

# How Animals Can Inspire Kids to Reach, Bend, and Stretch!

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By Maureen Frost

It's often easiest to get your kids excited about a new idea if you relate it to something they're already familiar with. In National Geographic Kids' recently released book, [Yoga Animals: A Wild Introduction to Kid-Friendly Poses](#), that's exactly what they did. By showing the natural ways animals move and pairing them with basic yoga poses and lyrical rhyming text, this adorable picture book will help you enjoy down(dog) time with your kids.

Your little one will love practicing the nine animal-inspired yoga poses, whether in a sequence or one at a time, and you'll love that it's a safe and easy activity for any skill level.

The benefits of yoga go beyond just having fun, too. Studies show (and yogis agree) that yoga can reduce stress and improve strength, balance, flexibility, and mental clarity. It's a healthy way for people of all ages to take a break from the outside world and focus on the good that you can create inside yourself—at a time when we all really need it.

To learn more about how animals can inspire kids to move, we reached out to Tara Stiles, founder of Strala Yoga and mom to budding yogi Daisy. Tara shares her expertise and guidance with readers in *Yoga Animals*. The duo can often be found practicing yoga together at their home in Brooklyn, New York, moving just like the animals do in this book.

## What was the inspiration for *Yoga Animals*?

When National Geographic Kids came to me about this project, I was thrilled to be involved. Being a new mom, I understand the need for useful and fun activities to do with our little ones. I loved the idea of yoga and animals going together. The practice of bending and stretching just like the animals do makes yoga fun and enjoyable as well as educational for children. It's also good for us big kids to get out of our heads and roar like a lion and stretch like a giraffe.





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### Why is this book a great resource for kids?

Tara at home in Brooklyn, NYC

*Yoga Animals* is so simple, easy, and filled with beautiful pictures of the animals and a wide variety of children to encourage kids to do yoga in a way they can relate to. The poetry woven through makes it really fun to read and practice along and memorize, as parents and kids will probably end up doing after a few rounds through.

### How can both kids and parents benefit from practicing yoga?

The benefits of practicing yoga for parents and kids are basically countless, but what I love is yoga has a way of helping you find exactly what you need. Going through the poses in *Yoga Animals* brings out the playfulness in us all.

### What can kids learn from the animals in this book?

Daisy and I love looking at the photography in *Yoga Animals*. There is an immediate discovery of the animal and then you try to do the yoga pose that looks like the animals' movements. Through observing the pictures and then doing the poses, children get to understand how each animal moves, why they do what they do, and what that feels like.

### What is your favorite way to practice yoga with your daughter?

I usually have a yoga mat out in the living room so whenever it sparks her interest we can do a few poses together. She has her favorite poses from *Yoga Animals*. We go through those and she usually ends up inventing a few of her own, which is fantastic.

### Do you have any advice for parents and kids just starting out that may be hesitant?

It might be a relief to know that yoga is easy, and you can practice in a way that is fun and easy for you. The goal is to feel better and enjoy. One of the many things I've learned from practicing with Daisy is that I can have an idea about a few poses and a little routine, but she always changes it and has her own ideas. I've learned to go with the flow and enjoy the spontaneous moments, which is probably a good lesson, too!

Want to practice with Tara? Watch her demonstrate some of the poses from the book and share a sneak peek inside *Yoga Animals*. Click [here](#) to watch.

Buy *Yoga Animals: A Wild Introduction to Kid-Friendly Poses* on [Amazon](#).

### About National Geographic Kids

National Geographic Kids inspires young adventurers to explore the world through its award-winning books, magazines, website, television series, apps, games, and events. It is the leader in children's nonfiction and the only major kids brand with a world-class scientific organization at its core.