



# **THE DEVON SCHOOL OF YOGA**

**PRE AND POST NATAL YOGA  
TEACHER TRAINING COURSE**

**2023 Syllabus**

**Devon School of Yoga established 1989  
33 Years of Inspiration**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3-4</b>
<b>SYLLABUS</b>	<b>4-5</b>
<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>TUTORS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>READING LIST</b>	<b>10</b>

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# INTRODUCTION

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## Welcome to the pre- and post-natal yoga teacher training syllabus

### INTRODUCTION

The Devon School of Yoga, founded by Duncan Hulin was established in 1989 and brings together classes, workshops, retreats and training courses under one umbrella, covering all aspects of the subject. Set in carefully considered studios and locations around Devon, the ideal surroundings are provided for yoga practice, study and contemplation.

This course 10-day course (set over 5 monthly weekends) offers a broad spectrum of techniques from within the yoga tradition specially adapted to meet the needs of pregnant and postnatal women in a supportive and safe way.

Pregnancy, childbirth and the post-natal period can be some of life's most fulfilling and challenging events that women and their families undertake. The practices of yoga are well known to reduce stress and anxiety, to strengthen and open our bodies and to enrich our lives with clarity and joy. This is why yoga is uniquely placed to holistically support a woman and her family through these transitional times.

### STANDARDS

Standards are derived and underpinned from three fundamental yoga principals:

- **Ahimsa** (non-harming)
- **Satya** (truthfulness)
- **Svadyaya** (ongoing self-study)

1. In order to serve the needs of students, teachers will be prepared by having a sound practical and theoretical grounding in yoga and in teaching methods.
2. A knowledge of the main aspects of basic yoga texts and knowledge of anatomy, physiology and pathology underpin the safe application of yoga practices.
3. Personal practice is approached in a calm, inquisitive manner.
4. Individuals are encouraged to extend areas of study in light of their particular knowledge and interests.
5. The ratio of students to teacher will not exceed 12.

**Attitudes:** By the end of the course students will:

1. Aim to uphold the values and ethical lifestyle of traditional yoga teachings in daily life.
2. Accept responsibilities compatible with the teachings of yoga and the ethics of a professional teacher.
3. Aim to empower women and the birthing industry through sharing their work and spreading information about the benefits of yoga during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period.
4. **Commit to being openminded** (particularly to exploring new practices and ideas), maintain good timekeeping, be respectful to tutors and fellow students and practice good listening skills.

### **Prerequisites**

Students who apply for this pre and postnatal yoga teacher training course must meet the following prerequisites:

- Be a qualified yoga teacher PLUS please see below:
  - If the yoga teacher training programme you qualified with was 500 hours, you qualify to join the course.
  - If the yoga teacher training programme you qualified with was 200 to 300 hours, you must have a minimum of 2+ years teaching experience since qualifying.

### **Inclusivity**

All students who meet the above prerequisites and are interested in learning are welcome to apply. This may include women who are themselves pregnant and/or breastfeeding. Babies in arms are welcomed and we will make all reasonable efforts to support students on this course to learn effectively in a safe and nurturing environment.

# SYLLABUS

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## **Course Hours -This is a 80-hour registered course**

Tutor led: 60 hours  
External tutor led: 6 hours (students to attend at least 6 classes either pregnancy or postnatal yoga)  
Student home work: 14 hours (this does not include personal practice time)

## **Aims**

1. To enable students to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become safe and effective pre- and post-natal yoga teachers.
2. To provide a basis for the continued study of the philosophy, principles and practice of yoga in the field of women's health for the teacher's personal growth and development.

## **Learning outcomes**

**Skills:** By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Teach safe and effective pregnancy and postnatal yoga classes to a range of women from different backgrounds.
2. Have a good knowledge of precautions and alternatives to suit the pregnant and postnatal body showing knowledge and understanding of relevant anatomy and physiology.
3. Have a good knowledge of pranayama techniques and their uses in relation to pain relief and the functioning of the autonomic nervous system.
4. Have a good knowledge of mudra and mantra and their applications in pre and postnatal yoga.
5. Have a good knowledge of the pelvic floor muscles system in relation to pregnancy and the postnatal period, including potential surgical procedures and complications that can arise during and after pregnancy and childbirth.
6. Design and utilise lesson plans including individual personalised therapies for specific conditions.
7. Recognise the challenges associated with mixed ability classes including specific health conditions in a general pregnancy and/or postnatal class.
8. Create a safe and supportive working environment for the teaching of yoga

**Knowledge:** By the end of the course students will have a basic knowledge of:

1. The principles of teaching pre and postnatal yoga classes.
2. Pranayama techniques to help with pain relief and relaxation also contra-indicated practices.
3. Traditional asana adaptations and therapeutic movements to help ease common pregnancy and postnatal ailments.
4. Anatomy and physiology of the 4 trimesters of pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period.
5. How to apply anatomy and physiology when teaching.
6. Exercises to strengthen and release the pelvic floor muscles in preparation for birth and for recovery postnatally.
7. The anatomy of the female pelvis and optimal foetal positioning.
8. The physiological and psychological effects of relaxation, nidra and meditation.
9. How to apply relaxation techniques effectively during labour and childbirth.
10. Birthing positions and the importance of the birth environment.
11. The application of restorative postures in pregnancy and postnatal yoga.
12. Mudras for pre and postnatal women.
13. Mantra and visualisation for pregnancy, childbirth and postnatal recovery.
14. How to apply yoga philosophy and psychology to the context of pregnancy, childbirth and postnatal recovery including pregnancy loss, stillbirth and postnatal depression.

## PRACTICAL CONTENT

### Asanas/Sequences/Bandha (adaptations and variations)

Sanskrit Name	English name
Pavanmuktasana	Joint rotations and mobility
Shakti Bhandha	Movement of energy
Chandra Namaskar	Moon salute
Virabhadrasana 1	Warrior posture1
Virabhadrasana 2	Warrior posture 2
Trikonasana	Triangle posture
Parsvokonasana	Intense side angle stretch
Adho Mukha Svanasana	Downward facing dog (variations)
Kaliasana	Goddess posture
Vrikshasana	Tree posture
Garudasana	Eagle posture
Natarajasana	Dancer posture
Marjarasana	Cat variations Including: Extended cat Hip circles Figure of 8 Swooping cat Arm circles
Balāsana	Child posture
Bhadrasana (Bhaddha-konasana)	Cobbler's posture
Janusirshasana	Head-to-knee posture (variations)
Parivritta janusirshasana	Revolving head-to-knee posture
Uppavista-konasana	Wide leg forward fold
Kapotasana	Pigeon posture
Parivritta Uppavista-konasana	Revolving wide leg forward fold
Supta ardha parivritta jatharaparivartanasana	(Relaxed) lying heart opening half twist

### Restorative Asana

Hiranyagharbasana/supta baddha-konasana	Golden womb posture/reclined cobbler's posture
Uppasvishta konasana	Wide legged forward bend
Supta Virasana	Kneeling warrior
Viparitkarani	Half shoulder stand (legs up the wall)
Balāsana	Child posture
Pranava	Prone posture
Savasana - Left side or propped on back	

(PLEASE NOTE: this list is not exhaustive)

## **Mudras**

Yoni Mudra - with movement and variations

Prana mudra

Padma mudra

Prithvi / Apana mudra

Chin mudra

## **Pranayamas**

Brahmari

Nadi shodhana

Golden thread breath

Ujjayi

Simhasana

## **Mantra**

Om Purnamadah

Lokah Samastha

Pranava Om

So Ham

Ha

## **THEORETICAL CONTENT**

### **Anatomy and Physiology**

Pelvic anatomy

Optimal foetal positioning

Hormonal changes in pregnancy, labour and postnatally

Common ailments in the pre and postnatal body

Birth preparation

Labour and childbirth

Pelvic girdle pain

Carpel tunnel syndrome

Diastasis recti

Pre-eclampsia

IVF

Multiple births

Heartburn

Oedema

Blood pressure issues

Digestive system



## **Philosophy**

Pancha Koshas

Prana

Kleshas

Patanjali's 8-fold path

## **Teaching Skills**

- Application of knowledge and anatomy and physiology specific to the pre and postnatal body in teaching movement, asana and breath work.
- How to prepare a syllabus and teach a yoga class, including lesson plans for general and individual classes.
- How to teach posture safely for pregnant and postnatal women including those with specific conditions.

## **ASSESSMENT**

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### **Aims**

- To measure achievement and provide a basis for the award of a certificate.
- To assess students fairly and reliably.
- To aid and enhance learning by the provision of feedback on written and practical work.

### **Practice**

Students will have a final teaching assessment at the end of the course.

### **Theory**

1. A 2,000-word project of personal choice concerning an aspect of pre- and/or post-natal yoga
2. An end of course multiple-choice theory paper.

**Students must complete and achieve a satisfactory standard in all assessments and coursework before receiving a certificate.**

### **Assessors**

The course tutors will set and mark theory and observe practice. They will also moderate assessments in the interests of fairness and justice.

### **Quality Issues**

Quality control is primarily the responsibility of the School Director and the course tutors. Attention is given to student and teacher evaluations, safety matters and feedback. Keeping up to date is important in this dynamic field and teachers on the course will be properly qualified.

## **TUTORS**

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**Alice Chapman** BA, Dip DSY YTH, Dip YE, Dip PYTTC, Dip PYTTC  
([www.pregnanyogatorbay.co.uk](http://www.pregnanyogatorbay.co.uk), [www.alicechapman.co.uk](http://www.alicechapman.co.uk))

Alice is a Teacher trainer for the Devon School of Yoga and a yoga therapist with special expertise in women's health including pre and post-natal yoga (*Pregnancy yoga training with Uma Dinsmore Tuli 2013, Postnatal yoga training with Uma Dinsmore Tuli 2014*). Alice has a special interest in the practical life skills yoga offers us particularly in times of great transition and change such as childbirth and early years parenting.

**Helen Humble** Dip DSY, Dip YHT Biomedical Trust, Dip Med

Helen teaches yoga and yoga therapy. She has a background of working in the NHS as a district nurse. She is a Shiatsu practitioner and is a qualified teacher of meditation with the Dent Meditation Centre. Helen is a qualified Birthlight and T-R-E practitioner to complement an integrated approach to holistic health.

**Ruth Heard** Dip DSY

Ruth teaches hatha yoga and specialises in prenatal and postnatal yoga. Ruth also finds a great deal of joy teaching toddler yoga. Ruth is a full spectrum doula and hypnobirthing instructor and is currently on the Devon School of Yoga postgraduate yoga therapy course.

## READING LIST

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PLEASE NOTE - you are not expected to own or read all of the following books. Most are simply a suggestion and there are many more books available. Specific required reading is indicated below (\*).

### Book List (\*Required reading)

Birth Your Way - Sheila Kitzinger  
Birthing from Within - Pam England and Rob Horowitz  
Encyclopaedia of Pregnancy and Birth - Janet Balaskas ISBN 0136906166  
Ina May's Guide to Childbirth - Ina May Gaskin  
Mother's Breath - Uma Dinsmore-Tuli  
Rediscovering Birth - Sheila Kitzinger  
Spiritual Midwifery - Ina May Gaskin  
\*The New Pregnancy and Childbirth - Sheila Kitzinger  
Yoga for Pregnancy - Francoise Freedman and Doriel Hall  
Yoga for Pregnancy - Wendy Teasdill  
\*Yoga for Pregnancy, Birth and Beyond - Francoise Freedman  
Yoni Shakti - Uma Dinsmore Tuli  
Teach yourself Pregnancy yoga - Uma Dinsmore Tuli  
The first 40 days - Heng Ou and Amely Greeven  
What Mothers Do - Naomi Sadlen  
Our Babies Ourselves - Meredith Small  
Continuum Concept - Jean Liedlow  
A Secure Base - John Bowlby

### Web Sites

[www.activebirthcentre.com](http://www.activebirthcentre.com)  
[www.birthlight.com](http://www.birthlight.com)  
[www.yogashakti.co](http://www.yogashakti.co)  
[www.yoganidranetwork.org](http://www.yoganidranetwork.org)  
[www.spinningbabies.com](http://www.spinningbabies.com)