

Pilates Program

- Single Leg Stretch -

Lying on your back in a neutral position (neck long, shoulder blades and rib cage on the mat, small arch in your lower back), knees bent and feet on the floor. Breathe in and as you exhale, engage your pelvic floor and deep abdominal muscle and lengthen one leg (keep your leg close to the floor), return as you breath in and repeat with the other leg. Repeat 10 x

To advance this further, raise your knees above your hips and repeat as above. (you don't have to lengthen the leg, you could just tap your foot on the floor. The longer the lag the harder) x 10

- Arm lengthening -

Lying in the neutral position, exhale as you engage your deep abdominal and take one arm up and above your head, then return as you breath in. Alternate arms with the focus on keeping your ribs down. Repeat 10 x

To advance this add the Single Leg Stretch Exercise.

- Hip Rolls -

Lying on your back, knees bent and stuck together. As you exhale, engage core and roll your knees to one-side. Inhale whilst at the side and then exhale and work from your core to return to the middle (neutral spine). A progression would be to raise your knees above your hips, but be conscious of sending your knees directly to the side. X10 each side

- Bridging-

Lying in a neutral position with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Start with a pelvic tilt and then engage your glutes and continue to raise your body up until you are resting on your shoulder blades. Inhale at the top and then exhale as you bring your ribs down first, then mid back and lower back, then pelvis to neutral.

A progression is to add 6 leg extensions when at the top. Raising a leg (above other leg), focusing on keeping your pelvis up and level! Alternate legs! X 4

- Table Top-

One all fours, knees under hips and hands under shoulders, engage pelvic floor and keep shoulders away from ears. Lengthen one leg behind, ensuring you engage your glute muscles and straighten your leg! Focus in keeping a neutral spine. Return and repeat, alternating legs. X 10 on each leg!

A progression would be to add the alternate arm. Raising your arm forwards and up but keeping your shoulders back and down.

- Dart-

Lying on your front with your arms by your side, palms facing up. As you raise your upperbody, rotate your arms and open across the front of your collar bones, drawing your shoulder blades together down your back. As you lift engage your core and only lift your upperbody slightly. Keep your eyes down. X 10

- Spine Extension-

Lying on your front, with your hands wide at chest level. Push through the palms of your hands, look forwards and open across your shoulders, pushing your chest and then ribs forwards. Aiming to make a ski slope with your back. X 5

-Side Lying-

Lying on your side in a neutral position. As you exhale, engage your deep abdominals and raise your top leg. Repeat leg left 10x

- Raise both legs , working your obliques more and keeping your shoulders relaxed!
- Raise both legs and head works obliques too!

- Side Lying Leg Circles-

Lying in a neutral position, lower leg bent! Circle your top leg 10x in each direction. Remember to extend your hip (take foot behind you) to ensure correct movement in the hip!

- Arm Openings-

Staying on your side, Knees bent and forwards, arms in front and block/towel underneath your head. Take the top arm up and back opening across the front of your chest and shoulders and rotating your spine. Repeat 10x on each side.

- Roll Downs-

Standing tall feet hip distance apart. Relax your head and shoulders and roll down on yourself. Make sure you support your spine by engaging your deep abdominal. Keep your knees soft and move as you exhale. X5

Above all this the main aim is.....

To become much more aware of your pelvic floor muscle and your posture!

Practise engaging your core as often as you can!

Stretching

To improve your flexibility you need to hold the stretch for at least 30 seconds and progress the stretch gently within those 30 seconds.

- Quad Stretch-

Standing on one leg. Bring your other foot up behind you and place in your hand. Remember to keep your knees next to one and other. Tilt your pelvis (tucking your bottom under), pull your foot so your knee drift back slightly and feel the stretch down the front of your thigh!

- Hamstring Stretch -

Place your foot up on a chair or wall. Keeping your leg in front of you so you are square with your hips. Keep your leg totally straight and whilst sticking your bottom out lean forward! Feel the stretch up the back of your thigh.

- Glute Stretch-

Seated at the front of a chair, cross one leg over the other so your ankle is resting on your knee. Let your knee fall out to the side. Seated TALL, stick your bottom back and lean forward. You could also push your knee down slightly with your hand. Hold!