



# Yoga Etiquette Guide

## Before class

**Eating/Drinking:** It is best to let meals or snacks digest before coming to class. After a meal, give yourself 2 hours before practicing yoga. After a snack, give yourself 1 hour. You may drink water during class as needed, but you may feel more comfortable if you hydrate prior to class.

**What to wear:** Wear comfortable, stretchy clothes that are not too loose. Choose appropriately based on how your clothing may respond to things like sweat, twisting, lying down, or bending forward.

**Bring:** A yoga mat, towel, and water. We will have mat rentals if needed and other necessary yoga props for your convenience.

**Avoid:** Wearing strong scents such as perfumes, deodorants, essential oils, or cologne. Please ensure that your mat, clothes, and body are odor-free to help maintain the purity of the practice space.

**Get there early:** If it is your first time, please arrive 15 minutes early to fill out any necessary forms, get changed if needed, and settle in.

## Once you arrive

**Footwear:** Take off your shoes and socks before you walk into the practice space and place them in the designated changing or shoe-storage area.

**Electronic devices:** Please turn your cell phone off, or, better yet, do not take it into the practice space with you. If you do need to keep your cell phone with you and turned on during class (i.e. if you are a physician on call or a pilot on standby), then please set it to vibrate. If you've brought your cell phone in with you and it accidentally rings aloud during class, please turn it off as soon as you safely can.

**Communicate:** If you have any injuries, limitations, or concerns, please notify your instructor before class begins so they can help you stay safe.

**Enter the room:** When you enter the room, please respect the sacredness of the space by entering quietly. Try to keep noise to a minimum when setting up your mat and collecting your props (i.e. block, blanket, strap), and be sensitive to whether conversations with others may disturb those around you. Also, please make sure that you have (quietly) closed the door behind you in order to maintain the temperature of the practice space and to reduce any noise from outside.

**Positioning your mat:** Orient your mat so you will be facing the teacher. If you are new to yoga and are trying out a class that may have some more experienced students in it, then you might consider placing your mat in a row behind the front so you can follow along more easily. Place your props and your water bottle nearby your mat to keep them handy, but make sure they are not in your way.

**Making space for others:** If a fellow student arrives and there is not an immediate space available for their mat, please extend the yoga love by adjusting your mat in order to create space for them.

**Other people's mats:** For many people, their mat is a safe, sacred space. Please respect this by not stepping on others' mats, if at all possible.



## During class



**Take Child's pose at any time:** If at any point you feel that you need a rest, then please take Child's pose. You can return to Child's pose at any time—even if the teacher does not specifically cue it—and then rejoin the class when you are ready.

**If you feel that you need to leave the room:** It is not uncommon to experience dizziness, fatigue, or discomfort during your first yoga classes, especially if you are practicing in a warm room. If you must leave the room, then please choose a point in the class that is resting (i.e. Child's pose or Down Dog) to excuse yourself, and leave and return quietly.

**Communicate:** Let your teacher know if you are confused, are having trouble with something, or are experiencing any pain. Your teacher is here to serve you but cannot help if s/he does not know there's an issue. A quick mention to the teacher or asking for help can be the difference between having a horrible time and being comfortable enough to focus on your practice and other students may benefit from your question!

**Follow your teacher's cues:** Unless you are taking Child's Pose in order to rest or center yourself before rejoining the class, then please follow your teacher's cues rather than following your own sequence. If there is a pose that you feel you cannot or should not do, then please let your teacher know and s/he can provide a modification or an alternative.

**If you are late:** Being on time is of course optimal, however if you arrive more than ten minutes after class has started, then it's best to come back for another class; the first ten minutes provide centering and warming up, and joining in a class without having had this can risk injury and can also be distracting for fellow students. If you've arrived within the first ten minutes of class, then, if it's OK with the teacher, please enter the studio and gather your props quietly, and choose a space for your mat that is close to the entrance so as not to distract other students. If possible, join the sequence as your teacher cues it. If there are some warm-up postures you need before you can join in the sequence, then quietly take these and join the sequence as soon as you can.

**Savasana:** Savasana, or Corpse pose, is the last pose we do in class, and consists of lying down on our mats with our bodies relaxed and our eyes closed so that we may absorb the benefits of our yoga practice. This is a very important part of yoga class, so please give yourself a full Savasana! Your teacher will let you know when it's time to come out of the pose.

**Leaving class early:** Please plan to stay for the entire class. If this is not possible, then please let your teacher know before class starts, and take a short Savasana before you depart. When you leave, be mindful of your fellow students by being quiet as you collect your items, return your props, and depart the room.

## After class

**Clean your immediate area:** If you borrowed a mat from the studio, wipe it down if needed and return it. If there is moisture on the floor around your mat—either from your perspiration or your water bottle—wipe it up with your towel. If you used props, put them back.

**Communicate:** Speak with your teacher after class if you have any questions or concerns about your yoga practice.

**Make sure you take your own belongings:** Double-check that those are your shoes! This goes for anything else you leave out during class, like sweatshirts, jackets, or water bottles.

**Hold any loud conversations away from the studio:** Please remember to keep your voices low when you are nearby the practice space, even if you are outside of it. It's great to feel invigorated after class, but your voice can travel far in the tranquil environment of the studio, so please be mindful of others.

**Congratulations on starting a yoga practice!**

