



The Most Important Rules to Follow in Yoga Class

Yoga is everywhere—It's important to know what's expected of you when entering a yoga space. Whether you're new or a seasoned vet who's wondered, am I doing this right? Here's a guide of yoga etiquette.

Be. On. Time.

Budget the necessary time to hunt down a parking space, lock up your bike, or hike the five blocks from the subway so that you can check in at the front desk and be in your chair or on your mat before class starts. If you enter the yoga room while others are trying to get centered, it can disrupt the vibe and the teacher might have to repeat himself or herself, which can cut into class time.

Skip perfumes and lose the shoes.

Many people have sensitivities to scents of all kinds, so respect the shared space by minimizing them. To keep the yoga room clean, find the place for shoes—whether it's in cubbies or shoe racks, or even alongside the doorway. Your fellow yoga students will appreciate not having your shoes touch the same spots where they put their heads and hands.

Read the room.

Take a second to notice how others have placed their mats—this sounds obvious, but you'd be amazed at the weird things people do with their mats when unprompted. The same goes for yoga props—blankets, straps, blocks, eye pillows, bolsters, and the like. Your teacher will probably tell you what you'll need during class, but when in doubt, a strap, two yoga blocks, and a blanket are a safe bet.

Let the instructor know if you have an injury or condition that needs attention.

Let the teacher know about any injury or condition that may affect your practice so you can go over the basic do's and don'ts together to help you stay safe. Keeping the teacher in the loop can help them help you better with modifications and adjustments.

During Yoga Class

If you absolutely must be late...It's human. When you're late, the way you approach the yoga space matters. Try to enter class so quietly that no one would notice. If you're frazzled about being late, pause to take a few deep breaths before you open the door to the yoga room—that way you'll be more in tune with the energy of the class as you quietly set up. If possible, choose a spot at the back to minimize your distraction.

Phones on silent and put away.

Yes, silent. Not vibrate. Believe it or not, an incessantly vibrating phone can seem almost as distracting as a chiming, dinging, or beeping one. If your job requires you to be on call, keep your phone quiet and close so you can check it discreetly as needed. But if on a rare (rare!) occasion your phone happens to go off in class, give yourself a break. Again, we're human. A swift "sorry about that" and putting it on silence it is all it takes.

Stay to the end, for the final minutes of yoga class.

It's a time for your body and mind to take conscious rest, for your heart rate and nervous system to settle, and—many practitioners believe—for the benefits of yoga to deeply integrate. This isn't just a cool down, it's a really important part of the practice. When you leave before the end of class, you miss the opportunity for the benefits of your practice to sink in, and it can be really annoying for others. If you seriously need to leave, make sure you let the teacher know before class starts and be close to the back of the room for a quiet exit.

Most Importantly: Enjoy Your Class

Last but definitely not least, remember that patience pays off. Yoga styles and instructors vary greatly. Don't worry about what the yogi next to you is doing. You are doing yoga. Celebrate!