

santa fean

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yoga 101

a primer on how to stretch, bend, and flex your way to a healthier mind—and bod

THE WORD yoga once conjured images of Indian swamis meditating quietly in lotus position. The practice has since entered the mainstream, and studios are so plentiful—and diverse—in the City Different as to be a bit overwhelming. Yet it's easy to get started, even for those who don't know a downward dog from a hot dog. Here's how:

Dress in comfortable (but not baggy) athletic-wear that allows for easy movement, and avoid eating large meals for at least an hour before attending a class. Various forms of yoga exist, but don't let that scare you—allow the staff at the studio to make suggestions. Lori Parrish, owner of Body, says, "We ask clients what kind of person they are to find the best class for them."

Gentle yoga is best suited for those who do not exercise regularly, and who want to start simple.

Hatha focuses on breath and alignment through a series of postures. It's ideal for the average person wanting to reduce stress.

Iyengar centers on body alignment and often integrates props.

Vinyasa synchronizes breath and movement together in a continuous series of postures. It tends to be more vigorous than other forms.



COURTESY BODY

Sitting pretty: Yoga postures increase flexibility and calm the mind.

Bikram is sometimes called hot yoga, as the room is heated to between 95 and 105 degrees to encourage easier muscle movement. It's not recommended for those with high blood pressure or heart conditions.

Ashtanga, also referred to as power yoga, consists of a quick flow from posture to posture.

Most local yoga centers rent and sell supplies to equip the novice yogi. A mat, designed to keep you from slipping during *asanas* (poses), is the main staple. Colorful cork blocks are useful for modifying difficult postures.

Beginning students (and even some limber pros) may also use a yoga strap, a cotton belt that helps to deepen and hold a stretch.

The advantage of sitting in lotus position in Santa Fe is the variety of studios, each with its own unique ambience. Yoga Source, for example, boasts a tranquil and nurturing feel, while Body is more vibrant and contemporary. A single class usually costs between \$10 and \$15, and most places offer monthly discounts. Try out your warrior poses around town to find the right one for you.—Valerie Brooks

where the yogis go

Here are a few places you can lay your sticky mat around town:

Baca Street Yoga

1125 Cerrillos
505-955-9644
www.bacastyoga.com;
Iyengar, Gentle

Body

333 Cordova
505-986-0362
www.bodyof-santafe.com; all forms

Fort Marcy

490 Washington
505-955-2500; Hatha

Mary Jo Mulligan

505-995-0181
www.ashtangawith-detail.com; private lessons, all forms

White Iris Yoga

1701 Callejon Emilia
505-986-8212
www.whiteiris-yogannm.com;
Hatha, Iyengar

YogaSource

901 W San Mateo
505-982-0990
www.yogasource-santafe.com;
Iyengar, Vinyasa