



Registered Yoga Teacher (RYT) Handbook:
A Guide for Aspiring and Registered Yoga Teachers

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Welcome to Yoga Alliance

Welcome to the Yoga Alliance community! This handbook is for yoga teachers who have or wish to earn a Registered Yoga Teacher (RYT) designation.

You may become a RYT if and only if you attended a teacher training program at a Registered Yoga School (RYS). The RYT designations indicate that your training and experience meet our standards. These standards have become a benchmark for distinguishing knowledgeable yoga teachers.

As part of our credentialing system, RYT's and RYS's participate in a feedback system, which helps ensure the quality of future teacher training programs and supports the integrity of our credentialing system. The social ratings and comments of past trainees may be shown on our public directory, providing insight into the school's culture and training experience for potential trainees.



These two systems combined—the traditional credentialing system and social ratings—form our unique Social Credentialing system.



As a teacher, you are asked in your application to Yoga Alliance to evaluate your training experience and whether or not you would recommend the training to others. You can learn more about the RYS evaluation in the “Evaluating Your Training” section of this handbook.



This handbook is intended as a resource for how to earn and keep your RYT designation.


Teacher Credentials

This table shows the training and teaching hours required to earn each RYT designation.

Designation	Requirements
	<p>RYT 200®</p> <p>Training requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completed a 200-hour training program with a RYS 200 <p>Teaching hour requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None <p>Teaching time requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None <p>Teachers can register as a RYT 200 if they have successfully completed a 200-hour yoga teacher training program that is registered with Yoga Alliance. All training hours must come from the same school and multiple trainings cannot be combined to meet the 200-hour requirement. Teaching hours are not required for this designation.</p>
	<p>RYT 500®</p> <p>Training requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completed a 500-hour training program with a RYS 500, OR ✓ Completed a 200-hour training program with a RYS 200 AND an additional 300 hours of training with either the same RYS or a different RYS registered as a RYS 300 <p>Teaching hour requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Has at least 100 hours of teaching experience since completing a RYS 200 or 500 <p>Teaching time requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None <p>Teachers can register as a RYT 500 if they have successfully completed a 500-hour yoga teacher training program that is registered with Yoga Alliance. The 500 hours of training can either come from one registered school or can be a combination of a 200-hour program plus 300 hours of advanced training from a different registered school. Applicants must submit 100 teaching hours for this designation which must be performed after completing a RYS 200 or 500. Once</p>

	<p>registered, a RYT 500 is able to provide continuing education classes and workshops to other teachers.</p>
	<p>E-RYT 200®</p> <p>Training requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completed a 200-hour training program with a RYS 200 <p>Teaching hour requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Has at least 1,000 hours of teaching experience since completing a RYS 200 <p>Teaching time requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Has taught for at least 2 years since completing a RYS 200 <p>Teachers can register as an E-RYT 200 if they have successfully completed a 200-hour yoga teacher training program that is registered with Yoga Alliance and have taught a minimum of two years since their date of training completion. All training hours must come from the same school and multiple trainings cannot be combined to meet the 200-hour requirement. Applicants must submit 1,000 teaching hours for this designation which must be performed after completing a RYS 200. Once registered, an E-RYT 200 is able to provide continuing education classes and workshops to other teachers and can be a Lead Trainer of a 200-hour teacher training program.</p>
	<p>E-RYT 200, RYT 500®</p> <p>Training requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completed a 500-hour training program with a RYS 500, OR ✓ Completed a 200-hour training program with a RYS 200 AND an additional 300 hours of training with either the same RYS or a different RYS registered as a RYS 300 <p>Teaching hour requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Has at least 1,000 hours of teaching experience since completing a RYS 200 or 500 <p>Teaching time requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Has taught for at least 2 years since completing a RYS 200 or 500 <p>Teachers can register as an E-RYT 200, RYT 500 if they have successfully completed a 500-hour yoga teacher training program that is registered with Yoga Alliance and have taught a minimum of two years since completing a RYS 200 or RYS 500. The 500 hours of training can either come from one school or can be a</p>

	<p>combination of a 200-hour program plus 300 hours of advanced training from a different RYS. Applicants must submit 1,000 teaching hours for this designation which must be performed after completing a RYS 200. Once registered, an E-RYT 200, RYT 500 is able to provide continuing education classes and workshops to other teachers and can be a Lead Trainer of a 200-hour teacher training program.</p>
	<p>E-RYT 500®</p> <p>Training requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completed a 500-hour training program with a RYS 500, OR ✓ Completed a 200-hour training program with a RYS 200 AND an additional 300 hours of training with either the same RYS or a different RYS registered as a RYS 300 <p>Teaching hour requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Has at least 2,000 hours of teaching experience since completing a RYS 200 or 500. At least 500 of these hours must be taught after completing a RYS 300 or RYS 500 <p>Teaching time requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Has taught for at least 4 years since completing a RYS 200 or RYS 500 <p>Teachers can register as an E-RYT 500 if they have successfully completed a 500-hour yoga teacher training program that is registered with Yoga Alliance and have taught a minimum of four years since completing a RYS 200 or RYS 500. The 500 hours of training can either come from one school or can be a combination of a 200-hour program plus 300 hours of advanced training from a different RYS. Applicants must submit 2,000 teaching hours for this designation; At least 500 of these hours must be taught after completing a RYS 300 or RYS 500. Once registered, an E-RYT 500 is able to provide continuing education classes and workshops to other teachers and can be a Lead Trainer of a 200-hour, 300-hour, or 500-hour teacher training program.</p>
	<p>Registered Children's Yoga Teacher (RCYT®)</p> <p>Training requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completed a 200-hour training program with a RYS 200 ✓ Completed a 95-hour training program with a Registered Children's Yoga School (RCYT) <p>Teaching hour requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Has at least 30 hours of teaching experience in children's yoga since

	<p>completing a RCYS</p> <p>Teaching time requirements: - None</p> <p>Teachers can register as a RCYT if they have successfully completed both a 200-hour yoga teacher training program and a 95-hour children's yoga training—in either order—that are registered with Yoga Alliance. Applicants must submit 30 teaching hours in children's yoga which must be performed after completing a program with a RCYS (Registered Children's Yoga School). Currently, teachers with significant experience in children's yoga prior to 2011 can also register as a RCYT via grandfathering.</p>
	<p>Registered Prenatal Yoga Teacher (RPYT®)</p> <p>Training requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completed a 200-hour training program with a RYS 200 ✓ Completed a 85-hour training program with a Registered Prenatal Yoga School (RPYT) <p>Teaching hour requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Has at least 30 hours of teaching experience in prenatal yoga since graduating from a RPYS <p>Teaching time requirements: - None</p> <p>Teachers can register as a RPYT if they have successfully completed both a 200-hour yoga teacher training program and an 85-hour prenatal yoga training—in either order—that are registered with Yoga Alliance. Applicants must submit 30 teaching hours in prenatal yoga which must be performed after completing a program with a RPYS (Registered Prenatal Yoga School).</p> <p>Currently, teachers with significant experience in prenatal yoga prior to 2011 can also register as a RPYT via grandfathering.</p>

Registering as a RYT

To register with Yoga Alliance, you first must complete a teacher training program with a RYS. Yoga Alliance does not accept teachers who have completed teacher training programs at non-registered schools. Check our online directory to verify that the school where you train[ed] is actively registered with us or was actively registered with us when you completed your teacher training.

If the school you trained at is no longer active with Yoga Alliance, but was active when you completed the training, you can still register. In this scenario, Yoga Alliance staff will verify your registration using your certificate of completion submitted during the application process described below.

Application Process

Applications must be submitted through our online system. Review the following steps. Current RYT's will be prompted to upgrade their designation by the system when they qualify (see "How to Upgrade Your Designation").

You can apply to be a RYT in one of two ways:

- 1. You initiate** the registration request after you have completed training.
With this option, you create an online account and select "Register as a RYT." The application portal will prompt you to submit: your name, your RYS's name, desired designation (e.g., RYT 200), the date you completed your program, and a digital copy of your yoga teacher training certificate. After you submit this information, the system will alert your RYS of your request and ask the school to confirm that you completed their teacher training. When the school confirms, you will receive an email inviting you to complete your registration.
- 2. Your RYS initiates** the request for registration.
With this option, the RYS where you train[ed] initiates your registration. The school creates your online account by entering your information (first name, last name, and email). Our system will email you an invitation to complete your registration.

With either option, upon receiving your invitation to register you will need to sign in to your account and follow the prompts in our online system. In the online system, you will be prompted to submit the appropriate fees and an evaluation of your RYS. You will receive a confirmation email when your registration is complete.

Application Fees

When you submit your application for registration, you will need to remit both an application and annual registration fee. All application fees are non-refundable. A list of current fees for each designation can be found on our website.

Evaluating Your Training – Social Credentialing

The final step of registering is completing an evaluation of the RYS where you trained. You play an important role in ensuring Yoga Alliance registers quality teacher training programs. The school where you trained will be evaluated each time one of its trainees registers with us. Responses will not be anonymous; the RYS you attended will see your survey responses along with your name. They also have some control over what information (survey responses, comments) are available to the public.

The evaluation includes the following questions:

1. **Please indicate how closely the following syllabus reflects what you were taught in the teacher training program.** *This question and its responses are optional for public posting.*
2. **To what extent do you feel this program met the following learning objectives [provided by Yoga Alliance and possibly the RYS] (i.e., what you were expected to learn and be able to do upon completion of the program)?** *This question and its responses are optional for public posting.*
3. **During your training, did you study for at least # hours (not counting breaks) in the physical presence of one or more of the following lead trainers [names of Lead Trainers]?** *This question is not available for public posting.*
4. **How likely are you to recommend this teacher training program to a friend or fellow yoga teacher?** *Responses to this question will be posted publicly through the Overall School Rating (defined below).*

In addition to these basic questions, schools might elect to write a few of their own survey questions. You can write any general comments about your training experience at the end of the survey.

The Overall RYS Rating, which appears on the school's online profile, is a 1 to 5 star rating calculated from trainees' responses to the question: **How likely are you to recommend this teacher training program to a friend or fellow yoga teacher?** You will be asked to answer on a scale of 0 to 10; responses will be aggregated and translated



into 1 to 5 stars (because the 1 to 5 scale maintains consistency between the other question response formats and other online rating systems).

Note: Schools will be required to post a syllabus starting in June 2014. If you are registering with us before June, your school's syllabus may not be posted and you may not be able to answer all evaluation questions related to the syllabus, overall training learning objectives, and Lead Trainer(s).

Tips for Commenting on Your Training Experience

Practice these principles when commenting on the teacher training program you attended:

- **Be constructive.** Provide relevant information about what you think they did well and/or what they can improve on.
- **Be authentic.** Think about how well you can articulate your thoughts and feelings about your experience with the program.
- **Be respectful.** Schools will look to your feedback for growth and enrichment; provide them the best opportunity to learn from your comments.
- **Be thoughtful.** Your comments are for others to learn from, so consider the length of your comments and how well you pay attention to the details of grammar and spelling.
- **Be factual.** Keep your comments focused on the facts of your experience and the specific changes that you would like to see in the program, as this will provide a clearer picture for the school to learn from.

Some New Rules for Registering

Effective December 1, 2013, we will no longer accept retroactive teacher registrations from RYSs. If you completed the training before the RYS applied to Yoga Alliance, you cannot register as a RYT.

If your school was inactive when you completed your training, you can still register if your school has renewed, provided their registration lapse does/did not exceed six months. To discourage schools from remaining inactive for six months and compromising your eligibility to become a RYT, we remind inactive schools to renew.

How to Upgrade Your Designation

All RYT's seeking to upgrade their designation will follow the same application process as outlined in the "Application Process" section except for those upgrading from RYT to

E-RYT of the same level (e.g., RYT 200 to E-RYT 200). All registrants should maintain their teaching hours within their online account. When your teaching hours and time requirements are met for the appropriate E-RYT level, you will automatically receive a notification from us to upgrade your designation.

How to Maintain Your Credential

To maintain your registration as a RYT you need to:

- Pay your annual renewal fee
- Complete continuing education, and
- Uphold our Code of Conduct

These requirements are explained in more detail in the following section. If you fail to meet these requirements you will become inactive and denied access to member benefits.

Continuing Education

To maintain your registration and to encourage you to continue to grow and develop your yoga teaching knowledge and skills, you must complete continuing education. Every three years, a Registered Yoga Teacher must complete:

- **30 hours of training** and
- **45 hours of teaching**

You must enter these hours of training and teaching in your online account.

Yoga Alliance does not pre-approve providers for continuing education. RYT's must simply ensure that continuing education is obtained from a qualified instructor and fits into one of our five educational categories (see "Glossary" for definitions).

We do not require a certificate of completion or attendance record for your continuing education. While our current process of verifying continuing education is built on the honor system, this may change in the future.

Annual Renewal Fees

To maintain your designation(s), all levels of RYT must pay an annual renewal fee which includes an annual membership assessment. A complete listing of these fees can be found on our website.

Code of Conduct

All RYT's agree to uphold the Code of Conduct when making application, upgrade, and renewal payments with Yoga Alliance. The complete Code of Conduct is available in this handbook in the "Agreements" section. Our code of conduct is a declaration of acceptable ethical and professional behavior by which all registrants agree to conduct

the teaching and business of yoga. It is not intended to supersede the ethics of any school or tradition but is intended to be a basis for yoga principles.

Promoting Your Credentials

Use of Registry Marks

Our standards are a measure of professional education and experience in the yoga teaching community. Whether you are a registered teacher or school, Yoga Alliance Registry's registry marks are globally-recognized symbols of standards-based knowledge in the field of yoga. Actively registered teachers and schools are encouraged to promote your credentials. In doing so, you support the professionalism of yoga teaching and actively participate in the effort to ensure that yoga students receive knowledgeable instruction and training.

For accuracy, RYSs® and RYT® should not use the terms “certified,” “accredited,” “approved,” or “licensed,” in reference to the designations awarded by YA. The correct term is “registered.”

Here are a few tips on how to use the RYT or RYS designations in your marketing materials:

- Include the RYT designation in your bio to let students know you are a registered teacher
- Put the RYT or RYS registry mark on your personal or school website and link back to your online profile
- Promote your credentials by displaying your designation on business cards, brochures and workshop flyers
- Add the RYT or RYS registry mark or letters to the bottom of your email signature

Need a copy of your RYT or RYS registry marks? Check out your online profile for downloadable versions of the registry marks you can add to your website. (Please note that we do not give out digital versions of the Yoga Alliance logo; our logo is for the exclusive use of Yoga Alliance.)

Profile Management

Your RYT designation gives your credibility; your online profile gives you visibility. Students looking for a yoga teacher or school search on YA's online directory. Your RYT profile is an opportunity to explain how you can meet students' needs as a teacher. If you use this resource to communicate who you are and what students should expect from your classes, you will be more likely to attract students who are enthusiastic about your teaching style. Craft a bio that reflects your strengths as a teacher and targets the



students who could most benefit from these strengths. You may also link to other personal online pages in your bio that you think will enhance your teacher profile—e.g., blog, website, etc.

Agreements

All RYTs using the Yoga Alliance website will electronically sign to the following agreements:

- **Terms of Use:** This governs the responsibilities you have as a user of the Yoga Alliance website. You will agree to these when you first create or sign-in to your account. The complete agreement will be made available to you at this time to review.
- **Membership Agreement:** This outlines the responsibilities you have as a Yoga Alliance member. You will agree to these when making application, upgrade, and renewal payments with Yoga Alliance. The complete agreement will be made available to you at this time to review.
- **Code of Conduct:** All RYTs agree to uphold the Code of Conduct when making application, upgrade, and renewal payments with Yoga Alliance. The complete Code of Conduct is below.

You will agree to uphold following Code of Conduct when you register with Yoga Alliance.

As a RYT, E-RYT or representative of a RYS, I agree to uphold the following ethical principles:

- Conduct myself in a professional and conscientious manner. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring that I live up to any commitments I make to my students or to the public, and ensuring that my practices and behavior conform to the representations I make about myself in holding myself out as a yoga practitioner who adheres to certain precepts.
- Acknowledge the limitations of my skills and scope of practice and where appropriate, refer students to seek alternative instruction, advice, treatment or direction.
- Create and maintain a safe, clean and comfortable environment for the practice of yoga.
- Encourage diversity by respecting all students regardless of age, physical limitations, race, creed, gender, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation.
- Respect the rights, dignity and privacy of all students.
- Avoid words and actions that constitute sexual harassment or harassment based on other legal protected characteristics.
- Adhere to the traditional yoga principles as written in the yamas and niyamas.

- Follow all local government and national laws that pertain to my yoga teaching and business.

I understand that Yoga Alliance Registry may revoke my right to use the Registry Mark for cause, including failure to uphold the standards set forth in the code of conduct. Prior to revoking my right to use the Registry Mark, Yoga Alliance Registry will provide me notice of the basis for the potential revocation and an opportunity to respond in writing. After review of the evidence, Yoga Alliance Registry will issue a decision as to whether to revoke my credentials, based on its reasonable judgment of the evidence before it. I agree to hold Yoga Alliance Registry harmless for any losses or damage I may incur as a consequence of the revocation of my credentials.

Glossary

Active or **actively registered**: To be *active* or *actively registered* means that you have met all the necessary criteria and can utilize the benefits of being registered with Yoga Alliance. These benefits range from the use of our registry marks in your marketing materials to having your profile on our website to special discounts on products and services from our approved partners. Criteria for being actively registered is outlined the “How to Maintain Your Credential” section.

Credentialing is the process by which we grant formal recognition to individuals and programs that meet our predetermined criteria and standards. Credentialing is the umbrella term that includes concepts like registration, accreditation, licensure and professional certification. However, it’s important to understand that Yoga Alliance does not currently provide certifications or licenses for teachers, nor do we currently provide accreditation for schools.

Educational categories are the areas of content that a RYS teacher training program must devote a minimum number of instruction hours to, they include the following:

- **Techniques, Training and Practice:** Topics in this category could include, but would not be limited to: asana, pranayama, kriyas, chanting, mantra, meditation and other traditional yoga techniques. Hours may include (1) analytical training in how to teach and practice the techniques, and (2) guided practice of the techniques themselves.
- **Teaching Methodology:** Topics in this category could include, but may not be limited to: communication skills such as group dynamics, time management, and the establishment of priorities and boundaries; how to address the specific needs of individuals and special populations, to the degree possible in a group setting; principles of demonstration, observation, assisting and correcting; teaching styles; qualities of a teacher; the student learning process; business aspects of teaching yoga.
- **Anatomy and Physiology:** Topics in this category could include, but would not be limited to: both human physical anatomy and physiology (bodily systems, organs, etc.) and energy anatomy and physiology (chakras, nadis, etc.). This includes both the study of the subject and application of its principles to yoga practice (benefits, contraindications, healthy movement patterns, etc).
- **Yoga Philosophy, Lifestyle and Ethics for Yoga Teachers:** Topics in this category could include, but would not be limited to: the study of yoga philosophies and traditional texts, such as the Yoga Sutras and Hatha Yoga



Pradipika; yoga lifestyle, such as the precept of non-violence (ahimsa), and the concepts of dharma and karma; ethics for yoga teachers, such as those involving teacher – student relationships and community; understanding the value of teaching yoga as a service and being of service to others through yoga (seva).

- **Practicum:** Topics in this category could include, but would not be limited to: practice teaching; receiving and giving feedback; observing others teaching; assisting students while someone else is teaching.
- **General Background in the Specialty Area:** This category is specific to the prenatal and children’s yoga teacher training standards. View the standards on the website for details of what is included.

Lead Trainers are actively registered E-RYT’s that lead a RYS training program. Lead Trainers are absolutely necessary in order to become a RYS of any kind.

A **qualified instructor** for continuing education is anyone that carries the following designations or qualifications:

- RYT 500
- E-RYT 200
- E-RYT 200, RYT 500
- E-RYT 500, or
- Someone with a relevant degree, certification, or substantial education and teaching experience (100+ hours) in their area of expertise. These instructors may only teach in their area of expertise.

Registration is the type of credential that we use to list teachers and schools with specified education and experience requirements on our registry.

RYS stands for “Registered Yoga School.” RYSs can teach their training programs at the 200-hour level, 300-hour level, or 500-hour level. Hence, our credentials for schools are: RYS 200, RYS 300, and RYS 500. Schools can have specialty credentials as well. Our current specialty designations for schools are RCYS (Registered Children’s Yoga School) or RPYS (Registered Prenatal Yoga School).

RYT stands for “Registered Yoga Teacher.” RYT’s may either be registered at the 200-hour or 500-level, similar to schools. In contrast to schools, we do not have a designation for a RYT at the 300-hour level. Teachers can also have specialties if they complete a program from a specialty yoga school. Our current specialties for teachers are RCYT (Registered Children’s Yoga Teacher) or RPYT (Registered Prenatal Yoga

Teacher). Finally, teachers can also become E-RYT's—Experienced Registered Yoga Teachers by upgrading their RYT designation when they have met the teacher hour requirements for each level. One can become an E-RYT at the 200-hour or 500-hour level.

Registry marks are the special marks you are allowed to use when actively registered with Yoga Alliance that show off your designation (e.g. RYT 200). A registry mark is not the same thing as the Yoga Alliance logo.

Standards or **Yoga Alliance Registry standards** are the requirement and basis for registration of a school or teacher. The complete listing of our requirements can be found on our website.