



Video Transcript

Learn Yoga Essentials: On & Off The Mat

Hi everyone. Welcome. My name is Amanda, and we're gonna talk briefly about the inner and outer components and practices of yoga. Of course, you can use any of these on the mat, but you can use a lot of them off the mat as well. The first one is the breath. The breath is the most important part of your practice, and in general, just daily living.

The breath is what drives the cleansing practice. It's what helps to focus the mind. It's what carries prana throughout the body when you're practicing yoga, and what helps keep that radiant source of life force emanating throughout your day. The breath is used during the yoga practice to help focus the mind.

But it's also used to cleanse your body as you're moving through these asanas. And the type of breath that we use during a yoga practice on the mat is called the uja breath victorious breath. This is done by gently breathing through the nose. We never hold our breath, and it's best to breathe through the nose to help regulate the breath.

The UJA breath is created by breathing behind the sinuses and gently at the top of the throat with a small constriction, just enough to create a sound to help keep the mind focused. It also helps cleans the breath and it warms the breath before entering and leaving the body. So you wanna have a slight sound to draw your awareness inward.

Keep practicing and it will come. The next component is the bandas. So the bandas are used during our practice, and a lot of times you'll notice that we use 'em during our Prana. Yama practices, our breathing exercises. The bandas are really places in the body, and you might

have heard them being referred to as locks or seals, but I like to think of them as a way to contain the prana.

The three main ones that we use are Mula Banda, NDA and nda. The two main ones that we use during an Asana practice are moola, Banda, and nda. We use these to help contain the prana so that it doesn't leave the body out the bottom and that it doesn't leave the body out the top. You engage Mula Banda by gently engaging and squeezing, not forcefully, but just enough to feel the muscles between the pubic bone and the tailbone.

So that's gonna be the anus and the perineum. It's very gently. It helps hold everything in. The next one is Ana Banda. Ana means flying up. It's what creates the lightness in your practice. And the last one, which we use during pranayama exercises is Ja Banda. You keep the spine tall, you draw the chin in and slightly down.

So it really creates this container of the prana. We all have prana. And it's just a matter of how we can access that and work with it. And then the third component is the drifty. Drifty are gazing or focal points. We have nine total. So throughout your practice we have the drifty at the third eye or above us towards the sky.

Urba, facing upwards. Then we have the nose, we have our hands. And then we have the thumb, then we have our toes, and I even mentioned during some of the yoga flows yesterday, NABI cha Rodi, where we look towards the navel. And then lastly, we have to the sides. These are really helpful, not just during balancing practices like standing on one leg, but they're used in order for you to keep your awareness gently turned inward, even as you're looking outwards.

So this is a great way to start to practice on how to focus the mind so that what you may be looking at isn't distracting you. If you're, uh, really working towards a meditation practice, this can be very helpful as well, where you keep the eyes or the gaze very soft, but gently open just out in front of you, not letting your eyes dart around.

And during our yoga practice, we keep our eyes open all the time. And lastly, the Vinyasa. The vinyasa is my most favorite way to bring the breath and the movement together. Vinyasa means it's the combination and spec, special placement of your body or the movements. It's the breath that leads the movement.

It directs the movement. We breathe and then the body follows. So it's the special dance between the two. In that way, it keeps the mindfulness on the breath where you're placing something, all of the other components that are involved and creating this wonderful play of the inner and outer practices of yoga.

Thank you so much for joining me, and I hope that this helps to bring about peace and equanimity and joy on and off the mat.

