



Yoga Fitness Module

Teaching for a Practice Across the Lifespan

**British Columbia Recreation & Parks Association (BCRPA)
Performance Standards**

**Plus an exploration of accessibility, adaptability,
and ageing in the yoga classroom.**

40 hours

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What We Bring to Yoga Class

A Yoga Fitness class is shaped continuously by the teacher's decisions, awareness, and approach. How we arrive, prepare, and engage with the people in front of us influences the experience as much as the postures and practices themselves.

This begins before class starts and continues through the final moments of practice. Arriving prepared, acknowledging participants, remaining present and attentive, communicating clearly, and working within scope of practice all contribute to a safe and supportive learning environment.

Consistency, reliability, and genuine care help build trust over time. Together, these qualities create an environment where participants feel welcomed, supported, and encouraged in their practice.

HOW ADULTS LEARN MOVEMENT

For the teacher, presence is what allows adult learning to function in real time.

It shows up in noticing when instruction is landing, when it needs to slow down, or when silence or demonstration may be more effective than additional cueing. It also means reading the group as it is, not as it was planned to be, and adjusting without losing steadiness or clarity.

Adults often come into movement with prior experience—of exercise, of their own body, and of expectations about what they “should” be able to do.

In a Yoga Fitness setting, learning is supported when instruction is:

- repeated without unnecessary variation
- linked to clear, simple actions
- paced so participants have time to see, try, and adjust
- offered with options and choice
- free from criticism, comparison, or correction

Many adults also learn by watching first, then trying. Clear demonstration and consistent cueing support this, especially when movement is unfamiliar or confidence is still developing.

TEACHING AS A GUEST

Walking into a room as a guest (substitute teacher) requires observation first — noticing how the space feels, how participants are engaging, and what rhythms already exist in the room before offering instruction.

What we bring to the class is not only our teaching knowledge, but also our ability to listen, adapt, and respect the community we are entering. Rather than teaching the class we want, we respond to the people in front of us, recognizing their needs, energy, experience, and familiarity with the practice. From there, teaching can be offered in a way that supports continuity while remaining clear and steady in the role of teacher.

Being invited back reflects more than teaching ability. It demonstrates adaptability, reliability, and the ability to work within an established community.

Substituting also provides valuable teaching experience and can help build a reputation as a reliable, supportive, and respectful teacher.

SELF-CARE AS PART OF TEACHING PRESENCE

Teaching can be rewarding, but it also requires energy and attention over time. Without balance, fatigue and burnout can affect how effectively we teach and respond in the classroom.

Supporting longevity in teaching may include taking classes as a participant, stepping away from teaching when needed, resting, or spending time with practices and relationships that restore energy.

Noticing early signs of strain, maintaining realistic teaching loads, and allowing time for recovery can help sustain both teaching quality and enjoyment of the role.

ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Years of life and movement experience can shape how older adults enter a Yoga Fitness class. The preparation, professionalism, consistency, and attention a teacher brings to the room help create an environment where people can focus on learning, movement, and their own experience of practice.

DOWNWARD FACING DOG

Adho Mukha Śvānāsana

A common yoga posture that combines upper- and lower-body engagement while encouraging length through the spine, shoulder awareness, and coordinated movement through the body.

It is often included as a transitional pose, a focused position (S6), or as part of flowing sequences such as Sun Salutations (*Sūrya Namaskāra*, S3).

FORM

- Table (*Bharmāṇāsana*)
- Hips/tailbone lifted
- Legs/arms extended
- Micro-bend in lengthened legs
- Spine elongated
- Hands anchored
- Balls of feet rooted (heels up or down)
- Head follows movement of spine
- Gaze — neutral, aligned with chest

TEACHING CONSIDERATIONS

S2, S3, S6

- Rounded spine
- Collapsing through shoulders
- Excessive weight/pressure onto wrists
- Locked knees
- Holding tension in neck
- Substitute: Extended Child's (*Bālāsana*)

MODIFICATIONS

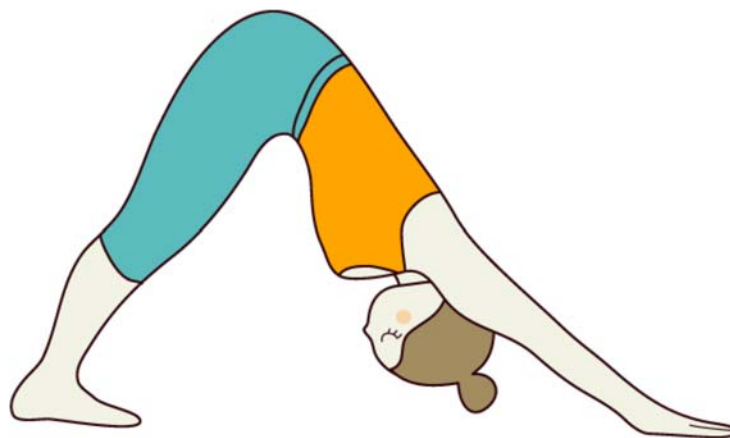
- Bend knees generously
- Widen stance
- On forearms
- Child's (*Bālāsana*)

MAJOR MUSCLE GROUP/S

- Latissimus dorsi (lats); Deltoids; Triceps brachii; Hamstrings; Gastrocnemius and Soleus

ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Weight-bearing through the upper body and changing orientation in space may feel unfamiliar for some older adults. Wrist comfort, shoulder mobility, and previous movement experiences can influence how this pose is approached, including transitions to and from the floor.



Note: Pose images are representational. Some may reflect variations from best practice across the lifespan. Use cueing suggestions and apply core principles of safety, accessibility, and success to guide informed choices around inclusion, form, and sequencing.

WARRIOR II

S4

Vīrabhadrāsana II

This pose explores grounding through the feet, sustained engagement through the legs and arms, and awareness of alignment through the torso.

FORM

- Mountain (*Tāḍāsana*)
- Stance rooted in basic ‘warrior’ positioning
- Shoulders stacked over hips
- Hips opened and level
- Arms extended out in a T-shape
- Gaze — head turned, chin toward shoulder

TEACHING CONSIDERATIONS

- Steady engagement through both legs
- Shoulders lifted, arms extended in a V-shape
- Hips lowering on one side
- Over rotation of lower, upper and cervical spine

MODIFICATIONS

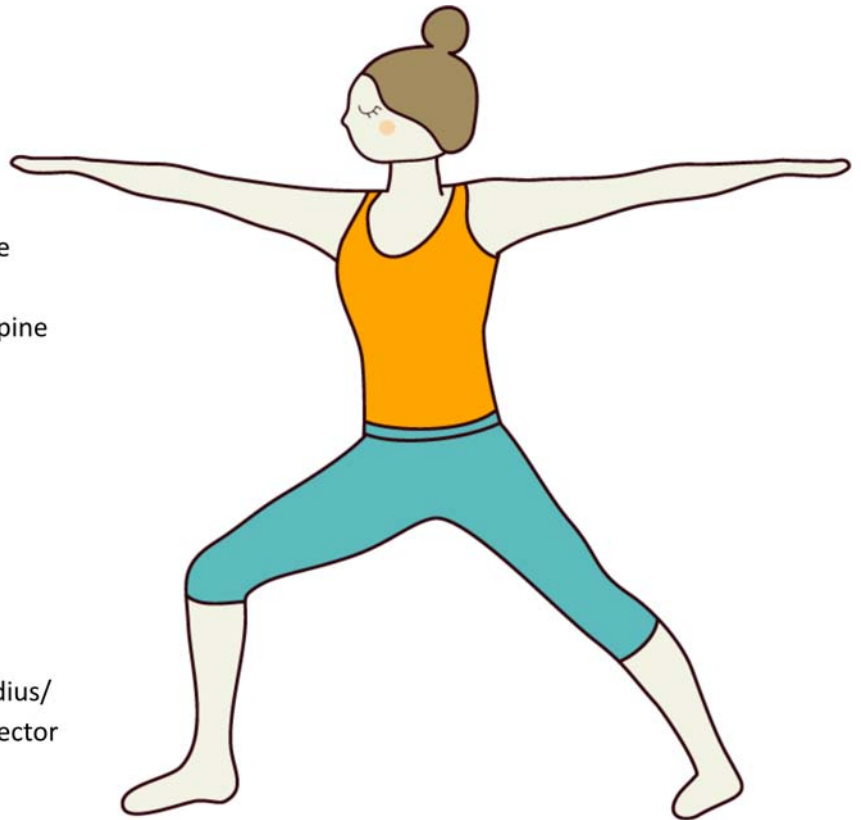
- Elbows bent, hands on shoulders
- Lower arm position
- Wider or shorter stance

MAJOR MUSCLE GROUP/S

- Quadriceps; Gluteus maximus; Gluteus medius/minimus; Adductors; Deltoids; Obliques; Erector spinae

ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Holding a wide standing shape requires strength, balance, and endurance through the legs and hips. With ageing, some older adults may explore adjustments such as changing arm position, stance width, or time in the pose while maintaining the intention of the movement.



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Vṛkṣāsana

This pose explores steadiness through the relationship between a grounded base and a lifted, externally rotated leg. Tree invites awareness of hip position, alignment, and coordination while maintaining stability through the standing leg.

FORM

- Stork (*Sāras Pakṣi Āsana*)
- Hip rotated externally
- Foot placed at ankle, calf, above or below knee
- Arms at hips, heart centre, or swept overhead
- Gaze — neutral, aligned with chest

TEACHING CONSIDERATIONS

- Instability
- Foot pressed against knee joint
- Hip lifted

MODIFICATIONS

- Foot/arm position
- Shifting to a support (wall or chair)

MAJOR MUSCLE GROUP/S

- Quadriceps; Gluteus maximus; Gluteus medius/minimus; Hamstrings; Gastrocnemius and Soleus; Transverse abdominis; Deltoids; Latissimus dorsi (lats)

ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Finding alignment between the grounded leg, lifted foot, and overall posture requires coordination and body awareness. With ageing, individual movement patterns may influence how balance and steadiness are experienced in this shape.



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BRIDGE

Setu Bandhāsana

This supported backbend explores length through the front of the body while encouraging strength and stability through the legs, hips, and back body. Within S6, the pose is held with steadiness and ease, offering a contrast to the movement and effort of Rolling Bridge (S2).

FORM

- Corpse (*Śavāsana*)
- Knees bent, heels aligned under knees
- Feet grounded and hip-width apart
- Hips lifted from the mat
- Spine lengthened
- Arms at the sides, overhead, or in an alternate position
- Chest gently lifted
- Gaze — neutral, aligned with chest

TEACHING CONSIDERATIONS

- Chin lifting toward the ceiling
- Knees collapsing inward or rolling outward
- Turning the head or lifting the head
- Overarching through the lower back

MODIFICATIONS

S6

- Reduce/increase the height of the lift
- Raise heels
- Hands clasped under hips

MAJOR MUSCLE GROUPS/

- Gluteus maximus; Hamstrings; Quadriceps; Erector spinae; Transverse abdominis

ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Lifting the pelvis into extension asks the hips, legs, and back body to work together. Ageing may influence hip mobility, lower-body strength, and how this supported lift is experienced.



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