

# A Yoga Teacher's Guide to Sanskrit

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आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः (ऋग्वेदः १-८९-१)  
*ā no bhadrāḥ kratavo kṣyantū viśvataḥ* (ṛgvedaḥ 1.89.1)  
Let noble thoughts come to us from all directions.

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**Recommended Resources:**

- Books
  - *2100 Asanas*, Daniel Lacerda
  - *Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit*, Antonia Ruppel and its online resources:  
<https://www.cambridge-sanskrit.org/>
  - *Devavanipravesika*, by Robert P. Goldman and Sally J. Sutherland Goldman
  - *Introduction to Sanskrit, Part 1*, and *Part 2* by Thomas Egenes
  - *The Language of Yoga*, by Nicolai Bachman
  - *A Sanskrit Dictionary*, by John M Denton
- Websites/Apps
  - Greenmesg.org
  - learnsanskrit.org
  - Pocketyoga.com/pose/
  - sanskritebooks.org/ebooks-download/
  - Sanskritsounds.com
  - SpokenSanskrit.org
  - Yogastudies.org
  - Yoga 108 App designed by Rajeev Ravindran

संस्कृतम् - **saṃskṛtam** - **sanskrit** - *perfectly made, refined, polished, highly elaborated*  
dēvabhāṣā - *the language of the gods*  
devanāgarī - *dwelling of the gods*

*The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologist could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists.*

- Sir William Jones (1746-1794)

### **Introduction**

Sanskrit is one of the oldest known languages and continues to be of major interest to religious scholars, linguists, and Eastern philosophers. The body of Sanskrit literature encompasses a rich tradition of poetry and drama as well as scientific, technical, philosophical and religious texts. It continues to be the primary language in many sacred texts from the East, including those from Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism.

Dating as far back as the second millennium BCE, Sanskrit is the oldest Indo-European language for which substantial written documentation exists. It is believed that all Indo-European languages, including Sanskrit, developed from an original language that has now become forgotten. The similarities between Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin all point to this original source, and many modern languages also connect to this lineage. French for example, is a direct descendant of Latin, and about half of English words come from French. The Anglo-Saxon side of English, related to German, is also part of this big Indo-European family.

Over the past two millennia, the popularity of Sanskrit as a spoken language waned as other languages took over. In the 2001 Census of India, only 14,135 Indians reported Sanskrit to be their first language. Nevertheless, it is today one of the 22 languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, which mandates the Indian government to develop and continue use of the language.

The compositions of Sanskrit were orally transmitted for much of its early history by methods of memorization of exceptional complexity and fidelity. Some followers of Vedantic philosophy, for example, were required to be able to recite the compendium of the Vedas scripture both backwards and forwards. In modern times, it continues to be widely used as a ceremonial language in Hindu religious rituals and Buddhist practices in the form of hymns and chants.

Learning Sanskrit is not like learning any other language. Learning Sanskrit is a spiritual practice, it is part of our *sādhana*. It is about tuning into the unique vibration of the language, and understanding its strong spiritual significance. We do not just say Sanskrit words, we feel their vibration in our own bodies.

Some say that every sentence, word, syllable and even letter in Sanskrit is a mantra in of itself, meaning it has the vibrational capability to completely transform the mind and help the seeker attain liberation. Some also say that you do not need to memorize the meaning behind any Sanskrit words. Rather, the meaning is found in the sound itself.

Learning Sanskrit is opening the door to entirely new realms of understanding. The more Sanskrit you learn, the better you will understand key yogic and philosophical concepts. Words we use in common parlance, like *yoga*, *asana*, *hatha*, *vinyasa*, *ashtanga*, *drishti*, *savasana*, *namaste*, *Om*, *karma*, *nirvana*, take on whole new meaning when we learn where they words came from and their spiritual significance.

May this Sanskrit lesson be the gateway to a new world of sacred literature,  
May you continue to tune in to all the vibrations around you,  
May you find harmony with the divinity flowing within you.

नमस्कार, Namaskāra,

- Zach

## **Part I: Basic Asana Vocabulary**

While it may seem complicated at first, learning Sanskrit is relatively easier than learning many other languages, because it is a *phonetic language*. Every Sanskrit letter is read and pronounced exactly as it is written. This is very different from English, where the same letters can be pronounced very differently depending on the surrounding letters and convention--like the 'gh' in *tough* vs. *weigh*, the letter 'c' in *cent* vs. *can't*, or the letters 'tio' in *emotion* vs. *ratio*.

It may help to think of long Sanskrit words as like a string of pearls. Urdhva Mukha Paschimottanasana has 5 words in it; Urdhva (upward); Mukha (face); Paschima (West or backside of the body); Uttana (intense); Asana (pose). Learning to identify the smaller words within the long name makes it easier not only to recognize but also helps with proper pronunciation. Once each word is decoded, the meaning of the pose can be elucidated.

For this section, we will simply focus on the words that encompass most asanas in modern yoga classes. There are of course many Sanskrit dictionaries that cover all the words in the language. But since the beginning of learning any language requires a lot of memorization, we will refine our focus here on words we have probably heard before in yoga classes and trainings. The following pages list the most commonly used words in modern yoga poses.

### **Descriptions:**

1. Adho: downward
2. Ananda: bliss/blissful
3. Ardha: half
4. Baddha: tied/bound
5. Kona: angle
6. Niralamba: without support
7. Parivrtta: revolved
8. Pida: pressure
9. Prasarita: spread out
10. Purna: complete
11. Raja: royal/king
12. Salamba: with support
13. Sthiti: stability
14. Supta: reclining/sleeping
15. Ubhaya: both
16. Upavistha: seated
17. Urdhva: raised/upward
18. Utkata : powerful, fierce
19. Uttana: intense stretch
20. Utthita: extended, stretched

**Body parts:**

1. Anga: limb
2. Angusta: big toe
3. Anjali: hands held together at prayer
4. Bhuja: arm
5. Hasta: hand
6. Janu: knee
7. Jattara: stomach/abdomen
8. Karna: ear
9. Mukha: face
10. Pada: foot/leg
11. Parshva: side
12. Paschima: west direction (back side of body)
13. Prana: breath/ life force
14. Purva: east direction (front side of body)
15. Shirsha: head
16. Sukha: easy

**Humanity:**

1. Bala: child
2. Garbha: womb
3. Namaskar: I bow to you in respect
4. Pinda: embryo
5. Sarvanga: whole body
6. Shava: corpse
7. Vira: hero/warrior

**Animals:**

1. Ashva: horse
2. Baka: crane
3. Bitil/marjari: cow/cat
4. Bheka: frog
5. Bhujanga: snake/serpent
6. Go: cow
7. Kaka: crow
8. Kapota: pigeon/dove
9. Kukkuta: rooster
10. Kurma: turtle
11. Matsya: fish

12. Mayura: peacock
13. Nakra: crocodile
14. Sasaka: rabbit
15. Shalabha: locust/ grasshopper
16. Shisho: puppy
17. Shvana: dog
18. Tittibha: firefly
19. Ushtra: camel
20. Vrischika: scorpion

**Things:**

1. Bandha: lock
2. Chandra: moon
3. Chapa: bow, rainbow, arc
4. Danda: rod/staff
5. Dhanur: bow
6. Hala: plow
7. Mala: garland, necklace
8. Mudra: seal
9. Nava: boat
10. Padma: lotus
11. Parigha: gate latch or iron bar
12. Pincha: feather
13. Setu: bridge
14. Tada: mountain
15. Tola: scales
16. Vajra: thunderbolt
17. Viparita: inverted
18. Vrksa: tree

**Numbers:**

1. Eka: one
2. Dwi: two, both
3. Tri: three
4. Chatur: four
5. Ashta: eight

### **Sages and Deities:**

1. **Anjana:** mother of Lord Hanuman
2. **Bharadvaja:** a Vedic sage; also the father of a famous archer, Drona, who trained the cousins who would later become rivals and fight the famous war that the Bhagavad-Gita was written about.
3. **Galava:** a celebrated sage and the son of Visvamitra
4. **Garuda:** the king of the eagles; Garuda once provided transportation and carried Lord Vishnu to the aid of a devotee, Gajendra, who was in a life threatening situation.
5. **Hanuman:** chief of the monkey army; one of Rama's greatest devotees who came to his aid. Hanuman made huge leaps across the sea, first to find Sita and then to save Rama's brother. Anjaneya is another name for Hanuman.
6. **Koundinya:** a royal court scholar who predicted the newborn prince, Siddhartha Gautama, would leave his father's kingdom and become the Enlightened One, the Buddha.
7. **Marichi:** son of Brahma and grandfather of Surya the sun god.
8. **Matsyendra:** Lord of the Fishes; Shiva discovered a fish, who had completely learned his teachings of yoga. Shiva gave him divine form to then spread the knowledge of yoga.
9. **Nataraja:** one of the names of Shiva, the lord of the dance.
10. **Skanda:** (Sanskrit: "Leaper" or "Attacker") also called Karttikeya, Kumara, or Subrahmanya, Hindu god of war who was the firstborn son of Shiva.
11. **Surya:** Sun god
12. **Vashishtha** is one of the oldest and most revered Vedic rishis. Vashishtha is credited as the chief author of Mandala 7 of Rigveda.
13. **Virabhadra:** the great warrior who sprang to Shiva's aid to seek revenge on his father-in-law.
14. **Visvamitra:** A Great king, who, after attempting to steal a sage's cow, went on the yogic path and after getting set back many times, finally attained sagehood.

There are still more obscure poses with more obscure names, such as poses named after **Kapila**, **Korakar**, **Koormamuni**, **Goraksha**, **Bhairava**, **Durvasa**, **Ruchika**, **Virancha**, **Vamadeva**, and **Valakhilya**.



**Test your knowledge**

(write down the direct translation of the following yoga poses, then, if applicable, the common name for the pose)

1. salamba sarvangasana = \_\_\_\_\_
2. supta baddha konasana = \_\_\_\_\_
3. janu shirshasana = \_\_\_\_\_
4. chaturanga dandasana = \_\_\_\_\_
5. surya namaskar = \_\_\_\_\_
6. prasarita padottanasana = \_\_\_\_\_
7. parshvottanasana = \_\_\_\_\_
8. trikonasana = \_\_\_\_\_
9. setu bandha sarvangasana = \_\_\_\_\_
10. parivrtta utkatasana = \_\_\_\_\_
11. eka pada kakasana = \_\_\_\_\_
12. salamba bhujangasana = \_\_\_\_\_
13. parshva virabhadrasana = \_\_\_\_\_
14. ardha navasana = \_\_\_\_\_
15. ananda balasana = \_\_\_\_\_
16. utthita supta virasana = \_\_\_\_\_
17. hanumanasana = \_\_\_\_\_
18. adho mukha svanasana = \_\_\_\_\_
19. utthita hasta padangusthasana = \_\_\_\_\_
20. pincha mayurasana = \_\_\_\_\_
21. karnapidasana = \_\_\_\_\_
22. dwi pada kapotasana = \_\_\_\_\_

### **Challenges**

1. Instruct Sun Salutation A and B entirely in Sanskrit

#### **Example: Sun Salutation A**

<b><u>Breath</u></b>	<b><u>English</u></b>	<b><u>Sanskrit</u></b>
	Standing at Attention	
Inhale	Extended Mountain	
Exhale	Forward Fold	
Inhale	Half Lift	
Exhale	Low Plank	
Inhale	Upward Facing Dog	
Exhale	Downward Facing Dog	
Inhale	Half Lift	
Exhale	Forward Fold	
Inhale	Extended Mountain	
Exhale	Standing at Attention	

2. Instruct—or be instructed by—a unique yoga sequence entirely in Sanskrit
3. Give **three examples** of how knowing the Sanskrit name of the pose can help one understand the nature and qualities of the pose.

#### **What about plank pose?**

There is not a common Sanskrit word for plank pose. Some options are:

1. utthita chaturanga dandasana: \_\_\_\_\_
2. kumbhakasana: \_\_\_\_\_
3. phalakasana: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Part II: Proper Pronunciation and Understanding Transliteration**

Learning Sanskrit is more than simply memorizing a vocabulary of words. We have to learn a whole new script and pronunciation system too. When the 44 (some scholars say up to 49) characters of Sanskrit are translated (also known as *transliteration*) to the 26 romanized letters in the English language, much gets lost in the way of correct pronunciation.

As yogic practitioners, we are deeply connected to how our physical experience is deeply connected to the energetic, or subtle. In our **asana** practice, we become connoisseurs of our bodies. In our **pranayama**, we become connoisseurs of our breath, lungs, and thoracic cavities. In **mudra**, the same goes for our hands.

In Sanskrit, we become deeply connected to an awareness of our mouth and vocal cords. We deepen our understanding of how sound, which is essentially just a vibration, is produced in the body and how the movements of the breath, mouth, lips and tongue affect the syllabus and words that we say. Some call this practice **mantra yoga**. For a long time, Sanskrit was not a written language, and some say that Sanskrit does not have an alphabet, but what is known as a **syllabic script**, where each character is a syllable in of itself. So even as you read the characters, take special note of the sound and vibration that they refer to.

One thing that you will note is that all vocalizations are caused by the outgoing breath. We inhale before we speak and constrict the air on the way out to speak. Most vowels involve the continuous flow of air, while most consonants involve stopping the air in some way. When you remember that the air is how we take in *prana*, Sanskrit vibrations take on a whole new significance.

For Sanskrit, how the air comes out can change the letter. For example, we often see how one Sanskrit character is transliterated into a “dh”, like in **dharma**, **Buddha** and **Gandhi**. The added ‘h’ implies the ‘d’ should be *aspirated*: said with a large pushing out of the breath. The same goes for the ‘b’ in the name of the great sage, **Amitabha**. In English we do not have aspirated sounds.

Sanskrit's breadth of expression comes in part from using the entire mouth for pronunciation and from elongating vowels. It has several different versions of familiar sounds such as ‘n’ and ‘s’, what are known as **nasals** and **sibilants**, each issuing from a different part of the mouth.

### **Diacritical Marks**

For those reasons, writers and translators use what are known as **diacritical marks**, symbols above or below the letter, to indicate how and where a consonant or vowel should

sound, making up what is known as the **International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration**. For sibilants there is **s, ś, and ṣ**, and for nasals there is: **n, ñ, ṅ and ñ̄**.

Many Sanskrit mantras and texts are considered sacred, and some are even considered to have special mystical and magical powers. Thus the proper pronunciation of these words are critically important. In fact, if a writer forgets to use diacritical marks, or a speaker forgets to pronounce the right letter, it can change the meaning of a word entirely.

So if there is a line, known as a *macron*, over the vowel it indicates a longer version of the vowel, which can change the meaning of the word. For example, the word **hala** means plow, but **hālā** means spirituous liquor. Meanwhile, **halā** means earth. **Raja** means dust, but **rājā** means king; **maya** means “made of,” while **māyā** means illusion.

You might know the yoga pose **mālāsana**, where **mālā** means garland or necklace. **Māla**, on the other hand, can mean field, forest, or garden. **Mala** can refer to dirtiness or godlessness, and in some circles, can literally mean any bodily excretion or secretion, which is why some people think that malasana is actually named after the pose that one would defecate in!

One final example of the importance of pronunciation is the word *ananda*. **Ananda** with no diacritical marks means *joyless*. When we talk about the blissful being of pure consciousness, we really mean **ānanda**. You have probably noticed a lot of “a” sounds in Sanskrit, and the vowel is so common that it is rarely even written down, but *implied* anytime a consonant is written.

One last complication is that as Sanskrit has become anglicized in its pronunciation, and as more and more yoga teachers unfamiliar with the sanskrit language keep using sanskrit words, the most common pronunciation is “incorrect.” For example, words like **cakra**, **haṭha**, and **maṇḍala**, do not have any long ā sounds, although you will hear them pronounced a number of ways that feel more natural to English speakers.

### **More Examples**

**Upaniṣad** - the dot under the second *s* means a “sh” sound, which is why you will commonly see this word translated to *Upanishad*. This *ṣ* however is pronounced like it is in the word *schnapps* or *leash*. It is known as a *cerebral* or *retroflex* consonant, and along with the letters *ṭ th ḍ dh* and *ṇ*, it is pronounced with the tongue touching the roof of the mouth.

**Gaṇeśa** - the accent over this *s* also indicates a “sh” sound, but it is pronounced closer to the front of the mouth, like in the word *shut* or *shout*. This *ś* is the *s* in *śiva/shiva*, while the previous *ṣ* is the one in **viṣṇu/Vishnu** and **kṛṣṇa/krishna**.

**Pārśva Vīrabhadrāsana** - For side warrior, we see the same ś as in Ganesha, however we also see lines over the vowels. This means we hold the vowel for longer.

**Śīrṣāsana** - For headstand, we have three different sibilants, as well as lines over the vowels that are meant to be lengthened. The next pages cover proper pronunciation of all the Sanskrit letters.

**Hasta Pādāṅguṣṭhāsana** - now we see a dot above an 'n' as well as under a 't'. If the dot is over an n, it implies a more **guttural** (towards the throat) pronunciation, while under implies a **cerebral** (towards the middle/top of the mouth) pronunciation. Also the h after the ṭ means the ṭ is **aspirated**.

Now, with this knowledge, let us chant the student teacher prayer, an introductory verse to the *Kṛṣṇa Yajur-Veda Upaniṣad* (2.2.2):

**saha nāvavatu** | Together may we be protected  
**saha nau bhunaktu** | Together may we enjoy our studies  
**saha vīryaṃ karavāvahai** | Together may we work vigorously  
**tejasvi nāvadhītamastu** | Let our study together be fiery (to illuminate)  
**mā vidviṣāvahai** | And (because of this) may we not hate (each other).  
**om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ** | om peace peace peace

Let us also chant the Anusara Invocation:

**om namaḥ śivāya gurave** | I offer myself to the Light, to Shiva, the  
Auspicious One, Who is the True Teacher within and without,  
**satccidānanda mūrtaye** | Who assumes the forms of Reality,  
Consciousness and Bliss,  
**niṣprapañcāya śantāya** | Who is never absent and is full of peace,  
**nirālambāya tejase** | Independent in existence, the vital essence of  
illumination.

### **Learning all the characters**

On the next page, there is a list of all the vocabulary words from Part I, but with their correct diacritical marks according to *The International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration* (IAST). Some words on the next page are pronounced as you would expect, while some others have longer vowels that one may already pronounce naturally. But still there are some words with new or different pronunciations one should take particular note of. On subsequent pages there are multiple lists of all the Sanskrit letters and how to pronounce them, as well as tables of all the devanāgarī.

Learning the Sanskrit script involves understanding four essential components:

- The **characters** themselves
- How they are **transliterated**
- How they are **pronounced**
- The **order** in which they are conventionally listed

Lastly, you should know that there is a way to write these words without any special characters. This requires use of what is known as ITRANS convention, Indian languages TRANSLiteration. Although this method can look a bit clunky, it can help to know that there is a way to transliterate Sanskrit without any special characters.

The student teacher prayer above written in ITRANS looks like this:

AUM sah nAvavatu sah nau bhunaktu  
sah vIry.n karvAvahai.  
tejasvi nAvadhItamastu  
mA vidviShAvahai..  
AUM shAntiH shAntiH shAntiH..

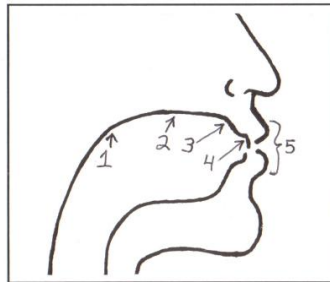
adho	dhanur	namaskār	śalabha
ānanda	dvi	nāva	śava
aṅga	ekaḥ	nirālamba	śīrṣa
aṅguṣṭha	go	pāda	śvāna
aṅgulī	hala	padma	sthiṭi
ardha	hasta	parigha	sukha
aṣṭa	jānu	parivṛtta	supta
aśva	jāṭhara	pārśva	ṭiṭṭibha
baddha	kāka	paścima	tolā
baka	kapota	pīḍā	tri
bāla	karna	piṇḍa	upaviṣṭa
bhāṇḍa	koṇa	piñcha	ūrdhva
bheka	kukkuṭā	prāṇa	uṣṭra
bhuja	kūrma	prasārita	utkaṭa
bhujaṅga	mālā	pūrva	uttāna
bitil	matsya	rāja	utthita
candra	mayūra	sālamba	vaśiṣṭha
catur	mudrā	sarvāṅga	vīra
daṇḍa	mukha	setu	vṛkṣa

## Saṃskṛtam Alphabet

<b>Vowels</b>	अ a	आ ā	इ i	ई ī	उ u	ऊ ū
			ऋ ṛ	ॠ ṝ	ऌ ḷ	ॡ ḹ
<b>Compound</b>	ए e	ऐ ai	ओ o	औ au	अं am̐	अः aḥ
	Hard	Hard-Aspirated	Soft	Soft-Aspirated	Nasal	
<b>Guttural</b>	क k	ख kh	ग g	घ gh	ङ ṅ	
<b>Palatal</b>	च c	छ ch	ज j	झ jh	ञ ñ	
<b>Cerebral</b>	ट ṭ	ठ ṭh	ड ḍ	ढ ḍh	ण ṇ	
<b>Dental</b>	त t	थ th	द d	ध dh	न n	
<b>Labial</b>	प p	फ ph	ब b	भ bh	म m	
<b>Semi-Vowels</b>		य y	र r	ल l	व v	
<b>Sibilants</b>		श ś	ष ṣ	स s	ह h	
<b>Compound Consonants</b>		क्ष kṣ	ज्ञ jñ	त्र tr		

## MOUTH POSITIONS

	Part of Tongue Used
1 Guttural (or Velar) (back of throat).....	Back
2 Palatal (beginning of hard palate).....	Top
3 Cerebral (or Lingual or Retroflex) (upper front pocket of hard palate).....	Tip
4 Dental (behind teeth).....	Tip
5 Labial (at the lips).....	Not used





## Sanskrit Pronunciation Key

14 Vowels (some have 2 forms)

अ	a	<u>another</u>	ऋ / ॠ	r̄	trill for 2 beats
आ / ऀ	ā	<u>father</u> (2 beats)	ॠ / ॡ	l̄	<u>table</u>
इ / ि	i	<u>pin</u>	ॠ / ॡ	l̄	trill for 2 beats
ई / ी	ī	<u>need</u> (2 beats)	ए / ै	e	<u>etude</u> (2 beats)
उ / ु	u	<u>flute</u>	ऐ / ौ	ai	<u>aisle</u> (2 beats)
ऊ / ू	ū	<u>mood</u> (2 beats)	ओ / ो	o	<u>yoke</u> (2 beats)
ऋ / ॠ	r̄	<u>macabre</u>	औ / ौ	au	<u>flautist</u> (2 beats)

Two Special Letters

अं	am	<u>hum</u>	अः	aḥ	out-breath
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33 Consonants

क	ka	<u>paprika</u>	थ	tha	<u>eat honey</u>
ख	kha	<u>thick honey</u>	द	da	<u>soda</u>
ग	ga	<u>saga</u>	ध	dha	<u>good honey</u>
घ	gha	<u>big honey</u>	न	na	<u>banana</u>
ङ	ṅa	<u>ink</u>	प	pa	<u>paternal</u>
च	ca	<u>chutney</u>	फ	pha	<u>scoop honey</u>
छ	cha	<u>much honey</u>	ब	ba	<u>scuba</u>
ज	ja	<u>Japan</u>	भ	bha	<u>rub honey</u>
झ	jha	<u>raj honey</u>	म	ma	<u>aroma</u>
ञ	ña	<u>inch</u>	य	ya	<u>employable</u>
ट	ṭa	<u>borscht again</u>	र	ra	<u>abra cadabra</u>
ठ	ṭha	<u>borscht honey</u>	ल	la	<u>hula</u>
ड	ḍa	<u>shdum</u>	व	va	<u>variety</u>
ढ	ḍha	<u>shd hum</u>	श	śa	<u>shut</u>
ण	ṇa	<u>shnum</u>	ष	ṣa	<u>shnapps</u>
त	ta	<u>pastā</u>	स	sa	<u>Lisa</u>
			ह	ha	<u>honey</u>

### The 25 consonants

The 25 consonants (**vyañjanā**) are called stops (**sparśa**).

They are arranged according to the five points of articulation (**sthāna**).

The first and second letters are considered **unvoiced/hard**.

The third, fourth and sometimes fifth letters are considered **voiced/soft**.

The second and fourth letters are aspirated (**mahā-prāṇa**), the rest are unaspirated (**alpa-prāṇa**).

<b>Place</b>	<b>Sanskrit</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>AKA</b>	unvoiced	unvoiced	voiced	voiced	voiced
					aspirated		aspirated	
Throat	kaṅṭhaḥ	velar	guttural	<b>ka</b>	<b>kha</b>	<b>ga</b>	<b>gha</b>	<b>ṅa</b>
Palate	tālu	palatal		<b>ca</b>	<b>cha</b>	<b>ja</b>	<b>jha</b>	<b>ña</b>
Roof	mūrdhā	retroflex	cerebral lingual	<b>ṭa</b>	<b>ṭha</b>	<b>ḍa</b>	<b>ḍha</b>	<b>ṇa</b>
Teeth	dantāḥ	dental		<b>ta</b>	<b>tha</b>	<b>da</b>	<b>dha</b>	<b>na</b>
Lips	oṣṭhau	labial		<b>pa</b>	<b>pha</b>	<b>ba</b>	<b>bha</b>	<b>ma</b>

If we were to add the semivowels and sibilants to this table, it might look something like this:

<b>ka</b>	<b>kha</b>	<b>ga</b>	<b>gha</b>	<b>ṅa</b>	<b>ha</b>	
<b>ca</b>	<b>cha</b>	<b>ja</b>	<b>jha</b>	<b>ña</b>	<b>ya</b>	<b>śa</b>
<b>ṭa</b>	<b>ṭha</b>	<b>ḍa</b>	<b>ḍha</b>	<b>ṇa</b>	<b>ra</b>	<b>ṣa</b>
<b>ta</b>	<b>tha</b>	<b>da</b>	<b>dha</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>la</b>	<b>sa</b>
<b>pa</b>	<b>pha</b>	<b>ba</b>	<b>bha</b>	<b>ma</b>	<b>va</b>	

<i>a</i>	pronounced like 'a' in <i>america</i>
<i>ā</i>	pronounced like 'a' in <i>barn</i>
<i>i</i>	pronounced like 'i' in <i>bit</i>
<i>ī</i>	pronounced like 'i' in <i>liter</i>
<i>u</i>	pronounced like 'u' in <i>put</i>
<i>ū</i>	pronounced like 'u' in <i>dude</i>
<i>e</i>	pronounced like 'e' in <i>gray</i>
<i>ai, ay</i>	pronounced like 'ai' in <i>aisle</i>
<i>o</i>	pronounced like 'o' in <i>over</i>
<i>au</i>	pronounced like 'ow' in <i>cow</i>
<i>k, kh, g, gh, ṅ</i>	<i>gutturals</i> , arising from the throat
<i>c, ch, j, jh, ñ</i>	<i>palatals</i> , arising from the back of the palate
<i>ṭ ṭh ḍ ḍh ṇ</i>	<i>cerebrals</i> , with tongue touching the roof of the mouth
<i>t th d dh n</i>	<i>dentals</i> , with tongue touching the back of the teeth
<i>p ph b bh m</i>	<i>labials</i> , arising from the lips
<i>c, ch</i>	<i>Palatal</i> , always pronounced like 'ch' in <i>chop</i>
<i>ṛ</i>	<i>Cerebral</i> , pronounced 'ri' in <i>rip</i>
<i>ś</i>	<i>Palatal</i> , pronounced like 'sh' in <i>shout</i>
<i>ṣ</i>	<i>Cerebral</i> , pronounced like 'sh' in <i>leash</i>
<i>ñ</i>	Pronounced like 'ni' in <i>onion</i>
<i>ṃ</i>	pronounced like 'n' in <i>uncle</i>
<i>ṅ</i>	pronounced like 'gn' in <i>igneous</i>
<i>h alone</i>	pronounced like 'h' in <i>hot</i>
<i>ḥ</i>	a soft echo of the preceding vowel
<i>h after a consonant</i>	extra breath after the consonant

## **Sanskrit Phrases and Chants**

### **1.2 Patanjali's Yoga Sutras**

yogaś citta vṛtti nirodhaḥ | Yoga is the cessation of mental thought streams

#### **Pavamana mantra**

Asato mā sad gamaya | *From the unreal lead me to the real,*  
Tamaso mā jyotir gamaya | *From darkness lead me to the light,*  
Mṛtyor māmṛtaṃ gamaya | *From death lead me to the immortality*

#### **Mahamrityunjaya Mantra**

Om tryambakam yajāmahe | *We worship the three-eyed one who sustains all living beings.*  
sugandhim puṣṭivardhanam | *May he liberate us from (Samsara) death.*  
urvā rukamiva bandhanān | *May he (Lord Shiva) lead us to immortality,*  
mṛtyor mukṣīya mā'mṛtāt | *just as the cucumber is released from its bondage.*

#### **Lokah Samasta**

Lokāḥ Samastāḥ Sukhino Bhavantu | *May all beings in the world be happy and free.*

#### **Ganesha Chant**

Jai Ganesha Deva, Jai Durga Ma  
Uma Parvati, Ananda Ma  
Hari Om Namah Shivaya  
Om Namah Shivaya, Mahadeva Shambo

#### **The Adi Mantra**

Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo (4x)  
Guru Dev Guru Dev Namo  
Guru Dev Guru Dev Namo

#### **Jai Mata Kali**

Jai Mata Kali Jai Mata Durge (2x)  
Kali Durge Namo Namah  
Kali Durge Namo Namah  
Kali Durge Namo Namah

#### **Govinda Gopala**

Govinda Gopala, Radha Ramana Hari  
Govinda Jaya Jaya Ishvara

**Surya Namaskar B with counting**

1	१	ekam	utkaṭāsana	fierce pose	inhale
2	२	dve	uttānāsānā	forward fold	exhale
3	३	trīṇi	ardha uttānāsānā	spine extension	inhale
4	४	catvāri	chaturaṅga daṇḍāsana	plank to low plank	exhale
5	५	pañca	ūrdhva mukha śvānāsana	upward facing dog	inhale
6	६	ṣaṭ	adho mukha śvānāsana	downward facing dog	exhale
7	७	sapta	vīrabhadrāsana	warrior A	inhale
8	८	aṣṭau	chaturaṅga daṇḍāsana	plank to low plank	exhale
9	९	nava	ūrdhva mukha śvānāsana	upward facing dog	inhale
10	१०	daśa	adho mukha śvānāsana	downward facing dog	exhale
11	११	ekādaśa	vīrabhadrāsana	warrior A	inhale
12	१२	dvādaśa	chaturaṅga daṇḍāsana	plank to low plank	exhale
13	१३	trayodaśa	ūrdhva mukha śvānāsana	upward facing dog	inhale
14	१४	caturdaśa	adho mukha śvānāsana	downward facing dog	exhale
15	१५	pañcadaśa	ardha uttānāsānā	spine extension	inhale
16	१६	ṣoḍaśa	uttānāsānā	forward fold	exhale
17	१७	saptadaśa	utkaṭāsana	fierce pose	inhale
18	१८	aṣṭādaśa	samasthiṭh	standing upright	exhale