

# YOGA for Golf

By Jafri Mohamed

Lower back pain, neck aches, knee and wrist injuries are all too common to golfers and the right yoga movements can prevent or minimize such mishaps. Find out from Yogi Sukhdev, the inspirational guide to Mardan Mamat's historic win at the Singapore Masters in 2006 who is also responsible for a resurgent ex-Singapore no. 1 player, Lam Chih Bing.

Yogi Sukhdev has practised the art for over 30 years and studied under renowned masters like Guru Chaiavala, Baba Yogiraj, and Ram Lal. Apart from Mamat and Lam, Sukhdev has also trained Asia's top golfers like Iyoti Randhawa and Kyi Hla Han, now the Asian Tour's chief.

Mainly, he preaches a combination of relaxation and breathing exercises based on yogic principles together with the right diet to optimise personal health and efficiency. Here's how it works, according to him.

## Moving Right

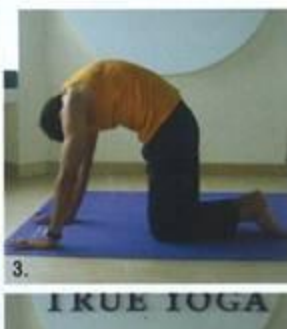
Generally, the following yoga moves are recommended to prevent golf-related injury.

The Shoulder Rotation – helps relieve stiffness and stress around the shoulder and neck area. This increases flexibility and improves the rhythm and swing.

The Spine Twist – relieves stiffness around the lower back muscles and increases strength and flexibility.

The Cat Pose – releases stiffness and stress around the spine, upper, lower and middle back area, and neck. It also improves the strength and flexibility of the spine.

The Cobra Pose – relieves stiffness and reduces stress of the lower back muscles and also increases strength in your shoulders and grip.



1. The Shoulder Rotation. 2. The Spine Twist. 3. The Cat Pose.  
4. The Cobra Pose. 5. The Meditation Pose.

The Meditation Pose – promotes relaxation and relieves stress before and after a game of golf.

Yoga helps to focus the mind by giving a better mental concentration, promoting focus and control of their physical abilities.

## Starting Yoga

Beginners should practice at least thrice a week. It is best to start with breathing exercises and simple yoga poses to stretch

and strengthen core muscles. Be aware of what your body can and cannot do and do not overstretch as it may lead to injuries. Also, a balanced diet is vital. Cut down on red meat, and eat more fruits, vegetables, protein, soya products, whole grain, and organic food to achieve a balanced diet. More importantly, drink lots of water.

And finally, pick up that driver and swing away. ♣

Yogi Sukhdev currently teaches at True Yoga ([www.trueyoga.com.sg](http://www.trueyoga.com.sg)), one of Singapore's leading yoga centres.