

TRADITIONAL SURYA NAMASKAR
AT
SWAR ASHRAM



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The 12 movements of Surya Namaskar aka Sun Salutations is a significant number. Twelve corresponds to the 12 hours of AM + PM (Left + Right sides) making 24 movements – 1 step for each hour of the day. Twelve is for the 12 month cycles of the zodiacal year. There are 7 asanas corresponding to the main chakras, some occurring twice per sequence as they are performed left and right to total the 12 movements. Right + Left are performed to complete 1 set, assuring both sides are equally balanced. The following pages contain some references to its origins, however obscure, as well as both mundane and esoteric instruction on this beloved asana sequence. Rituals of Saluting the Sun reach back as far as time can tell in the Vedic Traditions and Surya Namaskar as we know it today has changed little since its early days.

MANTRA	DIAGRAM	(PRANA) SANSKRIT NAME	FOCUS ON
		<u>Sankalpa=Resolution / Release</u>	
1. OM MITRAYA NAMAH		(I/E) SAMASTHITIH / ANJALI MUDRA Acceptance / Analysis	ANAHATA 4 th
2. OM RAVAYA NAMAH		(I) UTTHITA HASTASANA Forgiveness / Regret	VISHUDDHI 5 th
3. OM SURYAYA NAMAH		(E) PADA HASTASANA Security=Faith / Fear	MULADHARA 1 st
4. OM BHANAVE NAMAH		(I) ASHWA SANCHALASANA Compassion / Judgement	AJNA 6 th
5. OM KHAGAYA NAMAH		(E) UTTHITA CHATURANGA Influence=Uplift / Insult	MANIPURA 3 rd
6. OM PUSHNE NAMAH		(H) ASHTANG NAMASKAR Surrender to Divine Power	PAUSE ENERGY
7. OM HIRANYAGARBAYA NAMAH		(I) BHUJANGASANA Connection=(pro)Creativity / Procrastination	SVADHISTHANA 2 nd
8. OM MARICHAYE NAMAH		(E) ADHO MUKHA SVA ASANA Gratitude / Non-attachment	SAHASRARA 7 th
9. OM SAVITRE NAMAH		(I) ASHWA SANCHALASANA Compassion / Judgement	AJNA 6 th
10. OM ARKAYA NAMAH		(E) PADA HASTASANA Security=Faith / Fear	MULADHARA 1 st
11. OM ADITYAYA NAMAH		(I) UTTHITA HASTASANA Forgiveness / Regret	VISHUDDHI 5 th
12. OM BHASKARAYA NAMAH		(E) ANJALI MUDRA / SAMASTHITIH Acceptance / Analysis	ANAHATA 4 th

NOTE: Numbers 4 and 9 (Ashwa Sanchalasana) are performed alternating left foot dominating the step (front and back) then on round 2 right foot dominating the step (front and back).

SURYA NAMASKARA

THE ASANAS PERFORMED at SwAr Ashram
by CHILDREN on INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY 2019
children's photos courtesy of Jack Morgan



Note to Jack: parental consents have not been sent out yet nor am i positive these are the final photos. Some So bear in mind this is a draft copy and some intro to SN text will go here eventually. The rest of the text is fairly completed.

AUM MITRAYA NAMAH



Resting breath: Tadasana with Anjali Mudra
Anahata 4th Chakra: Acceptance / Critical Analysis

OM RAVAYE NAMAH



Inhale: Utthita Hastasana
Vishuddha 5th Chakra: Forgiveness / Regret

AUM SURYAYA NAMAH



Exhale: Ardha Uttanasana or Pada Hastasana
Muladhara 1st Chakra: Security=Faith / Fear

AUM BHANAVE NAMAH



Inhale: Ashwa Sanchalanasana (first set on R/ 2nd on L)
Ajna 6th Chakra: Compassion / Judgement

AUM KHAGYAYA NAMAH



Exhale: Utthita Chaturanga
Manipura 3rd Chakra: Influence=Uplift / Insult

AUM PUSHNE NAMAH



Kumbhaka (breath retention): Ashtang Namaskar
Pause Energy: Surrender to Divine Power

AUM HIRANYA GARBHAYA NAMAH



Inhale: Bhujangasana

Svadhishthana 2nd Chakra: Connection=(pro)Creativity /
Procrastination

AUM MARICHAYE NAMAH



Exhale: Adho Mukha Svan Asana
Sahasrara 7th Chakra: Gratitude / Non-attachment

AUM ADITYAYA NAMAH



Inhale: Ashwin Sanchalasana (first set on R/ 2nd on L)
Ajna 6th Chakra: Compassion / Judgement

AUM SAVITRE NAMAH



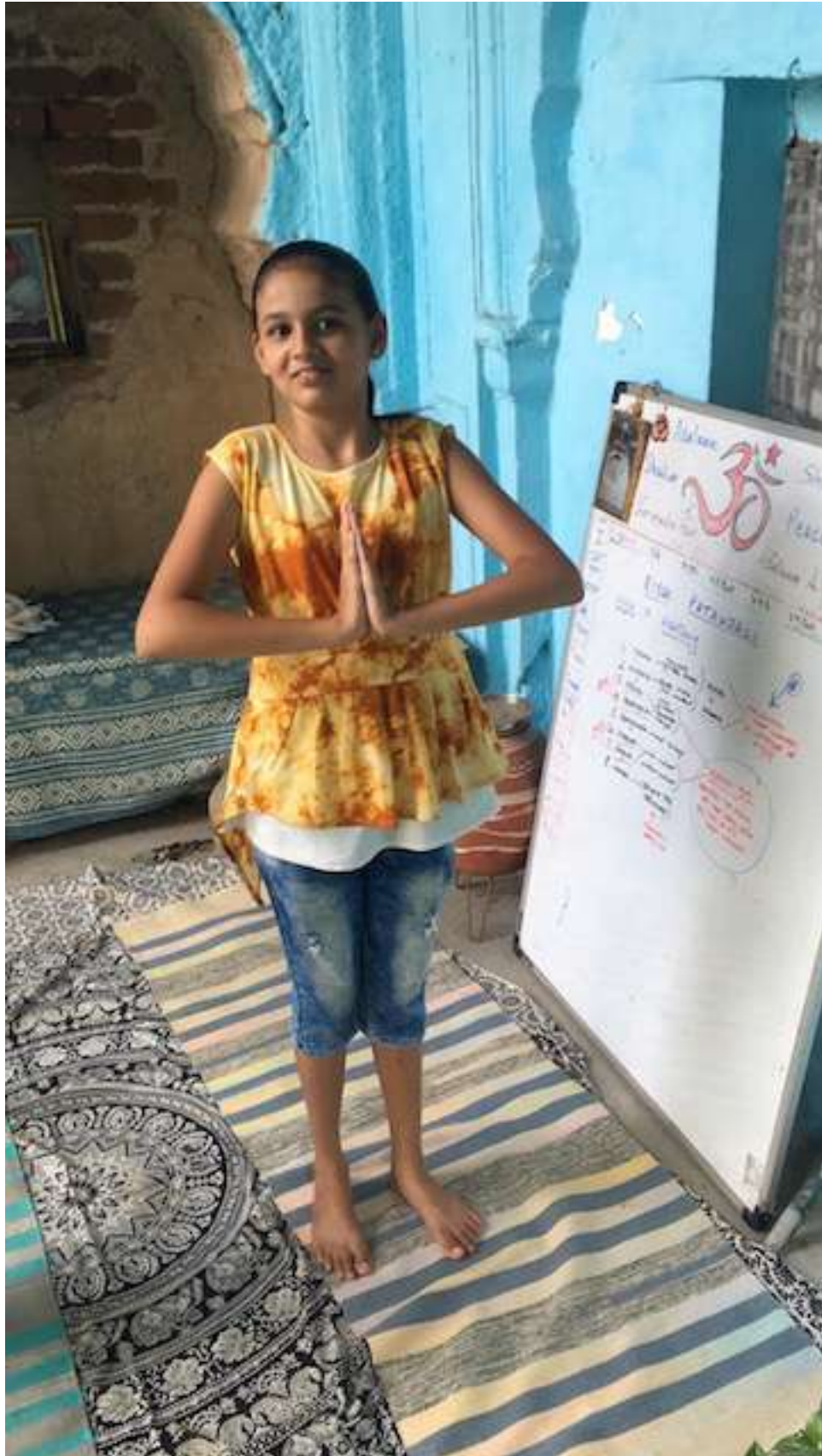
Exhale: Ardha Uttitha Hastasana or Pada Hastasana
Muladhara 1st Chakra: Security=Faith / Fear

AUM ARKYAYA NAMAH



Inhale: Utthita Hastasana
Vishuddha 5th Chakra: Forgiveness / Regret

AUM BHASKARAYA NAMAH



Exhale: Tadasana with Anjali Mudra
Anahata 4th Chakra: Acceptance / Critical Analysis

SURYA: HERE COMES THE SUN

O! the colonizing of Yoga! let me count the ways... those who trace SN to the 1930s in America, certainly haven't tried hard enough in their research. At SwAr Ashram we have over 700 volumes of texts (Shastra - ancient Vedic and Vedantic scriptures) which our Guruji Swami Anantram collected over his lifetime and which he left in my care on his departure from this life. Let me see what can discover about the origins of Surya Namaskar.

To start, the seals of Harappan are 5-6,000 yrs old depictions of asana-based Namaskaras (salutations in the form of vinyasa sequenced asanas) for the Sun, Moon and dieties such as Shiva, which have changed little until recent years - now there are variations in various trademarked styles. This obscure artwork is the earliest and really only nod to Vinyasa in Hatha Yoga and bears little resemblance to what we popularize as Vinyasa in Yoga today. From the ancient Sanskrit origins, Vinyasa means when Asana or Kriya or Karana-s, flow in sequence from one form to the next in a graceful efficient way. Even today in Traditional Classic Hatha Yoga, the Asanas which are sequenced as a Vinyasa are held for several rounds of breath each or several minutes each asana, with the exception perhaps of the Namaskaras. Surya Namaskar is likely performed in a more speedier way today than when first practiced.



Namaskara to the solar diety Surya, rituals and religious practices, were first written in the earliest of all the Vedas (4,000 to 8,000 years ago) - the Rg Veda. It is important to know that there is ample evidence in artifacts from the Indus Valley that the Mantras, Asanas, rituals, etc in these ancient writings were practiced for perhaps 10,000 years before written language formed in the medium of Sanskrit to write them down. No specific Asana was never a focus in the written word, instead we have artwork equally as old or older than the Rg Veda that shows us how these are to be done. Seals of Harippan is the earliest artistic reference for Surya Namaskar.

For example, many Sun rituals are mentioned but not detailed step by step how to since the writing of Rg Veda. Agnihotra (offering fire back to the sun as gratitude for its use), Tarpanam (offering water to the sun in the names of the ancestors and gods), and yes Pranam-ing (bowing) and Namaskar-ing (saluting with prayer hands) to the Solar diety Surya/ the Sun are a few of the rituals which are so well guarded and passed down that written verbage had no use in these texts that were concise, precise shlokas and sutras.



Original lineages don't need books and rarely write them. No one in the living traditions claims ownership or creates their own styles nor needs to copyright anything. The West, however writes and re-writes, adapts and modifies, as well as takes personal credit for inventing this or that in Yoga. There are a dozen or so trademarked versions of Surya Namaskar today. In some,

the apex of the 12 Asana steps in Surya Namaskar sequence - Ashtang Namaskar (eight limbs bowing on the floor) - is left out of modern versions missing the esoteric point of Surya Namaskara entirely. This may have been eliminated by fitness fanatics so that great numbers like 108 repetitions can be done by mere novices and also because nowadays being taught to total beginners, the breath retention (Kumbhaka) is not a good idea. While these may be practical modifications for a beginner, they should not be thought of as the complete expression of Surya Namaskar itself. So are the mantras from the Rg Veda missing from modern Surya Namaskar. Presumably for the belief in the West that Sanskrit is too difficult to learn or pronounce, missing the benefits of it entirely.

Of course there are other Yogic forms than asana, there are 8 commonly agreed upon since 2,500 years ago when Patanjali penned the Yoga Sutras. They are

YAMA • NIYAMA • ASANA • PRANAYAMA • PRATYAHARA • DHARANA • DHYANA • SAMADHI



Asana is mentioned just twice in the 196 Sutras. No Asana descriptions and little time is given to them except that they are a link in a chain, the purpose of which is to reach what is variously known as Samadhi/ Moksha/ Kevalyam/ Nirvana. What was commonly called Asana back in those days - and even now in traditional India – is Padmanasana and the other Meditation Asans. Likewise, the lifestyle suggestions of Niyamas, are not detailed as ‘how-to’ in the Yoga Sutras. The practices which the words, Saucha, Tapas and Ishvara Pranidhana suggest, are highly individualistic, vary from region to region, are learned through family and Gurukulum traditions, originate perhaps 10,000 or more years before Patanjali’s time, are inclusive of (but not exclusive of) infinite Sun rituals that are practiced since time immemorial, still very strongly today.

So you see, it was never part of the written tradition to write how-to manuals. Until Hatha Yoga Pradipika by Yogi Svatmarama in the 15th century. What is difficult for the Western thinker to grasp is that 'how-to' was never a written format. Instead it was passed down in the Gurukulum with all the trappings of secrecy attached. While Yogi Svatmarama did write down plenty of instructions on Hatha Yoga, still few were Asanas. There are 16 Asanas in the descriptions – half of those for Meditation, although he states that there are as many Asanas as there are life species - arguably 84 lakh. He does not make reference to sequence of any kind. The way of Classical Tradition is in favor of having your Guru give you one Asana to focus on for weeks, months or even years. This is not to say that sequences like Surya Namaskar did not exist. They had for thousands of years, but is not a very popular way of teaching in the Gurukulum. The Guru teaches the Shikshya to prepare for Samadhi. Yogi Svatmarama wrote Hatha Yoga Pradipika from that standard. Surya Namaskar is more useful for simply overall health and well-being that contributes to the ability of a person to sit long periods in meditation by balancing their life with some physical strengthening activity as well. It would be considered a warm-up or an Upa-Yoga. And again, something that requires precise movement is best taught and practiced live with a teacher, not from a book. Books being rare and expensive, this was never considered the format of teaching that which can be better taught in person.



Asana being an oral and direct tradition imparted by direct experience by a master, the asana unlikely were ever written formally for milleniums - til printing presses made their appearance. Asana never was terribly important to ancient Yogis, and being physical movements didn't lend themselves to textual narrative in a culture focused on Sanskrit, the Science of Vibration of Sound as its conduit. Hence, the 12 Mantras themselves were (and still are) seen as the description of the movements/ Asanas themselves, since the ancient experience.

it is said that Hanuman himself in the Treyta Yug created the Surya Namaskar and its mantras, Hanuman being an incarnation of Shiva/Adiyogi who created all 84,00,000 asanas, all of the Surya Namaskara Asanas included. These expositions are touched on in the Shivapurana. Again,, not a how-to manual. Shiva the popularized name today, originated from Fire/the Sun himself as Agni/Rudra fully described in Rg Veda. Adi Shankaracharya of the 8th century influenced Sri-tattva-nidhi (of the same lineage in the early 1800s) which describes Surya Namaskara a series of 12 asanas pretty much like it is today. Swami Sivananda is credited for picking up the lineage that is still oldest running as of today, the Bihar School popularizing it in the current YTT era pretty much just as it ever was, with some modifications mentioned above – presumably since they cater for the beginners and less-flexible Indians from the modern cities and their Western counterparts.



