

CUET · PHYSICAL EDUCATION · CLASS XI · CODE 321

# Yoga and its Relevance in the Modern Times

CUET unit: Yoga and Lifestyle / Yoga as a way of life

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## Snapshot

- Establishes yoga as a science of living working on physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual levels — derived from Sanskrit **yuj** meaning to join/yoke/ unite.
- Traces history from Indus Valley Civilisation (2000 B.C.) through Vedas, Upanishads, Buddha (Arya Asthanga Marga), Jainism (five vows), epics, Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga, and the Hatha tradition.
- Lists the four schools — Karma, Jnana, Raja, Bhakti — and sets out guidelines for safe yogic practice (before / during / after).
- Catalogues the operative practices: Shodhana Kriyas (Neti, Kapalabhati, Agnisara), Surya Namaskara (12 steps / 7 asanas), a long list of yogasanas, three Pranayamas, three Bandhas, and Dhyana.
- CUET tests this chapter for definitions, etymologies, technique sequences, schools/limbs of yoga, benefits of specific asanas, contra-indications, and phases of Pranayama.

## Detailed Notes

### 2.1 Core concepts

- Yoga is a science of living that works on physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual levels of human beings; it is an art and science for healthy living (NCERT §Intro, p. 210).
- The word **yoga** is derived from the Sanskrit root **yuj** meaning "to join, to yoke, and to unite"; it is an ancient system of self-development and natural evolution of human beings (NCERT §Intro, p. 210).
- According to the Upanishads, yoga is a higher state of consciousness and a process to ease the mind and manifest wisdom (NCERT §Intro, p. 210).
- **History:** Yoga finds place in the Indus Valley Civilisation (2000 B.C.) where stone seals depict yogic practice; it is referred to in all four Vedas — **Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, Atharvaveda** (NCERT §History, p. 211).
- **Moksha** is the ultimate goal of yoga (explained in the Upanishads); Buddha's **Arya Asthanga Marga** and Jainism's five great vows are the two pillars of the yoga tradition; **Ramayana, Mahabharata** and especially the **Bhagavad Gita** (a classical treatise on yoga) discuss it (NCERT §History, p. 211).

- **Maharishi Patanjali** codified yoga around the second century B.C. and gave the concept of the eight limbs of yoga called **Ashtang Yoga** (NCERT §History, p. 211).
- **Nath** culture played an important role in developing the **Hatha** Yoga tradition; key scriptures of Hatha Yoga are **Hatha Yoga Pradeepika**, **Gheranda Samhita**, **Hatha Ratnavali**, **Shiva Samhita**, **Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati** (NCERT §History, p. 211).
- **Schools of Yoga (four):**
- **Karma Yoga** (Path of Action) — emphasises action as duty; three attributes: **Karma as duty**, **Karma Sukaushalam** (skilled efficient action), **Nishkama Karma** (action free from personal motives / expectations of result) (NCERT §Schools, pp. 211–212).
- **Jnana Yoga** (Path of Knowledge) — overcomes **avidya** (ignorance) through **viveka** (discriminating knowledge); three stages — **shravan** (adequate hearing), **manana** (constant remembrance), **nidhidhyasana** (contemplation/meditation) (NCERT §Schools, p. 212).
- **Raja Yoga** (Path of Psychic Control) — controls **chittavrittis** through **abhyasa** (continuous practice) and **vairagya** (detachment); based on **Ashtanga Yoga** (eight-limbed) of Patanjali (NCERT §Schools, pp. 212–213).
- **Bhakti Yoga** (Path of Devotion) — nine forms: **Shravan**, **Kirtan**, **Smaran**, **Padsevan**, **Archana**, **Vandana**, **Dasya**, **Sakhya**, **Atmanivedan** (NCERT §Schools, p. 213).
- **Guidelines for practice:** Before — **Shauch** (cleanliness), empty stomach, even surface, mattress/durpy, cotton clothes, never in exhaustion/illness (NCERT §Guidelines, p. 213). During — begin with prayer, breathe through nostrils unless instructed otherwise, regular practice, consult doctor for chronic/cardiac/ pregnancy/menstruation cases. After — bath and light food only after 15–30 minutes, end with **Shavasana**, meditation and **Shanti Path** (NCERT §Guidelines, p. 214).
- **Wellness through Yoga:** Mechanisms include **Shodhana Kriyas** (cleanse toxins), yogic diet (antioxidant enhancement), **Yogasana** (postural steadiness), **Pranayama** (autonomic respiratory control), **Dharana** (focus), **Dhyana** (contemplation) (NCERT §Yogic Principles, p. 215).
- **Shodhana Kriyas — Neti:** A **Hathayogic Kriya** for cleaning the nasal passage; pre-requisite for Pranayama. Two types — **Jala Neti** (water; performed in **Kagasana**, lukewarm salted water before sunrise) and **Sutra Neti** (thread; insert one hand-span thread through nose, draw out through mouth; do not attempt unless Jala Neti is perfected) (NCERT §Yoga for Wellness, pp. 215–217).
- **Kapalbhati:** **Kapala** = skull/head, **Bhati** = to shine — rejuvenates skull and mental functions; deep inhalation through both nostrils, forceful exhalation by abdominal contraction; "bellows-type" breathing 30–40 strokes per round (start from 10); avoid in high BP, heart disease, gastric ulcers (NCERT §Kapalbhati, pp. 217–218).
- **Agnisara** (also **Vahnisara**) — **Vahni/Agni** = fire, **Sara** = essence; the essence of fire resides in navel region. Stand erect, bend knees at 60°, exhale completely, contract

and expand abdominal muscles rapidly while retaining breath outside (NCERT §Agnisara, p. 218).

- **Surya Namaskara:** Sun salutation — set of seven asanas in twelve steps, performed every morning with breathing technique. Steps: 1. Namaskarasana, 2. Hastottanasana, 3. Padhastasana, 4. Ashwasanchalanasana, 5. Parvatasana, 6. Ashtanga Namaskarasana, 7. Bhujangasana, 8. Parvatasana, 9. Ashwasanchalanasana, 10. Padhastasana, 11. Hastottanasana, 12. Namaskarasana (NCERT §Surya Namaskara, pp. 219–221).
- **Yogasanas covered:** **Tadasana** (palm-tree posture), **Vrikshasana** (tree), **Padahastasana** (palms-to-feet), **Ardha Chakrasana** (half-wheel), **Trikonasana** (three-angle), **Parshvakonasana** (lateral angle), **Padmasana** (lotus — knees should touch ground), **Vajrasana** (the only posture that can be practised immediately after meal), **Bhadrasana**, **Ushtrasana** (camel), **Shashankasana** (rabbit), **Uttanamandukasana** (upright frog — head held by elbows), **Paschimottanasana** (back-stretch), **Suptavajrasana**, **Vakrasana** (twist), **Ardhamatsyendrasana** (modified — named after yogi Matsyendranatha), **Gomukhasana** (cow's face), **Makrasana** (crocodile — relaxation), **Bhujangasana** (cobra), **Shalabhasana** (locust — stimulates parasympathetic NS), **Pawanmuktasana** (wind-releasing), **Setubandhasana** (bridge), **Viparitkarani** (inverted), **Shavasana** (corpse — final relaxation) (NCERT §Yogasana, pp. 222–242).
- **Pranayama:** Prana = vital force, Ayama = restraint; three phases — **Puraka** (inhalation), **Kumbhaka** (retention; performed with **Mulabandha**, **Uddiyanabandha**, **Jalandharbandha**), **Rechaka** (exhalation — duration supposed to be double of puraka) (NCERT §Pranayama, pp. 242–243).
- **Yogic Deep Breathing** combines three types: **Abdominal**, **Thoracic**, **Clavicular**. **Nadishodhana Pranayama** (also **anuloma-viloma**) purifies nadis by alternate-nostril breathing with **nasagran mudra** on right hand and **jnana mudra** on left (NCERT §Pranayama, pp. 243–245). **Ujjayi Pranayama** — sit in **Padmasana**/**Siddhasana**, partial closing of glottis produces a peculiar sound on inhalation; removes heat and phlegm (NCERT §Ujjayi, pp. 245–246).
- **Bandhas:** Means to hold or lock; introduced during mudra and pranayama. **Jalandhara Bandha** — chin to chest while retaining breath (improves thyroid function); **Uddiyana Bandha** — exhale fully, pull abdominal muscles up and inside towards spine (improves blood circulation and tones abdominal organs) (NCERT §Bandhas, pp. 246–247).
- **Dhyana:** Part of **Astanga** yoga; reached after **shatkarma**, **asana**, **pranayama**; focused on a single point — a **mantra** or an object; activates parasympathetic nervous system; controls BP, normalises heart rate, reduces anxiety (NCERT §Dhyana, p. 248).

## 2.2 Definitions to memorise

Term	Definition	Page
Yoga	Sanskrit <b>yuj</b> — to join, yoke, unite; science of living working on physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual levels	210
Moksha	Ultimate goal of yoga as explained in the Upanishads	211
Ashtang Yoga	Eight-limbed system of yoga codified by Maharishi Patanjali (~2nd century B.C.)	211
Nishkama Karma	Action free from personal motives, performed as a duty without expectation of results	212
Avidya / Viveka	<b>Avidya</b> = ignorance (cause of suffering); <b>Viveka</b> = discriminating knowledge that removes avidya	212
Abhyasa / Vairagya	Continuous practice / detachment — both emphasised in Raja Yoga for control of chittavrittis	213
Shauch	Cleanliness — pre-requisite for yogic practice (of surroundings, body and mind)	213
Neti	Hathayogic kriya for cleaning the nasal passage; pre-requisite for Pranayama	215
Kapalbhati	<b>Kapala</b> (skull) + <b>Bhati</b> (to shine); bellows-type breathing rejuvenating the skull	217
Agnisara	Also <b>Vahnisara</b> ; "essence of fire" kriya in navel region	218
Surya Namaskara	Seven asanas in twelve steps performed every morning with breathing	219
Vajrasana	"Adamantine" posture; the only asana practised immediately after a meal	227
Pranayama	<b>Prana</b> (vital force) + <b>Ayama</b> (restraint); breath-regulation technique	242
Puraka / Kumbhaka / Rechaka	Inhalation / breath-retention (with bandhas) / exhalation (duration double of puraka)	243
Nadishodhana	Alternate-nostril pranayama, also called <b>anuloma-viloma</b>	244
Jalandhara Bandha	Chin-to-chest lock while retaining breath; improves thyroid	246
Uddiyana Bandha	<b>Ud</b> + <b>di</b> = to fly/rise; pull abdomen up and in after full exhalation	247
Dhyana	Meditation — part of Astanga yoga, follows shatkarma/asana/pranayama; focuses on one point	248
Karma Yoga	Path of Action — duty + skilled efficiency + non-attachment to fruits	211
Jnana Yoga	Path of Knowledge — Viveka removes Avidya	212

Term	Definition	Page
Raja Yoga	Path of Psychic Control — controls Chittavrittis	212
Bhakti Yoga	Path of Devotion in 9 forms	213
Hatha Yoga	Forceful path; preparatory body-purification system	211
Shavasana	Corpse posture — final relaxation at end of every session	214
Padmasana	Lotus posture — knees touch ground; meditation seat	226
Surya Namaskara (def.)	Sun salutation — 7 asanas in 12 steps with synchronised breathing	219
Mula Bandha	Perineum lock during pranayama retention	246
Anuloma-Viloma	Alternative name for Nadishodhana Pranayama	244

### 2.3 Diagrams / processes to remember

- **Fig. 6.2 Vedas** (p. 211) — the four Vedas in which yoga is referenced: Rig, Yajur, Sama, Atharva.
- **Figs. 6.8–6.11 Surya Namaskara** (pp. 219–221) — the twelve numbered postures of one round: Namaskarasana → Hastottanasana → Padhastasana → Ashwasanchalanasana → Parvatasana → Ashtanga Namaskarasana → Bhujangasana → Parvatasana → Ashwasanchalanasana → Padhastasana → Hastottanasana → Namaskarasana.
- **Fig. 6.4 Jala Neti and Fig. 6.5 Sutra Neti** (p. 216) — note posture (Kagasana) and pot/thread insertion through the active nostril.
- **Figs. 6.12–6.34** (pp. 222–241) — the principal asanas in their final positions (Tadasana, Vrikshasana, Padahastasana, Ardhashchakrasana, Trikonasana, Parshvakonasana, Padmasana, Vajrasana, Bhadrasana, Ushtrasana, Shashankasana, Uttanamandukasana, Paschimottanasana, Suptavajrasana, Vakrasana, Ardhamatsyendrasana, Gomukhasana, Makrasana, Bhujangasana, Shalabhasana, Pawanmuktasana, Setubandhasana, Viparitkarani).
- **Fig. 6.36 Nadishodhana pranayama** (p. 244) and **Fig. 6.37 Ujjayi pranayama** (p. 245) — meditative posture, mudra of hands.
- **Fig. 6.38 Jalandhara bandha** (p. 246) and **Fig. 6.39 Dhyana** (p. 248) — chin-lock posture and meditative sitting with Jnana mudra.

### 2.4 Common confusions / NTA trap points

- **Karma Sukaushalam** (skilled action / efficiency) vs **Nishkama Karma** (action without expectation of results) — both fall under Karma Yoga but mean different things (p. 212).
- The eight limbs are part of **Raja Yoga** — which is based on Patanjali's **Ashtanga Yoga**; do not confuse with Buddha's **Arya Asthanga Marga** (Eightfold Path), which is one of the two **pillars** of yoga tradition (p. 211).

- The duration of **Rechaka** is supposed to be **double** that of **Puraka** (not equal, not half) — frequent trap in pranayama questions (p. 243).
- **Vajrasana** is the **only** asana that can be done **immediately after meals**; **Padmasana, Sukhasana** etc. cannot (p. 227).
- **Jala Neti** uses **lukewarm salted water before sunrise**, breathing must be **through the mouth** during the practice — NTA often flips these (p. 216).
- **Sutra Neti** must **not** be attempted unless **Jala Neti** is perfected (p. 217).
- **Bhakti Yoga** has **nine** forms (Shravan, Kirtan, Smaran, Padsevan, Archana, Vandana, Dasya, Sakhya, Atmanivedan) — not seven.
- **Jnana Yoga** stages = **Shravan** → **Manana** → **Nidhidhyasana** (hearing, remembrance, contemplation). NTA may rearrange the order.
- Patanjali codified Ashtang Yoga in the **2nd century B.C.** — not 2nd century A.D.
- **Kapalbhati** avoidance: high BP, heart disease, gastric ulcers — NTA might list "obesity" as a contraindication, which is wrong (it's a benefit).
- The four Vedas referencing yoga are **Rig, Yajur, Sama, Atharva** — all four. Sub-listing only three is a trap.
- **Surya Namaskara** = **12 steps** built from **7 asanas** (some repeat, e.g., Hastottanasana appears at steps 2 and 11).
- **Bandhas: Jalandhara** (chin to chest), **Uddiyana** (abdomen in & up), **Mula** (perineum lock). Often mis-assigned.
- **Pranayama** = Prana + Ayama (vital force + restraint); Ayama is NOT "control" alone — it includes both extension and restraint.

## 2.5 Key concepts table — schools, kriyas, asanas, pranayamas

#	Concept	Detail	Page
1	Yoga etymology	Yuj = to join, yoke, unite	210
2	History anchor	Indus Valley 2000 BC; stone seals depict yogic postures	211
3	Yoga in Vedas	All four — Rig, Yajur, Sama, Atharva	211
4	Patanjali	Codified Ashtang Yoga, 2nd century BC	211
5	Hatha Yoga texts	Pradeepika, Gheranda Samhita, Hatha Ratnavali, Shiva Samhita, Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati	211
6	Karma Yoga	Action as duty; Karma Sukaushalam; Nishkama Karma	211–212
7	Jnana Yoga	Avidya removed by Viveka; 3 stages: Shravan, Manana, Nidhidhyasana	212
8	Raja Yoga	Control of Chittavrittis via Abhyasa + Vairagya; based on Ashtang Yoga	212–213

#	Concept	Detail	Page
9	Bhakti Yoga	9 forms (Shravan, Kirtan, Smaran, Padsevan, Archana, Vandana, Dasya, Sakhya, Atmanivedan)	213
10	Pre-practice rule	Shauch + empty stomach + cotton clothes + even surface	213
11	Post-practice rule	Bath/light food after 15–30 min; end with Shavasana + Shanti Path	214
12	Shodhana Kriyas	Neti, Kapalbhathi, Agnisara	215
13	Jala Neti	Lukewarm salted water before sunrise in Kagasana	216
14	Sutra Neti	Hand-span thread through nose → mouth	217
15	Kapalbhathi	30–40 strokes per round; bellows breathing; avoid BP/heart/ulcer	217–218
16	Agnisara	Knees bent 60°; abdominal contraction with breath retained outside	218
17	Surya Namaskara	7 asanas in 12 steps with breath	219–221
18	Vajrasana (unique)	Only asana practicable immediately after meal	227
19	Padmasana	Lotus posture — knees must touch ground	226
20	Shalabhasana	Stimulates parasympathetic NS	238
21	Shavasana	Corpse posture — final relaxation	241
22	Pranayama phases	Puraka (in), Kumbhaka (hold + bandhas), Rechaka (out, 2× Puraka)	242–243
23	Yogic deep breathing	Abdominal + Thoracic + Clavicular	243
24	Nadishodhana	Alternate-nostril (anuloma-viloma) with Nasagra + Jnana mudras	244
25	Ujjayi Pranayama	Partial glottis closure → peculiar sound; removes heat/phlegm	245–246
26	Jalandhara Bandha	Chin-to-chest while retaining breath; thyroid benefit	246
27	Uddiyana Bandha	Pull abdomen up & in after full exhalation; tones abdominal organs	247
28	Dhyana	Single-point focus; activates parasympathetic NS	248

## 2.6 Extended discussion — historical layers, scientific basis and CUET strategy

A **layered chronology** runs through this topic and CUET regularly tests it. Layer 1 — pre-Vedic: Indus Valley seals (2000 BC) showing meditative postures. Layer 2 — Vedic:

Yoga appears in all four Vedas (Rig, Yajur, Sama, Atharva). Layer 3 — Upanishadic: Moksha defined as the ultimate goal. Layer 4 — Sramana: Buddha's Arya Asthanga Marga (Eightfold Path) and Jainism's five great vows treated as twin pillars of the yoga tradition. Layer 5 — Epic: Ramayana, Mahabharata, and the **Bhagavad Gita** as a classical treatise on yoga. Layer 6 — Classical: Patanjali codifying the eight limbs of Ashtanga Yoga around the second century BC. Layer 7 — Nath / Hatha tradition: scriptures like Hatha Yoga Pradeepika, Gheranda Samhita, Hatha Ratnavali, Shiva Samhita, Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati. Layer 8 — Modern: Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Ramana Maharishi popularising yoga in the 19th–20th century. Most CUET items pick a single layer and ask either a **who-when** recall or a **which-text** identification.

The **four schools** (Karma, Jnana, Raja, Bhakti) provide a second exam-favourite skeleton. The trick is to lock each school to its **central operative concept**: Karma = duty + Nishkama; Jnana = Viveka against Avidya; Raja = control of Chittavrittis via Abhyasa + Vairagya; Bhakti = devotional surrender in nine forms. The Bhakti nine — Shravan, Kirtan, Smaran, Padsevan, Archana, Vandana, Dasya, Sakhya, Atmanivedan — are a stand-alone NTA mini-cluster.

The **operative chapter spine** runs Shodhana Kriyas → Surya Namaskara → Yogasanas → Pranayama → Bandhas → Dhyana. Each layer has a distinct physiological signature that examiners exploit. Shodhana Kriyas (Neti, Kapalbhata, Agnisara) clean nasal/pharyngeal/abdominal passages and prepare the body for Pranayama. Surya Namaskara integrates 7 asanas into 12 steps with synchronised breathing — equivalent to a complete cardio-strength-flexibility routine in 5 minutes. Yogasanas develop postural endurance and target specific organ systems (Shalabhasana — parasympathetic; Vajrasana — digestion; Padmasana — meditation base). Pranayama controls autonomic respiration through the three phases Puraka–Kumbhaka–Rechaka, with Rechaka twice the duration of Puraka. Bandhas (Jalandhara, Uddiyana, Mula) lock prana inside during Kumbhaka. Dhyana culminates the journey with single-point focus, activating the parasympathetic nervous system to lower blood pressure, normalise heart rate and reduce anxiety.

For CUET, the **figure-based identification questions** are increasingly common — a posture image with four asana names as options. The minimum visual vocabulary required is Tadasana (palm-tree), Vrikshasana (tree, single-leg balance), Trikonasana (triangle, lateral bend), Padmasana (lotus, cross-legged), Vajrasana (diamond, kneeling on heels), Bhujangasana (cobra, prone backbend), Shalabhasana (locust, prone legs up), Pawanmuktasana (wind-relieving, knees to chest), Setubandhasana (bridge), Shavasana (corpse, supine relaxation). Pair the image with one signature benefit and you can answer almost any CUET item from this chapter.



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## Practice MCQs

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## PYQ Alignment

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This is one of the highest-yielding chapters of Class XI Physical Education in CUET. Past papers consistently include 6–9 MCQs on yoga: schools of yoga (Karma/Jnana/Raja/Bhakti and their sub-attributes), meaning/etymology of asanas (e.g. **Vajra**, **Padma**, **Trikona**, **Ushtra**), phases of Pranayama and their duration ratios, the twelve-step sequence of Surya Namaskara, Patanjali's Ashtang Yoga, types of Neti and Bandhas, and identification of figure-based posture questions.



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