

What's Trending?

Agencies Jump on this Trend, Which Moves Yoga to the Water

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In recent years, one of the fastest growing recreational activities has been stand up paddleboarding and related activities. While paddleboarding is nothing new, its popularity has steadily increased since 2009. As the paddle boarding industry has grown, innovative people have found other ways to utilize the boards, including Stand Up Paddle board (SUP) yoga.

Offered primarily in the summer on outdoor bodies of water, SUP yoga offers a new challenge to yoga practitioners by adding a stability element. Like any other yoga class, the instructor moves the class through various positions, but they are performed on a paddleboard that is floating in the water. SUP yoga has recently seen a surge in popularity.



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The Basics

SUP yoga began where many water sports do – in oceans and other large bodies of water. However, for many agencies (particularly those that are land-locked), SUP yoga classes take place at a lake, reservoir, or another outdoor body of water. Class participants are given an orientation on the equipment, then they move to a centralized location at which they anchor their boards. Once the boards are in place, participants are guided through a routine that can last for between 45 and 60 minutes. Participants at all levels are welcome to join, and classes range in price depending on where they are offered.

History

Paddleboard yoga caught the attention of many news organizations and trade publications as early as 2011. Its origins are not well detailed, but they may stem either from a desire to add a challenge to yoga by introducing a stability element, or from practitioners who enjoy doing yoga poses outside while connecting with nature. It is possible that SUP yoga was motivated by both factors. One of the practice's main appeals is that it offers more of a core workout and could help you perfect your yoga technique once you've moved back indoors. A 2013 *Huffington Post* article titled, "[10 Reasons You Should Try Yoga on a Stand Up Paddleboard](#)" states, "You'll be more in tune with your poses... For example, during downward dog, if you have more weight on one side, your board will let you know."

Following its rapid growth in popularity, some providers took SUP yoga indoors, offering classes at indoor pools in the community. This solution offered a chance for people who may be less comfortable in open water, or for those who live in colder climates, to experience a class.

Get in on the Trend

To offer a SUP yoga class in your agency, you must first determine whether or not interest exists in the community. You'll need an indoor or outdoor body of water large enough to accommodate about 10 paddle boards, the boards themselves, paddles, and anchoring equipment. It is imperative to have an instructor that is trained in paddle board equipment and safety, so many agencies contract these classes out to professional, certified instructors. However, if your agency chooses to hire an instructor in-house, there are certification programs available. Life jackets are not a standard requirement for SUP yoga, but they should be on hand for participants who want them. Public agencies offering SUP yoga and other paddle board classes usually list in the class description that participants must be able to swim before signing up for the class.

For most agencies, purchasing SUP yoga equipment can benefit the agency in many ways. Once your agency has paddle boarding equipment, it can be used for a variety of other paddle sports, including stand up paddle boarding, paddle board polo, paddle board boot camp, and many others. Your investment in one program could potentially open your agency up for a wide variety of programming opportunities.

For yoga practitioners in your agency, a SUP yoga class may be just what they are looking for to change up their routine. With paddle sports growing so quickly, jumping in on this trend may be beneficial for your agency – rather than taking classes with private providers, your current users can take advantage of your paddleboard yoga class. Others, who may not be taking advantage of your programs and services could also discover the breadth of your agency's offerings by taking a paddleboard yoga class.



*SUP Yoga instructor training class in Sarasota, Florida.
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