

The benefits of chair yoga for older people



What is chair yoga?

You may have heard that yoga is a wonderful way to maintain your physical health and calmness of mind. And it's true. Yoga can help improve strength, balance, flexibility, and meditation skills. But is it only for those who are young and flexible, and who can afford weekly \$40 classes? Absolutely not!

There's a way to try out yoga that's low cost, low impact, but high reward. And it's suitable for older people and people recovering from injuries. All you need is a stable chair with no arms, and you can do some gentle yoga in your own home for free.

Chair yoga can reduce pain and stress, which can improve physical and mental health. This promotes your [independence](#) as you age well.

Why try chair yoga?

Chair yoga can help you maintain an active lifestyle as you age. It's an exercise for [falls prevention](#), and a measure of preventative health. It's [shown](#) to help with:

- Handgrip strength
- Upper and lower limb strength
- Static balance
- Agility
- Dynamic balance

[This small study](#) suggests it also reduces fear of falling, while improving mobility.

The benefits of gentle exercise

Regular light exercise like chair yoga helps manage conditions such as [Type 2 Diabetes](#). It helps with how your body responds to insulin. It also aids in managing cholesterol and [blood pressure](#).

And of course, low impact exercise is beneficial to sufferers of [arthritis](#). In fact, chair yoga [improves quality of life](#) in older adults with osteoarthritis. It decreases joint pain and [lessens the impact](#) this condition has on your everyday living.

Getting set up

Convinced that chair yoga is worth a shot, but still wondering how to get started? Here are some handy tips.

First, put on comfortable clothes.

Next, get your stable, armless chair. Be sure to place it on a flat surface. Choose somewhere you have room to extend your arms around you. It might also be nice to find a place with natural light and a pleasant view.

Important information

Before you begin, remember to listen to your body. Stop and seek advice from a medical professional if you feel new or increasing pain. Get immediate help if you feel dizzy, clammy, or short of breath.

Some exercises may not be for you. Consult a medical professional if you are unsure.

Getting started

To get things going in a self directed way, you can use an [exercise sheet](#) with a few different poses to try.

If you want a more guided session, you can find helpful videos online. Try the Daily Yoga mobile app for free. (This is one of many [mobile apps for healthy ageing](#).)

Or you can find a local group in your community to practice with. Chair yoga classes are often quite affordable.

Other benefits of chair yoga

Yoga is known for its health benefits, mindfulness, and community.

A chair yoga class may introduce you to new breathing and meditation practices. This can improve your mental health and calmness of mind.

And it's an opportunity to connect with people in your area. [Read more about the importance of staying connected](#).

Develop skills at your own pace

Once you've mastered the seated poses, you might have the option to advance your difficulty level. You may even want to try standing poses that include the chair as support.

Chair yoga can allow for a self-determined progression. You can engage this practice whenever you like and step it up whenever you're ready.

As for how often you should practice, even a little bit of yoga helps. But keeping up with a regular [fitness routine](#) could be most beneficial for you. Get advice from your healthcare professional when planning a new exercise regimen.

More helpful information

If you would like to find local exercise classes, social activities, and helpful tips, try the quick quiz by clicking on the 'Let's Go' button below.

You might want to [check out these other exercises](#) that can also be done from the comfort of your own chair.

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