

Beginners Course: Week 1 Email - How did you go? -



Dear <<First Name>>

Welcome to Week 2 of the Beginners Yoga Course.

I hope you enjoyed your first week on the mat.

Our aim for the first week was to give you a gentle introduction to the nature of breathing and body movement in a yoga practice – the fundamental elements of *vinyasa* (body movement synchronised with the breath).

Your teacher would have taken you through some of the basic Sun Salutation poses – which is a key part of *vinyasa* practice.

Vinyasa is a great place to start. As you worked your way through the sequence, I hope you began to experience what yoga is all about.

It's not just about stretching and improving flexibility. By directing your attention to the physical body, yoga shows you how to become more mindful and self-aware – reducing stress and enabling personal growth.

It's perfectly normal for some of the poses to feel a bit unnatural at first (and to feel a bit sore the next day) but as the course progresses you will find yourself feeling more comfortable. Importantly, remember that there is no right or wrong – only feeling better in the body, breathing easier, and having fun. Enjoy the process, and let it unfold.

If you found it hard to quieten the mind in this first class, don't worry, this is also very common. Unfortunately, modern life makes it hard to switch-off. It takes a class or two for the mind to relax and settle into a more meditative relaxed sense of awareness.

It is not unusual to experience slight dizziness or even nausea. As breath awareness is introduced, you gradually shift from irregular breathing to deeper, longer and more natural breaths. By class two or three, this discomfort will disappear.

However you found week one; hopefully, you felt some positive benefits when the class finished and in the days since.

In week two, you will focus on Standing Poses (*asanas*). These are designed to help strengthen both the body and the mind. Some may be challenging, but that is part of the experience and is the key to achieving clarity of mind.

In the meantime, if you have any further questions, feedback, or anything you want clarifying, don't hesitate to drop me an email. Alternatively, feel free to chat with one of the teachers before or after class.

Enjoy your classes.

Namaste.

In wellness,
Monica

Monica Anderson
Principal Teacher, Director
[Canberra Yoga Space](#)

P.S. Thank you to everyone who cancelled classes they couldn't attend this week. The minute you cancel, an automated email goes to the next person on the waiting list, giving others the chance to practice. Managing your schedule at least two hours before class is ideal as this gives the next person enough time to get to class. You can cancel and manage your classes [here](#).

P.P.S. Please arrive at each class on time – this means you on your mat with everything you need -- and not walking through the door. The first ten minutes are designed to centre and prepare everyone for practice – which is more difficult for both participant and teacher, with constant distraction. Your instructors will have a CLOSED DOOR policy, effective 5 minutes after the start time.

P.P.P.S. Practice is barefoot. Shoes are kept off the floor to keep it clean and safe for your use. Please remember to leave your shoes and personal items inside the small locker room towards the rear of the studio (to your left when you walk in the door).

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Beginners Course: Week 2 Email - Are you feeling grounded? -



Dear <<First Name>>

Welcome to Week 3 of our Beginners Yoga Course.

How did you find your second week on the mat?

While Week 1 focused on body movement and breath (*vinyasa*), the focus for Week 2 was on Standing Poses and helping you find your foundation, your strength. Standing Poses give you that sense of feeling grounded. I hope you managed to relax as you explored your stability in the poses.

Many yoga courses concentrate purely on the poses (*asanas*). Others tailor their classes to the philosophical concepts of yoga. However, to realise the full benefits of yoga, these two need to be interlinked – something we aim to achieve in each class and across the duration of the course.

There is a well-known saying “Yoga is not about touching your toes, it’s about what you learn on the way down” –Judith Lasater.

This speaks to the heart of yoga and is a great way to think about practice. Poses aren’t just about improving physical flexibility – they’re a way to achieving conscious awareness. By releasing blocked energy and switching awareness to your body, they help quieten the mind and make self-discovery and transformation possible.

This quietening of the mind is how Patanjali, a yogic sage, describes the practice saying ‘Yoga chitta vrtti nirodhah’ which translates as ‘Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind’.

This state is not easy to reach in the beginning, but as you continue to practice, you’ll find your inner chatter lessening. When it does, you’ll begin to experience some of the wonderful benefits yoga brings – including a deeper connection with your inner self which will translate into positive changes in your life and relationships.

By now, your teachers would have introduced you to *savasana* as a way of finishing class. This is said to be the most important pose as it helps to consolidate all aspects of you – your body, mind, ego, breath and awareness. Enjoy this moment, and don't forget to acknowledge yourself for completing your practice.

This week will focus on backbends and twists and finding the balance between strength and flexibility. We'll also look at the concept of *ahimsa* – being kind towards yourself – and the importance of listening to both your body and your breath.

Once again, if you have any clarifications, or would like to share your thoughts or experiences on the course so far, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Enjoy your classes.

Namaste.

Monica

Monica Anderson
Principal Teacher, Director
[Canberra Yoga Space](#)

P.S. Thank you to everyone who cancelled classes they couldn't attend this week. The minute you cancel, an automated email goes to the next person on the waiting list, giving others the chance to practice. Managing your schedule at least two hours before class is ideal as this gives the next person enough time to get to class. You can cancel and manage your classes [here](#).

P.P.S. Remember to sign yourself in on the iPad when you arrive for class. This ensures we know who is in the studio and helps us keep track of how you're progressing through the course.

P.P.P.S. Please ensure you continue to make a conscious effort to arrive at your classes on time. The first ten minutes are designed to centre and prepare everyone for practice. This is more difficult for both participant and teacher with constant distraction. Your instructors have a CLOSED DOOR policy, effective 5 minutes after the start of each class.

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Beginners Course: Week 3 Email - How your practice helps you leading to Christmas -



Dear <<First Name>>

Welcome to Week 4 of our Beginners Yoga Course – and congratulations on making it to the halfway mark.

How did you enjoy your time on the mat this week learning backbends and twists? Did your teacher inspire you to be kind to yourself? It's something many of us struggle with these days – but it's central to happiness.

At this stage, I hope you feel you're gaining a good introduction to what yoga is all about. If you're repeating the course, there's always value in reaffirming what you know. And, as we're always in a state in change, you're likely finding a fresh perspective this time.

In addition, by now, you should be starting to experience some real benefits – from increased strength and flexibility to improved focus, less stress and better sleep. You may also have noticed a shift in your quality of breath? Are you breathing softer, deeper? This is a reflection of a calmer mind and body.

If you're struggling to notice any significant difference in yourself, I'd recommend you increase your visits each week. Our Beginner's Yoga Course includes unlimited classes, so be sure to take advantage of this if you can.

This time of year – with Christmas just around the corner – can be extremely busy and you may be feeling more stressed and anxious than usual. By making time for practice, you can give yourself the space to re-focus, relax and maintain your sense of self amidst the chaos.

To put things in perspective, there are 10,080 minutes in a week and each of our classes only runs for 60 or 75 minutes. So allow yourself this small amount of time, even if you only do one class a week, to focus on looking after yourself - clearing your mind, relaxing your body and reconnecting with the breath.

When you're in the studio, I encourage you to smile and say hello to your fellow students. Not only will it help you feel more comfortable, but the welcoming and supportive environment of a yoga class is a great place to meet like-minded people, without expectations. Plus, feeling a sense of community can encourage you to practice more.

Regular practice is when true transformation arises. The more you repeat your body and breath awareness, the easier you will form new habits – ones which enhance your well-being and vitality. Yoga is a whole body regime, and something you can do for the rest of your life – so keep at it.

Enjoy your classes this week.

Namaste.

In wellness,

Monica

Monica Anderson

Principal Teacher, Director

[Canberra Yoga Space](#)

P.S. Enrolment is open for our next Beginner's Yoga Course, which starts on Monday 16 January 2017. You can do this course as many times as you like - I recommend doing it at least twice. It will prepare you well for our next level of classes. Have a chat with your teacher about what's most suitable for you. [Click here to learn more.](#)

P.P.S. You can now sign up for an 'Introduction to Advanced Beginners'. This deal – which commences on Monday 19 December and runs until Sunday 15 January (4 weeks) – costs \$49 and offers unlimited access to all Level 1/Advanced Beginners classes over the Christmas / New Year period. [Click here to sign up.](#)

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Beginners Course: Week 4 Email – Feel balanced in this busy season –



Dear <<Insert name>>

Welcome to Week 5 – the penultimate week of our Beginners Yoga Course.
How are you feeling today?

December is such a busy time of year, with more social engagements and the mounting pressures of getting ready for Christmas – I hope you're not becoming too overwhelmed. Are you finding your practice is helping you? Are you sleeping better? Feeling calmer? More grounded?

It's so easy to get caught up in festive 'to-do' lists and the desire to have everything organised, but try to pull back, clear the mind and reconnect with your body and breath. Reflect on what you want, what your priorities are and put your energy into those things that really matter.

Spend time with friends and loved ones, aim for mindful choices and try to spend each moment in the present. Much of the pressure we feel is from ourselves, from our own unrealistic expectations, so give yourself a break and use your time on the mat to help you finish 2016 calmly, joyfully and purposefully.

This week was a more physically demanding class exploring core poses and hip openers. How did you find it? Core poses are great for strength. However, they do so much more than just work the abs.

By working on your solar plexus, the seat of your personal power, not only can core poses help stabilise digestion and settle anxiety, but they also ignite *tapas*. This translates to 'that burning fire in your belly' or your full potential – something yoga pushes you to pursue by challenging you on the mat.

Alongside *tapas* comes *ahimsa* – another term your teacher would have talked you through which translates as 'non-violence towards the self'. Yes, you need to challenge your capabilities but you also need to be kind to yourself, to nurture yourself – it's all about balance. This is where the yin and yang elements of yoga practice start to show.

This week, you'll be introduced to balance poses and forward bends. Alongside *nadi shodhana* (alternate nostril breathing), these introspective poses really mirror and reflect your sense of balance within yourself. They give you the perfect seat to find greater self-awareness and explore being in the present, the now.

I encourage you to make the most of these next two weeks of practice. You know better than anyone else what you need, so take the time to listen to yourself, find your balance, and you should be able to sidestep festive burnout.

Enjoy the lead up to Christmas.

Namaste.

In wellness,

Monica

Monica Anderson

Principal Teacher, Director

[Canberra Yoga Space](#)

P.S. Enrolment is open for our next Beginner's Yoga Course, which starts on Monday 16 January 2017. Over half the spots are already taken, so we encourage you, as with each course, to enrol early so you can book your preferred classes early.

P.P.S. In the last email, we let you know about our upcoming 'Advanced Beginners' classes running from Monday 19 December to Sunday 15 January. Cost is currently \$49 for an unlimited deal for those already enrolled on our Beginners Course but will go up to \$69 at 5 pm on Tuesday 6 December. Kindly note, this is not a progressive course. What you have is access to 35 classes prepared for an advanced beginner level – helping you gently transition. You'll also get to experience different styles of yoga including Restorative and Yoga Synergy with Pippa Matthews. Ashtanga Vinyasa on Tuesdays at 5.45 pm won't be offered as it's the strongest practice. You're still welcome to attend, and your unlimited pass will allow it, but be sure to practice at your own pace. You can book your classes through the [timetable](#).

P.P.P.S. Our 'Advanced Beginners' classes over this holiday period are a launching pad for myself (and the teachers) to design the new syllabus with a view to introducing a new Advanced Beginners Transition Course in 2017. With your support and participation during this period, I can study and find out through you and the teachers, what works and what doesn't work in terms of scope, and decide how to optimise the coverage for the new course.

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Beginners Course: Week 5 Email – Out with the old, in with the new –



Dear <<Insert name>>

Welcome to Week 6 of our Beginners Yoga Course.

This final week of classes is designed to bring everything you've learnt so far together. Your teacher will revisit the five layers of *kosha* – the different aspects of self – reaffirming how yoga can reveal their interconnectedness and open up holistic self-awareness, the key to self-transformation.

In life, one of the biggest barriers to self-transformation is inflexibility – not just in the physical sense but in the mind. The reality is, we are creatures of habit. How we breathe, what we think, how we act, from childhood onwards patterns appear and become ingrained. While some habits can be positive and productive, others can have a negative impact. For example, unhelpful thoughts or coping mechanisms can cause mental stress while poor diet choices or posture can weaken the body. However, yoga provides the key to change, and it begins with the breath.

Breathing is a reflex essential to life, but we don't always do it well. Often we breathe too fast and shallow or subconsciously hold our breath – both a sign of tension. But as you inhale and exhale deeper, longer and with purpose on the mat, you start to notice change in the form of a calmer mind and a more relaxed body.

In this state, you're better able to identify bad habits and make better choices. You also begin to realise the benefits of change and can more effectively build the motivation to make it happen.

But remember the concept of *ahimsa* – being kind to yourself? Some negative habits may have been with you for a while, so don't expect change overnight. Just take it gently, practice regularly, and you can lay new pathways.

A few of you have been asking me whether the next 6 week Beginners Yoga Course commencing Monday 16 January 2017 will be the same as the current course. While they will be similar, we continuously review our classes and make improvements based on feedback.

Don't forget; yoga is not an intellectual discipline to be learnt and understood. It's a platform for personal reflection and transformation. If you do re-enrol, you'll always learn something new as your body and mindset will be different.

In the meantime, even though this course has nearly come to a close, I encourage you to continue to come to the studio for classes over the holidays. We're open on a modified timetable and have reconfigured our classes to be appropriate for advanced beginners to support your transition.

Namaste.

In wellness,

Monica

Monica Anderson

Principal Teacher, Director

[Canberra Yoga Space](#)

P.S. Enrolment for our January Beginners Yoga Course is now 60% full. If you're thinking of continuing on, I would recommend registering now so you can book your preferred classes.

P.P.S. We're hoping to create an Advanced Beginners Transition Course over the holidays. However, it likely won't start running until towards the middle of the year. We'll keep you posted. In the interim, you can benefit from the Advanced Beginners Unlimited Pass and can book our reconfigured advanced beginners classes through the [timetable](#).

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Beginners Course: Week 6 Email – Congratulations, you did it! What's next? –



Dear <<Insert name>>

Congratulations on completing our Beginners Yoga Course!

Committing to something every week isn't always easy, particularly at this busy time of year, but you did it! I hope you've enjoyed your classes and have noticed some positive changes both in mind and body as a result?

As myself and the teachers have reaffirmed throughout the course, yoga offers cumulative benefits. The more you practice, the more positive changes you'll see – improved flexibility, reduced anxiety, better sleep but, most importantly, increased awareness of self and your own role in realising a happier, healthier more fulfilling life.

Because of this, don't view the end of this course as the end of your practice – it's just the beginning. And if you are keen to continue on your yoga journey, there are plenty of options open to you.

If you enjoyed the pace across these six weeks, and this was only your first time completing our Beginners Course, why not consider **re-enrolling in our next set of classes commencing Monday 16 January?** ([Book here](#)) In yoga, as I've mentioned before, learning by repetition is a good way to progress – plus you'll experience the course differently the second, or even third, time around.

Enrolment for our next Beginners Yoga Course is now open and is already three-quarters full, so I encourage you to sign-up as soon as possible so you can [book your preferred classes](#) in advance and avoid disappointment later on.

If you've already completed the Beginners Yoga Course a number of times and you feel ready to move forward, I'd recommend our **drop-in classes**. If you choose this path, your best option is to [set up a direct debit](#) and select in advance the number of classes you'd like to attend each week so you can benefit from our sliding discounts.

Breakdown of costs

4+ classes a week – \$7.50 a class (\$60 per fortnight)

3 classes a week – \$8.65 a class (\$52 per fortnight)

2 classes a week – \$10 a class (\$40 per fortnight)

1 class a week – \$13 a class (\$26 per fortnight)

Alternatively, if you can't commit to weekly practice, our **10-class passes which are valid for 6 months** (available [here](#)) might suit you better and also offer good value.

Yet another option is to take advantage of our \$69 Advanced Beginners Unlimited Pass (available [here](#)). This offer runs over the Christmas period with classes working off our modified timetable which commences this Monday 19 December and ends 15 January. There are 35+ classes on offer. Please note, our Ashtanga Vinyasa class on a Tuesday evening and Sunday afternoon may not be suitable for everyone as it's the most dynamic form of practice.

However you choose to continue your yoga journey, I encourage you to have a clear vision of how you want 2017 to begin. With a goal in mind and your practice to guide you, achieving it is absolutely possible.

All that's left for me to say now is thank you for your support and Merry Christmas! I hope you and your loved ones have a wonderful break.

Namaste.

In festive wellness,

Monica

Monica Anderson

Principal Teacher, Director

[Canberra Yoga Space](#)