



**Santhika
Retreat
Center**

5 Yoga Poses for Bad Habits

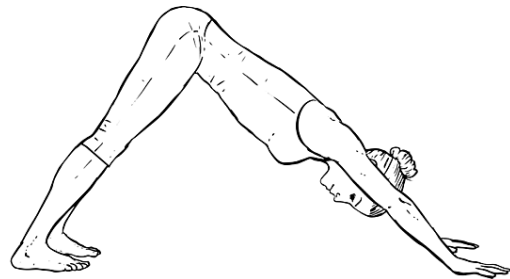
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Everyone has bad habits that they wish they could break, but when you're stuck in that vicious cycle yourself, it can seem impossible to get out of it. A few yoga poses for bad habits might just help you break yours once and for all, but really, it's the defining principles of yoga itself that can teach you how to find a lifestyle and a set of habits that work for you, and how to release the ones that aren't serving you.

1. Downward Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana)

Downward facing dog is a pretty common pose in most yoga classes, but no matter how many times you practice it, there's always room for growth. Much like a bad habit itself, think of down dog as a constant work-in-progress: It's not something you'll automatically master on the first try, and it might be something you never fully master.

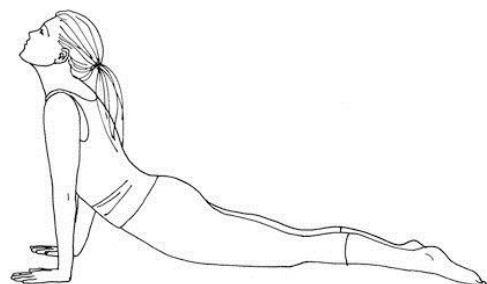
Feeling comfortable in adho mukha svanasana takes time and practice, but if you make it a point to include this asana in your regular routine, you'll see yourself gain more strength, balance, and discipline — all of which can help teach you how to overcome your bad habits off the mat.



2. Upward Facing Dog (Urdhva Mukha Svanasana)

When it comes to certain yoga poses — particularly ones you've practiced over and over again on the mat — it can be easy to form bad habits within your own physical practice, and find yourself flowing through the motions on autopilot, sheerly because you already think you know what the pose is supposed to look or feel like.

Specifically, in upward facing dog, there are plenty of things you might be able to clean up a bit with some extra self-awareness, like where you're lifting your body from, or the positioning of your neck. These little tweaks can help your body feel much more supported and properly aligned. Plus, once you prove to yourself how easily you're able to make changes in urdhva mukha svanasana, you'll feel totally unstoppable when it comes to breaking toxic habits in other areas of your life. Remember, these little adjustments, both on and off the mat, can go a long way.



3. Camel Pose (Ustrasana)

Camel pose lifts and expands your energy reserves, opening your heart chakra and releasing any stagnation you've been holding onto.



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While you're in ustrasana, think about the fact that you always have the opportunity to be whatever you want to be. Just because you were someone else yesterday does not mean you are under any obligation to be the same person today. Picture your old habits literally exiting your body through your open chest as you bend backward in this luxurious, shoulder-opening pose.

Look, backbends won't magically rid you of, or destroy, your bad habits overnight. But they can give you the tools to help you focus on who you really are, and what you need to do to become the person you truly want to be.



4. Child's Pose (Balasana)

Resting in a restorative child's pose gives you the opportunity to close your eyes, shut out the rest of the world for a moment, and use your breath to find a calm sense of stillness. Changing yourself is hard, no matter what the circumstances are, and sometimes, you just need this one quiet moment to yourself.



5. Breath Of Fire /Kapalbhati

Routinely practicing breath of fire can be extremely beneficial when you're trying to overcome a bad habit. Any time you feel tempted to indulge in your bad habit — whether it's nail-biting, procrastinating, or scrolling through Facebook out of boredom — simply remove yourself from the situation for a moment, and instead of giving into the toxic habit, distract yourself by practicing this cleansing breathing technique.

Kapalbhati reminds you that you do have the power to regain control of a stressful situation at any time, and that you can change whatever it is you want to change, whenever you, personally, are ready to do so. Breath of fire can make you feel more powerful and more sure of yourself in your actions, and it's up to you to harness that confidence to make real, long-lasting, positive changes for yourself.
