



SPORT

yoga for snow sports

Boost strength, confidence, and agility for your winter adventures.

Yoga—notwithstanding its roots in steamy India—is a great way to condition your body and mind for the slopes, says certified professional ski instructor Anne Anderson, whether you’re skiing or snowboarding. Anderson, who is also a Kripalu-trained yoga teacher, started adding yogic

breathing techniques to her downhill skiing classes about seven years ago. She immediately noticed that her students were more confident when approaching the slopes: “Once I started adding yoga to the lessons, students progressed much more quickly.”

These days, Anderson’s skiing lessons include a practice she calls “Snowga,” in which ski-booted students do 15 minutes of simple meditation, pranayama, and asana before stepping into their skis. Doing yoga before skiing, she says, means a better experience on the slopes: “The mind becomes calm. The body gets warmed up and is less prone to strain or injury.”

Anderson suggests limbering up before hitting the slopes with six movements of the spine: Cat-Cow Pose, for flexing forward and arching the back; a side-to-side C-shape; and a twist to each side. From there, she says, practice postures that build strength and enhance balance and flexibility, particularly in the knees and hips (*see sidebar*). Utkatasana (Chair Pose), she says, is essential. It gets the lower body comfortable with the bent-knee, flexed-ankle position that is the downhill skier’s default stance. And it strengthens the quads so that they can protect the knees. KATHERINE GRIFFIN

warm UP before you fly DOWN

4 moves to smooth your experience on the slopes



MOUNTAIN POSE

Cultivates internal focus and awareness of body alignment.



CHAIR POSE

Strengthens quads, glutes, and calves and promotes ankle flexion.



WARRIOR POSE I

Opens the chest and builds strength in the lower body.



WARRIOR POSE III

Promotes balance and strengthens core muscles.

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