

# Introduction to Power Yoga

## By Barb Pierce

Power yoga is a general term used to describe a vigorous, fitness-based approach to yoga. Most power yoga is modeled on the Ashtanga style of practice, but unlike Ashtanga, power yoga does not follow a set series of poses. This means that any power yoga class can vary widely from the next. What they have in common is

- An emphasis on strength and flexibility;
- Using the sun salutation as the basis for the flow of the practice; and
- Asanas must flow seamlessly from one to another.

All balanced Power Yoga classes have a balance of:

- The 8 ways to bend and twist the spine
- Poses and counter poses (compression and expansion)
- Standing, crouching and seated poses, as well as poses lying on the abdomen and poses lying on the back

Power yoga is characterized by a series of flowing yoga poses while synchronizing one's breathing patterns to each movement. Although the movements are performed in a slow & steady rhythm, the physical endurance of the student is challenged when poses are held for between 5 and 10 breaths.

You might be attracted to a power yoga style class because it helps to:

- Increase strength, stamina and flexibility
- Improve your ability to focus
- Release tension and anxiety
- Tone your body
- Remove toxins through sweat
- Improve core strength

### Power Yoga

A dynamic yoga practice that uses a rhythmic combination of challenging poses linked with the breath; emphasizing proper body alignment, balance, stamina, and strength. In this class the focus is on upper and lower body strength coupled with a powerful core, which increases circulation in the joints and vertebrae resulting in a healthier, stronger you. Power Yoga helps to sculpt and tone your body from the inside out.

This class is ideal for people who want to increase their strength and stamina.

Power Yoga is more vigorous than a traditional hatha yoga class, but it still follows the principles of classical yoga which is to unite the body, mind, and spirit.

A typical power yoga class might look something like this:

- A few minutes of breathing to remind the student of the yogic breath
- Teacher opens the class with 3 ohms to balance the chakras and signal the beginning of the class
- Kapalbhatti (a vigorous breathing technique to strengthen the lungs and warm up the entire body)
- A warm up
- A vigorous series of standing poses linked with sun salutations
- Poses on the belly, back, crouching and sitting, all linked by sun salutations or modified sun salutations.
- A closing sequence with an inversion for calming the body
- Savasana (corpse pose) to calm and rejuvenate
- A short meditation or additional breathing techniques to balance the mind and body
- Closing with an ohm