

Why Bodybuilders Should Practice Yoga

Why bodybuilders should practice Yoga? Because yoga and bodybuilding complement each other so well that yoga can strengthen whatever bodybuilders do physically.

The prolonged stretching movements of yoga - you hold a pose for up to a minute - can improve your posture and the balance of strength in opposing muscle groups, as well as increase flexibility and range of motion. The more flexibility you have in your muscles, the greater you're protected from injury. Yoga also helps relieve the stress accumulated in your muscles from the repetitive contracting movements of weightlifting, leaving you more relaxed and helping you sleep better at night.

Although most other forms of exercise physically exhaust you, yoga will help energize you, mainly because of its focus on long, slow breaths that bring oxygen back to the muscles. And since yoga is as much a mental practice as a physical one, it can help your thoughts become more directed and your attention more focused. These benefits of yoga can make average bodybuilders look and feel better, but for competitive bodybuilders, they're essential.

Don't worry if you don't have the flexibility to do the yoga poses as instructed. It isn't important how deeply you can move into a pose, but rather that you focus on doing the yoga movement correctly. Enjoy! Bodybuilders might be surprised at what yoga can do for them which helps to answer why bodybuilders should practice yoga.

Builds Strength

There is a massive misconception in mainstream society and the fitness community in general, that yoga is for women, old people and cosmic types. Yoga is for everyone!

Stretching helps prevent injuries, keeps the muscles loose, and should be a part of your health maintenance routine.



Not stretching actually limits the growth and size of the muscle and it's output.

Stretching elongates the fascia, a protective sheath of connective tissue covering all muscles and muscle cells. On the molecular level, fascia tissue is actually stronger than structured steel. It's very tough stuff.

When the fascia is stretched using the techniques of yoga the muscle underneath is ultimately given greater room to grow. Stretching also gives the muscle a greater shape, with more convolutions, so muscle separation improves as well.

Stretching when combined with proper nutrition can even alter bone structures. Bone structure can change dramatically such as sternums being pushed out to clavicles increasing in length, thereby increasing the shoulder structure.

Yogic stretching can be especially good for muscle groups that don't respond well to regular weight training.

Can yoga really make you stronger?

Yoga when done consistently can increase your strength. Strength through yogic stretching is related to your golgi tendon reflex threshold, which limits a contraction well short of the point at which the tendons would be injured.

Regular stretching gives your muscles the ability to fire more efficiently without shutting down in response to stretched tendons. The golgi tendon organs (GTOs) are located in the tendons near the ends of the muscle fibers. Essentially these GTOs are stretch receptors, and they respond to changes in muscle or tendon length as a muscle or tendon is stretched, or when a muscle contracts powerfully.

They act as a safety mechanism for the muscle and tendons. If the intensity of a muscular contraction or a stretch exceeds a certain critical point, an immediate reflex occurs to inhibit the contraction or stretch. As a result, the muscle instantly relaxes and the excessive tension is removed, and with it the possibility of injury. **Keith had this to add here about [golgi tendon](#) not sure if it is right or not but we are sharing it **

In other words the GTOs shut down the muscle to prevent injuries. If the GTOs didn't exist, it would be possible to have a stretch or muscle contraction so powerful that the muscle or tendon would be torn of their attachments!

In the weight room when you fail with a weight on a max rep, it isn't just because of muscular fatigue: it's because your GTOs fired and shut down your muscles. So how do you raise your GTO threshold? By stretching your muscles and ligaments regularly you can raise your GTO threshold, gaining a strength increase by as much as 15 to 20%.

The higher your GTO threshold, the more intensity you can train with which leads to greater strength gains.

How else can yoga help?

Also by learning the practice of yoga, you will learn how to use your body, to form a solid foundation that you can press off of. You will learn how to use your stomach muscles to get into a powerful position to work off. You can throw away and burn that weight belt and use your own natural stabilizers - your abs!