

**YOGA TEACHER
TRAINING
HOME STUDY**



YOGA TEACHER TRAINING HOME STUDY

How to Earn Your 12 NETA Home Study Continuing Education Credits

Included in this home study:

- Yoga Teacher Training manual
- Multiple choice exam (70% correct required to pass)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Only one person may receive continuing education credits for this exam
- Select the best answer for each test question
- Score your answers on the exam answer sheet
- Keep a copy of your exam for your records

TAKE YOUR EXAM ONLINE

1.) Go to www.netafit.org

2.) Log-In

From the Home Study drop down menu, choose "Take Your Exam". Choose test and enter the item number and exam code.

Item #: 9212	Serial #: <i>(Leave serial number blank when taking exam online.)</i>
Exam Code #: 921292	

3.) **Take the exam and click submit answers**

Your exam will be scored automatically. 70% correct to pass. If you do not pass the exam, you can re-take it.

4.) **Once you have passed your exam**

Complete the Course Evaluation. You will receive two separate emails one with exam results and one to print your Certificate of Completion.

MAILING or FAXING Your Exam

Mail: NETA

Attention: Home Study Coordinator
5955 Golden Valley Road, Suite 240
Minneapolis, MN 55422

Fax: 763-545-2524

Your Certificate of Completion will be mailed to you.

Questions? Call 1-800-237-6242 or email neta@netafit.org

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Introduction

The ancient practice of yoga has gone through many changes throughout its history. We approach it today as a Mind-Body practice with the intent of progression and not perfection. The NETA Yoga Teacher Training is designed to provide fitness professionals with the background, training, and practice necessary to develop into Yoga Instructors that are able to offer an enjoyable, safe, and helpful environment in which their students can participate in mind-body fitness experiences that are stimulating, inspirational, and gratifying.

Above all, we focus on yoga as an experience of mindfulness. The study of somatics is a form of self-learning in which the body learns to change itself by turning inward and making self-observations to improve posture, emotional responses, and movement strategies. This type of body awareness can be achieved in yoga through conscious meditation and proves beneficial for all persons, especially those suffering from chronic stress and/or disease.

Because we live in a fast paced and driven society, we tend to disregard the need to rest until we have broken down in injury or illness. Instead of slowing down to allow our bodies to restore and repair, we push forward to find an external fix without thinking to look inward for the peace and healing we require. As discussed later in the course materials, when somatic techniques (like the ability to relax at will) are developed, we are better prepared to recognize and respond to the feedback the body provides. It challenges the mind and body to connect with each other as we achieve a deeper sense of consciousness. This allows the yoga practitioner to gain a more profound sense of acceptance for themselves, the world around them, and personal responsibility for the interaction of the two.

Individuals come to yoga for a variety of reasons. Each student has the ability to turn inward and reach a new state of enlightenment through their practice. As you take this journey of yoga, think about why you have been drawn to the practice. Approach the poses as if they were new. Always celebrate the feeling of being in the moment. Adopt an attitude of conscious awareness, open acceptance, and a willingness to honor and love the body.

Namaste.

Unit One - What is Yoga?

Yoga is a Sanskrit word meaning unity; as in oneness of all things. In the modern practice of postural yoga we think of yoga as Mind-Body exercise. We still the mind to improve focus and create an environment of relaxation, and we practice asanas to provide strength, balance, and flexibility to our bodies. Above all, yoga is a practice; not something to be perfected within one class, one year, or possibly one lifetime. In this section of the manual we will present the background information necessary to understand the following questions:

- How did the practice of yoga originate?
- How do we practice yoga today?
- Why do we practice yoga?

History of Fitness Yoga

Yoga is an ancient practice that originated more than 5000 years ago and has gone through a variety of transformations to reach the form we currently practice. The postural form of yoga can be traced back to figures depicted in heat seeking poses in the Indus Valley civilization around 2500 BC. The first documented poses for reaching enlightenment were written in the *Yoga Sutras* by Pantanjali around 400 AD. This sacred text of yoga contained only seated poses. About 1,000 years later another of the classic yoga texts, the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, was written by Swatmarama and contained 15 postures as well as various other techniques of the ancient practice. Another Hatha text written around 1700 AD, the *Gheranda Samhita*, contains 32 postures and other practices related to yoga.

During the early years of yoga, much of the practice was based on mysticism and had supernatural claims associated with the practice. It was practiced only by males, and often yogis were treated as vagabonds and performers more so than respected holy men. However, yoga began to go through a transformation as Indian nationalism grew. In 1851, N.C. Paul authored *A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy* and produced the first scientific study of yoga. Paul examined several claims of yogis regarding the yoga breath, metabolism, and the ability to die and resurrect themselves. Paul discovered important information on yoga's ability to create a form of human hibernation.

One of the more famous yogis of the 19th century and beyond is Swami Vivekananda who is credited with bringing yoga to the United States in 1893 while presenting at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. At this time, yoga was still a primarily spiritually based practice relying more on the use of Pranayama (the breath), Kriya (purification), Dharana (concentration), and Nada (sound work) than postures (asanas).

In the 1920's-30's, postural yoga began to develop in India as the face of Indian nationalism. Ashrams, defined as places where progress is made, were opened to purify the practice of yoga. In 1924, Jagannath G. Gune opened his ashram, south of Bombay, to study the many claims of yoga and by 1926 he deemed the new yoga practices to be fit for women to perform. By 1931, Gune published *Asanas* and re-focused his practice of yoga on health and fitness to align with the findings of his many years of scientific studies.

The 1930's are also when Sun Salutations begin to appear. This "aerobic" style of yoga originated at the Mysore Palace by Krishnamacharya, one of the most influential forefathers of the physical yoga practice. They were included as part of his Vinyasa style that incorporates Indian martial arts with wrestling, British gymnastics, and other physical fitness techniques. In 1935, Krishnamacharya published *Yoga Makaranda*, a book praising the therapeutic benefits of yoga and incorporating his own refined postures with deep breathing to create a flow style that is a precursor to Ashtanga, Power, and Viniyoga styles.

Around the 1940's, Parmahansa Yoganada and a fellow student, Bagchi, opened The Self-Realization Fellowship in California and attempted to renew some of the mysticism and spirituality that surrounds yoga as it began to expand globally. By 1946, the two had gone their separate ways as Yoganada published *Autobiography of a Yogi*; telling of yogic miracles like mind reading, the ability to fly, and the ability to change the weather. His passing in 1952 (despite the claim that yoga allows one to live for 100's of years) caused his following to flourish. Bagchi headed in a more scientific direction in regards to yoga and examples of his research can be found in the section on Benefits and Risks of Yoga Practice.

From the 1950's and onward, there were many scientific studies performed around the world to investigate the many mystic claims of yoga. The results concluded that these claims were false, but that the health benefits of practicing yoga are numerous, and that there are also many risks involved (see the Benefits and Risks of Yoga on page 6).

In 1953, Indra Devi, one of the most influential female yogis and the first yoga teacher to the stars, brought teachings from Krishnamacharya to the realm of fitness and beauty in her book *Forever Young, Forever Healthy*.

The 1960's popularized the Ashtanga yoga style created by K. Pattabhi Jois. It has been highly adopted in the west as a popular form of practice because of the athletic nature. During this time, B.K.S. Iyengar promoted his hatha style of yoga that he claimed was aligned with medicine and science in his book *Light on Yoga*, published in 1965. Both Ashtanga and Iyengar styles create a "fitness" based practice of Hatha yoga (asanas and pranayama) which leads to a social rise in yoga participation during the 1970's-80's.

In 1973, Bikram was invited to the United States and began the spread of his style of Hot Yoga that is still very popular today. Other prominent styles of Hatha yoga continue to emerge in the U.S. today including YogaFit by Beth Shaw, created around 1994, and Anusara Yoga by John Friend beginning around 1997.

NETA has been offering yoga training since 2005 and continues to provide training for practitioners and new instructors in a fitness style of Hatha yoga. We strive to present well researched material that delivers a safe and effective way to practice and teach the discipline of yoga to a wide variety of participants and ability levels.

Benefits and Risks of Yoga Practice

Many of the benefits and risks of each individual asana (pose) will be outlined in Unit Two of the manual. Some individuals have claimed that practicing yoga can assist in developing supernatural abilities and achievements; however, some scientific research has negated many of the myths surrounding the practice. Here is a list of some of the more prominent research conducted around the world in the last 150⁺ years regarding the science of yoga. This list is by no means comprehensive, but addresses some of the major fitness and health related issues in regards to the practice of yoga.

1853 – N.C. Paul discovers that the practice of slow breathing allows yogis to release less carbon dioxide and enter a state of human hibernation, but not die and come back to life

1924 – Gune begins several experiments that determine the following:

- Inversions are gentle on the heart and cause only a mild rise in blood pressure
- Fast breathing techniques do not cause an increase in oxygen uptake, but allow the body to blow off more carbon dioxide
- Well trained yogis can sustain a “live burial” for a maximum of 18 hours by lowering their heart rate and breathing rate in a sealed chamber

1961 – Bagchi determines that yogis can slow their heart rates, but cannot stop and restart them

1989 – Researchers at Duke University determine that yoga does not improve VO_2 (even through the use of Sun Salutations), but does improve personal psychology

Between the 1960's and 2000's, several studies show that poses like Cobra, Wheel, Headstand, Shoulder stand, Side angle, Triangle, and Plow can cause nerve damage, spinal damage, stroke, and even death, and that fast breathing exercises can lead to a pneumothorax (i.e., collapsed lung)

2001 – Luciano Bernardi shows that repeating a mantra can slow breathing and heart rate and creates a sense of calm and well-being

From 2002-11 Kevin Tracey, Shirley Telles, and others show that yoga helps with inflammatory conditions in the body including sepsis, lupus, pancreatitis, and rheumatoid arthritis

2004 – Researchers in Russia show that certain poses like Cobra can increase testosterone levels in both males and females

2005 – Researchers at the University of Wisconsin prove that yoga significantly improves strength, endurance, balance, and flexibility; while those at University of Virginia show that despite its lack of effect on VO_2 , yoga can still improve cardiovascular health