

SCW Yoga Club Class Levels Descriptions

1. What

SCW Yoga Club yoga class experience level descriptions for assistance in determining appropriate class selection for new and existing members.

2. Why

To be used by members and potential members to find classes that they believe align with their experience level and desire to continue or expand their yoga practice.

Level Descriptions are not meant to be hard and fast rules. They are meant to provide the reader with class direction and context so that the reader can make an informed decision to find an appropriate yoga experience. For this reason, the criteria for each class are given as recommendations and suggestions. Hard and fast requirements (e.g., the ability to get up from, and down to, a mat on the floor) will be marked as such.

These Level Descriptions are meant only for use in SCW Yoga Club classes and may or may not align with descriptions or rules outside of the Club. Our membership fits a specific demographic, so the Level Descriptions are presented with them in mind.

3. Level Descriptions Principles

The SCW Yoga Club class Level Descriptions should demonstrate perceptible differences between levels so that readers understand the distinctions between the levels. The goal is not to exclude people from any level but to make them aware of the level differences so that they may find a class in which they are comfortable, or which will challenge them.

Assessment of readiness to participate in classes at certain levels will not be policed by the Club but will be self-assessed by the participant. Instructors may recommend or suggest pose modifications, alternate poses, or participation in other classes if the candidate is perceived to be struggling or capable beyond the class level. Participants may be requested to attend other classes or discontinue participation in a class if they are deemed to be at risk of injuring themselves or others in the class. Standard SCW Yoga Club procedures will be followed in these instances.

Level Descriptions can be used by instructors to tailor their classes knowing that there are minimum expectations of which the participants are aware coming into a class. Again, the expectations are not hard and fast, but an instructor can have a reasonable expectation that the range of student capabilities is narrower than if the Level Descriptions had not been published.

4. Level Descriptions Components

Level Descriptions describe levels of yoga mastery and are composed of different attributes to help a participant select an appropriate yoga class:

- Level name (e.g., Introductory, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced)
- Intensity (e.g., slow vs. fast, aerobic vs. less aerobic)
- Prior yoga experience
- Physical requirements (e.g., ability to get up and down, to and from, the floor)
- Differences from, or additions to, the next lowest rated class

The Level Descriptions will be stated in a narrative form rather than in a bulleted or check-list format.

5. SCW Yoga Club Level Descriptions

Yoga is a powerful tool in relieving stress and aids in musculoskeletal strength. Stretching, deep breathing, and toning boosts energy levels and benefits circulation and flexibility.

- Beginner
- Beginner/Intermediate
- Intermediate
- Intermediate/Advanced
- Advanced
- All Levels

Safety is a guiding principle for SCW Yoga Club classes and is expected of participant and instructor at every level. Each participant is responsible for his/her own practice; they are encouraged to challenge themselves in a healthy manner but not put themselves at risk attempting to perform poses that are beyond their own capabilities.

Beginner

Designed for the student new to yoga and those who have had prior exposure. This class will teach participants proper alignment, breathing techniques, and the use of props to build confidence in postures. Participants will learn how to get in and out of each pose, as well as modifications to address physical limitations.

Emphasis is placed on student understanding, safety, and stability within each pose. Classes are slow to moderately paced with hands-on adjustments offered by the instructor as needed. The ability to get down to, and up from, the floor is required.

Beginner/Intermediate

These more challenging classes continue to build on fundamental Beginner poses and will require a bit more strength, flexibility, and balance. Classes assume some prior yoga

or Pilates knowledge and prior experience. Classes generally have a flow and rhythm, are moderately paced, and are more challenging than introductory classes. Hands-on adjustments may be offered by the instructor as needed. The ability to get down to, and up from, the floor is required.

Intermediate

Intermediate classes are designed for those with a good understanding of basic postures and have begun to explore a wider variety of poses and styles. Participants understand the relationship between breath and movement. Poses are generally held longer and may introduce poses that require moderate strength or stamina. Classes generally have a flow and rhythm to encourage the evolution of one's practice. Intermediate classes are generally aerobic and vigorous; participants should expect to work up a sweat. The ability to get down to, and up from, the floor is required.

Intermediate/Advanced

Designed for the more experienced yogi who needs no demonstration of fundamental poses. These classes will consist mostly of challenging poses and/or will move at a vigorous pace, so sweating will be unavoidable. These classes are appropriate for the self-directed participant with many years of experience who is seeking a higher level of challenge. A high degree of strength, flexibility, and stamina will be required. The ability to get down to, and up from, the floor is required.

Advanced

Designed for the most experienced yogi with many years of yoga experience. These classes will consist of challenging poses and/or will move at a vigorous pace, so sweating will be unavoidable. These classes are appropriate for the self-directed participant with many years of experience who is seeking a higher level of challenge. A very high degree of strength, flexibility, and stamina will be required.

All Levels

Designed for participants of varying experience and ability. Knowledge of basic poses is desirable but not a requirement. Special props (e.g., foam roller) may be required; check with the instructor at your first class. The ability to get down to, and up from, the floor *may* be required; check schedule for more information.

6. Special Classes

Chair Yoga

Chair Yoga combines mind, body, and spirit using a chair as a prop. The chair assists in alternating yoga postures from standing to sitting. A yoga mat is used to keep the chair in place; a second chair "raises the floor," allowing participants to extend their legs. Mudras enhance the yoga experience, as does three minutes of relaxing breath work

and meditation at the end of class. Getting down to, and up from, the floor is *not* required.

Mind-Body

Mind-Body movement is a mind-body-spirit practice incorporating elements of Tai Chi and Qigong that improves one's mental and physical health by integrating posture, movement, breathing technique, self-massage, sound, and focused intent.

Physically, slow gentle qigong movements warm tendons, ligaments, and muscles; tone vital organs and connective tissue; and promote circulation of body fluids (blood, synovial, lymph). Loose clothing that allows unrestricted movement is all that's required. A mat is not required for this class.

Therapeutic Classes

Therapeutic yoga classes can focus on one or more areas of the body, or the entire body, in a single class. Focus may change from week to week. Depending upon the class, emphasis on common ailments or issues, flexibility, strength, or other conditions will be addressed. Classes may address arthritis, low back pain, soft tissue, sciatica, shoulders/neck, hips/knees, hands, feet, etc.

Special equipment may be required and will vary by class. At a minimum, you should have your own yoga mat, yoga block(s), strap, and water. Other equipment may include a small pillow, a yoga blanket, or foam roller. Be sure to read the class description to understand those requirements.

You must be able to comfortably get up from, and down to, the floor unassisted. Wear comfortable clothing that allows you to stretch and bend.

Levels: Varies by class (Level is specified on class schedule.)