



Online Yoga Class Guide

Since March 2020, the world has been quickly changing to meet people's needs during a COVID-19 world pandemic. Balance Your Life Yoga has always strived to “meet you where you are” in your yoga practice, and continues to do that now. Whereas our previous yoga classes met yoga practitioners in their community settings, we are now bridging the distance to our fellow practitioners by providing online classes. As before, the classes will be donation based. So if you would like to make a donation for taking a class, that helps our small company up and running. However, if the virus or other circumstances have affected your ability to make a donation, please do not feel any pressure to pay for a class. Balance Your Life Yoga, LLC has always been and continues to be about accessibility. When we continue our practice of yoga, especially during a crisis, we can and will heal the world. That, in itself, is a beautiful donation.

The online classes will be held through the ZOOM app. Each weekly class will have its own “identification number,” and at this time, no passwords will be required. Before class, there will be time to chat with the instructor online to “check in” verbally (in which other participants will be able to hear,) to see what kind of modifications may be required. However, if privacy is desired an email can be sent to cynthia@balanceyourlifeyoga.com. To ensure enough time to communicate effectively, please send your email at least 48 hours prior to the yoga class.

Let's review the technology setup, and answer some questions you may have about an online class.

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1.Preparing with Technology: What Do I Need To Do Before Class?

Having a technology device with both camera and microphone will allow everyone to see you and hear you. Some examples are a smartphone, Ipad, or laptop. Zoom allows for you to test these out before class if you download the app to your device, but a Zoom app is not required to take the class, it just makes it easier. The app is free, and downloading and exploring it is recommended before class. Here is a link to a YouTube tutorial

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTSJ0YDoF7o>. A helpful reminder is that each technological type of device has a different way to navigate Zoom, so practicing with the device you will be using for class will be most beneficial. Create an account, sign in, check your audio and video, and you'll be ready for that first class! Both audio and video can be *turned off* if you would rather join the class without having other people see and/or hear you. You're ready!

2. Class Invites and Joining a Class

A link with the Zoom Meeting ID for classes will be posted on the Balance Your Life Facebook wallpage as well as in Events for that page

(https://www.facebook.com/Balance-Your-Life-Yoga-LLC-578931142574547/?eid=ARDGb-dpCp2Emj25-qRjvBrFv-ZQ8sooXZbD9pFcycOM7nL-gKTK_AZtyl1yyc6oqM7ALGgorHsh1dti), and additionally on our website at Balanceyourlifeyoga.com <https://www.balanceyourlifeyoga.com/> on our homepage.

which can be clicked on to join the class whether you have a Zoom account or not.

SAMPLE:

Cynthia Haas is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Facebook test
Time: Apr 13, 2020 09:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84532543723>

Meeting ID: 845 3254 3723

One tap mobile
+19292056099,,84532543723# US (New York)
+13126266799,,84532543723# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location
+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
+1 301 715 8592 US
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
+1 253 215 8782 US

Meeting ID: 845 3254 3723
Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kbJB0E4B2u>

SAMPLE

ZOOM link is HERE

OR

ZOOM meeting ID is HERE

Classes will be added to the online class schedule as we navigate the COVID-19 journey. Comments are always appreciated in ZOOM to help improve the class, to request focus of future classes, and to let us know what we're doing right! It is recommended to use the "add class to your Google or Outlook calendar" feature so that you'll remember to attend the class!

To join the class, follow the link from the Facebook page, the webpage, or your calendar. You can also log into Zoom and click "Join a Meeting" and put in the Meeting ID number. The meeting will be set up so that participants can join the class online before it starts. Your microphones will be muted initially to reduce the echo effect which can happen. You can unmute yourself if you have a question during class. The "raise your hand" feature will not work because the instructor will not be able to see that notification from across the room!

We've noticed that unless you have a broadband internet connection you might experience delays or disconnection. You can problem-solve this by turning off your video (ability to see you in class, you will still see everyone else who has video on.)

3. Yoga Online Classes: What's It Like?



Before class, a recommendation is to remove any clutter from your practice area so that you can move freely throughout the practice. Additionally, choose an area with a good wifi signal, and with limited background noise. You might also have some type of container of water for small sips during the practice if you feel you need it. If you are at home, you may have some distractions from your practice. Of course, it's fine to leave and then rejoin the class if needed. Just a reminder that this class is for YOU, and the less distractions you have the more you can focus on your practice.

Try out some different ways to orient your mat, your technology device and screen, and your body so that you can see the instructor as well as have enough space for your body in different poses. A mat is highly recommended because of its non-skid surface and additional safety it provides for limiting slipping. Bare feet are also recommended not just for safety, but also for increasing feedback from the feet to the brain during practice. However, neither the mat nor the bare feet are required. A large towel would also serve the purpose for the mat, and socks with non-skid features on the bottom would work as well. Also, take into consideration other balance factors which could include the surface under the mat or towel. A thick carpet would provide cushioning for the knees, but might make balancing less steady. A hard floor would be best for balance, but maybe a blanket or knee pad might be handy if the knees are sensitive. Through the course of a few classes, you will find what is right for your individual body and practice.

You will have the opportunity to join the class before it starts. The instructor will have some "check-in" time to meet students, answer any brief questions, and inquire if any modification cues might be needed in class. Some items you might have handy for modifications are:

- **BLOCKS-** Yoga blocks are used for providing more support for balance, shortening the distance from the body to the floor, or providing supported poses during theyoga

practice. Substitutes for blocks might be large books (think “Harry Potter” or “The Thornbirds” hardback books,) a small portable step, or even a nearby low table.

- **STRAPS-** Yoga straps are used to shorten the distance between hands, or hands and feet in certain poses. They can also add a beautiful traction effect in some poses to add grounding or elongation. The easiest strap to manipulate during a yoga practice is one which can lock either with D-rings, or a plastic buckle so that the length of the strap can be easily changed, if needed. If locking is not required, substitutes are a necktie, a robe tie, or scarf. If locking is needed, a cloth belt with a loop closure would work.
- **BLANKETS-** Yoga blankets are used to provide elevation of a body part in a pose (such as under the hips or neck,) cushioning from a hard surface, support (such as a roll under the neck,) or warmth since the body cools down quickly after practice during final relaxation. Of course, any household blanket would be great for warmth, but towels are recommended for the other uses during a practice.
- **KNEE PADS-** Yoga knee pads are great if your knees tend to get cranky when you are on your hands and knees. They can also be used under the wrists to provide additional support and move weight toward the palm and fingers in a pose. Towels or a blanket can suffice for this type of support in a practice.
- **CHAIR-** If your balance is challenged in a yoga practice, it can be handy to just have a chair nearby to use for additional steadiness in yoga balance poses. That’s a benefit to having a practice at home! You can have props nearby without worrying about cluttering up anyone else’s yoga space.
- **MUSIC-** Feel free to have your own music playing (as long as you are muted during class) to enhance your yoga experience. The instructor will not have music playing due to honoring copyright laws, and having the audio be as clear as possible during the practice.

The instructor will give instructions of any types of props that are needed/suggested before class begins.

Do play around with your technological device to the types of “views” you can choose during the Zoom class. There is “Gallery” view (being able to see other participants in class,) and “Speaker” view (being able to see only the person speaking.) A suggestion is to have Gallery view when everyone is arriving in class, and right after class so that we can socialize, and then Speaker view during the class to see the largest picture possible of the instructor.

Remember that during class, if you have a question, please unmute yourself and ask verbally. Then mute yourself again after your question is answered.

4. During the Class: What Happens?

Most classes, unless otherwise mentioned, will follow the “mountain” structure of class, which is one that builds in intensity during the practice, peaks, and then slows down toward the end of

class. Classes will range from one hour to one hour and fifteen minutes. A typical class will have elements of these components:

1. Meditation-time to reflect on a given or individual intention for class. This helps our body and brain to arrive fully for a yoga practice.
2. Warm-up- moving and warming up muscles and joints that will be used for our peak pose, and to link our breath with movement
3. Sun salutations- a “one-breath, one-movement” sequence which further warms up the body, mind and breath
4. Peak pose(s)- a focus and deeper study of a yoga pose or poses to experience the pose more intently, or learn nuances of the pose
5. Deep stretches- stretches which are held longer now that the body is warmed up and ready to go more deeply into opening up
6. Final relaxation- a stilling of the body, mind and spirit to integrate the yoga practice and the gifts it has brought to us

Again, feel free to ask questions before and during class. Classes will be recorded from the setting of the instructor’s technological device. That being said, during the class the instructor’s device will be in “speaker view.” If a question is asked during class and you are unmuted, you will be visible to other participants in class. After the class if the recording is posted online in any way, those parts of the class will be edited out for protection of everyone’s privacy.

5. Safely Socializing at the End of Class

At the end of class, after final relaxation and class has ended, you are welcome to chat with other attendees. If you wish to extend your final relaxation or add a meditation at the end for yourself at the end of your practice, just simply leave the class and we will understand! Please remember our yoga community, which we are so grateful for, is one where we respect and support each other. Remember, too, we have a Facebook and Instagram page to enhance your connections with each other! If you are just entering the world of ZOOM, and as you begin to get used to using it, you might schedule a “coffee” or “lunch” meeting with some new or familiar friends. Social distancing does not have to be social isolation.

6. Missed the Class? Watch the Recording

Most classes will be available to watch after the class on Balance Your Life Yoga’s YouTube channel (Balance Your Life Yoga, LLC) as well as additional videos for meditation and other recorded practices. ** Know that video production is a time-consuming venture, and classes may not be released on the channel right away. Also, this is a new venture for our company...as with everyone else we are learning as we go as we navigate the COVID-19 journey.

7. Continuing Yoga Practice

As our environments and daily routines have changed, we may have let our yoga practice fall by the wayside, or not be practicing as often. Or maybe it's a new practice we now have time or the desire to try. Remember that any yoga is good yoga, and it's "yoga practice," and not "yoga perfect." Just accept where you are, give yourself a break, and **KEEP PRACTICING**. The great thing is that the body, mind, and spirit will meet us where we are. With so many changes, it's great to be in touch with our "home," that core part of ourselves that doesn't change. When we tap into our "core," our true selves, and balance our lives with a grounding and centering practice, we heal ourselves as well as the world...one breath at a time.



Did we miss something? Do you still have questions?

Please email us at cynthia@balanceyourlifeyoga.com. We can learn together!