

GUIDE

What RYT, E-RYT and RYS actually mean

Yoga Alliance credentials explained: what RYT 200, RYT 500, RYS and membership fees mean for students.

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Yoga Alliance is a US nonprofit (a 501(c)(6)) that maintains a registry of yoga teachers and schools. Its credentials are voluntary; they are not a government licence. This guide summarises the Yoga Alliance training-options page, fetched on 2026-11-13.

The letters, decoded

- **RYS — Registered Yoga School.** The school-side credential. A school with RYS status can register its graduates with Yoga Alliance.
- **RYT — Registered Yoga Teacher.** The teacher credential. Per Yoga Alliance:
- **RYT 200** follows a 200-hour teacher training at a registered school. It is the foundational credential most new teachers start with.
- **RYT 500** follows 500 hours of training. It can be one 500-hour programme, or a 200-hour training plus a separate 300-hour advanced training, including at two different RYS schools. Applicants need at least 100 teaching hours before applying.
- **E-RYT 200 and E-RYT 500** are "experienced" credentials that add teaching-hour requirements on top of the training.
- **RCYT** is for children's yoga teachers; **RPYT** is for registered prenatal yoga teachers.
- **YACEP** is the continuing-education provider credential used for workshops and trainings.

What it costs the teacher

Yoga Alliance states that tuition is set by each school and ranges from US$1,500 to US$5,000 or more, depending on programme length, location and format. On the Yoga Alliance side there is a one-time application fee of US$50 and an annual membership fee of US$65 (page fetched 2026-11-13).

What it does not mean

MedlinePlus (reviewed 2026-07-22) notes that most yoga instructors have had some formal training but that "there is no objective yoga certification body." A credential tells you what training was completed and registered; it does not guarantee teaching quality. When you choose a teacher or a training, ask what the programme covers, who teaches it, and what the graduate can actually do afterwards. See our guide on choosing a yoga teacher training.

Frequently asked questions

Is RYT a licence?

No. Yoga Alliance registration is a voluntary credential, not a government licence or accreditation. There is no objective government certification body for yoga teachers.

What does RYS mean?

Registered Yoga School. It is the school-side credential that lets a school register its graduates with Yoga Alliance.

Sources

yogaalliance.org — https://yogaalliance.org/explore-training-options/
medlineplus.gov — https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000876.htm