

Plus-Size Yoga

How to Start Yoga When You are Overweight

<http://yoga.about.com/od/beginningyoga/a/plussized.htm>



By [Ann Pizer](#)
[Yoga Expert](#)

Why Do Yoga?

Any physical activity will improve mobility and general health. Doing yoga [decreases stress](#), improves flexibility and increases muscle tone and strength. The overweight often have trouble with joint pain; yoga can help by improving the body's [alignment](#) to reduce strain on joints by allowing the frame to bear more of the body's weight. Yoga also develops your balance, which helps you feel grounded and reduces the likelihood of injuring yourself in a fall. People who are overweight often feel disconnected from their bodies — yoga helps to bring the mind-body connection to the fore, which can improve self-image and acceptance of your body. Most importantly, yoga can help you feel better, both improving your physical fitness and elevating your mood.

How to Start

The best way to learn yoga is from a [qualified teacher](#) in a yoga class. Specialized classes for the plus-sized are becoming more popular, but can't be found everywhere. In order to have a positive experience from your first yoga classes, try a beginner's level gentle [hatha practice](#). [Kripalu](#), [Viniyoga](#), and [Integral](#) are good choices, if available, because the teachers are trained to work with differing abilities and body types. [Chair yoga](#) is also a possibility for those with limited mobility. Abby Lentz, founder of Heavyweight Yoga in Austin, Texas, suggests speaking to the yoga teacher before your first class to ensure that you are comfortable and the teacher will be prepared to offer modifications and [props](#) as necessary. If you do not feel ready for a group class, private yoga sessions may be the way to go. This can be a great way to learn basic poses and gain the confidence to use props in an effective way before joining a group practice. Becoming knowledgeable about yoga is the best way to ensure that you will feel at ease.

[Cute Plus Size Clothing](#)

www.zulily.com

Up to 70% Off On Plus Size Dresses & Accessories. Shop Now!

YogaJack - GoYogaJack.com

www.goyogajack.com

Damn Fine Yoga Mats - #1 Rated Mat. Strong & Awesome Mats. Made for You

Those who don't have access to yoga classes can still get started by using DVDs at home. Lentz's *Heavyweight Yoga* DVD (see below) is a great choice, as it leads you through basic exercises and offers modifications for those whose mobility is limited by their size.

Yoga and Weight Loss

In order to lose weight, you must limit your caloric intake while also engaging in regular exercise that raises your heart rate. If weight loss is your primary goal, there are more effective methods than yoga. Yoga will make you feel better, but is best thought of as a part of your overall wellness routine than as the path to thinner thighs. Read more on [yoga and weight loss here](#).

Plus-Size Yoga Resources

[Curvy Yoga](#), Nashville, Tennessee (and online)

[Heavyweight Yoga](#), Austin, Texas (and on DVD)

[A Gentle Way Yoga](#), San Diego (and on CD)

[Mega Yoga](#), NYC area (and on DVD and print)

[Big A#%!™ Yoga](#) at the Yoga Center of Minneapolis, MN [Big Yoga](#) DVD