

# Daily Schedule

## SBS MONK TRAINING CENTRE



Mon - Fri	Activity	Location
05:00 – 06:00	Sitting/Walking meditation	Free choice
06:00 – 06:45	Dhamma recitation	Sīmā Hall
07:30 – 09:00	Alms round	Mon-Sat: TIMS; Sun: market/TIMS <sup>1</sup>
09:00 – 09:30	Shower/free time	Free choice
09:30 – 10:30	Lunch	Saṅgha Court - porch
10:30 – 11:15	Sitting/Walking meditation	Sīmā Hall & surroundings
11:30 – 12:15	Sutta class: Mon, Wed, Fri Vinaya class: Tue, Thu	Saṅgha Court - porch
15:00 – 17:30	Sitting/Walking meditation	Free choice <sup>2</sup>
17:30 – 18:00	Afternoon drink	Saṅgha Court - washing area <sup>3</sup>
18:00 – 19:00	Chores <sup>4</sup>	Dependent on type of chore <sup>5</sup>
19:00 – 19:30	Shower/free time	Free choice
19:30 – 20:30	Sitting meditation	Sīmā Hall
20:30 –	Further sitting/walking meditation or individual Dhamma/Vinaya studies	Free choice

**On weekends, there are no specific time, activity, or location guidelines.**

This is the default schedule at SBS Monk Training Centre.

At certain periods of the year the schedule is put aside<sup>6</sup>,  
to allow for periods that suit the specific needs of the individual.

Exemptions to the above are possible, if justifiable under one of the following scenarios:

- (a) one's participation in training courses provided at SBS Monk Training Centre,
- (b) one's duties & functions, (c) other reasons approved by the Saṅghapariṇāyaka.

<sup>1</sup> On Sundays, a group of monks and yogis go to the market - others go to TIMS. The market group departs from SCF at 07:30, others depart at 08:00.

<sup>2</sup> Library and Saṅgha Office are closed during this period.

<sup>3</sup> Lay guests can get drinks from box at Saṅgha Cave.

<sup>4</sup> Alternatively, one may request to meditate at this time in order to have a long continuous meditation period extending into the evening, and do a pre-assigned set of chores from 10:30 – 11:15 instead. The person concerned has to make arrangements with the monk in charge of chore allocation.

<sup>5</sup> Whoever hasn't been assigned an individual chore, is part of the sweeping team. Sweeping starts collectively from Saṅgha Court - washing area. Be punctual so that others aren't kept waiting.

<sup>6</sup> Currently, the community alternates between four weeks of scheduled period, followed by two weeks of unscheduled period.

# Daily Schedule

SBS is a Training Centre that provides a complete all-around training for highly dedicated monks ordained in the Theravāda tradition. The daily schedule supports that aim by making sure that all important aspects of monastic training are developed in a balanced way. The schedule complements each monk's personal inclinations and fills in gaps in one's monastic education that are otherwise likely to occur. It aims to strike a balance between study, practice, work, community service, teaching activities, while maintaining deep and meaningful interpersonal relationships among residents. In this way, the holy life will not only last for a long time, but also becomes a basis for liberation, Nibbāna.

## PURPOSE & BENEFITS

- Group activities and classes make it possible for teachers to reach more disciples, than would be the case with individual practice and exclusively 1:1 meetings between a teacher and his disciples. In this second scenario, a teacher's maximum capacity for fulfilling his duty towards his disciples, would only be viable with approx. 2 – 3 disciples. A group-schedule on the other hand, allows for more than 2 – 3 practitioners to stay at SBS and train under A. Ariyadhammika's guidance, because in this way multiple disciples can be instructed in the Dhamma, the Vinaya, and the essentials of the holy life, all at once.
- A schedule helps to bundle together activities that would otherwise cause sound disturbances to others (chanting, chores, maintenance work).
- A schedule is particularly helpful for individuals with moderate self-discipline, to establish a regular Dhamma practice. Those not in need of such external encouragement, can regard their participation in group activities as a form of dāna towards their companions in the holy life, who do gain benefit from it.
- Adherence to a schedule can foster humility and simplicity, by learning to be able to adapt to circumstances and let go of full control of one's personal preferences; a skill required in many areas of life – lay or monastic alike. In this way, a pre-set daily routine provides and fosters important aspects of mental cultivation and monastic training.
- Group activities help to establish a sense of belonging, being in the same team, having a common basis – thus leading to communal harmony. Harmony, in turn forms an important basis for wellbeing, which is a supporting condition for meditative development.

## ELEMENTS

### SOLITARY MEDITATION

- Gives an increased sense of seclusion and reduces social awareness ('I'-making) by being alone.
- Allows for increased physical comfort by choosing a spot for meditation suitable to one's needs in terms of climate and environment.
- Minimises potential disturbances by others, and gives a sense of safety.
- Helps one to take responsibility for one's practice, by reducing the possibilities for the mind finding faults externally. It becomes apparent that dukkha arises in the mind even when dwelling in seclusion.

### GROUP MEDITATION

- Ensures that even individuals who are more inclined towards Dhamma studies, and on their own accord would not tend to spend much time in formal meditation, to meditate at least for a moderate amount of time.
- Increases self-discipline, by having a set start and end-time for meditation periods.
- By sharing this most meaningful activity together, rather than only sharing worldly activities such as meals and chores, group meditation is a way to strengthen our bond and commitment to the path.

### GROUP RECITATION

- Ensures that even individuals with only moderate inclination to study the Dhamma on their own accord, recite and memorise important passages from the Buddha's teachings for at least a moderate amount of time.
- Helps one to learn proper Pāli pronunciation, even without having to memorise pronunciation rules, by developing an intuitive feeling for the language (Pāli).
- Enables one to memorise important Dhamma passages and become able to recite them in unison with others. Whenever a group of monks is requested for recitation of Anumodanā (thanksgiving chants) at a layperson's home, or to perform other services for our supporters (e.g. bereavement service), a monk who can memorise and fluently recite the texts, is a valuable member of the community, because others can rely on him when they get stuck.
- Can be energising when sleepy in the morning.

### SUTTA/VINAYA CLASS

- Ensures that individuals with only moderate inclination to study the Dhamma and Vinaya on their own accord, spend at least a moderate amount of time in acquiring knowledge of these two pillars of the Buddha's teachings.
- Classes led by a competent teacher are a quick and easy way to encounter different/new/deeper perspectives about the DhammaVinaya in theory and practice, that one would otherwise discover only much later – if at all.
- Active participation in classes (i.e. asking questions and occasionally sharing one's own understanding) is an excellent method to get one's own perspectives double-checked, since one can get immediate feedback from verbal and non-verbal cues of one's friends in the holy life.
- It is unlikely that there is one person who knows the correct answer to every single question that may arise. However, the chances are comparatively high that a group of people who collectively put their minds to the same question, may come up with the correct answer (one that is in line with the DhammaVinaya) – either because one group member knows it from the outset, or because the discussion has led to its discovery in an organic way.
- Active participation in classes helps to develop one's ability to express oneself clearly and share one's understanding of the DhammaVinaya with others skilfully i.e. without putting down people who hold other perspectives. Not to forget the immensely wholesome act of bringing value to one's community, by sharing the true DhammaVinaya.

### GROUP MEAL

- The period preceding the meal is an ideal time for announcements, since everyone can be reached at the same time; other occasions (e.g. before or after meditation, or Sutta/Vinaya class) are not ideal for announcements. This will avoid mixing the Dhamma with worldly activities.
- A common meal strengthens the bond among Saṅgha members and thus forms a basis for harmony in the community.
- Fostering of eating habits that are beneficial to the path to liberation e.g. eating in moderation and avoiding looking around, talking or reading while eating; or making smacking and slurping sounds etc.

- When eating only during the official group meal, there is less opportunity for excessive socialising before or after the meal.
- Kuṭis remain free from food; thus, no attraction for ants, and no temptation to store food for afternoon.

### CHORES

- Help to maintain the monastery in a condition that is fit for striving for the goal without negligence.
- Chores are a good opportunity to practise generosity by offering one's time to the benefit of the community.
- Group chores such as sweeping, create a team atmosphere and a sense of connection among residents. It is particularly useful for newcomers to get to know other residents, and establish a sense of belonging by performing a task together.
- Individual chores give the person in charge a sense of responsibility. It also helps to ensure a certain area is looked after on a regular basis.
- Heavy tasks can be done more effectively by joining hands.
- If everyone performs chores at the same time, there is no disturbing sound during meditation periods.

### TIMING

Timing of above elements and their positioning within the schedule are based on the following general principles:

- Avoidance of long gaps without meditation at any part of the day.
- Allowing for and encouraging at least one long continual meditation period (afternoon).
- Getting active elements done during the morning period, which leaves the mind for the rest of the day in a more meditative mindset.
- Getting practical activities done in the early part of the day, gives a sense of lightness and accomplishment for the rest of the day, which can be a supportive factor for "a pleasant abiding" during that period.

*"I think thus: 'It is a gain for me, it is a great gain for me,  
that I am living with such companions in the holy life.'*

*I maintain bodily...verbal...mental acts of loving-kindness towards those venerable ones  
both openly and privately.*

*I consider: 'Why should I not set aside what\* I wish to do  
and do what\* these venerable ones wish to do?'*

*Then I set aside what\* I wish to do and do what\* these venerable ones wish to do.*

*We are different in body, venerable sir, but one in mind."*

(MN 31)

\* An interesting nuance comes to light, when mentally replacing "what I wish to do" with "when I wish to do".