

RANJANA YOGA CLASS

Yoga for Sleep

A Beginner's Guide (Doctor First)

A calm evening routine, honest expectations,
and when poor sleep needs a doctor

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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 better sleep is

Sleep is shaped by habits, stress, light, caffeine, health conditions and medicines. A calm evening routine often helps people wind down.

Gentle yoga, slow breathing and relaxation are commonly used as part of such a routine. Some studies are promising, but evidence is mixed, and yoga does not treat sleep disorders.

The short answer

A short, gentle evening routine can help some people unwind. If you have trouble sleeping most nights, loud snoring or breathing pauses, see a doctor.

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.

Doctor first

Talk to your doctor if poor sleep lasts more than a few weeks, affects your day, or comes with loud snoring, gasping, leg discomfort or low mood. Do not stop sleep medicines without advice.

Stop and get medical advice if you notice:

- gasping or pauses in breathing during sleep;
- falling asleep suddenly during the day;
- mood changes or thoughts of self-harm.

3. An evening wind-down

Step	How	Time
Dim the lights and put the phone away	Reduce stimulation.	10 min before
Slow breathing	Longer exhale than inhale.	3-5 min
Gentle stretching	Cat and cow, forward fold with support.	3-5 min
Legs up the wall	Rest and breathe.	5 min
Final relaxation in bed	Soften from the toes upwards.	5 min

4. A 15-minute bedtime routine

Time	Practice	Notes
3 min	Dim lights, slow breathing	Longer exhale.
4 min	Cat and cow, supported forward fold	Slow.
4 min	Legs up the wall	Rest.
4 min	Relaxation in bed	Soften the body.

5. Your four-week plan

Week	Focus	Length	What to notice
1	Slow breathing in bed	5 min	How long to fall asleep?
2	Add stretching	10 min	Any change?
3	Full routine	15 min	Track sleep for a week.
4	Same time each evening	15 min	Review with your doctor if poor.

6. Choosing a class or teacher

Evening classes should be gentle, such as Restorative or Nidra. Avoid vigorous classes late at night.

- Tell the teacher about your condition, medicines, injuries and pregnancy before class.
- Ask about their training for your situation.
- Avoid anyone who says yoga can replace your treatment.

7. Practising at home

At home, practise at the same time every night in a dark, cool room. Avoid screens and caffeine late.

8. Honest expectations

Evidence on yoga for sleep is mixed and often from small studies. Regular sleep habits, daylight and exercise matter too. Yoga is not a treatment for insomnia.

9. Common mistakes and fixes

Mistake	Fix
Doing a vigorous class late	Choose gentle.
Using the phone in bed	Put it away.
Forcing sleep	Rest is still useful.
Skipping the doctor	See one for ongoing problems.
Irregular timing	Keep a routine.

10. Questions people ask

Does yoga help sleep?

It may help some people unwind. Evidence is mixed.

What is yoga nidra?

A guided relaxation done lying down. Many people use it for rest.

Can I do yoga in bed?

Gentle stretching and breathing are fine.

When should I see a doctor?

If poor sleep lasts weeks or affects daytime life.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. Glossary

Term	Plain meaning
Insomnia	Persistent trouble sleeping.
Nidra	Guided deep relaxation.
Wind-down	A calm routine before bed.

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	Sleep notes	How it felt	Notes
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				