



YOGA – Could it help your bootcamp?

The delicate flutterings of a bamboo flute usually drift through a yoga studio, while most Bootcamp sessions throb with screams from your instructors. Yoga is about peace and serenity. Bootcamp is not.

If you can find deep relaxation 5 minutes into a Tabata burpee session then a small wooden seat atop a very tall mountain is

probably a good place for you.

If yoga is yin, Bootcamp is most certainly yang. They're opposites, to be sure, but are they separate? Some athletes don't think so.

Movement Is Movement

The philosophical gap between the two pursuits makes the Grand Canyon look like a shallow ditch. Nevertheless, some Bootcampers are indeed able to find a sort of blissful relaxation during the savage efforts of a workout, and yoga isn't just about flexibility and chanting. It's also about breathing, alignment and mental focus. Perhaps common ground can be found with very simple approach:

Bootcamp/or any fitness training/sport and yoga are both about moving your body. On a very fundamental level, movement is movement, and being able to teach someone good quality movement is generally the same, whether you're doing track and field, yoga, Bootcamp or Olympic weightlifting. The gym didn't invent any movements. They've taken a lot of the best movements that were already around—lunges, squats, pushes, pull-ups etc—but it's all basic good human movement that people have been doing for ages. There's all the basic stuff like lunges and squats and overhead movements and handstands and push-ups.

All those basic body movements that are found in yoga, they definitely benefit Bootcamp and there's definitely a lot of crossover."Some of the links between Bootcamp and yoga aren't very subtle at all. Watch just about any yoga class and you'll see a multitude of postures that are very similar to movements performed every day at Bootcamp.

In the yoga squat (malasana), the hips are lower than you would see them in an air squat, but cleaning a big weight often demands a squat that's well below parallel. Similarly, yoga's emphasis on avoiding a rounded back in the pose mirrors the instructions often heard at Bootcamp

The basic chair pose, can be considered more of a deadlift position. It's not a full deep squat, but it's knees bent, hips bent, back arched, and then you have an arms overhead position that's a good prep for an overhead squat to really get those shoulders up and open and active. It's good to teach people how to really arch their back and maintain a good solid lumbar curve while flexing at the hip joint and the knee joint. A really good preparation for deadlifts, squats and kettlebell swings."



Crescent lunge (anjaneyasana) finds the yogi with one leg forward and the back leg powerfully extended behind while the arms are raised overhead, almost as if he's working on the a new move with Bootcamp trainer Graeme Pattison

Extended-hand big-toe pose
(utthita hasta padangusthasana B)

Half-moon pose
(aardha chandrasana)

Warrior 3
(virabhadrasana 3)

Chair pose
(utkatasana)

Downward-facing dog
(ardha mukha svanasana)

Upward-facing dog
(urdvha mukha svanasana)

Knee-down or knee-up crescent lunge
(anjaneyasana)

Pyramid pose
(parsvottanasana)

Perhaps the position with the most in common with Bootcamp is handstand (adho mukha vrksasana), though its precursor, downward facing dog (adho mukha svanasana), is also helpful in strengthening the shoulders and requires less balance (Mountain Climbers anyone?).

It really opens up that shoulder angle, and it's a good place for a lot of people to learn how to open up the shoulders and stretch there and get weight on their hands before taking their legs up over their head. "You can spend a lot more time in a downward dog than you can in a handstand. It's a good

place to bridge the gap and then take your legs up overhead. Once you've got that, it's tremendously helpful, and you can definitely see applications when you've been doing a lot of handstand work to overhead pressing."



Getting Looser

Can yoga help you become more proficient in an important aspect of Bootcamp or any overall fitness regime? Indeed, stamina, strength, balance, coordination and flexibility are all emphasised in yoga, with flexibility being the one most people usually associate with the ancient art. How many times have you heard your bootcamp instructor pleading with you to work on your flexibility to improve your squat or reduce knee pain?

At every single session people discover they are very challenged by many movements. Large chests and biceps sculpted in the Globo Gym pull the shoulders forward and arms up into a T-Rex position that makes an overhead squat torture.

Tight hamstrings and hip flexors earned with 40 hours a week behind a desk wreak havoc on the lumbar curve.

Rack a rifle on the shoulders with elbows high? Out of the question if you often find yourself tapping on a laptop in some airplane seat that's precisely designed to support the natural curves of a bag of laundry.

Many bootcampers and fitness enthusiasts are limited by shoulder and hip tightness, yoga instructors believe their fitness work would improve with looser muscles.

This is correct many Bootcampers, and athletes in general, are about as flexible as an iron rod. One instructor in Doha said "One of the issues I see in a lot of gym bunnies is a lack of shoulder flexibility and hip flexibility," she says. "I've been working on that with them because the squat is impossible for some people due to a lack of flexibility. For me personally, I think that yoga gives you a lot more flexibility work, lengthening of the muscle tissue.

With Bootcamp it's a little more strengthening. So they balance each other out that way. Yin and yang, as it were—but many kinds of yoga aren't just about reclining on a mat, chanting mantras and waiting for flexibility to descend from the heavens on the wings of a dove

Hero pose (virasana)—Seated on the heels to open knees and tops of feet. Ujjayi breathing technique is used to learn focus and breath control. Interlace fingers and reach arms overhead to stretch palms, wrists, forearms and shoulders (mountain pose, or parvatasana).

Child's pose (utthita balasana)—While seated on the knees, lower forehead to the mat and extend the arms with toes tucked under to stretch the broad muscles of the back, the shoulders and soles of feet.

Downward-facing dog (adho mukha svanasana)—Hands and feet on the floor with hips raised to lengthen spine and open shoulders.

Sun salutation (traditional suryanamaskar)—Standing upward stretch followed by forward bend, low lunge, plank, up dog, down dog, forward bend and a return to standing. Repeat on other leg. Warms the large joints and the spine and teaches correct movement with breath.

Chair pose (utkatasana)—Bend hips and knees with torso erect and arms overhead. Teaches the necessary structural integrity of the spine in squats, overhead squats and deadlifts. Also opens shoulders and teaches athletes to stay off their toes.

Low lunge/high lunge with back and arms lifted (anjaneyasana)—Stretches the quadriceps and the gluteus maximus, strengthens and lengthens the attachments within the knee. Tones and stretches hip abductor stabilizers. Shoulder elevation also involves glenohumeral movement in combination with scapulothoracic movement and thoracic extension, which can help with the shrugging motion in Olympic lifting. Prayer twists and eagle arms also incorporated to open lumbar tissue and stretch the rhomboids, posterior delts and upper traps.

Triangle (trikonasana)—Feet apart with legs straight, incline torso to place one hand on the floor. Extend the other skyward to lengthen hamstrings, rotate spine and lengthen lower back and waist.



One aspect of yoga that's misunderstood in its application is the idea that yoga is merely just passive stretching, where you just sort of sit there and you stretch.

There's more to it than that. There's a lot of different yoga styles that are more active, that involve more movement. There's a mobility aspect, not just a static, sit-there-and-stretch aspect.

Wide-legged forward bend (prasarita padottanasana)—A wide-legged forward fold with no rounding of the spine to teach lumbar arch and open adductors and hamstrings, similar to the wide stance of a squat.

Warrior two (virabhadrasana two)—Lunging posture with both heels on the ground and arms extended in front and behind you to open hips

Warrior three (virabhadrasana three)—Balancing on one leg, the torso, arms and other leg are parallel to the floor with lumbar arch engaged. Strengthens hamstrings and hip abductor stabilizers.

Half moon (ardha chandrasana)—From warrior three, rotate the torso and place one hand on the ground. The other reaches to the ceiling.

Peacock preps (pincha mayurasana)—A plank or side plank on the forearms, or side plank on one forearm. Encourages Crossfitters to use their shoulders in different ways and increases shoulder stability.

Bow pose (dhanurasana)—Lying prone, reach back to grab the feet, raising quads and shoulders off the ground. Strengthens back body and lengthens psoas, hip flexors, quads—tight muscles on many CrossFitters.

Half-lord of the fishes twist (ardha matesyan-drasana)—While seated with right leg bent or extended, place left foot outside right leg. Place right elbow on outside of left knee and twist to stretch gluteals.

Resting pigeon (eka pada rajakapotasana)—From lunge position, bring left leg forward until it rests against the floor under the shoulders. Lower torso forward to rest with arms extended overhead to release hamstrings and piriformis.

Lying hand to foot/band pose (supta padan-ghustasana)—Lying supine, extend one straight leg and raise it as high as possible, grasping foot or assistance strap to stretch hamstring.

Corpse pose (savasana)—Supine rest, similar to post-Fran position.

For example. PNF stretching is something that you can incorporate and that is incorporated a lot of times in a yoga practice where you contract and release, contract and release, and actively move through greater ranges of motion and stretch yourself more than just sitting there, not doing anything and hoping that your hamstrings stretch.

Learning to Breathe

The average person doesn't think about breathing, but athletes are more aware of their respiration. Swimmers obviously have to time their breaths appropriately, but other sports such as running, boxing and mixed martial arts incorporate breathing techniques to increase performance.

In Bootcamp a breathing technique called "gasp" is often found at the end of a nasty session, but many powerlifting and Olympic-lifting coaches encourage holding of the breath with Valsalva manoeuvre. By closing the glottis and trapping air inside the body, athletes increase intra-abdominal pressure and vertebral support, which can help during big lifts.

Breathing ladders also exist to train athletes to avoid panic breathing during exertion.

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Yoga views the Valsalva maneuver in much the same way your family doctor does, but the principles of breath control might transfer from the studio to the field. In the simplest terms, yoga is about coordinating breath with movement. Once you learn to pay



attention to your respiration, you might be able control it and use it to increase performance during heavy lifting or maximum exertion.

Knowing how to breathe can help you lift. It can help you run. It can help you recover There are hundreds of yoga breathing exercises, some of which mirror the power breathing or martial-arts-type breathing that is needed for strength work. But most

importantly, learning how to breathe is learning how to focus, which will help you in all facets of your life.”

No Chanting

No one’s expecting Bootcamp classes to start doubling as yoga studios. The chanting of mantras will not occur before a session. But at Bootcamp we encourage people to mix things up—the best of gymnastics, running, rowing, sandbags and more. Some might suggest it’s time to add yoga to that list. Others will certainly disagree.

At the very least, Bootcampers are always encouraged to try new things to see what works and what does not. If nothing else, yoga has a lot of great relaxation and recovery poses, all of which will come in handy after one of one of the killer leg sessions!

If you are interested in learning more then contact bootcampqatar’s yoga partners Yama Yoga on <http://www.yamayogastudios.com/> or email yamayogastudios@gmail.com or call 974-6617-5802.