

Ashtanga Yoga Mysore Style



The **Mysore style** of yoga asana practice is a particular way of teaching yoga individually within the Ashtanga Yoga tradition as taught by Sri K. Pattabhi Jois in the southern Indian city of Mysore. There are some differences in this method from the usual modern way in which yoga is taught:

- the class is not „led“ as a whole but rather all instruction is one-on-one within the group class setting
- students practice their own portion of the Ashtanga sequence of asanas at their own pace
- the teacher assists each student individually by giving physical adjustments & verbal instruction

In Mysore style students learn the fixed order of postures using a specific movement-breathing technique called vinyasa krama. Through vinyasa, there is continuity via the breath from postures to posture. In the Ashtanga sequence, each posture builds from the previous – and prepares for successive – postures.

Each student is given their yoga routine according to their ability.

Newer and more beginning students might have a much shorter practice at the beginning than do those with more experience. As one gains more strength, stamina, flexibility and concentration,

additional postures are given to the student. The sense of the word „given“ in this context comes from how the practice is taught in India, where a yoga practice is something that a teacher gives to a student as a spiritual practice. In the West, people are accustomed to learning a lot of postures all at once – such as in a typical modern „led“ yoga class. One advantage of the „Mysore“ method is that, because it teaches yoga according to one’s individual capacity, it accommodates everyone of all levels even those without any prior yoga experience; and hence the class is neither too difficult nor not advanced enough for anyone.

Postures are given, one by one in a sequential order.

The structure of the class depends on the teacher being able to keep track of what every student is doing with a quick glance. If students attempt something out of sequence, the teacher is less able to help in the appropriate way. For therapeutical reasons, the teacher can offer a modification that is consistent with the intention of the practice. One by one also means that once a student is given a new posture, they practice their sequence up to that posture, then do backbends if applicable (backbending is the climax, not a part of the finishing sequence), and then wind down with the finishing sequence. In general, the next posture in the sequence should be added/taught/learned only after obtaining stability in one’s last posture.

The Ashtanga vinyasa method – as is any hatha yoga practice – is intended to be a daily practice. Traditionally, practice takes place every day except for Saturdays and full & new moon days.