

The Pilates Intermediate Workout

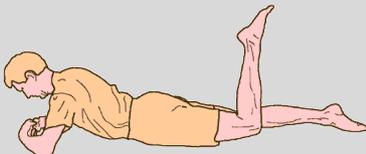
Companion Book to “The Text-To-Speech Pilates Intermediate Workout”
Includes:-

To be used in conjunction with:

- Pilates upper body workout
- Stretches and mobilisations to complement Pilates mat

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Disclaimer: (1) This program is not intended to replace the advice of a medical professional. (2) The writer has made every effort to assemble a set of safe and well trialled instructions, however as you will be aware, all exercise involves risk. The risk you take is your responsibility.



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Note: Exercises marked with a double star (**) are considered to be “basic”, or “introductory”.

Pictorial Table of Exercises

Name of Exercises and Approximate Page Number	Pictures of Exercises
Warm-up: 1. Hundred (100)** 2. Roll Up (5)** 3. One Leg Circle (5EW)** 4. Rolling Like a Ball (6-8)**	
Abdominals: 5. Single Leg Stretch (6-10EW)** 6. Double Leg Stretch (6-10)** 7. Single Straight Leg Stretch (6-10) 8. Double Straight Leg Lower Lift (6-8) 9. Criss Cross (3-5)	
Spine Stretch Group: 10. Spine Stretch Forward (5)** 11. Open Leg Rocker (Prep) (1EW,4) 12. Corkscrew I (2-4EW) 13. Saw (3-5EW)**	
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Name of Exercises and Approximate Page Number	Pictures of Exercises
<p>Teaser Group: 26. One Leg Teaser I (3-4 EW) 27. Teaser I (3-5) 28. Swimming - Prep (20) 29. Leg Pull Front Prep (1 - hold 10 secs.)</p>	
<p>Mermaid to Push-Up: 28. Mermaid Stretch (3-4 EW) 29. Seal (6-8)** 30. Push-Up Series ((3*3)</p>	



Introduction

In Joseph Pilates' Opinion, the Pilates Mat Class Benefits Are:-

“Contrology [Joseph’s term for what we today call “Pilates”]... is complete coordination of body, mind, and spirit. Through Contrology you first purposefully acquire complete control of your own body and then through proper repetition of its exercises you gradually and progressively acquire that natural rhythm and coordination associated with all your subconscious activities. This true rhythm and control is observed both in domestic pets and wild animals – without known exceptions”.

Return to Life through Contrology (see “Recommended Reading, Page 54).

In My Opinion, the Pilates Mat Class Benefits Are:-

(1) Very time efficient resistance training.

- Each muscle group is worked for 5 to 10 repetitions, by rotation. When one group is working, another is resting. There is no downtime between exercise sets, and no downtime spent adjusting and checking a weight machine.

(2) Physical Training with a strong element of diagnosis and cure:

- You become aware of tight, painful or weak areas and any asymmetry or poor alignment, and you stretch, rest, or work a body part harder with the ultimate intention of achieving perfect alignment and exercise form.

(3) An extremely good recovery exercise for almost all sports.

- Each mat exercise can be modified to accommodate any painful areas, and you still free up tight muscles in a flowing and enjoyable way.

(4) The ultimate form of cross training for any sport.

- Not many sports are performed on your back with legs and arms wagging in the air!

(5) An enhancer of breathing.

- Few other disciplines deliberately stretch and flexibilize the rib cage muscles thus improving tidal volume (= total amount of air you can breathe in or out in any one breathe). When you consider that respiratory muscles working at maximum take a full 15% of blood flow away from the legs, you can appreciate that easier breathing means enhanced sprint performance.
- There is research evidence that deep, rapid inhalation through the nose, at the same time as strengthening the breathing muscles, desensitizes the respiratory system to asthma and reduces reliance on medication.
- The postural realignment that the asthmatic Pilates student undergoes is also likely to enhance respiratory comfort. That has certainly been my personal experience.

(6) A stabilizer of the Spine.

- By enhancing postural muscles and separating spinal movement from the destabilizing influence of limbs and breathing.

(7) A stabilizer of the hip joint.

- By bulking up the muscles in front of the hip joint and preventing forward glide of the head of the femur.
- By activating the Gluteus maximus and associated “femoral head deep into its socket” stabilizer muscles that hold the head of the femur securely in its socket.

(8) A stabilizer of the shoulder joint.

- By working the weak shoulder muscles and realigning the whole area.

(9) A bringer of competitive edge.

- Giving you a solid foundation of body conditioning and awareness from which to explore safer and more efficient walking, running, biking, sitting, skiing, canoeing, ice-skating. You name it, Pilates will help!

(10) An Enhancer of Physical Attractiveness and Sexual Enjoyment.

- If you don’t believe me, ask the husbands of the “Pilates Ladies”!

With perseverance, you too will discover the benefits! Enjoy...

How Often And How Much Should You Exercise?

In Joseph Pilates' Opinion:-

"If you will faithfully perform your Contrology exercises regularly only four times a week for just 3 months, as outlined in RETURN TO LIFE, you will find your body development approaching the ideal, accompanied by renewed mental vigor and spiritual enhancement. Contrology is designed to give you suppleness, natural grace, and skill that will be unmistakably reflected in the way you walk, in the way you play, and in the way you work" (7).

In the Opinion of the American Heart Association:-

"For health benefits to the heart, lungs and circulation, perform any moderate-to-vigorous-intensity aerobic activity for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week at 50-75 percent of your maximum heart rate. You can accumulate 30 minutes in 10 or 15 minute sessions. What's important is to include physical activity as part of a regular routine" (17).

In my Opinion:-

1. If you are under forty:-

- The full Pilates workout and stretches program (with 5 to 10 repetitions per exercise) should be performed twice weekly. (You may wish to do the stretches on separate occasions to the Mat Workouts).
- In addition to this, you should do aerobic exercise a further four days per week. The American heart association recommends that you do 30 minutes or more of aerobic exercise most days. Do something enjoyable!

2. Once you are over forty:

Your levels of HGH (Human Growth Hormone - the Elixir of Youth) fall away markedly (17). This trend can be partially reversed by some light resistance and flexibility training most days - Pilates mat is ideal (Joseph Pilates lived to the age of 86 despite smoking cigars and suffering from asthma and emphysema) - and a good night's sleep (into bed before 11 pm). Your exercise program thus becomes:-

- Two full Pilates workouts, including stretches two days per week. (You may wish to do the stretches on separate occasions to the Mat Workouts).
- Two "short repetitions" Pilates workouts alongside the stretches that you feel you most need.
- Some aerobic exercise to top up the 30 to 60 minutes daily exercise quota such that you are doing something that you enjoy most days per week.

3. If you are "office chair bound" for much of your day:

- Memorize the stretch exercises and apply them just as often as you need them.
- **"Walk to your water bottle"** (or drink station) every 20 to 60 minutes. A 50 meter round trip would be sufficient to straighten up and "pump your muscles clean" – **"Movement revitalizes!"**
- Don't forget to also apply instructions "1" or "2" above, depending upon your age.

The companion publication "The Text-To-Speech (TTS) Pilates Intermediate Workout" will go a long way to making the above recommendations easy for you to follow.



The Pilates Intermediate Workout

1. MAT-HUNDRED**

REPS: 100 PUMPS OF ARMS/10 FULL BREATHS

SET UP: Lie on your back, knees together and bent, feet flat on the floor. Lengthen spine and neck.

ACTION: Chin to chest, knees to chest and stretch arms out long. Draw abdominals deeply in and up ("scoop!") Roll shoulder blades down back and relax your shoulders wide. Pump arms vigorously up and down 6 - 8 inches above abdominals, and breathe: Inhale 5 Exhale 5

1



2



PRECISION: Tips of shoulder blades stay on mat.

Back of neck long, work to centerline Spine lengthened, breastbone heavy to the mat.

Easy



Advanced



2. MAT - ROLL UP**

REPS: 5

SET UP: Lie on your back with legs out straight in Pilates stance, (or flexed with hands under thighs.) Reach your arms above your head in line with shoulders, reach fingers long.

ACTION: (1) Head looks through arms (2) Inhale, scoop deeply, roll up to sitting. (3) Maintain C-curve, Exhale forward lift abdominals deeply in and up, roll shoulder blades down back, relax shoulders wide.

(4) Inhale and keep your spine curl as you bring your lower back to the mat; exhale, roll down through spine, and reach your arms over and back.

PRECISION:

Keep C curve in back while reaching forward. Peel upper, middle then lower back off mat. Legs stay long and tight together. Keep ribs on mat when arms reach behind.

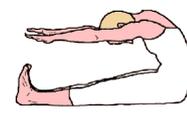
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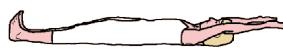
3



4



5



Easy



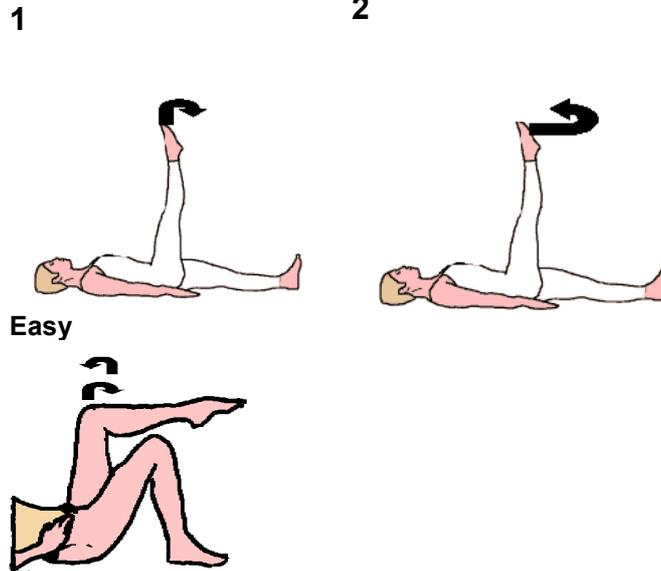
3. MAT- ONE LEG CIRCLE**

REPS: 5 EACH DIRECTION

SET UP: Lie on your back, one leg straight up to the ceiling, the other leg on the mat, both legs in the centreline. Anchor arms, shoulder blades, pelvis and head into mat.

ACTION: Draw a circle with your toe: (A) Cross a long leg over your body, circle down, around and up. Shoulder blades roll down, and keep your ribs to the mat. (B) Reverse direction: Down; cross over and up.

PRECISION: Accent the cross over and up in each direction. Keep extended leg in centreline Scoop deeper to lift leg up. Anchor 2 hips, 2 palms, 2 shoulders and head. Inhale for one circle, exhale for the next.



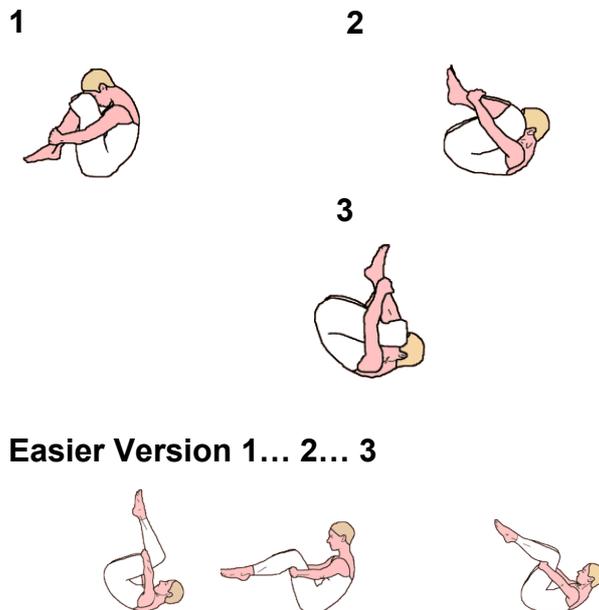
4 MAT- ROLLING LIKE A BALL**

REPS: 6 - 8

SET UP: Wrap hands across and low on ankles, one hand holds the opposite wrist in a bracelet hold. Hug heels close to bottom. Curl forward; bring head to knees. Lift feet lightly off mat in Pilates point, heels together and toes slightly apart.

ACTION: Pull abdominals in and keep chin to chest throughout. Inhale to roll back. Exhale to roll up, ribs in; eyes down and balance.

PRECISION: Nose to sternum, Chin to chest at all times. Chest relaxed, back round, stay tight in a ball. Heels together and toes slightly apart, shoulders relaxed wide, shoulder blades rolled down.



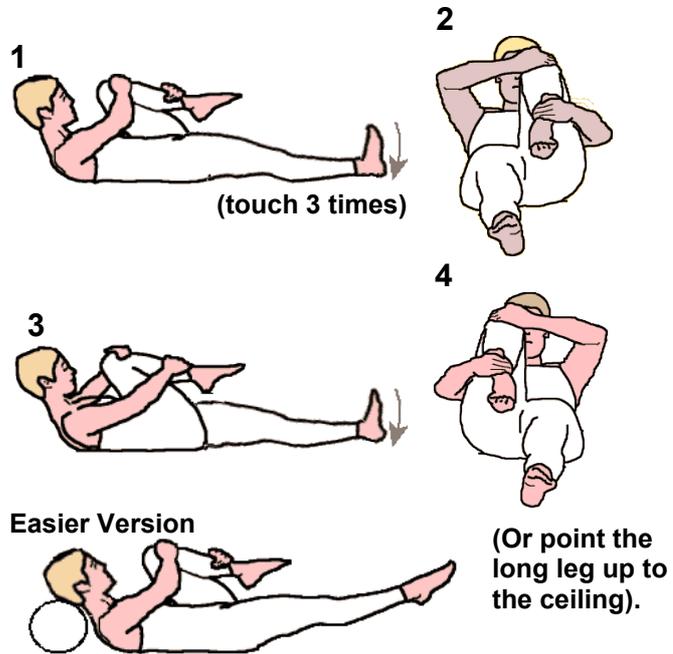
5. MAT: SINGLE LEG STRETCH**

REPS: 4 – 6 EACH LEG

SET UP: Lie on your back. Chin to chest and lengthen your spine and neck; one leg bent into chest. Knee, hip and ankle in line. Outside hand on the ankle and other hand on the knee, elbows wide. Extend the other leg out as low as you can while still imprinting your spine to the mat. Shoulder blade tips lightly touch the mat; toe in line with nose.

ACTION: Pull your leg firmly into your body (and then further). Draw belly in and up. Lower the long leg to the ground with toes to kneecap, and touch the calf to the ground three times. Inhale to switch, and exhale to lower and touch.

PRECISION: Tips of shoulder blades on mat. Keep both legs in centreline. Both sides of body long. Legs pull in and out with resistance. Keep spine imprinted on the mat.



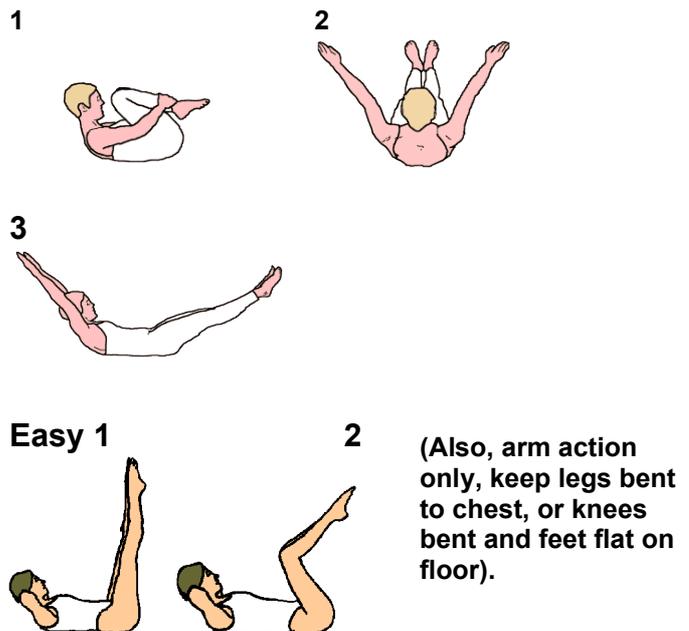
6. MAT: DOUBLE LEG STRETCH**

REPS 6 - 10

SET UP: Chin to chest and lengthen your spine and neck. Eyes on your belly button; maintain shoulder tips lightly touching the mat and both knees slightly apart and into your chest. Hold your shins and hug them firmly to your seat. Elbows wide, and feet softly pointed.

ACTION:
 Inhale as you reach your arms and legs out long from your centre; 45 degrees from the mat. Pause, Inhale; reach long. Sweep arms to the side and around to hug your ankles in. Exhale and hug tight.

PRECISION:
 Spine stays long on mat, work your centre line. Roll your shoulder blades down your back and anchor them to your ribs. Exhale completely, squeeze the toxins out of your lungs!!!!



7. SINGLE STRAIGHT LEG STRETCH (SCISSORS)

REPS:4-8

SET UP: Chin to chest, lengthen your neck. Maintain shoulder tips lightly to mat. Hold one ankle or calf with both hands and stretch the opposite leg out straight and just above the floor. Keep both legs in slight Pilates stance. Lengthen your spine from tail to head, and imprint your back firmly into the mat.

ACTION:

Scoop your abdominals. On the side of the lowered leg, clench your bottom, “toe to kneecap” and touch your heel to the floor, and pull the raised leg toward your shoulder (two pulls).

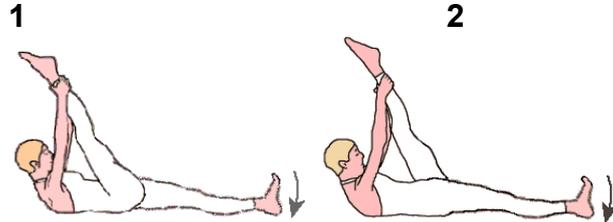
Inhale to switch. Exhale to stretch

PRECISION:

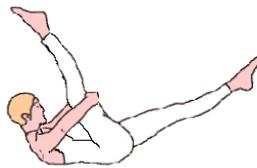
Pull leg to shoulder, keep body anchored and silent. Move with flow, but allow time for the stretch to happen.

Reach to your ankles.

Keep your torso long on both sides – maintain the Pilates box.



Easier version



8. MAT - DOUBLE STRAIGHT LEG - LOWER/LIFT

REPS: 6-8

SET UP: Place your fists under your hips for support. Both legs together in gentle pilates stance and straight up in the air. Chin to chest; eyes on your belly button; keep our lower back firmly glued to the floor.

ACTION:

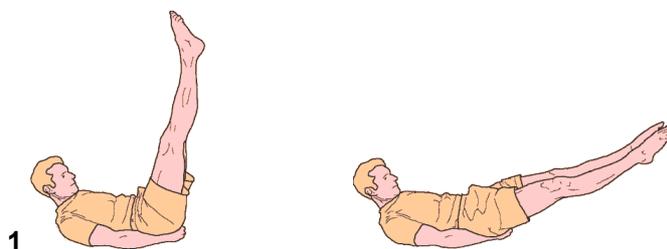
Inhale and slowly reach your legs away from you for 3 counts. Exhale to return your legs to the ceiling in one swift motion.

PRECISION:

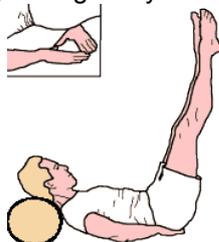
Reach your legs away long to lift up. Keep your lower back glued to the mat. Take your legs to the point where .

Rib button cinched, chest heavy to the mat.

Inhale to lower legs.....exhale to lift legs.



Easier versions:- use a pillow under the head, lower your legs only half way.



9. MAT - CRISS CROSS**REPS: 6-10**

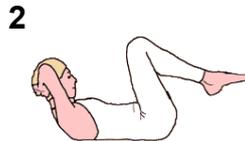
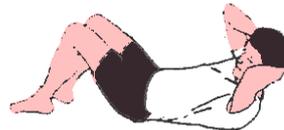
SET UP: Fold your hands behind your head, elbows out wide. Bend your right knee into your chest, the other leg reaches out long. One armpit reaches for the opposite knee, the other elbow reaches behind. Look back at the elbow behind.

ACTION:

Inhale and switch sides. Stay high as you pass through the centre.
Inhale to criss Exhale to cross.

PRECISION:

Twist from the powerhouse.
Anchor both hips to the mat.
Stay centered in your "Box" (keep the length both sides of your torso).
Arms and shoulders remain wide.

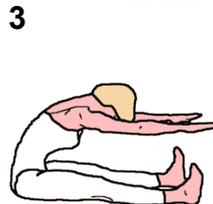
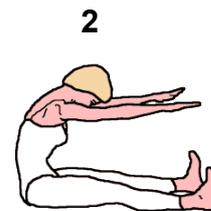
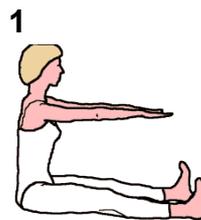
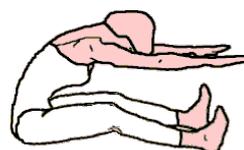
**Easier version****10. MAT- SPINE STRETCH FORWARD******REPS: 5**

SET UP: Sit tall with legs slightly wider than hip width. Knees facing ceiling and toes to knee caps. Arms straight out in front of shoulders, palms down. Lift up out of your hips, scoop deep. Roll your shoulder blades down your back, and relax your shoulders wide.

ACTION: Sit tall, chin to chest and lift abs deeply in and up. Exhale, and peel off the wall vertebra by vertebra. Empty your lungs and reach, reach, reach (three times).
Inhale to roll up: your lower, middle then upper back, pressing abs to spine. Sit tall!

PRECISION:

Keep your shoulders wide and roll your shoulder blades down.
Deepen into sternum to initiate curl of spine
Keep arms at shoulder height.
Form a horse shoe: Keep your ribs lifted away from your hips.

**Easy**

11. MAT - OPEN LEG ROCKER PREP (BALANCE)

**REPS: 1 EW,
then open &
close 4 times**

SET UP: Reach for the top of your ankles; Pull them in to you as you balance behind your sit bones. Maintain balance, knees in line with shoulders, feet softly pointed. Keep your C-curve, chest open & lifted, shoulders blades rolled down.

ACTION:

Scoop deep, sit tall throughout. Inhale to move, and exhale to hold.

(a) Inhale and stretch one leg up. Exhale and hold. Inhale to lift the other leg. Exhale and hold; lift taller. Inhale the first leg down.... Inhale the second leg down.

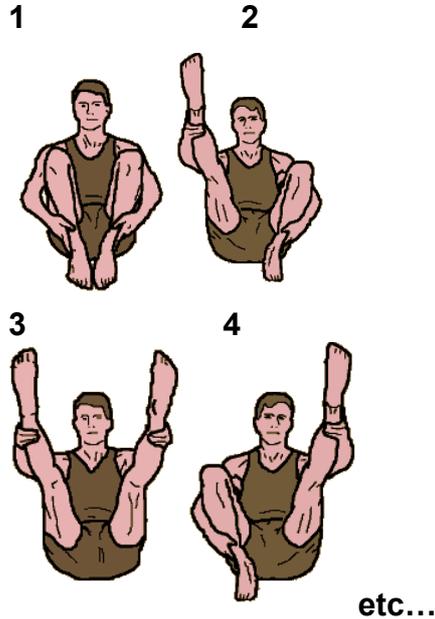
(b) Inhale & repeat starting with the opposite leg.

(c) Inhale both legs up together. Breathe normally and open and close your legs four times.

(d) (Transition to corkscrew): Close your legs together, let go your hands, Inhale to hold the V position, then exhale to roll the upper body down.

PRECISION:

Be light; eyes on horizon the horizon; relax your shoulders wide & roll your shoulder blades down.



12. MAT - CORKSCREW 1 (SMALL CIRCLES)

**REPS: 2-4 EACH
DIRECTION**

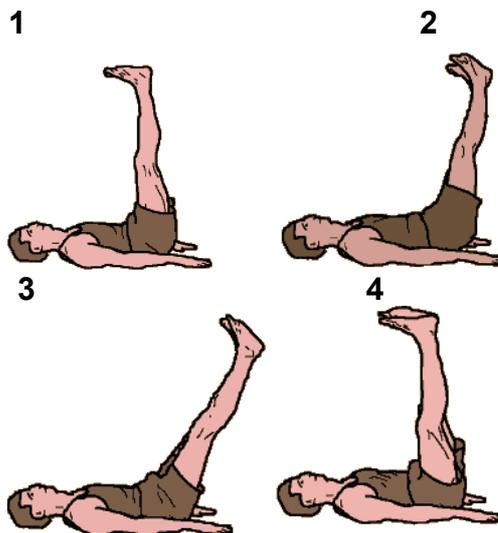
SET UP: Lie on your back with your legs at a 90 degree angle. Glue your heels together in a gentle Pilates stance. Anchor your palms, shoulder blades, ribs and pelvis to the mat.

ACTION: (a) Inhale to reach your legs across your body in line with opposite shoulder. Deepen your abs and bring your legs to 180 degrees. Exhale & deepen your abs to complete the circle.

(b) Reverse the circle!

PRECISION:

Glue your heels and knees together. Keep all buttons cinched to the floor. Keep the weight of the legs anchored to the pelvis and into the mat.



13. THE SAW**

REPS - 3 TO 5 EACH WAY

SET UP: Open your legs a little wider than your shoulders and reach your arms out to the sides in line with your shoulders. Sit tall; lift up out of your hips; perch with the toes to kneecaps.

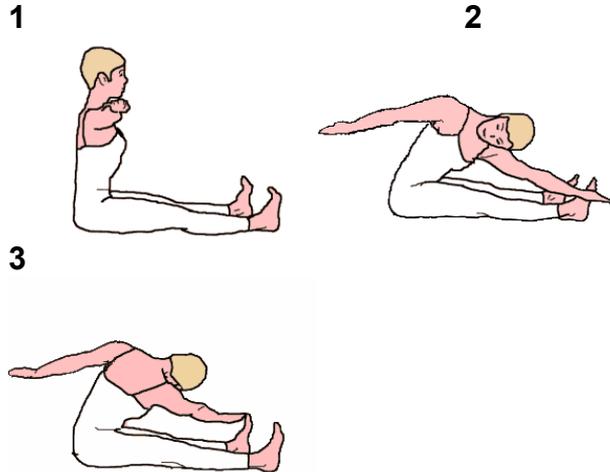
ACTION:

Twist your spine, lower the back arm and look at it as you reach your pinky finger past the little toe; reach and exhale; reach further and exhale; reach further again and exhale. Inhale to roll up (initiate from the navel) and return to the center position.

Repeat on the opposite side.

PRECISION:

Anchor your sit bones, twist with your belly. Opposite hip and legs stay anchored. Stay in twist to sit up. "Look with the eyes, listen with the ear".



14. SWAN PREP – NECK ROLL

REPS: 2-3

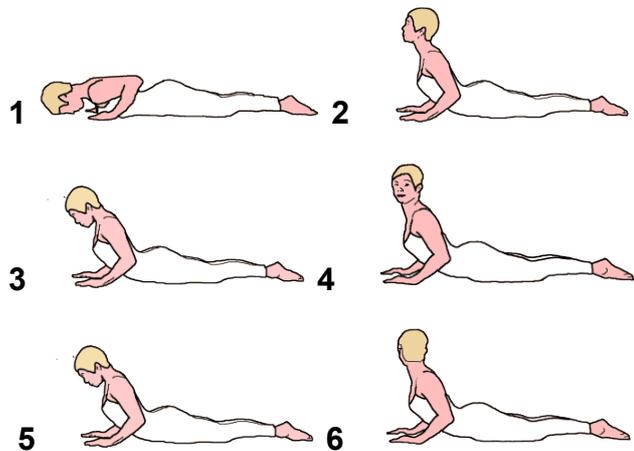
SET UP: Lie on your stomach; hands under shoulders; elbows close to ribs; abs deeply scooped – "house for a mouse". Gently touch your front teeth together. For more lower back support, clench your butt and wrap around the back of the inner thighs.

ACTION:

Inhale and push up, pulling your breast bone and chin forward to the horizon. Scoop and keep your elbows close to your ribs. Breathe naturally: Look to the floor; look to one side; roll your chin across your chest to the other side; reverse. Look down and lower.

PRECISION:

Roll your shoulder blades down and relax your shoulders wide. Touch your front teeth gently together, and feel the stretch in your throat.



15. MAT – THE SINGLE LEG KICK**REPS: 3 EACH SIDE**

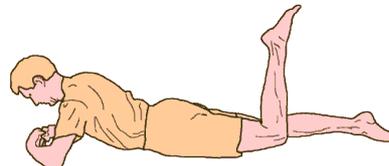
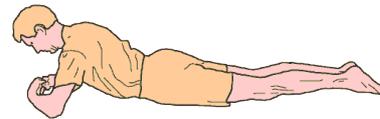
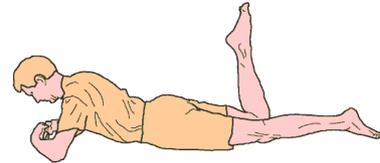
SET UP: Lie on your front, form your hands into fists and touch them together under you eyes. Place your elbows wide at the level of your shoulders. Roll your shoulder blades down and rise up out of your shoulders. Make sure that your knees are touching. Scoop deep, clench your butt and wrap around the back of your inner thighs.

ACTION:

Breathe normally. Bring one leg to your rear and kick with a double kick. Clench the butt strongly and put energy into lifting the thigh off the mat as you kick. Lower the leg and repeat for the other side.

PRECISION:

Roll your shoulder blades down and rise up out of your shoulders. Scoop deep, keep the knees touching and work the butt muscles.

**16. MAT - REST POSITION****REPS: 3 BREATHS**

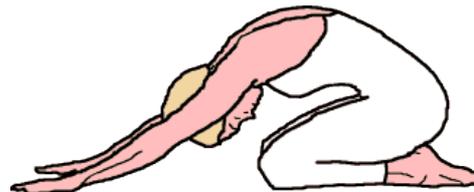
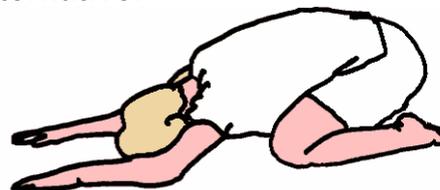
SET UP: Sit on your heels with knees together or just slightly apart; lengthen your tailbone under your heels. Reach your arms over your head long.

ACTION:

Breathe in through nose, expand your sides. Exhale and scoop your belly off your thighs. Rest heavy on your thighs, breathe up and down your spine.

PRECISION:

Soft and heavy shoulders; shoulders relax wide, Keep your feet and ankles straight. Relax low into the mat.

**Alternative:-**

Knee problems or groin pinch: just lower to the point of discomfort and hold.

17. MAT - SHOULDER BRIDGE PREP**REPS: 3-5**

SET UP: Lie supine and anchor palms, shoulder blades and hips into the mat. Feet parallel and lined up with the hips a foot length from your (12 inches).

ACTION:

Scoop the abs, clench the butt, and inhale to boost your torso and pelvis up in one piece. Pause and lengthen.

Relax your shoulders wide, and roll your shoulder blades down.

Exhale to roll chest away from chin then roll down bone by bone.

PRECISION:

Powerhouse hugs your spine

Keep the sides of your torso and the back of your neck long.

Weight over the foot arches, boost up on your glute's rather than your hamstrings.

1



2



3

**18. MAT - SIDE KICK SERIES - FRONT AND BACK******REPS 6 -10**

SET UP: Lie on your side and align hip to elbow along the back of the mat. Prop your head on your lower hand, and bring long legs forward to an angle of 22.5 degrees. Anchor your top hand six inches in front of your heart, relax the shoulder wide and roll the shoulder blade down. Stack shoulder over shoulder & hip over hip. Keep lower foot to the floor and "toes to kneecap".

ACTION:

Breathe naturally and fully.

Lift top leg to hip height; kick forward long and strong, two pulses - kick, kick.

Reach leg straight and long behind, two pulses - kick, kick slow enough to feel the stretch).

PRECISION:

Relax your shoulders wide and roll your shoulder blades down.

Lengthen the upper side of your body, and hold on to your "Box": shoulder over shoulder, hip over hip, over heel over heel.

Work the hip "in the joint", keep the thigh from rolling in or out, high or low.

Put energy into bringing the top hip forward of the lower hip. The hips remain motionless.

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19. MAT - SIDE KICK SERIES - UP AND DOWN**

REPS 6 -10

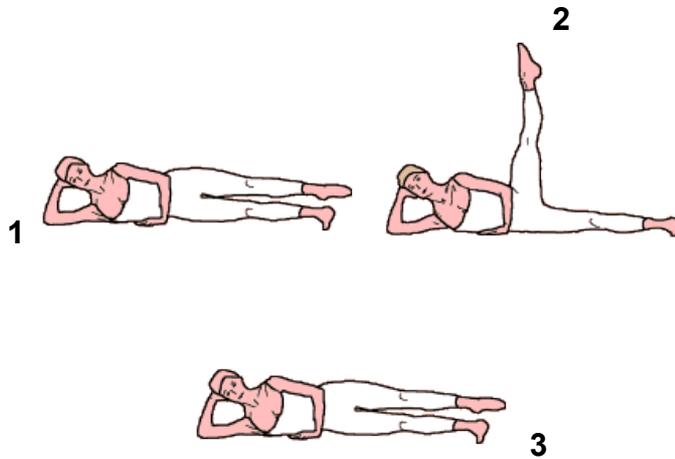
SET UP: Maintain your side position and reach your top leg out of the hip more.

ACTION:

Breathe naturally. Turn your top leg gently outward. (The knee cap looks slightly upwards). Lift strong and straight up to the side.
Lower slowly through treacle, turn leg out even more and reach L-O-N-G.

PRECISION:

Relax your shoulders wide and roll your shoulder blades down.
Abdominals lift - no shift
Hold on to your "Box", shoulder over shoulder , hip over hip, heel over heel.
Align the upper leg over the lower: Put energy into taking the thigh backward and the hip forward.



20. MAT - SIDE KICK SERIES - PASSE

REPS: 3 EACH WAY

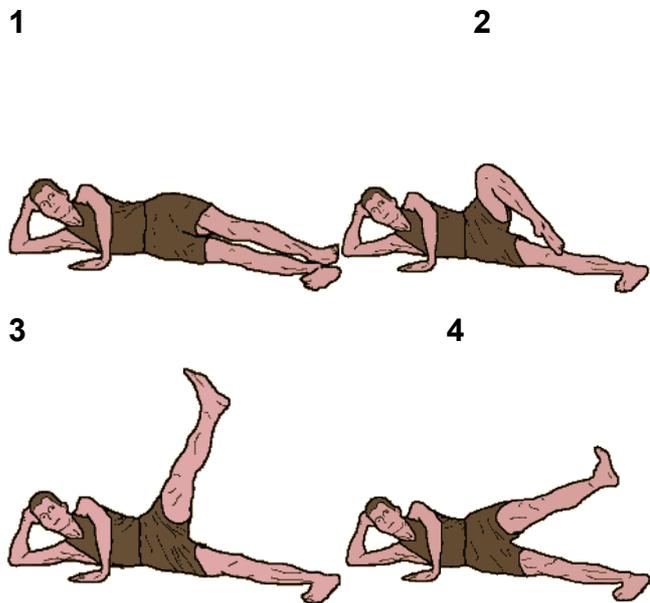
SET UP: Maintain side position and keep the top leg parallel with bottom leg.

ACTION:

Breathe naturally.
Turn top leg out so knee is looking to the ceiling, You big toe is a crayon: Crayon up the inside leg, high to your groin.
Scoop the abdominals and energize the pelvis to look forward and down. Aim your knee behind your shoulder, turn your leg out more and extend it to the ceiling. Reach it long through the heel while lowering. After 3, reverse direction.

PRECISION:

Relax your shoulders wide and roll your shoulder blades down.
Hold onto your "Box". (The "Box" is not being maintained in the diagram)
No backward tilt of pelvis!



21. MAT - SIDE KICK SERIES - CIRCLES

REPS: 5 – 8 EACH WAY

SET UP: Maintain the side position and reach the leg longer. Scoop the abdominals deep Parallel legs.

ACTION:

Breathe normally. Deepen your abs.
Circle leg equally around front and back.
Lengthen and reverse, move only the leg.



PRECISION:

Relax your shoulders wide and roll your shoulder blades down.
Cinch the rib and breastbone button.
Pull the leg long out of the hip.

22. MAT - SIDE KICK SERIES - INNER THIGH LIFT AND CIRCLES

REPS:5-8

SET UP: Maintain side position. Top leg in front held with hand wrapping from inside of leg to outside of ankle. Keep the weight on foot firm, and knee opening toward ceiling.

Inner thigh lifts

ACTION:

Breathe naturally
(1) Lengthen bottom leg, (toe to knee cap, foot parallel with floor). Lift, lift; lengthen leg and lower.
(2) Circle leg around and reverse. Use the space behind you.



Inner thigh circles, forward and reverse



PRECISION:

Relax your shoulders wide and roll your shoulder blades down.
Abdominals lift - no shift.
Hold onto your "Box", shoulder over shoulder, hip over hip.

23. MAT - BEATS ON BELLY TRANSITION****REPS: 6 - 18**

SET UP: Roll onto your stomach; rest your forehead on the back of stacked hands, palms on floor. Legs together. Scoop abdominals and make a "house for a mouse". Clench the butt and lift relaxed legs off the floor.

ACTION:

Open and close legs, beat the whole inner leg briskly together : "flubba, flubba, flubba flubba".

PRECISION:

Lengthen the neck Sides of the body pulling downward
Lift the lowest button.

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**24. MAT - TEASER-ONE LEG****REPS: 3-4 PER LEG**

SET UP: Sit with knees bent, inner thighs tight together with the thigh bones at a 45 degree angle to the mat. One leg extended (knees together), arms reaching to the extended foot with a gentle Pilates point. Chest lifted, lower spine curved.

ACTION:

Inhale, shine your breastbone to the sky and lift your arms straight up by your ears, scoop deeply.

Exhale to roll back onto the mat.

Inhale to roll back up: reach to the knees, to the feet, and to the top of the wall. Keep leg still and at eye level.

PRECISION:

Abdominals scoop deep to the spine.

Shoulders relax wide and shoulder blades roll down.

Bottom foot stays firmly planted on the floor.

Glue your inner thighs together.

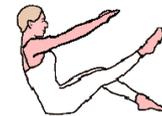
Try not to throw yourself to get up.

Roll smoothly down and up like a yo-yo.

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Easier version – Maintain good posture while lowering a small distance.



25. MAT - TEASER 1

REPS: 3-5

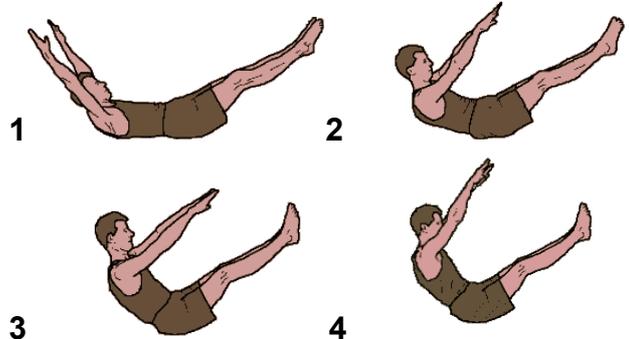
SET UP: Lie on your back with arms and legs extended to an angle of 45 degrees and chin tucked. Do not allow your back to arch or ribs to protrude. Slight Pilates stance.

ACTION:

Maintain scoop & keep back into the mat. Inhale into the sides or your ribs and curl off the mat vertebra by vertebra. Reach to knees, to feet, to top of wall. Sit up into the "V". Exhale down, lowering the spine one segment at a time.

PRECISION:

Keep legs up, long and straight. Articulate the spine up and down. Try not to throw yourself to get up. Proud open chest at the top.



Note: Put effort into flexing the hips more and raising the legs even higher than in the diagram above.

26. MAT - SWIMMING

REPS: 4 switches, then 20

SET UP: Lie on stomach with arms reaching straight out in front in line with the shoulders and legs long and parallel behind you. Nose down to the mat, abdominals scooped in and up. All toes on ground, Lengthen!

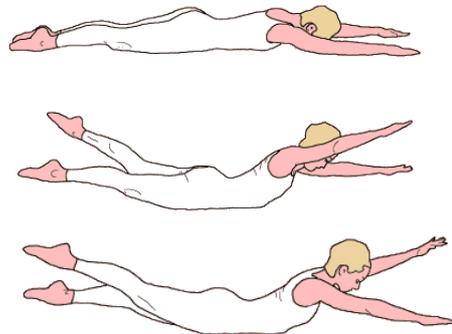
ACTION:

(a) Breathe normally. Raise and reach right arm and left leg equally, pause and lengthen. Switch to opposite arm and leg, and lengthen (4 switches).

(b) Now keep the length as you breathe in for 5 switches and out for five.

PRECISION:

Elongate torso from waist to crown and waist to toes (keep the box square). Even height of the arm and leg. Arms and legs reaching, back of neck long.



Easier version:- lift your head just off the mat (maintain length at the back of the neck), and let the lower leg and arm rest on the mat.

27. MAT - LEG PULL FRONT (PREP)

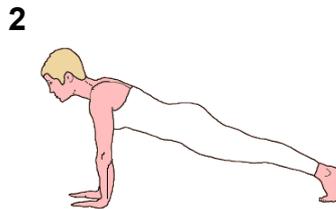
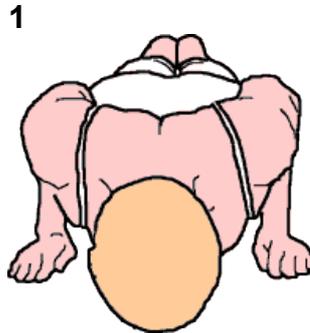
REPS: ONE – HOLD 10 SECS

SET UP: Place your hands under your shoulders; keep elbows close to ribs. Fingers together; thumbs in. Head, shoulders hips & heels in line, legs together, toe pads on the mat, abs lifted, heels over toes.

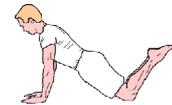
ACTION: Press up to and hold your body long & still for 10 seconds.

PRECISION:

Scoop your abs deeply up towards your spine. Lift your body out of your shoulders. Roll your shoulder blades down your back and glue them to your ribs. Work your centerline long and straight. Point your elbows backward.



Easier version



28. MERMAID STRETCH

REPS: 3-4 WITH LEGS TO LEFT, THEN 3-4 WITH LEGS TO RIGHT

SET UP: Sit with your back lined up to the side of your mat and bring your feet to the left so that the sole of the right foot is against the left thigh and the left foot is just off the mat. The left arm is straight to the ceiling, "glued" to the ear.

ACTION:

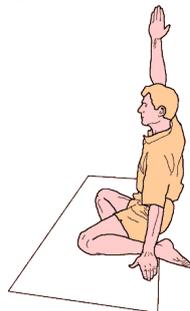
(Imagine that all movement is between two sliding glass doors). Inhale deeply then reach your left arm to the ceiling and over. Right hand hovers 6 inches above the mat. (2) Lower to the side with elbow on the mat directly under your shoulder, palm down. Inhale deeply then reach long to the wall. Repeat on opposite side.

PRECISION:

Powerhouse pulls deeply in and up Long arm glued beside ear to reach.

Easier version:- Straighten the left leg and put it out in front. If you need to, hold onto your right foot for support when reaching to ceiling and over.

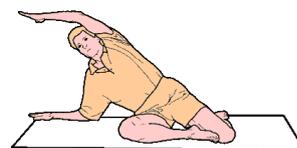
Start Position:



To Ceiling and Over -



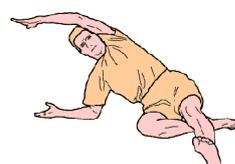
To the Wall:



Easier Version -



Repeat w. feet to Right:



30. MAT - SEAL****REPS: 6 -8**

SET UP: Dive hands between legs and wrap around to rest on the outside of each ankle. Tip back to balance behind your sit bones. Softly point your feet with your toes together and heels apart. Create opposition by pressing out with arms and in with knees. Chin to chest, abdominals scooped, knees just outside line of shoulder.

Caution:

Do not grasp your feet or ankles!

ACTION:

Scoop your abs deep. Clap feet together 3 times with your whole leg, then inhale to roll back. (Stay off your head). Clap heels together 3 times. Use your Abs, to exhale and roll up.

PRECISION:

Scoop deep and keep your eyes on your belly button! Relax your shoulders wide and roll shoulder blades down your back. Squeeze your knees together.

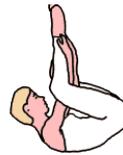
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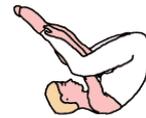
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**31. MAT - PUSH UP SERIES****REPS: 3x3 SETS**

SET UP: Stand tall in gentle Pilates stance, scoop your abs deep and lean into the wind. Reach your arms to the sky, press your back into an imaginary wall and grow tall. Glance down to check you can "see your shoe laces".

ACTION:

(1) Exhale to come up on your toes, inhale to return to Pilates stance.

(2 & 3) Roll down the spine and walk the first hand out, the second hand out further and the third time bring the hands together to front support – "head to heel like steel", and abs drawn in & up.

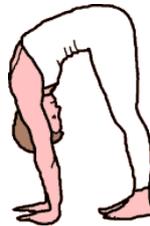
(3 & 4) Inhale to lower a long straight torso: Exhale to push the mat away.

(2 & 1) Walk hands back to feet, hips over heels, roll up from your powerhouse.

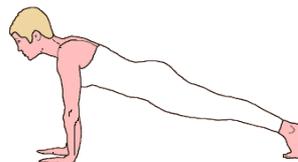
PRECISION:

Hands under shoulders, heels above toes. Lengthen your neck, rise up out of your shoulders, roll your shoulder blades down and anchor them to your ribs. Your elbows skim your ribs as you lower your body to the mat.

2



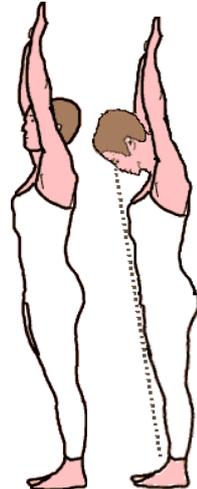
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**Easy**