



Teaching Yoga: Essential Foundations and Techniques

By Mark Stephens

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Teaching Yoga is an essential resource for new and experienced teachers as well as a guide for all yoga students interested in refining their skills and knowledge. Addressing 100% of the teacher training curriculum standards set by Yoga Alliance, the world's leading registry and accreditation source for yoga teachers and schools, *Teaching Yoga* is also ideal for use as a core textbook in yoga teacher training programs.

Drawing on a wide spectrum of perspectives, and featuring more than 150 photographs and illustrations, the book covers fundamental topics of yoga philosophy and history, including a historical presentation of classical yoga literature: the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Yoga Sutras of Pataljali, and the main historical sources on tantra and early hatha yoga. Each of the eleven major styles of contemporary yoga is described, with a brief history of its development and the distinguishing elements of its teachings. Exploring traditional and modern aspects of anatomy and physiology, the book provides extensive support and tools for teaching 108 yoga poses (*asanas*), breathing techniques (*pranayama*), and meditation. *Teaching Yoga* offers practical advice for classroom setup, planning and sequencing classes, as well as the process involved in becoming a teacher and sustaining oneself in the profession. The book has over 200 bibliographic sources, a comprehensive index, and a useful appendix that lists associations, institutes, organizations, and professional resources for yoga teachers.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Whether you’re already a yoga teacher, aspiring to be one, or just seeking to deepen your understanding and practice of yoga, Mark Stephens’ thoughtful, eloquent, and thorough book would be a valuable addition to your library... In *Teaching Yoga*, he covers all the basic topics you’d hope to find in a comprehensive teacher training class... Stephens’ deep understanding of, and appreciation for, the practice and fruits of yoga constantly illuminate his writing. That spirit gives force to his gentle insistence that all yoga teachers must look inside to find – and share with their students – their own authentic expression of yoga.”

—*Yoga Journal*

“Mark Stephens’s all-encompassing tome for both new and experienced teachers [offers] an exhaustive overview of philosophy, history, yoga styles, and guidelines for practice... Authoritative and engaging, but never dogmatic, *Teaching Yoga* will help instructors fine-tune their classroom skills and empower their personal practice.”

—*Yoga+Joyful Living Magazine*

“*Teaching Yoga* by Mark Stephens is a great resource, not just for yoga teachers but for practitioners of all levels. It covers everything from yoga philosophy and history to the intricacies of the poses, breathing practices and meditation... The foreword is sweetly written by Mariel Hemingway and only serves to enhance this must-read for any practicing or aspiring yogi.”

—*Wisconsin State Journal*

“Mark Stephens, a teacher of teachers, has created a comprehensive and inspiring guide for yoga teachers and serious practitioners alike. In these pages, he offers us the fruit of his years of rigorous practice, his deep contemplation, and his understanding of what really matters in yoga. Filled with tips and secrets for finding the inner core of asana, gently but firmly puncturing myths, this book is a brilliant merger of traditional wisdom with contemporary rigor and insight. It should be on the shelf of everyone who loves the practice of yoga.”

—Sally Kempton, *Yoga Journal*’s “Wisdom” columnist and author of *The Heart of Meditation: Pathways to a Deeper Experience*

“Comprehensive, deeply insightful, and chock full of tips and techniques for teaching and doing yoga, Mark Stephens’s *Teaching Yoga* will be required reading for yoga teachers, teacher trainers, and serious students alike. We heartily recommend this essential new contribution to the conscious evolution of yoga.”

—Joel Kramer, coauthor with Diana Alstad of *The Passionate Mind Revisited: Expanding Personal and Social Awareness*

“*Teaching Yoga* is an urgently needed manual that will be a valuable tool in the arsenal of aspiring yoga teachers to add perspective and to hone their skills. It provides a wealth of foundational information, advice, tips, guidance, and grist for the mill.”

—Ganga White, founder, White Lotus Yoga Foundation, Santa Barbara, California, and author of *Yoga Beyond Belief: Insights to Awaken and Deepen Your Practice*

“*Teaching Yoga* is friendly, well thought out, helpful, clear, and tremendously thorough. Many people will benefit from this gift, it being exactly what is needed to help a growing teacher teach at his or her best. I’m

glad it is finally in print and it is coming out just in time for my next teacher training!”

—Erich Schiffmann, author of *Yoga: The Spirit and Practice of Moving Into Stillness*

“Mark Stephens is making a real offering to yoga teachers, providing practical tools and inspiration for the path that embraces all forms of embodied yoga. There are hard-to-find gems that make this a great resource, from the section of the mythological meaning behind the *asanas* to teaching cues for the core *asanas* and sequencing tools from *vinyasa krama*. Enjoy this great resource and dive deep into your own transformation of teaching yoga.”

—Shiva Rea, leading instructor of Transformational Prana Flow Yoga and Yoga Trance Dance

“Yoga teachers and their students will love this book. Mark Stephens untangles the complexities of yoga philosophy, history, and energetics, offers clear and compelling techniques for teaching and exploring *asanas*, *pranayama*, and meditation, and gives teachers a rich array of practical tools for planning and sequencing classes, working with diverse students, and teaching with integrity and authenticity. *Teaching Yoga* should be in the hands of every teacher and dedicated student.”

—Seane Corn, yoga teacher and founder, Off the Mat, Into the World

“Yoga luminary Mark Stephens has written a book that embodies *Hatha* yoga itself, offering a highly informative guide for all yoga teachers. *Teaching Yoga* answers our questions and addresses our controversies. This comprehensive and scholarly guide is now required reading for our teaching staff.”

—Mary Lynn Fitton, founder and director of programs, The Art of Yoga Project

“Dedicated yoga students and their teachers will find Mark Stephens's comprehensive book an essential and timeless resource. Filled with profound insights presented with clarity and intelligence, *Teaching Yoga* is a wonderful resource that beautifully models the practice of yoga itself; it unites many diverse threads of truth into a cohesive, vibrant whole. It has quickly become an indispensable part of my teaching library.”

—Daniel Stewart, cofounder and director, Rising Lotus Yoga, Los Angeles, California

“Fifteen years after starting a successful movement to bring yoga into inner city schools, prisons, treatment centers, and veteran’s facilities, Mark Stephens is back with a treasure trove of wisdom and insight drawn from years of training teachers for success in those settings as well as more traditional yoga spaces such as studios, retreats, and conferences. *Teaching Yoga* is destined to be a classic that every yoga teacher and student will consult for years to come.”

—James Wvinner, yogi and cofounder, Yoga, Tribe, and Culture

“*Teaching Yoga* is a wonderful addition to the growing collection of books being created for yoga teachers... [Stephens’] writing is friendly, clear, helpful and thorough.”

—YogaBasics.com

“*Teaching Yoga: Essential Foundations and Techniques* is the first comprehensive guide written for practicing and would-be yoga teachers and their students, covering yoga's history, philosophy, and basic teaching methods. It follows the teacher training curriculum standards set by Yoga Alliance and blends traditional yoga with modern techniques and over 150 photos and anatomy illustrations. Any new age or yoga collection must have this!”

—Midwest Book Review, Reviewer’s Choice

“Mark Stephens’ *Teaching Yoga* offers a fantastic primer for the beginning teacher or those interested in learning more about the many facets of the philosophy and practice of yoga. Stephens is obviously a seasoned student and teacher, and even though the book is written at an expert level, it is still accessible and

easy to understand. Stephens' text offers a great gift for coming generations: what a pleasure to have all of this information in one place.”

—CirclesOfLight.com

“Steeped in the knowledge of classical yoga and modern adaptations, Stephens manages to make the practice of yoga accessible to experienced teachers, new teachers, and students.”

—*A Garden Carried in the Pocket*

“This has to be the most comprehensive book on yoga I've ever read. It is definitely more than just your typical 'how-to' yoga book... I have been thoroughly impressed.”

—Kari, *Reading For Sanity*

About the Author

An esteemed yoga teacher and teacher trainer who has trained over 1,000 yoga teachers, Mark Stephens conducts classes, workshops, and retreats worldwide. The founder of Yoga Inside Foundation, L.A. Yoga Center, and the recipient of *Yoga Journal's* first annual Karma Yoga Award in 2000. The author of *Yoga Sequencing: Designing Transformative Yoga Classes* (North Atlantic Books, 2012), he lives and teaches in Santa Cruz, CA.

Foreword contributor Mariel Hemingway is an actress and longtime yoga practitioner and teacher.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gerald Chisholm:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in every single way. By being competitive currently, people have to do something to make these people survive, being in the middle of the actual crowded place and notice by means of surrounding. One thing that often many people have underestimated it for a while is reading. Yes, by reading a guide your ability to survive enhance then having chance to endure than other is high. In your case who want to start reading any book, we give you that *Teaching Yoga: Essential Foundations and Techniques* book as basic and daily reading publication. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

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