




NURTURE

PHYSIOTHERAPY + YOGA

Our gift to you...

Top 5 Yoga Poses for Slowing Down & Relaxing.

Hi, my name's Marnie!

I'm the yoga-loving physio *behind* Nurture Physiotherapy + Yoga.

Nurture was created when my passion for yoga collided with my many years of experience as a physiotherapist.

My yoga journey began 15 or so years ago. As a self-confessed sports freak, and busy bod who did not know how to sit still for more than 5 minutes, I was looking to build up my core strength, improve my flexibility, and get stronger to help me improve my performance out on the court.

Enter yoga! I can still remember the very first class I ever went to, *like it was yesterday...*

The part I remember most was the last half of the class - where we practiced some settling, restorative poses. Then the relaxation at the end..

I couldn't believe how amazing I felt! I was so disappointed when the teacher announced that class had ended.

I drove home from class feeling as **light as a feather**, like the world has slowed down a little.

From then on, I started to get a little more out of classes than just the strength and flexibility. And despite an on-again / off-again relationship with yoga, I just kept coming back. Usually when I just wanted and needed to feel good, in one way or another.

In 2017 I enrolled in a Diploma of Yoga, simply with the aim of learning a little more, building up a more regular home practice and practicing some self-care. But, since completing my training, I've realised that I by sharing what I've learnt, I could just help someone else to experience the amazingness that I've been lucky enough to experience!

So, I've put together this guide to share some of my favourite poses for slowing down and taking time out. The aim of all of these poses is to find what feels good, and to take some time out for yourself.



Child's Pose

Child's pose is all about finding comfort and rest. I find that it helps me to come back to the present moment, by focusing on the breath when I'm feeling a little stressed. It also lengthens the hips and spine, so you might notice some gentle lengthening in these areas.

How to:

Kneel on the floor. Slowly bring your belly towards your thighs. Rest your forehead on the floor, or turn your head to one side, if it's more comfortable. One hand resting on top of the other, palms supporting your forehead. Or arms outstretched in front of you.

Close your eyes and take slow breaths, expanding all four sides of your chest / ribcage. Notice any sensations you might be feeling. On each outward breath, allow yourself to let go of any tension you may be holding.

Modifications:

Bring your knees wide, big toes touching. This creates more space if you have a larger belly or chest. Or try lifting your hips up high, above your knees. You can stay anywhere from 30 seconds to a few minutes in this restful pose.

To come out of the pose, bring your hands to the floor underneath each shoulder, and slowly press the floor away, lifting your head and neck last.



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Cat/Cow Pose

This pose is super helpful in bringing some attention to your breath, and coupling it with movement. It's like a moving meditation. I find it helps me to come out of my over-thinking mind, and focus on what I'm feeling physically. *(It's also my go-to, every morning, to help me loosen up some back stiffness!)*

How to:

Come onto your hands and knees. Check that your wrists are roughly stacked below your shoulders, and your knees below your hips. Spread your fingers wide. Press the floor away with your hands.

As you breathe in, tuck your tailbone under and arch your middle back towards the ceiling, and bring your chin towards your chest.

As you breathe out, tilt your pelvis forward, belly comes towards the mat and gently look forward. Slowly repeat this sequence, breathing in as you arch your back upwards, then breathing out as you move in the other direction. *(You may choose to close your eyes, to help settle the central nervous system and make this a moving meditation.)*

You can continue to repeat this sequence for 30-90 secs. Remember to move with your breath.



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CONT...

Modifications:

You might like to use a folded towel or blanket underneath your knees if you experience any knee discomfort, or under the heels of your hands if you experience any wrist discomfort.

Cat/Cow Pose

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Did you know that we run face to face and online classes? If you're in Central Victoria then be sure to come along, our classes are pretty great!

Here's the proof...

“Thanks so much, Marnie. I've really enjoyed classes. You're so clear with explaining how to get into each pose. I like that you use lots of props, beautiful music and essential oils, and the relaxation part at the end of class is amazing.”



Supported Bridge

A restorative pose that helps to gently lengthen the front of the hips, chest and shoulders in a supported way. When I spend a few minutes in this pose, it helps to give me a beautiful open feeling across the front of my body. *All you need is a couple of folded towels, a foam roller or a yoga block.*

How to:

Lie on your back with both knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Take a breath in, then as you breathe out press into the feet and lift the buttocks from the floor. Place the folded towel, foam roller or yoga block underneath your pelvic/sacral area. Gently rest your pelvis down onto whatever support you are using - you might need to play around a little with the positioning.

Gently lengthen your neck, by tucking your chin slightly. Turn your palms up, resting your arms on the floor beside you. Focus on your breath, and expanding your ribcage. This position should feel delicious!

Modifications:

You can straighten your knees, to rest the backs of your heels on the floor - but only if it feels good. *(If this causes any strain in the low back area – place the soles of your feet back on the floor.)*



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Knee Circles

I love this pose. It's one of the first ones that really stood out to me when my yoga journey began, just because it felt so good! Some love for your low back!

How to:

Lying on your back, bring your knees towards your chest. Clasp knees with your hands, fingers pointing down towards your toes. Tuck your chin gently to help lengthen your neck.

Straighten the elbows, allow the legs to become heavy and relaxed. With your hands, guide your knees in tiny super-slow circles, keeping the legs heavy and relaxed.

Continue for 30-60 seconds, then gently move your knees in the opposite direction. Throughout this pose, take long, slow inwards breaths, and on the outward breath, let go of any tension with an audible sigh. Notice what you feel!

You can also guide your knees in larger circles, but slowly. Notice how this feels.

**“Thank you Marnie
for a beautifully
instructed class.
After a stressful
week, this was
exactly what my
body and mind
needed”**

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Legs up the Wall

An inversion pose with so many benefits. It can help to create a refreshing sensation if you've been standing or sitting for a long time or if you're feeling stressed or fatigued. It can boost energy, mental clarity and soothe lower back pain. It also gives you the time and space to just be.

How to:

Find a wall space that is clear and uncluttered. Sit on the floor, with the wall beside you (on your left side), as close as possible. Slowly lean on your right elbow and rotate your bottom around, so that your bottom is facing towards and touching the wall, your feet are resting on the wall and your upper back and head are resting on the floor. Gently lengthen your legs. Rest your arms beside you - palms can be up or down. Find the position that feels good!.

Tuck your chin gently to help lengthen your neck. Close down the eyes, completely relax everything and enjoy. You can stay here for as long as you like. *(If your blood pressure is not well controlled or if you have glaucoma, be a little bit more careful with this one – just stay here for 30-60secs.)*

Modifications:

If your pelvis feels tucked under, you may be too close to the wall. Move away from the wall a little. If you like, you can place some folded-up blankets underneath your pelvis – make sure you get these in position before you lie down.

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Here's the proof...

“Class is paced nicely and has clear instructions throughout. Many options are offered for those of us that may struggle due to stiffness/aches and pains, and at no point did I feel forced to do something I couldn't do”

Thanks so much for taking the time to check out My Top 5 Poses for Slowing Down and Relaxing!

I'd love you to join us on the mat to experience some of these poses either online or in person with a more personalised approach, some hands-on adjustment, some beautiful music, essential oils, and an overall welcoming and nurturing experience.

There's so many reasons that people avoid yoga! Some of the more commonly heard ones are:

- "I feel too nervous to go to a class with all those fit and athletic types, I won't fit in"
- "I'm not flexible enough to do those poses"
- "I'm not into all that woo woo chakra and meditation stuff"
- "I'm too old to go to a yoga class"
- "I have an injury – I can't do yoga until that's healed"
- "I need a really good hard and challenging workout – yoga's way too chilled"
- "I really struggle to get on and off the floor – there's no way I could do a class!"

If you've ever had any of those thoughts, then Nurture's classes are perfect for you!

At Nurture, our yoga-inspired exercise classes help people to improve their core stability, their mobility, flexibility and their strength. But what we're really passionate about is helping people to experience all of the unexpected and bonus benefits - slowing down, relaxation, improved sleep, improved well-being and self care, plus many more.

Our classes are delivered in a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment - perfect for all ages and body types, people with pain or injuries, mobility problems, health concerns and for those interested in trying yoga for the first time.



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Our gift to you...

To find out more about our online and face to face classes and physiotherapy services, get in touch with us!

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