

Sanskrit for Yogis™

Introduction to Nāda: The Yoga of Sacred Sound



WHY LEARN SANSKRIT?

The Ancient Vibratory Language

Sanskrit is an ancient, precise, vibratory language. As one of the oldest known languages in existence, all languages have their roots in Sanskrit. The ancient Seers, the *Rṣis*, who cognized these subtle sounds of creation emanating at the Source, identified Sanskrit as the language of Consciousness.

The Sanskrit name for an object is derived from the combination of precise sound vibrations and silent gaps emanating from the structure of that object. This is why *Saṁskṛita* means, “perfected language” in the sense that both Relative and Absolute aspects of existence unite as vibrations of Consciousness.

Just as the sounds of Sanskrit arise from the basis of creation, they are also the means through which the mind is directed back to its Source. In this way, the Sanskrit language provides a powerful yogic tool for “quieting the fluctuations of mind” as described in Patañjali’s Yoga Sūtras. When Sanskrit verses are properly pronounced, the mind is pulled into the field of Pure Consciousness – the highest meditative reality. Sanskrit is the most effective sound medium to induce deep states of transcendence, or meditative awareness, to transition the mind from chaos to eternal tranquility at its source – to *Samādhi*.

LEARNING SANSKRIT IS EASY

Traditional Methods of Learning

Sanskrit for Yogis™ – Introduction to Nāda: the Yoga of Sacred Sound is the first in a series of three courses designed for learning Sanskrit. This introductory course offers the student practitioner or teacher of Yoga immersion in the basics for learning Sanskrit.

The course structure provides the platform for easily learning Sanskrit in a fun, experiential way that is fully in keeping with the traditional methods of how Sanskrit has been taught for thousands of years.

Sanskrit for Yogis™ – Introduction to Nāda: the Yoga of Sacred Sound focuses on Sanskrit fundamentals. You will learn:

- 1) Cosmology of sound in Vedic tradition.
- 2) Alphabet – cosmic status & meaning, experiential basis in the body of the practitioner and proper pronunciation.
- 3) *Devanāgarī* characters, *saṁdhi* – ancient rules for how letters and words combine.
- 4) Traditional Vedic recitations – Hymn of Thanksgiving, Invocation to Gaṇeśa, Gāyatrī Mantra, Blessing from the Upaniṣads.

Through chanting recitations and observing the inner experience of the subtle vibrations from Sanskrit sounds, this course provides a profound way to begin mastery of the language. Proper pronunciation is next applied to reciting traditional Vedic sounds (or mantras) with special attention to precise intonation and invocation to internalize the language.

AN EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH

Subjective Inner Experience

An academic approach to studying languages stresses the need to maintain scholarly objectivity, however, Sanskrit is a language of sound vibration and personal inner experience that relies totally on subjectivity for its ultimate meaning, expression and comprehension. When observing Vedic *paṇḍits* in Sanskrit training from early childhood, it is apparent that the purest and most effective approach to learning this language is through direct subjective experience. A traditional student of Sanskrit will spend many years reciting and memorizing tens of thousands of verses from the Vedas, committing vast amounts of sacred knowledge to memory without ever dwelling on the specific meaning of the verses, their philosophical content, or their grammatical structure. It is only after a *paṇḍit* has memorized all the ritual chants and movements accompanying associated rituals (*yajñās*) that they will attempt to understand the meaning of what they have spent their entire daily childhood and adolescence reciting.

Yogis who study Sanskrit report that their yoga practice ascends to a deeper and more profound level. This is because they attain a solid basis for grasping the deep knowledge of Vedic tradition at the core of all Yogic practices. Also, reciting and meditating on the subtle sounds of Sanskrit attunes the physiology to the vibratory nature of consciousness at its source.

In the same way that the practice of Yoga *āsana* opens channels for the flow of energy through the body, both subtle and gross, the practice of Sanskrit opens channels for the flow of energy through the mind while simultaneously raising awareness to higher consciousness.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Katyayani Poole, Ph.D. holds a doctorate in Religious Studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara. A Sanskrit scholar with over 10 years of study, Katyayani became deeply absorbed in the sacred Vedic traditions of India. She lived and traveled throughout South Asia studying religious philosophies, meeting spiritual adepts from many traditions, and has dedicated over 18 years of her life to daily spiritual practices of



āsana, prāṇāyāma, meditation and Vedic chanting. Presently, Katyayani resides in the Boulder, CO, area where she's co-director of *Shruti Institute for Vedic Arts* teaching Vedic Astrology, Sanskrit and a variety of courses in World Wisdom Traditions.

From Shruti Institute

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