



# Ananda Kutir Ashrama

serve . love . give . purify . meditate . realise

Affiliated to the Divine Life Society, Rishikesh, India

## ANANDA KUTIR ASHRAMA

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## GUIDELINES TO THE PRACTICE OF HATHA YOGA

1. Regular practice makes speedy headway - set aside a time each day.
2. Wear clean, loose, comfortable clothing.
3. Cleanliness is next to Godliness so before practice have a quick wash, empty bladder and bowels also, if possible. If you wear sandals, kindly check that your feet are clean before stepping into the yoga room. If you need to have a wash, kindly bring your own towel.
4. No asanas (postures) or pranayama (breathing) should be attempted with food in the stomach. Allow two hours to elapse after a light meal, three hours after a heavy meal.
5. **If you have had a spinal or neck injury in the past - if you suffer from high or low blood pressure, or are under treatment for an organic illness such as diabetes, ulcers, hernias, asthma - if you have recently undergone surgery or may be pregnant - it is important that you tell your yoga teacher BEFORE the class. There may be asanas you should not attempt at first as they may actually worsen your condition. On the other hand, your teacher may help you choose suitable asanas for practice that will actually help improve your particular problem.**
6. In the beginning one should take short rests between each asana, to allow pulse rate and breathing to return to normal.
7. One should relax and spend at least ten minutes on basic deep breathing practices as taught in the class, at the end of each session.
8. All breathing should be long, CALM, deep and COMFORTABLE, within one's own limits and without straining. **No breath retention if suffering from high blood pressure or heart ailments.**
9. Perform all yoga practices with a mental attitude of calm contemplation directed towards the breathing and the movement, towards the effects and the flow of prana. (subtle energy).
10. No violence - learn to extend rather than strain and struggle. Inform teacher if you find any difficulty or discomfort in a posture. As headstands are not for beginners, please never attempt to do this.
11. **Please do not attend an intermediate class without first consulting your teacher.**
12. If there are any questions please refer them to your teacher who is there to help you in your practice and understanding of yoga.