

Sequencing for Yoga asana practice:

All physical yoga is called: Hatha Yoga

There are many different ways of building up your asana practice.

Some practices have a clear set practice.

Others are less set and have many variations.

Give me some examples of practices that are set:

Asthanga, Bikram Yoga, Shivananda

More variable: Vinyasa, Hatha (Flow)

General set up of a Hatha (flow) practice

- Sthira Sukham Asanam
- Starting Meditation including Aum and subject/theme of your practice
- Setting your intention
- Introduction of the Breath (Ujjayi Breath)
- Warming up
- Surya Namaskar A
- Standing poses
- Crouching poses
- Seated poses
- Reclined poses on stomach and on back
- Inversions
- Shavasana

Surya Namaskar A: Sun-Salutation A

Sun-Salutations working on increasing and stimulating energy (prana) in the body.

They are in the beginning of an Asana Practice.

Sequence 1:

1. Namaskara Tadasana
2. Urdhva Hastasana
3. Uttanasana
4. Anjaneyasana (low)
5. Kumbhakasana
6. Asthanga Namaskara
7. Bhujangasana
8. Adho Mukha Svanasana
9. Anjaneyasana (low)
10. Uttanasana
11. Urdhva Hastasana
12. Namaskara Tadasana

Sequence 2:

1. Namaskara Tadasana
2. Urdva Hastasana
3. Uttanasana
4. Ardha Uttanasana
5. Anjaneyasana (high)
6. Adho Mukha Svanasana
7. Kumbhakasana
8. Ardha Kumbhakasana
9. Bhujangasana
10. Adho Mukha Svanasana
11. Anjaneyasana (high)
12. Uttanasana
13. Urdhva Uttanasana
14. Namaskara Tadasana

Both sequences : start first with stepping left foot back.

Repeat the other side by first starting with right foot stepping back.

Sequencing of poses

1. **Standing poses** are done near the beginning or the middle of sequences.

They are powerful and often more dynamic.

They have a grounding quality as we root into the earth and simultaneously an uplifting quality since the spine is lengthening in both directions and we reach for the sky.

They use large body movements to prepare the body for further practice

- **Standing forward bends** are usually easier for beginners than seated forward bends. Gravity helps the body to move forward and releases the spine.
- **Standing twists** focus on keep the hips levelled, twisting from the thoracic spine
- **Standing backbends** are often more challenging for beginners than standing forward bends: naturally the body tends to bend more forward through the effect of gravity
- **Standing balances** range from more basic (Vrksasana with foot close to the ground and little movement) to more challenging (Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana)

2. **Crouching poses:**

- Transition from standing poses towards the floor.
- Continue work that you started in standing poses
- Also done during Sun-Salutations (p.e. Asthanga Namaskara) or in a sequence of standing poses (p.e. Vasisthasana).
- Forward bends, twists, backbends and balances

3. Seated Poses:

- After standing poses or crouching poses
- Create stability and rootedness
- Majority of seated poses are easily to adapt to any level of strength and flexibility
- Forward bends, twists, backbends and balances

4. Reclined Poses:

- After Seated poses
- On Stomach: mostly stabilizing the sacrum and the lower back
- On Back: heart openers, twists
- Inversions: head below the heart, brings oxygenated blood to the brain
 Heating inversions energize the body
 Cooling inversions calm the body and the nervous system
- Shavasana: the Ultimate pose: absorbs and integrates the benefits of the practice in the muscle memory, mind and nervous system

Homework:

- *What are the English names of the poses in the 2 variations of Surya Namaskar A?*
- *Draw after each name the figure*
- *Give an example of the following standing poses: a forward bend, twist, backbend and balance with their Sanskrit names*
- *Same for crouching poses and seated poses.*
- *Give an example of reclined poses on the stomach and on the back*
- *Give an example of a more energizing (heating) inversion and a more relaxed (cooling) inversion*

Structure of a class, building up a sequence.

