

• TEACHING

YOGAPROS LEARNING HUB • MEMBER RESOURCE

GUIDE • MARKET RESEARCH

Finding Your Niche

How to research your local market for yoga classes: who lives in your area, and what they might actually be looking for.

YOGAPROS

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Teaching



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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.

◆ FINDING YOUR NICHE

You don't need to become a market *researcher*.

If you're thinking about starting yoga classes, one of the most useful things you can do before choosing a location, venue, or marketing strategy is to understand who lives in your area and what they might actually be looking for.

You don't need to become a market researcher. A little focused research can help you identify an audience that is likely to be interested in what you offer and, importantly, help you work out how to talk to them.

For example, if yoga played an important part in your own recovery from injury, you may be particularly interested in helping others who want to use yoga to support mobility, strength, flexibility, and general wellbeing.

That could be a strong niche, but it is worth researching whether there is a local audience before building your classes around it.

◆ STEP 1

Start with the person, not the *class*.

Before looking at demographics, think about who you would genuinely like to teach.

Your own experience can be a useful starting point.

For example:

◆ FOR EXAMPLE

"I discovered yoga after an injury and found it hugely helpful during my recovery. I'd like to make yoga more accessible to men who might benefit from it but would not normally consider going to a yoga class."

This is more specific than simply saying:

“I want to teach yoga to others.”

You could potentially be looking at students who:

- Have experienced a sports or other physical injury
- Want to improve mobility or flexibility
- Exercise regularly but do not currently do yoga
- Take part in running, cycling, football, tennis, golf, martial arts or other sports
- Spend long periods sitting at a desk
- Are returning to exercise after an injury
- Want to improve strength, balance or movement
- Feel that traditional yoga classes are not aimed at them
- Are interested in the physical benefits of yoga but are less interested in the more spiritual side

You don't need to target all of these people. The research should help you decide which group makes the most sense.

Your notes: who would you genuinely like to teach?

◆ STEP 2

Research your local *area*.

Start with the area where you are considering teaching.

Look at a realistic catchment area around the venue. Depending on the location, this might be a 10-minute drive, a few miles, or an area that people can easily reach by public transport.

Look at:**Population**

- How many people live locally?
- Is the population growing?
- What is the male/female split?
- What are the main age groups represented in the area?

Age

- Is there a large population of people aged 30–50?
- Are there significant numbers of older people?
- Are there younger professionals living nearby?

Employment

- Are there large business parks or office areas?
- Do people work predominantly locally or commute?
- Are there particular industries nearby?

Lifestyle

- Are there gyms, running clubs, cycling groups, sports clubs or leisure centres?
- Are there golf clubs, football clubs or other sports communities?
- Are there businesses focused on health, fitness, and wellbeing?

Health and activity

- Are there indications of an older population?
- Are there relevant health or disability patterns?
- Are there local rehabilitation, physiotherapy or sports therapy services?

The Office for National Statistics' [**Explore Local Statistics**](#) tool allows you to search by post-code or local authority and compare information about different areas. It includes indicators such as population, income, and other local characteristics.

ONS also provides local information on population by age and sex, which can help you assess whether your target age range includes a substantial male population.

For a niche connected to injury, movement or recovery, you can also look at local health and disability data. You can explore **ONS Census data** at the local authority and neighbourhood level.

Don't stop at statistics

Statistics tell you who lives there.

They don't necessarily tell you what those people want.

That's where the next stage comes in.

Your notes: what did you find about your local area?

◆ STEP 3

Research what already *exists*.

Search Google, Google Maps, Instagram and Facebook for yoga classes in the area. For this example, you're researching how to set up yoga classes for men.

Try searches such as:

- Yoga classes near [location]
- Men's yoga near [location]
- Yoga for men [location]
- Yoga for athletes [location]
- Yoga for runners [location]
- Yoga for beginners [location]
- Mobility classes [location]
- Yoga for back pain [location]
- Sports recovery [location]

Make a simple list of the classes you find.

For each one, record:

RECORD	CONSIDER	YOUR NOTES
Who is it for?	Men, women, mixed, beginners, athletes, older adults?	
Age	Who appears to be the intended audience?	
Price	What do local classes cost?	
Location	Studio, gym, community centre, sports club?	
Class size	Small group or large class?	
Style	Gentle, strong, mobility-focused, traditional?	
Messaging	What benefits are they promoting?	
Schedule	When are classes held?	
Reviews	What do customers particularly like?	
Gaps	Who doesn't appear to be catered for?	

You aren't trying to copy another teacher.

You're looking for patterns and gaps.

◆ STEP 4

Look beyond yoga *businesses*.

This is particularly important when developing a niche.

If your potential audience is men interested in recovering from injuries or improving movement, your competitors may not only be other yoga teachers.

They could include:

- Gyms
- Personal trainers
- Physiotherapists
- Sports massage therapists
- Pilates teachers
- Mobility coaches
- Strength and conditioning coaches
- Running coaches
- Sports clubs
- Community fitness programmes

This can actually be good news.

If you find lots of men already paying for fitness, sports, or rehabilitation services, it may indicate an audience interested in improving their physical health.

It also gives you potential referral partners.

For example, a local physiotherapist may not offer yoga but may have clients who would benefit from appropriate movement work after their treatment ends.

◆ STEP 5

Talk to real *people*.

This is one of the most valuable parts of market research.

Don't rely entirely on Google or demographic statistics.

Talk to 10–20 people who broadly fit your potential audience.

Ask questions rather than trying to sell them a class.

For example:

- Have you ever tried yoga?
- What do you think of when you hear the word yoga?
- Would you consider going to a yoga class?
- If not, why not?
- Would you be interested in yoga for mobility or recovery?
- Have you ever used exercise or movement to help recover from an injury?
- What would make you more likely to try a yoga class?
- Would you prefer a men-only class or a mixed class?
- What days and times would work for you?
- What would you expect to pay?
- Where would you normally look for a class?

Pay particular attention to the **reasons people say no**.

If several people say:

“I’ve never really thought yoga was for me.”

that is useful information.

If they say:

“I’d be interested if it was more about mobility and recovery than traditional yoga.”

that’s even more useful.

That could influence how you describe the class.

Your notes: what did people tell you, and why did they say no?

◆ STEP 6

Don't assume that "men" is specific *enough*.

"Yoga for men" is a niche, but it may still be too broad.

You may discover a more specific audience such as:

Option A: Men returning to exercise after injury

Need: mobility, confidence and a gradual return to movement.

Option B: Active men and sportspeople

Need: flexibility, mobility, recovery and body awareness.

Option C: Desk-based men aged 35–55

Need: movement, mobility and relief from the physical effects of sitting.

Option D: Men who have never tried yoga

Need: an approachable introduction without feeling intimidated or out of place.

Option E: Runners and cyclists

Need: mobility, flexibility, recovery and complementary movement.

These are very different audiences, even though they are all "men interested in yoga."

Your research should help you decide which one you understand best and which one has the strongest local opportunity.

◆ STEP 7

Build a simple customer *profile*.

Once you've done your research, create a picture of your ideal student.

For example:

Your potential customer

FIELD	EXAMPLE	YOUR CUSTOMER
Name	David	
Age	42	
Lifestyle	Works full-time and exercises regularly	
Interests	Running and gym	
Problem	Tight hips and hamstrings, occasional lower-back discomfort	
Experience of yoga	None	
Attitude	Thinks yoga could be useful but feels traditional yoga classes aren't aimed at him	
Motivation	Wants to stay active and reduce the likelihood of future problems	
Barrier	Doesn't want to feel out of place in a class	
What he wants	A practical, accessible class focused on mobility, movement and recovery	

This doesn't mean every student will be like David.

It gives you a **clear person to communicate with** when you create your class, website or social media.

◆ STEP 8

Think about the problem you are *solving*.

A common mistake is to market the activity:

“Men’s Yoga – every Tuesday at 7pm.”

Instead, think about the problem or motivation behind the class.

For example:

Yoga for men who want to move better, recover well and stay active.

Or:

A practical yoga class for men looking to improve mobility, flexibility and recovery.

Or:

Yoga for active men who want to move better and keep doing the things they enjoy.

These are examples rather than fixed wording.

The important question is:

Why would someone who doesn’t currently do yoga want to come to this class?

Your notes: how would you describe your class?

◆ STEP 9

Use your own story, but don't make the class about *you*.

Your experience of recovering from injury could be a valuable part of your story.

It gives you an authentic reason for wanting to teach this audience.

For example:

◆ FOR EXAMPLE

"I came to yoga after an injury and found it incredibly helpful during my recovery. I wanted to create a class that makes the physical benefits of yoga more accessible to men who may never have considered trying it."

That is much more compelling than simply saying you have decided to specialise in men's yoga.

However, be careful not to make medical or recovery claims.

Your personal experience is your story. It doesn't mean you should promise that yoga will treat or prevent a particular injury or medical condition.

◆ STEP 10

Do a simple SWOT *analysis*.

SWOT analysis may not be particularly fashionable, but it remains a practical and valuable tool.

It helps you step back and ask whether your idea has a genuine opportunity.

Strengths

What do you already have going for you?

For example:

- Personal experience of discovering yoga through injury
- Genuine interest in working with men
- A clear niche
- Understanding of the barriers men may have around trying yoga
- A yoga teaching qualification
- Local connections
- Existing sports or fitness networks

Your strengths

Weaknesses

What could make it harder?

For example:

- New teacher with limited teaching experience
- No existing customer base
- Limited marketing experience
- The niche may be unfamiliar to potential customers
- A men-only class may initially have a smaller audience
- You may need to educate people about what the class actually involves

Your weaknesses

Opportunities

What could you take advantage of?

For example:

- Partnerships with gyms and sports clubs
- Referrals from physiotherapists or sports therapists
- Running clubs and cycling clubs
- Local businesses
- Men's health or fitness communities
- Corporate wellbeing
- Beginner workshops
- Introductory classes
- Social media communities aimed at local men
- Building a reputation around a specific type of yoga or movement

Your opportunities

Threats

What could make the idea difficult?

For example:

- Established yoga studios nearby
- Free yoga content online
- Other mobility or fitness classes
- Difficulty finding a suitable venue
- A perception that yoga isn't "for men"
- Low initial attendance
- Pricing competition

Your threats

The purpose is not to produce a complicated business document.

It is to ask:

What could make this work, and what could stop it from working?

◆ STEP 11

Test the idea before investing *heavily*.

You don't need to decide immediately that you'll run a weekly men's yoga class for the next year.

Test the idea first.

For example:

Stage 1: Research

Speak to potential customers and research your local area.

Stage 2: Test interest

Create a simple expression-of-interest form or social media post.

For example:

Would you be interested in a beginner-friendly yoga class for men focused on mobility, movement and recovery?

Ask people to register their interest.

Stage 3: Run a trial

Consider a one-off introductory workshop rather than immediately committing to a weekly class.

For example:

Men's Yoga: Mobility & Movement

90 minutes

Beginner-friendly

No previous yoga experience required

Stage 4: Ask for feedback

After the session, ask:

- What did you enjoy?
- What could be improved?
- Would you attend another class?
- What would make you come back regularly?
- What day/time would suit you?
- Would you recommend it to a friend?

Stage 5: Decide

If you get strong interest and good feedback, develop the idea.

If you don't, that doesn't necessarily mean the niche is wrong.

You may need to change:

- The audience
- The wording
- The venue
- The price
- The time
- The class format
- The specific problem you're addressing

◆ CHECKLIST

Your market research *checklist*.

Before launching the class, see if you can answer these questions:

The area

- ☐ Who lives locally?
- ☐ How many men are in my target age range?
- ☐ What are the main local employment and lifestyle patterns?
- ☐ What sports and fitness activities are popular?

The competition

- ☐ What yoga classes already exist?
- ☐ Are there men's yoga classes?
- ☐ What other businesses serve my potential audience?
- ☐ What are they charging?
- ☐ What are they offering?
- ☐ Is there an obvious gap?

The customer

-
- ☐ Who exactly am I trying to reach?
 - ☐ What problem or motivation brings them to the class?
 - ☐ What might stop them from attending?
 - ☐ What would make them feel comfortable trying yoga?
 - ☐ What language would they respond to?
-

The idea

-
- ☐ What makes my class different?
 - ☐ Why am I the right person to teach it?
 - ☐ What would I call the class?
 - ☐ Where could I run it?
 - ☐ What would I charge?
 - ☐ Could I test it with a workshop first?
-

The test

-
- ☐ Have I spoken to potential customers?
 - ☐ Have I tested interest?
 - ☐ Have I run a trial?
 - ☐ Have I collected feedback?
 - ☐ What will I change based on what I learn?
-

◆ THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

Don't try to prove that “men want *yoga*.”

Try to find out:

Which men in my area might want what I can offer, what problem are they trying to solve, and what would make them choose my class?

That shift can make your marketing much more focused.

Your personal experience of discovering yoga through injury gives you a strong starting point. Next, find out whether a local group shares a similar need or motivation, then test your idea with them before building the whole business around it.

In conclusion, understanding your local demographic and tailoring your approach is crucial for building a successful yoga class or niche offering. By combining research, personal experience, and direct community engagement, you can identify a genuine need, create targeted solutions, and test your ideas before making a significant commitment. Remember that the goal is to serve a specific group with authenticity and clarity, ensuring your classes resonate with those who will benefit most. This thoughtful, iterative approach will help you build a sustainable and rewarding teaching practice.

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.

YOGA PROS

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

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YogaPros Learning Hub — Teaching

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

