

## The Importance of warming-up



We must always warm-up before we practice more challenging asana as this prevents injury and enables students to receive the full benefit of their asana practice.

Warming-up involves mobilizing joints and warming muscles, as we create an increase in body temperature.

There is no one way of warming up, different traditions taking different routes for instance:

- The Sivananda tradition begins with surya namaskar, sun salutation
- Bihar School often starts with parts of the pawanmuktasana series, the wind-relieving series of movements (Asana, Pranayama, Mudra & Bandha Book)
- The Desikachar tradition generally begins with simple supine movements
- Iyengar yoga often starts with standing movements

For our purposes:

We can work with general warm ups to warm and mobilise the whole body, placing an emphasis upon those which will especially prepare the body for the asana to follow, for instance if the asana to follow requires good external hip rotation then we will incorporate hip mobilisers into our warm up.

Warm up movements will be:

- Dynamic/active not passive
- Simpler & more gentle than asana which follow
- Move the joints to their ROM not beyond this i.e. not stretching
- Incorporate the use of the breath
- Performed with full awareness

Only once the body has been warmed up do we move into stretches, and then into more specific asana.

Inevitably as we are taking a Vinyasa Krama approach we will always consider the needs of our students, the time of day, the temperature of the room and so forth. This means we will have to think ahead and be able to be adaptable & responsive. Note: for our classes it is not generally considered acceptable to teach surya namaskar (sun salutation) as a warm up as this too requires some warm up to be practiced effectively and safely.



As part of this approach it is also important we consider the flow of asana so we move sensitively between the different levels for instance it is not helpful to start lying and move to standing then return to lying, the flow should always be intelligent.

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