

Beginning to Teach



Its six months from the start of the LYTTC and you have BWY insurance to cover you to teach

So it's time to start...

We recommend you first review the *Safe Teaching documents 1, 2 and 3* (on the website in the 'Documents' section, 'Course Documents' subsection) before beginning to teach, then...

Do you feel ready?

If you are unsure discuss this with your mentor and with an LYTTC director, and make use of their experience and advice. On the LYTTC, even if you do not personally envisage 'teaching yoga' as a large part of your future life, teaching a small group is how we explore, learn and deepen our understanding - so it's for everyone to try.

When to teach?

Decide what time of day to hold the class, so you know you will have time to quieten yourself for 30 minutes or so before your class begins, and try not to have something you have to rush on to do immediately afterwards.

How long will the class be?

An hour is probably fine to start with, especially with beginners or 1 hour 15 minutes, or 1 hour 30 minutes.

Where to teach?

Have you space to hold a small class at home? If not, do you have a friend with space where you can fit two to three people for a class?

Who to teach?

Start small - beginners are great - family or friends are invaluable. If offered something bigger such as a class at a gym or yoga studio discuss with directors and, subject to approval, you will be issued a letter confirming that you are insured to teach.

Best not to teach anyone suffering with an injury until you have been teaching for at least six months - and always ask anyone you are concerned about physically to check with their GP first to be sure yoga is suitable for them. Never be afraid to say to students that you will need to ask advice about their situation from your teachers first if at all unsure.

Do not teach pregnant women in a general class until you have completed the LYTTC pregnancy weekend; in order to teach dedicated yoga for pregnancy or post natal classes the BWY require that you undertake additional specialist training (for example with YogaBirth or the BWY pregnancy module).

To teach vulnerable groups including children you must have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (this was formerly known as a CRB check). See the BWY website for more information.

To teach dedicated children's classes the BWY requires that you undertake an additional specialist module once you are qualified. Calm for Kids and the BWY, amongst others, offer specific children's modules. You also need to alert them to the fact that you are teaching children and complete the paperwork they will send you.

How many to teach

Up to three people is probably plenty for the first six months, however this depends on you - but more than ten will feel a big challenge .

We recommend everyone teaches a small group of three to six people during the course, even if you prefer 1-2-1s, as looking at several bodies is very different, and revealing.

What to teach

Only teach what has been covered on the course, what you thoroughly understand and feel totally confident about.

Do not do not teach headstand or shoulderstand until we have had the specific workshops on them during the course.

What to say

You will probably hear the words of the teachers you like and know well ringing in your head, and copy what they say, but soon you will find your own language based on your own experience. Explore!

Perhaps practice with friends and have them let you talk them through some poses to begin with?

When to charge

As a trainee teacher perhaps offer a free four to six week course and tell your students that after that you will make a small charge.

What to charge

Check what is charged per hour locally and charge less until you are qualified.

How to plan classes

Learn to draw stick figures for quick use in a class - so you are not reading notes when you are teaching!

Practice the class yourself first so you feel confident it works and flows well.

Keep the content balanced and use recommended books and the LYTTC teaching resources to help with the flow of the class.

Good to plan a 6 week course and 'spread' the poses and breathing throughout, developing them as you go. This gives a basic structure to work from, even if it changes when you respond to what is needed each day.

Been too speedy?

Gone too fast? Have some extra poses to add in just in case.

Slow down how you speak, focus on the breathing in some poses so this adds in time on each section.

Have students repeat a pose and stay in it longer and being quieter, or return to a pose to see how it feels at the end of the class.

Run out of time?

Make sure you have already thought about areas of the class you might leave until next week if you don't have time.

General

If you have specific queries or are in need of advice remember that you can discuss any of the above with your mentor and/or with course directors at lunchtime meetings.

Teaching yoga is a great responsibility, but it also brings tremendous pleasure, is very rewarding, and we are privileged to be able to do it. Enjoy sharing your love of it, and make sure your students are foremost in your mind during your class - don't let yourself get too much 'inside your own head!'

Above all, have fun!