

The Pilates ABC's

Ton Voogt and Michael Fritzke

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“Pilates is not a system of haphazard exercises designed to produce bulging muscles. To the contrary, it was conceived and tested for years with the idea of properly and scientifically exercising every muscle in your body. The importance of exercising every muscle in your body is so that every muscle cooperatively and loyally aid in the uniform development of all our muscles. Developing minor muscles naturally helps to strengthen major muscles. Just as small bricks are employed to build and support large buildings, so will the development of small muscles help develop large muscles. Therefore, when all your muscles are properly developed you will as a matter of course perform all your work and daily activities with minimum effort.”
Joseph H. Pilates

The foundation and common thread in all the exercises and variations within the method are the basic concepts and patterns of movement created to realign and balance the entire body. Clara Pilates called them the “A-B-C’s of Pilates”, others call them “Pre-Pilates”, “Before the Hundred”, “Fundamentals”, “Building Blocks”, etc. Whatever name you assign them, they are helpful in teaching your clients the movement patterns of their body that will help them experience and understand the underlying concepts and principles of the method and exercises. The Pilates ABC’s are also beneficial for clients with physical limitations to help them rehabilitate and prepare them for more challenging work.

PILATES VOCABULARY

POWERHOUSE

The Powerhouse refers to your core. It is the band of muscles around your center; abdominals, gluteals and lower back muscles. In Pilates, the Powerhouse is the center of your strength and control, from where all exercises/movements are initiated and are sustained.

PILATES STANCE/"V" POSITION

The Pilates Stance is an alignment position in which your legs are externally rotated with your heels together and toes slightly apart creating a "V" position. It is a position used during many standing, seated, supine and side lying exercises. It is important that your Powerhouse initiates the action of externally rotating your legs from your hips and not from your knees or ankles. The rotating or wrapping motion of the buttocks, and the back of the legs, creates the external rotation. Your feet respond naturally to this rotation by opening into the "V" position. It is not important how many "inches" apart your toes are, as this will depend upon your flexibility, strength and control. How and why Joseph Pilates created this position has been under discussion. Some say it was after working with dancers and it is a small first position. Others have described it as a "Greek column." To us the most true story is that it is was a military stance, based on his military training and posture.

TUCKING

Tucking is used to describe a posterior pelvic tilt.

IMPRINTING

Imprinting is a conceptual term used to describe the position of the spine. In this position, you create and maintain a long spine with your abdominals engaged and your tailbone (coccyx) on the mat. Contracting your abdominals in and up will allow you to create and maintain an imprinted spine while moving. Don't shorten your waist or tuck your pelvis under when focusing on imprinting.

IN AND UP

In and up refers to simultaneous contraction of the abdominals and your pelvic floor by drawing your belly in and up against your spine. The action of contracting the abdominals in and up activates the transversus abdominis muscle, which is essential in stabilizing the spine. When you pull your abdominals in and up, it is important that you don't change the shape of your body position. For example, don't round your shoulders forward, shorten your waist or tuck your pelvis under when you pull your abdominals in and up.

C-CURVE

The C-curve relates to the shape of the spine. When you contract the abdominals in and up and curl the tailbone (coccyx) under, your spine will round and resemble a C-shape. It is important that the curl of the tailbone is *not* a tucking motion initiated from the hip flexors, but rather a *lengthening* of your lower back and a curling under motion of your tailbone *initiated by your abdominals*. This way the C-curve creates space and length in your back.

POSITION OF THE PELVIS AND LUMBAR SPINE

The pelvis is the base of the trunk. The relationship between the pelvis, sacrum, coccyx and the lumbar spine are critical for the functional coordination of the body during the workout. When you lie on your back, the natural double-S-curve of the spine should lengthen and sink down towards the mat. Ideally, the pelvis and the spine should lie flat and relaxed on the mat. Bending the legs will help the body to relax more and therefore this position is sometimes referred to as the “Constructive rest” position.

Too much tension in the lower back musculature, hip flexors, internal organs or intercostals can prevent the ideal position. During the workout, the slight contraction of the Pelvic floor gives an impulse that will initiate the lifting and lengthening of the spine. This impulse of the deep muscles allows the lumbar back extensors to relax, and the deep abdominal muscles to contract, so the spine can lengthen and the pelvis becomes a Functional Unit with the trunk. Which means that when you lie on your back (supine) you “anchor” your pelvis and your lumbar spine will be in contact with the mat. We also call this an Imprinted spine. Do not confuse this position with “tucking”, when the lumbar spine is pressed down and hip flexors are shortened.

POSITION OF THE HEAD AND CERVICAL SPINE

The head is the counter pole of the Coccyx and pelvis. Therefore, the position of the head is just as crucial in regards to the lengthening of the spine. When lying on the back, the relaxed neck should be able to “sink” towards the floor, the cervical spine should be able to lengthen, the chin should be at a 90-degree angle with the floor and there should be no pressure in the throat (pressure in the throat could mean that the chin is pressed down too much). If the student is not able to create this long neck (especially when lying on the back and the neck “hangs”) you should give them a pillow. The alignment stays the same when you are sitting or standing. The neck should be able to lengthen and the head should balance on top of the spine in the plum line of the body (reference point is the 7th cervical vertebrae). Ideally, the chin should neither be shifted forwards or backwards, it should be at a 90-degree angle with the throat. During the workout, you should maintain the oppositional function between the two poles (pelvis and head).

POSITION OF THE RIBS AND THE THORACIC SPINE

Freedom of movement in the chest is crucial in regards to integrated movement of the chest with the spine and breath. The chest should not look like a rigid cage. The ribs are flexible and should “open” and “close”. When the spine is straight (in both standing and lying down) the top ribs should follow the alignment of the head and the bottom ribs the pelvis. Ideally, when laying on the back the bottom ribs should sink towards the floor and pelvis and the top ribs towards the floor and head. This opposition will lengthen the sternum and the breath will help open the chest. A rounded or arched spine can lead to tightness in the chest (e.g. too much tension in the sternum area, intercostals or abdominals). This tightness is noticeable when the costal arch is high or low.

POSITION OF THE PELVIS AND LEGS

The hips-knees-feet work together as a functional unit and therefore (looking from the side) should be in a straight line from the pelvis, through the knee to slightly in front of the ankle. In order to maintain this position while weight bearing, the external rotators of the hip play a crucial role (wrapping). In order to keep the hips “open”, the hip flexors must be able to lengthen. Shortness of the hip flexors will tilt the pelvis to the front, which in turn will shorten the lumbar spine creating a strong lordosis (arching of the lower back). Too much tension in the back of the legs and in the pelvic floor will tilt the pelvis backwards, rolling the coccyx in. To keep the hips open, the alignment of the pelvis plays a crucial role. Therefore, in order to maintain this alignment, the musculature of the leg and hip must be both strengthened and stretched in a balanced way.

POSITION OF THE KNEES

When the hips and feet are correctly placed, the knees should be right in the middle. Ideally, the patella should be over the 2nd and 3rd toe (making sure the patella is centered). When the feet roll in or out or when the hips are not centered, the knees will also be forced out of alignment. The knees will absorb most of the stress of this incorrect pressure. Shortness of the inner thigh musculature can lead to a valgus stand (knocked knees). Shortness of the external rotators can lead to a varus stand (bowed legs). When the knees are hyper-extended this can mean that the quadriceps are too short and the hamstrings too long.

POSITION OF THE FEET

The foot has two longitudinal arches and one transverse arch. For the longitudinal arches, it is important that the heel and the ball of the big toe are anchored. The transverse arch is formed from the ball of the big toe to the ball of the small toe (equal opposite pressure will activate the arch). During the workout, it is important to keep the arches active while the toes stay relaxed. You can think of it as a tripod: the ball of the big toe, the ball of the little toe and the center of the heel. The two poles of the longitudinal arch are the ball of the big toe and the outside of the heel. The two poles of the transverse arch are the ball of the big toe and the ball of the little toe.

POSITION OF THE SHOULDER GIRDLE

The shoulder joint should always be inline with the position of the shoulder blade and the clavicle/collarbone. Of the shoulder girdle, the sternoclavicular joint is the only joint that is attached to the sternum. The position of the shoulder blades is very important during the workout (especially during weight bearing). For this to happen the lifting and opening of the chest in combination with the flexibility of the ribs plays an important part. In the relaxed position, the shoulder blades should lie relaxed and wide on the back. Ideally, during weight bearing exercises the shoulder blades should still be “wide” but anchored on the back. The complete shoulder girdle should be wide, open and expansive. The head of the humerus should be centered in the shoulder joint. Often the shoulders roll to the front (and up) and the arm rolls in. Too much tension in the neck and chest musculature is often the reason for this. This will lead to parts of the rotator cuff muscles to become inactive and/or over active.

POSITION OF THE ELBOWS

The elbows should adapt fluently to the position of the hands and shoulders. In order for the body to transfer the energy during weight bearing positions in most effective way, the upper arm should be externally rotated and the forearms should be internally rotated (counter rotation in the arm). Watch out during the workout that the elbows do not hyper-extend.

POSITION OF THE HANDS

The hands are often overlooked during the workout. However, the wrist and hand positions are extremely important especially when they are weight bearing. Often the fingers are overstretched, and instead of actively working with the body, the joints are pressed down and the overstretched. To activate the muscles in the hand and wrist it is important that there is even pressure on the thumb and little finger side of the hand creating an arch or dome (whether holding a strap or on the hands and knees). Ideally, the middle finger should be in line with the forearm. The hand and wrist should stay active and you should not “hang” in the wrists and fingers.

BREATHING:

Breathing is the most essential factor in life. We can do without food and water for a while....but you cannot go without air for long. Breathing is a very important component in the Pilates method, but there is a lot of confusion in regards to how to breathe during Pilates and exercise in general.

Joseph Pilates said, “Even if you follow no other instructions learn to breathe correctly”. He compared his breathing pattern to filling up a vessel. You fill it from the bottom to the top and empty it from the top to the bottom.

The key muscles involved in respiration are the diaphragm; the intercostals, which are between the ribs; and the abdominal muscles. The muscles in the neck, throat, chest and upper back also engage, but less so.

The diaphragm is responsible for 75 percent of the respiratory process. As we inhale, the diaphragm lowers and expands, and the breath draws in; when we exhale, this process is reversed. As we consciously engage both the abdominal and intercostals muscles, supporting the movement of the diaphragm, the auxiliary muscles involved - in the chest, back and neck - respond accordingly. As we inhale, a slight “stretch impulse” occurs that lengthens the spine. During the exhale, the spine relaxes back to its original position. Tension in the body is the main culprit preventing us from breathing properly.

Prone Breathing exercise

Goal:

To experience the breath low and wide in the lower back

Starting position:

Lie on the stomach

Execution:

Diagonal breathing

Goal:

Opening and releasing the intercostals. These are the muscles between the ribs. If they are tight and constricted it will limit the movement of the ribcage. This in turn will limit the movement in the spine.

Starting position:

Stand with the right hand across the body. Finger against the bone at the front of the shoulder. Hand on the chest on an angle. Left hand on the back (same side) on the bottom of the ribs. Fingers facing front. The hands create a diagonal.

Execution:

Breath-a-cizor

Goal:

Breath control

Starting position:

Stand with the legs in Pilates stance, together or parallel apart holding the breath-a-cizor in one hand

Execution:

SPINE

Towel lengthening

Goal:

To feel the length in the lower spine and create a long and relaxed lumbar spine.
To experience a long spine without “tucking”.

Starting position:

Fold part of a towel like an accordion, keep the rest unfolded. Lie down on the back with the folded part of the towel underneath the pelvis and lumbar spine. The upper back and shoulders are not on the towel. Make sure that there is enough towel left for the instructor to hold. Bend the legs and open them about the width of the mat. Place the arms down long next to the body or folded behind the head in order to softly “pull” the neck out to create more length.

Execution:

Imprinting

Goal:

Experience a long spine
To experience full engagement and connection of the powerhouse and a long spine as the legs and arms move.

Starting position:

Lie on the back with the spine long and relaxed, legs bent and arms long next to the body.

Execution:

Testing the concept

Starting position:

Lie on the back with the spine long and relaxed, legs bent and arms long next to the body. Place one foot on top of the TRIADBALL™ with the foot flexed.

Execution:

Neck release - figure 8

Goal:

Releasing the neck musculature

Starting position:

Lie down on the back with the legs bent and hip width apart.

Place one hand in front of the face, palm facing the body. Like you are looking into a mirror

Execution:

Neck release

Goal:

Releasing the neck musculature

Starting position:

Lie down on the back with the legs bent and hip-width apart. Place both hands on top of each other behind the head.

Execution:

Neck peel

Goal:

To experience the length in the cervical spine as head lifts

Starting position:

Lie down on the back with the legs bent and hip-width apart. Place both hands behind the head.

Execution:

Coccyx curl

Goal:

To experience the length in the lumbar spine as the coccyx lifts

Starting position:

Lie down on the back with the legs bent, hip-width apart and the arms down long next to the body.

Execution:

Reverse Coccyx curl

Goals:

- Feel the opening of the front of the hips
- Feel the connection of the front of the body during extension

Starting position:

Lie on the stomach with the forehead on the hands. The legs can be relaxed and apart or together.

Execution:

Pelvic floor

Goals:

Experience the engagement of the pelvic floor

Starting position:

Lie on the back and place the TRIADBALL™ (more deflated than normal or use a smaller ball) underneath your pelvis. Place the TRIADBALL™ more forwards than normal, the pelvis is in a slightly rounded position, releasing the lower back (hanging like a hammock). Place both arms down next to the body (or slightly open) and lift both legs up to a tabletop position with the legs together.

Execution:

Clock

Goal:

Articulation of the pelvis

Starting position:

Lie down on the back and place the TRIADBALL™ underneath the lower back with the tailbone slightly forward off the TRIADBALL™. Make sure that the back can be relaxed. The legs are bent and hip-width apart with the arms down long next to the body.

Imagine the pelvis as the face of a clock, 12 is the navel, 6 is the pubic bone, 3 and 9 are the ASIS (anterior superior iliac spine – the bones you can feel)

Execution:

Figure 8 of the pelvis

Goal:

Articulation of the pelvis

Starting position:

Lie down on the back and place the TRIADBALL™ underneath the lower back and pelvis with the tailbone in line with the edge of the TRIADBALL™. Make sure that the back can be relaxed. Legs are bent and hip-width apart with the arms down long next to the body.

Imagine the two sides of your pelvis as a rudder. You are going to pedal backwards.

Execution

Hip and Lower back release 1

Goal:

Release the lower back and hip

Starting position:

Lie down on the right side with the hips and shoulders on top of each other with the legs at a 90-degree angle. Place the TRIADBALL™ between the legs. Stretch the bottom arm out long in line with the body and place the head on top of the arm. If necessary, place a pillow underneath the head. Place the other hand on the floor with the hand in front of the sternum

Execution:

Hip and Lower back release 2

Goal:

Release the lower back and hip

Starting positions:

Same as “Hip and Lower back release 1”, except extend the bottom leg out in line with the body. Inflate the TRIADBALL™ so that the knee is more or less hip-height when you place the TRIADBALL™ underneath the knee of the top bent leg. Place the foot of the top leg relaxed on the floor.

Execution:

Inverse tick tock

Goal:

Experience twisting

Starting position:

Lie on the side with the hips and shoulders on top of each other, with the legs at a 90-degree angle. Place the TRIADBALL™ between the knees. Extend the bottom arm out long in line with the body and place the head on top of the arm. Keep the arm relaxed and slightly bent. If needed place a pillow underneath the head. Place the top arm in front of the sternum keeping the arm relaxed and slightly bent.

Execution:

Reverse tick tock

Goal:

Experience rotation of the spine

Starting position:

Lie on the side with the hips and shoulders on top of each other, with the legs at a 90-degree angle. Place the TRIADBALL™ between the knees and extend both arms out to the front and in line with the shoulders. Place the head on the mat, if needed place a pillow underneath the head.

Execution

Spinal change

Goal:

Articulation, flexion and extension of the spine
Opening of the chest

Starting position:

Sit on heels, bend upper body forward and down with arms next to the body and the palms of the hands facing up.

Execution:

Cat stretches

Goal:

Limbers the spine and pelvis
Articulation of the spine

Starting position:

Kneel on all fours (hands and knees) with the knees hip-width apart and the hands shoulder-width apart. Divide the weight evenly over all four points with the shoulders directly over the wrists and the hips directly over the knees.

Execution:

Prone head lift

Goal:

To experience the length during extension of the spine.

To experience the initiation of extension of the spine by lengthening.

Starting position:

Lie on the stomach with the legs extended out long and slightly apart. Place the forehead on top of the hands.

Execution:

Back extension

Goal:

Connection of the upper back during thoracic extension

Starting position:

Lie on the stomach and place the TRIADBALL™ under the sternum, and curl the head (forehead) down towards the floor. Extend the legs out long and slightly apart. Place the forearms next to you on the floor at a 90-degree angle (elbows about shoulder height).

Execution:

Thoracic rotation

Goal:

To experience the rotation of the thoracic spine and the ribcage

Starting position:

Stand with the legs hip width apart and place a theraband around the shoulders and back. Hold one end of the theraband in each hand. Tighten the band and bring both arms forward shoulder height and shoulder width.

Execution:

Quadruped extension and rotation

Goal:

To create rotation and extension in the thoracic spine
To experience correct rotation

Starting position:

On hands and knees, place right hand behind the head, keeping the elbow open to the side

Execution:

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SHOULDERS

Arm Figure 8

Goals:

Experiencing normal range of motion in the joint.
To feel and see any restrictions in the joint
Stabilization of the shoulder while moving the arm

Starting position:

Stand and place the right hand across the body with the fingers underneath and against the rounding of the arm. Angle the hand down so that the heel of the hand is towards the sternum. The left arm is down next to the body and relaxed. Turn the back of the hand to the front.

Execution:

Shoulder placement on the floor

Goal:

Experience the movement of the arms and shoulder

Starting position:

Lie on the back with the legs bent and lift both arms up towards the ceiling

Execution:

Single arm lift

Goals:

To experience and control the movement of the ball of the humerus down and back as the arm lifts forward and up

Starting positioning:

Sit with the back close to the wall. Place the legs in a comfortable position. Hold a theraband in the right hand and have it anchored under the right hip. Place a small ball behind the top of right shoulder.

Execution:

Plank

Goal:

To experience the stabilization of the shoulders

Starting position:

Plank position on the elbows
Keep the upper back open

Execution:

Spider on the wall

Goal:

Experience the movement of the arm while the shoulder blade is anchored
Stretch of the chest musculature

Starting position:

Stand facing the wall and place the fingertips against the wall with the arms straight, shoulder-height and shoulder-width.

Execution:

Roll up the wall

Goals:

Shoulder stability

Starting position:

Stand facing the wall with the legs in a lunge position. Back leg can be either parallel with the heel lifted or turned out with the heel down.

Place the forearms on two TRIADBALLS, arms bent, palms facing each other.

Execution:

ARMS & HANDS

Castanets

Goal:

Isolation and articulation of the fingers
Strengthen forearms

Starting position:

Stand with the legs in Pilates stance or hip width apart with the arms lifted out to the sides, shoulder height and with the palms of the hands facing forward. Keep the hands in your peripheral vision and the fingers spread wide.

Execution:

Finger flicks

Goal:

Isolation and articulation of the fingers
Strengthen forearms

Starting position:

Stand with the legs in Pilates stance or hip width apart with the arms lifted out to the sides, shoulder height and with the palms of the hands facing forward. Keep the hands in your peripheral vision and the fingers spread wide.

Execution:

Wrists

Goal:

Strengthen, stretch and placement of the hands, wrist and forearms

Starting position:

Kneel on all fours with the shoulders directly over the wrists and the hips directly over the knees. Make sure, that the middle fingers point straight forward and that there is even weight on both sides of the hands. Don't hang in the wrists or hands.

Execution of exercise:

Sandbag with and without the sandbag

Goal:

Strengthen the forearms and wrists
Stabilization of the shoulder
Articulation of the fingers

Starting position:

Stand with the legs in Pilates stance or parallel apart, with the arms at shoulder height in front of you holding the bar with the sandbag rolled up

Execution:

HIP

Hip - 8

Goals:

Experience disassociation of the hip/leg
Experience the full range of motion
Release tension in the hip

Starting position:

Stand on one leg, place one hand against the wall or hold on to a pole of the Cadillac for balance and in order not to over recruit any stabilizing muscles. Bend the other leg by bringing the foot back (flex in the knee) and keep the knee relaxed down under the hip

Execution:

Joint release

Goal:

To release the hip joint

Starting position:

Lie down on the back with the legs bent and hip-width apart. Place the TRIADBALL™ on the floor between the heel of the foot and the thigh of one of the legs.

Execution:

Cat press back

Goal:

Ability to keep the pelvis neutral
Experience “sitting back and relaxing” into the hips

Starting position:

On all fours in the cat stretch position with a long spine

Execution:

Pelvis Stability

Goal:

To create and experience stability of the pelvis

Starting position:

Lie down on the back with the legs in a tabletop position. Place the hands against the thighs.

Execution:

Diamond folds

Goals:

Pelvis stability
Disassociation

Starting position:

Lie on the back with the legs bent and closed, feet flat on the mat

Execution:

Walking

Goal:

Enforces the connection between the inner thighs and the powerhouse

Starting position:

Lie down on the back with the legs bent, hip-width apart and feet flat on the mat. Place the TRIADBALL™ between the inner thighs; close the groin. Then lift the legs into a Table Top position without tucking the pelvis. Place the arms down next to the body. Keep the spine long and the shoulders, neck and arms relaxed.

Execution:

TV exercises

Goal:

Enforces the connection between the powerhouse and the legs
Stabilization of the spine

Starting position:

Sit on a stool/chair or the Cadillac with the short-box underneath the feet. Place the legs hip-width apart, with the legs – hips at a 90 angle. Sit with the spine straight and place both hands next to the body on the Cadillac or on the hips

Execution:

Hip flexor stretch

Goal:

Stretch the hip flexor muscle group

Starting position:

Kneel on one knee. Hip above knee and the front leg, knee above ankle

Execution:

LEGS

Standing rotation

Goal:

Experience correct movement in the femur/hip
Feel the rotations in the lower kinetic chain

Starting position:

Stand with the Theraband wrapped around the foot and leg.
(Start outside of the hip, to the front of thigh (to inside), behind the calf, top of foot, underneath the foot, and wrapped around the foot).

Hold the Theraband and place the hand on the outside of the hip (on the femur)

Tighten the band enough to feel resistance.

Execution:

Side lying press down

Goals:

Activation and strengthening of the gluteus medius

Starting position:

Lie on the side with the bottom arm long and place the head on top of the arm; use pillows if necessary. Bring the bottom leg forward into a 75 degree angle with the knee bent. The top leg is straight inline with the body or slightly forward. Place a TRIADBALL underneath the knee of the top leg for support. The shoulders and hips are stacked.

Execution:

Reverse clam

Goal:

Experience and strengthen the external rotators of the hip

Starting position:

Lie down on the side with the hips and shoulders on top of each other with the bottom leg at a 90-degree angle and the top leg inline with the body (place ball underneath the knee if necessary). Place the bottom arm out long in line with the body and place the head on top of the arm. If necessary place a pillow underneath the head. Place the other arm in front of the sternum on the floor for support.

Execution:

Sitting external rotation

Goals:

Activation and strengthening of the external rotators

Starting position:

Sit on the side of the Cadillac with the legs hip width apart. Place a support under one foot, let the other leg "hang".

Execution:

External rotation

Goal:

Experience and strengthen the external rotators of the hip

Starting position:

Lie down on the side with the hips and shoulders on top of each other with the legs at a 90-degree angle. Place the bottom arm out long in line with the body and place the head on top of the arm. If necessary place a pillow underneath the head. Place the other arm in front of the sternum on the floor for support.

Execution:

External knee fold

Goal:

Strengthen the muscles around the knees

Starting position:

Lie on the back with the legs together, bent and feet on the floor

Execution:

Prone leg extension 1

Goals:

Experience the length of the leg during extension
Strengthens the hip extensors

Starting position:

Lie on the stomach, forehead on the hands with the legs long and relaxed. Keeping the knee on the floor, curl the toes of the right foot under

Execution:

Prone leg extension 2

Goals:

Experience the length of the leg during extension
Strengthens the hip extensors

Starting position:

Lie on the stomach, forehead on the hands legs out long and hip width

Execution:

FEET

Foot spiral

Goals:

Feel the activation of the arches in the foot

Starting position:

Sit and place the Theraband on the outside of the foot under the heel. Cross the band over the foot to the inside of the big toe, around the big toe and cross back over the foot. Hold the band on the top.

Execution:

Flex/point

Goal:

Experience the correct way to flex and point the feet

Starting position:

Sit with the legs out long in front of you, relaxed and slightly apart. Place the hands next or slightly behind the body in a comfortable position.

Execution:

Towel

Goal:

Strengthen the arch of the foot
Articulation of the foot and toes

Starting position:

Sit on a stool/chair or the Cadillac with the short-box underneath the feet. Place the legs hip-width apart, with the legs – hips angle not less than 90-degrees. Sit with the spine straight and place both hands next to the body on the Cadillac or on the hips. Place a towel underneath the feet with the heels off the towel.

Execution:

Toe Tensor

Goal:

Release the joints of the big toe

Starting position:

Sit with the legs in a 90-degree angle and the back straight. Place the toe tensor around the big toes and place the hands in a comfortable position. Place the legs apart as wide as necessary to tighten the toe tensor without pulling the springs out.

Execution:

Foot Corrector

Goal:

Massages and activates the soles of the feet

Starting position:

Place the heel of one foot on the base of the foot corrector. Place the ball of the foot on the bar of the foot corrector. Place the other leg in a comfortable position. If necessary hold on to something.

Execution:

Finding the tripod of the foot

Goals:

Finding the tripod of the foot

Starting position:

Stand with the legs in Pilates Stance or hip width apart

Execution:

Arch lift

Goals:

Feel the activation of the arches in the foot

Starting position:

Stand with the legs hip width apart and parallel

Execution:

Picking up the coin

Goal:

Activation of the longitudinal arch of the foot

Starting position:

Sit on a stool/chair or the Cadillac with the short-box underneath the feet. Place the legs hip-width apart, with the legs – hips angle not less than 90-degrees. Sit with the spine straight and place both hands next to the body on the Cadillac or on the hips.

Place a coin underneath the arch of the foot. Keep the upper body straight and relaxed

Execution:

STANDING ALIGNMENT AND BALANCE

2 by 4

Goal:

Articulation of the feet
Alignment of the ankle and legs

Starting position:

Stand facing the wall with the legs in Pilates stance and place the hands against wall for balance.

Execution:

Balancing exercises

Goal:

Challenges the balance
Strengthens the internal feedback
Improves proprioception

Starting position:

Stand with the feet parallel behind each other heel to toe. Make sure the feet are parallel and divide the weight evenly over both feet and the tripod of each foot.

Execution:

Bibliography for the Continuing Education workshops with Michael Fritzke and Ton Voogt

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- "Your Health" Joseph H. Pilates
- "Return To Life Through Contrology" Joseph H. Pilates
- "Rule of the Bones" Bruce King
- "Body dynamics" Eleonor Metheny
- On-going personal study and workshops with the Pilates Elders and/or their protégés
- On-going personal study and workshops of other modalities
- "Anatomy Trains" Thomas W. Myers
- "Dynamic Alignment through Imagery" Eric Franklin
- "Pelvic Power" Eric Franklin
- "Anatomy of Movement" Blandine Calais-Germain
- "Anatomy of Movement – exercises" Blandine Calais-Germain
- "Pilates for Hip and Knee Syndromes and Arthroplasties" Beth A. Kaplanek, Brett Levine, William L. Jaffe
- "Meridian Exercises" Shizuto Masunaga, translated by Stephan Brown
- "Pilates TRIADBALL™ Manual" Michael Fritzke & Ton Voogt
- "Clinical Exercise Specialist Manual" ACE
- "Dance Injuries" Daniel D. Arnheim
- "Zen Shiatsu – How to harmonize Yin and Yang for better health" Shizuto Masunaga with Wataru Ohashi
- "Do-it-yourself Shiatsu – how to perform the ancient Japanese art of "Acupuncture without needles" Wataru Ohashi
- "Spiraldynamik" - Dr. Med. Christian Larsen & Bea Miescher

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"Who we are" icon at the left side of the screen.**

To contact Michael and Ton please email us at contact@zenirgy.com

Facebook: Ton Voogt

Facebook: Michael Fritzke