

SIMPLE STYLE

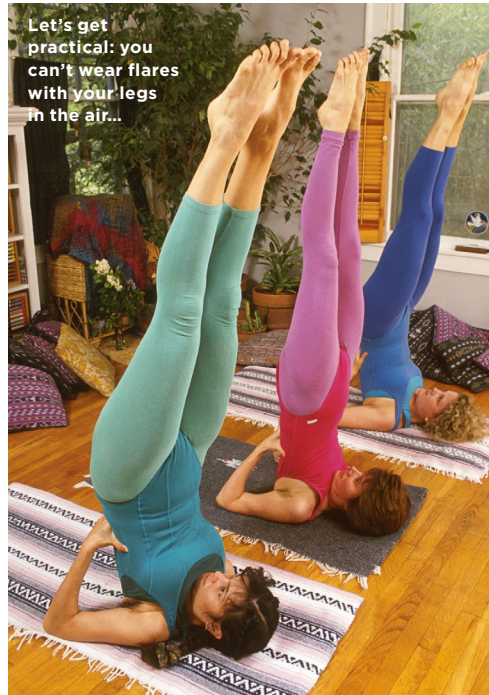
YOGA PANTS

Words: **CLARE GOGERTY**

We have been told countless times by yoga teachers that yoga isn't competitive; that you go at your own pace and only as far as your body will allow. Which is all very well when it comes to measuring how long you can stand in tree pose, or how deep is your downward dog, but when it comes to yoga gear, that's a whole other matter. That pair of baggy black leggings won't cut the mustard at a yoga class when all those around you are in close-fitting, snazzily patterned yoga pants made of technical fibres. Not only will your faithful leggings make you feel like a lesser being, but they will affect your yoga practice. The time has come to invest in a proper pair.

Like other fitness regimes, yoga has benefitted from increasingly sophisticated fabrics and manufacturing processes. Although leggings have existed since the days men wore them 'neath their doublet, it's only been since the start of this century that the demand for yoga pants has been so great and the choice so expansive.

What you choose depends largely on what kind of yoga you practise. Gentle, meditative yoga, like yin or kundalini, where you don't want to feel restricted, suit roomier styles like harem or flared pants.



“That pair of baggy black leggings won't cut the mustard at a yoga class”

More active yoga practices, such as ashtanga or vinyassa, demand light, streamlined versions that don't flop about during inversions. Hot Bikram yoga requires as little clothing as possible, so capri pants or shorts are the best option. All yoga pants should fit high and comfortably at the waist.

Choice of material is another consideration. Dynamic yoga practices best suit synthetic, well ventilated fabrics such as polyester, nylon and Spandex, that wick away sweat and offer support to potentially wobbly legs. Cotton, although a natural fibre, is not supportive or sweat-friendly, so is best restricted to gentler classes.

The trend for 'athleisure' wear, ie gym gear that looks good in the street, has created a world of yoga pants that can be worn on the mat and then, à la Gwyneth Paltrow, out to an avocado-based brunch. These garments, often cleverly structured with gussets and seams and in a range of trippy patterns can come with a hefty price tag, however. Fortunately, there are many reasonably priced versions that provide a stylish alternative to the baggy leggings of yore. **S**

PHOTOGRAPHY: TOFFOTO

THE UPDATE



Wunder Under Pant Hi-rise | £78

Failsafe black, snug, and nice and secure around the waist. lululemon.co.uk



Urban Goddess Satya Leggings Minty Monkey | £66.95

Snazzy with maximum comfort. yogamatters.com



Reversible Yoga Leggings | £90

Patterned on one side, plain black on the other. sweatybetty.com