



Iyengar Yoga Institute Indonesia

Iyengar Teaching format

Introduce the asana by giving its name first in Sanskrit and then in English

Demonstrate the asana to show its shape

If you are teaching the asanas in stages, demonstrate each stage of the asana before you ask students to do it.

Do the asana with students, simultaneously teach and observe. See what is missing in the student's asana

Demonstrate the asana again or demonstrate the next stage, giving further direction based on observation

Have the student repeat the asana alone; see what is missing in their asana and give appropriate corrections

Give feedback by demonstration rather just theory

Observe students from different angles, time permitting

Observe whether the students are responding and following the instructions. The teacher should move on to new points only when his or her point has been followed. See that the instructions have been assimilated by most of the class

Asana Names

Candidates are expected to pronounce the Sanskrit name of the asanas and know the English translations and meanings

Linking

Teachers should be able to link actions in asanas as well as build on instructions taught in previous asanas



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Principles of Demonstration

Name the Asana

If you are having the students use props, have the students get the props and set them up before you do your demonstration

Stand so you are clearly visible. Reposition yourself so that students are able to observe you in each different asana. For example, you might place yourself differently for a demonstration of Virabradrasana 1 than for a demonstration of Utthita Trikonasama

Make certain every student comes to watch

Select correct viewing angles

Insist on attention and make eye contact. Then ensure that students look at what you demonstrate rather than your face

Demonstrate the asana two or three times at the beginning so that the students get a clear image of the asana. Demonstration and perception are better than words

Your first demonstration should convey the shape of the asana as you want the students to achieve it by the end of the class. If you are teaching the asana in stages, demonstrate each stage before you ask the students to do it

Demonstrate the asana as you are going to teach it. If you will ask students to use a prop, demonstrate with a prop

Give two or three points per demonstration. Do not rush. At the same time, keep demonstrations short and to the point.

Present the asana with dynamic, observable actions

There should be uniformity between the teacher's words and the teacher's body. Use the same phrases in demonstration as you intend to use in instruction. Do not describe what students can easily see, draw attention to specific things that enhance the shape of the asana

Let the students try the points to your satisfaction

Re-demonstrate as necessary

Do not demonstrate mistakes until you have observed them in your students



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Principles of Instruction

Keep the instruction simple. Use short, clear sentences

As much as possible, re-use the same phrases you used in the demonstration. Do not hesitate to allow time(silence) in order to see that the students have attempted to do what you asked

Modulate your voice to emphasize the important points. Then repeat the same instructions with a different voice, perhaps with different words

Instruct the students systematically

- Begin with the basics
- Begin instructions at the foundation of the asanas and teach the students to move from the foundation
- Teach the students to coordinate the actions of the body with actions of the breath
- Move from the gross to the subtle
- Return to the key instructions, again and again. Repetition takes the students deeper and deeper

Link your instructions systematically. State what is not to be disturbed or moved, give breathing instruction and then say what is to be done or moved

First link to connect the parts to the whole. Then link to connect one asana to another. Finally link to join mind and body

Develop the feeling of the asana. Sthira Sukham asanam(Sutra II.46) Sthira means stability, sukham means ease. Every asana should have some degree of ease and stability. At the same time as developing poise, **the teacher should cultivate will, focus and effort in the students**

When instructing, observe that the majority of the students have assimilated your instruction before you move on to the next instruction. Ask your students if they have understood the instruction or demonstration

Learn to increase the student's concentration. Learn to keep the students attention



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Principles of Observation

Set up the class in a manner that allows you to see as many students as possible

Reposition yourself to begin teaching each asana from the most advantageous position

Observe the class as a whole to assess the harmony and balance or lack thereof (Is everyone going in the same direction)

Look quickly to see if your instruction was carried out

Base your instruction on what you observe, not on memorized words

Observe the students' state of being (as revealed in their eyes, skin, color, breathing, etc)

Look at midline(vertical) points of the body and limbs to see where the distortions are

Look also at horizontal points(shoulders, hips) for distortions

Don't walk aimlessly, but do view students from all angles

Principles of Correction

Correct by words first

Respect boundaries (physical and emotional)

Use a prop if necessary

Know what it is you want to adjust before you touch

Place yourself in the correct position so that the students can benefit from the adjustment

Make your touch appropriate so that the desired effect is realized. Do not touch unnecessarily, as the attention of the student goes to where you touch

Observe how your touch is received

Much that needs to be corrected is impossible to correct in completed asanas. The student may need to come partially out of the asana and go in again with correction to avoid forcing