



# YOGA

**for** CHILDREN OF AGE 3-6 YEARS

Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India,  
in collaboration with Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India





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## Preamble:

Life is full of vicious circle and age is just a number and being a kid is an opportunity. Being in a kid, a child tosses between assignments and school pressures in the form of compulsory extra-curricular activities. Time for physical activities like playing outside in the fields is extremely less. There are a lot of distracting activities around the kids. It could be peer pressure or competitive atmosphere and it turns into insecurities and fear in children. To overcome such challenges, Yoga offers a solution which children can imbibe in their personalities by practicing Yogic practices at regular basis in playful ways. Yogic practices ensure right direction of growth and development which result in improvement their behaviour and personalities. Benefits of Yogic practices for children with age ranging from 3-6 years could be summed up in the following way:

1. **It builds concentration:** There are many asanas (such as Vrikshasana, Tadasana) that help in improving focus. Good concentration is essential for children as they learn and develop
2. **It boosts memory:** Studies suggest that regular practice of Yoga helps in improving brain power. Mandukasana and many forward-bending asanas are particularly beneficial in improving memory and other mental functions. Meditation also works wonders.
3. **It enhances immunity:** Kids often fall prey to cold and cough despite all the care taken by their parents. Yoga stimulates the nervous, endocrine, digestive and circulatory systems enhancing their functioning. Simple asanas such as Bhujangasana, Parvatasana, Plank, and simple deep breathing techniques can safeguard the children from easily falling victim to germs.
4. **It supports speech development:** Bhujangasana and Ustrasana help in improving speech. Chanting "OM" also produces vibrations that can improve the voice quality.
5. **It improves physical agility:** Asanas such as Kagasana, Konasana, Gomukhasana and balancing asanas improve mind-body coordination. Asanas when combined with proper diet help improve the strength, stability and flexibility.
6. **It helps create emotional balance:** Like adults, children go through various emotional states such as stress, anxiety, depression and guilt. Yoga helps in improving self-esteem, self-confidence and developing a positive attitude towards life. Yoga brings health, confidence and peace.

### Need and Purpose of the Book:

Practicing Yoga can help improve flexibility, strengthen muscles and improve balance. Children need at least one hour of physical activity daily. Only about half of the children are active at this level. Practicing Yoga can help children incorporate more physical activity into each day. Healthy habits established in childhood are likely to endure into adulthood. The practice of Yoga at young ages can help children develop lifelong healthy habits that will be sustained long-term. Research showing the behavioral benefits of Yoga for children is limited, but some



suggest that this type of exercise can improve children's attention, relationships, self-esteem and listening skills. Studies suggest that Yoga can improve symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children with this condition. Other studies suggest Yoga may reduce anxiety and negative behaviors.

Yoga is inexpensive, requiring no special equipment, and can be performed nearly anywhere. Practicing Yoga with children should be different from Yoga practice with adults. Yoga poses need not to be perfect for children. The purpose of kids' Yoga is to increase fitness, decrease stress and improve mental focus in a joyful ways. Yoga at an early age encourages self-esteem and body awareness with a physical activity that's noncompetitive. Fostering cooperation and compassion instead of opposition is a great gift to give our children in the current scenario.

### **Target Group:**

The contents of this booklet are prepared having all the requirement of kids with age group of 3-6 years. The booklet has all the prerequisites and guidelines needed for children.

### **Pre-requisites for Yoga practice:**

1. Practice in fresh air, in a quiet and clean place.
2. Practice with empty stomach after emptying bowels and bladder.
3. Wear loose and comfortable dress and practice on a firm mat.
4. Best time to practice Yoga is during sunrise and sunsets.
5. Food can be consumed after 2 hours of practice of Yoga.
6. Always breathe normally through the nose, both in and out, unless specified otherwise.
7. Those with disabilities, severe, acute or chronic medical conditions should consult with Yoga expert to assess any dangers or difficulties which may arise.

### **Asana Practice**

1. These stretch and tone the muscles and ligaments, keeping the spine and joints flexible.
2. Pranayama recharges the body and controls mental state.
3. Relaxation recharges the body and controls mental state.
4. Relaxation releases tension from muscles and thus provide rest to whole system leaving you fresh and energetic.

### **Balya Yoga (Yoga for Children of the Age group 3-6 years):**

#### **Guidelines:**

1. Children less than 6 yrs of age stay up to 10 seconds staying in the final stage of any asana /Yoga practice. The total time for the kid's Yoga session should be not more than 20 minutes.



2. Children are advised not to perform asana for long duration and breathe holding practices (Kumbhaka).
3. Yoga for children consists gentle Yoga stretches, Movements, often mimicking animals, are incorporated with games.
4. Imaginative stories about each asanas are the best way to teach Yoga to kids.
5. Always demonstrate the posture, rather than explaining it. Use the same method when trying to correct their poses, during practical session.
6. Avoid extreme forward and backward bending asanas.
7. Avoid head stand and hand standing asanas.
8. Avoid over stretching or being pushed too hard while practicing Yoga.
9. Yogic practice should be done in an empty or light stomach.
10. Children should practice Yoga under the supervision of an expert/ trained Yoga teacher with proper guidance and never alone.
11. If child complains of any discomfort while or after practicing Yoga, she/he should be given full attention and medical help, if needed.
12. Never compare children with each other. Encourage them in each and every session for discipline to sit properly.
13. It's always appreciated to teach Yoga with affection and deal with all their reactions tenderly.
14. Yoga is not merely a set of physical exercises; they are psycho-spiritual practices, where body is the means. Therefore, basic principles of Yoga like Yama and Niyama shall be emphasized while teaching Yoga practices to get better results.

## Yogic diet

Ahar (diet) plays vital role in the development of overall personality. A Yoga practitioner is supposed to take agreeable food. Consumption of refined food induces tamasic gunas and tamasic diseases. Hence 'Satvikahara' which includes millets, other whole grains should be encouraged especially in kids whose need for calcium, iron is more compared to the other individuals. Diet works to prevent illness, increase energy and improve overall health. It relies on food as close to its natural state as possible. This means eating foods that do not contain artificial ingredients and are free of chemical preservatives and additives. The primary intake should ideally include organic whole foods that are as fresh as possible to ensure maximum nutritional value and life force.



1. **Vegetables:** All green leafy vegetables, Ash gourd, Ridge gourd, Apple gourd, Beet root, Turnip, Carrot, Cucumber, Spinach, Tomato etc.
2. **Cereals:** Unpolished rice, Whole wheat and multi-grain flour.
3. **Sweet:** Honey, Organic natural Jaggery.
4. **Sprouts:** Green gram, Bengal gram, Wheat, Groundnut.
5. **Dry fruits:** Dates, Figs, Dry grapes, Cashew, Almonds, Walnut, Dry grapes (soaked overnight).
6. **Fresh fruits:** Ripened, Seasonal and juicy fruits like Guava, Pear, Apple, Banana, Sapota, Orange, Sweet orange.
7. **Fruit juice:** Apple juice, Carrot juice and Orange juice.
8. **Soups:** Spinach, Carrot, Tomato, Beetroot and Coriander either all mixed or can be prepared separately.
9. **Others:** Lemon water, Butter milk, Tender coconut water etc.

Yoga helps in inculcating positive thoughts in children to distinguish between right and wrong and good or bad. It also helps them to cultivate good habits. Children are to be taught karma Yoga concept i.e. they should be taught in such a manner that they learn to work in harmony. They should be taught to remain happy and cheerful and thus creating a relaxed environment all around. This helps to keep them in happy and healthy state. This will also help to enhance the creativity and enjoy good health.

### Recommended Yoga protocol for Children (3-6 Years):

S. NO.	YOGA PRACTICES	ROUNDS	DURATION
1.	<b>PRAYER (OM CHANTING)</b>		1 Minute
2.	<b>YOGIC SUKSHMA VYAYAMA: (Micro Circulation Practices) Loosening and Strengthening Joints practices</b>		<b>10 Minutes</b>
	<b>Neck Movements:</b>		
	- Neck Movement – Left & Right Movement <b>(Road Crossing Movement)</b>	03 Rounds	
	- Hands Up & Down <b>(Fly with your wings)</b>	03 Rounds	
	- Hands Rotation <b>(Throw the ball)</b>	03 Rounds	
	- Shoulder rotation	03 Rounds	
	- Shaking Wrist		
	- Back Movement Forward & backward <b>(Touch the sky &amp; touch the floor / toes)</b>	03 Rounds	
	- Back – Twisting Movement <b>(Pass the ball to other)</b>	03 Rounds	
	- Back – Side Bending <b>(See – Saw movement)</b>	03 Rounds	
	- Back – Side Bending <b>(See – Saw movement)</b>		
	- Ankles – Gulf Naman <b>(In &amp; out bending), Gulf Chakr (Rotation)</b>	03 Rounds	
3.	<b>YOGASANAS (2-3 asanas from each series)</b>		<b>10 Minutes</b>
	<b>STANDING POSTURES</b>		
	- Tadasana <b>(Palm tree posture)</b>		
	- Vrikshasana <b>(Tree posture)</b>		
	- Ashvasanchalan <b>(Horse riding posture)</b>		
	- Parvatasana <b>(Mountain posture)</b>		
	- Konasana <b>(Triangle posture)</b>		
	<b>SITTING POSTURES</b>		
	- Marjari Asana <b>(Cat posture)</b>		
	- Ustrasana <b>(Camel posture)</b>		
	- Shashankasana <b>(Rabbit posture)</b>		
	- Mandukasana <b>(Frog posture)</b>		
	- Vakrasana <b>(Twisting posture)</b>		
	- Gomukhasana <b>(Cow posture)</b>		
	- Kagasana <b>(Crow posture)</b>		
	- Simhasana <b>(Roaring lion posture)</b>		
	<b>PRONE POSTURES</b>		



S. NO.	YOGA PRACTICES	ROUNDS	DURATION
	- Makarasana ( <b>Crocodile posture</b> )		
	- Saral Bhujangasana ( <b>Cobra posture</b> )		
	- Dhanurasana ( <b>Bow posture</b> )		
	- Balasana ( <b>Child posture</b> )		
	<b>SUPINE POSTURES</b>		
	- Setubandhasana ( <b>Bridge posture</b> )		
	- Saral Matsyasana ( <b>Fish posture</b> )		
	- Shavasana ( <b>Star fish posture</b> )		
<b>4.</b>	<b>PRANAYAMA:</b>		
	- Deep Breathing	5 Rounds	
	- Bhramari	5 Rounds	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Krida Practices</b>		<b>5 Minutes</b>
	- Rain Clap		
	- Flower Clap		
	- Special Clap		
	- Laughing practice		
	- Freeze Movement (Krida)		
	<b>TOTAL TIME</b>		<b>30 Minutes</b>



# Yogic practices for Children

## 1. PRAYER

**OM SAHANA VAVATU SAHANA BHUNATTU  
SAHA VIRYAM KARAWAVAHAI  
TEJASVINAVADITAMASTU  
MA VIDVISHAVAHAI  
OM SHANTI SHANTI OM**

*Together may we be protected  
Together may we be nourished  
Together may we work with great energy  
May our journey together be brilliant and effective  
May there be no bad feelings between us  
Peace, peace, peace*

## 2. Sukshnavyayama (Loosening exercises)

Joint movements, and light exercise of the body parts bring lightness in the body and retain proper movement and functions of the joint and muscle. The following loosening exercises are beneficial for children.

### Neck Movements

#### Forward and Backward Bending:

1. Stand with the feet comfortably apart.
2. Keep the hands straight beside the body.
3. This is Samasthiti.
4. Keep your arms on the waist.
5. While exhaling, move the head forward slowly and try to touch the chin to the chest.
6. While inhaling, move the head as far back as is comfortable.
7. This is one round: repeat 2 more rounds.



### Right and Left Twisting:

1. Keep the head upright.
2. While exhaling, gently turn the head to the right so that the chin is in line with the shoulder.
3. While inhaling, bring the head to the normal position.
4. Similarly, while exhaling, turn the head to the left.
5. Inhale and bring the head to the normal position.
6. This is one round: repeat 2 more rounds.



### Hands up and down:

1. Keep Feet together and the body straight, the arms by the sides.
2. Raise your both arms sideways above your head with the palm outward. Bring it down in the same manner.
3. The arms must not touch the head when going up or the thighs when coming down.
4. Palms must be opened, with fingers together.
5. repeat 2 more rounds.



### Hands rotation:

1. Stand erect.
2. Make a fist of both hands and without bending the elbows rotate both the arms in a clockwise direction 4-5 times.
3. Repeat the same practice in an anti-clockwise direction for 4-5 times.



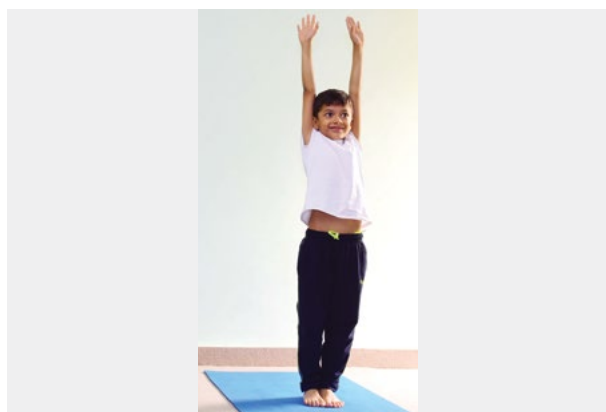
### Shoulder Rotation:



1. Stand erect.
2. Place the fingers of left hand on the left shoulder and the fingers of right hand on the right shoulder.
3. Full rotation of the both elbows in a circular manner.
4. Try to touch the elbows in front of the chest on the forward movement and touch the ears while moving up.
5. Stretch the arm back in the backward movement and touch the side of the trunk while coming down.
6. It is clockwise rotation and repeat it for 5 times.
7. Do the same anti-clockwise.

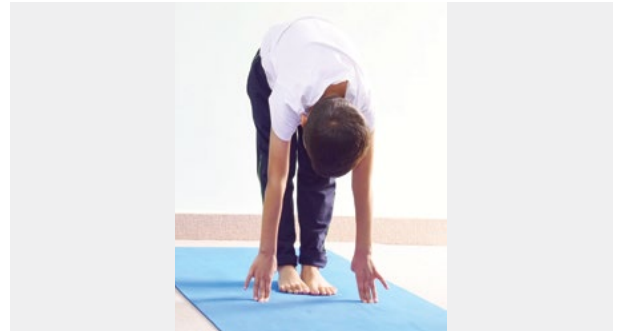
### Shaking wrist:

1. Stand erect.
2. Lift your arms up at the shoulder level in front of the body.
3. Shake your wrist for 10-15 times
4. Bring your hands in normal position.



### Back movement (Forward and backward)

1. Stand erect.
2. Inhale, raise the hands up towards the sky and bend slightly backward.
3. While exhaling bend forward and touch your toes.
4. Repeat 4-5 times.



### Back twisting movement:

1. Stand straight.
2. Keep the legs about 2-3 feet apart.
3. Raise both the arms up to chest level with palms facing each other and keep them parallel.
4. While exhaling, twist the body towards the left side so that the right palm touches the left shoulder, and come back with inhalation.
5. While exhaling, twist the body towards the right side so that the left palm touches the right shoulder, come back with inhalation.
6. This is one round: repeat two more time



### Back – side bending:

1. Stand straight.
2. Keep the legs a few feet apart.
3. Raise both the arms by the side at shoulder level with palms facing downward.
4. While exhaling, bend the body towards the left side and come back with inhalation.
5. While exhaling, bend the body towards the right side and come back with inhalation.
6. This is one round, repeat two more times.



### Butterfly Movement:

1. Sit erect with the legs stretched out straight in the front.
2. Keep the hands beside the hips and palm resting on the floor. This is Dandāsana.
3. Now join the soles of your feet together.
4. Exhale and clasp your hands together over your toes. Pull your heels as close as possible up to perineum region.
5. Start moving bent legs up and down repeatedly.



### Knee Movement:

1. Stand straight with the feet a few inches apart.
2. Inhale; lift your arms up at the shoulder level, palms facing downwards.
3. Exhale; bend the knees and bring down your body to the squatting position.
4. In the final position, both the arms and thighs should be parallel to the ground.
5. Inhale; and straighten the body.
6. Exhale while bringing down the hands.
7. Repeat two more times.



### Ankle Movements:

#### Ankle stretch:

1. Sit erect with feet stretched forward.
2. Now stretch the ankle joint forward and backward.

#### Ankle rotation:

1. Sit erect with the feet stretched forward.
2. Slowly rotate the right foot clockwise from the ankle joint.
3. Repeat the rotation in an anti-clockwise direction.



### 3. Asanas (Postures)

#### 1. Tadasana (Palm Tree posture)

1. Stand straight with the feet few a inches apart.
2. Inhale and raise your arms up to the shoulder level.
3. Interlock your fingers and turn the wrists outwards.
4. Inhale, bring your arms up.
5. Raise the heels and balance on the toes as per capability with normal breathing.
6. With exhalation come back to the initial position.
7. Strengthens ankles, calves, inner thighs ann back. Stretches the shoulders.
8. It helps to increase height in kids.



#### 2. Vrikshasana (Tree posture)

1. Stand straight.
2. Bend the right leg and place the right foot on the inner side of the left thigh.
3. Inhale, bring the arms up and join the palms together.
4. Exhale, bring the arms and right foot down.
5. Now repeat the same practice with the other leg.
6. Develops balance and concentration, and tones the leg muscles.





### 3. Ashvasanchalan (Horse riding posture)

1. Bend forward and place both hands by side of both feet.
2. Stretch the right leg back as much as possible.
3. Bring the right knee on the floor.
4. Bend the left leg at the knee.
5. Inhale raise the head backward with the back arched and gaze in between the eyebrows.
6. This strengthens the lower body
7. It help to stretch the groin and hip region.
8. Lengthens the spine, thereby stretching the chest



### 4. Parvatasana (Mountain posture)

1. Bend forward and place both hands by side of both feet.
2. Exhale; stretch the front leg to back.
3. Balance whole body on both hands and toes.
4. Buttocks should be pushed upward like mountain pose.
5. Strengthens the lower body
6. It help to stretch the groin and hip region.
7. Strengthens and relieves stiffness in shoulders.



## 5. Trikonasana (Triangle posture)

1. Stand and open your legs a few feet apart
2. Inhale; raise both your arms up to shoulder level.
3. Turn your right foot towards right side
4. Exhale, bend to the right side
5. Turn your head and gaze at your middle finger.
6. Inhale and slowly come back
7. Bring your right foot back to the normal position
8. Repeat the same practice with other side.



## 6. Marjariasana (Cat posture)

1. Kneel on the floor and lean forward putting both your palms on the floor pointing forward.
2. The legs can be slightly apart and palms should be at shoulder length.
3. Let your trunk be parallel to the ground, the thighs should be straight. The lower leg and feet should be on the floor.
4. Now exhale completely. Move your head inwards between your shoulders. While doing this your back will bend and arch upwards.
5. Now inhale and arch your back in the opposite direction. The spine will bend slightly downwards. The head, neck and shoulders should be arched backwards, as if you are looking up.
6. It helps to get rid stiffness from the back.
7. It strengthens the abdominal organs.



## 7. Ushtrasana (Camel posture)

1. Kneel down and stand on your knees.
2. Inhale; bend backward and hold your heels with their respective palms.
3. This is the final position and maintain this with normal breathing.
4. Ustrasana stretches out muscles around neck, chest and abdomen region.
5. It strengthens up back muscles, gluteal muscles and triceps of the arms.



## 8. Shashakasana (Rabbit posture)

1. Sit in kneeling posture.
2. Spread both the knees wide apart, keep the big toes touching.
3. Keep the palms between the knees.
4. Exhale and slowly stretch them to full length.
5. Bend forward and place the chin on the ground.
6. Keep the arms parallel.
7. Look in front and maintain the posture with normal breathing.
8. It is a good resting pose. Good for the lower back.
9. It helps in regulating adrenal glands.
10. It improves concentration and memory.
11. It helps reduce emotional instability and anger.



## **9. Madukasana (Frog posture)**

1. Sit in the pose of Vajrasana.
2. Make a fist of both palms.
3. Now place both fists on your naval area.
4. Now take a deep breath and while exhaling bend forward.
5. Keep your elbows parallel.
6. Inhale; raise your head and shoulder up.
7. Look at in between eyebrow.
8. Hold this pose as much as you can and continue breathing normally.
9. It relieves constipation.
10. It reduces stress.



## **10. Vakrasana (Twisting posture)**

1. Sit erect with the legs stretch forward in dandasana.
2. Bend the right leg and place near the left knee.
3. Exhale, twist the body towards the right and bring the left hand palm near the right foot.
4. Place the right hand behind the back on the ground.
5. Turn the head towards right side and maintain the final position with normal breathing.
6. Do the same practice with other side.
7. It tones spinal nerves.
8. It strengthens back muscles and reduces back ache.
9. It helps to relieve constipation and remove toxins.



### **11. Gomukhasana (Cow face posture)**

1. Sit erect with the legs stretch forward.
2. Bend one leg above the other and place one knee above the knee.
3. Interlock the hands on the back and maintain the position with normal breathing.
4. It improves the lung capacity and is very beneficial for respiratory system.
5. It increases the flexibility of arms and shoulder muscles.



### **12. Kagasana (Crow posture)**

1. Stand straight with the feet few inches apart.
2. Exhale; bend the knees and come in squatting position.
3. Place your hands on respective knee.
4. It strengthens the pelvic joint and knee joint.



### **13. Simhasana (Roaring Lion posture)**

1. Sit in Vajrasana.
2. Spread your knees wide apart.
3. Now inhale and take out your tongue. Try to look between in the eyebrows and exhale.
4. During exhaling roar like a lion.
5. It is best exercise for face, eyes, tongue and throat muscles.
6. It helps to improve the vocal chords.
7. It opens the respiratory tract properly.



### 14. Makrasana (Crocodile posture)

1. Lay down on abdomen.
2. Spread your legs and heels facing towards each other.
3. Bend both the arms and place the right hand on the left.
4. Place the face on your hands.
5. Keep the eyes closed. This is Makarāsana.
6. Indicated to counter stress and anxiety.
7. Promotes relaxation of the lower back.



### 15. Saral bhujanasana (Cobra posture)

1. Lie down on your abdomen.
2. Now join your legs and stretch your arms.
3. Keep the forehead on the ground.
4. Now place your hands just beside the body; keep palms and elbows on the ground.
5. As you inhale slowly, lift the chin and chest come up to navel region. Stay there comfortably with normal breathing.
6. This is called Sarala Bhujangāsana.
7. This āsana is best for stress management.
8. It helps to remove backache and bronchial problems



### 16. Dhanurasana (Bow posture)

1. Lie down on your abdomen.
2. Fold your knees and hold ankles with the respective hands.
3. Inhale; raise your whole body on the abdomen (navel centre).
4. It stretches the spine and keeps it flexible.
5. It improves the functioning of Vital Organs.
6. It is very useful for overcoming lethargy.



### 17. Balasana (Child posture)

1. Lie down on your abdomen.
2. Bend your one leg and hand, relax the whole body.
3. It helps to reduce stress and anxiety.



### 18. Setubandhasana (Bridge posture)

1. Lie down on your back.
2. Bend knees and bring feet toward buttocks.
3. While holding both the ankles firmly keep the knees and feet in one straight line.
4. Inhale; slowly raise your buttocks and trunk up as much as you can to form a bridge.
5. Not all children will be able to hold ankle. They can keep their palm on the base for support.
6. Opens the chest and upper back.
7. It relieves depression and anxiety and strengthens lower back muscles.
8. It stretches abdominal organs, improves digestion and helps to relieve constipation.



### **19. Saral matyasana (Fish posture)**

1. Lie down on the back. Legs should be extended.
2. Lift the upper back with support of elbows and palms and place the crown of your head on the ground.
3. Place the hands on your thighs.
4. This is final position and maintain this with normal breathing.
5. This asana is good for the abdominal organs.
6. It relieves stress and irritation.
7. It is good for bronchial disorders.



### **20. Shavasana (Star fish posture)**

1. Lie down on your back with arms and legs comfortably apart.
2. Palms facing upward; eyes closed.
3. Relax the whole body consciously.
4. Become aware of natural breath and allow it to become rhythmic and slow.
5. It helps to relieve all kinds of tensions and gives rest to both body and mind.
6. Relaxes the whole psycho-physiological system.





## 4. PRANAYAMA

### 1. Bhramari Pranayama

1. Sit in any comfortable posture with eyes closed.
2. Inhale deeply through the nose.
3. Close the eyes with index fingers, mouth with ring and small fingers and ears with respective thumbs. This is also called Śanmukhi Mudra.
4. Exhale slowly in a controlled manner while making a deep, steady humming sound such as that of black bee.
5. The resonance effect of humming sound creates a soothing effect on the mind and nervous system.
6. It helps to relieve anxiety, stress and hyperactivity.



### 2. Deep Breathing

1. Sit in any comfortable posture with eyes closed.
2. Inhale deeply through the nose.
3. Exhale deeply through the nose.
4. Become aware of deep breath and allow it to become deep, rhythmic and slow.
5. It helps to improve breathing capacity.



## 5. KRIDA YOGA

### 1. Rain Claps

Clap your left palm repeatedly with one, two, three, four fingers and entire right palm three times each in ascending and descending order. Then clap loudly in the usual way. It sounds similar like rain.



### 2. Special Claps – I

Clap with both hands three times with the rhythm 1,2/1,2,3/1,2/1,2,3/1,2/1,2,3.



### 3. Special Claps – II

Clap with both hands three times with the rhythm 1,2,3/ 1,2,3/1,2,3.

### 4. Flower Claps

Raise both your hands with fingers spread widely apart forming a flower. At the command 1,2,3, move your fingers vigorously. This is a silent clap that can be used during a performance or speech without disturbing the programme. But a “zoooo” sound can be added at other times.





This Yoga module is prepared by Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) under Ministry of AYUSH in consultation with Ministry of Women and Child development

