



# TO COMPARE THE CONCEPT OF HATHA YOGA ACCORDING TO PATANJALI YOGA SUTRA AND VASISHTHA SAMHITA

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## ABSTRACT

*Hatha Yoga, also known as "Discipline of Force" in Sanskrit, is a branch of yoga that emphasizes physical control as a means of achieving spiritual perfection in which the mind is shut off from the world. Hatha yoga was once an austere discipline that has been practiced for a very long time. The tradition began on the boundaries of India and Nepal, with roots that go back to the Sanskrit epics (Hinduism) and the Pali canon (Buddhism). Ancient Hatha yogis practiced the Hatha yoga disciplines for the purpose of self-exploration while living as renunciates. Hindu ideas like karma and rebirth were crucial to their way of thinking. Hatha yoga is a branch of yoga primarily concerned with mastery of the body, and it is arguably the tradition most familiar to Western culture. Hatha yoga has only recently come to be known as a physical practice that normally entails a series of asanas (yoga postures) and pranayama (breathing techniques). In this regard, compared to techniques like Ashtanga or Vinyasa, Hatha yoga is typically done more methodically and with more stable posture holds. But Hatha yoga is much more than just the physical exercise that has recently gained popularity.*

## PURPOSE

For the purpose of conceptual clarity and proper application by yoga aspirants, it is important to recognise the similarities and contrasts between the concepts of hatha yoga as they are presented in the texts Patanjali Yoga Sutra and Vasishtha Samhita.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a comparative study. It employs analytical techniques to obtain results as it contrasts two works of ancient literature from a particular perspective to find similarities and differences regarding specific topics.

## PREFACE

Hatha literally translates to "stubborn" in Sanskrit. Therefore, practicing Hatha Yoga implies doing yoga obstinately without the five senses or the mind interfering. Most often, asana practice is all that most people associate with Hatha Yoga. But to reach the exalted condition of samadhi, one must engage in the disciplined practices of asana, pranayama, dharana, and dhyana. The yogi is emancipated from the deception of appearance, time, and space when they are in samadhi. One of the six practices on this path is asana.

It's intriguing to learn that some experts explain that the word "Hatha" is derived from the Sanskrit words "ha" and "tha," which translate to "sun" and "moon," respectively. As a result, it is widely believed that Hatha practices aim to integrate and balance these two forces. Hatha, however, literally translates as "force," referring to the physical methods this tradition employs.

## METHODS IN USE

1. Using **asanas**, you can control your body.
2. **Pranayama** helps you manage your breathing.
3. **Mudra**: a way to control and energise pranas (subtle energies).
4. **Bandhas**: a chakra (energy centers) stimulator .
5. Purifying internal organs using **kriyas**.
6. **Mantras**: a tool for mind control.

## SIX PRINCIPLES OF HATHA YOGA

Hatha Yoga is the six-limb yoga (Shatanga Yoga). These six limbs are:

1. **Asana** – steady comfortable state of body and mind
2. **Pranayama** – expansion of capacity to retain prana
3. **Pratyahara** – withdrawal from the sensory input
4. **Dharana** – bringing the mind to one single point



5. **Dhyana** – observing the self
6. **Samadhi** – becoming free from Maya

## CONCEPT OF HATHA YOGA IN PYS

In the past, Hatha yoga provided a comprehensive life philosophy that included how we connect to both our inner and outer experiences as a means of achieving mental calm. The Yoga Sutras, a collection of 196 aphorisms composed by Patanjali in Sanskrit about the year 400 AD, are one of the most well-known early works on Hatha yoga.

Hatha yoga is described by Patanjali as an eightfold path that requires the mastery of eight different mind-body practices. In Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, the eightfold path is referred to as ashtanga and is essentially a set of guidelines on how to live a meaningful life. They serve as a model for moral conduct and self-control, concentrate attention on health, and help us recognise the spiritual aspects of our nature. All other physical styles of yoga practiced today have their roots in the Hatha yoga tradition.

“Yoga anga anushtana ashuddhi kshaye jnana dipthir viveka khyatehe” (2.28)

**Meaning:** “By the sustained practice of the eight limbs of yoga, impurities are destroyed and the light of wisdom, discrimination shines forth.”

The eight limbs of the Hatha yoga method are listed as follows in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras:

1. **Yamas** - Five social observances: *ahimsa* (non-violence), *satya* (truthfulness) *asteya* (non-stealing), *brahmacharya* (chastity) and *aparigraha* (non-possessiveness).
2. **Niyamas** - Five moral observances: *saucha* (purity), *santosha* (contentment), *tapas* (self-discipline), *svadhyaya* (self-study), *ishvarapranidhana* (devotion or surrender).
3. **Asana** - Yoga postures.
4. **Pranayama** - Breathing techniques as a means of controlling prana (vital life force energy).
5. **Pratyahara** - Withdrawal of the senses.
6. **Dharana** - Concentration.
7. **Dhyana** - Meditation.
8. **Samadhi** - Enlightenment or bliss.

These eight limbs offer a systematic approach to calming the mind and finding liberation from suffering. Although the practice manifests itself as physical strength, physiological health and emotional well-being, the ultimate goal of Hatha yoga is to transcend identification with the body-mind-intellect complex in order to understand the nature of the true self.

### What are the 8 limbs of yoga?

#### 1. Yamas - Social duties

The first of yoga's eight limbs, yama, focuses on our behavior and how we conduct ourselves in life. It deals with one's moral principles and sense of integrity. The Golden Rule, or yamas, is a set of universal moral principles that states, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

**The five yamas are :**

##### a. **Ahimsa** - Non-violence

“Ahimsa pratishhtayam tat sannidhau vairatyagaha” (II Sutra 35)

“When a person is established in non-violence, then violence is dropped in his or her presence.”

Deciding consciously to follow the path of nonviolence, giving up any intentions that veer towards destruction because the very intention itself can uproot and destroy your foundation and root.

Your aura affects people around you when ahimsa is a part of who you are. You achieve inner peace when you practice ahimsa, and you tend to ahimsa when you achieve inner peace. The street runs both ways.

##### b. **Satya** – Truth

“Satya pratishhtayam kriya phala shrayatvam” (II Sutra 36)

“When a person is established in truth then the fruits of action will follow.”

This yama alludes to an unchanging trait that resides deep within each of us. We must be honest in more ways than just words. What really matters is how we behave, what is going on in our hearts and minds, and what our intentions are. The tendency towards the constant should come from the very depths of our being. Satya is that.

##### c. **Asteya** - Not stealing

“Asteya pratishhtayam sarvara ratna upasthanam” (II Sutra 37)

“When non-stealing is established, all the jewels (wealth) approach the person.”

We must not attempt to obtain anything that is not rightfully ours through our actions, words, or thoughts. Stealing includes the taking of thoughts as well as the taking of physical, intellectual, or material property.

Wealth will come easily if we are established with the goal to not steal and are truthful.

##### d. **Brahmacharya** – Celibacy

“Brahmacharya pratishhtayam viryalabhaha” (II Sutra 38)

“On being established in celibacy, vigor is gained.”

Brahmacharya has more to it than just celibacy. It denotes infinite movement. We lose track of our bodies, minds, and perceptions while we meditate, instead moving in boundless consciousness. This ties us to the vastness of nature. This



grants vigor and strength. We can become powerful by ignoring the whims and fancies of the senses and fusing with the boundless consciousness inside. That is what brahmacharya means.

**e. Aparigraha - Not coveting**

*"Aparigraha sthairye janmakathanta sambodhaha" (II Sutra 39)*

*"Being established in non-accumulation gives knowledge of all past and future births."*

Aparigraha means being happy and content in our own existence without amassing possessions or stealing from others. realizing that the greatest delight is in giving. Positive energy returns to us when we give something to someone else.

**2. Niyamas - Personal rules**

The second limb, niyama, is concerned with self-control and religious observances. Niyamas in action include things like regularly going to temple or church services, saying grace before meals, creating your own personal meditation routines, and making it a habit to go for solitary, reflective walks.

*"Saucha santoshatapaha swadhyaya ishwarapranidhanani niyamaha" (II Sutra 32)*

*"Cleanliness, contentment, penance, self-study, and devotion to divinity are the five rules or niyamas."*

**The five niyamas are:**

- a. Shaucha ( cleanliness ) :** Maintaining our physical purity (by bathing, drinking water to clean us from the inside out), the environmental purity (by not worrying), and our mental purity (by not worrying).
- b. Santosha ( happiness, contentment):** Realizing our true nature and experiencing unwavering happiness in all circumstances.
- c. Tapaha ( penance , spiritual austerities):** Burning of unwanted thoughts by restraint and austerity to enable us to travel far within ourselves and find silence.
- d. Svadhyaya ( self- study):** Scriptures should be read, but learning should also come through experiences and reading to help one understand oneself better.
- e. Ishvara pranidhana ( devotion or surrender to divine) :** Putting life into the larger framework of the huge universe, entering the limitless and wide consciousness that is abound with love, beauty, and truth, and giving yourself completely to it.

**3. Asanas - Physical postures**

*"Sthirasukhamasanam" (II Sūtra 46)*

*"That posture which is steady and comfortable is āsana."*

In order to prepare the body for meditation, asanas are physical positions. It makes sure the body is in good shape, free from illness, and unrest-free. It is crucial to take care of your physical self since it equips you to discover your inner Self. Balance on the physical level paves the way for harmony on the cerebral, intellectual, and, eventually, spiritual levels.

**4. Pranayama - Control of breath**

Prana is defined as life power. Pranayamas are breathing techniques that support our life energy. According to Rishi Patanjali, pranayama is the particular retention, splitting, and alteration of the breath's rhythm. Impurities from the mind are removed when we deliberately take lengthy, counted breaths while focusing on various body areas to stop the breath from moving.

**5. Pratyahara - Conscious withdrawal of senses**

The fifth of the eight limbs of yoga, pratyahara, is known as retreat or sensory transcendence. In this phase, we deliberately work to turn our attention away from the outer world and external stimuli. We focus our attention inward while remaining acutely aware of but detached from, our senses. Pratyahara offers us the chance to take a step back and examine our own behavior. This withdrawal enables us to see our appetites for what they are: potentially unhealthy behaviors that are probably impeding on our ability to grow as individuals.

**6. Dharana - Attention**

Pratyahara practice sets the stage for dharana, or concentration, just as each step prepares us for the next. We can now cope with internal distractions after freeing ourselves of external distractions. A difficult task! Prior to meditation, we learn how to slow down our thinking by focusing on a single mental object, such as a particular energetic point on our bodies, an image of a deity, or the silent repeating of a sound. Of course, in the previous three steps of posture, breath control, and sensation withdrawal, we have already started to hone our attention skills.

**7. Dhyana – Meditation**

Meditation or contemplation, the seventh stage of ashtanga, is the uninterrupted flow of concentration. Although concentration (*dharana*) and meditation (*dhyana*) may appear to be one and the same, a fine line of distinction exists between these two stages. Where dharana practices one-pointed attention, dhyana is ultimately a state of being keenly aware without focus. At this stage, the mind has been quieted, and in the stillness, it produces few or no thoughts at all. The strength and stamina it takes to reach this state of stillness is quite impressive. But don't give up. While this may



seem like a difficult, if not impossible task, remember that yoga is a process. Even though we may not attain the “picture perfect” pose, or the ideal state of consciousness, we benefit at every stage of our progress.

## 8. Samadhi

Patanjali describes this eighth and final stage of ashtanga, *samadhi*, as a state of ecstasy. At this stage, the meditator merges with his or her point of focus and transcends the Self altogether. The meditator comes to realize a profound connection to the Divine, an interconnectedness with all living things. With this realization comes the “peace that passeth all understanding”; the experience of bliss and being at one with the Universe. On the surface, this may seem to be a rather lofty, “holier than thou” kind of goal.

## CONCEPT OF HATHA YOGA IN VASISHTHA SAMHITA

### 8 limbs of yoga :

1. Yama (rules of conduct)
2. Niyama (vows)
3. Asana (Postures)
4. Pranayama (control and expansion of breath)
5. Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses from their respective objects)
6. Dharana (concentration of mind)
7. Dhyana (meditation)
8. Samadhi (perfect equanimity).

### 1) YAMAS ( rules of conduct): There are 10 types of yamas in vasistha samitha

- **Ahimsa (Non injury):** as defined by Yogis, is the practice of never inflicting harm on anyone at any moment through one's actions, thoughts, or speech.
- **Satya (truth):** A sincere, kind, or warranted and favorable speech is said to be Satya ( truth).
- **Asteya (desirelessness):** according to the enlightened sages, is the absence of all desire in one's actions, thoughts, and speech.
- **Brahmacharya (celibacy):** In all places and with all kinds of beings (at all levels, including mental, verbal, and physical), Brahmacharya is the complete abandonment of sexual indulgence. Regularly serving the Guru (Master) is regarded as becoming Brahmacharya.
- **Dhrti (fortitude):** The ability to remain composed under any situations, including those involving financial loss, the death of close family members (kith and kin), the loss of property, or even positive developments, is referred to as steadfastness.
- **Ksama (equanimity):** described by Vedic scholars as an attitude of neutrality towards both friends and enemies.
- **Daya (compassion):** Daya is the quality of always being compassionate towards one's family, friends, and enemies.
- **Arjava (compassion):** Arjava is a (attitude of) consistency in one's thoughts, words, and actions, whether one is engaging in or refraining from (something) that the Scripture either commands or forbids.
- **Mitahara (moderate diet):** The amount of food one should eat should not make them drowsy and should also satisfy their appetite.
- **Sauca (cleanliness):** Both an internal and an external mention of sauca (cleanliness) are made. While mental purification is referred to as internal, external cleansing involves the use of clay and water. The only ways to know this mental purity are through good deeds and spiritual wisdom.

### 2) NIYAMAS (vows): There are 10 niyamas in vasistha samitha

- **Tapa (austerity):** Purification of body by the Krcchracandrayana vow prescribed in the scriptures, is the best tapa (austerity).
- **Santosha (contentment):** One should be content with whatever they naturally get; the sages refer to this state of mind as Santosha (contentment). This is a happy symbol.
- **Astikya (faith in dharma):** Faith in Dharma (actions to be done) and Adharma (action to be not done) is called Aatikya.
- **Dana (charity):** It is known as Dana when fairly earned money, grains, or another item is distributed with the intention of helping those in need (charity).
- **Isvara Pujana (worship of God):** Systematic adoring Visnu with pleasant mood and devotion, is called worship of God.
- **Siddhanta sravana (listening to the doctrines):** Ishvara Pujana is the state of having one's body free of violence, one's speech free of lies, etc., and one's heart free of attachments (worship Of God). Siddhanta Sravana is the practice of listening to and reflecting upon the Vedanta doctrine. Siddhanta Sravanam is another name for learning one's own branches of the Vedas, as well as history and mythology, and then listening to other people's teachings.
- **Hri (modesty):** The deeds which are condemned by the Vedas and by the social laws, an attitude of ignominy towards them, is called Hri (modesty).



- **Mati (intelligence):** is a Sanskrit word that means “intelligence,” “understanding,” “mindful,” “intuition” and “perception.” In the context of yoga and Hindu philosophy, mati describes a spiritual intelligence that is associated with a state of awareness. Having faith on all the ordains of the scriptures and omitting those which are not advised by the preceptor is called Mati.
- **Japa (repetition of a mantra along with its meaning):** The practice of chanting Mantras in the prescribed manner is called Japa (repetition). Such Japa is said to be three fold : (i) Upamsu (low voice) (ii) Vaikhari (loud audible) & (iii) Manasa (mental)
- **Vrata (observance of vows):** The methods used to put into practise all of the advice (knowledge) obtained from the well-pleased Guru with his due assent are known as observing Vrata because they help one achieve Dharma, Artha, and Kama (vows).

### 3) ASANAS (POSTURES) :

The third limb of Ashtanga Yoga is asana. Vasistha enumerates 10 asanas. They are :

- Svastikasana
- Gomukhasana
- Padmasana
- Veerasana
- Simhasana
- Mayurasana
- Kukkutasana
- Kurmasana
- Bhadrasana
- Muktasana.

### 4) PRANAYAMA : in 2nd chapter

This procedure starts with an investigation into the steps involved in the cleansing of Nadis, the origin of Nadis, Kanda, and the number of Vayus, as well as their locations and roles.

In response to Shakti's questions, Vasistha begins to discuss the human body from a yoga perspective. He discusses Dehamadhya, Kanda, Kundalini, the genesis of the 14 Nadis, their names, the location and purposes of both their terminal point, Vayus, and their point of origin, Kanda.

Vasistha starts describing the technique of Nadi Shodhana Pranayama. The following techniques Of Nadi Shodhana has been described by Vasistha :

- Closing the right nostril with the help of the fingers of right hand and gazing at the tip of nose, mentally imagining a harmonious orbs of the moon there and contemplating on that and "va" along with "m" or " " (anusvara) on it should be seen there mentally while inhaling through the left nostril i.e. Ida twelve matras.
- Then meditating on fire element which is like a flashing flame and contemplating upon "Ra" with (anusvara) existing within the circle of five, one should exhale slowly through right nostril i.e. Pingala.

### 5) PRATYAHARA:

There are four types of Pratyahara :

- The withdrawal of the sense-organs, which by nature indulge in the sense-objects.
- Whatever one sees, all that should be seen by one as Self within the Self.
- The performance of the obligatory duties, mentally within the self and without any external (aids).
- Holding the air successively at the eighteen vital points after pulling it from the preceding point.

### 6) DHARANA : Dharana according to Vasistha, is the establishment of the mind in self.

In vasistha samhita there are five types of dharana with their specific color, elements, letter, location, deity and form.

#### Name of the five dharana :

- Bhudharana
- Varidharna
- Vaisvanaridharana
- Vayavidharana
- Nabhodharana

### 7) DHYANA : According to Vasistha Dhyana (meditation) is understanding the nature of the self by mind. Dhyana is divided into two parts :

- Nirguna: The experience of merging in Brahman is how the Nirguna variety is characterized. The term "Nirguna " cannot be interpreted literally in this context. If by "guna" you mean "worldly attributes," then the Brahman lacks these traits but possesses supernatural ones instead.





- Saguna: saguna is the type of meditation in which the meditation done By concentrating over the idol or divine symbol.

#### **8) SAMADHI : (enlightenment or bliss)**

According to Vasistha, only he, who has practiced and has perfected in the Angas, viz. Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana and Dhyana, are competent to practice Samadhi. Samadhi is considered to be the state in which individual and universal consciousness unite. The spiritual significance of Samadhi is profound, since it encompasses self-realization and symbolizes the ultimate connection with the Divine.

#### **CONCLUSION**

- Vasistha asserts that knowledge is identical to yogic knowledge and that this yoga has eight limbs. Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi are among them. In contrast to Patanjali, Vasistha views the first four as external and the latter four as internal (Pratyahara is included in Patanjali's definition of external yoga).
- In vasistha samhita there are 10 yamas and niyamas whereas patanjali has 5 each but Aprighara yamas are not mentioned in vasistha samitha.
- Only Tapa and Santosa from Patanjali have found their place in the list of ten niyamas when we analyze this list of yamas and niyamas and compare it to Patanjali's yamas and niyamas. Sauca, niyama according to Patanjali, has been included in the list often yamas. The two niyamas of patanjali svadhyaya and ishvarapranidhana has been excluded from the list of yamas and niyamas. However, there are certain similarities between svadhyaya and japa, as well as between ishvarapranidhana and isvara pujana.
- In patanjali yoga Sutra there is no specific Asana mentioned but vasistha samitha talks about 10 Asana .
- Pranayama is described in the third chapter of the Vasistha Samhita. It consists of controlled inhalation (Puraka) , controlled retention (Kumbhaka) and controlled exhalation (Recaka). Pranayama in two ways, as Uttama, Madhyama and Adhama and as Sagarbha and Agarbha. Vasistha also mentions that Puraka, Kumbhaka, and Recaka each took sixteen, sixty-four, and thirty-two Matras, respectively. Vasistha advises practicing Kumbhaka to the best of one's ability, even though it is reported to last for sixty-four Matras.
- In vasistha samhita the pranayama is mentioned with four types of purification of Nadi , vasistha mentioned the Nadi shuddhi pranayama and it's process and even its merits and demerits whereas patanjali don't talk about the specific pranayam .
- Pranayama focused on the pranva and bija mantra and also mentioned the sagana(pranvatmak) pranayama in vasistha samitha . Vasistha begins with describing Pranava, which is made up of the three letters A, U, and M and stands for creation, sustenance, and annihilation, respectively. He goes on to discuss the forms of A, U, and M.
- According to descriptions, "A" is Gayatri, who is sixteen years old, has a crimson body, rides a swan, and holds a staff in her hand.
- The symbol of "U" is Cakradharini, a youthful woman with a white body who flies on an eagle.
- Savitri, an elderly woman with a white body, three eyes, and a spear in her hand, has been given the name "M," and she is riding a bull. She is also referred to as Pascima, Maheswari, and Sarasvati.
- The Yogasutra includes Pratyahara in the external Angas (Bahiranga); but according to Vasistha , Pratyahara is Abhyantara (internal). The BY describes four types of Pratyahara, viz. (1) the gradual control of the external air in the body, (2) the mental control of the activities of the sense-organs, (3) the (actual) withdrawal of sense-organs from their objects and (4) the control of the Sankalpa, Adhyavasaya, Abhimana and Suksma Vayus.

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