

# Iyengar Yoga

Iyengar yoga is classical yoga based on the teachings of B.K.S Iyengar, who resides in Pune, India. Mr. Iyengar has been a dedicated practitioner of yoga for over 70 years. His teachings are grounded deeply in the yoga sutras of Patanjali, which is the most profound and complete text on the subject. The sutras, or aphorisms, define yoga in a sequential manner, leading one from body to soul, from *annamaya kosa* to *anandamaya kosa*.

Similarly, in the Iyengar method there is a systematic and sequential approach to learning and practicing the *asanas* (poses). For example, the standing *asanas* are taught first to bring flexibility, stability, and to gain strength and poise. Alignment is also a key component in the method. Correct alignment in an *asana* is important so that it has the proper effect in the body and mind. Equally important and stressed is correct alignment in the physical, physiological, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual levels of the body.

Mr. Iyengar is credited for introducing the use of props to facilitate learning. This enables students to receive the benefits from the *asanas* at an early stage. For example, if the student is unable to reach the floor in a standing pose, a block may be used to build up the height of the floor. Bolsters, blankets, and benches may be used to aid in the inversions, backbends, etc. Yoga has many therapeutic benefits, and with the use of props a student who is suffering or recovering from an illness may benefit greatly. Props can allow students to stay longer in any given pose and attain deeper penetration.

It was never Mr. Iyengar's intention to put his name with the method. His students began to call it Iyengar yoga to distinguish it from other more generic methods of teaching. Mr. Iyengar will be celebrating his 90th birthday in December this year. He continues to practice everyday is an inspiration to his many dedicated students.

To learn more about Mr. Iyengar and the method visit [www.iyngaus.org](http://www.iyngaus.org).

"The aim and culmination of yoga is the sight of the soul, but it has a lot of side effects which are health, happiness, peace and poise."

— B. K. S. Iyengar