

# OM-SCHOOLED

THINK YOGA IS ALL ABOUT CHANTING IN AN INCENSE-FILLED ROOM CRAMMED WITH FLEXIBLE FLACAS? NOT SO. WITH A VARIETY OF STYLES CATERING TO DIFFERENT BODY TYPES AND FITNESS LEVELS, ANYONE CAN DO IT. BY CELIA SHATZMAN

## YOGA BENEFITS

### // BODY BOOSTER

Increased flexibility isn't the only upside to yoga. It can also make you stronger and build stamina.

"Every pose involves your whole body, working your legs, arms and core at once," says Angel Vasquez McLendon, a Los Angeles-based Spanish and Portuguese yoga instructor. "Most people don't stand or sit up straight and this can lead to aches; yoga builds the weak muscles and relaxes the tight muscles."

### // BRAIN POWER

"Most of us lead busy lives and take little time to slow down," says New York-based Brazilian yoga teacher Miles Borrero. "The practice of bringing awareness to your breath and noticing how it moves through the body brings you home to yourself." Yoga's calming effect will stay with you long after class. You'll also increase your focus, stabilize breathing and destress.

### HIT THE MAT

This lightweight mat is made from recycled material (\$48-58, [manduka.com](http://manduka.com)).

## CHOOSE WISELY

### To build strength:

**VINYASA** keeps you active by flowing from one pose to the next.

**ASHTANGA** is like ballet, with a fixed sequence.

**BIKRAM** lets you sweat it off in a heated room.

### To relax:

**HATHA** is a gentle class focusing on slower movements.

**YIN** encourages you to still the mind with passive, seated postures.

**RESTORATIVE** uses simple poses for maximum relaxation.

## YOGA, WITH A TWIST

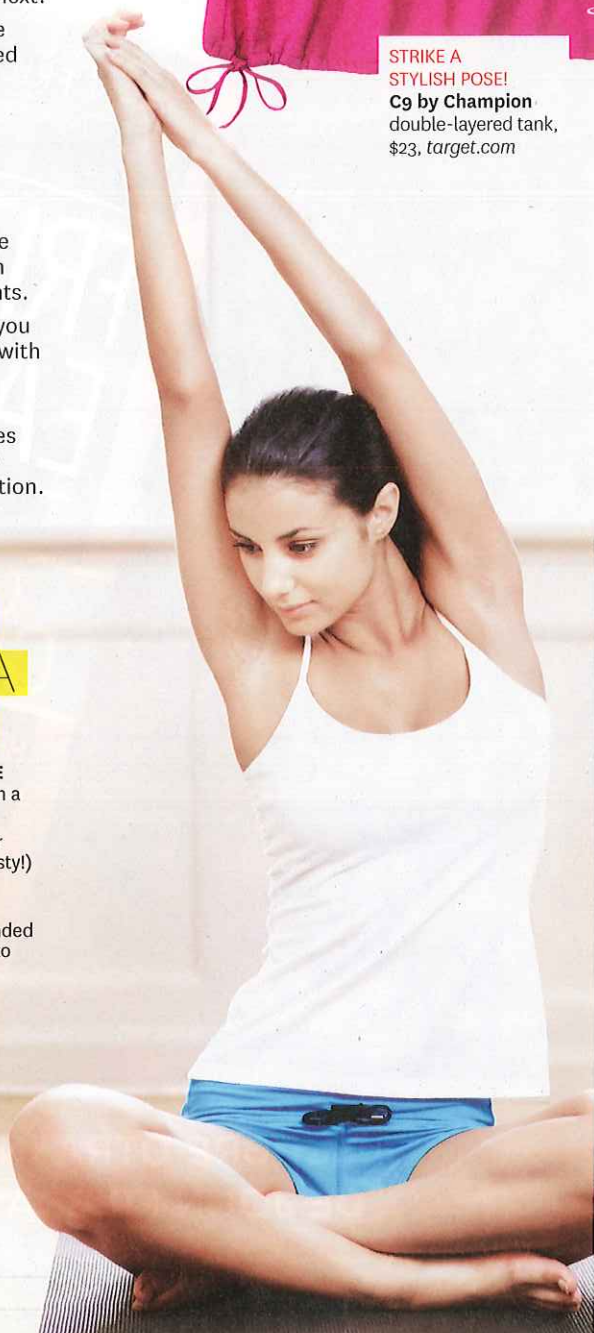
**STAND-UP PADDLE BOARD:** Practice on a surfboard in water.

**NAKED:** Leave your clothes (and modesty!) at the door.

**AERIAL:** Perform poses while suspended from fabric rigged to the ceiling.



STRIKE A STYLISH POSE!  
**Cg by Champion** double-layered tank, \$23, [target.com](http://target.com)



PHOTOGRAPHS: CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM RIGHT: JOSHUA HODGE PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS (2).