

Yoga Support for ADHD

An 8-pose gentle reset designed to offer movement, grounding and a manageable pause.

ADHD can affect attention, activity level, impulse control, emotional regulation, transitions and awareness of internal body signals. For some people, being asked to sit still and clear the mind is not calming at all. A movement-first yoga practice can offer another route into regulation.

Movement before stillness

This sequence begins with standing and purposeful movement before gradually moving towards quieter positions. There is no requirement to be perfectly still, empty your mind or complete every pose. Fidgeting, changing position, using music, shortening the practice or repeating a favourite movement are all valid adaptations.

8-pose gentle reset - 5 to 10 minutes

1	Mountain pose	30-45 sec
2	Shake and pause	30-60 sec
3	Half sun flow	3-5 rounds
4	Warrior II	20-30 sec each side
5	Balance pose	10-30 sec each side
6	Forward fold	20-40 sec
7	Knees to chest	30-60 sec
8	Resting pose	1-2 min

Make it ADHD-friendly

Keep instructions short. Put the pose list where it can be seen. Use a timer if time disappears easily. Try the practice at a predictable transition point such as before work, after work, before a task or when returning home. If eight poses feel like too many, choose three.

The eight movements

Choose the version that gives your body useful input without strain.

1. Mountain pose

Stand with feet comfortably apart. Notice pressure through the feet and let the arms hang naturally. You can sway gently rather than trying to be completely still.

2. Shake and pause

Shake the hands, arms or legs in a comfortable way, then pause briefly and notice the contrast. Keep the movement controlled and stop if you feel dizzy or unwell.

3. Half sun flow

Use a simple repeated sequence of reaching up and folding or hinging forward. Repetition can give the brain a predictable rhythm. Use a chair if helpful.

4. Warrior II

Step into a comfortable stance and open the arms. Reduce the depth of the bend as needed. Notice the feeling of pushing through the feet and reaching through the hands.

5. Balance pose

Use a wall or chair. The aim is not perfect balance; it is to give attention a clear physical target. Toe taps or a supported one-leg stance are enough.

6. Forward fold

Keep knees soft and use a chair. Let this be a small hinge rather than a deep stretch. Come back up slowly.

7. Knees to chest

Lie back or recline and bring the knees towards you only as far as comfortable. A gentle rock can be used if stillness feels uncomfortable.

8. Resting pose

Rest in any position that feels workable. You can keep your eyes open, hold a cushion, use quiet music or set a short timer so the ending feels defined.

Sensory differences matter

ADHD often co-occurs with sensory differences. Bright light, scratchy clothing, silence, strong smells or an uncomfortable floor can make a practice harder. Adjust the environment rather than assuming you are doing yoga incorrectly.

ADHD, regulation and everyday life

Yoga is a support tool, not a treatment for ADHD.

Attention can be supported by the body

A short physical sequence can provide an external structure for attention. Counting repetitions, following a visible sequence or alternating left and right movements can give the mind something concrete to return to when attention drifts.

Transitions and task initiation

Some people find a brief movement routine useful between activities. It can become a bridge between one state and another: waking and starting the day, finishing work and coming home, or feeling stuck and beginning a task.

Emotional regulation

Strong emotions can arrive quickly with ADHD. Movement may provide a safe way to discharge some physical activation before deciding what to do next. The aim is not to suppress emotion, but to create enough space to respond with greater choice.

Avoid turning it into another demand

A wellbeing practice loses value if it becomes another standard you feel you have failed. Missing days, changing the sequence and doing only one pose are not failures. Build around what your nervous system actually uses.

Professional support

Yoga does not replace ADHD assessment, medication, psychological support, occupational therapy or other appropriate healthcare. Seek individual advice if symptoms are significantly affecting daily life or if you have health conditions that affect exercise.

ADHD movement check-in

Use this as a flexible experiment rather than a streak to maintain.

Day	Energy before	Movement used	After	What helped?
Mon				
Tue				
Wed				
Thu				
Fri				
Sat				
Sun				

Reflection prompts

Before: Do I need more movement or less stimulation? Am I restless, stuck, overwhelmed, under-stimulated or tired?

After: Is starting the next thing any easier? Which movement gave me the most useful input? What would make this easier to return to?

A message from Maggie

With ADHD, support does not have to look like sitting perfectly still. Sometimes regulation begins by moving first. You can shorten this, change it, repeat the same pose, use a chair or stop halfway through. The useful practice is the one that works with your brain and body rather than asking you to fight them.

Evidence-informed note

Physical activity and mind-body practices can support general wellbeing, stress management and aspects of attention for some people, but evidence varies and yoga should not be presented as a cure for ADHD. This resource is educational and is designed to sit alongside appropriate individual support.

Move gently. Breathe naturally. Use props. Stop if you feel pain, dizziness or unwell. Seek appropriate professional advice if you have medical concerns, are pregnant or are returning after illness or injury.