

This Vinyasa flow practice is all about twists. Use this sequence to wring out your students and revitalize their spines.

Twists are often used in the yoga world to 'detox' as they squeeze and soak the internal organs with fresh blood and prana. I love doing lots of detox-y classes at this time of year to help recover from a summer of perhaps a few over-indulgences and so I can feel my best before the holiday season starts and I start digging into the pumpkin pie and red wine...

Instruction

Start your class having your students seated for pranayama/grounding/centering. Lead a few warm-ups here like seated cat/cow and seated spinal twist. Then guide your students into table and lead the 'thread the needle' twist. Come into downward dog, then standing forward fold, then mountain pose. Begin your first vinyasa: sun salutation

Raise arms, forward fold, step right foot back into high lunge, step left foot back to plank, 4-limbed staff pose, cobra, down dog, raise right leg to one-legged down dog, step right foot forward and raise arms into high lunge, hands back to floor and step left foot forward to standing forward fold, back to mountain pose.

Repeat on second side.

Repeat on first side but instead of cobra lead upward dog. After the high lunges bring palms together for lunge prayer twist. Repeat on second side.

Repeat on first side but now add on twisted balancing half moon after the high lunge prayer twist and from one-legged down dog flip into wild thing before stepping forward to the next high lunge.

After completing the three vinyasa on both sides, guide triangle from mountain pose followed by revolved triangle. Repeat second side.

Peak pose: Swastika stretch

Finish your class by leading a few backbends, forward folds and side bends to balance out all the twists.

Enjoy!

If you want to engage your students with a deeper understanding of the sequence, explain WHY twists are beneficial.

BONUS

B.K.S. Iyengar explains that the organs are compressed during a twist, pushing out blood filled with metabolic by-products and toxins. When we release the twist, fresh blood flows in, carrying oxygen and the building blocks for tissue healing. So from the physiological standpoint, twists stimulate circulation and have a cleansing and refreshing effect on the torso organs and associated glands.

For more information on the benefits of the postures, B.K.S. Iyengar's *Light on Yoga* is an encyclopedia-style resource that is handy for all yoga instructors, regardless of the lineage you come from. I've always considered it the bible of yoga and although I'm not certified to teach Iyengar Yoga, I refer to this book frequently and use it in the yoga teacher trainings I lead.

