TEACHING

YOGAPROS LEARNING HUB · MEMBER RESOURCE

GUIDE · DEMONSTRATING ASANA VARIATIONS

Teaching Mixed-Ability Classes

Demonstrating asana variations. Show the final posture first, then offer different ways to work toward it based on the student's experience and ability.



YOGAPROS

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INTRODUCTION

This template provides a practical starting point for planning, recording, and reviewing your professional practice. Adapt it to suit your role, teaching environment, students, and any relevant legal, safeguarding, or insurance requirements.

MIXED-ABILITY CLASSES

You don't need to demonstrate every variation *individually*.

When teaching a mixed-ability class, it can be difficult to demonstrate an asana when some students are beginners while others have years of experience.

You don't need to demonstrate every variation individually. Instead, show the final posture first, then offer different ways to work toward it based on the student's experience and ability.

STEP 1

Show the final *posture*.

Begin by demonstrating the full or final version of the asana so everyone can see the overall shape and understand what they are working toward.

For more experienced students, you can then say something like:

> FOR EXAMPLE
>
> "If you're familiar with this asana and know how to move into it safely, you can come into the full expression when you're ready."

This lets experienced students move into the posture without a lengthy demonstration of something they already know.

STEP 2

Break it down for *beginners*.

For newer students, return to the simplest version of the posture and break the movement down into clear, manageable steps.

Start with the **lowest level or simplest variation**, explaining the key actions, alignment points and any relevant safety considerations.

Then introduce progressions:

- **Level 1:** The simplest variation, suitable for those new to the practice.
- **Level 2:** A progression for students who are comfortable with the first variation.
- **Level 3:** A more advanced variation for students with the appropriate experience, mobility, strength or control.

You don't need to label these as "beginner", "intermediate" and "advanced" if that could make students feel categorised. Instead, describe them as different options or variations.

STEP 3

Let students *choose*.

Once you've demonstrated the options, invite students to choose the variation that feels appropriate for them.

For example:

> FOR EXAMPLE
>
> "Choose the option that feels right for your body today. You can stay with the first variation, explore the next option, or work with the full asana if that's appropriate for you."

This gives students **autonomy** instead of assuming what they should or shouldn't be able to do.

WHY THIS APPROACH WORKS

Keep the whole class working *together*.

A mixed-ability class doesn't need to mean teaching several completely different classes at once.

By demonstrating the final posture and then offering progressive variations, you can:

- Give experienced students enough information without over-explaining.
- Give beginners the detailed instruction they need.
- Provide clear progression within the same asana.
- Allow students to work at an appropriate level for their experience and ability.
- Avoid making beginners feel "behind".
- Avoid making experienced students feel held back.
- Keep the whole class working together.

The aim is not for everyone to perform the same version of the asana. The aim is for everyone to have an appropriate and clearly explained way to participate.

YOUR PLANNING PAGE

Plan your *variations*.

ASANA	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3

IMPORTANT

This guidance is for general awareness and professional orientation. It is not a substitute for professional legal, tax, or insurance advice, or for medical or mental-health care, specific to your individual situation.

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A Learning Hub resource from the Teaching team — helping members teach with confidence.

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Guidance only. An example of points to consider — not exhaustive, and not a substitute for professional advice.

