

# namaste

the game of yoga



## CONTENTS:

- 49 large format cards:
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  - 20 easier asana cards (green back) ②
  - 20 more difficult asana cards (purple back) ③
  - 5 summary cards with the 8 positions of each type ④
- 2 giant wooden dice:
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  - 1 fuchsia die with the 5 categories and 1 joker ⑥
- 1 gong made of wood and brass:
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  - 1 gong made of brass ⑧
  - 2 strings to tie the gong to the frame by inserting them into the two slots ⑨
  - 1 wooden gong hammer ⑩
- this book ⑪ with:
  - introduction to Yoga
  - description of Yoga for children
  - detailed explanation of the 40 positions
  - rules of the 5 games



The positions of yoga are very numerous. We chose 40 of them, which are representative and within reach of children. These 40 positions are divided into two main groups, 20 "easier" positions with the green back and 20 "more difficult", purple back, so that all children, even with different ages, can experiment and play. The name of the asana is written on each card in Sanskrit, the ancient language of India, and on pages 5-9 there is the English translation. For each asana, it is written the inspiration, how it is performed and what the players can learn from it. Each asana card belongs to one of the **5 categories** of the game that represent the qualities that can be achieved through the practice of asanas:

### Focus



**Third Eye**  
The gaze on just one point

### Energy



**Kundalini Snake**  
The awakening force

### Flexibility



**Bamboo**  
The ability to adapt

### Balance



**Pebbles in balance**  
The absence of effort

### Stretching



**Zen Bow**  
It tends but it does not break

# the yoga

Classical Yoga was codified in the Yoga sutras by Patanjali, the first written text on Yoga, in which the author describes **Ashtanga Yoga**, the yoga of the **eight limbs or steps**, in the 2nd century BC, after more than two thousand years of oral transmission. Its conceptual foundations are based on Samkhya philosophy and cosmology.

The term yoga derives from the root yuj, to bind together; **to unite**, to hold tight, to jog. In yoga the actions of binding, uniting, connecting must be performed, and become the means that allows man **to harmoniously reunite all opposites**: body and consciousness, individual and universe, head and heart, breath and sensations, psyche and memory, past and future, activity and passivity, will and abandonment.

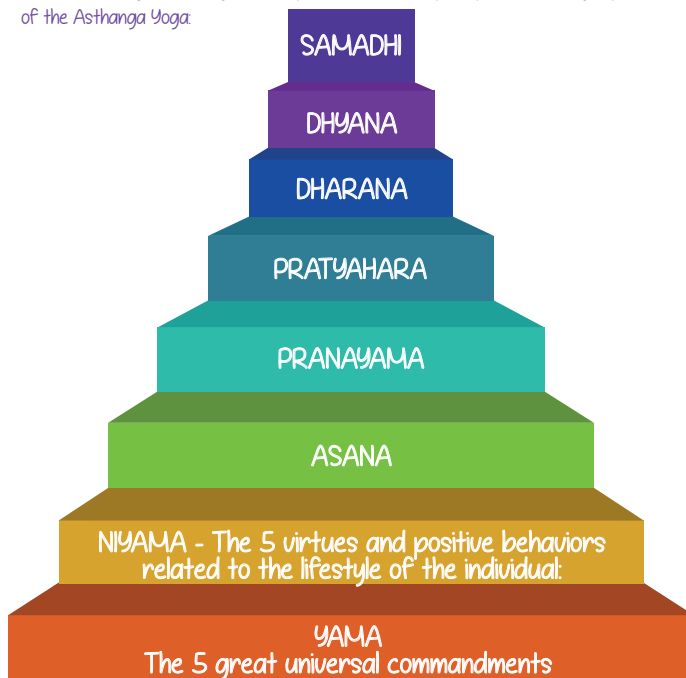
Yoga is therefore a thousand-year old practice that is still used by millions of people around the world to care for and maintain their psychophysical balance. Over the years, and through its spread throughout the world, the traditional practice has undergone contaminations and transformations, in some cases adapting itself to the needs of modern man.

Modern forms of yoga, in which the strictly physical practice of asanas (positions) is privileged, have arisen especially in the West, often forgetting the essential aspect of yoga which is the immobility and stability of the position maintained for a long time.

This is to meet the needs of the western practitioner; of our lifestyle so agitated and stressful, perpetually oriented to action and result, but also leaving out the beauty and complexity of Ashtanga Yoga in which the asanas are only one of the eight steps, the third one, and whose ultimate goal is the well-being of the mind. However we believe it is important not to forget all the richness of traditional classical yoga, a real philosophy far removed from the mere physical practice we have come to today. Yoga was born when the fields of knowledge were not yet separate: philosophy, psychology, hygiene, religion and spirituality were a single body of knowledge put at the service of human evolution. For this reason yoga is a practice where these knowledge, meditative practices and bodily practices work in harmony for the maintenance of a healthy existential condition. This makes Yoga a global education proposal that can be **perfectly integrated with modern pedagogy**, with the aim of enriching and enhancing the potential of children and young people.

## the 8 steps of ashtanga yoga

Astha means eight and Anga means parts. These 8 steps represent the eight parts of the Ashtanga Yoga.





# yoga for children

In 1968 Swami Satyananda wrote the book “Yoga for education”, which focused on the pedagogical and transcultural potential of yoga.

When asking a child to bring himself into an asana we might suggest to think of the strength of the eagle, the stability of a mountain or the energy of a tiger; and discover that he will immediately find these qualities within himself.

While for adults this is not so immediate, since we need a very long mental process to come at these intuitions, for a child all this is simply his essence.

Yoga is a global education proposal that can be perfectly integrated with modern pedagogy, in order to enrich and enhance the potential of children. Yoga dedicated to children has exquisitely educational modalities and objectives, and it is different from the one proposed to adults, in which sometimes the yogic tradition is misinterpreted and presented as a search for movement, which may appear to be end in itself. Adults who will practice yoga together with their children will always have to bear in mind that for children it is “the game of yoga” and that this must remain: asanas must not be maintained for long.

This is contraindicated, and the children are not able to stay still. We respect their wonderful bodies in constant growth and transformation and we “play” by inventing stories with these protagonists, with their funny positions, absorbing this ancient “knowledge”, comforted in this

also by the specifically dedicated studies of modern pedagogy.

Playing spontaneously stimulates resilience and emotional growth, as children transfer into their fantasy stories all their affectivity. The characters encountered become real characters, animated by courage and anger. Getting in touch with these feelings through the playful representation makes sure that they can be better known and elaborated in real life. Surely, with the passing of time and with a practice that stimulates creativity, fantasy and imagination, even stillness will manifest spontaneously.





## bear jambavat-asana

*I feel the force rising from the earth. No, it's not fatigue, it's strength. Do I feel it? Do I feel strong?*

- I stand up, legs slightly apart
- I bend my knees
- I extend my arms with my hands facing the floor



I learn from the bear to respect the nature where I live

## lightning shiva nataraja-asana

*I release all my energy*

- While standing I bring my right leg back, bent, and grab my foot
- I move the foot away from the back and I lean forward with the bust
- I extend my left arm
- The gaze follows the left arm



I learn from the lightning to hit the target

## seagull paksina-asana

*I fly to meet always new friends*

- I remain as stable as a mountain
- I open my arms slightly backwards
- I flex the bust simulating the flight of the seagull



I learn from the seagull to feel free, because freedom is a fundamental right of all the children of the world

## warrior virabhadra-asana

*I follow my goal without fear  
I am the warrior of light.*

- While standing I rotate the right foot 45 degrees and keep the left foot firm and stable
- I lunge with the right knee
- The look follows the right arm
- I repeat on the other side



I learn from the warrior of light to follow my wishes in respect of others

## candle sarvanga-asana

*I feel the reverse feeling of having my head instead of the feet and feet instead of the head  
I feel the heat coming down towards my heart, as the wax slowly melts from the lighted candle*

- I lie down with my arms outstretched
- I bend the legs on the chest
- I lift my legs pointing to the sky and I put my hands on the back to support my body vertically



I learn from the candle to be bright even when it is very dark

## ship nava-asana

*I float lightly and silently respecting the sea and its creatures*

- I lie down with my arms outstretched
- I clench my fists
- I lift the legs, the trunk and the head



I learn from the ship to surf safely even when the sea is stormy

## eagle garuda-asana

*I fly higher than everyone.  
How will I feel up there?*

- I stand as stable as a mountain
- I twist the left leg around the other leg
- I twist my left arm around the other arm, focusing my gaze on a point in front of me



I learn from the eagle to have a very concentrated gaze

## tree vriksha-asana

*I have deep roots that allow me to stretch high towards the sky*

- I stand up and I feel deeply rooted
- I move the weight on one side and lift the opposite foot
- I lean the raised foot against the opposite knee



I learn from the tree to be strong, but also flexible so as not to break with the strong wind

## seashell aditya-asana

*Inside me lives a wonderful pearl*

- I sit with the soles of the feet in contact with each other
- I slide my arms under my legs and lean my hands against my feet
- I move the forehead forward and lean it against the feet



I learn from the seashell the protection towards myself and towards the others

## moon ardha chandra-asana

*I have the shape of a smile and I shine happy in the sky*

- I kneel down and I position my right leg stretched outwards
- I slide with the right arm on the right leg and in the meantime I bend the left arm over the head
- I repeat from the other side



I learn from the moon the beauty of silence

## cat marjari-asana

*I am a meditation expert*

- I put myself in the position of the table
- When I exhale I create the hump of the cat (image above)
- When I inhale I bend my back (image below)



I learn from the cat the art of doing nothing and the ability to daydream

## tiger vyagra-asana

*With this position I shoo away sadness*

- I put myself in the position of the table
- I move the right knee in contact with the forehead
- I push my right leg backwards and point my gaze forward



I learn pride from the tiger

## camel ushtra-asana

*With my water reserve I am the king of the burning lands I resist the desert sun without a hat or sunscreen*

- I kneel down and I point my arms towards the sky
- I move the pelvis forward and rotate the arms backwards
- I grab my ankles



I learn from the camel how to dose my energy without ever wasting it

## pebble rocking and rolling

*I roll like a pebble down the slope of a very high mountain*

- I sit cross-legged
- I grab the toes
- I roll back and forth without touching the floor



I learn from the pebble to check where I go even when I am running fast

## rocking horse dhanura-asana

*I remember my rocking horse from when I was a child*

- I put myself prone, bowed to the ground, I bend my legs and lean the heels against the back
- I grab my ankles
- I move the heels away from the back and I lift and open the chest



I learn from the rocking horse the elegance of the movement

## plough hala-asana

*With the feet I make the furrows to plant the seeds that will become something good to eat*

- I lie down and move my legs back, over the head
- I lean my toes against the floor
- I inhale and exhale slowly for at least 3 times



I learn from the plough the toil of work, but also the great satisfaction in gathering its fruits



## lion simha-asana

*Roaring, I express my power  
My sore throat will also pass!*

- I sit on my heels, hands on my knees
- I put my hands on the ground, turning them while I squint my eyes and roar
- After the roar I listen to the sensations again in the calm



I learn from the lion the courage  
of my actions

## plane matsyendra-asana

*I visit all my friends who come from far away*

- I sit with my legs outstretched
- I bend the right knee and put my foot on the ground over the left leg
- I rotate the trunk to the right opening the arms, while the left elbow is like a leverage on the right knee, and the gaze is backwards
- I repeat on the other side



I learn from the plane to feel over  
the clouds

## triangle trikona-asana

*Am I good at geometry? I reproduce the  
geometric figure that has three equal sides*

- I stand up, legs apart
- I position the arms along the shoulder extension, and then I move the left hand on the right ankle
- I extend my right arm upwards, with the look that follows it



I learn from the equilateral triangle  
to be harmonious

## fish matsya-asana

*Cross-legged in water,  
I will stay afloat with great ease!*

- I lie down on my back with my feet well extended
- I slide my hands under my back
- I rotate the head back by pulling the upper part of the back off the floor



I learn from the fish to get carried  
away by the current

## dolphin catu-svana-asana

*I am playful and I perform spectacular  
acrobatics when I follow the boats*

- I put myself in the position of the table
- I put both elbows on the ground
- I extend my knees



I learn from the dolphin that it takes  
very little to have fun

## diamond supta vajra-asana

*I am very pure and precious, nobody is the  
same, but this is our strength*

- While on my knees I slightly spread my legs and I sit down between my feet
- When I exhale, I lie down to rest my elbows
- I take a few breaths
- I continue to go down until I lean my back and head against the floor



I learn from the diamond to reflect  
every little ray of light and to be bright

## cobra bhujanga-asana

*I look in front of me and I feel truly majestic  
while I am hissing!*

- I lay down on my stomach
- I put my hands under my shoulders, with my legs together
- I push myself with my arms, turning into a hissing cobra



I learn from the cobra how to be royal

## cockerel baka-asana

*In the morning I wake up first full of energy*

- I put together the toes of the feet
- I crouch
- I put my hands in front of me and I bend my elbows
- I move the weight forward and I lean the knees against the bent elbows, keeping the toes in contact



I learn from the cockerel to be  
a curious observer of the world  
around me

## butterfly baddha kona-asana

*I flap over a world of a thousand colors*

- I am sitting with the soles of the feet in contact with each other
- I grab my feet with my hands
- I bounce feeling light



I learn from the butterfly  
the art of lightness

## starfish shava-asana

*I decorate the bottom of the sea and I lay on the sand, or I hug the rocks while being lulled by the water*

- I lie down on my back, with my stomach up
- I extend the arms, with the palms of the hands towards the sky, and I slightly spread the legs
- I breathe while remaining motionless



I learn from the starfish to stay still and listen to what is happening around me, relaxing and becoming lighter

## snake sarpa-asana

*Hard to believe, but my skin is really velvety*

- I'm lying on my stomach and weaving my hands behind my back
- As I exhale, I raise my head and shoulders
- I open the space of the heart



I learn from the snake how pleasant it is to be kissed by the sun

## half bridge setu bandha-asana

*I watch the water flow beneath me*

- In the supine position I lean the soles of the feet against the floor
- I lift the back and I bring the shoulder blades near, creating a bow
- I grab my ankles with my hands



I learn from the half-bridge that everything flows and sometimes you just need to do nothing

## square ananta-asana

*I like geometry and I draw a geometric figure with four sides*

- I lie on the right side and lean my head on the folded arm
- I grab the big toe of my left foot with my left hand and spread my legs
- I repeat on the other side



I learn from the square to search for complete symmetry

## small mountain adhya mukha svana-asana

*I become as stable as a mountain*

- I put myself in the position of the table
- I exhale and I extend my knees
- I push myself on my arms and I draw an inverted V with my body



I learn from the mountain the art of imperturbability

## turtle koorma asana

*I put myself in position without fear of losing: whoever comes last wins!*

- I sit with my legs outstretched
- I exhale and flex
- I look for contact with the earth in front of me



I learn from the turtle that slowness belongs to the wise

## chair utkata-asana

*Thanks to this position my legs will become very strong*

- I get on my feet, my legs slightly apart and my arms pointing to the sky
- I bend my knees without spreading them



I learn from the chair the art of hospitality



## arrow bana-asana

*I entrust to the arrow shot in the sky  
my message of peace for the world*

- I sit with my right leg extended. I bend my left leg and move my foot to the opposite groin
- The right hand grabs the left foot, while the left hand grabs the right foot.
- I repeat on the opposite side



*I learn from the arrow the lightness  
in speed*



## frog manduka-asana

*I hear frogs croaking at sunset  
and this gives me endless joy*

- I sit in a crouched position
- I put my hands in front of my heart, breathing deeply
- I pay attention that my elbows gently turn my knees outwards



*I learn from the frog to camouflage  
myself in nature*

## book pashimottana-asana

*I relax and think about the last book I read*

- I'm sitting with my legs in front of me
- I inhale and move my arms up
- I exhale and lean forward, grabbing my feet



*I learn from the book to open myself  
to others, with no fear of showing my  
emotions*

## hare shashanka-asana

*I try to stay in this position for three breaths*

- I sit on my heels with my forehead on the ground
- I weave my fingers behind my back
- I rise from my heels pointing my head on the ground and hands to the sky



*I learn from the hare how to be snappy*

## archer akarna dhanur-asana

*I know that if I'm calm I cannot miss the target*

- As I sit with my legs outstretched, I bend my right leg and grab my foot with my right hand
- The left hand simultaneously finds the left foot
- I try to gently lift the right foot towards the face
- I repeat on the other side



*I learn from the archer the art  
of accuracy*



## bridge chakra-asana

*If I commit myself and identify myself to the  
maximum I find a treasure within my heart*

- I lie down on my back, I bend my knees with my heels close to my back and my hands under my shoulders with my palms on the ground
- I push simultaneously with my hands and feet on the ground, raising my whole body as much as possible
- I extend my legs, push the navel up and my head upside down



*I learn from the bridge to act as a link  
for those in difficulty*

## cow gomukha-asana

*In India I am sacred. They milk me for my milk  
but they do not eat my meat, because Hindus  
are vegetarians*

- I sit cross-legged, feet in line with the pelvis
- I lift the right arm and bend the left behind the back, so that the two hands can touch each other
- I repeat on the other side



*I learn from the cow to lie down  
on a lawn and to appreciate  
the smell of grass*

## locust shalamba-asana

*I remain still and then I jump  
with my three pairs of legs!*

- I lie down on my stomach with my hands clenched in fists under my torso
- I point the chin to the ground
- I exhale and move the legs upwards



*I learn from the locust to concentrate  
all my energy before a big event*

# rules of the games




With the contents of this box you can play many different games. You can find 5 games described below, which are intended to entertain the little ones (and the older too) in many different ways, in addition to those that you might invent yourself. The game stimulates creativity (game 1), memory (games 2 and 4) and learning the names of asanas (game 3), becoming more and more experienced in the practice of yoga.

If you are playing with children under the age of 6, it is recommended for an adult to play the role of moderator; or Master. Since the age of 6-7 the role of the Master can be played, in turn, by the players themselves.

In all the 5 games the first thing to do is to choose whether to play with the 20 easiest cards (green back) or with the 20 less easy cards (purple back). The games (except the fourth) must be played by rolling both dice and then looking for the matching card within the 20 cards deck.

The black die indicates the color that can be found on the background of the cards.

The fuchsia die represents the category (Focus, Energy, Flexibility, Balance and Stretching) and the corresponding icon can be found on the lower right corner of each card.

The joker  in the category die means that you can choose the category you want. Likewise, the joker  in the color die means that you can choose the color you want. The second Joker  on the color die means your own color: the one that you get when you draw a color card (black back) at the beginning of the game. You can also play by rolling the two dice together and performing the position.

Before starting to play it must be highlighted that the practice of Yoga should never hurt, and for this reason the positions should always be performed slowly. It is important to respect your limits and do not forget that our bodies are not all the same: ease and difficulty vary a lot from one person to another; and an asana that is easy for one player may be difficult for another one.

## game 1 - invent your story

### PREPARATION AND START OF THE GAME

- choose whether to play with the 20 easier cards (green back) or with the 20 more difficult cards (purple back) and put them, covered, to form a single deck
- each player draws a color card (black back) and so the colors and the characters for this game are assigned
- roll the color die to decide who starts (re-roll if no one has that color) and then the game proceeds clockwise

### GAME PLAY

- the current player rolls the dice and finds the corresponding card: **performs that position** and **BEGINS THE STORY**
  - \* if the player does not know the name of the position, the Master can say it
  - \* in the following turns the current player rolls the dice and finds the card: **performs that position** and **CONTINUES THE STORY**
- the Master **RINGS THE GONG** when the position is correctly performed and the story is well continued
- those who can not make the new position or continue the story are out of the game

### END OF THE GAME

- the game ends when only one player remains and the last player left wins



## game 2 - remember the sequence

### PREPARATION AND START OF THE GAME

- choose whether to play with the 20 easier cards or with the 20 more difficult cards and put them, covered, to form a single deck
- each player draws a color card (black back) and so the colors and the characters for this game are assigned
- roll the color die to decide who starts (re-roll if no one has that color) and then the game proceeds clockwise

### GAME PLAY

- at the beginning the current player **must remember the positions**, one after the other, of the covered cards (at the beginning of the game no cards, then one, then two, etc.)
  - \* he must remember them all, one after the other, in the same order as the cards had been turned
  - \* the Master verifies the names of the various positions and rings the gong when all positions are correctly named
  - \* when all the covered cards have been correctly remembered, the turn continues
  - \* those who can not remember a position are out of the game
- the current player rolls the dice and finds the corresponding card
  - \* puts it in the middle of the table, clearly visible to everyone, and **performs the position**
  - \* the Master **rings the gong** when the position is correctly performed
  - \* at the end the Master turns the card, so that the position is no longer visible, and puts it next to the other turned cards
  - \* whoever fails to perform the position is out of the game

### END OF THE GAME

- the game ends when only one player remains
- the last player left wins

## game 3 - guess the name

### PREPARATION AND START OF THE GAME

- choose whether to play with the 20 easier cards or the 20 more difficult cards and put them, covered, to form a single deck
- each player draws a color card (black back) and so the colors and the characters for this game are assigned
- the youngest player starts and then the game proceeds clockwise

### GAME PLAY

- the current player rolls the dice and finds the corresponding card
- puts it in the middle of the table, clearly visible to everyone
- if the player says the proper name of the asana, he gains the asana card, but only after **having performed the position** and staying in that position until the Master **rings the gong**
- if the player does not know the name of the position, or fails to perform it, the player on his left can try, and so on clockwise, until a player says the right name, performs the position and wins the asana card

### END OF THE GAME

- the game ends when a player has won 3 cards
- if you play in three you have to win 4 cards, and if you play only in two you must have 5 cards to win the game

## game 4 - quartet (at least 3 players)

### PREPARATION AND START OF THE GAME

- choose whether to play with the 20 easier cards or with the 20 more difficult cards
- the youngest player shuffles and distributes the 20 asana cards in a clockwise direction (it does not matter if any player has one more)
- the player who has the green card with the category "focus" ① (the lightning or the ship), starts the game

### GAME PLAY

- the player asks for an asana card (color and category, for example "yellow balance") to another player
  - \* if the player has that asana card he must give it to the current player, who must **perform that position** to actually win that card, and then he can continue his turn by asking for a new asana card to a new player (even to the same player)
  - \* if the other player does not have that asana card, or if the position is not correctly performed, the turn passes to the player to whom the card was requested
- when a player has all 4 cards of the same category (for example the 4 red, yellow, green and blue cards of the energy category ②) he declares the quartet **ringing the gong** and puts the 4 cards turned in front of him as his loot

### END OF THE GAME

- the game ends when all 5 quartets have been composed, and no player has any more card in hand
- the player who has composed the highest number of quartets wins. In the event of a tie, the category die is rolled, and the winner is the player with the quartet of that category



## game 5 - outdo the master

### PREPARATION AND START OF THE GAME

- choose whether to play with the 20 easier cards or with the 20 more difficult cards and arrange them, covered, to form a single deck, which is taken by the Master

### GAME PLAY

- the Master rolls both the color die and the category one
  - \* if a die indicates a Joker, the Master re-rolls that die
- the Master draws from the deck the asana card corresponding to the color and the category indicated by the two dice, reads the name on the card (in Sanskrit) and says its name (in English, if needed by referring to this book). Finally he puts the card in the middle of the table, clearly visible to everyone
- **all players must perform the same position**, the one indicated by the asana card
- the Master has the difficult task of deciding who performed the position better
  - \* the Master waits for all the players, eventually with his suggestions, to have performed the position
  - \* at that point the Master indicates the winner of the turn, to whom the asana card is given, as well as the gong's little hammer
  - \* the winner of the round **rings the gong**

### END OF THE GAME

- the game ends when a player has won 3 cards. If you play in three you have to win 4 cards, and if you play in two only you must have 5 cards to win the game

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