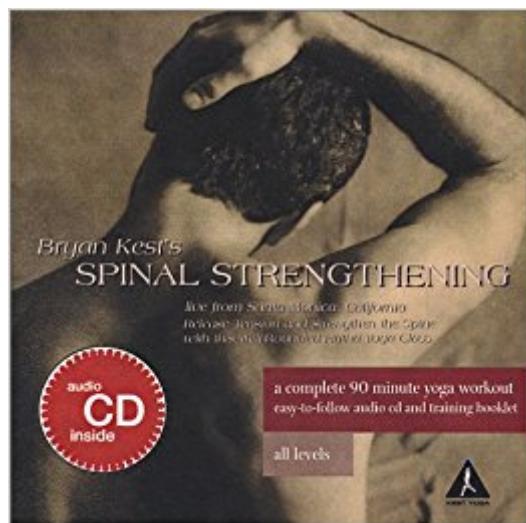


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# Bryan Kest: Spinal Strengthening (CD & Booklet)



## **Synopsis**

Bryan Kest draws upon personal experience of injuring and going through a healing process with his own back to produce this extensive yoga routine for a healthy spinal region. This is the second in a series of live recordings just made available to the general public. The recording is of one of Bryan's 90 minute classes at his very popular Santa Monica, CA studio, in audio CD format accompanied by a beautiful instructional booklet. The audio CD is segmented into 8 tracks for easy repeating or forwarding. The booklet has over 100 photographed asanas (positions) that track the recording, along with detailed written instruction for key poses provided by Bryan. A nice treat: Bryan Kest is one of the two models photographed for the asanas. In addition to being an excellent, complete yoga routine for your library, the CDs are a compact format perfect for travelers.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Aloha everybody. Welcome to spinal strengthening. Eight years ago I suffered an injury to my spine in a car accident. Since then, a lot of my yoga has been working with my injury. I feel I've made some pretty important discoveries in working with my back injury, and I want to pass on that information to you.

People either love Bryan Kest or they detest him - I happen to love him. He does talk a good bit but he does not ramble here like I have heard him do on other recordings. The talking is actually helpful instead of distracting when you are listening on your ipod and his voice is your only cue. As some reviewers have pointed out this is not really a beginners set but I am not really sure a beginner should be learning yoga from an audio cd anyway. This set is for advanced beginners to

intermediate practitioners. There are no pretzel positions but there are lots and lots of sun salutations and little rest of your wrists if you are not used to holding your body up for over an hour. Over all a really good routine that I turn to time and time again. Note: for people who do not like their yoga to "new agey" Kest is a good fit since although he does see yoga as a spiritual as well as physical practice his accent is little too New Yorker to be considered fluffy and he does not use flowery phrases like Yee and some others. If you like the P90X yoga and are looking for a new routine then he is probably your go to guy.

This Bryan Kest routine has a number of advanced elements, cobras and other poses held for 5 breaths or more, a standing pose sequence that is quite intense, a plough pose that would not be recommended for a beginner, etc. Nevertheless, many of the more difficult sequences can be easily modified or skipped over making this an approachable yet challenging practice. Note again that poses are held for reasonable amounts of time, so those of you expecting a fast movement vinyasa flow workout might be disappointed-this one will not cause you to break a sweat- still, there is generally ample opportunity to "sink" into the poses should that be your preference. Note that this is primarily a core routine with a couple of sequences of push-ups thrown in- no lunges, warriors or triangles. Kest's focus here is on the breath- maintaining an even, deep breathing flow through the nose and by deep he doesn't mean hyperventilation (good advice as I found myself huffing and puffing on a few of the more challenging poses). Other reviewers found his voice and comments distracting at best and often irritating. Tastes vary of course, but I found his comments encouraging and his instructions to the point and helpful. The spiral bound booklet is of good quality and useful but I imagine most people will be able to dispense with it after some experience with the routine. The audio is spread over 2 CD's and lasts a full 90 minutes. Having a multi disc player or downloading to an iPod would insure continuity. Beginners should consider this product only after becoming familiar with a decent variety of yoga poses (taking several classes would prove useful) and with a good understanding of their (the practitioners') limitations (I should know I'm a beginner). However, approached with this knowledge and a healthy dose of patience, this could prove a rewarding program.

I can't begin to say enough good things about this workout. I am an aficionada of Bryan Kest's original Power Yoga series from 1995. I also enjoy his new videos (especially Intensive Sculpting) from 2002. But...I just love this CD. It is the best workout that I have done in a long time - maybe ever. I thought initially that it might be weird working out without the visual imagery of video, but it is

actually better. Bryan's voice is extra soothing, and his direction easily guides you from pose to pose without needing to look at the included book, (assuming that you know a few basic poses, such as cobra and down dog - the others he aptly describes.) I found myself more able to concentrate on the yoga, without distraction. The basic workout begins a bit more relaxed than his Power Yoga series, taking a bit more time to stretch, as opposed to getting your muscles "hot" right away. But before long, you find that your heart rate is getting up there and your muscles are working and that you are doing some invigorating but really challenging balances. This is spinal strengthening at its best, relaxation at its deepest. Bryan Kest's emphasis is, as always, on knowing your body and its limitations and first and foremost, feeling the breath. Another nice thing about this workout is that although it is divided between two CD's, the second CD is basically the last stretches and relaxation, so if you have a single CD player machine, you are not changing the discs in the middle of an intense pose. Also, you might like to do the relaxation CD by itself sometime, just to unwind. A bonus is the book, which has all of the poses and could be taken on a vacation even when you don't want to take the CD. This CD is great - and a day after doing this workout, all of my muscles feel like they got their fair workout. Six stars. Check it out.

There are 2 CDs in the package, and I've done just the first CD which encompasses a little over 1 hour. It's quintessential Bryan. The poses are quite similar to those found in Intensive Body Sculpting, like the pretty challenging "half-moon pose" (which I haven't yet managed to perfect, but I'm working on it) but you also get a lot of boat poses for your core/abs (boat pose is when sitting, you raise your legs up straight until you form a "V" shape and you hold your legs for about five breaths, with your arms parallel to the ground) and a bunch of spinal stretches. Overall, I thought the CD was good. It's part strengthening/part stretching, and complements Bryan's other practices. I don't know if there are other yogis who do poses like Bryan does his. I've tried Shiva Rea's Yoga Shakti (which I didn't like) and some Baron Baptiste (which I didn't think was as challenging as Bryan Kest). So it's safe to say I'm a Bryan-Kestophile. His stuff really gets me going. Very strongly recommended.

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