

HOME PILATES PROGRAM

Warm Up

Aim: To prepare the body for the exercises in the class. Focusing on neutral spine position and Transverse abdominus (TrA) contraction: thinking of Pilates principles such as breathing and flowing movement.



1) Centre: finding that start position: In standing start with feet together then turn toes out and bring heels in line. Lengthen through crown of head. Slide shoulder blades into the centre of the spine opening collar bone. Soften ribs. Rest hands on bones either side of pelvis and gently tuck tail bone under and then relax to feel movement at pelvis and lower back; stop with bones pointing directly forwards in a neutral pelvic position. Hold this position then by gently engaging TrA by drawing tummy button gently through spine.



2) Toy Soldier:

Lengthen one arm to ceiling and fold opposite knee rolling forwards onto toes. Alternate then with arms and legs like at toy soldier on the spot.



3) Dumbwaiter to Cleopatra:

In standing start with elbows folded to 90 degrees palms to the ceiling; elbows tucked in. As you breathe out rotate arms away from body keeping scapula control. You can do this with or without a theraband. As you breathe in return to start position. Repeat 8-10 times.



4) **Roll Down:** In standing tuck chin to chest and as you breathe out roll down folding rib cage down towards pelvis, peeling down through the spine sliding your hands down the front of your thighs. Roll down to where you feel your stretch and pause; breathe in. As you breathe out then tuck your tail bone under and use your centre to control re-stacking through spine to grow tall and coming back to start position.

Matwork - Below are some exercises looking at different types of control. You do not have to do all of them pick some exercises from at least two different types of stability. There are some progressions of the exercises suggested: start with the lower levels and progress as you can with good quality, pain free movements. We have tried to offer options in different positions so you can pick which suits your body on that day.

Static stability-Dynamic stability-Rotary stability-Controlled strength-Mobility

1) Hundreds

Level 1: On your back, neutral spine; arms lengthen down by your sides finger tips reaching away. Keeping control of your centre as you breathe out commence small pulses from your shoulders. Out for breath of 5 and in for a breath of 5. Repeat up to 100 pulses.



Level 2: Progression with one knee lifted into single table top; therefore reducing stability.

Level 3: Both hips lifted into your double table top position again challenging your control.

2) Abdominal Prep On your back, pelvis neutral arms reaching down by sides. As you breathe out scoop forwards and draw head and shoulders away from mat. Hold for in breath then lengthen and lower head and neck back down to mat as you breathe out. Keep head and neck lengthened away through movement, imagining a peach tucked under chin to keep deep neck muscles working. You can fold one elbow and tuck finger tips in behind the back of the head if needed for neck. Repeat 8-10 repetitions.



Dynamic Stability

1) One leg stretch Level 1: On your back with a neutral spine. As you breathe out slide one leg out along the floor, maintaining neutral spine position. Then as you breathe in fold knee and hip and slide foot back into start position. Repeat alternating legs. Repeat 10-12 repetitions

Level 2: to progress in the same start position, float one hip and knee up to single table top. Then as you breathe out extend the knee to take the foot away at a diagonal; breath in and fold knee back to table top then bring foot down to rest. Continue alternating legs.

2) Scissors Level 1: On your back, neutral spine. As you breathe out float one hip and knee up to 90 degrees as if resting onto a table top. Hold for in breath then lower with the out breath the foot back down to the floor. Maintaining a neutral spine position throughout movement. Repeat alternating legs. Repeat 8-10 repetitions

Level 2: Progress by working with both legs into double table top. As you breathe out float one hip and knee to 90 degrees, then soften ribs so you feel control increase into tummy and draw the second leg to meet into double table top. Keeping control tap down with one foot to the ground as if dipping into water, then draw leg back to the start position, alternate side to side with the legs.



Level 3: Progress again by starting into double table top position, then allow one toe to tap down, then alternate so you always have one toe in table top one tapped down to the mat, working harder with the muscles into your lower tummy.



3) Shoulder Bridge Level 1: On your back with a neutral spine start position. As you breathe out tuck your tail bone under and peel your spine away from the mat to come up and into your shoulder bridge position, with gentle pressure at shoulder blade level and rib cage relaxed. Hold for in breath then lower back down to the mat from upper spine down to tail bone and back to neutral spine. Repeat 8-10 repetitions.

Level 2: Come up into your shoulder bridge position: hold pelvis level as you breathe in. As you breathe out, lengthen one leg forwards straightening knee, inhale and bring foot back down. Come back down from shoulder bridge, then repeat with the other leg. You can then progress by building up repetitions with leg lengths maintaining shoulder bridge position. You can progress by repeating leg lengthens while holding shoulder bridge position. You can also bring in lowering that straight leg, ensuring your maintain a neutral pelvis.

4) Swimming Level 1: On your front, head rested onto hands. Neck lengthened away, neutral spine. As you breathe in engage gluteal muscles then as you breathe out extend from one hip to hover straight leg away from the floor an inch. Inhale and lower leg. Exhale and hover opposite leg. Repeat alternating legs.



Level 2: On your front, forehead rested onto small folded towel so you can have arms lengthened overhead arms just wider than shoulder distance apart palms down. Keep legs rested, as you breathe out, reach one arm forwards and away to hover arm one inch from the mat. Inhale and lower arm. Repeat alternating arms.

Level 3: Start position as above, as you breathe out hover opposite arm and leg one inch away from the mat, maintaining neutral spine. Inhale and lower arm and leg, alternate side to side opposite arm and leg.

Level 4: In 4 point kneeling as in the picture, maintain a neutral spine. As you breathe out lengthen one arm to hover and the opposite leg to create a long line, as you breathe in return to start position. Repeat alternating opposite leg and arm 8-10 repetitions.



5) Roll Up Level 1: In sitting, you may want to sit on a folded towel to make your hips more comfortable. Start with your hands rested onto your knees. As you breathe out roll off the back of the sitting bones into a small c curve with lower back and pelvis working lower tummy to control movement. Breathe in and roll forwards onto sitting bones keeping curve then lift back to neutral start position. Repeat using control. You should feel lower tummy working hard but no pain in lower back. Start with 5-10 repetitions

Level 2: Repeat exercise above but have hands lengthen out in front of you so you do not get support from having your hands rested on your knees. Keeping the same control throughout the movement.

Rotary Stability - 1) Clam Level 1: In side lying have your feet knees and hips stacked. Feet in line with hips, hips in line with shoulders. Push top waist away lifting lower waist to keep pelvis and lumbar spine still and stable. Gently draw sitting bones in together to engage gluts, then as you breath out lift top knee upwards and outwards, keeping feet together. As you breathe in lower knee. Complete 8-10 repetitions then repeat on the opposite side to work the other hip.

Level 2: In the same position as above, keeping feet together draw feet up to hip height to start. Then again as you breathe out lift top knee up and outwards keeping feet together as you breathe in lowering the knee back to the start position.



Level 3: On your side with bottom leg extended, have top knee folded with toes tucked in behind the bottom knee and repeat the action lifting top knee up and out working into deep gluteal muscles on upper hip.

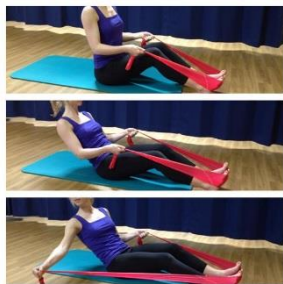


2) Lift and lower On your side with underneath arm lengthened away spine, pelvis and legs aligned in a straight line. You can start with bottom knee folded for some stability, top leg straight. To progress then lengthening both legs. Pelvis in neutral. As you breathe out float top leg up and out to just above hip distance and as you breathe in return leg to start position. You can point your toe as you lift and flex as you lower. Repeat 8-10 times.

3) Hip Twist Level 1: On your back. With a neutral pelvis, centre engaged. As you breathe out allow one knee to float out to the side. Then as you breathe in return to start position. Repeat alternating side to side. Repeat 8-10 times. You can use your hands to monitor pelvis position.



Level 2: (pictured) Remaining on your back. Draw your feet, knees and hips together. Rest arms out just below shoulder height along the mat. Maintaining contact with your shoulder blades into the mat. As you breathe out allow your knees to roll over to one side, simultaneously roll head and neck to roll over to the opposite side. Taking a breath in once you have rotated as far as you can. With the next out breath use your centre to draw your spine back into the mat to return to your start position. Repeat 6-8 times each way.



4) Oblique roll up In long sitting with knees folded, neutral spine. You can do this with or without a theraband. As you breathe out tilt pelvis backwards rolling lower back into a deep C-curve. Then rotate upper body to one side allowing arm and head to follow movement of the spine. Inhale and bring upper body back to midline and then rolling forwards with the spine maintaining a deep C curve until the shoulders are positioned over hips. Repeat with opening side to side 6-8 times.

Controlled strength

1) Criss Cross Level 1: Laid on your back with legs in double table top position. Place hands behind head with elbows folded. As you breathe out flex and rotate thoracic spine to fold in a diagonal line between opposite shoulder to hip. Maintaining a neutral pelvis. As you breathe in lengthen and lower spine to mat. Repeat alternating side to side 6-8 repetitions.



Level 2: (pictured) In the same start position. As you breathe out flex and rotate thoracic spine folding along diagonal line. Simultaneously lengthen opposite leg to the knee you have folded towards. Trying to maintain head and shoulder lifted, alternate trunk rotation and leg that is lengthened side to side. Repeat 6-8 times then lengthen and lower to the mat.



Leg pull in prone prep Level 1: In 4 point kneeling with a neutral spine. Tuck toes underneath. Then as you breathe out keeping centre set press down through toes to hover knees from mat maintaining spine position. Hold for in breath then gently lower with the out breath. Repeat 8- 10 times.

Level 2: In 4 point kneeling as above hands slightly further forwards. As you breathe out push down through toes to hover knees. Then extend knees to take weight forwards into plank position. Hold for in

breath. Then with the out breath fold knees to bring weight back and gently lower knees to mat. Repeat 8-10



Leg pull in supine Level 1: In long sitting, neutral spine with arms along the side of your body palms down elbows soft. Maintaining a neutral spine as you breathe out press down into heels to lift hips away from mat, into a supine plank position. Maintain for in breath then as you breathe out gently flex hips and lower to the mat. Repeat 6-8 times.

Level 2: Assume the supine plank position as above, then maintaining position. As you breathe out fold knee to slide foot towards sitting bone as you breathe in lengthen to start position.

Maintaining plank position alternate with legs side to side for 6-8 repetitions then lower to mat.

Cool Down Aim: Mobilise after mat work, relax and focus on balance for transfer of gains from class into daily life.

1) Spine Twist In standing or sitting arms lengthen out at shoulder height (you can fold arms across body); maintaining pelvis facing forwards as you breath out rotate upper trunk around to one side, keeping head in centre of chest. Hold for in breath then return to start with next out breath. Repeat alternating side to side 6-8 repetitions.



2) Arm opening Laid on your side with your head supported onto a pillow; with arms lengthen out palm to palm just below shoulder height. Maintaining a neutral spine, with the out breath float top arm up opening spine, rotating with upper trunk. Hold for in breath, feeling ribs expand. Then return to start position with next out breath. You can fold elbow in a bow and arrow technique if you find you get any pinching at shoulder. Repeat 6-8 times each side.

3) Mermaid You can do this in sitting or standing. In standing place one hand on head, slide the foot on that side behind other leg. Slide free hand down towards the floor to feel stretch over trunk. In sitting knees folded or legs crossed. Maintain contact into the mat with your sitting bones. Inhale and draw one arm overhead, exhale and lengthen curve of the spine to that side feeling stretch through spine. Inhale and draw arm back to start position. With next exhale repeat to the opposite side. Repeat side to side 4-6 times.

