



Setting up a Yoga Studio

*A Conversation – New Ashtanga Yoga Studio
Owner and Master Teacher James Bryan*

Question:

Do you have any recommendations on the best way to set up a Yoga Studio?

Answer:

We have learned some things in setting up a few yoga schools and the 1st thing you need to do is to ensure you negotiate reasonably priced rent/lease. If you can find reasonably priced rent/lease then it is worthwhile signing up for 3 - 5 years, so you can capitalize on your investment. At our last school, we had 225 sq meters and the annual rent was \$22,000 (a bargain). Because this was such a good deal we signed a lease for 3 x 3 x 3 years. We invested \$100,000 on renovations and it takes time to earn the money back.

Before signing any documentation, you need to find out from the local council about the zoning and parking requirements. If you don't do this and you and someone reports you, you could be shut down or be forced to pay a huge fine, e.g. \$25,000.

When offering a Timetable, we found out that you cannot change this without upsetting students, as some of them organize their lives around it. So, think it through and only make changes carefully and most certainly advise your students at least 3 months in advance.

As you probably know, the majority of students will always be beginners or experienced beginners. Very few students have the mind-set to work up to higher levels. We think it is a good idea to design the Timetable so there is room for your students to progress, but at the same time most of your income is going to be coming from the lower levels.

Yoga schools have proliferated to the point that in the major cities there are yoga schools on every corner, i.e. the competition is intense. Because of this situation I am not sure opening a yoga school makes business sense anymore. And it is not just yoga schools, gyms, fitness centers, dance studios, pilates studios, and even the local council will offer yoga classes.

It is really basic, but we found being friendly and welcoming to work to our benefit. For our 4 busiest classes (beginners) we actually hired a "doorman" to meet and greet the students and show them where everything is (changing area, where to put shoes, toilet, and help them sign in). It helps if they can sign in on your website software, e.g MindBody.

As far as your student fees, it is important to calculate your break-even point and then include teachers wages and some profit.

I highly recommend getting a good accountant and discussing whether your teachers will be classified by the ATO as employees or sub-contractors. If they are employees you have a lot more paper work, plus expenses to consider.

You also need to discuss what legal entity you want to set up. We registered a trust, so our official business name is, "Yoga Training Systems Pty Limited, as Trustee for the Nicky Knoff Yoga Trust, Trading as Knoff Yoga".

Luckily with Ashtanga you have a system to follow and many potential students already know what it is.

You will most likely have many more questions once you start in earnest and I am happy to assist if I can.

Namaste

James E. Bryan

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Director & Master Teacher