



Segmenting Your Class

Description

The Challenge



It can be challenging to accomplish all of your intentions without the class “getting away from you” i.e. becoming imbalanced with too much focus in one area or not enough time left for [an adequate Savasana](#), for example.

More specifically, to skillfully design and teach an effective sequence requires many tasks such as:

1. Working within a confined [time that varies by class](#)
2. Adhering to [wise teaching guidelines](#) and [safety cautions](#)
3. [Moving the spine in all directions](#)
4. [Considering all joints](#)
5. [Neutralizing](#) throughout class
6. [Effectively weaving in a theme](#)
7. [Teaching an overall balanced or intentional class](#) while creating an energetic arc from warm up to peak intensity and back down
8. Meeting the needs of [various student types](#) plus [adapting for individual needs](#)

Sample Framework



Introduction

- Depending upon the style and intention for class, there can be quite a lot of variance among teachers, but no matter the approach, thinking of a class in segments can help to ensure it feels balanced and effectively meets your intentions.
- Consider dividing your class into sections and applying a percentage of class time to each. This makes it easy to adapt a class to different lengths such as 45, 60, 75 or 90 minutes.

Sample

Here's a starting place from which to create your own timing of segments:

1. **Welcome, Opening, Warm Up** 15 to 20% of class
2. **Heat Building, Standing Poses** 20 to 25%
3. **Inversions, Arm Balances, Floor Poses** 20 to 25%
4. **Cooling, Slowing Down** 15 to 20%
5. **Savasana, Pranayama, Meditation, Closing** 15 to 20%

Another helpful practice for more easily noticing if a class has begun to "get behind" is this:

- Take note of your targeted end time for each segment of class and then periodically watch the clock while teaching.
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Here's a tool we developed for newer teachers. These percentages are simply from our own experience; please vary them according to your style and goals.

Class 12:00 start time

Phase	75 min class	60 min class
20% Welcome, centering, warm ups	15 min12:15	12 min12:12
25% Heat building, standing	20 min12:35	15 min12:27
20% Inversions, floor poses e.g. hip stretches, backbends	15 min12:50	12 min12:39
15% Cool down e.g. shoulderstand, twists, forward bends	10 min1:00	9 min12:48
20% Savasana & closing	15 min1:15	12 min1:00

See Also

- Use the [Class Builder](#) to note your plans by segment.

Focus by Segment



The following are ideas and considerations for class segments. Not all suggestions will be relevant to all styles. Use this framework to build and tweak according to your own style and intentions.

Opening

1. Design an opening that gives an opportunity for students to center themselves.
2. Keep opening and initial centering practice to a particular time limit, such as 8 minutes, in order to ensure students, have the opportunity to soon begin simple movement and connecting with their breath.
3. You may wish to introduce a theme here.

See Also

- [Meditation & Mindfulness Practices](#)
- [Themes & Readings \(includes Guidelines, Theme Plans and much more\)](#)
- [Research & Study Guides: Warm-Up Practices](#)

Warm Up

1. Meet students where they are energetically. For example, if students appear tired or lethargic, you may choose to begin with poses on the floor and/or poses that have a slow and gentle rhythm. And if students have excess energy, you might choose to begin with standing poses or poses that require more focus or energy.
2. Use rhythmic movement during warm up.
3. Avoid static holds, many seated forward bends and in-depth alignment teachings until students have a chance to become attuned to their breath and inner state.
4. Avoid too much verbal instruction before students have a chance to move their bodies and become attuned to their breath and inner state.
5. If you did not introduce a theme during the Opening, you may wish to do so here.

See Also

- [Sequencing Fundamentals & Guidelines](#)
- [Choosing & Arranging Poses](#)
- [Sequencing & Pacing to Balance Energy](#)
- [Research & Study Guides: Warm-Up Practices](#)
- [Surya Namaskar](#)

Heat Building

1. Choose poses that prepare for the rest of class.
2. For Peak Pose Sequencing, see [Choosing & Arranging Poses](#).

See Also



- [Sequencing Fundamentals & Guidelines](#)
- [Choosing & Arranging Poses](#)
- [Asana Categories](#)
- [Asana Category Themed Classes](#)
- [Peak Pose Themed Classes](#)
- [Sequencing & Pacing to Balance Energy](#)
- [Surya Namaskar](#)

Floor Poses

1. Be sure to be knowledgeable about Asana Categories including their effects and sequencing considerations.
2. Ensure to plan for proper neutralizing and counterposes.

See Also

- [Sequencing Fundamentals & Guidelines](#)
- [Choosing & Arranging Poses](#)
- [Asana Categories](#)
- [Sequencing & Pacing to Balance Energy](#)

Savasana

- Consider calculating a *Savasana* length of 5 minutes for every 30 minutes of *asana*.

See Also

- [Savasana](#)
- [Restorative Yoga \(including Savasana\) Inspiration](#)

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