THE 7 KEYS TO MAXIMISING YOUR HOT YOGA

"REAP THE BENEFITS OF HOT YOGA ... FROM DAY 1!"

Welcome to this power-packed guide from www.quickfityoga.com!

Dear Yogi/Yogini,

So you've decided to taste for yourself the hot yoga series that Olympic Athletes, Sporting Champions, Hollywood Celebrities and millions of ordinary people the world over say is the most exciting, challenging, effective and rewarding.

As a new student to Hot Yoga methods we believe you deserve the best possible start to your yoga journey, no matter what your physical or athletic prowess.

Or perhaps you are already well into your Yoga Journey.

Either way, read this power-packed guide at your leisure - it will help your motivation skyrocket and equip you with plenty of great tips to get the most from your very first class!

And whether you are a local intending to visit quickfityoga, or simply curious about the far-reaching benefits of this amazing series, this guide will provide practical information for you when beginning any yoga practice at any yoga studio.

This guide is designed to be most helpful if you print it out.

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SOME BASIC FACTS TO HELP YOU FEEL CONFIDENT

>> The popular hot yoga sequence of 26 poses especially suits beginners, although each and every pose also contains within it plenty of challenges for the seasoned yogini/yogi.

>> Beginners can attend any class they wish and at quickfityoga, there is no need to book ahead, just turn up 20 mins before your first class!

>> EVERYONE receives personal attention at quickfityoga.

>> And NO-ONE is too stiff, inflexible, old or 'the wrong shape' to get 100% benefits from this amazing series. All the poses are designed to be both accessible to all and to maximise results. You won't find yourself being 'pushed' to try to get your arms and legs into places they simply won't go!

It's often said - "100% alignment will get you 100% benefits - no matter how FAR you can get 'into the posture".

The Hot Yoga Doctor, Gabrielle Raiz, Colete Pty Ltd and their associated websites, products and services are in no way endorsed by, sponsored by or affiliated with Bikram Yoga™. For more information about Bikram Yoga please visit www.BikramYoga.com
WHAT EXACTLY IS HOT YOGA?

Hot Yoga is a preventive, therapeutic and healing yoga first popularized over 30 years ago. It is scientifically designed to systematically address every part of your body through its 26 carefully formulated postures over 90 minutes, developed for beginners while still challenging for advanced students.

You can read some testimonials from other Hot Yoga students at:  

Hot Yoga Classes are always held in a room heated to body temperature. The heat allows for greater flexibility, it minimises muscle strain, lactic acid build up, reduces the chance of injury, allows for greater cleansing of the body and builds tremendous stamina and endurance.

To find out more about the benefits of the heat and read an excellent independent article that will address any concerns, go to: 

The room is mirrored to allow for greater body awareness and to refine and deepen our postures with easy self-correction. You can see some photos of a studio and students practising in typical classes at: 

The benefits of a hot yoga class are felt right after your first class - now that is something to look forward to!

To help ensure this is the case for you, read on ...

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THE 7 KEY ASPECTS OF A YOGA PRACTICE

Many people in the western world first come to yoga attracted by the fabulous physical benefits - body toning, muscle stretching, increased flexibility, increased strength. Perhaps because this is what you first SEE, it is the most obvious benefit. However, it is by no means the only powerful one and many experienced yogis believe it is merely the beginning.

But hey, you're just wondering if you can even do the postures, right?

So let's break things down a little ...

First let's take a look at the following 7 key areas:

1. Physical
2. Mental
3. Intention
4. Attention
5. Skill
6. Breathing
7. Emotional
1. PHYSICAL

The most obvious thing about any hatha yoga practice is the physical element, otherwise known as the 'postures', 'poses' or 'asanas' (the original Sanskrit name). These can be daunting to anyone, let alone someone just beginning a yoga practice.

Keep the following in mind:

>> Everyone's body is different - we all have our own challenges! Just because someone else seems to be more flexible and can 'get into a pose' further and more easily than you, does not mean they are doing it well, or even gaining as much benefit as you are.

>> Try not to think of them as 'poses', this really doesn't help. It is easier in the beginning to think of them as 'stretches' that liberate your body, mind, feelings of happiness, spirit and soul.

>> Remember, 'yoga' is NOT the posture. Yoga is the PRACTICE. More about this later, but really the postures are INCIDENTAL (I know it sounds crazy!). It does not matter what you can and cannot 'do'. It is a JOURNEY.

>> So only go into poses to the point of feeling a good stretch, never to the point of extreme pain. You will want to aim for a level of 'discomfort' that shows your body YOU CAN stretch (usually the discomfort is more a mental thing, more on that soon too ...)

>> If you have physical 'issues' - old or current injuries; you are 'carrying a few extra kilos'; you feel stiff or have restricted movement:

1. Talk with your instructor when you arrive - they'll make time to understand the needs of your personal practice. So take advantage of it.

2. Let go of the 'perceived inability' in your own mind, and just allow the postures to do their work. In the Hot Yoga series especially, the scientific design coupled with the heat really works wonders.

3. Resist trying to exactly copy other students (other than the posture alignment) and faithfully follow your instructors instructions. They are there to help you access the best possible results and are trained and skilled to do so. If you need some modified poses initially, they will assist you.
Many first timers are concerned about what they might 'look like' - either in their yoga gear, or just simply feeling silly in the room when everyone else appears to be consummate professionals. It is hard to tell you NOT to think this, because you no doubt will - our advice is to let it pass in your own mind, every time it comes up and simply RE- FOCUS ON THE TREMENDOUS BENEFITS YOU ARE BRINGING TO YOURSELF.

If you want to take a look at some photos of the poses, you can do so at: http://www.quickfityoga.com/hot-yoga-poses.htm

(The No.1 most visited Hot Yoga Posture web-site in the world Since 2002!)

2. MENTAL

There are one thousand things to pay attention to on your first class and you won't get all of them! So switch off that chatterbox in your head - or as it's often called, the 'monkey mind' and bring focus to your breathing, it will help tremendously.

You'll arrive with a mind packed full of "What will this be like? Will I be able to do it? What if I can't? Did I let the babysitter know when I would be back? What is for dinner tonight? Why was work so stressful today? etc etc"

There goes that monkey mind again!! Here are a few tips;

>> Imagine as you enter the yoga room or practice space that the thoughts of your busy mind have been neatly packed into a bag and left at the front door for you to collect on the way out. Any that remain really important will be there for you when you leave!

>> Try to get into the room with enough time to lie down for a few minutes before class starts. Our world is busy enough with little space for ourselves. You have already made this time for yourself, so take full advantage of it, revel in it, bask in it and use it to relax your mind a little.

>> Anxiety only comes from thinking about the future. If you are thinking about the 'next pose' or worrying whether you remembered all the things in the orientation then your mind is already in the future. Bring it back to now by focusing on your breath and maybe some well-chosen positive phrases such as "This is really good for me NOW", "I am receiving 100% benefits no matter what I think I can do or not" or "I am here and I am finally doing it!"

INTENTION / ATTENTION / SKILL

This is an excellent 'triple success formula' to help you use
the formidable power of your mind positively in your yoga practice. And this applies to ALL STUDENTS, not just beginners!

3. INTENTION

Why are you doing this? Keep coming back to your original intention - even when the going is 'difficult' or you feel as if you have plateaued in your practice.

However, intention alone can be an enemy. The student who thinks "I am going to do this posture so much better than I ever have!" may sound as if they have a good intention, but in reality their mind is too busy and they are spending too much time thinking about what will (or won't) happen.

So set your intention that you are here to 'practice yoga' and to 'openly receive benefits' and 'to be the best you can be at any given time'. Set your intention to keep re-focusing on your breath and you are already practising yoga ...

And set your intention to have fun! Why not? Do you have a better offer!!

4. ATTENTION

As we said before, there are one thousand things to pay attention to on your first class and you won't get them all. So here is a useful metaphor to help you appreciate that you are continuously learning.

Imagine you have been given $10 of 'attention' (or euros or pounds, we don't apply exchange rate here!).

Every time you are asked to put your attention on something, you will 'spend' $1.

When it is your first class you'll be directed to:

>> Put your mat somewhere
>> Breathe in a certain way
>> Move in a certain way
>> Look at the mirror
>> Set up for a posture
>> Move into a posture
>> Adjust a posture
>> Get out of a posture
>> Breathe in a certain way (again)
>> Have your towel in a certain arrangement
>> Put your water somewhere
>> Sometimes be reminded to drink
>> You'll notice perspiration
>> You'll notice stretches
>> You'll notice tightness in your body
>> You'll notice flexibility in your body
   (sometimes surprisingly on your first class)

Now the $10 has gone and you're 'in debt'! And for some people this can feel a little confusing.
But, as you learn poses, sequences and 'how this works in MY body', things will start to fall into place over the next few classes, and you'll be able to 'spend' your $$ of attention on new things.

So remember, EVERYBODY has limited attention. Placing it on what you 'can do' and noticing how that attention moves and develops is one of the lovely elements of a growing yoga practice.

Humberto Maturana, Biologist, Cybernetician and Scientist says "Change in nature is what happens when nature conserves what works and discards what doesn't." This is not meant to be a struggle!

5. SKILL

Perhaps surprisingly, there are more skills to learn in yoga than just yoga postures and getting in and out of them.

You'll actually need to UNLEARN some things!

You'll learn new skills in breathing.

Skills in balancing.

Skills in quickly recovering from stress.

Relaxation skills.

Concentration and focus skills (BIG TIME!).

Skills to quieten the mind.

Skills to hold the skeletal body in a more effective position - sitting, standing, walking.

Like any skill, you can learn the essentials quickly, but really refining them takes some time, good intention and attention.

And some of your 'less empowering habits' (you know the ones!) take a little skill-building to overcome.

For all this to happen in your first class is quite frankly impossible ... BUT, your first class is likely to leave you feeling incredibly good. Perhaps cleansed and clear-minded. Perhaps 100% de-stressed. We’ve even known students with LIFELONG problems FIX THEM IN ONE CLASS.

Of course nothing is guaranteed in the first class - what we can and will say is that a dedicated Hot Yoga practice can and will change your life ... if you want it to.

6. BREATHING

We mentioned it before, but breathing is such an important part of getting the most out of a yoga practice - even your
first class - that many teachers say that "it is all about the breath".

'Gym breathing' ... ... is completely different (and in our opinion, not as empowering) as the full yoga breath.

What is 'gym breathing' you ask? Intense and often noisy inhalation through the nose, followed by intense and often noisy exhalation through the mouth. In extreme conditions 'gasp air in and out of the mouth'.

In our opinion, this only encourages 'paradoxical breathing', which is where the stomach contracts as the upper chest expands, not allowing the powerful diaphragm muscle to do its work. In fact, this specifically works against getting the fullest breath possible, because the diaphragm is forced upwards, REDUCING the 'available' lung capacity.

Abdomino-diaphragmatic-breath (a full yoga breath) is a learned skill!

And once learned, is the most wonderful thing to do for your body, mind and soul. Fresh oxygen is our lifeblood. If, for instance, when stressed, you are able to continue to take in the fullest breath available, you will be much more empowered (and feel stronger) then someone else who is 'gasp' - or even worse, holding their breath.

You will quickly and easily learn Abdomino-diaphragmatic-breath in Hot Yoga classes, but be patient and put your attention on your breath. If a posture is 'difficult', ask yourself the following questions:

>> Am I breathing all the way down into my stomach?
>> Does my stomach expand when I breathe in?
>> Or am I 'holding my stomach in' as many of us were taught to do in our youth!

7. EMOTIONAL

So once this all starts to come together ... in that you begin to understand the sequence of poses; you learn to breathe more effectively; your body opens up and lets go of tension ...

... not surprisingly there can be 'emotional releases'.

Sometimes we laugh together in class when someone makes a breakthrough. Maybe you'll hear someone sigh with an 'ah-ha!' And maybe even a tear shed from time to time. So although we say you should be silent in class, sometimes the class is far from silent. And sometimes it is totally silent and focused, one never knows.

Human beings are 'creatures of emotion'. So try not to put too much deep meaning into emotions that come and go in your practice. Just be an observer. Tell yourself "Hmmm, that's interesting" and move on.

Equally you will find your overall emotional balance will improve over time. Maybe, as many of our students do, you'll
find yourself just 'smiling for no good reason'!

There is no question that a sense of peace of mind and a deeper positive emotional connection with life and the people around you is possible to achieve quite quickly with Hot Yoga.

You'll need a regular practice to hold onto it though!

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IF YOU THINK YOU CANNOT DO SOMETHING ...

If you are too tired to go on or you feel dizzy then please to stop for a moment (your teacher may check on you too).

>> Calm your breath and heart rate at first by standing still, looking at yourself in the mirror and inhaling/exhaling through your nose.

>> If you really have to sit down then keep your back straight and chest open to assist your breathing.

>> Always breathe in and out through your nose, mouth closed.

This is a yoga class not a competition! Because of the structure of the class - we do a posture and then we rest and then do another posture - most people find it challenging yet easy to get through the class by taking it one posture at a time.

Everyone's ability in each posture will be different. You are guaranteed to get the benefits of Hot Yoga by doing the best you can in each posture; respond to the instructions, concentrate on alignment and work to your level of discomfort and never pain!

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IMMEDIATELY AFTER CLASS

>> Stay in the yoga room in the final relaxation pose (savasana) for as long as you need to warm down and allow your breathing and heart rate to return to normal. This helps to integrate all the great work you have completed in the last 90mins.

>> Some experienced students stay 10 minutes in savasana in a deep meditation ... beautiful!

>> You will usually be able to shower and change in your studio.

>> Bring plastic bags are available for your wet towels and yoga gear.

After class can be a great time to mingle, pick up tips, meet new yogi friends - or just enjoy the rush of endorphins through your body!

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THE NEXT DAY/FEW DAYS

Reactions the next day are varied. Most new students never feel at all stiff, thanks to the beneficial effects of the heat, but should you feel a little stiff then getting back into the yoga room with the heat and more stretching is the cure. And try a hot bath or spa with Epsom Salts - mmmmm!

It's best to get at least three classes into your first week - your mind will quickly overcome the challenge of the heated room, get to know the postures and you'll be ready to yoga!

You'll also start noticing the benefits IMMEDIATELY - we have some truly wonderful stories from many many students about first class miracles!

Over the next 10 days, your body will acclimatise to exercising in the heated room and you'll be noticing great changes in your flexibility, ability to stretch out necks, arms, legs - and your whole attitude will just seem to lighten up several notches.

Friends and family start to notice that 'yoga glow' in your skin - without you saying a thing!

And remember - this is your journey, no-one else's - and this is your first class, the postures may seem strange, and the heat may feel unbearable. Stick with it.

As Bikram says (somewhat ominously we think, but it is a fun quote!): "It is better to have 90 minutes of hell each day for a lifetime of heaven".

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HOT YOGA?

There is much evidence both scientific and anecdotal to support the benefits of practising yoga on a regular basis. Problems of alignment, rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, diabetes, heart disease, asthma, insomnia, high and low blood pressure, and so many other medical problems have shown much improvement with a regular practice.

Read testimonials from our students at: http://www.quickfityoga.com/HotYogaTestimonials.htm.

The Bikram Yoga site also has a great list of testimonials specific to certain medical conditions. Go to http://www.bikramyoga.com/.

Some of the benefits include:

- Expands your capacity to breathe deeply and fully
- Prevents injury and may prevent or improve chronic illness
- Promotes better sleep, you may even need to sleep less
- Fabulous body toning effects
- Weight loss or gain depending on your body's needs
- Improvement in posture and body awareness
- Improve the healing and regenerative powers of your body
>> Improvement in T cell function and your immune system
>> Improvement in your lymphatic system
>> Lengthening and strengthening of muscles
>> Increased flexibility
>> Improvement in peripheral circulation
>> Improvement in metabolism / digestion
>> Gives the body a cardiovascular workout without negative impacting forces
>> Nervous system is exercised
>> Endocrine and exocrine glands are massaged and stimulated to better function
>> Muscular and skeletal network are enhanced
>> Weight bearing exercise will help prevent osteoporosis
>> Works every organ, gland, nerve, tendon, ligament and muscle in the whole body every class
>> Improves heart and lung function
>> Improves back conditions of pain and misalignment
>> Improves flexibility of your spine in its range of motion in all directions allowing the improvement in function of your central nervous system.
>> Better nervous system communication means a better functioning body and mind
>> Helps cultivate a sense of well-being and a more peaceful mind
>> Integration of both sides of the brain to improve memory, learning, body coordination and balance
>> Builds mental strength and teaches you to hold your mind in a focused and meditative state

WHY IS THE ROOM HEATED?

If you think about it, it makes sense. To best benefit from any exercise program we should always warm our bodies up and at the end warm down. The temperature of the yoga room is similar to our body’s own temperature.

This facilitates faster improvement in many of the benefits resulting from your yoga practice. Just think of it as a hot day.

Or better still, if you have been used to exercising you will recognise that the best feelings come when you are at the peak of your exercise and your body has had enough time to generate the warmth from the inside radiating it out to all of your muscles.

It just doesn’t make sense to exercise in air-conditioning!

HOW CAN I BECOME A YOGA TEACHER?

You need to find a quality course to take - beware as there is a great deal of variation!

If you wish to gain a licensed certificate to teach Bikram Yoga then you must go directly to Bikram Yoga themselves at www.bikramyoga.com – there is no other choice.
But if you are looking for more than just the 26 poses, the I invite you to check out my own Teacher Training “Hot Yoga Doctor Pro 200”.

Read more at www.HotYogaTeacher.com

For more information about Teacher Training, go to: http://www.quickfityoga.com/Yoga-Teacher-Training.htm

WHY DO WE NEED TO SWEAT?

The moisture in the air is the reason you will probably sweat quite a lot. We have experimented with different levels of heat and moisture and have found that it is the increased moisture in the air that is more likely to make you sweat! Many confuse this with the actual temperature. The more people in the room, the more moisture from our breath, the more we sweat.

The quickfityoga studio is thermostatically controlled so the temperature never gets too high. Experts agree that the moisture level for optimal lung function for protection against colds, flu and other respiratory problems such as asthma is around the 60-70% mark.

So enjoy the sweat! It is doing you so much good on so many different levels!

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE HEAT?

When the room is heated we are able to get into our postures more deeply and more effectively and therefore the benefits of the postures come more quickly. You will find like countless thousands who have come to this yoga before you, that it is a satisfying and almost addictive feeling of achievement to be in the warm room.

The benefits are many:

>> Your body burns fat more effectively, fat may be redistributed and burned as energy during the class. It is very common to lose centimetres of shape in a very short period of time

>> The warm temperature produces a fluid like stretch allowing for greater range of movement in joints, muscles, ligaments and other supporting structures of the body

>> Capillaries dilate in the heat; more effectively oxygenating the tissues, muscles, glands and organs and also helps in the removal of waste products

>> Your peripheral circulation improves due to enhanced perfusion of your extremities

>> Your metabolism speeds up the breakdown of glucose and fatty acids

>> You benefit from a strengthening of willpower, self
control, concentration and determination in this challenging environment

>> Your cardiovascular system gets a thorough work-out

>> Your muscles and connective tissue become more elastic and allow for greater flexibility with much less chance of injury and increased chance of injury resolution. Scar tissue is more easily broken down and eliminated

>> Promotes sweating and detoxification and elimination through the skin which is the body's largest eliminating organ

>> Just as when your body raises its temperature to fight infection, the raised temperature in the room will assist in improving T-cell function and the proper functioning of your immune system

>> Your nervous system function is greatly improved and messages are carried more efficiently to and from your brain and spinal cord

>> It improves your metabolism in the digestive system and in the body's cells (that is; food in the gut and nutrients in the cells)

WHAT IF I AM NOT FLEXIBLE?

This is the most common misconception which prevents many people from starting yoga. Yoga is not about how flexible you are, but about strengthening your body and spine in all directions. All that matters is that you try the right way and you will get 100% of the benefits. Yoga stresses the importance of strengthening your mind and body. With regular practice you will see great improvements in your concentration and flexibility.

THE QUICKFITYOGA ENVIRONMENT:
DOES YOUR HOT YOGA STUDIO DO THIS?

We believe in a positive, supportive environment. No matter what your background, capability, goals, yoga is a great equaliser and that's how we believe everyone should be treated.

You'll be encouraged to maximise the alignment in your postures; coached to reap the rewards of good deep breathing; coaxed to find 'new places' in your Hot Yoga practice.

This is done extremely positively - no 'drills', shouting, no "No, no, no that's wrong". (Yes, sounds ridiculous, but there are yoga instructors who do this .... we don't condone it.)

After class is an excellent time to share experiences, to ask for tips and techniques - or just to make some new, like-minded friends.

So you really ARE going to go! Here is how to get started ...
BEFORE COMING TO YOUR FIRST CLASS

It's your first class! Take all the pressure off yourself by having no expectations other than enjoying the decision you've made.

Brand new students will gain the most by arriving 20 minutes early for registration and a confidence-inspiring orientation.

Please note, only Private Classes are now available (Contact us here: http://www.hotyogadoctor.com/index.php/site/contact)

>> Make sure you drink plenty of water before (and after class).

>> It is best to minimise eating before class to light meals about 2-3 hours before yoga.

>> If you are attending a morning class, having a light breakfast - perhaps just non-citrus fruit - might help you. Heavy cereals or the full fried breakfast just don't mix well with yoga.

And finally, choose your day (did you know Monday nights are the most popular 'new student' night? It's a 'start the week well' thing we think) and prepare by re-reading this guide.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT TO BRING TO A TYPICAL CLASS ...

>> Your own yoga mat.
>> NEW STUDENTS – always arrive early!
>> Yoga mats usually available at most studios.
>> You’ll need your own LARGE beach towel to place on your mat (and one to use with your shower after class)
>> A sipper water bottle / sports bottle.
>> Women: wear gym gear with sleeveless tops. T-shirt sleeves get in the way.
>> Men and women: mid-thigh length bike shorts are probably the best and most comfortable. Shorts are fine.

Still need more? Visit our informative web sites at www.HotYogaDoctor.com and www.QuickFitYoga.com – the No.1 Hot Yoga Sites in the world for many years running!

And do let us know how you are going! Perhaps your testimonial can inspire someone else just needing that extra bit of motivation ....

Namaste
(Sanskrit for "I honour or bow to the divine in you")

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Introducing: The Hot Yoga MasterClass™

Whether you are just starting your hot yoga or Bikram method yoga practice, or you are a hard-core regular, this **brand new resource** will accelerate your results and have you enjoying a new depth of benefits like never before!

*I purchased the entire package and have not stopped reading and rereading yet! I choose one pose to critique in my 90 minute session and make the adjustments suggested in the text. My backbend has never been this deep! How do I know, the instructor commented that it looked good!*  

FayeJ, FL, USA

*Wow… Gabrielle, you and your team, have developed a fabulous resource - I love the whole set. Even though I am new to Hot yoga, I practice at two studios because I value the different perspectives offered by each teacher. Your gorgeous book is filled with amazing pictures and explanations, and it offers a whole new insight. I had been resisting some poses in class. Because I now understand the intent of these poses, they have become favorites! You have fuelled my addiction to Hot yoga... and of all the addictions to have, I believe it is a pretty good one!*  

Shona, Brisbane, Australia

[www.HotYogaMasterClass.com](http://www.HotYogaMasterClass.com)
Totaling 304 pages, with 744 full-color photographs, you’ll find everything you need to know about all your favorite (and not so-favorite!) hot yoga poses:

- The Essential Elements;
- “What Makes This Pose So Difficult To Get Right?”
- Step-By-Step Instructions For Getting In-And-Out Of Every Pose;
- Common Mistakes – And How To Fix Them (With Photos – This Information Is NOT Available Anywhere Else!);
- Modifications For Injuries / Restrictions / Different Body-Types;
- And much much more!

If you want to know more about how exactly The Hot Yoga MasterClass™ 304-page manual and 2-Volume DVD will TRANSFORM your practice, GUARANTEED, head straight to:

http://www.hotyogamasterclass.com/
[and see the package deals!]

May your journey continue to delight you ...

Namaste

gabrielle

Gabrielle Raiz