



Choosing & Arranging Poses

Description

Overview of Sequencing Guidelines

Here the focus is on the specific task of choosing and sequencing poses. But of course, poses are only one part of a yoga practice. To learn more about sequencing other practices, please see [Sequencing to Balance Energy](#) and [Class Elements](#).

Overview

1. Have a clear reason for the choice and placement of every pose in a sequence.
2. It's generally accepted that a balanced yoga practice will move the spine in each of its directions.
3. Moving joints through their full range of motion can help prevent injury as well as relieve joint pain and stiffness.
4. Use knowledge of the agonist / antagonist muscle relationship when sequencing and class planning.
5. Be mindful of promoting overall balance, noting in particular the area of strength and flexibility.
6. When preparing for a peak pose, introduce a progressive sequence of poses that educate the student and imprint actions in the body.
7. Consider length (or proportion of lengths) of each segment of class. This will help to avoid having a backbending series take too long or finding that the proportion of standing vs. seated poses doesn't feel right or that the cool down is rushed or *Savasana* is too short.

Reasons for Choosing Poses

Poses are chosen for such reasons as:

1. To connect breath and movement.

2. To heat or cool the body.
3. To loosen up or engage a body part.
4. To support an energetic arc of class.
5. To imprint an anatomical action via a pose that is less demanding than one to come.
6. To move the spine in a particular way.
7. To neutralize between different spinal movements.
8. To counter the effects of a deep pose.

A PURPOSE FOR EVERY POSE

When I train teachers, I always ask, “Why did you select that particular pose?” If they can’t answer, I make them go back to the drawing (sequencing) board. **Bernadette Birney**

See Also

- [Sequencing Fundamentals](#)

Move the Spine



It’s generally accepted that a balanced yoga practice will move the spine in each of its directions:

Forward Bending

- Example “[Happy Baby Pose](#)”
- Learn more “[Forward Bending](#)”

Backbending

- Example “[Bhujangasana \(Cobra Pose\)](#)”
- Learn more “[Backbending](#)”

Lateral Movement

- Example “[Parighasana \(Gate Pose\)](#)”
- Learn more “[Lateral / Side Bends & Asymmetrical Poses](#)”

Twist

- Example “[Ardha Matsyendrasana \(Half Lord of the Fishes\)](#)”
- Learn more “[Twists](#)”

Spinal Extension / Axial Extension / Elongation

- Example â?? [Urdhva Hastasana \(Upward Salute\)](#)
- Learn more â?? [Spinal Movements: Axial Extension](#)

Inversion

- Example â?? [Salamba Sarvangasana \(Supported Shoulderstand\)](#)
- Learn more â?? [Inversions](#)

See Also

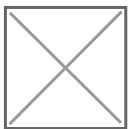
- [Anatomy: Spinal Movements](#)
- [Pose Categories & Families: Introduction & Overview](#)

THERE IS GENERALLY ONE SPINAL MOVEMENT AT A TIME

While we can achieve movements in multiple directions at the same time at the hips, it is much more rare to move the spine in multiple directions at the same time. This fact means that if we want to move the spine through all six degrees of freedom, we will need six postures to do so. However, we can add movements at the hips while we target the spine, as shown in Figure 2 which shows a student in Saddle pose: she is internally rotating her hips while extending the spine. (If she were lying flat on the floor she would have very little, if any, extension occurring in her lower back.) â?? **YinYoga.com**

Figure 2: Saddle Pose creates an extension of the spine if the student is not lying completely flat on

Use Knowledge of Biomechanics



Joint Movements

- Moving joints through their full range of motion can help prevent injury as well as relieve joint pain and stiffness.
- And knowledge of which joint movements are involved in each pose enables identification of specific anatomical issues related to studentsâ?? particular challenges.

MOVE THE JOINTS THROUGH THEIR ROM

Begin by considering the various ways that these joints can move and then select postures that take [them] through all their degrees of freedom. Table 1 shows these degrees of freedom for our main joints. â?? **YinYoga.com**

Muscle Pairs

The agonist / antagonist muscle relationship shows that when one muscle contracts, another muscle stretches.

- This key relationship among muscles for movement can guide the intention you set to address an anatomical area.
- Avoid choosing too many poses that use similar muscular actions.

Details Provided in a Structured Way

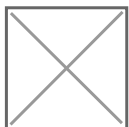
The following material builds knowledge on this topic sequentially. The last lesson (Key Muscles Pairs in Movement) concludes with a section on Teaching Applications which includes Sequencing & Class Planning:

- [Muscle Movement and Contraction](#)
- [Joint Movements, Joint Mobility & ROM](#)
- [Key Muscle Pairs in Movement ??? Agonist / Antagonist Relationship](#)

See Also

- Structural Yoga Therapy ??? In this excellent book, Mukunda Stiles details the joint-freeing series: a set of specific movements to systematically move all joints. (p 121)

Take a Longer View



A fundamental sequencing principle is the necessity of setting a class objective and this is a prime basis from which to choose poses. (See [Sequencing Fundamentals.](#)) Here we take that a step further and encourage teachers to take a longer-term view of class planning. We call this a [Strategic Teaching Plan](#) or it could be called a teaching curriculum.

This is a high-level look at your teaching over a period of time, such as a season, month, or week. With a Strategic Teaching Plan, you clarify your intention for a particular time period or multiple time periods. The plan may be designed to:

1. Balance the effects of seasons.
2. Honor holidays and observances.
3. Respond to particular conditions.
4. Guide students deeper on a topic, whether philosophical, physical or other.
5. Or, progress through a series of related topics.

See the expert wisdom below to consider how this impacts your choice of poses for each class.

Jason Crandell does a superb job of describing this topic here:

Crandell says, “We might end up with a really good one-off class, but if we don’t have a consistent curriculum and if we don’t have clear teaching points and if we are afraid of repetition, then we’re not really setting up a true learning environment where people are going to make efficient progress.” He believes that yoga teachers, like school teachers, should have well thought-out short-term and long-term objectives that they clearly communicate with their students; and that classes need to be consistent enough for students to truly learn appropriate technique and the poses. That isn’t happening if teachers feel like they need to be continually changing their sequences, themes, and focal points. **Meagan McCrary**

And Baxter Bell offers excellent advice here:

I always consider what I taught last week in my classes. I typically teach a similar sequence in all my classes in a given week, modifying it a bit depending on the group of students who show up. Lately, I have been writing out my sequences at the start of the week! If you have a long-term goal that you’re working on, this can give you a clue about how to [plan] your practice. For example, if you are working on one of the four essential physical skills (strength, flexibility, balance, and agility) you could select a poses or poses that focus on the area that you want to concentrate on. **Baxter Bell**

Go deeper: [Creating Strategic Teaching Plans](#)

Promote Overall Balance

Introduction

- Be mindful of the overall goal to promote balance in mind, body and spirit.
- To meet such an immensely valuable goal involves intuitive sensibility which every teacher has and continues to develop over time.
- In addition, there are some techniques that you can employ to promote balance, such as the following.

Techniques

- Avoid practicing too many poses on one side before practicing the second side.
- [Sequence to balance energy.](#)
- [Move the spine through all directions.](#)
- [Use counterposes to neutralize the effects of deep poses.](#)
- Balance strength and flexibility (see below).

Balance Strength & Flexibility



Another specific area of balance to consider is strength and flexibility.

Why This is Particularly Relevant

- While this is one of the many [yin/yang](#) aspects of being human, the topic of strength and flexibility balance is also particularly relevant as it relates to the tendency among some yoga practitioners to [overstretch](#).
- In addition, modern postural yoga *asana* has come to feature an abundance of particular types of movements â?? and not others. Thus, a lifestyle that includes excessive amounts of particular *asana* without complementary movements will tend to lead to imbalance. (See also: Andrey Lappaâ??s philosophy [here](#) and Trina Altmanâ??s article [here](#))

Itâ??s also worth noting that oftentimes when something feels tight or stiff, itâ??s actually weak. If youâ??ve been stretching your hips for the last decade and they still feel tight, that could be a sign that you could benefit from strengthening them. You might even find that the sensations of stiffness and tightness go away when your muscles are strong enough to support your joints. â?? **Trina Altman**

There is Some Complexity

- The topic of balancing strength and flexibility is complex in part because these qualities are not general abilities but are specific to a particular part of the body.
- For example, a person might have strong quadriceps and weak hamstrings or tight lumbar muscles and flexible adductors.
- There tend to be patterns, of course, such as in Lower Crossed Syndrome where some muscles around the hip and spine become tight and some become weak and stretched. (See more: [Yoga & Conditions of the Back & Spine](#).) But the point is that not only do different students have different situations, their own bodies have a fascinating mix of needs.
- On another note, yoga *asana* class is, of course, not required to do everything and be everything in terms of a personâ??s movement. There are plenty of other physical activities that people can and do participate in and such activities as resistance training, walking or running, swimming or physical therapy can be tasked with some of a personâ??s physical needs.
- In fact, a common benefit of *asana* is its ability to bring balance to the physical effects of gardening, hiking, cycling and so on.

Promoting Balance

The good news is that yoga is supremely effective at addressing the complexity of humans through a holistic approach that has at its foundation such effective assumptions as:

- [Divine Wholeness](#)
- [Bodily Connectedness \(including fascia\)](#)
- [The Science of Oneness](#)

In addition, when deciding on the inclusion of strengthening vs. lengthening poses in a pose sequence, consider such factors as these:

- General physical state, experience level and tendencies of students in this particular class, including tendencies to [overstretch](#) (see also: [Beginners](#), [Seniors](#), [Adaptation Principles](#))
- Class [objective](#)
- Actions needed to practice peak pose (see below)
- How contracting muscles assists in then relaxing them (as taught in [PNF techniques](#))

Sage Rountree speaks to this topic here:

All sports injuries are the result of some kind of imbalance. Sometimes you literally lose your balance and fall, causing an acute injury like a sprained ankle or torn ACL. More insidiously, training itself can develop an imbalance between strength and flexibility that leads to an overuse injury like patellar tendonitis or piriformis syndrome. To correct such muscular imbalance in your body, you need to open any constricted areas — those where you don't have enough flexibility to move easily — and to strengthen the relatively weak areas. The opening has to precede the strengthening for the strengthening to have full effect; otherwise, you're fighting against the limitations tightness imposes. Take, for example, someone like me who's trying to improve her posture to correct a tendency to slump. Passive backbends will help stretch the front of the chest, which is overtight; once that's open, active backbends will strengthen the back muscles, which are comparatively weak. — **Sage Rountree**

Rountree adds the insight that opening needs to precede strengthening due to the limitations that tightness brings.

- Note that this advice is NOT about how to sequence poses within a class (where, often, strengthening poses such as *Utkatasana* (Chair Pose) and *Navasana* (Boat Pose) are sequenced earlier in class than stretching)
- Rather, her point is regarding working more generally on a longer-term objective of gaining — balanced strength. —•

Specific Strengthening Considerations

Two types of strengthening often noted as missing from some *asana* classes are:

1. Upper body pulling movements
2. Hip strengthening and stabilizing

SPECIFIC STRENGTHENING RECOMMENDATIONS

Yoga could start incorporating more upper body — pulling movements! As adults, most of our daily tasks involve pushing motions (think strollers, shopping carts, lawn mowers). The same is true in modern postural yoga *asana*. For example, you are often pushing the ground away in many poses like Plank, Downward-Facing Dog and Crow. However, there are few opportunities to pull against load or your own body weight!

Yoga could start including more hip strength and stability work to balance out all the hip openingâ! Most of the people taking yoga classes today are stiff men who sit at desks all day and women who have a lot of natural flexibility. While itâs not bad to open your hips, these populations are not always best served by extensive hip opening, at least in the beginning. A wiser approach would be to build hip stability first for control of your range of motion as you increase mobilityâ!

Yoga could start focusing on strength at end range of motion to reduce the risk of injury from passive stretchingâ! While itâs not bad to practice asana in end range of motion, if you intend to do it, itâs smart to be strong in those ranges. An example of this is *Supta Padangusthasana B*. When you practice this pose with a strap, you are exploring your passive end range of motion. When you remove the strap and perform the same action, youâll discover your active range of motion. The difference between your passive range of motion and your active range of motion can show you the importance of finding strength and control in ranges of motion that you can actually use. Those last couple inches, where youâre most passive, demonstrate the range where you have the least amount of muscular support or control and are most likely to get injured. â Trina Altman

Peak Pose Sequencing



When sequencing a class featuring a Peak Pose, consider these questions:

From Christina Sell:

1. What are the [common misalignments of the pose](#)?
2. What parts of the body need to be opened and prepared?
3. What are the key actions required in the [pose](#)?
4. What are [related poses](#) that share similar shapes and benefits?

From Olga Kabel:

1. What is the [position of the spine](#) in the pose? (e.g. [Dhanurasana](#) is a prone symmetrical backbend)
2. What is the [spinal action](#)? (e.g. thoracic and lumbar spinal extension)
3. What is the [shoulder girdle](#) action? (e.g. shoulders internally rotated and extended back)
4. What is the [pelvic girdle](#) action? (e.g. hips extended, knees flexed)

From Jason Crandell:

1. What are the legs and hips doing in the pose?
2. What are the core and spine doing in the pose?
3. What are the shoulders and arms doing in the pose?

From Mark Stephens:



1. What needs to be open?
2. What needs to be cooperative in allowing that specific opening?
3. What needs to be stable?
4. What are the sources of that stability?
5. What are the basic postural forms and alignment principles of the peak *asana*?
6. What are the energetic actions of the peak *asana*?
7. What tension is likely to arise in doing the *asanas* on the pathway to the peak?
8. What *asanas* can address the new areas of tension along the pathway to the peak without compromising the warming and opening generated?

TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITY

As yoga teachers we have the responsibility to both analyze the biomechanics of movement in any difficult posture and try to foresee potential risks that it has for the body. Then we need to prepare our students for that particular pose and do our best to minimize the risk. ?? **Olga Kabel**

MAKE PRACTICE ACCESSIBLE

Designing a sequence of actions leading to the peak of a practice is all about making the practice simpler, more accessible, deeper, and more sustainable! The peak should not be confused with the point of maximum internal heat generated through prior actions and poses; it is not so much about peak heat as peak openness. ?? **Mark Stephens**

CHOOSE A RELEVANT SUPINE POSITION FOR OPENING

Pick a pose that has a moderate learning curve, and figure out how to teach the main muscle actions from a supine position during your opening. For example, if you want to teach *Bakasana* (Crow Pose), cue students to engage the serratus anterior, retract the shoulder blades, keep a strong core and round the spine slightly while placing the knees on the outsides of the triceps. This signals the neuromuscular system to recreate the same actions when the arm balance resurfaces later in the practice. ?? **Joy Keller**

MAINTAIN HEAT FOR ACTIVE PART OF SESSION

Once you have warmed-up and begun to engage in the heart of your yoga session, if it is an active session, you will generate a certain amount of heat. You want to maintain this heat for the duration of the active part of your session because it lends to the flexibility of your spine and body in general and keeps you mentally prepared for engaging in active *asana* work. Once you begin to cool down from your session, it is not good to have any more heating or active poses. Rather, you should gently move your body into preparation for *Savasana*. ?? **Brad Priddy**

WHEN IMPRINTING ACTIONS, STAY FOCUSED

Each pose should inform the next one and teach you something about that next pose. For example, these three poses work well together: *Virabhadrasana II* (Warrior Pose II) to *Utthita Trikonasana* (Extended Triangle Pose) to *Utthita Parsvakonasana* (Extended Side Angle Pose). They all have the

same basic foundation, the legs are externally rotated, and their actions are similar, explains Rizopoulos. Essentially, the legs of Warrior Pose II + the reach of Extended Triangle Pose = Extended Side Angle Pose. But if you add neutral standing poses, such as Warrior I and Warrior III, to the mix before switching sides, it will distract from the actions you need to reach your peak pose, in this case, Extended Side Angle. â?? **Tasha Eichenseher**

REMEMBER ITâ??S NOT REALLY ABOUT THE PEAK POSE

Today in class we did a big build up toward *Parsva Bakasana*; everyone in the room tried it, half got it, and once everyone sat down, I asked them if they thought I cared whether they could do the pose. Of course, they all said â??No!â?? in unison. The pose is not only a vehicle for creating physical strength and openness but mental strength and openness. Whatâ??s the quality of mind while youâ??re working on the pose? Are you clear, are you committed, are you present? Thatâ??s whatâ??s translatable outside of the room. â?? **Natasha Rizopoulos**

See Also

- [Sequence Library: Peak Pose Classes](#)

Vinyasa Flow Sequencing

Prioritize Safe Sequencing Over Artistry

- When sequencing *vinyasa* flow, all [fundamental sequencing](#) principles apply.
- In particular, while graceful transitions, unique pose flows, and other artistry may be an element of such sequences, teachers are cautioned to prioritize safe and sound sequencing principles.

Beware of Excessive Repetition & Unsafe Alignment

When sequencing a class that features a lot of repetition such as with *Surya Namaskar* or â??*vinyasa*, â??• be cautious to:

- Safe alignment is always of top importance, but becomes even more so when a movement is repeated excessively.
- Consider other ways to meet objectives to offer a balanced and safe sequence. For example, *Chaturanga Dandasana* is an excellent strengthening pose but also has a number of risks, particularly when repeated excessively in a flow sequence. There are many ways to mitigate risks such as teaching alignment and variations. But there are even more options. You can, for example, do fewer â??*vinyasas*â??• and more *Chaturanga* push-ups or longer holds, where you can oversee alignment and lessen the likelihood of unsafe transitioning due to repetition.

Learn More

- [Mindful Asana Transitions](#)



- [Surya Namaskar & Chandra Namaskar](#) â?? Includes many detailed variations, videos and instructions
- [The Future of Flow: 7 Questions for Vinyasa Teachers to Start Thinking Critically About \(by Megan McCrary\)](#)

CLASS ARC: BELL CURVE, NOT A TRIANGLE

Every *vinyasa* yoga class should follow a bell curve, not a triangle, to help practitioners avoid injury and leave class in a rested state. Here are the three essential components that every practice should have: A slow warm-upâ?; a themeâ?; a slow cool-down. You want to cool down SLOWLY to unwind the nervous system and land in a very even and gentle way at the end of the practice. This is so important â?? so many people walk away from a practice shaking and itâ??s inappropriate, especially to get in a car and drive home while youâ??re still amped up. â?? **Eddie Modestini**

VARYING SUN SALUTATIONS

The Sun Salutations are the perfect place to showcase your creativity. Low-lunge twists, extended heart-openers, deep forward folds, even some balancing poses â?? pick two things that will give the class a taste of what you will be serving, and place them delicately within the sequence. I tend to make the first set of Sun Salutations long and creative by stepping back into Downward Dog, flowing through a short sequence, and stepping forward; the second set is shorter by stepping right back into *Chaturanga* and jumping forward; the third set goes right from Chair into jumping back, and then the main sequence starts. â?? **Kendall Berents**

Travel & Office Sequencing

When in confined and public spaces, â??sequencingâ?• takes on a different perspective. Here are some considerations:

- Practice [mindfulness](#). Stay aware of body sensations, mental activity and state of the breath.
- Be committed to engaging in practices to bring balance. â??Donâ??t be shy, allow your inner yogi to shine!â?•
- Prioritize [natural breathing](#), [basic breath practices](#), [yogic breathing](#) and [pranayama](#) as appropriate.
- Consider [stretches](#), [pose adaptations](#) and [Chair Yoga](#) for practicing within confined spaces.

OFFICE YOGA

And if people have been sitting all day, start them moving in a different plane instead of more seated work. My favorite (if thereâ??s space for it) is to start standing with feet a little wider than hip distance and turning quickly right and left from the hips (and the opposite foot will pivot as you turn) with the arms dangling and swaying as you twist. You can add to this by making gentle fists that will â??tapâ?• your ribs and back as you twist. If thereâ??s not much room, a simple â??shakingâ?• practice will also work. Shaking the hands, arms, legs like youâ??re trying to get water off of them. Then, slowly work toward balancing the energy in excess. Allow the progression of the sequence to go from quicker

movement to slower *vinyasas* with the breath (cat/cow, standing balance flows, half sun salutations, bridge *vinyasas*). Eventually move to holding poses for a couple breaths. The overall pace will begin to slow. This attention to sequencing will gently lead the yogi to be able to experience rest without heaviness (*tamas*) and to practice stillness without the racing mind (*rajas*). â?? **Alison Wesley**

Neutralizers & Counterposes to Bring Balance



Neutralize vs. Counter

- Many sources use the terms â??neutralizeâ?• and â??counterposeâ?• interchangeably, recommending that we neutralize the effects of a pose with a counterpose.
- Other sources differentiate between these terms, which can make it easier to understand how to implement this concept effectively.

Neutral Poses

- Rodney Yee defines â??neutral posesâ?• as those that allow for natural spinal curves and a sense of ease. (Moving Toward Balance 2004 p 356)
- When neutralizing poses are recommended, it is with the intention that they follow poses of a specific spinal movement, such as backbending, before embarking on a new type such as twisting or forward bending.
- Neutralizing poses can also serve the purpose of allowing students time to â??pause and feelâ?• the effects of previous poses.
- Another way to think of neutralizing is in relation to asymmetrical poses. After practicing both sides, a symmetrical pose invites a sense of balance.
- Yee provides examples of neutral poses that include [Virasana \(Hero Pose\)](#), [Dandasana \(Stick / Staff Pose\)](#), [Ananda Balasana \(Happy Baby\)](#) and [Tadasana \(Mountain Pose\)](#).
- Viniyoga considers forward bends to be â??universal neutralizers.â?•

Counterposes

T.K.V. Desikachar defines a counterpose as the simplest *asana* that relieves tension created from previous poses.

1. A key is using the simplest neutralizer. It is not wise to follow a deep backbend with a deep forward bend, for instance. In 5 Common Sequencing Errors, Kathryn Heagberg describes the risk of, for example, hugging knees to chest immediately following a deep backbend.
2. Counterposes are not applied *asana* by *asana*. Typically, countering occurs after a category of poses has been practiced, such as after a series of backbends.



T. K. V. Desikachar provides in-depth coverage and examples of counterposes in *The Heart of Yoga* 1995 pgs 25-37.

T.K.V. DESIKACHAR

For any one *asana* there may be various counterposes possible, depending on where the tension is felt. Whenever we feel excessive tension in any area of the body after a posture, we must try to alleviate it with a counterpose; that is, the simplest *asana* that relieves the tension. The counterpose for a powerful forward bend is a gentle back bend. **â?? T.K.V. Desikachar**

FORWARD BENDS AS UNIVERSAL NEUTRALIZERS

The Viniyoga tradition views forward bends as universal neutralizers for all directional movements of the spine. The forward bends are considered the â??the hub of the wheel,â?• with back bends, lateral bends and twists forming the spokes of the wheel. It means that we would never place a backbend and lateral bend next to each other, or a backbend next to a twistâ??there always will be a forward bend of some sort in between. **â?? Olga Kabel**

A PAUSE IN THE ACTION TO DIGEST

Visualize a sequence of poses building one to the next and then when you reach a crescendo of that particular energy, insert something that balances it. I call these â??digest itâ?• moments. They arenâ??t always about taking rest, sometimes they are just a pause or a shift in the action to allow the students to digest the experience youâ??ve just co-created with them. **â?? Gina Caputo**

CHOOSING APPROPRIATE COUNTERPOSES

[After] holding a yin posture for a long periodâ? time is needed to allow the tissues to regain their normal stability, but the amount of time required can be reduced through appropriate counterposes. A counterpose moves the body in the opposite direction of the previous stresses. After flexing the spine for several minutes, do a short extension. After external rotation, do internal rotation. Notice that counterposes are not held as long, nor move the body as deep as the original pose, because then the counterpose would require another counterpose and we enter an infinite loop of counterposes needing counterposesâ? From tables 2 and 3, the selection of counterposes are easy to determine. If you have held an external rotation for 5 minute, select a short internal rotation from the postures listed. After flexions, choose some extension. Twists generally are their own counterposes through doing the opposite side. **â?? YinYoga.com**

DONâ??T ALTERNATE BETWEEN POSE AND COUNTERPOSE

Donâ??t alternate back and forth between forward bends and back bends. It is true that one good way to wind down from a session of back bends is to use a few gentle forward bends to recover and refresh the spine. However, one way that yoga was taught, especially in the early days of yoga in the West, was that you should alternate â??pose and counter-pose,â?• moving back and forth between a forward bend and a back bend to move the spine in both directions. Generally, this is not a good practiceâ? One pose should lead you into the next pose by means of its similarity with the next pose, not by means

of opposition. â?? **Brad Priddy**

NEUTRALIZE, INTEGRATE, REFINE & DEEPEN

The objective of *pratikriyasana* is to integrate prior actions in a way that prepares students to move forward into the next asana, sequence, class, or later activity free of tension and as balanced and blissful as possible. This principle is often applied with its literal meaning of â??opposite action,â?• â??counterpose,â?• or â??counteraction.â?• This can be problematic, especially when applied *asana* by *asana*. For example, in this narrow conception of *pratikriyasana*! the opposite of *Sirsasana* I (Headstand) would be *Tadasana* or *Urdhva Hastasana*, likely causing some students to become dizzy and possibly fall, and in any case not giving the simplest path to the release of accrued tension and thus the integration of the *asana*. What we want to do instead is to neutralize, integrate, refine, and deepen along a path in which successively sequenced *asanas* are similar, not opposite, while being attentive to releasing accumulated tension. There are many ways to sequence *asanas* for effective *pratikriyasana*. Generally, first offer students the simplest form of a neutralizing *asana*, and then offer variations or successively more complex *asanas* to reduce accumulated tension and restore overall stability and ease. Rather than approaching *pratikriyasana asana* by *asana*, it is better to take a broader view of entire practices, considering where, in the small sequences that make up an entire class, neutralizing and opposing *asanas* can help students to integrate their practice. â??

WellnessFeel.com

Concluding with Savasana



Itâ??s universally recommended that *asana* practice conclude with *Savasana* (Corpse Pose) in order for students to integrate the benefits of the practice before transitioning to their next activity.

- *Savasana* is also a restorative posture designed to release attachment to the body and encourage access to oneâ??s higher Self.
- Some teachings note that it takes at least fifteen minutes to fully relax.

Another common guideline is to design a practice that includes 5 minutes of *Savasana* for every 30 minutes of *asana*.

Author

michaeljoelhall