



DRISHTI

“Dṛṣṭi means gazing point. There are nine dṛṣṭis in the āsana practice. If the dṛṣṭi indicated for the āsana is too difficult, one may always revert to nāsāgra dṛṣṭi. With time and practice, the proper dṛṣṭi for each posture will be possible. Dṛṣṭi improves concentration and brings about a realization of oneness during the practice. With the gaze focused in one place during our practice, we can be more present in the postures. This focus and awareness can carry over into our daily life.”

~ Sharath Jois

“By practicing these drishti (dṛṣṭi) points the mind no longer looks around, observing or judging, but instead becomes focused and soft. In the vinyasa system, drishti is one of the vital components to draw prana inwards. Prana follows awareness. If our awareness is scattered then our prana will mirror those same qualities and it will be evident in our behavior and life choices on and off the mat.”

~ Magnolia Zuniga

So where do you look, and what exactly are you supposed to be looking for?

1. Nasagrai Drishti – the space just beyond the tip of the nose. This is used most often and is the primary drishti in the sitting postures.
2. Nhrumadhya Drishti – the space between the eyebrows (ex. Purvottanasana)
3. Nabi Chakra Drishti – navel center (ex. Adho Mukha Svanasana)
4. Hastagrai Drishti, – hand (ex. Trikonasana)
5. Pahayoragrai Drishti – toes (ex. Savangasana)
6. Parshva Drishti – far to the right (ex. Supta Padangusthasana)
7. Parshva Drishti – far to the left (ex. Marichyasana C)
8. Angushtha Ma Dyai Drishti – thumbs (beginning of Suryanamaskara)
9. Urdhva Drishti or Antara Drishti – up to the sky (Virabhadrasana A). For Antara Drishti it is an inner gaze where the eyelids are closed and the gaze is directed in and up toward the light of the third eye.

Drishti, doesn't only do a fixed gaze, limit visual stimuli and distraction. It also enhances your physical practice by preserving and directing your energy, enhancing alignment and even deepens a pose.

Of course, no matter the direction in which we're physically looking, drishti teaches us to hone the practice of looking inward. Drishti is a soft-focus gaze, not a piercing stare, with relaxed, possibly even gently blurred eyes.