

ACROYOGA



WHAT IS ACROYOGA?

Acroyoga is a unique discipline that's sure to pique the interest and passion of your young participants. It offers a combination of yoga, acrobatics and dance. Acroyoga lets you connect with the art of movement while fostering a connection with others. This activity serves to build self-confidence and trust in others in a fun-filled atmosphere of sharing and mutual aid.

LOCATION

Indoors/outdoors

SUGGESTED DURATION

30-45 minutes

INTENSITY LEVEL

Moderate/high

MATERIAL

Carpet (recommended)

AIM OF THE EXERCISE

To build self-confidence and trust in others, and better understand the notion of space and the way the human body moves.

ABILITIES TO DEVELOP

Agility, coordination, balance when stationary and in movement

WHY ACROYOGA IS GOOD FOR YOUTH

- 1 Improves coordination, balance and flexibility
- 2 Fosters a sense of accomplishment when the participants succeed in performing a posture
- 3 Develops patience and determination
- 4 Connects mind and body

ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

To emphasize relationships with others and interaction between participants, as well as the pleasure of moving with youth and the joy of connecting with others. Encourage your young participants to communicate and question them about their expectations, fears and the challenges that lie ahead.

– TIP

To keep the group focused on the practice, position the participants in a circle around you when providing instructions.

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ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR STEPS



1

READ THE SHEETS FOR EACH AGE GROUP.

On the sheets, you will find:

- A game meant to foster awareness of the body in space;
- A game of trust to foster self-knowledge and knowledge of the group;
- A preparation period to warm up the body for acroyoga postures;
- Acroyoga postures.

2

POSITION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

During the acroyoga practice, two people are essential to the successful performance of a posture.

- **THE BASE:** The person with the most points of contact with the floor, whose role is to support the flyer.
- **THE FLYER:** The person supported by the base in the performance of the postures.

3

CREATE TEAMS OF TWO PARTICIPANTS.

- Tip: If possible, form groups with participants of the same height and encourage them to alternate positions (bottom and top).

4

DRAW ON THE PLEASURE OF DISCOVERY.

- Take the time to carry out each step on the sheet and encourage your participants to communicate. If the participants succeed in performing the suggested postures for their age group, they can try postures geared to other age groups.
- Breathing is paramount at every step. Remind the participants to breathe in through the nose for three seconds, then breathe out through the mouth for three seconds.



Shake up tricks:

Don't hesitate to teach the participants by example when explaining the movements.



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GAME OF MOVEMENT

- 1 Have the participants spread out across the space.
- 2 On your signal, instruct them to perform one of four movements: walking, stopping, crouching, or jumping.

Variation(s):

- Instruct the participants to perform the opposite movement, for example by stopping when you've asked them to walk.
- Vary the speed at which you call out the movements.
Ex. fast, slow, optional

GAME OF TRUST [WALKING BLIND]

- 1 Instruct the participants to line up face to face to form a corridor.
- 2 Have one participant stand at one end and position yourself at the other end.
- 3 Instruct the participant on the end to cross between the two lines blindfolded or eyes closed, relying on your verbal instructions.
- 4 Instruct the other participants to place their hands in front of them or steer the "blind" participant in the right direction, that's to say down the middle of the corridor.

Variation(s):

- Have the "blind" participant rotate three times before crossing the line.

PREPARATION PERIOD

Create teams of two participants.

- 1 Instruct the participants to stand back to back and simultaneously drop down as low as possible without losing back-to-back contact.
- 2 Have the participants stand face to face and hold one another by the wrists, arms extended, knees slightly bent. Have them hold the posture for at least three seconds. From the posture cited in B, instruct the participants to raise one foot at a time, in front of them, behind them, and towards the side.

Tricks and tips:

- To facilitate the exercise and stabilize the posture, have each participant raise the same leg.

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ACROYOGA POSTURES

A. SQUARE POSTURE

- Instruct the two participants to stand face to face and bend forward, arms extended, hands on each other's shoulders.
- Have the participants bend forward to form the two corners of a square (90°).



B. THE PLANE

- Repeat the posture cited in A, this time asking the participants to lift one leg backwards to form a plane-like position.

Tricks and tips:

- Each participant should raise the same leg to facilitate the exercise and stabilize the posture.



C. DANCER'S POSE

- Instruct the participants to hold onto each other at the shoulders using only one arm.
- Have them raise one leg behind them and reach for their toes with their free hand.
- Have the participants hold the posture.

NOTES

- Hold each posture for two breaths (1 inhalation – 1 exhalation X 2)
- Don't forget to alternate positions.



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NINJA GAME

- 1 Have the participants spread out across the space and walk around without coming into contact.
- 2 Instruct the participants to assume a ninja position when you cry “NINJA!”
- 3 Check the stability of their ninja positions and highlight the importance of being firmly grounded in acroyoga.

Variation(s):

- Shrink the size of the space, still instructing the participants to hold a stable position while avoiding physical contact with the others.

GAME OF TRUST [CIRCLE OF TRUST]

- 1 Instruct the participants to form several small circles.
- 2 Designate one participant to stand in the middle of each circle, arms crossed.
- 3 Instruct the participants forming the circle to support the participant in the middle.
- 4 **Attention:** The circle must be small enough to ensure that the participant in the middle doesn't fall.

PREPARATION PERIOD

CHAIR POSITION

- Have the participants form teams of two. Instruct them to stand face to face, arms extended, and hold each other by the wrists.
- Instruct the participants to descend into chair position, keeping their arms extended, then slowly move back into standing position without letting go of each other.
- Repeat the exercise five times.

DYNAMIC CHAIR

- Instruct the teams of two to stand face to face.
- Have the participants shake hands (right hand in right hand, or left in left), arms extended.
- Instruct them to descend into chair position, holding one hand only.
- Instruct them to come back up, switch hands, then descend into chair position again. The movement should be continuous and dynamic.
- Repeat the exercise five to 10 times.

PLANK

- Instruct the participants to lie on their stomachs, hands in push-up position, toes firmly planted on the floor.
- On your signal, instruct the participants to straighten their arms and rise up into plank position, holding the position for two to three breaths.

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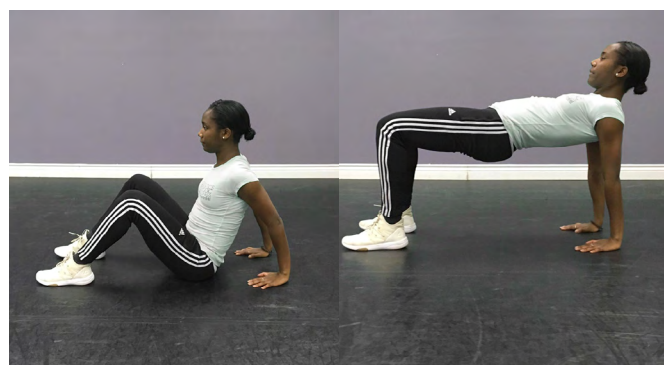


ACROYOGA POSTURES

A. CRAB POSTURE

Have the participants sit on the floor.

- Instruct them to walk their hands back, keeping them on the floor with their legs bent at the knees.
- Instruct the participants to push on their hands and rise up into crab position, holding the posture for two breaths.



B. CRAB POSTURE WITH FLYER

- Have the base assume a crab position.
 - Instruct the flyer to sit on the other's knees, back turned.
- *Make sure the flyer keeps his or her feet on the floor.

Variation(s):

- The flyer, if comfortable, may lift his or her feet off the floor.



NOTES

- In crab posture, the hands should be positioned towards the inside, the outside or the sides.
- Don't forget to alternate positions.

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GAME 1 [WILD ABOUT NUMBERS]

The aim of this game is to count out loud to the highest number without counting at the same time. If the participants do count at the same time, the entire group starts back at zero.

Here, communication is key: each participant must be able to say a number randomly

GAME 2 [GUIDING THE BLIND]

- 1 Instruct the participants to divide into groups of two or three.
- 2 Instruct them to establish physical contact in the following combinations:
 - Thumb to thumb
 - Elbow to elbow
 - Knee to knee
 - Foot to foot

Variation(s):

- Vary the combinations. Ex. elbow to thumb

GAME OF TRUST [GUIDING THE BLIND]

One participant guides another whose eyes are closed, walking that participant around the game space.

Ask the guiding participant what he or she paid attention to: the facilitator's voice, the other participant's non-verbal communication, etc.

PREPARATION PERIOD

TREE POSTURE

- Instruct the participants to stand back to back or face to face without touching.
- Instruct each participant to place one foot on the inside of the other leg, hands together in prayer position.
- Have the participants hold the position for four breaths.

Variation(s):

- If the participants are comfortable, have them close their eyes to raise the level of difficulty.

BUTTERFLY

- Instruct the participants to sit on the floor in butterfly position and hold the position for five breaths.
- Then, instruct them to roll from side to side, keeping their heads tilted forward. Roll 2x/side.

CAT

- Instruct the participants to get down on all fours.
- Give them the option of alternating the number of limbs they use for support (arms or legs). Ex. Raising and extending an arm forward or a leg backwards.

*Give the participants the option of raising and extending their arms and legs in alternance.

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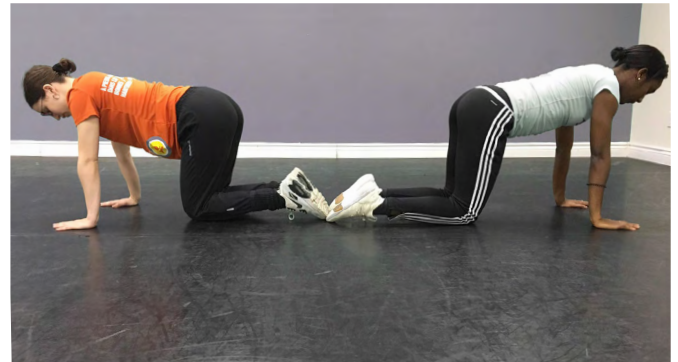
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ACROYOGA POSTURES

A. CAT AND PLANK

- Instruct the base to drop down on all fours like a cat.
- Instruct the flyer to drop down on all fours facing the opposite direction.
- Instruct the flyer to place his or her feet on the base's lower back and hold the position for two breaths.



B. DOUBLE CAT

- Instruct the base to drop down on all fours like a cat.
- Instruct the flyer to climb on top of the base, also in cat position, hands placed on the base's shoulders, knees on the base's lower back. Instruct them to hold the position for two breaths.

Variation:

- In posture B, the participants may raise their arms in alternance.

NOTES • Don't forget to alternate positions.



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GAME 1 NINJA!

- 1 Have the participants spread out across the space and walk around without coming into contact.
- 2 Instruct the participants to assume a ninja position when you cry "NINJA!"
- 3 Check the stability of their ninja positions and highlight the importance of being firmly grounded in acroyoga.

Variation(s):

- Shrink the size of the space, still instructing the participants to hold a stable position while avoiding physical contact with the others.

GAME 2 HYPNOTISM

One participant guides a second participant, using a hand placed near the head, back or another part of the latter's body, but without touching. The "hypnotized" participant must follow his or her "hypnotist."

Ex.: The hypnotist can place a hand near the head, back or legs, etc.

GAME OF TRUST [BALANCE]

- 1 Form teams of three participants. Have one participant stand in the middle, between the two others.
- 2 Instruct the two participants on the end to support the person in the center, rocking that person forwards and backwards without dropping him or her. This exercise is aimed helping the participants on the ends build stability. Alternate positions after 30 seconds.

PREPARATION PERIOD

HANDSHAKE OF FRIENDSHIP

- Instruct the participants to shake hands (right hand to right hand or left to left).
- Instruct one participant to drop down into seated position on the floor while maintaining the handshake, and then stand up again.
- The standing participant should be in control of the other participant as he or she drops down and stands up again.

PLANK

- Instruct the participants to lie on their stomachs, hands in push-up position, toes on the floor.
- On your signal, instruct the participants to straighten their arms and rise up into plank position, holding the position for two or three breaths.

DOWNDOG VARIATION

- Instruct the participants to start in downdog (arms and legs forming an inverted V).
- Instruct the participants to walk their hands toward their feet, keeping the knees slightly bent.
- Repeat five times.

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ACROYOGA POSTURES

A. DOUBLE PLANK

- Instruct the one participant, the flyer, to go into plank position.
- Instruct a second participant, the base, to go into plank position behind the flyer. Have the flyer place his or her feet on the base's shoulders, holding the position for three breaths.



B. OPPOSITE PLANK

- Instruct one participant to lie down on his or her back with arms raised, as though in plank position.
- Instruct the flyer to place his or her ankles in the hands of the base.
- Instruct the flyer to place his or her hands on the ankles of the base to form a rectangle. Make sure the position is held for two breaths.



NOTES • Don't forget to alternate positions!

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