



## STEADINESS OVER PERFECTION

In Ashtanga yoga, steadiness is required, while perfection is earned through dedication.

Perfection is often what draws the eye: the flawless alignment, the elegant pose, the sense of mastery. Yet the true essence of the practice is not in perfection, but in steadiness. Steadiness is the quiet, patient presence that allows perfection to emerge naturally through dedication and devotion.

Without steadiness, perfection becomes little more than a physical performance, far removed from the deeper purpose of yoga.

The traditions of Ashtanga emphasise the three pillars of steadiness: breath (pranayama), asana (posture), and drishti (gaze). Each element supports the other. If the breath is unsteady, the asana cannot find its grounding, and the mind drifts. If the gaze wanders, the sequence loses rhythm. When breath, movement, and focus align, steadiness arises naturally, and with it, the deeper wisdom of the practice.

Many of us come to Ashtanga thinking, “I am too stiff” or “I will never keep up.” Yet the body is patient; it will grow, stretch, and strengthen over time. The challenge lies in cultivating presence and shifting the focus from the end result to the present moment, which brings with it a sense of ease. This shift is not only the foundation of consistent practice, but a skill that shapes how we meet challenge in everyday life. It releases expectation and allows you to discover depth in every moment.

Modified postures practiced with steadiness are far more rewarding and transformative than “perfect” asanas performed without awareness. Each steady pose strengthens not only the body but also the mind and the heart. Steadiness cultivates patience and resilience, qualities that extend far beyond the mat.

When steadiness is truly mastered, inner strength reveals itself in the body. Challenging poses that once felt impossible begin to unfold naturally. The mind remains calm, the breath steady, and the body moves naturally, without strain. This effortless stability comes not from forcing the posture, but from the quiet, consistent practice of steadiness over time. It is here that the physical and mental converge, and the practice becomes both powerful and graceful.

Steadiness in Ashtanga isn't only about holding a challenging pose; it is also about awareness of moving steadily from one posture to the next. It is where the rhythm of the practice truly emerges. When movement flows in sync with breath, the body moves safely, efficiently, and gracefully. The sequence feels like a harmonious, continuous movement rather than a set of separate poses.

This January, set an intention to prioritise steadiness over perfection. Choose a challenging asana and approach it with patience, awareness, and ease. Observe how your energy shifts, how the heart space opens, how the mind quiets, and how the body responds when effort is guided by steadiness rather than expectation.

In Ashtanga yoga, perfection is not the goal; it is a natural result of steady practice. Steadiness is both the path and the reward. Let this month be an invitation to practice with patience, to flow with intention, and to discover the quiet strength that steadiness brings.