

FOR YOGA GEEKS ONLY



THE ACTUAL HISTORY OF HATHA YOGA



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THE ROOTS:
BACKGROUND OF
HATHA YOGA

THE BROAD VIEW – YOGIC PHILOSOPHY

According to surveys conducted in 2015, over 35 million people worldwide practice yoga. Not satisfied with mere fitness, these people are seeking holistic well-being, vitality, vigor, flexibility, and strength. After all, all these are needed for living a peaceful and balanced life. To meet this increasing demand, over 50 different yoga styles have sprung up out of Hatha Yoga in the last few decades. Most of these styles focus on the physical aspects of yoga, namely postures and breathing exercises.

Yoga, however, is much more than the practice of yoga asanas (poses) and pranayama (breathing techniques). It is an ancient discipline that monks and ascetics on the Indian subcontinent are said to have developed more than five thousand years ago. Unlike many modern practitioners, these “fathers” of yoga were not concerned merely with physical results. The entire practice was holistic—embracing all aspects of human nature. These original yogis had complete perfection as their goal. This meant physical, mental, and spiritual perfection. They wished to have control over not just the body, but also the vital energies, senses, and mind.

To understand and practice yoga holistically, it is beneficial to understand the philosophy behind it. Often yoga is defined by its literal translations: “to unite,” “to join,” or “to meet.” Following the literal meaning, yoga is often mistaken to be “union of body and mind” or “union of body, breath, and mind.” Yoga indeed does mean union: union of the self with the reality of self. Or in other words, self-realization. Thus, self-realization is the ultimate goal of the practice of yoga.

Self-realization is described as the state when you become free from the illusions of the material world and understand the true identity of your existence. In other words, when you find the answer to the question of “Who Am I?” you have realized your Self. But you might think you already know who you are. You might say, “I am John.” But you are not John—John is a name or a label you have been given. So

then, who are you? You might say, “I am a doctor.” But being a doctor is a profession that you pursue. So the question remains—who are you? This time you might say, “I am my personality,” but your personality developed over a time and it will keep changing. You did not have a personality when you were born, but you were alive nonetheless, so you cannot be your personality. By now, you can understand that it is difficult to answer this question because we do not know who or what we really are. Instead, we identify ourselves with the labels or roles we have in our life.

Yoga is the path through which we can become aware of our true Self. This path requires mastery of the body, senses, and the mind. When we achieve mastery over body, mind, and senses we can become free from our ego. Ego is our attachment to our ideas that we create of ourselves and the world around us. This ego is created through our limited senses and our limited minds. For this reason, ego is also very limited. The ego filters all of our perceptions. It makes us see only what we want to see. If we were to wear a pair of purple sunglasses, we would see everything through the purple glass—even a white shirt would appear purple. If we want to see the real color of the shirt, we need to remove the glasses. Similarly, to see and understand the reality of Self, we need to let go of the ego and master our senses and the mind.

India’s traditional writings on yoga also describe this ego-free state. The Bhagavad Gita explains that when you achieve the state of yoga, your mind or consciousness is focused only on the Self. In this state, your mind stops wandering around searching for pleasures, and identifies instead with the everlasting and blissful Self. This yogic state shines forth only under certain conditions. Your mind must become disciplined by understanding and discriminating between reality and illusion. It is only then that Self-awareness realizes its own eternally liberated and separate status.

“

A person is said to have achieved yoga, union with the Self, when the perfectly disciplined mind achieves freedom from all desires, and becomes focused only on the Self alone.” (Bhagavad Gita, 6:4)

The Katha Upanishad describes yoga as the highest state: where your five senses, mind, and intellect are still and under control. When these faculties become still, you realize the truth or reality of the Self and become free from the illusion of the world:

“

When the five senses are stilled, when the mind is stilled, when the intellect is stilled, that is called the highest state by the wise. They say yoga is this complete stillness in which one enters the unitized state, never to become separate again from reality. He who attains this is free from delusion (Maya)."

(Katha Upanishad, II: 3: 6–11)

According to Maharishi Patanjali, the author of the Yoga Sutras, yoga stops (nirodhah) the movements (vritti) of the mind (chitta). Here, Patanjali speaks of the mind's movements as mental disturbances arising from the mind's egoic attachments and desires. You experience these mental fluctuations as waves of happiness, sadness—and varying degrees of fulfillment. But once you realize the Self, your mind settles permanently into a stillness that is free from these disturbances.

“

Yoga ceases the movements of the mind." (Yoga Sutras 1:2)

As the above scriptures reveal, yoga is the state where the mind and senses abandon their ego-oriented quests for pleasure and realize the reality of the Self. To fulfill this goal, the scriptures offer four yogic paths. Each is a non-sectarian practice suitable for humans having various personalities, possibilities, and capabilities. You may follow one or several of these paths to reach the goal of Self-realization.

Raja Yoga: The path of control. In this practice, you bring body, mind, and breath under control to let go of ego and realize the Self. Hatha Yoga, including the practice of asanas, is a part of Raja Yoga.

Jnana Yoga: The path of knowledge. In this practice, you surrender your ego through acquiring knowledge, which removes ignorance and illusion and leads to understanding the reality of the Self.

Bhakti Yoga: The path of devotion to the Divine. This is the path of surrendering your ego to whatever is your perception of Divinity. In this way you start to realize the reality of the Self.

Karma Yoga: The path of selfless duty. When you follow this path, you do your duty to the best of your abilities, without attachment to results or rewards. This helps you let go of your ego and leads to Self-realization.

Over the last few thousand years, yoga has enriched mankind with specific practices—that independent of any underlying philosophy—anyone can apply. If you apply all of these practices (or a majority of them) you can speak of a yogic lifestyle. However it is each and every person's free choice to make it a lifestyle, or to simply pick practices and values as they naturally see fit. After all, an essential quality of yogic teaching is its independence from religions and sects. Even though yoga philosophy teaches certain concepts such as karma and reincarnation, it does so in a non-sectarian way. In this way, yoga remains open to all different religions and beliefs. This strong anti-sectarianism can be found in most of the texts of Hatha Yoga. One example is in the Dattatreya-yogasastra, the first text to teach a systematized Hatha Yoga:

“

Whether a Brahmin, an ascetic, a Buddhist, a Jain, a Skull-Bearer, or a materialist, the wise man who is endowed with faith and constantly devoted to the practice of yoga will attain complete success." (Dattatreya-yogasastra, 3.1.2 - verse 41)

The entire body of Hatha Yoga displays this non-sectarian view, making the methods and aims of yoga, its moral and ethical guidelines, as well as all practices available to all¹.

HATHA YOGA AND THE PRINCIPLE OF MINIMAL ACTION

Hatha Yoga is a branch within Raja Yoga, the yoga of control, which is one of the four paths of yoga. Hatha Yoga developed from the principles of Raja Yoga. The goal of Hatha Yoga, as in Raja Yoga, is to achieve samadhi. Samadhi is a state of freedom from attachments, ego, and the illusions of the material world. At first it is a temporary state. Gradually it becomes permanent.

According to the Raja Yoga tradition, you must first purify your nature and habits. This involves returning to a pure and non-violent existence by observing and cultivating moral observances and habits. These are called the yamas and niyamas. Only after you master these can you proceed to the practice of asanas, pranayama, and meditation. According to the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, though, you should start with the physical practices first. This is because most people will find it easier to master the mind through the body than purifying their character, habits, and mind directly through the observance of yamas and niyamas.

For this reason, the main practices of Hatha Yoga are asana and pranayama. Their main goal is to purify body and mind and prepare you for further spiritual practices. In the previous chapter you have seen that you can practice the asanas independently of any philosophy. Further down the road, you will also learn how and why the practice of asanas can be done to achieve maximum physical, mental, and spiritual benefits. Being and staying healthy is a central concern in Yoga. This is because when you have a healthy and strong body and mind, you possess the greatest vehicle for spiritual development. Other practices within the Hatha Yoga traditions—such as mudras, bandhas, shat kriyas, and mantras - were all developed as supplements to the practice of postures and breath control.

A common misconception of the word hatha is that it literally means Sun (ha) and Moon (tha). This has no resemblance with any word used in Sanskrit for sun and moon, and even though this definition of the term Hatha has been quite prevalent, it is simply a misconception. It came about because of a short passage within the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, where Swami Svatmarama speaks of how the physical practices can impact the flow of energy in the body, in particular the two primary (lunar and solar) energy channels of Ida and Pingala. These channels can be compared to the complementary forces that make up life: male and female, hot and cold, sun and moon. And the practice of Hatha Yoga purifies and brings balance between the Ida and Pingala channels. However, Svatmarama stresses that this balancing is just one effect of Hatha Yoga and that the goal, as in yoga in general, is the attainment of samadhi or “oneness of mind.”

The word hatha actually means “stubborn” or “forceful.” So Hatha Yoga means the forceful or stubborn practice of yoga. It is a discipline you practice to purify and control your body. As a result, you gain control over the mind as well. When you stubbornly stick to the practice, you cultivate willpower and overcome fears and other mental interferences. For example, when you practice asanas, you do not remain only within the comforts of easy postures and well-known routines. Rather you try to overcome fears and thoughts such as “I cannot do this.” When you first learn to do Headstand, you may encounter fears and doubts whether you may ever accomplish the pose. As a practitioner of Hatha Yoga, though, you glue yourself to the goal, stubbornly devoted to learning the pose. Even as your body falls and your mind tells you that it is too difficult, you stubbornly continue to practice until you become steady and comfortable in the asana.

Simultaneously, as you practice asanas, you do so according to Patanjali’s ancient definition of yoga asana practice: *sthira sukham asanam*, which literally means “asana is a steady and comfortable pose.” This is because only in such an effortless and comfortable posture can you merge your attention (mind) with the infinite. Only through effortlessness are you in tune with your true nature and nature around you. This ancient definition is in sync with a law of nature that in modern times has become well known as the Principle of Minimal Action.

An example of the principle is when you try hard to stay on the surface of the water, you sink. When you relax and give up, you float. It is one of the most fundamental principles of nature, and all of nature acts according to this Principle of Least Action,

as it is called in physics. Mathematicians formulated the principle during the first half of the 17th century. They observed that light travels at different speeds through different media and that light always chooses the path that takes the least time. How does the light know which path to take? They understood that nature will always follow the path that requires the least amount of energy and time. In fact, nature aims to conserve energy.

The Chinese also observed the same principle and called it Wu Wei (minimal action). Wu Wei lies at the basis of Tai Chi and Kung Fu. It refers to the cultivation of a state of being in which our actions are quite effortlessly in alignment with the ebb and flow of the elemental cycles of the natural world.

The same principle lies at the foundation of yoga asanas. You practice each asana most naturally when you ease into it with the least physical and mental effort. In this way you remain in sync with your own nature and the large flow of nature all around you. When you practice Hatha Yoga and your body is in a restful and regenerative mode, you are acting according to the most basic and natural principle of the universe. You thus act in harmony with the totality of natural law.

But wasn't Hatha Yoga just defined as a stubborn and forceful practice? How, at the same time, can you also aim for least effort as well as mental and physical ease and comfort? That seems quite contradictory. You must distinguish, though, between cultivating a stubborn and forceful willpower for the practice and practicing forcefully. In Hatha Yoga you do the first. You stubbornly dedicate and devote yourself to the practice, overcoming mental limitations and distractions from your senses. You become stubborn about what you decide to do. And you practice easefully and steadily when you perform the asanas. In its essence, Hatha Yoga is about stubbornly finding the balance between ease and force, or between Yin and Yang.

THE EVOLUTION OF YOGA ASANAS

“

By the practice of yoga one gains contentment, endurance of the dualities (of pleasure and pain), and tranquility. These teachings should not be given to all and sundry, but only to those who have the appropriate qualifications to learn with respect. Let no one declare this most secret doctrine to anyone who is not a son, who is not a pupil, who is not of a tranquil mind." (Maitri Upanishad, 6.29; 300 BC)

All sources suggest that knowledge of yoga practices was kept secret for millennia. Therefore it is extremely difficult to make a conclusive statement about the age and variety of yoga asanas. The practice of yoga asanas was until quite recently reserved for ascetics. It was passed down from teacher to student in the so-called guru–shishya (teacher–student) tradition.

In the guru–shishya tradition, the guru personally initiates the student. In turn, the student has proven himself to be competent and eager to learn the secrets of a particular lineage. This principle of learning under the direct supervision of a teacher was deeply rooted in the yoga tradition as well as in the general education system in India. The ancient yoga texts—the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Yoga Sutras, and all subsequent texts—were written knowing that only readers under the guidance of an experienced teacher in the lineage would be able to understand and practically benefit from the knowledge. This explains why the ancient classical texts mentioned asanas and meditation practices, but did not explain them in detail.

Early references

Some of the first references to yoga can be found in the Vedas, a collection of mantras that seers cognized thousands of years ago. Orthodox Hindus consider the four Vedas to be the source of all later religious and philosophical teaching in India. The oldest of the four, is the Rig Veda. The other three Vedas are the Sama Veda, the Yajur Veda, and the Atharva Veda. All are believed to have been composed between 1500 and 500 BC. The Vedas contain knowledge about spiritual and practical life. They are not yoga texts as such, but lay the ground for yogic ideas developed in later texts.

The word yoga appears in the Rig Veda, defined as “yoking” or “discipline.” It describes, though, no systematic practice. The term yoga turns up again in the Atharva Veda, where it refers to the means of harnessing or yoking the prana (life force) by the practice of pranayama (yogic breathing exercises to control and expand prana). This is the first known textual reference to physical yoga as a practice.

The word Upanishad means “sitting down near” and refers to a student sitting close to his or her master to receive secret and sacred teachings. The Upanishads were composed after the Vedas. Although there were some 200 of them, only 12 are considered principal Upanishads. These 12 are believed to have been composed in the period from 800 to 300 BC. In the 12 principal Upanishads, the word yoga occurs in only four. In the Taittiriya Upanishad (ca. 700 BC) the word yoga appears in an analogy of a bird. Scholars think that this use of the word yoga refers to quietness of mind brought about through contemplation.

The first time in history we find a written explanation of yoga is in the Katha Upanishad (500 – 400 BC). This text describes yoga as the science of controlling the senses. It states that in yoga the mind is stilled and Brahman (God) or the Supreme Self is realized. It says that this leads to spiritual liberation, liberation from the circle of life and death.

The Svetasvatara Upanishad (500 – 400 BC) offers some practical advice on how to practice yoga. The scripture describes the most conducive environment; how to breathe; and how to keep the body in a straight posture by holding the chest, neck, and head erect. It states that by silently chanting Om while focusing on its meaning, we will learn to control the senses. And by repressing and regulating breathing through the nostrils and observing subtle movements of the body, we will restrain the mind.

Dedicated practice, it advises, will lead to freedom from disease, old age, and death. According to the Svetasvatara Upanishad, the first step toward the goal of liberation occurs when the body becomes light and healthy; when the mind becomes free from desire; when the yogi develops a shining complexion, sweet voice, and pleasant odor; and when his or her excretions become meager. These changes suggest that through the practice of yoga a certain physical purification takes place. Because such a healthy body is not gained by sitting alone. We can reason that this is one of the first textual references to the practice of asanas.

“

From the conquest of posture, so by mastering asanas, an invincible, unconstrained freedom from suffering due to the pairs of opposites (such as heat and cold, good and bad, pain and pleasure) is attained.” (Yoga Sutras, 2.48)

In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali describes asana as “a posture” to be practiced prior to attempting pranayama or meditation. He provided the first reference to the term asana as we understand it today. He does not, though, describe any asana in detail, but states simply that an asana should be steady and comfortable (sthira sukham asanam). Only in such an effortlessly comfortable posture can the practitioner merge his or her attention (mind) with the infinite (the Self or God). This, after all, is the goal of yoga.

According to Patanjali, only once the postures are mastered may one continue to the practice of breath control. As Patanjali states, the practice of asanas in a comfortable and steady manner makes your body strong and immune to disease. Estimates of the date of the Yoga Sutras range from 500 BC to 200 AD. It is clear, however, that Patanjali did not originate the teachings in the Yoga Sutras. Rather, he inherited a huge mass of earlier teachings from the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. Patanjali’s contribution was to condense, refine, and systematize these teachings.

Light on Hatha Yoga

Today many people tend to associate all yoga with the term Hatha Yoga. This is rightly so in the case of the term yoga asanas, because the practice of yoga asanas has indeed become more systematized and accessible through the development of Hatha Yoga. There have been many, though, who have attained the state of yoga without practicing Hatha Yoga. Furthermore, the practice of yoga asanas existed long before the various practices that belong to Hatha Yoga were defined in writing.

Sanskrit texts ranging from the 11th century AD to the 13th century AD mention mudras and bandhas² that would appear later in Hatha Yoga texts. The Goraksha Shataka (13th – 14th C. AD) proclaims that there are 8.4 million postures, as many as there are species of living beings on this planet. According to Goraksha, the author, 84 of these postures have been selected by Lord Shiva as the main ones. Two of these, Siddha Asana and Padma Asana, which are later on included in the Hatha Yoga tradition as well, he considers to be of the highest importance for meditation. It is for this reason that he describes them.

The Shiva Samhita (1500 AD), mixes philosophy with specific practices. It also speaks at length about the chakras (centers of spiritual power in the subtle body) and nadis (subtle channels in your body that transmit energy) systems. The work mentions only four asanas, but many mudras and pranayama techniques. All these texts written between 1100 and 1500 AD³ either mention Hatha Yoga by name—without explaining any techniques—or they describe mudras, bandhas, and a few asanas but do not call these techniques Hatha Yoga.

The turning point in the definition of physical yoga practices is the Hatha Yoga Pradipika (which translated means Illuminating Hatha Yoga or Light on Hatha Yoga). *The Hatha Yoga Pradipika* was written in the 15th century AD by Swami Svamarama. It is a compilation of around 20 texts, including the ones mentioned above. It is among the most influential of three surviving texts on Hatha Yoga⁴.

The Hatha Yoga Pradipika is the first text that introduces all the techniques taught in earlier works under one umbrella. It defines and discusses asanas, pranayama, mudras and bandhas, kumbhaka (breath retention), and nadanusandhana (concentration on inner sounds) as Hatha Yoga practices. *The Hatha Yoga Pradipika* also discusses the shat kriyas (six internal cleansing practices) that became characteristic of Hatha

Yoga. Furthermore the Hatha Yoga Pradipika is the first available text on yoga to name and describe non-seated asanas. It also emphasizes, as does the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, the importance of asanas for physical well-being:

“

It is the first limb of Hatha Yoga and asanas are therefore described first. Asanas should be practiced for steadiness of posture, health and lightness of body."

(Hatha Yoga Pradipika, 1.19)

The Hatha Yoga Pradipika merely refers to the rich traditions of postures originating from the sages and then goes on to mention and describe only 15 asanas. Eight of the 15 asanas are varieties of sitting or lying postures, and seven are non-seated positions. The verses describing asanas are derived from a variety of earlier texts (These earlier texts are the Dattatreya-yogasastra, the Vivekamartananda, the Vasisthasamhita, the Yogayajnavalkya, and the Sivasamhita). No source text has yet been identified, however, for three of the seven non-seated asanas: Uttanakurmasana, Dhanurasana, and Matsyendrasana⁵.

Although the Hatha Yoga Pradipika is known as the ultimate textbook on Hatha Yoga, it is important to know that it is not an extensive guide to Hatha Yoga. It simply intends to provide basic information on the topic. In his book Swami Svatmarama stresses the importance of an experienced teacher from whom the proper practice of Hatha Yoga should be learned. Without the guidance of the teacher, these exercises cannot be utilized to their full potential. Svatmarama emphasizes that the true meaning of yoga cannot be gained by merely reading textbooks. It must rather come from personal experience gained under the supervision of a guru. As the Hatha Yoga Pradipika states,

“

A yogi desirous of success should keep the knowledge of Hatha Yoga secret; for it becomes potent by concealing and impotent by exposing."

(Hatha Yoga Pradipika, 1.11)

Pre-modern references

Although now the refined and extensive system for the practice of yoga asanas is dawning, we are able to glance the tip of the full glory of the sun. This is because the writings were purposely kept vague to ensure secrecy. Recently, though, more texts on the practice of yoga, yoga asanas, and Hatha Yoga have started to appear. Though united in their yogic goal, these texts reveal many discrepancies due to the different schools and lineages that had developed over time. One example of these is the great variation in the number and selection of asanas mentioned in classic and pre-modern works.

For instance, the Gherand Samhita, assigned to the 17th or 18th centuries, was the first book to really lay out the details of the entire Hatha Yoga system. It states that there are 8.4 million asanas. This is as many as there are species in the world. Only 84 of these asanas does it deem to be superior. And a mere 32 are said to be sacred in the world of mortals. Along with 32 primary asanas, it describes many forms of pranayama, 25 mudras, bandhas, and shatkarmas (internal cleansing) techniques.

Another example is the Hatha Ratnavali, the first book on yoga to actually list 84 asanas. It was written by Srinivasa, a yogi from South India. It dates from the 18th century. The text is strongly influenced by the Hatha Yoga Pradipika. The list of 84 asanas begins with Siddhasana (Accomplished Pose) and ends with Shavasana (Corpse Pose). It mentions 84 asanas, but describes, in all, only 36. Another text, the Jogapradipika, written by Jayatarama of Vrindavan in 1737, is the only other pre-modern text known so far that also names and describes 84 asanas. The names of the asanas, though, differ considerably from those listed in the Hatha Ratnavali.

As mentioned earlier, the discrepancies between the names and numbers of asanas indicate an extensive tradition of asanas as well as the existence of different lineages and sects. It is apparent that the number 84 was symbolically significant for authors both of ancient and of classical yoga texts. The number 84 traditionally signifies completeness, and in some cases sacredness. Even though many classical and pre-modern works refer to 84 asanas as an auspicious number, it is apparent that such a unified tradition never existed. The discrepancies in texts, traditions, and lineages may seem confusing. However, they are merely a sign of the rich and diverse traditions of yoga.

Nonetheless, key concepts remained somewhat stable and should be kept in mind as we move further:

- Yoga leads to control of your body, mind, and senses, and its final goal is self-realization.
- Yoga is non-sectarian and open to anyone and everyone. As practitioners it is our complete free choice to pick any path, any technique, any method as long as it serves us and leads us toward a more conscious and healthy existence.
- To reap the full and intended results and move toward the final goal (if you wish to), yoga should be practiced humbly, with dedication, and under the supervision of a teacher.
- The practice of yoga asanas is highly beneficial for physical well-being, making the body strong and healthy in preparation for further spiritual practices.

Millions of modern yogis and yoginis have experienced the benefits claimed by the ancient texts. These benefits have ignited yoga's explosive rise and popularity. In chapters that follow, we will explore why and how a yoga asana practice can be such a powerful tool for holistic well-being.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



RAM JAIN

Ram is the Founding Director of the Arhanta Yoga Ashrams (India and The Netherlands). Within the last 10 years, the Arhanta Yoga Ashrams have become renowned internationally for their professional yoga teacher training courses, and have up to present trained over 3000 yoga teachers from all over the world.

Born in New Delhi, India, in a traditional and spiritual family, his yoga and Vedic philosophy education started at the age of eight years as a part of his primary school education. He has in-depth knowledge of classical Hatha Yoga and is also well versed in ancient Indian scriptures.

During his 19 years of teaching career, he has worked with various anatomy and physiology experts and has developed unique teaching, adjustment, and modification techniques.

Presently, he is the lead teacher for various teacher training programs, ranging from Hatha Yoga, Yin Yoga, Vinyasa Yoga, to Meditation and Yoga Nidra. He teaches for several months a year in India and the rest of the year in the Netherlands, where he also lives with his wife and two children.

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KALYANI HAUSWIRTH-JAIN

Kalyani is a senior teacher & Creative Director at the Arhanta Yoga Ashrams since 2013. She was born and raised in Switzerland. Since early adolescence she has been fascinated by art, bodywork, the body-mind connection. The mother of two children now, she has been teaching yoga for over 10 years, training yoga teachers for more than eight years at the Arhanta Yoga Ashrams in India and the Netherlands.

Starting off with physical challenges, she transformed her body, mastering many advanced asanas with her regular practice and discipline. By following a diligent self-practice, working with many different teachers, styles, and techniques, she gained a profound understanding of physiology and movement techniques.

This, in combination with her extensive teaching experience, gave her an understanding of the importance of structure and sequencing for a holistic yoga asana practice.

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ABOUT ARHANTA YOGA ASHRAMS

At Arhanta Yoga ® our mission is to provide internationally accredited professional yoga courses and training in a non-sectarian way, while maintaining the authenticity of the ancient teachings. Since 2009 more than 3000 yoga teachers have graduated from Arhanta Yoga Ashrams.

Arhanta Yoga Ashrams are Registered Yoga School (RYS) with Yoga Alliance, International Yoga Federation, European Yoga Association and CRKBO (The Netherlands). Our courses meet and exceed the international standards of 200 hours and our certification is accepted by all major yoga institutions, yoga federations and insurance companies.

The 200 hour Yoga Teacher Training is our foundational course for becoming a yoga teacher. This course is an intensive training to become a professional and worldwide accredited yoga teacher in 26 days. The course is designed only with one goal – to make you a confident yoga teacher.

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During our 200 hour yoga teacher training course you will

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- become confident to teach with 60 hours hands-on teaching practice;
- acquire expert teaching skills as you learn how to give proper instructions, and how to apply corrections and modification techniques;
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Most of our students are surprised on how much they could learn in such a short period. And once you have completed the course, we are still there for you with our post-course support and mentoring:

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