

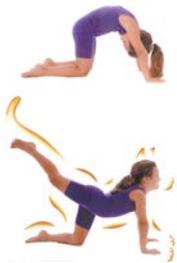


Month 3: Yoga Toddler/Preschool Activities

Top Ten Tips for Teaching Your Toddler Yoga:

1. Practice yoga routines in a safe and relaxing environment.
 2. Do the routine that best fits the moment and your child's needs.
 3. Make the whole room the yoga mat.
 4. Provide simple directions.
 5. Model the poses and actions you desire.
 6. Vary your energy to match the energy level of your child.
 7. Mirror your child's words and environment.
 8. Encourage and acknowledge creativity.
 9. Reward appropriate behaviour.
 10. Be specific when you praise your child.
- Children don't like holding poses, as adults do, but they do enjoy constant activity, so you just might have trouble keeping up with them.
 - Some poses may be too difficult for younger children. Use your best judgement of the child's ability, and let them move at their own pace.

Cat



- Start from hands and knees. Hands should be directly under shoulders, knees under hips.
- Spread fingers wide and point them straight ahead.
- Keeping arms straight, press down through hands into floor and exhale as you round back as much as possible and look at your bellybutton.
- On the inhale, arch your back, look up and reach one leg behind you. Imagine you are a cat stretching all the way through your tail.
- Repeat with the other leg stretching back.
- Do as many times as feels good.

*From all fours
I round my spine
So I can see my tummy
Then with a stretch
I arch myself
It makes my back
feel yummy.*

Turtle



- Sit with soles of feet pressed together so that legs form a diamond shape.
- Touch elbows together in front of chest.
- Then bending forward bring elbows down toward the floor between knees.
- Slide forearms under legs and rest hands on floor palms down.
- Round over and, if possible, rest forehead on feet.
- Pull head in and down when IN your shell and reach head out and up when peeking OUT of your shell.

*I hook my arms under my knees
And rest them on the floor
I round my back to form my shell
And peek out of the door.*

Mountain



- Stand with feet and ankles together.
- Press down into the floor through while foot and let top of head rise toward the ceiling.
- Eyes rest on one point at eye level. Lengthen back of neck.
- Chin draws down and in slightly as chest lifts and shoulders widen.
- Arms and hands reach down gently touching sides of body.
- Head, shoulders, ribcage and hips should all be aligned.
- Hold for 3-6 breaths.

*Head, shoulders,
Hips and feet
All aligned
with my heartbeat
Rooted down yet rising tall
I'm a mountain,
big or small.*

Tree



- Stand with feet parallel and together or just a few inches apart.
- Imagine being a tree. Grow long roots out of the bottom of your feet and let your body extend very tall.
- Check to feel if your feet, hips, shoulders and head are all lined up like the trunk of a tree.
- Press the palms of your hands together in front of your chest and find something at eye level to focus on. Without moving your gaze, shift weight to one foot.
- Lift the other foot on top of the standing foot or to the knee or inner thigh of the standing leg.
- Press the sole of the foot into standing leg while pressing down through the standing leg into the floor to help you balance.
- Feel as though you continue to grow. If your balance is steady, lift your hands above your head and open them like the branches of a tree.
- Breathe and hold as long as is comfortable. Do the other side.

*When I send my roots down deep
I let myself grow tall
I focus on a single point
I hold my center strong
Then I can balance on one leg
And stretch my limbs out long.*

Bridge



- Lie on your back with arms resting at your sides. Place soles of feet on the floor hip distance apart about 6" from buttocks.
- Press hips and back off the floor as high as you can by pressing into feet. Shoulders remain on the floor.
- Roll shoulders back and tuck them under you. Wiggle arms close together underneath you and interlace fingers.
- Press into arms as well as feet for a deeper back bend.
- Relax neck and face and keep head in the centre facing ceiling.
- Hold pose for 3-8 breaths and then lower slowly.

*From on my back
Knees bent, feet down
I press my hips
Up from the ground.
My hands meet underneath of me
So I arch even higher – see!*

Table



- From a seated position, place hands on floor about 6" behind you.
- Place soles of feet directly in front of hips about 8-12" in front of you.
- On an exhale, press into hands and feet and lift torso parallel to floor.
- Hands should be under shoulders and ankles should be under knees.
- Eyes can look at feet, the ceiling or back behind you depending upon what feels comfortable for your neck.
- Hold pose and breathe in and out 3-6 times before gently lowering yourself back to sitting.

*With soles and palms upon the floor
My calves and arms are legs
Off of the ground I press my seat
So you can place a vase.*

Shark



- Lay on floor on tummy, legs straight and together.
- Roll shoulders back and reach arms behind you. Clasp hands and interlace fingers behind back.
- Reach clasped hands up and back toward feet.
- Lift head and chest as much as possible. Lift legs as well keeping them straight.
- Breathe 3-5 times and then lower slowly.

With my hands held tight

Behind my sight

I roll my shoulders back

I lift my fin

And then my chin

To bit into a snack.

References:

Invest in Kids Foundation. (2001). What a child will be depends on you and me: A resource kit for a child's first five years. Toronto (ON): Invest in Kids Foundation