



**FITDOCK PILATES  
BY  
DIVESH MUKHYARA**

**INSTRUCTORS COURSE**  
**TRAINING THE PILATES REFORMER**



# INTRODUCTION

Did you ever wanted to try and practice Pilates, a form of exercise regime, but got stuck with the format and quite apprehensive about the suitability?

Pilates is a form of exercise which helps to strengthen the body's core strength and it helps in a great deal towards general fitness and overall-well-being. It has similarities with yoga and yogic postures, as it focuses mainly on the body postures, their balance and finally their flexibility.

On a general note, the practitioners who perform pilates have been found to have a lesser chance of getting an injury as compared to the other physical forms of strenuous exercises.



# THE ATTRIBUTES OF PILATES FOR PRACTITIONERS



- The best attribute that one can get while practicing pilates is that the regime is suitable to anyone irrespective of age and can get started anytime.
- For aged persons, it is a form of control yet with progressive movements of muscles which helps them in the total reshaping of the body.
- Pilates predominantly focuses on the mind-body, and while the practitioners keep performing pilates exercises they are constantly aware of their breathing system and the way the body keeps moving.

# THE FOUNDER



Pilates as a form of health regime was first coined and developed by Joseph Hubertus Pilates, who has a German origin and he was a German Physical Trainer and his profession was mainly concerned with carpentry and gymnasium.

He was constantly suffering from poor physical health and because of this, he was quite determined to overcome his poor physical health, and he attempted to undertake the task of becoming fit and strong and that was the reason behind introduction of Pilates as an exercise program,

He invented Pilates as an exercise program when he kept seeing the injured dancers and soldiers, who were quite suffering with muscle pains and fatigue and indeed wanted to have a remedy to overcome them.

He was notable to comprehensively understand Pilates (**Pilates or Contrology is a method of physical fitness being developed which can help to alleviate physical problems such as lower back pain.**)

He also gained popularity in presenting a method which comprises controlled movements through the workout of Pilates to the scientific community in large. His methodologies when properly done by the user's have made the lives of people much easier.





## A BETTER WAY TO GET INITIATED

For a beginner, pilates becomes the most ideal exercise program and in the case, the practitioner has mastered the form they can get initiated with more and more advanced moves. It is indeed always recommended to get the pilates exercise started with an instructor and at the pilates exercise center through a few sessions.

### **Importance of Pilates**

Pilates as a form of exercise regime, which is quite similar to the Yoga (A set of specific exercises, called poses, combined with specific breathing techniques and meditation principles makes an individual have a better health regime)

Pilates as an exercise regime, involves a series of physical movements on the proprioceptive systems ( Proprioceptive systems become the combination of both muscles and joints). The proprioceptive system enables body awareness and detects any movement or force or pressure over the muscles when applied.

The exercise is particularly centered on giving the core strength to the muscle, which in turn brings about the required posture balance and flexibility. Pilates practitioners have found themselves quite



- **Good Posture:** The regular practice of Pilates by the practitioner helps them to constantly maintain good posture and the exercise regime helps the practitioner to constantly remain in the perfect alignment. Pilates has been specifically recommended by physicians for individuals suffering from lower back pain.

- **Muscle Tone:** One should understand that the Pilates exercise predominantly involves the use of muscles and joints on a daily basis. The practitioner on the initial course of Pilates exercise feels initial soreness on the muscles but on regular practice, the soreness gets reduced. Pilates exercise has been found very good for older people who seem to be quite sedate at their age and proper muscle tone through Pilates becomes necessary to become healthy and healthy.

- **Flat Abdominal Muscles:** Pilates have been found to be very effective for individuals who complain about abdominal muscle fatigue. Pilates exercises done regularly help to maintain the abdominal muscles such as transversus abdominis, multifidi, pelvic floor, and diaphragm. The muscles mentioned above help to provide stability and support to the pelvis and also the torso.

- **Flexibility:** It is an unknown fact that the core muscles of the body get weakened as we age and these core deep muscles of the back, abdomen, and pelvic floor help an individual to get enough support required to bring about an efficient movement. Pilates as an exercise regime helps the individuals to get enough flexibility on the muscles so that they sustain themselves eventually after their injury or fall.

- **Enhances Back Support:** Pilates helps in tackling problems concerning the structural imbalances of the back. Certain problems like pelvic instability, muscular imbalances become a bottleneck for most individuals who are more prone to sitting posture during their work schedule. Pilates exercise regimes and methodologies specializes in the holistic health of people and further enhances the back support.



# EQUIPMENT SETUP

The Pilates Reformer is a bed-like structure which consists of a flat, cushioned, moving platform for the user to roll back and forth on the wheels, with shoulder blocks for comfort and stability. The objective of the Reformer is to bring about the proper muscle length and strength in an utmost organized manner or way.

The front platform usually hides the springs with a moveable bar which facilitates the user with work-outs and various exercise variations. The back platform may also have two adjustable bars. The Pilates Reformer is a bed-like structure with a frame and platform for the user to roll back and forth on the wheels. The users use the Pilates Reformer under the direction of a qualified instructor and the exercise is performed with the assistance of the springs.

**“The reformer is conceived and designed to bring about the diaphragmatic breathing for the Pilates practitioner which is indeed meant to organize the body’s posture through a series of coordinated movements with an absolute emphasis on postural control”**



# THE SETUP

The equipment setup plays a predominant role in getting the best benefits of the Pilates Reformer. Any deviation of the equipment setup would lead to the inability to perform the right pattern of exercise.

Added to this, the system setup failure would lead to loss of blood flow and exercise momentum.

**Springs:** The springs would allow you to adjust most of the resistance to the equipment, and they are meant to be pushed and pulled along the frame by your own body weight and strength.

## **Reformer Safety and Maintenance**

The Pilates Reformer is a device which moves constantly and the equipment comprises straps, springs, foot bar and other essential accessories. Since the equipment is constantly moving there are greater chances for accidents to happen during the equipment use.

During the equipment use, ensuring one's own safety is primordial and this applies to the safety of other users as well. The user's can be safe by observing the following protocols:





- **Replacement of the Reformer parts:** The Reformer can become non-functional, during the wear and tear of the machine. In this case, one must ensure the replacement of the Pilate parts for a prolonged and continual use. Ideally, the Reformer springs can ensure 2-3 years of good life. Under any circumstances, if one observes any wear and tear, it is recommended to replace the parts.
- **The user needs to have a holistic check of the hardware:** The user before using the Reformer needs to check the hardware of the equipment, in order to ensure safe use. One needs to specifically look into the footstrap which connects the frame. The footstrap is usually prone to become loose with the constant wear & tear.
- **The supporting bar must be firmly seated on the appropriate ledge:** When the Reformer is not in use ensure that the springs are attached to the carriage as it could prevent an accident if an unwary individual sits on the carriage. When using the short box, ensure that the back edge of the box is between the shoulder blocks and metal hocks. This prevents the box from slipping off the carriage while in use. A tall individual may have to set the reformer to a higher gear in order to straighten the legs. Do not straddle the Reformer with your legs, as it puts legs and groin in a vulnerable position.
- **Ensuring the carriage to be in a home position:** The user before using the Reformer, needs to ensure that the carriage is in a home position before changing the gear. One must ensure that the gear is firmly set into position before attaching the springs. Be sure the gear block is in the correct position.
- **Keep the Reformer in good condition for better performance:** One should understand that the Reformer comprises many parts and sub-components and all these sub-components are subjected to mechanical movements. So one should ensure that the equipment is well-oiled for a smooth glide in each use.



# EXERCISE SETUP

## PRESENTATION OF THE METHOD

With many forms of exercise that focuses on some muscles and makes them stretch and shrink them subsequently. Pilates workout focuses on strengthening them and the individual requires concentration and focus since your body gets through a certain precise range of motions. Pilates lengthens and stretches all the major muscle groups in the body, thereby over a session of 45 to 90 minutes one gets to be rejuvenated.

On the beneficial side, the workout becomes a form of rehabilitation for people with condition columns, in the treatment of chronic diseases or to prevent injury.

It is noteworthy that the pilates technique is not an aerobic workout or impact, which means it can be practiced at any age, providing reach old age with greater flexibility and performance

Of the 34 original movements, pilates currently consists of a total of 500 movements, all carefully studied. The method fully integrated these natural laws with a view to educating the mind and body. The author discovered the importance of building a center of force which flows moving towards the periphery.

The Pilates method of work out system is suitable to every person and the instructor who trains you on the Reformer regularly evaluates the suitable and appropriate method which suits the individual. The testimony from the users who are already having their workout with the Reformer find it very good and the device is suitable for athletes, pregnant women and also for individuals who have quite low fitness levels.





# PILATES PRINCIPLES



The Pilates principles with correct technique brings about the most promising results to an individual, with the integration of Breathing, Centering, Concentration etc, the individual gets to experience balance, grace and ease.

## **BREATHING:**

Breathing has an important role in most of the Pilates exercises, as the movements begin with a breath and end with a breadth. Nevertheless, most individuals who tend to perform exercises often hold their breath, but this proves to be fatal sometimes.

As a Pilates protocol, the individuals need to bring about a perfect coordination of the movement followed by a subsequent breath. The individual should bring about a standard practice of inhaling when working on the footwork and get into lengthening and exhaling while returning back to the normal position.

While you do this, you actually contract the deepest abdominal muscles, thereby creating a girdle of support and protection around the low neck. Added to this, we need to understand that ribs are connected to the vertebrae and in this case when we expand the rib cage, you also tend to lengthen the spine. This becomes an obvious reason why you need to inhale or breadth during the Pilates exercise movement.

# CENTERING



In a Pilates workout, all the muscle movements are driven towards the center of the body (Center of the body is the powerhouse area which lies between the lower ribs and pubic bone.) and while performing the exercise the individual needs to consciously focus on the center of the body.

One should understand that all the core muscles which are responsible for stability and posture are positioned in the center of the body. Though every movement involves the legs, the exercise focus is on the core, instead.

## Control

In the process of having a workout, the main focus that one needs to have is the control over the movement during the workout. The fantastic attribute of a Reformer is that the individual who does his workout happens to move his body in an anatomically correct manner, and the Reformer apparatus brings about full support to the body movements. But then, one needs to be less dependent on the machines and focus entirely on the body and have a control mechanism.

One should also understand that, the body while in the process of excessive work-out experiences certain challenges which are more prominent from the Supine position (The Supine position is a position where the face and the torso is facing up), to sitting, standing and kneeling. These positions, when performed, creates new demands on the body. However, one should have a control mechanism to maintain stability and alignment.





# CONCENTRATION

Concentration plays a key role for an individual to concentrate over the body and to achieve this, the individual needs to bring about an effective and mindful concentration when performing a particular task or exercise.

For the Pilates starters, it becomes the preliminary method to learn and understand the Pilates technique with minimal instructions from a trained instructor and further to undertake and perform the particular movement.

The individual needs to comprehensively be mindful of his sloppy movements so that he does not get into any sort of muscular cramps.

Once you get initiated, you can practice the method with full confidence and get better-and-better each day.

## Flow

Pilates as a workout regime puts its emphasis on the continuous movements of the body and the movements that an individual does is completely controlled and eventually during the workout the challenges in the body are always met.

As a user, who is performing his workout on the Reformer, he needs to pay attention to the different transitions during the exercise and one must also ensure that there are no wasted movements.

## Precision

Precision is an integral component when you practice the work out sessions in Pilates and it amalgamates the whole experience during the workout. It can be said that without a precision, you cannot apply concentration of both mind and body, you cannot control each movement without centering or having to do workout from the core, and you cannot work out without having to do a proper breathing.

Precision is what is controlled by the user in order to get the best out of Pilates and if an individual has gained mastery over the precision of each and every workout, he gets into a healthier life.



# ALIGNMENT AND EFFICIENCY

Alignment is one of the most important tenets of Pilates as one needs to be in alignment with his head, shoulders, spine, hips, knees and ankles and if an individual is perfectly aligned, the individual gains efficiency over the Pilates and learns how to balance the body's bony structure in order to achieve the most efficient movements in his daily activities and hence stays healthy throughout his life.

## Integration and Harmony

Integration and Harmony are both inter-related terms for most of the exercise regime of Pilates and this is achieved through the complete coordination of body, mind and the spirit. When an individual practices upon Pilates, there is an equal coordination of body and mind and when these two are in perfect alignment the individual gets into perfect harmony and all the other elements