



## Yoga for Runners

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Regular yoga practice can be a great complement to your running workouts. "Lots of runners cross-train with yoga, which builds core strength and flexibility, and improves performance through breathing, mindfulness, and fine-tuning your body's proprioceptive response," says Dana Slamp of Pure Yoga, the studio that's home to NYRR's Yoga for Runners classes. Slamp adds that for time-crunched New Yorkers, trouble spots can be addressed with five minutes of deep core work (leg lifts, etc.) to trigger the deep abdominal muscles, and by building ankle strength and flexibility through one-legged balance poses, the downward-dog pose, or chair lifts (sitting in a chair and lifting each heel separately for several reps, holding each lift for four counts).

For busy athletes, Slamp recommends the following short flow of post-run stretches:

- **Low Lunge Twist (Iliotibial band stretch):** Lunge your right foot forward, keeping your knee above your ankle. Raise your right arm to the sky for five to eight breaths. (If you're too tight for this, place your back knee on the ground.)
- **Half-Monkey Pose (hamstring stretch):** From the Low Lunge Twist position, place your back knee on the ground. Shift your hips back, place your hands on the floor (or on blocks on either side of you), and flex your front foot to distribute the stretch through the hamstrings.
- **Low Lunge (hip flexors and quads stretch):** From the Half-Monkey Pose position, bend your front knee again, lift your hands to your thigh (or higher in the air), and shift your weight forward until you feel a stretch in the front of your hip. (If this bothers your kneecap, place a towel under your knee.)

Once you've completed the flow with your right foot forward, return to standing and repeat, starting with your left foot. "All stretches should be done with five to eight slow, deep breaths through the nose, to avoid over-stretching, build awareness, and access the parasympathetic nervous system," Slamp says. She adds that "the best way to learn all the poses, of course, is with an experienced instructor at a yoga class."



### ABOUT THIS CONTRIBUTOR

#### Dana Slamp

Dana Slamp is a senior teacher at Pure Yoga who leads teacher trainings and workshops across the country. Her work with runners has been featured by CBS News, and her incorporation of music in yoga was covered by ABC News.

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