

CHAPTER 02

Yoga

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The practice of yoga is believed to have started with the very start of the Indian Civilisation. Many ancient sculptors, scriptures, seals and fossil remains of the Indus Valley Civilisation suggest that yoga was a part of the ancient Indian culture. Yoga has also been mentioned in *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and the *Upanishads* along with many other Indian scriptures.

Though Yoga was practiced in the ancient period, it was the great Sage Patanjali, who compiled *Yoga Sutras* in 147 BC, which presented its existing knowledge in a very systematic manner. Since then, Yoga has played a significant role in maintaining the mental and physical well-being of people all across the world.

Meaning of Yoga

The word 'Yoga' is derived from the Sanskrit word '*yuj*', which means 'to join' or 'to unite'. This means that Yoga unites the individual's soul with the divine soul (*i.e.* God), a unification of *Atma* with *Paramatma*.

It implies the unification of the physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual aspects of a human being. It is also considered as a science which develops a person's consciousness.

The following definitions can be helpful to understand the meaning of Yoga

- According to **Maharishi Ved Vyas**, "Yoga is attaining the pose."
- According to **Patanjali**, "Suppression of modifications of the mind is Yoga."

- According to **Agam**, "The knowledge of Shiva and Shakti is Yoga."
- According to **Bhagwad Gita**, "Yoga is skill in action."

Importance of Yoga

The modern age is the age of stress, tension and anxiety. The improper lifestyle and the lack of proper relaxation make people physically tired and mentally tense.

Their lives are full of problems. They are always in a hurry and have no time for leisure. As a result, most of them be it rich or poor, do not live a peaceful, healthy or a happy life.

At such a juncture, yoga becomes very significant. The practice of yoga is not merely an exercise for the body. In fact, it is the knowledge that our ancestors developed to live a healthier, happier, peaceful and meaningful life. Thus, yoga is important in many ways, which are described as follows

1. **Brings about Physical Purity** Internal organs of our body can be cleansed by doing various yogic exercises.

According to Ayurveda, our body is made of *Vaat* (airy elements), *Pitt* (fiery elements) and *Kaph* (watery elements). These elements must remain balanced for us to remain healthy.

Yogic exercises which keep our bodies healthy and clean include *Basti*, *Dhoti*, *Kapalbhati*, *Nauli*, *Tratak* etc. For proper cleanliness and purity of our internal organs, we should perform these yogic exercises regularly.

2. **Prevents and Cures Diseases** There are various diseases which usually hamper the smooth functioning of our body. Yoga protects us from these diseases and also cures them. Various yogic exercises increase the body's immunity.

Diseases which can be cured by some *asanas*, if performed regularly, are given in the table below

Disease which can be Cured	Asanas to be Performed Regularly
Poor functioning of thyroid gland	<i>Halasana</i> / Plough pose and <i>Matsyasana</i> / Fish pose
PCOS in women (excess male hormone production)	<i>Dhanurasana</i> / Bow pose and <i>Bhujangasana</i> / Cobra pose
Arthritis	<i>Shishuasana</i> / Child pose and <i>Adho Mukha Svanasana</i> / Downward facing dog pose
Lower back pain	<i>Supta Matsyendrasana</i> / Supine Spinal Twist and <i>Marjaryasana</i> /Cat or Cow pose
Diabetes	<i>Ardha Matsyendrasana</i> / Half Spinal Twist and <i>Chakrasana</i> / Wheel pose
Indigestion / stomach disorder	<i>Apanasana</i> / Knees to chest pose and <i>Paschimottanasana</i> / Seated forward bend pose
Migraine (recurrent headache)	<i>Padmasana</i> / Lotus pose and <i>Padangusthasana</i> /Big Toe Pose
Liver problems	<i>Ardha Bhikasana</i> / Half Frog pose and <i>Parighasana</i> / Gate Pose
Depression	<i>Baddha Konasana</i> / Bound Angle pose and <i>Sukhasana</i> / Easy pose
Kidney disorders	<i>Salamba Bhujangasana</i> / Sphinx pose and <i>Naukasana</i> / Boat pose

3. **Improves Health in General** Yoga maintains and improves our health by making our respiratory, circulatory, nervous, digestive and excretory systems more efficient as well as strengthening our muscles.

4. **Reduces Mental Tension** In the modern world, most people are under constant stress and tension. Without peace of mind, people feel upset and disturbed. Yoga helps to reduce any stress and tension.

The *Pratyahara*, *Dharana* and *Dhyana* elements of Yoga help in bringing peace of mind. Some *asanas* like

Makarasana, *Shavasana*, *Shalabhasana* and *Bhujangasana* benefit us by reducing stress and tension.

5. **Reduces Obesity and Beautifies the Body** Everyone wants to have a beautiful body. Obesity is a universal problem today and makes people prone to many diseases like high blood pressure, diabetes, heart diseases, stroke, gall bladder stones, cancer, gout, breathing problems etc.

Pranayama and yogic *asanas* like *Mayurasana* reduce obesity and make the body more beautiful.

6. **Gives Relaxation** When we indulge in any work, after some time we feel tired. At such times, we are unable to work further as we need relaxation.

Asanas like *Padmasana*, *Shavasana* and *Makarasana* as well as *Pranayama* helps in relaxing the body and mind, thus removing fatigue.

7. **Helps Maintain the Correct Posture** Due to the modern lifestyle of city dwellers, where most jobs are performed while being seated, deformities in posture are becoming common.

Practising *asanas* like *Sarvangasana*, *Mayurasana*, *Chakrasana*, *Bhujangasana*, *Vajrasana* and *Dhanurasana* helps to cure postural deformities and makes the practitioners of these *asanas* maintain correct posture.

8. **Increases Flexibility** Flexibility helps in moving the body efficiently. *Chakrasana*, *Dhanurasana*, *Shalabhasana*, *Halasana* and *Bhujangasana* helps in improving flexibility and prevents sports related injuries.

9. **Develops People Spiritually** *Padmasana* and *Siddhasana* improve the power of meditation and give better control over the mind to develop people spiritually. *Pranayama* also helps in spiritual development that brings peace in life.

10. **Improves Moral and Ethical Values** Nowadays, there is a declining trend in moral and ethical values. Following the first two elements of Yoga, *i.e.* *Yama* (meaning universal moral guidelines) and *Niyama* (meaning self-purification by discipline) helps in the development of moral and ethical values.

Elements of Yoga

In his description of the ancient Indian classical Yoga, Patanjali had classified Yoga into eight elements or *Ashtanga* (eight limbs).

These elements are also called the eight-fold paths or steps. These steps form a sequence from outer to inner self.

Through this sequence, the ultimate goal of yoga, *i.e.* union of our soul with the divine can be achieved. These elements are as follows

1. **Yama** Yama contains the ethical rules of Hinduism. With the practice of Yama, one learns to self-restraint from struggle for survival. Yama contains 5 moral vows or codes of conduct, which are as follows
 - **Ahimsa** (Non-violence) It means that we must stay away from negative emotions like jealousy, hate anger, etc. and not harm any other living being.
 - **Satya** (Truthfulness) It means that we must be truth-ful in our thoughts, words and deeds at any cost.
 - **Asteya** (Non-stealing) It means that we must not use or even think of using others' objects, money or thoughts for our own benefit. We must be satisfied with what we have.
 - **Brahmacharya** (Celibacy) It means that we must stay away from anything that stimulates sexual desires. We must also not indulge in any sexual relations.
 - **Aparigraha** (Non-possessiveness) It means that we must live our life with minimum requirements. We must not desire to own any material possessions.
2. **Niyama** *Niyamas* are ethical practices that are related to the individual's body and senses. It contains essential teachings for self-maintenance including *Saucha*, *Santosh*, *Tapa*, *Swadhyaya* and *Ishvara Pranidhana*, which are as follows
 - **Saucha** (Maintaining Cleanliness/Purity) It means that we must keep our mind, body and speech clean and pure.
In yoga, special emphasis is given to cleanliness of internal organs using six *Shudhikriyas* or *Shatkarmas* such as *Neti kriya*, *Dhauti kriya* etc.
 - **Santosh** (Contentment) It means that we must develop a feeling of satisfaction in all situations of life.
 - **Tapa** (Discipline) It means that we must bear the difficulties, obstacles and complex situations in our life, in order to achieve the goal. We should also have the same spirit for all conflicts in our life like pleasure and pain, loss and gain.
 - **Swadhyaya** (Introspection or Study of the Self) It means the study of the various scriptures such as Vedas, Granths, Upanishads, etc. with devotion as well as the study of self.
 - **Ishvara Pranidhana** (Prayer or Surrendering to God) It means that as a devotee, a person must dedicate all

the deeds to God. He/she must think that all the facilities and prosperity such as body, mind, intelligence, etc. available to him are due to God. There must not exist any pride, ego and other impurities within him/her.

3. **Asanas** *Asanas* are a set of physical postures that improve strength and balance. These *asanas* are beneficial for the inner organs.

There are various types of *asanas* such as corrective *asanas*, relaxative *asanas* and meditative *asanas*. These types of *asanas* have different types of effects on our body.

4. **Pranayama** It involves controlled breathing and is also practised with some *asanas*. It consists of three simple exercises, *i.e.* *Puraka* (Inhale), *Kumbhaka* (Retain the breath) and *Rechaka* (Exhale).

It is considered beneficial for lungs and helps in boosting the count of red blood corpuscles. It improves heart and lung functioning and increases longevity.

Ujjayi, *Digra*, *Bahya*, *Aulom-Vilom*, *Sheetali*, *Bhastrika*, *Nadi Sodhana*, *Kapalabhati* etc are various types of *Pranayama*.

5. **Pratyahara** Pratyahara means to control our mind and senses. It is a self-control process where people become able to control their various senses.

In other words, an individual stops responding to the external sensory world such as touch, taste, smell, etc. that hinders mental concentration and self-welfare. As a result, one starts meditating into the inner self.

6. **Dharana** It is the concentration of the mind and the first stage of meditation. You focus all your energy at one point without letting your mind get distracted, and discard all your random thoughts. The mind is fixed on one subject, topic or place.

7. **Dhyana** It is a process of complete constancy of mind. *Dharana* sets the stage for *dhyana*. When one starts focussing on a topic, the mind starts actively engaging with its focus.

Thus, *dhyana* is the active modification of knowledge in complete stability and calmness.

8. **Samadhi** It is the ultimate union of an individual's soul with God. It is the stage where a person loses himself to God. The concepts of 'I', 'me' and 'mine' hold no significance for that person and he forgets himself completely.

Introduction to Asanas, Pranayama, Meditation and Yogic Kriyas

Asanas

According to **Patanjali**, *asana* means, ‘*sthiram sukham aasanam*’ i.e. that position which is comfortable and steady.

In other words, Asana is a state of body in which it may be kept easily for an extended period in such a manner that all the organs and glands work most efficiently. Hence, Asanas are the means through which one can improve the health of mind and body.

Asanas also enhance the beauty of the body by reducing inappropriate accumulation of fat in the body. They help to regulate blood and oxygen flow. They bring flexibility and agility by stretching of muscles. They have no age restrictions and even old people can perform *asanas*.

Asanas are performed to improve flexibility, strength, and balance. The poses are not meant to simply be physical exercises but rather used as a mind-body practice to improve physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Types of Asanas

Asanas can be classified into three categories on the basis of its function. These are as follows

Types of Asana	Function	Examples
Meditative	Power of meditation is improved	<i>Padmasana, Siddhasana, Gaumukhasana, Swastikasana, Samasana, Veerasana</i> etc.
Reparative/ Relaxative	Removes fatigue and relaxes a person mentally and physically	<i>Shashankasana, Shavasana, Makarasana</i> etc.
Cultural / Corrective	Regulate and systematise bodily activities and provide energy	<i>Sheersasana, Sarvangasana, Matsyasana, Halasana, Bhujangasana, Shalabhasana, Dhanurasana, Vajrasana, Chakrasana</i> etc.

Pranayama

The word ‘*Paranayama*’ is composed of two words, *prana* (meaning ‘life’) and *ayam* (meaning ‘control’). Thus, it means ‘control and regulation of the vital life force i.e. ‘breathing.’

Pranayama strengthens the respiratory system, purifies the blood, soothes the nervous system, improves digestion, develops endurance and tones up the whole body.

It consists of three parts

1. **Puraka** (Inhale) When we breathe in, the chest expands, the diaphragm contracts and the ribs move outwards and up.
2. **Kumbhaka** (Retain) It consists of two parts, retaining the breath after complete inhalation (called ‘internal *Kumbhaka*’) and retaining the breath after complete exhalation (called ‘external *Kumbhaka*’).
3. **Rechaka** (Exhale) When we breathe out, the chest contracts, the diaphragm relaxes and the ribs move inwards and down.

Types of Pranayama

There are essentially various types or methods of *pranayama*. Some of them are

- *Suryabhedhi pranayama* or right nostril breathing,
- *Ujjayi pranayama* or victorious breath,
- *Sheetkari pranayama* or the hissing breath,
- *Sheetali pranayama* or cooling breath,
- *Bhastrika pranayama* or bellows breath,
- *Bhramari pranayama* or bee breathing technique,
- *Plavini pranayama* or the floating breath,
- *Morcha pranayama* or swooning breath, etc.

Meditation

It is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘*Dhyana*’. It is the process of complete constancy or stability of mind.

According to **Patanjali**, *Dhyana* is “the concentration of *chitta* (the mind) on a *vritti* (an impulse) without any divergence”.

It is described by Patanjali as “*tatra pratyaya ekatanata dhyanam*”, meaning a continuous and uninterrupted flow of attention towards the object of meditation.

As the 7th limb of yoga, it precedes the last step towards the achievement of goal of yoga. It essentially means to think, imagine, contemplate, and recollect. When such a perception starts, we call it *Dhyanaavastha*.

When a person is in *Dhyanaavastha*, he/she is only aware of his/her self and the object of meditation.

When perception starts directly without seeing any object, he/she gets the stage of *Dhyanaavastha*, which is the prior stage of *samadhi*.

As a result, one modifies his/her knowledge and moves towards *samadhi*.

Benefits of Meditation

The various benefits of meditation are as follows

- It removes the agitation of the mind and creates calmness and peace inside.
- Practice of *dhyana* improves memory and attention in our day to day activities.
- *Dhyana* brings forth our hidden creativity.
- Regular practice of meditation can give good physical health and a sense of well-being.
- Negative emotions like anger can be slowly brought under our control with *dhyana*.
- The peace that one feels during meditation, radiates to others in our daily activities and creates a harmonious society, free of negative thoughts and feelings.

Yogic Kriyas

The human body requires both internal and external cleanliness for proper functioning. Generally, we carry out outer cleanliness, which is very easy, but inner cleanliness is slightly difficult.

Inner cleanliness of our body can be accomplished by practising six yogic *Kriyas*, also called *Shatkarmas* or *Shudhhi Kriyas*. These are as follows

1. **Neti** Nasal cleansing.
2. **Dhauti** Cleaning of digestive tract, especially oesophagus and stomach.
3. **Nauli** Abdominal massage.
4. **Kapalabhati** Purification of lungs and frontal lobe of brain.
5. **Basti** Colon cleaning.
6. **Trataka** Purification of the eye to overcome eye problems.

Benefits of Yogic Kriyas

The general benefits of performing these *kriyas* are as follows

- They help in overcoming many diseases completely, so they are effective in Yoga therapy.
- The practice of the *shatkarmas* creates harmony between body and mind.
- The different systems of the body are purified by the practice of the *shatkarmas*, so energy can flow through the body freely.
- Practising the *shatkarmas* increases the capacity to work, think, digest, taste, feel, experience etc.

Yoga for Concentration and Related Asanas

Concentration is one's power of focusing or attention on something. It is one of those essential attributes or skills that all individuals need to perform well in everything they do.

However, with stress and anxiety, people are often unable to concentrate on the task at hand.

Yoga, by its very nature, is said to be a great means to improve concentration and enable people to focus on their work effectively.

Patanjali mentioned about Yoga as, "*Yoga chitta vritti nirodha*" which means that yoga reduces the fluctuation of mind.

Meditative exercises, various asanas helps to train mind and bring it to a relaxed state.

Various medical studies also show that yoga not only improves concentration, but also contributes to good mental energy and brings a balance to the body and the mind.

Some asanas which help to improve concentration include

Sukhasana

Sukhasana is a combination of two words *i.e.* 'sukh' meaning happiness or pleasure and 'asana' meaning posture. It is the foundation posture for seated meditation.

Procedure

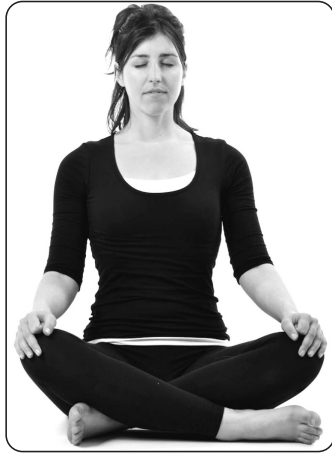
- Sit on the floor with your legs straight in front of the body.
- Now, cross your legs such that each foot is under the opposite thighs, *i.e.* the left foot should be under right thigh and the right foot must be under left thigh.
- Keep your hands on your legs such that your palms are placed on your knees.
- Keep your head, neck and spine straight.
- Keep your legs and shoulder relaxed.
- Close your eyes and practice deep breathing.

Benefits

- It strengthens muscles of the back and improves body posture.
- It has relaxing effects on mind and body.
- It builds physical and mental balance as well as concentration.
- It is helpful in reducing stress and anxiety.
- It creates flexibility in ankle, knee and hip joints.
- It increases the functioning of the glands.
- It helps in curing arthritis and knock-knees.

Contraindication

The individuals who have knee injury or have severe knee pain or lower back pain should not perform this asana for longer duration.



Sukhasana

Tadasana

Tadasana is made from two words *i.e.* 'tada' meaning mountain or palm tree and 'asana' meaning posture. It is the foundation of all of the standing yoga asanas.

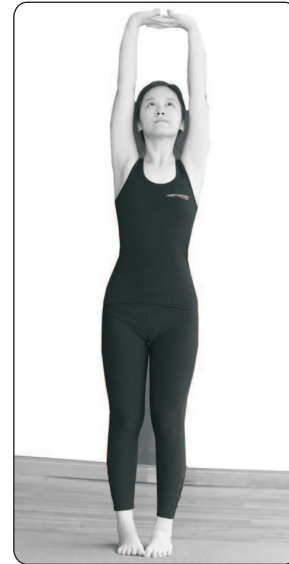
Procedure

- Stand straight with your feet slightly apart and your hands by your side.
- Inhale deeply and slowly raise your arms upwards, then interlock your fingers.
- Raise your heels and stand on your toes.
- Feel your body stretching and look up.
- Place your body weight on your toes and stretch out your shoulders, arms, and chest up.
- Hold this pose for a few moments.
- Exhale and return to the starting position.

Benefits

- It improves posture.
- It strengthens and increases the flexibility of thighs, knees, and ankles.
- It firms abdomen and buttocks.
- It helps to cure the disease sciatica.
- It helps in increasing height.
- It improves the function of respiratory and digestive organs.
- It strengthens the nervous system.
- It is good to improve balance and concentration as well as increase alertness.

- It relieves tension, aches, and pains throughout the body.



Tadasana

Contraindications

- Don't do this pose, if you suffer from insomnia/sleeplessness.
- If you experience a headache, stop immediately.
- If you take any blood thinning medications or have low blood pressure, avoid doing this pose without consulting a doctor.

Padmasana

Padmasana is made of two words *i.e.* 'padma' meaning lotus and 'asana' meaning posture. This yogic exercise primarily means sitting and meditating in a position without any movement.

Procedure

- Sit on the floor or on a mat with legs stretched out in front of you, while keeping the spine erect.
- Bend the right knee and place it on the left thigh. Make sure that the sole of the feet point upward and the heel is close to the abdomen.
- Now, repeat the same step with the other leg (*i.e.* left knee on right thigh).
- Place your hands on the knees in mudra position.
- Keep the head straight and spine erect.
- Hold and continue with gentle long breaths in and out.

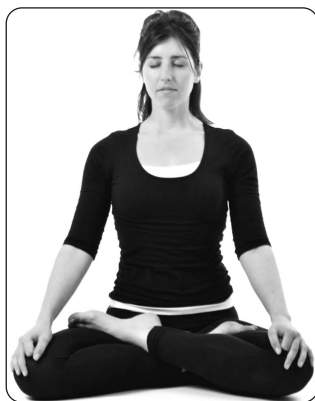
Benefits

- It calms the brain and increases the focus of mind.
- It increases concentration.
- It stimulates the pelvis, spine, abdomen, and bladder.

- It stretches the ankles and knees.
- It helps in reducing blood pressure and muscular tension.
- It helps in reducing abdominal fat.
- It strengthens the hip and knee joints.

Contraindications

- Do not perform this asana if you are suffering from ankle injury or knee injury.
- It is considered to be an intermediate to advanced pose. Thus, do not perform this pose without sufficient prior experience or unless you have the supervision of an experienced teacher.



Padmasana

Shashankasana

Shashankasana has been derived from two Sanskrit words *i.e.* 'shashanka' which means rabbit or hare and 'asana' means posture.

Also known as the 'Crescent Moon Posture' (shashanka also means moon), the final pose of this asana resembles a leaping rabbit.

Procedure

- Sit in a kneeling position with your knees fully bent and hands on the thighs (Vajrasana).
- Straighten the back.
- Inhale and slowly raise the arms, above the head. The arms should be in line with the shoulders.
- Now, exhale and bend forward.
- The arms, trunk and head should remain in one line.
- The forehead and arms should rest on the floor in front of the knees.
- Relax the whole body and let the elbows also rest on the floor.

- Inhale and exhale slowly.
- Inhale and raise your arms and trunk to the vertical position.



Shashankasana

Benefits

- It is known for abdomen toning.
- It helps in stretching and strengthening of the arms, shoulders and upper back.
- It helps in ankle and knee strengthening and flexibility.
- It helps in posture correction through treatment of the 'dropping shoulders' symptom.
- It relieves fatigue and promotes concentration.
- It helps in relieving stress, anxiety and calms the mind.
- It improves the blood supply in the head and therefore, nourishes the brain and the eyes.
- It stimulates the functioning of the glands.
- It controls diabetes.

Contraindication

Do not perform this asana if you are suffering from backache or slipped disc, knee pain, migraine, abdominal injury or high blood pressure.

Naukasana (Boat Pose)

Naukasana is comprised of two words *i.e.* 'nauka' means boat and 'asana' means posture. This yoga posture has been named based on the shape it takes *i.e.* of a boat.

Procedure

- Lie on your back with your feet together and arms beside your body.
- Take a deep breath in and as you exhale, lift your chest and feet off the ground, stretching your arms towards your feet.
- Your eyes, fingers and toes should be in a line.
- Feel the tension in your navel area as the abdominal muscles contract.

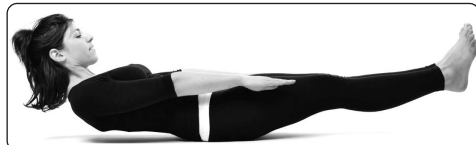
- Keep breathing deeply and easily while maintaining the pose.
- As you exhale, come back to the ground slowly and relax.

Benefits

- It strengthens the back and abdominal muscles.
- It tones the leg and arm muscles.
- It is useful for people with hernia.
- It helps to remove belly fat.
- It improves digestion.
- It improves the circulation of blood.
- It gives strength to thigh, hips, shoulder and neck.
- It helps in regulating the sugar level in the blood.

Contraindications

- Do not practice this yoga pose if you have low blood pressure, severe headache, migraine, or if you have suffered from some chronic diseases or spinal disorders in the recent past.
- Asthma and heart patients are advised to avoid this pose.
- Women should avoid doing this pose during pregnancy and during the first two days of the menstrual cycle.



Naukasana

Vrikshasana (Tree Pose)

The name of this asana comes from the two Sanskrit words *i.e.* 'vriksha or vriksha' meaning tree, and 'asana' meaning posture. This posture is a close replica of the steady, yet graceful stance of a tree.

Procedure

- Stand tall and straight with arms by the side of your body.
- Bend your right knee and place the right foot up on your left thigh. The sole of the foot should be placed flat and firmly near the root of the thigh.
- Make sure that your left leg is straight.
- Once you are well balanced, take a deep breath in, gracefully raise your arms over your head from the side, and bring your palms together in 'Namaste' mudra (hands-folded position).
- Look straight ahead in front of you.

- Ensure that your spine is straight.
- Keep taking in long deep breaths. With each exhalation, relax the body more and more. Just be with the body and the breath with a gentle smile on your face.
- With slow exhalation, gently bring down your hands from the sides. You may gently release the right leg.
- Now, stand tall and straight as you did at the beginning of the posture. Repeat this pose with the left leg off the ground on the right thigh.



Vrikshasana

Benefits

- This pose leaves you in a state of rejuvenation and relaxation.
- It brings balance and equilibrium to your mind.
- It helps improve concentration.
- This posture has been found to relieve some cases of sciatica.
- It strengthens the spine while improving both balance and poise.
- It tones the leg muscles while making the ligaments and tendons of the feet stronger.
- The knees become stronger, and the hip joints are loosened.
- The eyes, inner ears, and shoulders are also strengthened in this pose.
- It makes you stable, flexible, and patient.
- It enhances concentration and activates all the mental faculties.

Contraindication

Avoid doing this posture, if you are suffering from migraine, insomnia, low or high blood pressure, knee problems and hip injury.

Garudasana

The name comes from the Sanskrit words *i.e.* 'garuda' meaning eagle, and 'asana' meaning posture. It is a standing balancing asana in modern yoga as exercise.

Procedure

- Take a standing position.
- Bend your right leg and twist it around the left one.
- Ensure that right thigh should be in front of the left thigh. The top of the right foot should place on the calf of the left leg.
- Now, bend your elbows and place them on the front of the chest.
- Twist your forearms around each other, the left elbow should remain below.
- Bring your palms together to resemble an eagle's beak.
- Now, bend the left knee and lower the body in slow motion, until the tip of the right big toe touches the floor.
- Hold this position for around 20 to 30 seconds with steady breathing.
- Now, release the posture and return to standing position.
- After completing this procedure, repeat this on the other side.

Benefits

- It stretches the hips, thighs, shoulders and upper back.

- It improves balance.
- It strengthens the calves and ankles.
- It helps alleviate sciatica and rheumatism.
- It loosens the muscles of legs and hips, making them more flexible.

Contraindication

Avoid practicing this pose if you've had a recent knee, ankle or elbow injury.



Garudasana

Chapter Practice

PART 1

Objective Questions

• Multiple Choice Questions

1. Yoga has been mentioned in _____.

- (a) Mahabharata (b) Ramayana
(c) Upanishads (d) All of these

Ans. (d) Yoga has been mentioned in Mahabharata, Ramayana and Upanishads. It is an integral part of Indian culture.

2. From where do we derive the elements of yoga?

- (a) Bhagwad Gita
(b) Yoga-sutra
(c) Upanishads
(d) Ramayana

Ans. (b) The elements of yoga are derived from Yoga-sutras, which were compiled by Patanjali in 147 BC.

3. Match the following.

List I	List II
A. Vaat	1. Fiery element
B. Pitt	2. Yogic element
C. Kaph	3. Airy element
D. Tratak	4. Watery element

Codes

	A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D
(a)	4	3	1	2	(b)	2	1	4	3
(c)	1	3	2	4	(d)	3	1	4	2

Ans. (d) The correct match is A-3, B-1, C-4 and D-2.

4. The yogic elements that includes the study of self is _____.

- (a) Pratyahara (b) Dhyana
(c) Swadhyaya (d) Rechaka

Ans. (c) The yogic element that includes the study of self is called swadhyaya. Swadhyaya means introspection or study of the self. etc.

5. Match the following.

List I	List II
A. Santosh	1. Non-possessiveness
B. Brahmacharya	2. Purity
C. Saucha	3. Contentment
D. Aparigraha	4. Celibacy

Codes

	A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D
(a)	3	4	2	1	(b)	1	2	3	4
(c)	2	3	1	4	(d)	4	1	3	2

Ans. (a) The correct match is A-3, B-4, C-2 and D-1.

6. Swami ji described about one of the elements of yoga. He said that it is the concentration of mind and the first stage of meditation. All energies are focussed at one point and the mind is not distracted. Swami ji is talking about which stage?

- (a) Dharana (b) Dhyana
(c) Pratyahara (d) Pranayama

Ans. (a) Swami ji is talking about Dharana the first stage of meditation. The mind is prepared to be fixed at one subject, topic or place.

7. Sukhasana strengthens muscles of the back and improves _____.

- (a) body posture (b) spine
(c) focus of mind (d) abdomen

Ans. (a) Sukhasana strengthens muscles of the back and improves body posture.

8. Human body requires both internal and external cleanliness for proper functioning. Outer cleanliness is easy but inner cleanliness is slightly difficult. The inner cleanliness of the body can be attained by practicing which of the following kriyas?

- (a) Neti (b) Basti
(c) Nauli (d) All of these

Ans. (d) The inner cleanliness of the body can be attained by Neti, Basti, Nauli. Dhamti, Kapalabhati and Trataka are also ways of inner cleanliness.

9. Identify the asana shown in the image.



- (a) Tadasana
- (b) Sukhasana
- (c) Shashankasana
- (d) Naukasana

Ans. (b) The asana shown in the image is Sukhasana. It is done in sitting position and is the foundation posture for seated meditation.

10. Ishani is a yoga teacher. His students are middle aged people facing stiffness of muscles of shoulders and upper back. He gave them a demonstration on how to do an asana. See the image below and identify the asana shown by Ishani.



- (a) Mayurasana
- (b) Sulabhasana
- (c) Shashankasana
- (d) Vrikshasana

Ans. (c) The asana shown by Ishan is Shashankasana. It is also called rabbit or hare pose. It is beneficial for reducing the stiffness of muscles.

11. When we indulge in any kind of mental work, after sometime we feel tired. Our mind can no longer focus. At such times, we are unable to work further as we need relaxation.

Which among the following is an asana that relaxes the body and mind thus removing fatigue?

- (a) Padmasana
- (b) Sukhasana
- (c) Shashankasana
- (d) All of the above

Ans. (d) All of the asanas i.e. Padmasana, Sukhasana and Shashankasana are the asanas that relaxes the mind. Thus, remove fatigue.

12. Which of the following is the correct contraindication of the asana shown below.



- (a) Avoid doing if you suffers from insomnia
- (b) Avoid doing if you have high blood pressure
- (c) Avoid doing if you have ankle or elbow injury
- (d) Avoid doing if you have Asthama or are a heart patient

Ans. (d) The asana in the given image is Naukasana. Avoid doing if you have Asthama or are a heart patient, is the correct contraindication of this asana.

13. The english name for 'Garudasana' is _____.

- (a) Bird pose
- (b) King pose
- (c) Eagle pose
- (d) Moon pose

Ans. (c) The English name for 'Garudasana' is Eagle pose as the posture made in this asana resembles the eagle.

14. Which of the following asanas does not help in improving concentration?

- (a) Sukhasana
- (b) Tadasana
- (c) Chakrasana
- (d) Padmasana

Ans. (a) Chakrasana does not help in improving concentration.

15. Match the following.

List I	List II
A. Sciatica	1. Hare pose
B. Arthiritis	2. Mountain pose
C. Diabetes	3. Lotus pose
D. Blood Pressure	4. Easy pose

Codes

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|
| | A | B | C | D |
| (a) | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| (b) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| (c) | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| (d) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Ans. (c) The correct match is A-2, B-4, C-1 and D-3.

• Assertion-Reasoning MCQs

Directions (Q. Nos. 1-4) *Each of these questions contains two statements, Assertion (A) and Reason (R). Each of these questions also has four alternative choices, any one of which is the correct answer. You have to select one of the codes (a), (b), (c) and (d) given below.*

Codes

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true, but R is false
- (d) A is false, but R is true

- 1. Assertion (A)** Yoga unites the individual's soul with the divine soul.

Reason (R) The word 'Yoga' is derived from the Sanskrit word Yuj which means to unite.

Ans. (b) The assertion is true as Samadhi is an element of yoga that unites the individual's soul with divine soul. The reason is also true as the meaning of yoga is to join and is derived from Sanskrit word Yuj. But reason do not explains assertion. Thus, both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.

- 2. Assertion (A)** Yoga is not effective for depression.

Reason (R) Yoga helps in maintaining correct posture.

Ans. (d) Assertion is false as depression is a psychological condition and yoga deals with physical, mental, intellectual aspects, so it can help in depression too. Reason is true as yogic asanas help in maintaining correct posture and improves strength and balance. Thus, A is false, but R is true.

- 3. Assertion (A)** Pratyahara is the ultimate union of an individual's soul with God.

Reason (R) Pranayama involves controlled breathing.

Ans. (d) Assertion is false as Pratyahara means to control our mind and senses. Reason is true as Pranayama involves controlled breathing and is also practised with some asana. Thus, A is false, but R is true.

- 4. Assertion (A)** Naukasana is good for reducing belly fat.

Reason (R) Tadasana is performed in a sitting position.

Ans. (c) Assertion is true as Naukasana is a good asana that improves digestion and help in removing belly fat. The reason is false as Tadasana is done in standing position. Thus, A is true, but R is false.

• Case Based MCQs

- 1.** The Yoga instructor advised 62 years old Mr. Verma to do Yoga daily. He showed him the asana called Eagle pose as it will help to make muscles of legs flexible.

Based on this case, answer the following questions

- (i) Eagle pose is used to treat _____ and _____.
 (a) sciatica and rheumatism (b) hairfall and back pain
 (c) eyes and shoulders (d) knee pain and abdomen

Ans. (a) Eagle pose is used to treat sciatica and rheumatism.

- (ii) Eagle pose asana is done in which pose?
 (a) Standing (b) Sitting
 (c) Lying (d) All of these

Ans. (a) Eagle pose asana is done in standing position. Here the hands and legs are crossed out in the front position.

- (iii) Which of the following is the contraindication of Eagle pose?
 (a) Avoid if had a knee injury
 (b) Avoid if had an ankle injury
 (c) Both (a) and (b)
 (d) None of the above

Ans. (c) The contraindication of Eagle pose is that it should be avoided if there is a knee or ankle injury.

- 2.** Mahesh is a yoga instructor in a school. He explained about the 8 concepts or elements of yoga to his students.

8 elements of Yoga are the eight fold paths or steps to reach the ultimate goal of Yoga.

- (i) Which of the elements of Yoga focus on controlled breathing techniques?
 (a) Niyama (b) Pratyahara
 (c) Dharana (d) Pranayama

Ans. (d) Pranayama is a systematic and rhythmic control of breathing techniques.

- (ii) Which Yoga element contains 5 moral vows or codes of conduct?
 (a) Yama (b) Niyama
 (c) Dhyana (d) Asana

Ans. (a) Yama contains five moral vows which are ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya and Aparigraha.

- (iii) The concepts of I, me, mine hold no significance in which element?
 (a) Dharana (b) Pratyahara
 (c) Samadhi (d) Dhyana

Ans. (c) In samadhi, which is the eighth and last element of Yoga, the concepts of I, me and mine hold no significance.

PART 2

Subjective Questions

• Short Answer (SA) Type Questions

1. Enlist nine reasons, why the practice of Yoga is important for us.

Ans. Nine reasons why the practice of Yoga is important for us are as follows

- It brings about physical purity.
- It prevents and cures diseases by providing immunity to the body.
- It reduces mental tension.
- It reduces obesity and beautifies the body.
- It relaxes the body and mind.
- It corrects and maintains posture.
- It increases flexibility.
- It develops people spiritually.
- It improves moral and ethical values.

2. What is the meaning of the second element of Yoga? What are its five parts?

Ans. The second element of Yoga is called Niyama, which contains five essential teachings for self-maintenance. These teachings are as follows

- **Shaucha** It means maintaining cleanliness of the body, both internal and external.
- **Santosh** (Contentment) It means to develop a feeling of satisfaction in what we have.
- **Tapas** (Discipline) It means to bear the complex situations of our life to achieve the goal.
- **Swadhyaya** It means the study of various scriptures for introspection.
- **Isvaraparanidhana** It means prayer or surrendering to God.

3. What do you mean by Yama? What are the five basic vows mentioned in it?

Ans. Yama is the first element of Yoga, which teaches that we should not corrupt our souls by indulging in wrongful activities. It contains five basic vows which everyone should have. These are as follows

- **Ashimsa** (Non-violence) It means not harming any other living being.
- **Satya** (Truthfulness) It means that we must be truthful in our thoughts, words and deeds.
- **Asteya** (Non-stealing) It means that we should not steal and remain satisfied with what we have.
- **Brahmacharya** (Celibacy) It means that we must not indulge in any sexual desires.
- **Aparigraha** (Non-possessiveness) It means that we should not desire material possessions.

4. What are asanas and how are they beneficial?

Ans. Asanas are a set of a steady and comfortable postures performed in a way to make the activities of the organs and glands of the body more efficient, besides bringing many other benefits. Benefits of Asanas are as follows

- They benefit the internal organs by helping to regulate blood and oxygen flow.
- They bring flexibility and agility by stretching of muscles.
- They help to maintain correct posture.

5. Asanas can be classified into how many categories. Explain the categories briefly.

Ans. Asanas can be classified in three categories. These are as follows

- (i) **Meditative** This types of asanas improve the power of meditation. Examples are Padmasana (lotus pose), Siddhasana (accomplished pose) and Gaumukhasana (cow face pose).
- (ii) **Reparative or relaxing** This types of asanas removes fatigue and relaxes a person mentally and physically. Examples are Shashankasana (hare/ rabbit pose), Shavasana (corpse pose) and Makarasana (crocodile pose).
- (iii) **Cultural/Corrective** This types of asanas regulate and systematise the bodily activities and provide energy. Examples are Sheershasana (head stand), Bhujangasana (cobra pose) and Matsyasana (fish pose).

6. What do you understand by pranayama? Describe its three parts in detail.

Ans. The word pranayama is composed of two words, prana (meaning life) and ayam (meaning control). Thus, it means control and regulation of the vital life force or energy.

It consists of three parts, which are as follows

- (i) **Puraka** (Inhale) When we breathe in, the chest expands, the diaphragm contracts and the ribs move outwards and up.
- (ii) **Kumbhaka** (Retain) It consists of two parts, retaining the breath after complete inhalation called internal Kumbhaka and retaining the breath after complete exhalation called 'external Kumbhaka'.
- (iii) **Rechaka** (Exhale) When we breathe out, the chest contracts, the diaphragm relaxes and the ribs move inwards and down.

7. Write a short note on meditation.

Ans. Meditation is the process of complete constancy or stability of mind. It is described by Patanjali as 'tatra pratyaya ekatanata dhyanam' meaning a continuous and uninterrupted flow of attention towards the object of meditation.

It essentially means to think, imagine, contemplate and recollect everything about the object.

The various benefits of meditation are as follows

- It removes the agitation of the mind and creates calmness and peace inside.
- It improves memory and attention in our day to day activities.
- Dhyana brings forth our hidden creativity.
- The peace the one feels during meditation, radiates to others in our daily activities and creates a harmonious society, free of negative thoughts and feelings.
- Regular practice of meditation can give good physical health and a sense of well-being.

8. What are the six yogic kriyas and what are the functions of these kriyas?

Ans. The six yogic kriyas and the function of each of them are as follows

- (i) **Neti** It helps in nasal cleansing.
- (ii) **Dhauti** It helps in cleaning of oesophagus and stomach.
- (iii) **Nauli** It used in abdominal massage to improve functioning of the whole digestive system.
- (iv) **Kapalabhati** It helps in purification of lungs and frontal lobe of brain.
- (v) **Basti** It is a technique of replenishing the body internally by Cleansing the colon completely.
- (vi) **Trataka** It is used in purification of the eye to overcome eye problems.

9. Give the Sanskrit names and their equivalent English meanings of any four asanas in Yoga which help in improving concentration.

Write one benefit of performing each of these asanas.

Ans. The four asanas in Yoga which help in improving concentration and their additional benefits are as follows

- *Tadasana*, is called the palm tree pose or mountain pose. It helps to gain sense of balance, opens up the chest cavity for breathing exercises, stimulates the thyroid gland and helps increase height.
- *Sukhasana*, is called the easy pose. It calms the mind, strengthens the back and stretches the knees and ankles.
- *Padmasana*, is called the lotus pose. It calms the mind, increases awareness and attentiveness and restores energy levels.

- *Shashankasana*, is called the hare pose. It relaxes the body, relieves depression and gives the upper body a good stretch.

10. Explain the procedure for performing Sukhasana.

Ans. The procedure for performing Sukhasana is as follows

- Sit on the floor with your legs straight in front of the body.
- Now, cross your legs such that each foot is under the opposite thighs, i.e. the left foot should be under right thigh and the right foot must be under left thigh.
- Keep your hand on your legs such that your palms are placed on your knees.
- Keep your head, neck and spine straight.
- Keep your legs and shoulder relaxed.
- Close your eyes and practice deep breathing.

11. What is Tadasana? What are the benefits of Tadasana?

Ans. Tadasana is one of the yogic asana that is done in standing posture. It is also called as mountain pose or palm tree. It is the foundation of all standing yoga asanas.

Tadasana as a yogic exercises has many benefits. These are as follows

- It improves posture.
- It strengthens and increases the flexibility of thighs, knees and ankles.
- It firms abdomen and buttocks.
- It helps in increasing height.
- It improves the function of respiratory and digestive organs.
- It strengthens the nervous system.
- It is good to improve balance and concentration as well as increase alertness.

12. What are the contraindications of Tadasana and Sukhasana?

Ans. The contraindications of Tadasana are as follows

- Don't do this pose, if you suffer from insomnia/sleeplessness.
- If you experience a headache, stop immediately.
- If you take any blood thinning medications or have low blood pressure, avoid doing this pose without consulting a doctor.

The Contraindications of Sukhasana are as follow

- The individuals who have knee injury or have severe knee pain or lower back pain should not perform this asana for longer duration.

13. What are the benefits of Padmasana?

Ans. Padmasana is also called Lotus pose. It is done in a sitting posture. The benefits of Padmasana are as follows

- It calms the brain and increases the focus of mind.
- It increases concentration.
- It stimulates the pelvis, spine, abdomen and bladder.

- It stretches the ankles and knees.
- It helps in reducing blood pressure and muscular tension.
- It helps in reducing abdominal fat.
- It strengthens the hip and knee joints.

14. Explain the procedure for performing Vrikshasana.

Ans. The procedure for performing Vrikshasana is as follows

- Stand tall and straight with arms by the side of your body.
- Bend your right knee and place the right foot high up on your left thigh.
- Make sure that your left leg is straight.
- Once you are well balanced, gracefully raise your arms over your head from the side, and bring your palms together in 'Namaste' mudra (hand-folded position).
- Look straight ahead in front of you.
- Ensure that your spine is straight.
- Now, stand tall and straight as you did at the beginning of the posture. Repeat this pose with the left leg off the ground on the right thigh.

15. Explain the procedure for performing Garudasana.

Ans. The procedure for performing Garudasana is as follows

- Take a standing position.
- Bend your right leg and twist it around the left one.
- Ensure that right thigh should be in front of the left thigh. The top of the right foot should place on the calf of the left leg.
- Now, bend your elbows and place them on the front of the chest.
- Twist your forearms around each other, the left elbow should remain below.
- Bring your palms together to resemble an eagle's beak.
- Now, bend the left knee and lower the body in slow motion, until the tip of the right big toe touches the floor.
- After completing this procedure, repeat this on the other side.

• Long Answer (LA) Type Questions

1. What is Yoga? Discuss any three elements of Yoga in Brief.

Ans. The word 'Yoga' is derived from the Sanskrit word Yuj, which means 'to join' or to unite. Thus, Yoga unites the individual's soul with the divine soul (i.e. God).

It also implies the unification of the physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual aspects of a human being. According to Patanjali, Yoga has eight elements known as Ashtanga.

Three elements of Yoga are discussed as follows

- (i) **Yama** This contains five basic ethical rules that every person should possess. These five moral codes of conduct are Ahimsa (Non-violence), Satya

(Truthfulness), Asteya (Non-stealing), Brahmacharya (Celibacy) and Aparigraha (Non-possessiveness).

- (ii) **Niyama** It contains essential teachings for self-maintenance including Saucha (Maintaining cleanliness of the body/purity), Santosh (Contentment), Tapa (Discipline), Swadhyana (Introspection or studying the self) and Isvara Pranidhana (Prayer or surrendering to God.)

- (iii) **Asanas** These are a set of physical postures that improve strength and balance. These asanas are beneficial for the inner organs, help to regulate blood and oxygen flow, bring flexibility and agility by stretching of muscles and help to maintain posture.

2. Explain the Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi element of Yoga.

Ans. Pranayama It consists of three simple exercises Puraka (Inhale), Kumbhaka (Retain) and Rechaka (Exhale). It involves controlled breathing, improves heart and lung functioning and increases longevity.

Pratyahara It means to control our mind and senses. In other words, an individual stops responding to the external sensory word such as touch, taste, smell, etc. that hinders mental concentration and self-welfare.

Dharana It is the first stage of meditation. You focus all your energy at one point without letting your mind get distracted. The mind, then get focused on one topic object or thing.

Dhyana Dharana sets the stage for dhyana. It is a process of complete constancy of mind. When one starts focusing on a topic, the mind starts actively engaging with its focus. Thus, dhyana is the active modification of knowledge in complete stability and calmness.

Samadhi It is the ultimate union of ones soul with God. It is the stage where one loses oneself to God. The concepts of I, me and mine hold no significance for that person.

3. Write the procedure of performing the Shashankasana, also called the hare pose.

Ans. The procedure of performing the Shashankasana is as follows

- Sit in the kneeling pose with knees fully bent. Place your hands on the thighs and breathe in a relaxed manner.
- Raise both your hands above the head, palms facing forward. The arms should be in line with the shoulders.
- Slowly bend down and bring the hands forward, till the hands and forehead touch the ground. Exhale while you are bending forward.
- In the final position, the forehead and hands rest on the ground. Rest in this position for as long as you are comfortable and breathe rhythmically.
- Exhale slowly and come back to the starting position (kneeling pose). Repeat this process 5 to 10 times depending on time and comfort.

4. Write the procedure for performing Naukasana and also write its benefits.

Ans. The procedure for performing Naukasana is as follows

- Lie on your back with your feet together and arms beside your body.
- Take a deep breath in and as you exhale, lift your chest and feet off the ground, stretching your arms towards your feet.
- Your eyes, fingers and toes should be in a line.
- Feel the tension in your navel area as the abdominal muscles contract.
- Keep breathing deeply and easily while maintaining the pose.
- As you exhale, come back to the ground slowly and relax.

Naukasana has various benefits, which are as follows

- It strengthens the back and abdominal muscles.
- It tones the leg and arm muscles.
- It is useful for people with hernia.
- It helps to remove belly fat.
- It improves digestion.
- It improves the circulation of blood.
- It gives strength to thigh, hips, shoulder and neck.
- It helps in regulating the sugar level in the blood.

• Case Based Questions

1. Shivam is a student of class XI and is facing problem of poor concentration. During a recent medical check-up of school he was advised to practice Yogasana (as given in syllabus) and participate in sports activities for curing it.

Based on this case answer the following questions.

- (i) What are relaxative asanas?

Ans. Asanas that removes fatigue and relaxes a person mentally or physically are called relaxative asanas.

- (ii) How Yoga helps in concentration?

Ans. Yoga improves power of focusing or attention. It trains the mind, reduces fluctuation of mind which helps in concentration.

2. The physical education teacher of ABC school made a chart for the students to explain about the 8 elements of yoga.



- (i) Which moral vows are contained in Yama element?

Ans. The moral vows contained in Yama element are Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aprigraha.

- (ii) What does the word 'Yoga' imply?

Ans. The word 'Yoga' implies the unification of the physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual aspects of a human being.

3. Some students of class XI complained to their teacher that they are facing anxiety and stress due to the upcoming examinations.

Based on the case, answer the following questions.

- (i) Which asana is suggested by the teacher to reduce anxiety and stress?

Ans. Sukhasana is suggested by the teacher to reduce anxiety and stress.

- (ii) What are the benefits of the 'Lotus pose'?

Ans. The Padmasana or Lotus pose helps in meditation and concentration. It also calms the brain, increases awareness and attentiveness and restores energy levels.

Chapter Test

Multiple Choice Questions

- Which is the seventh element of Yoga?
(a) Dhyana (b) Yama (c) Pratyahara (d) Samadhi
- Cleaning of internal organs is a part of _____.
(a) Dhauti kriya (b) Swadhya (c) Tapa (d) Apoigraha
- According to whom the definition of Yoga is simply to attain the pose?
(a) Patanjali (b) Maharishi Ved Vyas (c) Agam (d) None of the above
- Which is the foundation posture for seated meditation?
(a) Padmasana (b) Sukhasana (c) Shashankasana (d) Garudasana
- Find the incorrect statement
(a) Yama contains 5 moral vows or codes of conduct
(b) Ishvara Pranidhana means study of scriptures
(c) Niyama are ethical practices related to body and senses
(d) Samadhi is ultimate union of a soul with God.
- Pranayam means control and regulation of the vital life force i.e. breathing. Pranayam is the fourth element of yoga. It strengthens the respiratory system, soothes the nervous system and tones up the whole body. Pranayam is an important yogic kriya and is practised in India from ancient times. It consists of three parts. From the given options, find out the three parts of Pranayama.
(a) Neti, Dhauti, Nauli (b) Kapalabhati, Basti, Trataka
(c) Puraka, Kumbhaka, Rechaka (d) Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi

Short Answer (SA) Type Questions

- What is the other name of Tadasana? Explain its procedure.
- Briefly explain the element of Dhyana and Samadhi.
- What are the benefits of yogic kriyas?
- What is Ishvara Pranidhana?
- Explain the procedure of doing Naukasana.

Long Answer (LA) Type Questions

- Yoga is known to prevent and cure various diseases. List in tabular form, five lifestyle diseases which can be cured by performing yogic asanas and two asanas which help in curing/preventing each of these diseases.
- Explain the procedure and contraindications of Padmasana.

Answers

- (a) 2. (a) 3. (b) 4. (b) 5. (b) 6. (c)