

# Yoga Off the Mat ? Aerial Yoga

When many people talk about taking yoga "off the mat" they are referring to embracing the principles of yoga in your daily life. For example, yoga teaches you to be in the moment and to focus on the present. It also teaches you to be flexible and strong – both mentally and physically. These are all wonderful benefits that can help you take your daily yoga practice into your daily life.

Yoga off the mat can also refer to the new and growing practice of aerial yoga. If you really want to get up and off the mat, try hanging in mid-air!

## What Is Aerial Yoga?

Like the practice of yoga where there are literally dozens of different styles and practices, the growing trend of aerial yoga also seems to be branching off into a number of different styles. Aerial yoga is the practice of blending traditional yoga methodology and poses with the aerial arts. Aerial arts are most often associated with trapeze and fabric arts which require balance, strengthening and good physical conditioning.

Like traditional yoga, aerial yoga is designed to build strength, conditioning, flexibility, and endurance. It requires focus, breathing techniques and an open mind. It's also deliciously fun! If you have an adventurous spirit and are looking to try something new, aerial yoga may be a perfect fit.

## What to Expect from an Aerial Yoga Class

Each aerial yoga school or class will utilize different techniques. All schools utilize a hammock or a large piece of fabric that supports your weight as you move through

traditional yoga movements. The fabric supports your body during inverted positions. It's more like a swing than a beach hammock.

You can perform everything from handstands to child's pose in an aerial yoga class, plus a number of other poses that simply may not be possible in a traditional yoga class.

Some classes spend the entire class utilizing the fabric hammock while other classes combine floor and aerial poses.

### Can Anyone Do Aerial Yoga?

While aerial yoga is perfect for people of all fitness levels, if you are pregnant or have high or low blood pressure it may not be right for you. Additionally, if you have vision problems or inner ear problems then aerial yoga may affect your balance and thus not be a good fit. Otherwise, if you enjoy trying new things and exploring your body and a vast range of movements, look for an aerial yoga class in your area. It's a growing trend and sure to be in a center near you.