



Yin Yoga Poses & Sequences

Description

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, we explain the distinguishing characteristics of a pose practiced in Yin Yoga style (vs. the *yang* version) and provide a list of poses commonly found in Yin Yoga plus sample sequences.

Objective

Gain an understanding of the characteristics that distinguish the ways in which a pose is practiced in Yin Yoga and review a list of common poses and sample sequences.

Description

Review the perspective that poses are not typically yin poses or yang poses per se, but rather that there are distinguishing characteristics for how a pose is practiced that creates the differentiation. Give examples of pose naming in Yin Yoga and provide a list of poses commonly found in Yin Yoga.

Are There Yin Poses and Yang Poses?



Sarah Powers proposes that poses are not distinctly *yin* or *yang*. Rather, what differentiates a pose in Yin Yoga is how it is practiced, including:

1. Muscular engagement vs. release,
2. Activity that is slow, steady and stationary
3. The length of time in the pose
4. An emphasis on stimulation of connective tissues

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YIN YOGA & YANG YOGA

Yin yoga activity is slow, steady, and often stationary, with a sense of core softness and surrender. Yang yoga activity is mobile, builds to an apex before calming down, and maintains a core strength that requires appropriate effort. The main difference between these different styles of engagement is a matter of degrees – a shift not so much in which poses we choose (for a yoga pose is not in and of itself Yin or Yang) but in how we practice, [which] determines whether we target the yin or yang tissues more directly or indirectly. – Sarah Powers

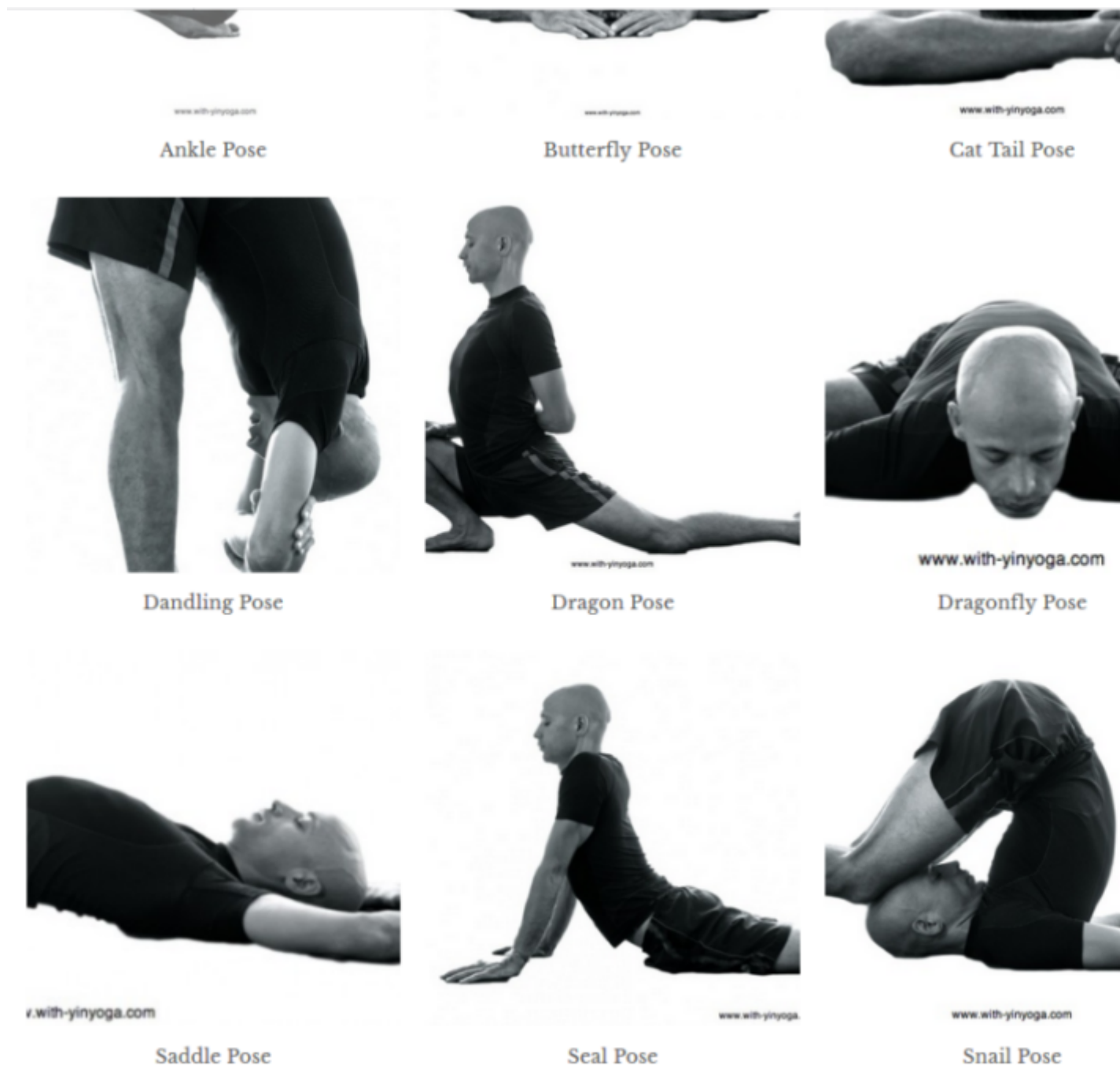
Yin vs Yang Versions



- Yin Yoga teachers (including Sarah Powers) typically use different, Yin Yoga-specific names for poses that are similar to those in *yang* styles, presumably to indicate the difference in practice. [Bhujangasana \(Cobra Pose\)](#), for example, is usually called Seal Pose in Yin Yoga, where it is typically set up with arms wider and more forward.
- When viewed as an image, many Yin Yoga poses will appear the same or similar to their *yang* counterpart. Much of the difference in how a pose is practiced in Yin Yoga may be more of a felt sense than a visible one.

- However, one visible difference could be a lack of muscular engagement in Yin Yoga.
- In a few cases, poses in Yin Yoga (such as Yin Frog) look different from the more common *asana* called by that name.

Pose List



At-A-Glance Pictorial View

See an at-a-glance view of the most common Yin Yoga poses (excerpt above) at With Yin Yoga.



•TWENTY IS PLENTY!•

Paul Grilley has often said that •Twenty is plenty!• You don't need a lot of postures to deeply touch the key areas of the body in a Yin Yoga practice. You don't have time for very many either because we hold the postures longer than in a yang-like Hatha yoga practice. Sebastian & Murielle have gifted us with an easy way to learn the major postures and variations used in Yin Yoga, with this Yin Yoga Poses page and their beautiful Yin Yoga poster. • **Bernie Clark**

List View

1. [Anahatasana](#)
2. [Ankle Pose](#) • [Vajrasana](#) shape variation
3. [Butterfly Pose](#) • [Baddha Konasana](#) shape
4. [Cat Tail Pose](#) • [Reclined Twist](#) shape
5. [Caterpillar Pose](#) • [Paschimottanasana](#) shape
6. [Child's Pose](#) • [Balasana](#)
7. [Dandling Pose](#) • [Uttanasana \(Rag Doll Variation\)](#) shape
8. [Deer Pose](#) • Seated Pose variation
9. [Dragon Pose](#) and [Twisted Dragon Pose](#) • [Anjaneyasana](#) shape
10. [Dragonfly Pose / Straddle](#) • [Upavistha Konasana](#) shape
11. [Frog Pose](#)
12. [Saddle Pose](#) • [Supta Virasana](#) or [Supta Vajrasana](#) shape
13. [Seal Pose or Sphinx Pose](#) • [Bhujangasana & Sphinx](#) shapes
14. [Shoelace Pose](#) • [Gomukhasana](#) shape
15. [Snail Pose](#) • [Halasana](#) shape
16. [Square Pose](#) • [Agnistambhasana](#) shape
17. [Squat](#) • [Malasana](#) shape
18. [Sleeping Swan Pose](#) and [Upward Swan Pose](#) • [Eka Pada Rajakapotasana](#) shape
19. [Stirrup Pose / Stirred-Up Pose / Happy Baby](#) • [Ananda Balasana](#)
20. [Toe Squat](#) • [Vajrasana](#) shape variation

Sequencing



Sequencing in General

Sequencing Yin Yoga poses is similar to sequencing poses in general. See these lessons:

1. [Asana Categories Summary & Highlights](#)
2. [Class Elements, Techniques, Tools & Practices](#)
3. [Sequencing Fundamentals & Guidelines](#)
4. [Choosing & Arranging Poses](#)
5. [Segmenting Your Class](#)
6. [Sequencing & Pacing to Balance Energy](#)

Complementary Poses & Stretches

Most students will find a rhythmic warm-up supportive in preparing them to relax into long hold poses. The following resources can help you to design or choose complementary poses and stretches. (For Stretches & Flows, be sure to use the quick menu at the top to navigate through Hip Flexor Stretches, Hamstring Stretches, Outer Hip Stretches and so on.)

1. [Stretches & Flows: Hips & Legs](#)
2. [Stretches & Flows: Back & Side-Waist](#)
3. [Stretches & Flows: Shoulders, Upper Torso](#)
4. [Stretches & Flows: Neck, Wrists, Ankles](#)
5. [Sequences to Accommodate Conditions](#)
6. [Gentle Sequences \(Sequence Finder ??? Select Style: Gentle or Restorative\)](#)

Sample Yin Sequences

For sample yin sequences, go to the [Sequence Finder](#) and select Style: Yin.

Related Resources



- [Yin Yoga Overview](#)
- [Anatomy: Connective Tissue & Fascia](#)
- [Yin Yoga Poses](#)
- [Themes & Readings](#)
- [Meditation](#)

Author
michaeljoelhall