comfort

Do not push into pain, numbness, tingling or dizziness. If you are pregnant, have an injury, joint or spine problem, high or low blood pressure, osteoporosis, glaucoma or any other condition, check with your doctor before starting, and tell your teacher. Strength work can strain wrists, shoulders and knees, so build up slowly.

3. Three sequences

Sequence	Poses (hold 3-5 breaths)	Time
Lower body	Chair, warrior I and II, bridge	12 min
Upper body and core	Plank (knees ok), side plank on knees, boat, locust	12 min
Full body flow	3 slow sun salutations, chair, warrior II, plank	15 min

4. How to progress

- Add a few breaths to each hold.
- Add one round of each sequence.
- Move from knees-down to full plank.
- Rest at least one day between sessions.

5. A 20-minute starter

Time	Practice	Notes
3 min	Warm-up: cat and cow, shoulder circles	Easy.
5 min	Chair and warrior II, both sides	Hold 5 breaths.
4 min	Plank (knees ok) and locust	Short holds.
4 min	Boat, with bent knees if needed	3 rounds.
4 min	Cool-down: forward fold and rest	Breathe.

6. Your four-week plan

Week	Focus	Length	What to notice
1	Lower body sequence	12 min	Are knees comfortable?
2	Add upper body and core	15 min	How do wrists feel?
3	Add the flow sequence	18 min	Is your breath steady?
4	Mix all three over the week	20 min	Rest days matter.

7. Choosing a class or teacher

Look for classes labelled strength, power or fundamentals. A good teacher offers easier options and does not push speed.

- Tell the teacher about any injury, surgery, pregnancy or health condition before class.
- Ask which poses are optional; a good teacher says most are.
- If a teacher dismisses pain as part of the process, find another class.

8. Practising at home

At home, a mat and a wall are enough. Do not copy fast videos. Slow, controlled holds build strength safely.

9. Honest expectations

Yoga strength work is gentle compared with weights, but it is real exercise. It is not a guaranteed way to lose weight or fix a condition. If you have joint or heart problems, ask your doctor.

10. Common mistakes and fixes

Mistake	Fix
Moving too fast	Slow down and hold.
Collapsing the shoulders in plank	Push the floor away.
Skipping rest days	Muscles recover in rest.
Holding the breath	Keep breathing.
Locking joints	Keep a soft bend.

11. Questions people ask

Can yoga build muscle?

It can build strength and some muscle for beginners. For larger gains, resistance training adds more.

How often should I do strength yoga?

Two to three times a week with rest days.

Is plank safe?

For most people, with knees down if needed. Wrists and shoulders need care.

Will I lose weight?

It can support an active lifestyle, but weight depends on many things.

12. A pre-session checklist

- Have I eaten lightly, at least two hours ago, and had some water?
- Is my space clear, warm and free from interruptions?
- Do I know what I will practise, and how long I have?
- Is there anything in my body today (pain, tiredness, illness) that means I should do less?
- Do I know my stop signs: sharp pain, dizziness, breathlessness?

Running through these five questions takes less than a minute and prevents most beginner problems.

13. Your first week, day by day

Day	Suggestion
1	Read this guide. Try just the warm-up and the final rest.
2	Rest, or a five-minute walk.
3	Repeat day 1 and add one new pose or step.
4	Rest.
5	Practise a short version. Notice how you feel afterwards.
6	Write a few lines in the practice log.
7	Rest. Plan next week from what you noticed.

Three short sessions a week are a good start. Regular, gentle practice builds confidence, and rest days let the body adapt.

14. Glossary

Term	Plain meaning
Plank	A strong holding pose.
Core	Muscles around the trunk.
Rep	One round of a pose or sequence.

Reminder

This guide is general education and not medical advice. It does not diagnose, treat or cure any condition. If you have a health concern, speak with your doctor before starting a new practice.

Practice log

Print this page and keep a short record. Notes help you see patterns over time.

Day	Minutes	Sequence done	How it felt	Notes
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				