

Simple WAYS TO INCORPORATE YOGA

Into Your Daily Routine

By Charlene Bazarian

Maybe the closest you get to yoga is wearing a comfy pair of yoga pants, or if you're like I used to be, perhaps you think your temperament isn't quite Zen enough for it, but the myriad of health benefits this ancient practice offers are difficult to ignore. The good news is whether your health goals aim to increase your flexibility, sleep more restfully, improve your balance, reduce stress and inflammation or even ease arthritis symptoms and back pain, adding yoga to your daily routine can quite literally put you in the right position to accomplish them.





The better news is incorporating more yoga into your days is easy with tips for even a beginner curated from yoga professionals.

7 Yoga Experts on How to Incorporate Yoga into Your Daily Routine

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**Mandy Enright,
MS, RDN, RYT:**

- Use your surroundings as props to help sneak in some stretches in your day. Your chair, desk, walls, and anything else that surrounds you during your workday can all serve as helpful props to do some stretches. Even if you sit a lot during your workday, you can do a wide variety of stretches right from your chair including twists, neck/shoulder rolls, figure 4 hip openers, and even take a forward bend to get some fresh blood to the brain. You can use your desk to do stretches in the wrists, shoulders, legs, and even hip openers, or use a wall to help get some deeper stretches or to help do some balancing poses. You don't need to hold those poses a long time but staying in them for at least 10 deep breaths can help you reset and get great benefits.
- Do restorative yoga or meditation at bedtime. A lot of people think of yoga involving movement and postures, but practicing gentle forms of yoga can be extremely beneficial, especially as we wind down in our day. I'm a huge fan of habit stacking: the practice of adding a new habit onto something you're already doing. Since you're going to bed anyway, why not consider heading towards bed a little earlier and doing some gentle yoga like restorative yoga, breathing exercises, or even listening to a meditation as soon as you get into bed? You'll create calmness in the body and mind, which will help you to get a better night's sleep.

- Put on some music and let your body move. Yoga absolutely does not have to be done in a formal class setting. Apps are certainly helpful, but sometimes our body is our best teacher. Put on a fun playlist, roll out a mat, and see where the body goes. You may feel like doing some stretches that focus on certain areas of the body that have been asking for attention. Or perhaps you just want to chill in a child's pose for 10 minutes. Whatever your body is asking for, give it what it needs in that moment.

In addition to being a Registered Yoga Teacher, Mandy is also a worksite wellness dietitian and author of 30-Minute Weight Loss Cookbook: 100+ Quick and Easy Recipes for Sustainable Weight Loss: You can learn more about Mandy at The FOOD + MOVEMENT® Dietitian and you can find her at @mandyenrightRD on Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, and YouTube.



Photo courtesy of Many Enright



Photo courtesy of Caroline Young

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- I love to remind my clients that yoga is not just the physical postures (*or "asanas"*), but it in fact includes seven other aspects (*also known as the "eight limbs of yoga"*). One of the other limbs is breath (*or "pranayama"*) – a tool we have available to us at all times. Breathing practices can be easily integrated into our days to help us increase our well-being within a matter of minutes. For example, you may wish to be more present during your day and less caught up in mental stories, and simply becoming aware of your breath can help you to do that. More specific breathing techniques, like the extended exhale breath or alternate nostril breath, can help you to regulate your nervous system, better manage anxiety, and increase your focus.

Caroline is the Owner of Whole Self Nutrition. You can follow and learn more about Caroline on Instagram at @wholeselfnutrition.