



Abhijāta	In Indian mythology, a special gem that fulfills all wishes and has the capacity to produce anything that the wearer of the gem wishes
Abhiniveśa	Clinging to life, fear of death
Abhyāsa	Practice; the endeavor of attaining the state of yoga which requires consistency, application over a long time and reverence or love for the practice
Adhikāra	The right to know; authority; progression; sensitivity
Advaita	Non-dual, not divided into two parts; union of soul and matter, the union of the universal, all-pervading Reality (<i>Brahman</i>) and the individual (<i>Atma</i>)
Advaita Vedānta	Non-dualistic philosophy of Adi Shankaracharya, based on the experience of the absolute Reality (<i>Brahman</i>) as “one without a second,” a perception based in realization of saints and realized yogis
Āgama	“That which has come down” or literally “to carry on” or “to go forward;” historic sacred literature, the philosophy and scriptures of tantra where Lord <i>Shiva</i> teaches his consort <i>Parvati</i>



Agni

Fire; the god of fire; fire of the stomach; digestive faculty

Agni Sāra

Literally, “fire essence,” a process using abdominal contractions to stoke the “fire” of the human body to build life force and dissolve impurities

Ahaṃkāra

The faculty of mind through which one identifies one’s self with external objects

Ākāśa

Ether; emptiness in which all things happen

Akliṣṭa

Not painful

Annamaya

“Food body,” one of the five koshas, or sheaths, of matter; the sphere of existence created by food, maintained by food and which ultimately becomes food, i.e. the body

Ānanda

Bliss, joy, delight

Ānandamaya

The “sheath of bliss,” one of the five koshas, or sheaths of matter; subtler sphere of existence, consciousness; the innermost sheath of the embodied spirit



Ananta Samāpatti

Meditation on the infinite as described in *Sutra 2:47* (i.e. “my mind is empty, my body is like the vast expanse of sky”)

Aṅga

A “limb,” or aspect, of yoga

Aṅga Bhaṅgha Sādhanā

Non-holistic approach to practice; “limb-harmful practice”

Angula

“Finger width,” a measure of distance

Antaḥkaraṇa

Inner instrument, the mind as a composite of *manas*, *chitta*, *buddhi* and *ahamkara*

Anusandhāna

Inquiry; investigation

Apāna

The energy that governs downward movement; one of the subtypes of *vata dosha* functioning mainly in the colon, it governs elimination of feces, flatus, urine, menstrual blood, and other gross wastes as well as cellular wastes

Apavarga

Liberation; realization by *purusha* of its own true nature



Apuṇya

Negative, destructive; non-virtuous; sin

Ārjavam

Straightforwardness; being truthful and innocent

Artha

Purpose; goal; means

Asamprajñata Samādhi

Samadhi in which all objects have been transcended, in which all is known about all that can be known; enlightenment

Āsana

"Seat;" in *raja yoga*, a physical posture in which one is at and in harmony with oneself; the third limb of yoga as described by Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras; in *hatha yoga*, specific body postures to balance and channel energy (*prana*)

Aśaya

Pouch, sack, container; an entity with the capacity to contain something

Asmitā

I-am-ness; self image; "ego"

Aṣṭāṅga

"Eight limbed," refers to the eight-fold path of yoga outlined in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, they include: *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*



Āsteya

Honesty, not stealing; one of the yamas of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras

Āstikya

Faithfulness; belief in God

Aśvinī

The yogic practice of anal contraction to redirect energy upward

Ātmā Purī

"City of the soul," includes physical, mental and energetic sheaths

Ātman

The self beyond mind and body; also called the principle of life, supreme consciousness, spirit, soul, etc.; the seer of *turiya* (reality) according to *Mandukya Upanishad*

Avidyā

Misapprehension, lack of knowledge, lack of self understanding; inability to experience eternal truth

Ayam Ātmā Brahma

"This soul is *Brahman*" or "This self is the absolute," the great statement of the identity between the individual and supreme soul, found in the *Mandukya Upanishad* of the *Atharva Veda*

Āyurveda

Literally, "life science," a system of healing that has its roots in ancient India



Bandha

To bind or lock, a form of restraint; to unite, to link; energetic locks in *hatha* yoga used to free and/or collect, concentrate pranic forces

Basti

Method of cleaning the intestines; yogic enema; one of the six *hatha* yoga techniques to purify and develop the body

Bhakti

Love and devotion; the path of total surrender and faith

Bhāv

Feeling, sentiment; becoming; condition; disposition of mind

Bhoga

Delight, pleasure, enjoyment

Bhrāmarī

Humming of bees; the calming, soothing form of *pranayama*, in which the humming sound can be applied on either inhale or exhale, though usually the emphasis is on exhale

Bhuta

Element or elemental; any of the five elementary constituents of the universe: earth, water, fire, air, space; "ghost" or "past"

Bhutaśuddhi

Purification of the elements of the body as well as purification of the ghosts (the darkness) or, that which haunts or overshadows clear perception



Bīja	Seed; source; origin
Brahma	Cosmic intelligence; eternal, omnipresent principle of existence or ultimate reality
Brahma Mudrā	A yogic practice; a hand gesture designed to help increase the breath related to building <i>vyana vayu</i>
Brahmacharya	One of the yamas; moving toward the highest modification of the senses
Brahman	Eternal, omnipresent principle of existence or ultimate reality; the all-pervading from which time, space and creatures are uninterruptedly being created
Brahmaṇa	To expand
Buddhi	Discriminating aspect of mind
Cakra (chakra)	Wheel; the wheel of life; a center of consciousness; in yogic literature, there are said to be seven chakras along the spinal column
Chandra	Moon; shining, bright; representing mental energy
Chandrabhedana	Piercing or passing through (<i>bhedana</i>) the moon; a <i>pranayama</i> in which the inhalation is done through the left nostril and exhalation is done through the right nostril



Chidākāsha

The space or sphere within; where one can observe the process and reactions of individual awareness; the inner space seen, in meditation, behind the closed eyes, inside or in front of the forehead

Chin Mudrā

Psychic gesture (*mudra*) of consciousness, a hand position with palm upwards on the knee and the index finger locked into the base of the thumb

Chin Māya Mudrā

A yogic practice; a hand gesture designed to help increase the breath related to building *samana vayu* (*chin* = consciousness and *maya* = cause of the phenomenal world)

Citta (chitta)

The totality of mind: conscious, subconscious and unconscious layers of mind as described in the Yoga Sutras; in *Vedanta* it refers to the storehouse of memory or *samskara*

Citti Śakti

Ever-awakened power of consciousness

Dākṣa

Another name for Patanjali, referring to the first born son of God, whose role is to disentangle, or to move humanity forward



Dakṣiṇā Mārga Dāna

The right-handed (yogic) path of *tantra*

Darśana

To see, to reflect—yoga is one of the six darsanas or systems of Indian philosophy; the act of receiving grace (being seen) by one's spiritual preceptor

Dayā

Sympathy, pity; clemency; tenderness; compassion

Devī Pūjā

"Goddess Worship;" rites, worship relating to the honoring of the Goddess; *Durga*, *Saraswati* and others are names for *Devi*

Dhāraṇā

The state of mind in which the mind is oriented toward one point

Dharma

"That which holds or supports;" ethical law; duty; way, path; virtue; righteousness; good work; the laws of fundamental support of life; practice, custom; religion; regarded as one of the four aims of human existence

Dharma Megha

"Cloud of virtue," a state of consciousness that unfolds in the higher stages of meditation/*samadhi*

Dharma Sūkta

A term coined by Yogarupa that refers to the five contemplative statements that distill the essence of reality, according to *Sri Vidya*, drawn from the sacred scripture *Saundaryalahari*

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Dhaufī
Process for the purification and cleaning of the alimentary canal, the stomach and sphincter muscles; one of the six *hatha* yoga cleansing techniques

Dhī
Mind; intelligence (knowingness)

Dhṛti
Firmness; steadiness; equanimity

Dhyāna
Meditation

Dīkṣā
Initiation; birth of a new vision; preparation for a sacrifice or a ceremony; dedication of oneself to a particular object; ceremony

Doṣa (dosha)
Referring to *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*; the three psycho-physiological functional principles of the body, the ratio of which determines an individual's constitution at the time of conception—when functioning normally and present in normal quantities, the doshas maintain all healthy bodily processes and when out of balance, they create disease

Dravya Shakti
The power of embodiment; that which has attribute, action, *karma*

Dukham
Suffering; unease; difficult; unpleasant; grief; pain



Dveṣa

Aversion; one of the five kleshas

Ekāgratā

One-pointedness; one of the five states of the mind

Ekendriya

Using one of the senses to focus the mind ("eka" = one, "indriya" = senses); a meditation practice

Gaṇeśa

Gana = beings; isha = ruler, that which presides; the son of Shakti and Shiva; the remover of all obstacles

Gāyatṛī

A vedic meter of twenty four syllables

Gheraṇḍa Samhita

Ancient text on *hatha* yoga by Rishi Gheranda, expounding on seven limbs of yoga: *shatkarma*, *asana*, *mudra*, *prayahara*, *pranayama*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*

Guna

Attribute or quality; one of the twenty qualities or attributes used to describe substances and determine their effects; one of the three universal qualities that are present in creation and that cause all phenomena (*sattwa*, the quality bringing essence, light, balance and understanding; *rajas*, the energy of movement and activity; *tamas*, the quality bringing darkness, inertia, heaviness and materialism)



Guru

From "gu" meaning darkness and "ru," meaning "dispeller;" one who dispels darkness; teacher; preceptor; teacher of the science of ultimate reality who, because of previous attainment of the highest states of meditation, is fit to guide others in their practice towards enlightenment

Gyan

A yogic practice, a hand gesture designed to help increase the breath related to building *apana vayu*

Hāṁsa

One of the *bija* mantras associated with the seventh *chakra*

Hatha

Derived from two *bija* mantras, "ham" representing solar, or pranic energy and "tha" representing lunar, or psychic energy

Hṛī

The heart; core, essential

Hṛdaya

Heart; essential center, seat or abode of the soul, as opposed to the heart *chakra*

Huta

Rituals; mindful ceremony such as fire practice

Idā

Channel of lunar energy, originating in the left nostril, regulates mind as well as the left side of the body and right hemisphere of the brain



Icchā Śakti

The limitless power of will and determination; divine desire; that desire which is the first manifestation of the greater mind or Goddess

Īṣṭa Devatā

Chosen ideal; personal deity or one's tutelary deity; the unique aspect of God of which the individual is innately connected and is innately connected to the individual; the unique form of God you will be most comfortable relating to

Īśvara

Supreme being; that which presides; higher reality; non-changing principle or quality; a state of consciousness beyond all concepts and form

Īśvara Praṇidhāna

Cultivation of faith in the supreme or indestructible reality; one of the *niyamas* described by Patanjali in the *Yoga Sutras*; complete dedication of one's actions and will to the Lord

Īśvarapūjana

The honoring, worshipping of Īśvara

Jala Nefī

Nasal cleansing using warm saline water; one of the six *hatha* yoga cleansing techniques



Jālandhara Bandha

“Chin lock,” one of the energetic locks used in a *hatha* yoga

Japa

The practice of silent mantra repetition (“*ja*” = going back to, again and again, attending to, reaffirming; “*pa*” = protection, guidance); the practice of receiving protection, guidance and nurturance by going back to their very source

Jaṭhara Agni

Literally, “stomach fire;” the fire of the digestive faculty; that which transforms physical substance into energy

Jīvanmukti

One who is liberated while living; a person who, being purified by knowledge of the supreme Reality, is freed from future births

Jñāna

Knowledge; understanding; spiritual discernment; wisdom; consciousness; higher knowledge derived from meditation or from inner experience

Jñāna Yoga

Yoga in which the emphasis is on inquiry

Jyotir

Light, brightness; fire

Jyotiṣ

Vedic astrology; light; heavenly body



Kaivalya	Aloneness; freedom; the highest state of awareness; beyond all limitations and conditions
Kapālabhāti	“Shining skull breath,” one of the six <i>hatha</i> yoga cleansing techniques
Kapha	One of the three doshas, combining the water and earth elements; the psycho-physiological energy that forms the body’s structure and holds the cells together
Karaṇi	Specialized or intentional action
Karma	Action; includes the process of performing actions, creating subtle impressions, and later reaping the fruits
Karma Chakra	The “wheel of action,” entailing the wheel of <i>karma</i> , <i>samskara</i> and <i>vritti</i> —a wheel that is ever spinning, each shaping and determining the other two
Karmāśaya	Repository or “pouch of <i>karma</i> ,” the place where all individual karmas are stored
Kaula	From the root meaning “family,” the sub-tradition of <i>tantra</i> , which emphasizes external practices or rituals



Kavī

Wise sage; person; thinker; poet;
thoughtful; intelligent

Kleśa

Affliction

Kośa (kosha)

Body, sheath or realm of experience or
existence; describes the five (or sometimes
six) coverings of the self, which blanket and
hide our experience of ultimate Reality

Krama

Order; rules regarding ritual; step,
proceeding, course; method, manner; series,
succession

Kriyā

Action; an approach to meditation,
whereby one moves attention in order to
purify/transform consciousness

Kriyamāṇa

Potential

Kṣamā

Patient; enduring; adequate; competent;
able; fit

Kṣipta

Disturbed, chaotic; incapable of controlling
the mind

Kumbhaka

Refers to both the internal retention or
external suspension of the breath; a key
component of *pranayama*—breath control

Kuṇḍalinī

The coiled, serpentine, spiritual energy
which is described as lying dormant at the
base of the spine



Laṅghana To reduce; to lighten, calm or steady

Laya Dissolution; solution

Loka Plane of existence; dimension; realm

Madhya Intermediate; interior; middle of the body; central

Mahā Great, noble

Mahābhāṣya Supreme teaching; Patanjali's treatise on Sanskrit grammar and linguistics

Mahā Mṛtyuñjaya Mantra The "Great Victory over Death" *mantra*; one of the most ancient mantras of the Vedas, dedicated to the *rudra* form of *Shiva*; one of the most powerful healing and strengthening mantras

Mahad The great principle; cosmic intelligence; the cosmic aspect of the intellect, it contains *buddhi*, the individual intellect, ego and mind

Mahāmudrā Great seal posture

Mahāvākya "Great statements," which are meant to be contemplated; extracted from the Upanishads, they describe and point the aspirant to a direct revelation of the supreme Truth and directly to realization



Maithuna

“To make two into one;” highly specialized practices found in the *Kaula* school of *tantra* (also known as forbidden *tantra*); a ritualized practice involving sexual union as a process leading to spiritual awakening

Man

“To think”

Manas

Finite mind, reactive mind; the mind identified with sensory perception; the internal organ of perception and cognition

Manas Pūjā

Mental worship; a specific *kriya* and closed meditation in ParaYoga

Maṇḍala

Circular or round pictorial representation; wheel; diagrams within a circumference symbolizing the deeper aspects of the human psyche and capable of invoking cosmic power; merging macrocosmic and microcosmic realities

Māṇḍūkya

One of the ten major Upanishads, which describes the three states of consciousness represented by the three sacred letters composing “a,” “u” and “m” as well as the fourth, which is silent, uniting, yet transcending the previous three



Maṇipura

Pranic center situated behind the navel in the spinal column, corresponding to the solar plexus and associated with vitality and energy; literally “city of jewels”

Manomaya

The mental sphere of life and awareness; one of the five sheaths covering the self; the sum of all thought and emotions

Mantra

The divine words heard by a *rishi* in his or her deep meditation; the spiritual words a student receives from the teacher through initiation

Marma

A vital point on the body that is used therapeutically and diagnostically

Mati

Intellect; understanding; sense; knowledge; judgment; thought; idea; belief, opinion; design; purpose

Mātrika

The letters and phonemes (presiding force over speech) of Sanskrit, all of which are linked to the *nadi* and *chakra* systems; sound as the most primordial form of the Divine, which is forever kind; the seat of all the mantras



Matsya

Fish; an incarnation of *Vishnu*, who is the source and maintenance of the universe and of all things

Mauna

The practice of observing silence; non-speaking

Māya

Cause of the phenomenal world; power of creation; illusive power

Miśra

“Mixed,” a school of *tantra* that combines external and internal-oriented practices

Mitāhāra

Balanced, moderate diet; one of the chief disciplines in *hatha yoga*

Mokṣa

Liberation

Mūḍha

Stupefied, prevents one from being focused or accessing higher nature of mind; intense mood state that overshadows objectivity; identification

Mudrā

Gesture, seal, or attitude (there are five types of mudras: focusing on hands, face, pelvic floor, the entire body or as practiced in *hatha yoga*, *bandha mudra*); see ParaYoga mudras in this glossary: *Brahma*, *Chin*, *Chin Maya*, *Gyan* and *Pran Adi*



Mūla Bandha

Engagement of the perineum; perineal lock; the technique for locating and awakening *muladhara chakra*

Mūlādhāra

The basic psychic and pranic center in the human body situated at the perineum, also connected to the coccygeal plexus, considered to be the seat of *kundalini* (the primal evolutionary force of spirit)

Mūrti

Form; shape; figure; statue; person; symbol; a symbol or statue used to worship something or to represent God as form

Nāda

Subtle sound vibration created by the union of *Shiva* and *Shakti* tattwas; subtle sound vibration heard in the meditative state; the inner sound on which the yogi concentrates in meditation; the tantric term for *pranava*

Nādī

Literally, a river; a channel or passageway; the pulse; there are innumerable nadis in the human body, from the very subtle to the very gross, all carrying substances into, out of, or throughout the body

Nādī Śodhana

Alternate nostril breathing, a technique that purifies the nadis



Nāstika

That which denies the authority of the Vedas as revelation or the existence of a supreme ruler

Nauḷī

A *kriya* or process in which the abdominal muscles are made to move laterally and vertically in a surging motion; a *hatha* yoga technique for awakening *manipura* chakra; one of the six *hatha* yoga cleansing techniques

Nidrā

Dreamless sleep

Nigama

Vedic knowledge; ritual procedures

Nirbīja Samādhi

The final state of *samadhi* (*nirbija* = "without seed")

Nirodha

The mind's capacity to stop shifting from one state to another; the complete stoppage or control of the movement of consciousness or *chitta*; the state of yoga

Nirvicāra

The end of thinking which cancels out all other kinds of impressions; the end of lower *samadhi*

Niṣṭhā

Integration; steadfastness; to be established in a certain state that leads to greater wholeness and awareness



Niṣṭhā Dhāraṇā

To be established in a certain state; integration

Nitya Ṣoḍāshikārnava

One of the outstanding texts of the *Sri Vidya* tradition, translated as “From the Eternal Ocean of the Divine Mother”

Niyama

Observance or rules of personal discipline to render the mind tranquil in preparation for meditation; the second step of *ashtanga* yoga mentioned by Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras; in yogic philosophy it means restraint of the mind or purification by discipline

Nyāsa

Placing, seating; committing

Nyāya

One of the six darsanas; using logic to explain the world and God

Ojas

Vitality, strength, vigor, vital reserve; the subtle, positive energy of *kapha dosha*, it has a functionally integrated relationship with *tejas* and *prana*

Pāda

Chapter

Pañca

Five



Pañca Kośa

Pañca means “five,” kośa means “sheath,” referring to the five bodies or realm of experience: (physical, mental, energetic, the body of pure intelligence and the blissful sheath)

Pañca Makāra

A ritual of left handed, *Kaula* school of tantric *sadhana*, using five specific material elements

Paramparā

Tradition

Para Puruṣa

Higher soul, equivalent to *Ishvara*

Parāyoga

“Parā” means highest, superior, greatest, preeminent; supreme goal of life; ParaYoga is a modern school of tantric yoga developed by Yogarupa Rod Stryker and based in the *Sri Vidya* tradition

Patañjali

Name of the celebrated sage who revealed the *Yoga Sutra*

Piṅgalā

A major pranic channel in the body that flows from *muladhara chakra* on the right, crisscrossing all the major chakras to *ajna chakra*; conducts the dynamic pranic force, governs the right side of the body as well as physical activity and the left side of the brain; sometimes called *surya nadi*

Pīṭham

Seat, bench; the locus of Goddess worship; there are said to be one hundred and eight both in the human body and throughout India

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Pitta

One of the three doshas, made up of the fire and water elements; governs digestion, absorption, assimilation, nutrition, metabolism and body temperature

Prājñā

Light of intelligence; intuitive wisdom, true understanding; enlightenment

Prajñānam Brahma

“Knowledge is *Brahman*,” one of the four key *maha vakya* (great statements) of the Upanishads, the expression of the identity of the individual soul and the supreme consciousness

Prakṛti

Primordial nature; the ultimate cause of the material world

Prakṛti Laya Yogi

One who has transcended *Prakṛiti*, the laws that govern natural law

Prāṇ

The third of the five *prana* vayus, its main action is revitalizing and internalizing

Prāṇ Ādi Mudrā

A yogic practice, a hand gesture designed to activate the upper chest and help increase the breath related to building *pran* and *udana* vayus

Prāṇa

The vital force that animates all levels of being



Prāṇa Anusandhāna

Research, investigation, exploring; stage one of *prana dharana*

Prāṇa Dhāraṇā

The meditation or *pranayama* practice of concentration, collection or intensification of *prana*

Prāṇa Prachhardana

A stage in the process of *prana dharana* which refers to the process of "shaving;" literally, "the removal of that which is not needed;" (described in *Sutra* 1:34); a specialized form of *bhastrika*

Prāṇa Prāsara

To move something to where it belongs so that it can fulfill its purpose; stage four of *prana dharana*

Prāṇa Pratīṣṭhā

Final stage of *prana dharana*, seating awakened force or *prana*; planting *prana* for a specific purpose; tantric ritual by which an object, image, or symbol of God is fully awakened with sacred force

Prāṇa Preṣaṇa

The movement of *prana* from one place to another in a specialized way

Prāṇa Saṃvedana

Sensitivity to *prana*/life force

Prāṇa Sañcaya

To collect, to hold; stage three of *prana dharana*



Prāṇa Śuddhi

Pranic purification; a specific meditation practice in which *prana* is collected at the 3rd eye

Prāṇamaya

One of the five sheaths or koshas; energy sheath; pranic body; the sheath covering the self which is composed of *prana* (chakras, nadis, vayus etc.)

Prāṇava

Another word for the sacred syllable *Aum (Om)*, the primal sound vibration; the same term in the tantric tradition is referred to as *nada*

Prāṇayāma

The restraint of *prana*; breathing exercise

Pranidhāna

To believe in; to offer; to give the fruit of one's efforts

Prasara

To flow; to direct; to move with purpose

Pratibhā

Inner light; intelligence; intuition; splendor of knowledge

Pratiloma

"Going against the flow;" a *pranayama* that combines *ujjayii* breath with alternate nostril breath



Pratikriyā

Counterpose

Pratyāhāra

Sense withdrawal; one of the eight limbs of *ashtanga* yoga

Ṙṥhivī

Earth; stability and grounding

Pūjā

Worship, honor, respect; rite

Puṇya

Karmas that are positive, constructive and flavored with dispassion, contentment, love and compassion

Puruṣa

Consciousness; inner self

Rāga

Attachment or desire; one of the kleshas, also means anything that colors the mind

Rāja

King, ruler, chief; light; mastery; unsoiled

Rajas

One of the three gunas; the force that motivates one to perform actions, feel agitated, hyperactive and full of desires

Rāma

Mantra related to psychic fire and transformation; in other contexts, it's used to denote the Lord, seventh incarnation of *Vishnu*, husband of *Sita* and subject of the sacred text *Ramayama*

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Ṛddhi

Wealth; super-natural powers; highest sensual delight

Ṛgveda

Oldest of the four Vedas

Ṛtam

Eternal law; law of nature; the fundamental law that governs and guides the dynamics of matter and energy and the world composed by them; the ultimate principle of sustainability

Rudra

“The one who howls;” the most compassionate form of *Shiva*, a name for the singular, all-pervading Reality; the one who presides over *prana shakti*; identical to fire, also deity of *manipura chakra*; signifies transformation through dissolution

Rudrāṇī

The awakened and fully vibrant force of *Rudra*, seated at the navel center; technical term for awakened *kundalini* at the navel center

Sabīja

With seed

Sādhaka

Practitioner, seeker

Sādhanā

Spiritual discipline

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Sahasrāra

The thousand-petaled lotus; abode of *Shiva* or super-consciousness; highest *chakra* or psychic center, located at the crown of the head

Śakti (shakti)

The Divine Mother, the highest reality, the vibrant self-conscious energy through which this whole universe evolves

Sāma Veda

Third of the vedic texts, the *Veda* of chants and hymns, it deals mainly with devotion, worship and contemplations

Samādhi

The state of mind that is free from all thought constructs; the state of spiritual absorption in which all questions are fully answered

Samāna

The *vayu* of the central region of the body, responsible for digestion and assimilation

Samavṛtti

Equal movement of inhalation, exhalation and suspension of breath in *pranayama*



Samāya	“One with Her;” the tantric school that emphasizes a purely meditative approach, in which all practices are done internally, while maintaining an awareness of the Divine within
Sāmkhya	One of the six systems of Indian philosophy, attributed to the sage <i>Kapila</i> ; a spiritual science centered around the twenty-five elements of creation; the philosophical basis of the yoga system
Sampradāya	Lineage; “that which gives eternally”
Samprajñata Samādhi	Merging; absorption with a chosen object or ideal
Saṃskāra	Impression
Sañcita	Dormant
Saṅkalpa	Vow, resolve
Śānta	Embodiment of pure, unalloyed peace
Santati	Continuity; uninterrupted
Śānti	Peace, calmness, tranquility, quiet; complete indifference to all worldly circumstance



Santoṣa Contentment, satisfaction; one of the five niyamas enumerated in the Yoga Sutras by Patanjali

Saraswatī Goddess of knowledge, speech and learning

Sarva Whole or complete

Sarvāṅgā Literally, "all limbs," all parts; the whole body

Śāstra Order; sacred book; any department of knowledge, science

Sati Mindfulness; attentiveness to the present

Ṣaṭkarma Intensive cleansing techniques, also called *satkriya*: *dhauti*, *bhasti*, *jala neti*, *tratakam*, *navli*, *kapalabhati*

Ṣaṭkriyā Intensive cleansing techniques, also called *satkarma*: *dhauti*, *bhasti*, *jala neti*, *tratakam*, *navli*, *kapalabhati*



Sattwa

One of the three gunas, the illuminating force; clarity, light, peace, balance; the quality of revelation

Satya

True, honest, truthful, faithful; one of the yamas described by Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, leads to a state where actions are based on and culminated in the truth; a vow to follow truth and renounce untruth in thought, word and action

Śauca

Cleanliness of the body and mind, purity (internal and external); one of the niyamas as described by Patanjali in the *ashtanga* yoga of the Yoga Sutras

Savicāra Samādhi

Absorption on a subtle object or concept (e.g. the *mantra tat tvam asi*) but still aware of the process/aware of the notion

Savitarka Samādhi

Cognitive absorption

Siddhānta Vākya Śrāvaṇa

The demonstrated conclusion of an argument; established view of any question; the true logical conclusion



Siddhi	Paranormal or supernatural accomplishment; control of mind and <i>prana</i> ; eight supernatural powers obtained by yogis, associated with power over the elements
Śitali	Breathing exercise in which one inhales through the mouth, shaping the tongue in a particular way in order to cool the system
Sītākārī	A type of <i>pranayama</i> which cools the system
Śiva	The auspicious one; the god of destruction; the light of knowledge which dispels the darkness of ignorance
Śiṣya	“One who is under discipline;” pupil, disciple; scholar
Smaraṇa	Remembrance, reflection; love; recollection of the highest
Smṛti	Retentive capacity; memory
Soham	Literally “That am I” (“so” is individual consciousness, and “ham” is cosmic consciousness); <i>mantra</i> used in <i>ajapa japa</i> , the unconscious repetitive prayer produced by the breath itself, the inhalation sounding “so” and the exhalation “ham” (also the reverse according to some texts)



Śraddhā

Faith, conviction, trust; a total acceptance of life as is and in oneself

Śrī

“Resplendent,” grace; wealth, prosperity; beauty, luster; the goddess of the ultimate wealth and beauty, the word *Sri* is often said as a honorific prefix to the names of scriptures, deities and eminent people

Śrī Vidyā

Literally, *vidya* = science or knowledge and *sri* = resplendent power, beauty, grace; a name of the Divine Mother; the singular non-dual essence that is the source and the sum of all existence and non-existence

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam

One of the 18 major Puranas (great histories) and most revered spiritual scriptures of India; it promotes devotion to *Vishnu (Krishna)*

Śruti

Eternal or revealed word

Sthiram

Steadiness and alertness

Sthiti

The state of unsurpassed calm

Śuddhi (Shuddhi)

Purification; pure, clean, untainted



Sukha

Happiness, delight, joy, pleasure; prosperity; well-being, welfare, ease, comfort

Sūktam

Set of hymns composed by rishis (e.g. the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali) as an expression of their perception in deep meditation

Śūnyatā

Non-existence; stillness; void; emptiness

Sūrya

The sun; also the son of sage Kasyapa

Sūrya Namaskar

Sequence of asanas collectively called the salute to the sun

Sūryabhedana

Piercing or passing through (*bhedana*) the sun; a *pranayama* in which the inhalation is done through the right nostril and exhalation is done through the left nostril

Sūtra

A brief statement; thread, string, line, cord; aphorism or condensed statements strung together to give an outline of a philosophy, such as the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

Suṣumnā

The central *nadi* running through the center of the spine, from the base to the top of the head



Sva Self; one's own innate essence of being

Svadharna Literally *sva* = self, *dharna* = duty, path, law, order; refers to one's own duty; alignment with one's own nature

Svarūpa Self essence; one's own form or shape; natural state or condition

Svasti Well being; success; fortune; health

Svatantra Self technique; personal practice

Svātantrya Self-sovereignty, mastery, dominion; one's self as one's own ruler

Svādhiṣṭhāna "One's own abode," the psychic, pranic center situated at the base of the spinal column in the lumbar region (level of the generative organs), associated with the sacral plexus and the storehouse of subconscious impressions

Svādhyāya Self-study; self-reflection

Swara Sound or tone; noise; voice; vowel; breathing cycle; flow of the breath in the nostrils

Tamas One of the three gunas; the force of nature that is characterized by darkness, heaviness, inertia and destruction



Tantra

A spiritual path that provides systematic discipline and practical instruction on the usage of *asana*, *pranayama*, *bandha*, *yantra*, *mantra*, meditation and either internal or external rituals

Tapas

Literally, to heat; the process of removing impurities; elimination, purification; one of the *niyamas* and a component of *kriya yoga*

Tattra

“There,” indicating a destination

Tattva

Element; “that-ness,” the essence of a thing; a primary substance; essence; truth; reality; principle; category

Tat Tvam Asi

“Thou art that,” one of the four *mahavakya*, it is the instruction given by the self-realized sage to the disciple; expresses the reality that the real nature of the human or the individual soul is identical with the supreme Spirit

Tejas

The subtle essence of fire (*agni*) and *pitta dosha*, *tejas* governs digestion on both subtle and gross levels; the energy of intelligence, discrimination and all bodily fire; gives luminosity, brightness, brilliance



Tirtha

Crossing place; holy or sacred place, place of pilgrimage; a shrine dedicated to a holy object; a sacred or holy object of veneration

Tra

To move beyond limitations

Trāṭaka

To gaze steadily; a concentration practice of gazing with unblinking eyes at one point to focus the mind; one of the six *hatha yoga* cleansing techniques

Tretā

Three or triplet; as in *treta bandha*, in which all three (*mula bandha*, *uddiyana bandha* and *jalandhara bandha*) are engaged simultaneously on suspension after exhale

Udāna

The *vayu* responsible for speech and upward movement

Uḍḍīyana

Abdominal lock

Ujjāyī

Breathing technique in which one inhales with a partial contraction of the glottis thus creating vibration at the throat either during inhale, exhale or both

Upaniṣad

“To sit near and listen” (to the spiritual teacher);” ancient vedic text containing intimate dialogues and discussions between *guru* and disciple on the nature of the absolute and the path leading towards it



Uttara Mīmāṃsā

The philosophy school based on the *Upanishad*, also known as *Vedanta*

Vairāgya

“Without coloring,” detachment, renunciation; to be free from craving

Vajroli

A *mudra* that involves the contraction and release of the urinary passage according to *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*; this *mudra* vitalizes the mind and body

Vāma Mārga

The left hand ritualized practices of *tantra*, sometimes referred to as “Forbidden *Tantra*”

Vāsanā

Desire

Vastu

The Hindu system of design and architecture based on the subtle principles of the four major directions of energy flow and *Samkhya* philosophy so as to harmonize with the forces of nature

Vāta

Air, breath, wind; one of the *bhutas*

Vāyu

Vital air, “wind of the body”



Veda

“To know,” sacred knowledge; holy learning; the most ancient and authentic scriptures, revealed to sages and seers and expressing knowledge of the whole universe

Vedānta

“The culmination of the Vedas;” philosophy that teaches the ultimate aim and scope of the Vedas and states that there is one eternal principle (*Brahman*), wherein mind experiences its own limitations and goes beyond them, gaining realization and understanding through that exploration

Vicāra (Vichara)

Reflection; enquiry into the nature of the self and contemplation on the real and unreal

Vicāra Samādhi

Absorption on a subtle object or concept (i.e. *mantra*), in which there is still awareness of the process

Vidhāraṇā

A specialized form of breath suspension (“*vi*” = special, unique; “*dharana*” = to hold, collect, concentrate)

Vijñānamaya

Astral or psychic (higher mental) sheath or *kosha* consisting of the principle of intellect or *buddhi*, intuition, wisdom and power of understanding; the covering of the self which is made of knowledge



Vikalpa

Fiction; projection; imagination; false perception; thought construct

Vikṛti

Change; products derived from *prakṛiti* (individual nature)

Vikṣipta

Distracted, restless, diffused; one of the five states of mind

Viloma

“Against the grain,” against the order of things

Vinyāsa Krama

A correctly organized course of asanas progressing appropriately toward a desired goal

Viparīta Karaṇī

Active reversal

Vīryā

Will; potency; energy; strength; indomitable will

Viśoka Jyotir

The light beyond all sorrow, the light where no sorrow can enter



Viśuddhi “Purity;” the psychic and pranic center located at the level of the throat or thyroid gland and associated with the cervical and laryngeal plexus

Viveka Discrimination

Viyoga Separating or disconnecting from what is non-constructive or not real

Vṛtti Thought; spinning, a circular movement of consciousness

Vyāna The *vayu* responsible for distribution of energy throughout the whole body

Vyāsa Name of a great sage who wrote the *Brahma Sutra* and the *Mahabharata* (which includes the *Bhagavad Gita*) and codified the four Vedas etc.

Yajña Sacrificial rite; vedic sacrifice; offering oblations to the fire; composed of ritual or worship (*puja*), *satsang* and unconditional giving (*dana*)

Yajurveda “Knowledge of sacrifice;” the *Veda* containing all the rituals, mantras, karmas and resulting fruits or effects of karmas relating to sacrifice; the second of the four principal Vedas



Yama

Self-restraints or rules of conduct which renders the emotions tranquil; the first of eight limbs or means of attaining *samadhi* in the *ashtanga yoga* of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras

Yantra

"Machine;" revealed geometric patterns intended for concentration or meditation that unleash the hidden potential within consciousness; visual form of mantra used for concentration and meditation

Yoga

One of the six major schools (*darśana*) of Indian philosophy; the science expounded by celebrated sage Patanjali including the practical means of uniting the higher and lower self and merging with cosmic consciousness through a gradual unfolding of inner strength and wisdom

Yoga Māyā

The power of Divine illusion

Yoga Nidra

The sleep of yoga, where the body is at rest as if in sleep while the mind remains fully conscious, though all of its movements are stilled

Yogarūpa

The body, or essence, of yoga

Yogi

One who is adept in the practice of yoga