

**[Headline]** Best Yoga Poses for Balance

**[Image copy]** Yoga: Center Your Mind and Body

**[Subhead]** Yoga can help with two types of balance — both physical and emotional.

World-renowned yoga teacher B.K.S. Iyengar said it best: “Yoga teaches us to cure what need not be endured and endure what cannot be cured.” According to Temple University research, women 65 and older who took twice-weekly yoga classes for nine weeks increased ankle flexibility and showed more confidence in walking. Flexibility and confidence? Sign us up!

### **What Is Balance?**

Balance is described in yogi terms by Yoga Journal as such: “When we balance, we align our body’s center of gravity with the earth’s gravitational field. Quite literally, we place ourselves in physical equilibrium with a fundamental force of nature.” They go on to bring up a seemingly contradictory thought — that you can’t balance by staying still. Rather, you’re constantly refreshing your balance each moment. This kind of alignment brings harmony not only to our skin and bones but also to our nerve impulses, mind, feelings, and consciousness. Yogis view balance of the body as balance of the mind, which creates an inner and outer cohesive calm.

In more scientific terms, our sense of balance is a complicated relationship between the inner ear, vision, and somatosensory system (the physical cues that tell the brain where the body is in its environment). If you have a vestibular disorder (balance problems), you may experience:

- Dizziness
- Vertigo
- Disorientation
- Poor coordination
- Exhaustion

### **How Yoga Helps Your Balance**

Whether you want to practice yoga because of a vestibular disorder or to improve your balance, you’re on the right track. Yoga helps with balance, focus, movement, and coordination. Rather than focusing on poses and being still, balance comes from movement, mastering transitions, and developing your strength.

Balance can be mastered by focusing your attention on alignment, strength, and attention.

- **Alignment:** Your body has to be in line with gravity to make balance physically possible.

- Strength: This gives us the power to find, hold, and modify our alignment.
- Attention: Being mindful of our alignment allows us to adapt as needed.

Gaining flexibility in your poses and being able to continuously adapt and find your center is essential to success. Yoga Journal recommends not “muscling your way through balancing poses” but rather using your brain over your body.

### Poses for Balance

According to the Vestibular Disorders Association (VEDA), [Iyengar yoga](#) (a practice of precision) is helpful for those with vestibular disorders, but avoid Bikram, Ashtanga, or Vinyasa as they use a flow sequence that could be problematic.

One-legged balancing Asanas (a pose adopted in performing Hatha yoga) help to:

- Improve your concentration
- Keep your calm
- Strengthen your muscles
- Improve your posture when standing and walking
- Increase coordination

An example of a popular and effective pose is the notorious [Tree Pose](#).

Other poses for balance include:

- [Eagle Pose](#)
- [Dolphin Plank Pose](#)
- [Four-Limbed Staff Pose](#)
- [Side Plank Pose](#)

When practicing these poses, arguably the most important thing to remember besides your breath is to be gentle with yourself and honor where you’re at, and soon you’ll be closer to where you want to go!

**[CTA]** Visit other resources on our site to learn more about balance disorders and how we can help.

**Comment [KW1]:** Balance link!