

The 7 Chakras Reference Chart: Tantric and Modern Systems

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Chakra	Meaning	Location	Petals	Element and symbol (1577 text)	Seed sound	Modern Western color	Modern Western theme
Mūlādhāra	Root support	Base of spine	4	Earth · yellow square	laṃ	Red	Safety, stability
Svādhiṣṭhāna	One's own seat	Lower abdomen	6	Water · white crescent	vaṃ	Orange	Emotion, creativity
Maṇipūra	City of jewels	Navel	10	Fire · red triangle	raṃ	Yellow	Will, confidence
Anāhata	Unstruck	Heart	12	Air · six-pointed star	yaṃ	Green	Love, compassion
Viśuddha	Purified	Throat	16	Space · white circle	haṃ	Blue	Expression
Ājñā	Command	Between eyebrows	2	Mind · beyond elements	oṃ	Indigo	Intuition, insight
Sahasrāra	Thousand-petalled	Crown	1,000	Beyond all elements	none fixed	Violet / white	Spiritual connection

Tan columns: the Ṣaṭ-cakra-nirūpaṇa (Pūrṇānanda, c. 1577) as translated by Woodroffe (1919). Colored columns: the 20th-century Western system. Other Indian texts differ.

How the modern chart was built

1577	Ṣaṭ-cakra-nirūpaṇa describes six centers plus the crown
1880s	Blavatsky links seven centers to nerve plexuses
1918-19	Woodroffe ("Arthur Avalon") publishes The Serpent Power
1920s	Leadbeater's The Chakras (1927); gland pairings begin
1930s-50s	Rainbow colors assigned by color therapists
1977	Dychtwald's Bodymind combines colors, glands and qualities

15-minute chakra meditation

1. Sit or lie comfortably with a tall, relaxed spine.
2. Breathe slowly through the nose. Never force or hold the breath.
3. Bring attention to the base of the spine and picture a small lotus.
4. Optionally repeat its seed sound quietly for a few breaths.
5. Move up through abdomen, navel, heart, throat, brow and crown.
6. Rest a minute at the top, then return attention to hands and feet.
Safety: pregnancy, glaucoma or severe high blood pressure, ask a provider first. Beginners skip headstands, shoulder stands and forceful breathing. Never a substitute for medical care.

Sources: Britannica, "Chakra"; K. Leland, "The Rainbow Body," Quest (2017); M. Fitger, Correspondences (2020); NCCIH yoga and meditation pages. Research on yoga and meditation concerns the practices, not the existence of chakras.