

Ball, Circle & Band Manual

studio pilates international

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

COPYRIGHT WARNING

© COPYRIGHT STUDIO PILATES INTERNATIONAL PTY LTD ACN 143 017 841
ATF THE STUDIO PILATES IP TRUST; and STUDIO PILATES INTERNATIONAL HONG KONG HOLDINGS LTD
COMPANY NUMBER 2581198

This document is the copyright of the Studio Pilates International companies listed above. **No part of this document may in any form or by any means (including, without limitation, electronic mechanical, microcopying, photocopying, recording or otherwise) be used, copied reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted without the prior written consent of the Studio Pilates International companies above.** No express or any implied right (including, without limitation, any common law right) to use, copy, reproduce, store or transmit the whole or any part of this document is granted to any person or other legal entity including, without limitation, any party to this document or any client of the Studio Pilates International companies above without the prior written consent of. No common licence (if such a licence has arisen) to use, copy, reproduce, store or transmit the whole or any part of this document exists as the same has previously been negated and/or is hereby expressly negated.

In addition to a civil action including, an action for substantial damages for breach of copyright, contraventions of the copyright act may constitute criminal offences punishable by a heavy fine for a first offence. For a subsequent offence the penalty may be an even heavier fine and/or six (6) months imprisonment. Both individuals (including, without limitation, directors) and a company may be joined in any such legal actions.

This document is a chattel. The chattel is and remains the sole property of the Studio Pilates International companies above. The chattel must be returned to one of the Studio Pilates International companies listed above within twenty-four (24) hours after a request for same.

All enquiries should be addressed to -

STUDIO PILATES INTERNATIONAL
C/O MCINNES WILSON LAWYERS
GPO BOX 1089
BRISBANE QLD 4001

© COPYRIGHT RESERVED

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE SMALL EQUIPMENT	
Ball	8
Circle	10
Band	11
INJURIES + CAUTION	
Disclaimer About Injuries	14
Pregnancy	15
BALL, CIRCLE AND BAND CLASS PREAMBLE	
Ball, Circle and Band Class Preamble	24
Preamble Script	25
STUDIO PILATES CUEING FORMULA	
How to Instruct Ball, Circle and Band Pilates	28
The Studio Pilates Cueing Formula	29
Demonstration	31
Equipment and Body Scans	31
THE EXERCISES	
Exercise Information	33
Palpations/Physical Corrections	35
Feeling for Muscle Recruitment	37
Speed at Which Exercises are Performed	37
Supine Abdominal Series	
Intro to the Supine Abdominal Series	38
Lift Foot + Ball	47
Leg Slides + Ball	51
Abdominal Curl + Ball	55
Oblique Curl + Ball	59
Abdominal Curl Over the Ball	64
Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle	68
Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle	72
Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle	76
Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) + Circle	81
Single Leg Circle + Band	86
Bicycle Legs + Band	91
Bicycle Legs + Ball	96
Criss Cross + Ball	102
Pendulum + Ball	108
Pendulum 1 (Tabletop) + Circle	113
Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball	119
Nutcracker 2 (Ball in Hands) + Ball	123
Hundreds + Ball	128
Hundreds Preparation + Circle	134
Hundreds Preparation + Band	139
Hundreds + Band	143
Hundreds + Circle	150
Double Leg Stretch Preparation + Circle	157
Beats + Circle	164
Sitting on the Ball Series	
Intro to the Sitting on the Ball Series	169
Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball	173
Sitting Twist + Ball	177
Sitting Lift Foot + Ball	182
Plank Abdominal Series	
Intro to the Plank Abdominal Series	186
Plank + Ball	189
Pilates Push Ups + Ball	194
Tucks + Ball	200
Pikes + Ball	205
Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball	210
Reverse Plank 2 (On the Feet) + Ball	215
Supine Buttock Series	
Intro to the Supine Buttock Series	220
Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Band	225
Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Band	230
Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Circle	235
Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Circle	240
Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball	245

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball	251
Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift) + Ball	257
Hamstring Curl 1 (Double Leg) + Ball	263
Pelvic Lift + Ball	268
Bridge Twist + Ball	272
Side Lying Series	
Intro to the Side Lying Series	277
Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band	280
Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band	284
Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band	288
Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band	292
Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band	297
Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band	302
Circles + Band	306
Straight Leg Raise + Band	310
Hot Potato + Band	314
Rectangles + Band	319
Bicycles + Band	324
Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle	328
Inner Thigh Lift 2 (Circles) + Circle	332
Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle	336
Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting) + Circle	341
Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats) + Circle	346
Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors) + Circle	351
Kneeling Series	
Intro to the Kneeling Series	356
Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band	357
Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band	362
Horsekick 3 (Sidekick) + Band	367
Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle	372
Hinge 2 (Arms Overhead) + Circle	376
Triceps + Band	381
Standing Series	
Intro to the Standing Series	386
Crab Walking + Band	391
Penguin Walking + Band	396
Standing Hip Abduction + Band	401
Standing Hip Extension + Band	406
Squats + Band (Around Thighs)	411
Squats + Circle (Between Thighs)	416
Squats + Circle (Chest Press)	421
Squats + Band (Bicep Curl)	426
Lunges + Band	431
Wall Squats + Ball	436
Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball	441
Standing Sidekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball	446
Standing Sidekick 2 (Side to Side) + Ball	451
Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball	456
Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball	461
Scooter + Ball	466
Scooter Lunges + Ball	471
Prone Lying Series	
Intro to the Prone Lying Series	476
Swan + Ball	479
Breaststroke Arms + Ball	483
Freestyle Arms + Ball	488
Breaststroke Legs + Ball	492
Freestyle Legs + Ball	498
Freestyle + Ball	503
Back Rowing Series	
Intro to the Back Rowing Series	508
Lower Trapezius Activation + Band	509
External Rotation + Band	513
Rowing + Band	518
Biceps Half Rollback + Band	523
Standing Biceps + Band	528
Front Rowing Series	
Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band	533
Hug a Tree + Band	538
Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band	543

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Side Arm Series

Draw a Sword + Band 547

Arm Series + Circle

Intro to the Arm Series + Circle 552
Bicep Press + Circle 554
Chest Press + Circle 559

Stretching Series

Prone Quad Stretch + Ball 564
Mermaid Stretch + Ball 568
Prayer Stretch + Ball 573
Thoracic Extension Stretch + Ball 577
Hamstring Stretch + Band 581
Hamstring Stretch + Circle 584
Inner Thigh Stretch + Circle 587

CLASS PROGRAMMING

Small Equipment Programming Tips 592
Type of Class 592
Assessment Findings 593
Injury or Pregnancy 593
Understanding Client Goals 594
Client Prior Experience and Fitness Level 594
Client Demographic 594
Class Time and Duration 596
Intensity of Your Class 602
Exercise Substitutions 604
Sample Class Programs
- Sample Class Program #1 612
- Sample Class Program #2 614
- Sample Class Program #3 616
- Sample Class Program #4 618
- Sample Class Program #5 620
- Sample Class Program #6 622
- Sample Class Program #7 624
- Practise Programming #1 626
- Practise Programming #2 628
- Practise Programming #3 630

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Recommended Procedures 633
Ball 633
Circle 635
Band 636

REFERENCES

List of References 639

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

INTRODUCTION TO THE SMALL EQUIPMENT

The following section introduces you to the ball, circle and band equipment

INTRODUCTION TO THE SMALL EQUIPMENT

The ball, circle and band are incredibly versatile pieces of Pilates equipment. There are so many exercises which can be performed using these pieces of equipment, some of which you will learn in this course. Let's have a look at each individual apparatus and some terminology.

Ball

It is important to note that this course content covers the Pilates ball, also commonly referred to as the Swiss ball. When referring to the ball in this course, we are referring to the large Pilates ball, not smaller balls or the Chi Ball which has been developed in more recent years.

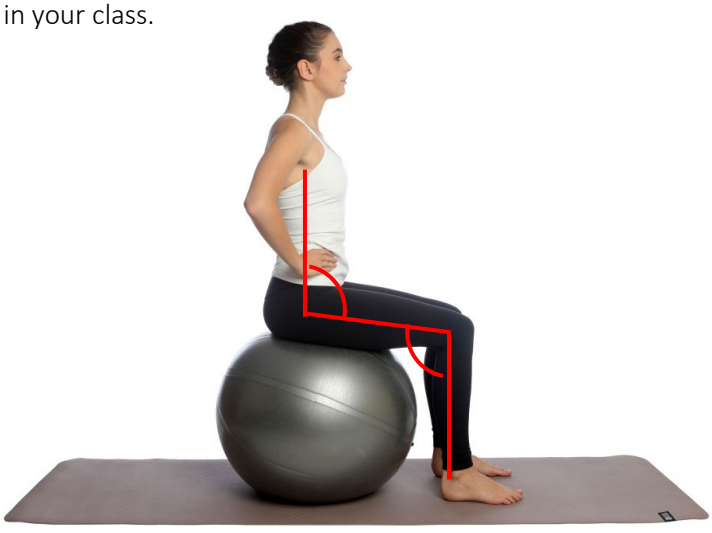
The Pilates ball is not a traditional piece of Pilates equipment and was not originally created by Joseph Pilates but it has been used extensively in the Pilates method. The ball exercises are not necessarily traditional Pilates exercises that were in Joseph Pilates' repertoire, however a large number of matwork and reformer exercises can be performed on the ball. Because of this, the ball is now used extensively in Pilates classes.



Various Sized Pilates Balls

Size

For most exercises, select a ball which is proportional to your client's height relative to the chosen exercise. The rule of thumb is that when a client is sitting on the ball, their legs should be at a 90 degree angle or slightly more, but not less. It is a good idea to purchase balls of varying sizes to cater to different sized clients in your class.



Correct Ball Size When Sitting

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Use these general guidelines when allocating a fitness ball to a client -

Client's Height	Ball Height	Ball Size
145cm Less than 4'10"	45cm (18")	Small
140 – 165cm 4'8" to 5'5"	55cm (22")	Medium
165 – 185cm 5'6" to 6'0"	65cm (26")	Large
185 – 195cm 6'0" to 6'5"	75cm (30")	Extra Large
195cm Greater than 6'5"	85cm (33")	Extra, Extra Large

Note, this height chart is just a guideline and some clients may feel more comfortable performing certain exercises with a ball that is a size up or a size down.

Quality

As with most pieces of equipment, you get what you pay for. Two important considerations in regard to the ball are durability and burst resistance.

- Anti-burst technology resists compression under load, particularly during exercise and allows the ball to slowly deflate if it becomes punctured
- Balls with an anti-burst rating of 500kg or greater are the safest
- Beware of balls which do not state an anti-burst rating as it is likely to be quite low

Benefits of Using the Ball

Some benefits of incorporating the ball into Pilates exercises includes -

- Challenges stability and improves balance
- Engages more core and stability muscles in order to stay balanced while performing exercises
- If clients do not perform an exercise correctly, they will see or feel the ball move - this gives them more feedback about their control which they can correct accordingly
- More exercises can be performed in a sitting position (beneficial for pregnant or elderly clients)
- Can make prone lying exercises more accessible to clients who are uncomfortable lying on the floor due to pain or movement restriction
- Allows for more peripheral (arm and leg) exercises to be performed than in matwork only
- Can assist clients by making certain exercises easier and giving the body more support
- For certain exercises, the ball can challenge clients due to the increased control and strength required than when performing the same exercise on the mat
- Can increase leverage and add resistance
- The movement of the ball can help to facilitate stretching
- It is a relatively inexpensive piece of Pilates equipment
- Most clients will have a ball at home
- If you are instructing in a gym setting, most gyms will already have balls
- Adds an element of fun to the workout

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Circle

What is the Circle?

The Pilates Circle is a flexible resistance ring which you can squeeze with your arms, legs, hands, ankles or feet to perform a variety of Pilates exercises. Unlike the ball, the Pilates Circle was designed and created by Joseph Pilates.

The circle is also known as the Magic Circle or a Pilates ring, it provides resistance for faster, more targeted toning and improved muscle strength throughout the body.



The Pilates Circle

Types of Circles

The circle can be made of various materials, it is usually made of a flexible plastic or metal and may have a soft-rubberised shell. It usually has handles which are padded for comfort. The handles can either be just on the exterior of the circle or can be on both the inside and outside of the circle. Circles which contain handles on both the inside and outside are more versatile as they allow for both abduction and adduction movements.

The circle can come in a variety of sizes ranging from 30cm – 40cm in diameter with the average being somewhere in between.

Quality

As with all Pilates equipment, you get what you pay for with regards to durability of the circle. If your circles will be used regularly it is more important to ensure that they are made by a reputable manufacturer and are durable or you will need to replace them often due to breakage and distortion.

Benefits of Using the Circle

Some benefits of incorporating the circle into Pilates exercises includes -

- A relatively inexpensive piece of Pilates equipment
- A lightweight piece of equipment, meaning you can transport them easily for classes on the go
- Easily added to matwork exercises to add variety and challenge specific clients within the class
- Adds resistance to Pilates exercises
- Increases activation of the T-Zone when squeezed between the thighs or shins
- Strengthens and tones the Adductor (inner thigh) muscles when in between the thighs or shins
- Effective at strengthening and toning the arms
- Can prevent hip pain and hip flexor cramping by taking some load off the thigh and hip muscles, which can become overactive in abdominal exercises, particularly when the legs are in tabletop position or extended straight
- Can assist clients to reach their foot, thereby assist with stretching
- Challenges balance and stability, for example when side lying
- Adds an element of fun to the workout

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Band

What is the Band?

The band is an elastic resistance band which allows clients to perform a type of strength training without the use of weights. The bands provide resistance to muscles throughout a range of movement and also allow for resistance to be applied to muscles during the eccentric (muscle lengthening) phase of the movement. Because of this, the bands are highly effective at toning and strengthening muscles in a safe and controlled manner.

Types of Bands

There are many different types of bands, some are flat bands, others are tubes, some have hard plastic handles attached to the ends, while others have Velcro cuffs attached to the band.

Throughout this manual we will be referring to two types of bands, the long band and the short band. They are both flat bands, without handles. This is generally best for the exercises contained in this manual as the tube bands can dig into the thighs and become quite uncomfortable. Neither of the bands have handles which means that the band tension can easily be altered.



A Long and Short Band

The long band should be 1.8m in length and the short band 60-80cm in length depending on the individual.

How to Tie the Short Band

Wrap the short band around your thighs, just above your knees. Try to keep the band as flat as possible, not letting it scrunch up, and tie the band into a tight knot around the thighs.

It is a good idea to have pre-tied the short bands prior to your class as this saves time in the class. It is also a good idea to have some long bands left untied and short bands tied up for your clients, as tying them up then untying them can be fiddly and take up too much time.

When tying the bands, remember that some clients will have smaller legs, others larger legs. Some clients will be stronger and need tighter bands, others weaker and need looser bands. So, it is a good idea to tie them in varying lengths. Just ensure that they are not too tight otherwise nobody will be able to get them on their legs, or too loose as they provide no resistance.

The tighter that the band is around a client's legs, the more resistance the band will provide.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Typically, bands are colour coded to show different levels of resistance. Code colours can vary between brands so the best way to test the resistance is to try it on yourself and use your own strength as a guide. For strength training, the strongest or second-strongest resistance is usually used (normally black or grey). Lighter resistance bands can be used for elderly or rehabilitation clients.

You generally do not need a large variety of band resistances as the tension can easily be adjusted by how tightly or loosely the band is held/tied. This is a simple way to make any of the band exercises easier or harder.

Quality

As always, you get what you pay for with the bands. Some are quite thin whereas others are thicker. The thicker bands will be more durable and last longer. Durability with the bands is an important safety consideration as they can lose their integrity and snap injuring a client.

Benefits of Using the Band

Some benefits of incorporating the band into Pilates exercises includes -

- Adds resistance to Pilates exercises
- It is an inexpensive piece of Pilates equipment
- The client can easily control their own resistance and make it harder by shortening the band or easier by lengthening the band
- The band can assist clients to perform exercises in which they find it difficult to hold their leg/s up as the band can support the weight of the leg
- The band allows for resistance to be applied throughout the range of movement (both eccentrically and concentrically) – this increases the muscles' time under tension and is more effective for strengthening muscles against injury
- The band adds an element of fun to the workout

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

INJURIES + CAUTION

The following contains a disclaimer about injuries

INJURIES AND CAUTION

Disclaimer About Injuries

While this manual refers to injuries, the diagnosis of injuries is outside the scope of practise for exercise professionals including Pilates instructors. Only health professionals are able to diagnose specific injuries. When in doubt, refer your client to a health professional for diagnosis.

Fitness Australia Registered Exercise Professionals

Fitness Australia approve the education delivered within the Scope of Practice for Registered Exercise Professionals and have allocated CECs accordingly to this program. While this manual refers to injuries, the diagnosis of injuries is outside the scope of practise for exercise professionals and only health professionals are able to diagnose specific injuries. When in doubt, refer your client to a health professional for diagnosis.

It is also encouraged that you reference the Fitness Australia Exercise Referral Kit, which has been created to help navigate the Allied Health system. It includes interactive guides, tools and templates and can be accessed anywhere, anytime using your mobile device. For more information on Scope of Practice and the Referral Kit, please refer to the Reference List.

Safety Using the Small Equipment

Specific safety information for each piece of equipment is discussed at the beginning of each series in this manual. Please refer to these introduction sections for more information on incorporating the small equipment safely. You can also find more information on equipment safety and maintenance in the Occupational Health and Safety section of this manual.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

PREGNANCY

First Trimester (Weeks 1-12)

The mother-to-be may be experiencing morning sickness (or in some cases all day sickness) or may be feeling a little tired. This initial stage of pregnancy is where there is the most risk of miscarriage. Pilates is safe to perform at this stage, but the intensity will need to be decreased slightly. If the body temperature and heart rate elevate too high this can increase the risk of miscarriage. Pilates is a more gentle type of exercise, so this is usually not a problem.

During this early phase, start to decrease the amount of sit up type abdominal exercises and focus more on the T-Zone and Pelvic Floor. Doing too much Rectus Abdominus strengthening can increase the risk of a Rectus Diastasis (see below).

Second Trimester (Weeks 13-26)

The baby continues to grow and the mother will start to show around this time. Lying on the back can start to become uncomfortable for some mothers and potentially dangerous. This is because the baby can sit right on top of the main blood vessels as they exit the spine and cause less blood to pump through. This can cause dizziness to the mother and shortness of breath, and less oxygen to the baby.

At this time, limit or avoid any time spent lying on the back and omit any supine abdominal exercises. Also, lying on the stomach will not be comfortable anymore as the baby is showing. Side lying Oblique muscle exercises can still be performed.

Working the adductors or abducting the hips to a great extent can often become difficult or painful as the pelvis becomes more unstable throughout the pregnancy, so take care with such exercises and monitor closely.

Third Trimester (Weeks 27+)

This is the time when the baby grows the most and the mother's posture changes dramatically. A Lordosis-Kyphosis posture becomes more evident as the baby grows and the breasts increase in size.

No abdominal exercises are to be performed, not even the side muscles, and no lying on the stomach or back. Working the adductors or abducting the hips to a great extent will usually be difficult in the third trimester as the pelvis becomes more unstable.

Mothers can continue with their workouts as long as they feel comfortable, most women will stop at 36 weeks or so, but if feeling well there is no reason why they can't continue right through to 40 weeks.

Implications for Pilates

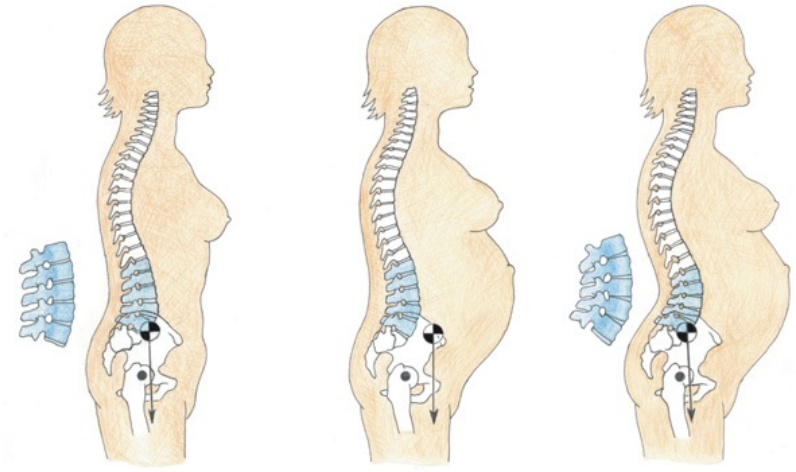
Large group classes are not suitable during pregnancy, unless they are specific pregnancy classes. There are not many matwork exercises that can be performed in the second and third trimesters. As such, incorporating the small equipment is much better for pregnancy than matwork sessions alone and can be done right through the entire pregnancy as more exercises can be performed in sitting and standing positions.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

1st Trimester (Week 1-12)	Start to decrease Rectus Abdominus work Ease back on the intensity of the workouts
2nd Trimester (Week 13-26)	No supine lying No prone lying No abdominal work except may do Double Leg Lift
3rd Trimester (Week 27+)	No supine lying No prone lying No abdominal work at all

During pregnancy, a hormone is released which relaxes the ligaments in the mother in preparation for childbirth. This hormone makes the mother more hypermobile and prone to injury. Improving the strength of the stabilising muscles is therefore very important to prevent and help pain and injury. Due to these ligament changes and the changes in posture, lower back pain, SIJ and hip pain, upper back and shoulder and neck pain are quite common.

Muscles to Strengthen in Pregnancy	Muscles to Stretch in Pregnancy
Pelvic Floor Transversus Abdominus Obliques (up until week 25) Gluteals Hamstrings (up until week 12) Lower Trapezius/Rhomboids Arms (to prepare for lifting baby)	Pectoralis Major Latissimus Dorsi Gluteals Quadriceps and Hip Flexors



Increased Lumbar Lordosis Throughout the Stages of Pregnancy

(Whitcome, Shapiro and Lieberman, 2007)

Post Pregnancy

Usually the mother will have a check-up with their doctor at 4 or 6 weeks post-partum. It is recommended that they wait until after this check-up before resuming their Pilates classes as they are still recovering from the trauma of the birth.

it is important to ascertain whether they have any Pelvic Floor weakness or Rectus Diastasis (separation of their Rectus Abdominus muscles) upon their first session. If they do have either of these issues, they may need to have a few personalised sessions to check that their T-Zone is activating correctly and to

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

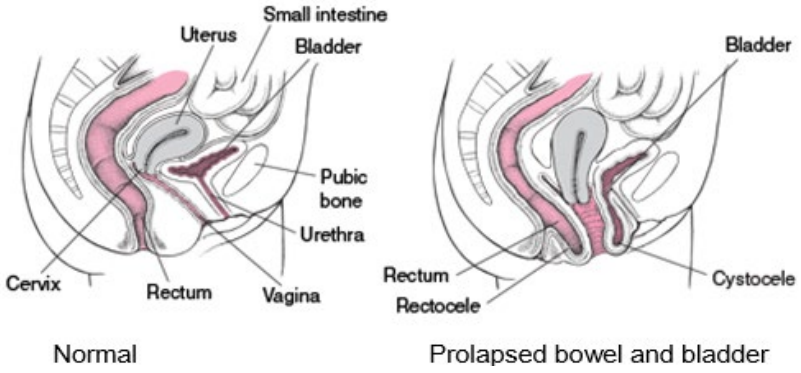
progress their abdominal exercises at an appropriate pace. Otherwise, if they jump back in to performing abdominal exercises in which the body curls up without correct T-Zone activation, they will be making their problems worse (see below for more on these problems).

Lower back, upper back, neck and shoulder pain is very common post pregnancy. At this time, the mothers' abdominal muscles are still quite weak and her spinal ligaments are lax. Performing a lot of lifting (the baby and heavy items such as prams and bags) without the support of strong abdominal muscles can place a lot of strain on the lower back. Breastfeeding also creates a rounded shoulder posture, both from holding the baby and the weight of the breasts, which can lead to upper back, neck and shoulder pain.

The muscles to strengthen and stretch are the same as during the pregnancy, the main difference is that the mother will be able to start on a specific routine to regain strength in all of the abdominal muscles, lie on their stomach and back and also start to promote some lumbar flexion mobility.

Pelvic Floor Problems

The weight of carrying the baby for 9 months along with the trauma caused to the Pelvic Floor during delivery can lead to weakened Pelvic Floor muscles, possibly even a prolapse. A prolapse is when the muscles and ligamentous structures suspending the Pelvic Floor and pelvic organs become so stretched and weak that they sag downward, allowing the organs to protrude. The bladder, uterus and bowel can all be affected.



(Merck Manuals, 2016)

Symptoms include lack of bladder control, stress incontinence, a feeling of a sagging in the Pelvic Floor area and weakness through the area. The treatment for both Pelvic Floor weakness and prolapse is to perform Pelvic Floor exercises. However, if the ligamentous damage is extensive, surgery may also be required to repair the prolapse.

Implications for Pilates

Pelvic Floor activation is the most important concentration point for every exercise for clients with Pelvic Floor problems. Start off with very basic T-Zone activation exercises and progress as the Pelvic Floor strengthens.

Take care with abdominal exercises – a strong abdominal contraction bears down on the Pelvic Floor, so if it is not strong enough to contract against this pressure it will be forced downward, contributing to the problem. Focus more on T-Zone isolation rather than global abdominal strengthening.

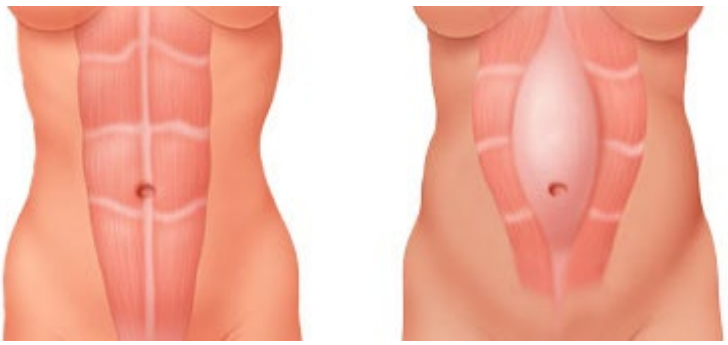
© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Rectus Diastasis

During pregnancy the Rectus Abdominus (six pack muscle) needs to stretch to accommodate the growing baby. Each side of the Rectus Abdominus muscle meets in the midline of the abdomen to form a fibrous structure called the Linea Alba. This is the weakest point of the abdominal corset.

In some cases when the Linea Alba is placed under too much pressure, rather than the Rectus Abdominus muscles stretching, the Linea Alba overstretches or in some cases tears. This is known as a diastasis (or separation) of the Rectus Abdominus.

The Rectus Diastasis will look like a vertical bulge or separation in the midline of the abdomen. This bulge is more noticeable when the client performs certain movements that increase the pressure within the abdomen and stress this area.



Normal Rectus Abdominus Rectus Diastasis

(Mayoclinic.org, 2016)

Diagnosis of a Rectus Diastasis

A Rectus Diastasis must be diagnosed by a health professional such as a Physiotherapist, Nurse, or Obstetrician. A Rectus Diastasis is diagnosed when abdominal separation is larger than 2.7cm.

If you are not sure whether a client has a Rectus Diastasis, refer them to a health professional for a diagnosis and follow the implications below.

Implications for Pilates

Performing sit up type of movements where the Rectus Abdominus is working without using the T-Zone properly will make the separation worse. Post pregnancy, start with very basic Pelvic Floor and Transversus Abdominus activation and all of the feet down Supine Abdominal Series (excluding Abdominal Curl and Oblique Curl). Then progress to exercises in tabletop position, or curling the body up. While performing any abdominal exercises, be sure to check that the client's separation isn't bulging out or opening further and that the T-Zone remains activated.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ball, Circle and Band Safe Exercises to Perform by Trimester

	Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 3	Post Natal
SUPINE ABDOMINAL SERIES	• Lift Foot + Ball • Leg Slides + Ball • Abdominal Curl + Ball • Oblique Curl + Ball • Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle • Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle • Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle • Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) + Circle • Single Leg Circle + Band • Bicycle Legs + Band • Bicycle Legs + Ball • Criss Cross + Ball • Pendulum + Ball • Pendulum 1 (Tabletop) + Circle • Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball • Hundreds + Ball • Hundreds Preparation + Band • Hundreds + Band • Hundreds Preparation + Circle • Hundreds + Circle • Double Leg Stretch Preparation + Circle • Beats + Circle			Initially start with the easier exercises with the feet supported and progress as strength allows • Lift Foot + Ball • Leg Slides + Ball • Abdominal Curl + Ball • Oblique Curl + Ball • Abdominal Curl Over the Ball • Inner thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle • Inner thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle • Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle • Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) + Circle • Single Leg Circle + Band • Bicycle Legs + Band • Bicycle Legs + Ball • Criss Cross + Ball • Pendulum + Ball • Pendulum 1 (Tabletop) + Circle • Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball • Nutcracker 2 (Ball in Hands) + Ball • Hundreds + Ball • Hundreds Preparation + Band • Hundreds + Band • Hundreds Preparation + Circle • Hundreds + Circle • Double Leg Stretch Preparation + Circle • Beats + Circle
SITTING ON THE BALL SERIES	• Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball • Sitting Twist + Ball • Sitting Lift Foot + Ball	• Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball • Sitting Twist + Ball • Sitting Lift Foot + Ball	• Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball • Sitting Twist + Ball	• Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball • Sitting Twist + Ball • Sitting Lift Foot + Ball
PLANK SERIES	• Plank + Ball (Level 1) • Plank Push Ups + Ball (Level 1)			• Plank + Ball (Level 1) • Plank Push Ups + Ball (Level 1)

SUPINE BUTTOCK SERIES	• Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Band • Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Band • Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Circle • Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Circle • Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball • Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball • Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift) + Ball • Hamstring Curl 1 (Double Leg) + Ball • Pelvic Lift + Ball • Bridge Twist + Ball			• Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Band • Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Band • Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Circle • Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Circle • Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball • Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball • Hamstring Curl 1 (Double Leg) + Ball • Pelvic Lift + Ball • Bridge Twist + Ball
SIDE LYING SERIES	• Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band • Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band • Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band • Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band • Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band • Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band • Circles + Band • Straight Leg Raise + Band • Hot Potato + Band • Rectangles + Band • Bicycles + Band • Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle • Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Circles) + Circle • Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle • Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting) + Circle • Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats) + Circle • Double Leg Lift 3 (Scissors) + Circle	• Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band • Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band • Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band • Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band • Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band • Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band • Circles + Band • Straight Leg Raise + Band • Hot Potato + Band • Rectangles + Band	• Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band • Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band • Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band • Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band • Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band • Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band • Circles + Band • Straight Leg Raise + Band • Hot Potato + Band • Rectangles + Band	• Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band • Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band • Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band • Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band • Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band • Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band • Circles + Band • Straight Leg Raise + Band • Hot Potato + Band • Rectangles + Band • Bicycles + Band • Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle • Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Circles) + Circle • Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle • Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting) + Circle • Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats) + Circle • Double Leg Lift 3 (Scissors) + Circle
KNEELING SERIES	• Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band • Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band • Horsekick 3 (Sidekick) + Band • Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle • Hinge 2 (Arms Overhead) + Circle • Triceps + Band	• Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle • Triceps + Band	• Triceps + Band	• Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band • Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band • Horsekick 3 (Sidekick) + Band • Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle • Hinge 2 (Arms Overhead) + Circle • Triceps + Band

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

STANDING SERIES	• Crab Walking + Band • Penguin Walking + Band • Standing Hip Abduction + Band • Standing Hip Extension + Band • Squats + Band (Around Thighs • Squats + Circle (Between Thighs) • Squats + Circle (Chest Press) • Squats + Band (Bicep Curl) • Lunges + Band • Wall Squats + Ball • Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball • Standing Sidekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball • Standing Sidekick 2 (Side to Side) + Ball • Standing Horsekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball • Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball • Scooter + Ball • Scooter Lunges + Ball	• Crab Walking + Band • Penguin Walking + Band • Standing Hip Abduction + Band • Standing Hip Extension + Band • Squats + Band (Around Thighs) • Squats + Circle (Chest Press) • Squats + Band (Bicep Curl) • Wall Squats + Ball	• Crab Walking + Band • Penguin Walking + Band • Standing Hip Abduction + Band • Standing Hip Extension + Band • Squats + Band (Around Thighs) • Squats + Circle (Chest Press) • Squats + Band (Bicep Curl) • Wall Squats + Ball	• Crab Walking + Band • Penguin Walking + Band • Standing Hip Abduction + Band • Standing Hip Extension + Band • Squats + Band (Around Thighs) • Squats + Circle (Between Thighs) • Squats + Circle (Chest Press) • Squats + Band (Bicep Curl) • Lunges + Band • Wall Squats + Ball • Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball • Standing Sidekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball • Standing Sidekick 2 (Side to Side) + Ball • Standing Horsekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball • Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball • Scooter + Ball • Scooter Lunges + Ball
PRONE LYING SERIES	• Breaststroke Legs + Ball • Freestyle Legs + Ball			• Swan + Ball • Breaststroke Arms + Ball • Freestyle Arms + Ball • Breaststroke Legs + Ball • Freestyle Legs + Ball • Freestyle + Ball
BACK ROWING SERIES	• Lower Trapezius Activation + Band • External Rotation + Band • Rowing + Band • Biceps Half Rollback + Band • Standing Biceps + Band	• Lower Trapezius Activation + Band • External Rotation + Band • Rowing + Band • Standing Biceps + Band	• Lower Trapezius Activation + Band • External Rotation + Band • Rowing + Band • Standing Biceps + Band	• Lower Trapezius Activation + Band • External Rotation + Band • Rowing + Band • Biceps Half Rollback + Band ~ • Standing Biceps + Band

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

FRONT ROWING SERIES	• Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band • Hug a Tree + Band • Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band	• Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band • Hug a Tree + Band • Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band	• Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band • Hug a Tree + Band • Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band	• Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band • Hug a Tree + Band • Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band
SIDE ARM SERIES	• Draw a Sword + Band	• Draw a Sword + Band	• Draw a Sword + Band	• Draw a Sword + Band
ARM SERIES + CIRCLE	• Bicep Press + Circle • Chest Press + Circle	• Bicep Press + Circle • Chest Press + Circle	• Bicep Press + Circle • Chest Press + Circle	• Bicep Press + Circle • Chest Press + Circle
STRETCHING SERIES	• Mermaid Stretch + Ball • Prayer Stretch + Ball • Thoracic Extension Stretch + Ball • Hamstring Stretch + Band • Hamstring Stretch + Circle • Inner Thigh Stretch + Circle	• Mermaid Stretch + Ball • Prayer Stretch + Ball	• Prayer Stretch + Ball	• Prone Quad Stretch + Ball • Mermaid Stretch + Ball • Prayer Stretch + Ball • Thoracic Extension Stretch + Ball • Hamstring Stretch + Band • Hamstring Stretch + Circle • Inner Thigh Stretch + Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SMALL EQUIPMENT CLASS PREAMBLE

The following section looks at the script you should say at the start of each Pilates class to teach clients the Pilates Basics

BALL, CIRCLE, BAND CLASS PREAMBLE

At the beginning of each class, you will need to welcome everyone, cover off some safety points and explain the Pilates basics to your class. This should not take more than 4-5 minutes in a large group class setting. In a one to one session you can tailor it specifically to each person to spend as little or as much time as is needed going over the basics until you feel that they have mastered them.

A common question regarding the preamble is "do I need to say this at the beginning of every class?" The answer is that it all depends on who is in the class. If you are running a group class in which every week there are new people in the class, then yes, you will definitely need to say the preamble each class so that the new people can hear it.

If you are taking the exact same people in the class each time with no newcomers, it is still a good idea to cover this every class at least for their first 10 sessions as the clients will benefit from covering the basics many times over. If you have a one on one session or a group class who have been coming for a very long time and are quite advanced, you may not need to do the full preamble each class and you would modify it accordingly. Regardless, there needs to be some sort of preamble, whether it be completely comprehensive or a shortened version.

Below we have provided a checklist of the things that you should cover in your preamble so that you can put these points into your own words. You will also find below a full script of a sample ball, circle and band class preamble that you may wish to read over and learn.

Some instructors also like to mention some safety considerations about the equipment in the Equipment Orientation section of the preamble – you may choose to do this, but it is usually a better idea to mention the safety considerations right before you are about to use the equipment and make it specific to the exercise.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Studio Pilates International® Ball, Circle, Band Class Preamble Script

Welcome	Introduction	*Get everyone seated on their mat.* Welcome everyone! My name is _____ and I will be your instructor today.
	Any new clients?	Is anyone new to the class...? Great, welcome to those that are new and those that have been here before.
	Plan for today's class	In today's class we will go over the Pilates Basics and then get started. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask along the way.
Safety and Injuries	Different levels	I will give you different options to make the exercises easier or harder. Please choose the level that suits you best.
	Any injuries?	Does anyone have any injuries? *Take note of who has injuries.*
	Workout class, not a rehab class	Thanks for letting me know. Please note that this class has been designed for a workout not specifically for injury rehabilitation.
	Muscles working but no pain	While you want to feel the muscles working in today's class, you should never feel any pain in the neck, back or any of the joints. If you do experience pain, either choose an easier level, or stop the exercise and call me over.
	Equipment Orientation	In today's class we will be using the ball, circle and band. Keep these handy by your mat.
Pilates Basics	Spinal positions ☐ 2 spinal positions in Pilates ☐ Neutral spine description ☐ Neutral spine demo and practise ☐ Imprinted spine description ☐ Imprinted spine demo and practise	Now let's go over the basics of Pilates. We have two spinal positions in Pilates – neutral and imprinted spine. I'll get you all to lie down on your back on your mats with your knees bent. Let's talk first about the neutral spine. A neutral spine is when you have a natural arch under your lower back and your tailbone is down on the mat. To help find your neutral spine, place the heels of your hand on your hip bones and your fingers on your Pubic Bone. When you have a neutral spine, you should have your hands parallel to the floor - you don't want your Pubic Bone or hip bones higher that one another. An imprinted spine is when you use your abdominals to try to draw your lower back down toward the mat as far as you can without lifting your tailbone. Your lower back doesn't actually have to touch the mat, for some of you it might, but think more about using your abdominals to draw your lower back as close toward the floor as possible without lifting your tailbone. Your

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

		Pubic Bone will tuck ever so slightly so your fingers will be slightly higher than your thumbs, but keep your tailbone down.

	T-Zone
	- What it is
	- Drawing the 'T'
	- Time for practise
	  - Place fingers inside hip bones
	  - Drawing up the vertical line
	  - Drawing across the horizontal line and flatten the line in toward the spine
	  - What you should feel
		In Pilates, you need to have your core muscles activated with each exercise. These are your deep abdominal and Pelvic Floor muscles. We call these muscles your T-Zone.
		
		I want you to draw an imaginary letter "T" on the front of your pelvis – The horizontal line going from hipbone to hipbone, and the vertical line running from the Pubic Bone up to form a "T." The vertical line is a visualisation of your Pelvic Floor muscles. The horizontal line is a visualisation for your deep abdominal muscles.
		
		To activate and feel for the T-Zone, place your fingertips just inside your hip bones. First let's think of the vertical line – **draw the Pelvic Floor up along that vertical line as if you were trying to stop going to the toilet.** Next, think of the horizontal line and try to **draw the hip bones across toward each other along the horizontal line, and then flatten that line in toward your spine**. So, it is drawing up, across and in.
		
		Get the class to practise two more times while briefly explaining how to activate again
		
		You should feel some tension under the fingers when these muscles engage. If you don't yet feel these muscles working, that's okay, we are going to focus on strengthening them.

	Breathing and Obliques
	- Pilates breathing
	- Time for practise
	  - Place hands on sides of ribs
	  - Breathe into sides of ribs
	  - Breathe out / close ribs
		In Pilates, we have a specific breathing pattern. Place your hands on the sides of your ribs.
		
		INHALE through the nose, directing the breath into sides of the ribcage and feeling the ribs expand out into your hands and
		
		EXHALE through the mouth and concentrate on closing the ribcage and tightening your abdominals
		
		Practice a couple more times

	Shoulder Blades - Shoulder blades down and back	Throughout the exercises, you should **draw your shoulder blades down and back** into a 'V' shape toward your lower back.
	Neck Position - Chin tucked in	And gently **keep your chin tucked in** to elongate your neck. Now let's get started!

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

STUDIO PILATES CUEING FORMULA

The following section looks at the Studio Pilates Cuing Formula, which teaches you how to effectively instruct each exercise in the Pilates repertoire and gives structure to your instructing cues

HOW TO INSTRUCT BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PILATES

Teaching ball, circle and band classes is similar to teaching matwork, except as well as setting up the body in the correct position you also have to take into account the equipment set up. Throughout the duration of this course you will have the time to practice teaching all of the exercises and putting into practice the following instructing tips –

- Cueing Formula
- Demonstration – either on the equipment or using arm/leg gestures
- Equipment and Body Scan

The main differences when instructing a ball, circle and band class are as follows:

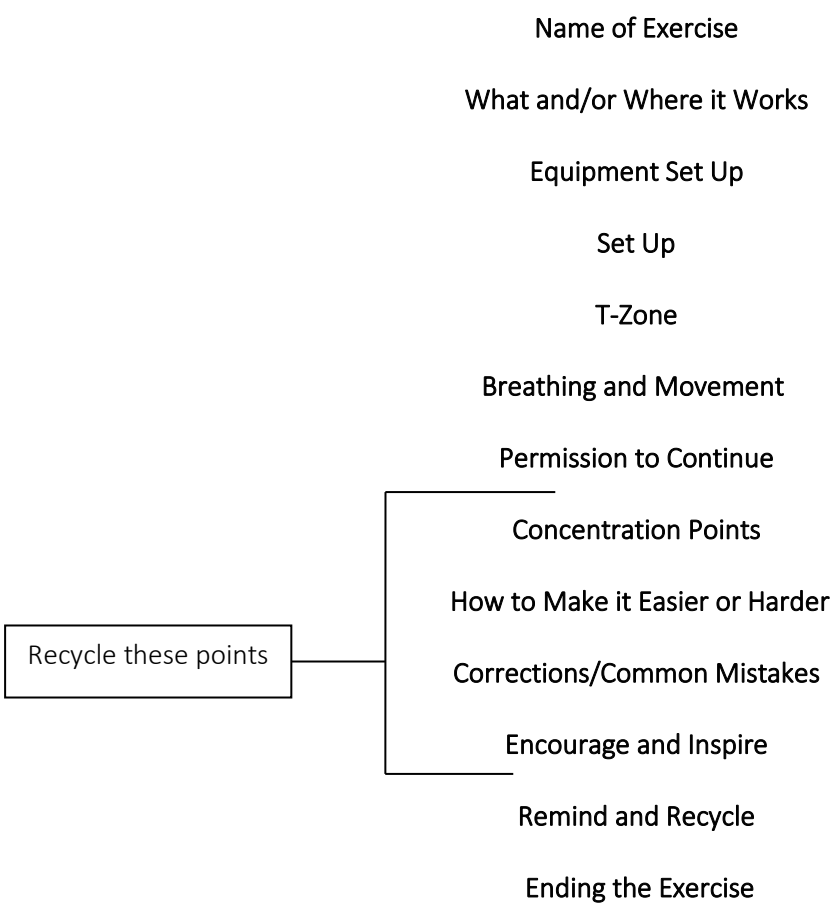
- Equipment set up is a new section which involves setting up the piece of equipment
- Demonstration is sometimes not done on the equipment, instead arm and body gestures can be used
- You will need to perform equipment safety scans to ensure that the apparatus is set up in the correct way
- You may need to help clients with adjusting their equipment
- As the intensity is more variable due to the varying resistance, you will need to check in with clients to ensure that they are working at the appropriate intensity level
- Since the balls move and can sometime place the body in an unstable position off the ground and the circles and bands can be dangerous if not used correctly, safety is paramount
- The Cueing Formula becomes even more important as you will often not be demonstrating the exercises, you need your verbal cuing to be in the correct sequence so it is easy for clients to follow

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

THE STUDIO PILATES CUEING FORMULA

As you would have experienced in the Matwork Course, the Studio Pilates Cueing Formula provides you with a structure for your cues. It gives you the steps to follow to ensure that you instruct an exercise in the best possible way so that your clients understand the exercise and perform the correct technique, along with feeling motivated and challenged. Using the Cueing Formula makes you stand apart from other Pilates instructors and teach a fantastic Pilates class.

The majority of the Cueing Formula is the same when instructing a ball, circle, band class compared to instructing a matwork class. The Equipment Set Up section has been added and is included after What and/or Where it Works and before the Set Up.



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

The Cueing Formula Explained

The main differences in the Cueing Formula when teaching a ball, circle, band class are the addition of the Equipment Set Up and the section on Ending the Exercise becomes extremely important due to safety reasons.

Equipment Set Up

When cueing the Equipment Set Up, these are the main things you will need to cover -

- Which piece of equipment to use (ball, circle or band)
- Size of equipment (if relevant) – ie. short or long band

Set Up

When cueing how to set the body up, you will also need to cue where to place the ball, circle or band in relation to the body and how to get into the position correctly.

Ending the Exercise

This is particularly important for safety reasons as the equipment is moving throughout the exercise. If you do not cue how to end the exercise safely and correctly, the client may try and end the exercise abruptly or incorrectly and risk hurting themselves.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Demonstration

When teaching ball, circle, band exercises, occasionally you won't be getting on the equipment yourself to physically demonstrate the exercises. As the equipment can be used to progress or regress matwork versions of the exercises, you may only demonstrate the matwork version then verbally cue the use of the equipment whilst using gestures to demonstrate.

There are three different methods of performing the demonstration.

Option #1: Perform a very quick visual demonstration whilst the group watches you

This option works well when teaching in a small group or individual setting with new clients or when you are teaching a complicated exercise. This works particularly well for ball exercises as it is good for clients to see how to get onto the ball safely and which position they will be in. Also, these exercises are the most different from the matwork repertoire of exercises so it is good for clients to have a visual demonstration as to what they are aiming to achieve with the exercise.

Option #2: Performing the demonstration whilst using the Cueing Formula and the class does it with you

This option works best in a large group gym class where you have your own equipment in front of the class. Keep in mind, you must stand up and start walking around the room once you get to the Permission to Continue.

Option #3: Using arm or body gestures to demonstrate

If you are not able to demonstrate an exercise you can instead use your words and your arms (or other body parts) to gesture while standing up and guiding the class through the exercise.

If it is a complex exercise that you are cueing, then you will need to ask one of the clients in the group to demonstrate whilst the others watch. However, if the exercise is simple and easy to explain, using non-verbal gestures may be sufficient in aiding your cues.

This works particularly well when incorporating the band or circle as the movements are usually quite simple and clients should be familiar with the movement as it is often similar to the version of the exercise performed on the mat.

Equipment and Body Scans

As well as scanning the clients' bodies to ensure that their technique is correct, you will also need to scan the equipment to ensure that it is set up correctly. This is best done when they are doing the Equipment Set Up in the Cueing Formula so that it is set up the right way before they begin the exercise. However, sometimes, you might miss something at this point eg. band bunched up or circle placed incorrectly, in which case as you walk around and help correct your clients, continue to keep an eye out for these things as well as looking at technique.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

THE EXERCISES

The following section takes you through the Ball, Circle, Band repertoire of Pilates exercises.

EXERCISE INFORMATION

This manual has been written in a way that for each exercise, it tells you how to actually cue each exercise/what you should say, using the structure of the Cueing Formula. This is followed by more information about the exercise.

Difficulty Levels and Intensity Levels

Each exercise has been given a rating in terms of difficulty and intensity. These ratings can be very useful when programming both a class or studio session. The intensity rating refers to how much the muscles will feel like they are working or stretching during an exercise. Difficulty level refers to how difficult an exercise is to perform, in terms of strength, flexibility, coordination, balance, stability and hence safety. The levels range from 1-4, 1 being the easiest, 4 being the most difficult or intense.

For example, an exercise which has a difficulty and intensity level of 1 is very safe and basic, not working anywhere very hard and best suited to basic programs and rehabilitation. Difficulty level of 1 but an intensity level of 3 is an exercise which works or stretches the muscles really well, but is simple, easy and safe to perform. Exercises which have a difficulty level of 4 but an intensity level of 1 are difficult to perform perhaps because they are a series of complicated movements that require coordination, but don't work or stretch anywhere intensely. Exercises that are level 4 for both difficulty and intensity are advanced, difficult to perform and hard work.

It is important to remember that this is a general guide, and every person is different; every person will find different exercises more difficult or intense based on their particular strengths, weaknesses, flexibility and injuries.

Prerequisites

Each exercise will have a list of prerequisites required to have achieved before attempting the exercise. The prerequisites may include both matwork and/or ball, circle, band exercises. Clients do not necessarily have to have performed every prerequisite exercise before trying the exercise. Sometimes your clients will have done matwork exercises with you before but no ball, circle, band exercises yet, and other times your clients will be performing ball, circle, band exercises only, without having done any matwork previously.

If a client can achieve some or most of the prerequisites, then you know the exercise will be suitable for them to do (also taking into consideration the injury/caution section). It also helps to build up the client's specific strength, flexibility and coordination required by doing the prerequisite exercises before attempting the more difficult exercise.

In saying this, clients can surprise you at times and can perform a more difficult exercise better than a supposed easier exercise. It is best to follow these basic manual guidelines, but remember that each individual will be different and it always best to assess each individual doing different exercises to determine what works best for them.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movement

This is a comprehensive and technical look at the muscles and joint movements that are involved in each exercise using the following headings –

Target Muscles: The muscles which are the main focus of the exercise

Accessory Muscles: The muscles which are not the main focus of the exercise but help to perform the movements – please note that not every single muscle that assists in the movement is mentioned as there would be too many of them to list, but we have chosen the most important ones for you to know.

Stabilising Muscles: The muscles which support and stabilise the joints throughout the exercise.

Joint Mobility: The joints which are being mobilised during the exercise (when the aim of the exercise is to increase range of movement of specific joints).

Please note that you do not need to explain this to your clients, what you will say to them is written in more layman's terms in the What and/or Where it Works section.

Injuries/Caution

Any client that has any kind of pain or injury should be referred on to a health professional eg. Physiotherapist, Osteopath, Doctor, Chiropractor etc. for diagnosis and treatment. You should then seek guidance from that health professional as to what you can do with that client and what you will need to avoid, and keep liaising with them on an ongoing basis.

In this manual, we have also provided a comprehensive list of what to be aware of for each exercise: the conditions/injuries which make it unsafe to perform the exercise at all and how to modify the exercise in the case of pain and injury. Please note that this in no way replaces a referral to and guidance from a health professional, it just gives you some tips on how to safely teach Pilates exercises and modify exercises accordingly.

Programming Advice

This gives you some simple tips and ideas on which clients you would use this exercise for, what it is good for, and where you might place it within a class program.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

It is important to combine the physical corrections when performing the Corrections/Common Mistakes part of the cueing formula. In this section you will find a list of physical palpations to perform, and you will also find a video corresponding to these in the Online Training Centre that shows you how to perform these.

Palpation Type	Palpation Name
Abdominal Palpation	Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
	Ab Activation #2: Oblique Lines
	Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
	Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
Scapula Setting	Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
	Scapula Setting #2: Scapula Resetting
	Scapula Setting #3: From the Front of the Shoulder
	Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
	Scapula Setting #5: Serratus Anterior***
Thoracic Spine Positioning	Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
	Thoracic Spine Positioning #2: Prone Extension
	Thoracic Spine Positioning #3: Arm Chair Stretch##
Pelvic Positioning	Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
	Pelvic Positioning #2: Preventing Hip Flexion
	Pelvic Positioning #3: Plank
	Pelvic Positioning #4: Four Point Kneeling
	Pelvic Positioning #5: Prone
	Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
	Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl
	Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
	Pelvic Positioning #9: Prayer Stretch
	Pelvic Positioning #10: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
	Pelvic Positioning #11: Knee Stretches##
Leg Positioning	Leg Positioning #1: Squeeze the Legs Together
	Leg Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
	Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
	Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
	Leg Positioning #5: Iliacus***
	Leg Positioning #6: VMO
Feet Positioning	Feet Positioning #1: Heels Together
	Feet Positioning #2: Lifting Up the Arches of the Feet
	Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes
Gluteal Activation	Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
	Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
	Gluteal Activation #3: Gluteus Maximus***
Arm Positioning	Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement
	Arm Positioning #2: Reaching Through the Fingers
	Arm Positioning #3: Relocation of Humerus
Head Positioning	Head Positioning #1: Prone Extension
	Head Positioning #2: Plank
	Head Positioning #3: Deep Neck Flexors***
Ball Positioning	Ball Positioning #1: Preventing the Ball from Moving
	Ball Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
	Ball Positioning #3: Guiding Ball Movement
Circle Positioning	Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
	Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations which are not related to any exercise contained in this manual. They are still listed here so that you have a master list of palpations
*** Palpations which are usually only used in one on one settings (not in group classes)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Feeling for Muscle Recruitment

Often it is helpful to feel for muscle recruitment as well as observe it. As some of the major muscles we are feeling for are the buttocks and lower abdominal area, always take care not to offend people or upset them, or make them feel uncomfortable at all in any way.

1. Ask them first if it is okay for you to feel their muscle activation and explain why it is important that you do. Once you have their permission on the first session, they will expect you to do this again in the future, but even so please tell them each time before you feel their muscles "I am just going to feel for your buttock activation whilst you do this exercise" etc.

2. *Never* feel lightly with your whole hand. Always press firmly, using either just fingertips or thumb with no other part of your hand touching their body or use the heel of your hand with no other part of your hand touching their body. Pressing lightly or grazing the surface of the skin is much more likely to be seen in a more sexual way.

Speed at Which Exercises are Performed

The basic rule is to only perform each exercise at a speed at which the movements are controlled and correct muscle activation can be maintained.

So initially, whilst learning the exercise/movement, the movement may be very slow. The client may even need to stop after each repetition to reset their T-Zone and posture. A progression from this would be to increase the number of repetitions before having to stop and reset the body, then also increase the speed at which the movements are performed.

Eventually, we want the movement patterns and correct muscle activation to become so natural that they can perform the movements quickly and without too much conscious thought, as this is what needs to be achieved in everyday life.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Using the Ball in the Supine Abdominal Series

Throughout the Supine Abdominal Series, the ball is used in several ways -

1. To support the legs, lying on the back
2. To support the upper body, with the feet on the floor
3. To increase the resistance, with the ball in the hands

Supporting the Legs on the Ball

The ball is used to support the legs in tabletop position or to support the leg while it is extending out.

Tabletop Position

For clients who cannot sustain holding the legs in tabletop position, placing the ball under the legs can help to take the weight of the legs, making it easier to perform exercises in this position. The amount of support provided by the ball can be increased by supporting more of the Calves on the ball (ie. to make the exercise easier), or decreased, by supporting only the edge of the heels on the ball (ie. to make the exercise harder).



Placing the Heels on the Ball (Harder)



Placing the Calves on the Ball (Easier)

Note that the exercises with the legs on the ball differ from the corresponding exercises on the mat as they are performed in a neutral spine position (since one or both legs are supported on the ball).

It is important to ensure that all of the usual principles of maintaining correct tabletop position apply –

- The knees are stacked vertically above the hips (making sure that the ball does not move away)
- Ensure that the ribs are not flaring and there is no arching in the back
- The spine is neutral with the tailbone down
- Avoid internal/external rotation at the hips



Correct Tabletop Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



Incorrect Tabletop Position
(Back Arching / Ribs Flaring)



Incorrect Tabletop Position
(Tailbone Lifting / Ball Too Close to Body)

Legs Extending

The ball is also used to support one or both legs as they extend out. Important considerations are -

- Start with the sole of the foot on the ball to allow the ball room to roll out as the leg extends
- Keep the kneecaps pointing up toward the ceiling (no internal/external rotation of the hip)
- Keep the foot and knee in line with the hip (no abduction/adduction of the hip)
- Ensure that the back does not arch as the ball rolls away
- Ensure that the tailbone does not lift when the ball rolls back in
- Keep the pelvis still, no rotation or lateral flexion

Supporting the Upper Body on the Ball

Some exercises can be performed with the ball underneath the upper back.

The ball should be placed in the middle of the back, roughly in between the shoulder blades. If the ball is too high (under the head/neck), it will be difficult to support the lower body and there will not be enough thoracic extension range of movement available. If the ball is too low, there will not be enough support for the upper body and the neck and shoulders will be more likely to tense.



Ball Too High Under the Body
(Hips Sagging)



Ball Too Low Under the Body
(No Upper Back Support)

Increasing Resistance with the Ball in the Hands

Holding the ball in the hands when performing exercises from the Supine Abdominal Series increases the weight of the upper body as it lifts, making the abdominals work harder. It is important that the ball is not causing the neck or shoulders to tense. If there is no ball available, a circle can also be held in the hands to increase the leverage of the upper body as it lifts.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Size of the Ball

It is important that clients are using correctly sized balls which are proportional to their individual body. A client is using a correctly sized ball if they –

- Have 90 degree hip and knee flexion (when lying on the back and the legs are on the ball) OR
- Have 90 degree knee flexion and neutral hip flexion/extension (when lying on the back on the ball with the feet on the ground)

When the ball is used to support the legs, the size of the ball used is incredibly important. If the ball is too large or too small, it will alter the client's leg position from the correct tabletop position. If the ball is too small, the back will be more likely to arch as the knees will not be stacked directly above the hips. If the ball is too large, the tailbone will be more likely to lift and the back to round as the knees will be pushed closer to the body.



Correct Ball Size



Incorrect Ball Size (Ball Too Big)

When the ball is used to support the upper body, if the ball is too large, the hips will be too high and the back will arch. If the ball is too small, the hips will be too low which may place strain on the knees.



Correct Ball Size



Incorrect Ball Size (Ball Too Big)

When holding the ball in the hands, ensure that the ball is not too heavy or causing the shoulders to hunch up. If the ball is too large and the person is inflexible, they may not be able to reach the ball through the legs comfortably while maintaining the correct abdominal activation.



Correct Ball Size



Incorrect Ball Size, Legs Opening Too Wide

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Safety When Using the Ball

Generally, using the ball for the Supine Abdominal Series is very safe and actually makes the exercises easier as it supports the weight of the legs, but just ensure that you are standing close to any client who is performing an exercise on top of the ball in case they lose balance.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Using the Circle in the Supine Abdominal Series

Why Use the Circle in the Supine Abdominal Series?

Generally, the circle is added to strengthen the Adductors and add an extra challenge to the abdominals, making the exercise harder. However, using the circle can also help to offload the Hip Flexors by engaging the Adductors and Iliacus muscles, and also make it easier to engage the abdominals. For clients who tend to arch their lower back or feel cramping in their hips, the addition of a circle may assist them.

Placement of the Circle

The circle can be placed in one of two positions -

1. In between the inner thighs, just above the knees
2. In between the shins, just above the ankles



Circle Between the Thighs



Circle Between the Ankles

Circle Between the Thighs

The circle is placed between the thighs when the feet are on the floor or when the legs are in tabletop position throughout an exercise. Important considerations are -

- Never place the circle over the knee joint itself, it should be placed just above the knees
- Both handles should be at an equal distance from the knee joint
- When the legs are in tabletop, the circle should be in a horizontal position so that the handles sit flat against the inner thighs
- When the feet are on the ground, the circle will be roughly on a 45 degree angle so that the handles sit as flat as possible against the inner thighs
- Always ensure that the circle is sitting in the correct position and that the circle is being squeezed evenly with both legs



Circle Between the Thighs
(Legs in Tabletop Position)



Circle Between the Thighs
(Feet Down)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Circle Between the Shins

The circle is placed between the shins when the legs are going to be extending throughout an exercise. Important considerations are -

- Never place the circle over the ankle joint itself, it should be just above the ankles
- Both handles should be at an equal distance from the ankle joint
- To achieve this position, place the circle between the shins when in the start position (ie. tabletop position) and the circle should be placed vertically between the shins
- When the legs are extended, the circle should be in a horizontal position so that the handles sit flat against the shins
- Always ensure that the circle is sitting in the correct position and that the circle is being squeezed evenly with both legs



Incorrect Placement of the Circle Between the Knees



Step #1: Legs in Tabletop, Place the Circle Between the Shins



Step #2: Extend the Legs so the Circle is in a Horizontal Position



Incorrect Placement of the Circle Between the Shins

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Safety When Using the Circle

Generally using the circle for the Supine Abdominal Series is safe, just ensure that the clients have correct circle placement on both legs and are squeezing evenly, otherwise the circle may fly out and injure someone.

Also ensure that the client is strong enough in their inner thighs and abdominals to add the circle into the exercises, otherwise they may end up feeling the exercise in their lower back or place strain on their Adductors and Pubic Symphysis joint.

Occasionally a client may feel pressure on their inner thighs or shins where the circle feels like it is digging into and hurting them. Often this can be alleviated by moving the circle slightly up or down and also making sure that the circle is straight (not higher or lower on one side), as this can make the edge of the handles (rather than the flat part of the handles) press against the legs.

Some clients may feel particularly sensitive in their inner thighs and shins, and if the circle is too uncomfortable, discontinue use of the circle and perform the exercise without it.

While most clients can safely place the circle between their legs, extra caution should be taken for clients who have the following conditions -

- Clients with Pubic Symphysis or Adductor pain
- Elderly clients or clients with thinning skin
- Clients with varicose veins over their inner thighs
- Clients who bruise easily or have bleeding or blood clotting problems

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Using the Band in the Supine Abdominal Series

The band is used in the Supine Abdominal Series in to help support some of the weight of the legs, thereby making the exercises easier than the corresponding exercise on the mat. Important considerations are -

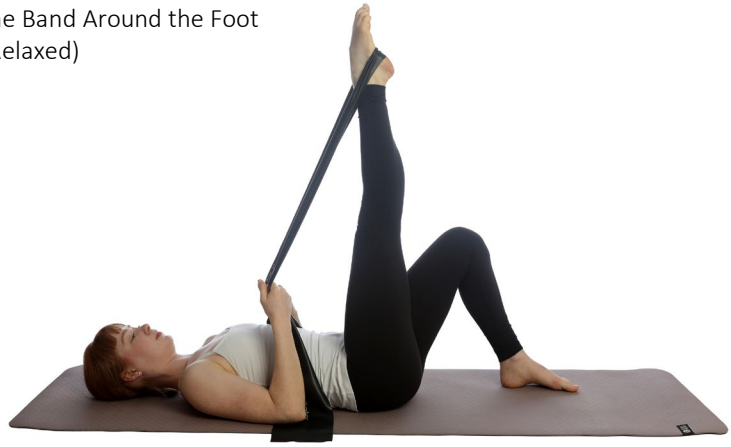
- Do not overly point or flex the feet as the band can slip off, a relaxed foot is best
- The tighter the band is, the more support it will give to the legs and makes it easier on the lower back
- The tighter the band is held, the more likely it is to place pressure on the neck and shoulders
- Always ensure that the shoulders are down and back and the neck is relaxed, there is no need to pull hard on the band
- If the neck is tense, release the tension on the band slightly
- To increase the support of the band, simply hold the band a bit higher up then return the arms back by the sides



Correct Placement of the Band Around the Foot
(Foot Relaxed)



Incorrect Placement of the Band Around the Foot
(Foot Flexed)



Incorrect Placement of the Band Around the Foot
(Foot Excessively Pointed)



Correctly Holding the Band
(Upper Body Relaxed)



Incorrectly Holding the Band
(Upper Body Hunched)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Safety When Using the Band

Using the band for the Supine Abdominal Series is generally very safe, but just ensure that clients have a firm grip on the band and that the band is secure on the foot, otherwise the band may slip off and hit clients in the face or body.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Lift Foot + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=1

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: The ideal Set Up position for this exercise is with the knees directly above the hips and the shins parallel to the floor when the heels are placed on the ball. Taller clients will require a larger ball, shorter clients will require a smaller ball to achieve this position.

Name of Exercise

"Lift Foot with the Feet on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, heels on top of the ball hip distance apart, knees over hips, arms relaxed by the sides. Shoulders down and back. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, lift one foot just off the ball, keeping the pelvis and spine still"



"INHALE, lower the foot back to the ball"

"Alternate sides"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, alternating sides and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone tight and don't let the hips rock"***
- "As you exhale, draw your ribs toward your hips so your back doesn't arch"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Keep the ball still, with the feet and knees in line with the hips"***
- "Only lift the leg slightly, keep the knee directly over the hip and the shin parallel to the floor"
- "Draw the thigh bone into the hip socket prior to lifting the leg"
- "Draw the shoulders down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Try using an imprinted spine if your back is arching"
- "Don't lift the leg as high off the ball"
- "Place the Calves on the ball for more support, making sure that the knees are still over the hips"

To Make it Harder

- "Focus on really tightening the abdominals to keep the spine still"
- "Alternate lifting the legs more quickly"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Bringing the knee in toward the chest, rather than just lifting the foot (the tailbone will lift)
- Allowing the ball to roll away from the body, causing the lower back to arch
- Not keeping the knee bent to 90 degrees as the leg lifts
- Drawing the ball in too close to the body, lifting the tailbone
- Letting the T-Zone and Obliques go
- Letting the pelvis rock or the ball move side to side
- Letting either knee roll in or out to the side
- Hunching or rounding the shoulders

Encourage and Inspire

- "Outstanding team!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, lift the leg"
- "INHALE, lower the leg"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- T-Zone Activation Exercise
- Oblique Activation Exercise
- Iliacus Activation Exercise

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus and Pelvic Floor to prevent the hips from rocking
- Hip Flexor muscles (Iliacus, Psoas, Tensor Fascia Latae, Quadriceps Femoris) to raise the leg (hip flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings of the stationary leg to prevent the ball from rolling away (knee flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus and Pelvic Floor to stabilise the lower back and pelvis
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Iliacus to draw the thigh bone into the hip socket (stabilise the hip joint)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- The client may feel it in their back if their stability is not good enough for this exercise
- Ensure that the ball is the correct size for the individual
- Ensure that the legs are in tabletop position and that the ball hasn't rolled away
- Ensure that the tailbone is down and the back is not rounding
- Try using an imprinted spine instead of a neutral spine
- Use the T-Zone and Oblique lines (rib to hip connection) to keep the ball and pelvis still

Hip Pain or Hip Flexor Cramps

- If a client feels Hip Flexor tightness or cramps, ensure that the T-Zone is on
- Cue to activate the Iliacus muscle to lift the leg

Pregnancy

- A good exercise to perform in the first trimester while safe to lie on the back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- Easier for Lordotic clients to perform than Lift Foot on the mat as the leg does not lift as far – the start position is in a greater degree of hip flexion, requiring less Hip Flexor muscle strength to lift the leg making it is easier for the abdominals to prevent the lower back from arching
- More difficult than Lift Foot on the mat as it requires a greater pelvic control and stability on the stationary side to hold the ball, leg and pelvis still
- A great warm up exercise in preparation for tabletop exercises
- A good basic exercise for low level or beginner clients, those with poor abdominal strength and lower back pain
- Use this exercise for Iliacus activation for anyone with hip pain, tight TFLs or cramping hips
- Can be used as an Iliacus activation exercise OR an abdominal exercise – change your cueing accordingly based on what you want the client to focus on

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Ball Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
- Leg Positioning #5: Iliacus

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Leg Slides + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to Leg Slides on the mat as you perform all of the repetitions on one side before swapping and repeating with the other leg, rather than alternating legs after each repetition.

This exercise works best when the edge of the heel is placed on the top edge of the ball. This allows space for the ball to roll out underneath the leg.

As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Name of Exercise

"Leg Slides with the Feet on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, soles of the feet on top of the ball, hip distance apart, knees over hips, arms relaxed by the sides. Shoulders down and back. Neutral spine, T-Zone tight."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, Lift one foot just off the ball, keeping the pelvis and spine still, hold it there"



"EXHALE, roll the ball away from you, straightening the knee"



"INHALE, bend the knee and roll the ball back in"

"Continue on the same side"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going with the same leg and…"

Concentration Points

- "Only roll the ball out as far as possible without your back arching"***
- "As you breathe out, really draw your ribs toward your hips, tightening your abdominals"***
- "Use your abdominals to stop your lower back from arching"***
- "Keep your T-Zone tight to stop the hips from rocking"***
- "Keep the free leg still in tabletop position, knee over hip, shin parallel to the floor"***
- "Keep the extending leg in line with the hip, don't let the ball roll in or out to the side"***
- "Only bring the leg back to tabletop position, not closer to the chest"***
- "Keep the kneecaps pointing straight up toward the ceiling, don't let the legs roll in or out"
- "Point and reach through the toes"
- "Draw the ball all the way back in to the start position each time, knee above the hip"
- "Keep your shoulder blades down and back and the neck relaxed, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't roll the ball out as far"

To Make it Harder

- "Roll the ball out further"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Not keeping the free leg still in tabletop position (lifting up too high or in toward the chest)
- Arching the lower back – extending the leg too far or not using the abdominals properly
- Rotating/twisting the pelvis – focus on the appropriate Oblique and T-Zone lines
- Not keeping the extending leg in line with the hip and the knee pointing up toward the celling ie. abducting or rotating the leg (leg moves in or out sideways or the knee rolls in or out)
- Flexing the foot rather than pointing the toes
- Extending the leg too far, locking the knee
- Bending the leg back in too far, lifting the tailbone

Encourage and Inspire

- "Let's do a couple more!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, roll the ball away along the floor"
- "INHALE, roll the ball back in"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Lift Foot + Ball

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back from arching

Accessory Muscles

- Hip Flexors to control the ball as it rolls out (eccentrically controlling hip extension) and drawing it back in (hip flexion)
- Hamstrings to control the knee as the leg extends and prevent the ball from rolling away (eccentrically controlling knee extension) and to roll the ball back in (knee flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus to prevent the hips from rocking
- Iliacus on the stationary leg to stabilise the hip in tabletop position

Injuries/Caution

Tight Hip Flexors or Lordosis Posture

- The addition of the ball makes this exercise more manageable for someone who is very Lordotic or has tight Hip Flexors as the leg is not as low as when performing the exercise on the mat (due to the leg being supported on the ball)
- Ensure that the ball is the correct size for the individual
- Try with an imprinted spine
- If the Hip Flexors of the free leg begin to cramp, cue the client to activate their Iliacus

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone activation
- Really emphasize drawing the ribs to hips on the breath out
- Try using an imprinted spine
- Stretch the Hip Flexors prior to the exercise
- Do not roll the ball out as far
- Ensure that the ball is the correct size for the individual

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Knee Pain

- Make sure that the leg is extending in line with the hip, not out to the side or rolling in
- Don't extend the leg out as far and discontinue if pain persists

Pregnancy

- A good exercise to perform in the first trimester while safe to lie on the back
- Focus on pelvic control and stability and control of the hips

Programming Advice

- Easier for clients with a Lordosis posture than Leg Slides on the mat as the extending leg is not as low – this makes it easier for the Obliques and the abdominals to engage and prevent the lower back from arching
- More difficult than Leg Slides on the mat in that it requires a greater degree of abdominal strength on the stationary side to hold the free leg in tabletop position
- Requires better pelvic and hip control than Leg Slides on the mat to keep the foot and knee in line with the hip and prevent the ball from rolling in or out to the side as the leg extends
- A great warm up exercise for anyone and also great for beginners
- A low-level exercise that teaches clients how to extend their leg without their back arching
- Perfect for clients with lower back pain
- Stretch the Hip Flexors first to help stop the back from arching
- You can get clients to place their fingers on their hip bones and thumbs on their ribs to ensure that their ribs and hips don't move apart and focus on the T-Zone and Obliques

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Ball Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
- Ball Positioning #3: Guiding Ball Movement
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Abdominal Curl + Ball

Intensity=2 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) on the mat as it is performed in a neutral spine position. This is because the feet are supported on the ball.

Name of Exercise

"Abdominal Curl with the Feet on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, heels on top of the ball hip distance apart, knees over hips. Hands behind the head, elbows wide, head relaxed into the hands. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, draw the ribs toward the hips, lifting the head and shoulders, eyes on the knees"



"INHALE, lower the body back down"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone tight, abdominals flat and scooped"***
- "Use your abdominals to curl the body up, sliding the ribcage down as you breathe out"***
- "Keep your shoulder blades down and back, elbows wide, head relaxed into your hands"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Eyes on the knees, small gap in between the chin and chest"***
- "Keep the ball still and the legs in tabletop position with the knees directly over the hips"***
- "Keep the spine neutral and the tailbone down"
- "You should feel it working in the abdominals, not the back or neck"

To Make it Easier

- "Stop and reset the T-Zone each time"
- "Place the Calves on the ball for more support, making sure that the knees are still over the hips"

To Make it Harder

- "Draw the ribs to the hips, curl up as high as you can, flattening and scooping the abdominals"
- "Flatten the T-Zone and hold the curl up for a second before slowly releasing back down"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing pure tabletop position (knees falling out to the sides or moving in or out closer or further away from the body – focus on T-Zone and Iliacus to keep the knees above the hips)
- Losing control of the ball and allowing it to move side to side, rotating the pelvis
- Posteriorly tilting the pelvis and lifting the tailbone
- Letting the T-Zone go and the Rectus Abdominus popping out or arching the back
- Overusing the Rectus Abdominus to curl up rather than the Obliques – focus on the lateral ribs drawing toward the hips
- Hunching the shoulders, pulling on the head with the hands, sticking the chin out
- Not keeping the elbows wide
- Pushing through the feet and using the Hamstrings and Gluteal muscles

Encourage and Inspire

- "Keep it up, nearly there!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, curl up"
- "INHALE, lower back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to draw ribs to hips and curl the body up (thoracic flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hamstrings to maintain tabletop position and prevent the ball from rolling away (knee flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone and Obliques, check the neutral spine and ensure that the back is not arching
- Ensure that the pelvis is still
- Ensure that the ball is the correct size for the individual
- Ensure that the legs are in tabletop position and that the ball has not rolled away
- Try bringing the knees slightly closer to the chest, without lifting the tailbone
- Ensure that the tailbone is down and the back is not rounding
- Try using an imprinted spine

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- As this exercise involves neck flexion, avoid for clients with a cervical Disc Bulge
- Ensure that clients do not pull on the head with the hands – they can either place the hands on the head just behind the ears or interlace them behind the head, whichever is comfortable
- Cue to keep the neck and head relaxed into the hands, chin tucked in, eyes on the knees
- Initiate the movement by activating the abdominals/ribs to hips, not by lifting the head
- If pain persists, perform abdominal exercises with the head down such as Lift Foot + Ball or Leg Slides + Ball or more challenging abdominal exercises like Hundreds + Circle or Beats + Circle with the head down
- Try the modification with the alternate arm position below

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Shoulder Pain

- Do not take the elbows as wide, keep the shoulders down and back
- Try placing the arms across the chest rather than behind the head
- Try the modification with the with the alternate arm position below

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, draw the ribs toward the hips,
lifting your head and shoulders,
hands past the hips,
eyes on the knees"



"INHALE, return the fingers to the ceiling,
resting the shoulders back down"



Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- A great warm up exercise
- Useful in a class setting to use a ball to assist any client who is struggling to hold tabletop position – enabling them to continue performing the same exercise with the rest of the group
- The ball increases the challenge by requiring greater pelvic control and stability to hold the ball still while performing this exercise
- Clients who have a large Lordosis or lower back pain may find their back feels more comfortable with their feet supported on the ball in tabletop position than with their feet on the mat as it places the spine in a more flexed position
- It can be easier to activate the abdominals with the feet on the ball – so the addition of a ball can make the Abdominal Curl easier for some clients, particularly those who are lordotic

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Ball Positioning #2: Tabletop Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Oblique Curl + Ball

Intensity=2 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to Oblique Curl 2 (Tabletop) on the mat as it is performed in a neutral spine position. This is because the feet are supported on the ball.

Name of Exercise

"Oblique Curl with the Feet on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, heels on top of the ball hip distance apart, knees over hips. Hands behind the head, elbows wide, head relaxed into the hands. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl the body up and rotate one rib toward the opposite hip"



"INHALE, release back down"

"Alternate sides"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, alternating sides and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "As you rotate draw the rib toward the opposite hip, or armpit toward the opposite knee"***
- "Elbows wide, head relaxed into hands, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight, abdominals flat and scooped, spine neutral"***
- "Keep the pelvis still on the mat, no rocking or twisting the hips, tailbone down"***
- "Keep the ball still and the legs in tabletop position with the knees directly over the hips"***
- "Using the Obliques to curl up and rotate the body"
- "Draw the shoulder across, not the elbow across"
- "Keep the eyes looking to the sides of the room, just past the knee each time you rotate"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't curl up or rotate as far"
- "Place the Calves on the ball for more support, making sure that the knees are still over the hips"

To Make it Harder

- "Curl up and rotate further, use the breath out to draw the ribcage toward the opposite hip"
- "Pause at the top, holding the curl and rotation for a second before resting back to the mat"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing pure tabletop position (the knees falling out to the sides or moving in or out closer or further away from the body – focus on T-Zone and Iliacus to keep the knees above the hips)
- Losing control of the ball and allowing it to move side to side, rotating the pelvis
- Losing neutral spine, twisting the hips or posteriorly tilting the pelvis and lifting the tailbone
- Hitching one hip or laterally flexing the lumbar spine (rather than performing a pure rotation)
- Losing the T-Zone and Obliques, letting the abdominals pop out or arching the back
- Hunching shoulders, sticking the neck out
- Pulling on the head and drawing the elbow toward the knee – keep the elbows wide
- Using the arms and neck to pull up with rather than the abdominals

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking good, just a few more to each side!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, curl up and rotate"
- "INHALE, lower back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Abdominal Curl + Ball
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Oblique Curl 1 (Feet Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to draw the ribs toward the hips, curl the body up and rotate the body (thoracic flexion and rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hamstrings to maintain tabletop position and prevent the ball from rolling away (knee flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone and Obliques, check the neutral spine and ensure that the back is not arching
- Ensure that the pelvis is still
- Ensure that the ball is the correct size for the individual
- Ensure that the legs are in tabletop position and that the ball has not rolled away
- Try bringing the knees slightly closer to the chest, without lifting the tailbone
- Ensure that the tailbone is down and the back is not rounding
- Try using an imprinted spine

Upper Back Pain

- There is a lot of rotation and flexion through the thoracic spine with this exercise
- If the client is feeling a stretch pain, that is okay
- If the pain is too sharp, uncomfortable or doesn't ease with the movement then decrease the range of movement, check the ribcage and spinal position or stop the exercise

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- As this exercise involves neck flexion, avoid for clients with a cervical Disc Bulge
- Ensure that clients do not pull on the head with the hands – they can either place the hands on the head just behind the ears or interlace them behind the head, whichever is comfortable
- Initiate the movement by activating the abdominals
- If pain persists, stick to performing abdominal exercises with the head down such as the basic stability exercises and Pendulum + Ball or the more challenging abdominal exercises with the head down
- Try the modification with the alternate arm position below

Shoulder Pain

- Do not take the elbows as wide, keep the shoulder blades down and back
- Try performing the exercise with the arms crossed over the chest
- Try the modification with the with the alternate arm position below

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl the body up and rotate one shoulder toward the opposite hip, one hand reaching between the thighs"



"INHALE, return the fingers to the ceiling, resting the head and shoulders back down"



Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- The addition of the ball makes the abdominals work harder to prevent the ball and pelvis from moving as the body rotates
- Goes well after Abdominal Curl + Ball as the set up position is the same
- Perfect for a group class as you can have some of the class performing Oblique Curl 1 (Feet Down) or Oblique Curl 2 (Tabletop) on the mat and some performing Oblique Curl + Ball for those who need extra support in tabletop position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #2: Oblique Lines
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Ball Positioning #2: Tabletop Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Abdominal Curl Over the Ball

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement.

Name of Exercise

"Abdominal Curl Over the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sit onto the ball, place the hands onto the ball for support as you lie back over the ball, walk the feet out until the middle back is resting on the ball and the feet are under the knees."



"Hands behind the head, elbows wide, head relaxed into the hands. Lower the upper back over the ball. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Squeeze the buttocks to lift the hips up in line with the knees. Neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, draw the ribs toward the hips, lifting the head and shoulders"

"INHALE, lower the body back down over the ball"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone tight, abdominals flat and scooped, to stop the ball rolling sideways"***
- "Use your abdominals to curl the body up, really sliding the ribs down as you breathe out"***
- "Keep drawing the ribs toward the hips to support you as you lower back over the ball"***
- "Press through the heels, squeeze the buttocks and keep the hips up"***
- "Tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button, maintaining a neutral spine"***
- "Shoulders down and back, elbows wide, head relaxed into your hands, chin tucked in"***
- "When lowering your head and shoulders over the ball, only go as far as it feels comfortable"
- "Keep the feet pointing straight ahead hip distance apart and knees stacked above the ankles"
- "Keep the arches of the feet lifted and the knees in line with the second and third toes"
- "You should feel it working in the abdominals, not the back or neck"

To Make it Easier

- "Stop and reset the T-Zone each time"
- "Don't lower as far back over the ball"

To Make it Harder

- "Draw the ribs to the hips, curl up as high as you can, flattening and scooping the abdominals"
- "Lower your head and shoulders further over the ball"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Dropping the hips below the height of the knees, arching the back
- Letting the ball move sideways or forward and backward
- Letting the T-Zone go and the Rectus Abdominus popping out
- Overusing the Rectus Abdominus to curl up rather than the Obliques – focus on the lateral ribs drawing toward the hips
- Hunching the shoulders, pulling on the head with the hands, sticking the chin out
- Lowering the head/shoulders too far back and letting the lower back or neck arch
- Not keeping the elbows wide
- Ball too high or too low – the ball should be underneath the middle part of the back
- Not keeping the knees stacked above the ankles or letting the knees roll in or out
- Feet too close together or too far apart or letting the arches of the feet roll in

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's the way, keep those hips up!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, curl up"
- "INHALE, lower back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "Start walking the feet back in and place the hands onto the ball behind you, walk the feet all the way back in and press the body back up into sitting"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Lift + Ball
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to draw ribs to hips and curl the body up (thoracic flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Gluteus Maximus and Hamstrings to tuck the pelvis under and lift the pelvis up (posterior pelvic tilt and hip extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that the ball is the appropriate size and the hips are not too high or the back will arch
- Cue to tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button to stop the lower back arching
- Check to see that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight, and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work (hips up in line with knees)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary, and do not lift the hips as high – only go as far as can without arching the lower back

Upper Back Pain

- If the upper back hurts in full extension when extending over the ball, do not lower back as far

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- As this exercise involves neck flexion, avoid for clients with a cervical Disc Bulge
- Try not to pull on the head with the hands – you can either place the hands on the head just behind the ears or interlaced behind the head, choose which position is more comfortable
- Keep the neck relaxed back into the hands, chin tucked in, eyes on the knees
- Initiate the movement by activating the abdominals/ribs to hips, not by lifting the head
- If all of this fails, then stick to doing abdominals with the head down such as Pendulum + Ball or Pendulum + Circle
- Try the modification with the arms by the side

Shoulder Pain

- Don't open the elbows so wide, keep the shoulders down and back
- Try placing the arms across the chest rather than behind the head, or the alternate arm position with straight arms

Pregnancy

- Avoid throughout pregnancy

Programming Advice

- As this exercise has two components, the abdominal curl component and the bridge component, it is a good idea to program in the class after you have done some abdominal curl exercises (eg. Abdominal Curl + Ball) as well as some bridging exercise (eg. Pelvic Lift + Ball) in order to warm up both the abdominals and the buttock muscles
- More challenging than Abdominal Curl (Feet Down) on the mat as the abdominals have to work from a more stretched position and there is much more pelvic and spinal control and stability required in order to not roll off the ball
- A great way to challenge someone in an Abdominal Curl type exercise who is not good at tabletop or with their legs extended as it challenges the abdominals with the feet down
- This exercise would be good for someone who has a Flatback posture and tends to lift their tailbone in tabletop position as having the feet on the floor will prevent them from being able to do this

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl
- Ball Positioning #1: Preventing the Ball from Moving

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle

Intensity=2 Difficulty=1

Exercise Tip: It is important that the circle is placed in the correct position or it can fly out from in between the thighs and injure a client.

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Inner Thigh Squeeze with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the inner thigh muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"



Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet on the floor. Place the circle horizontally between the inner thighs, just above the knees, feet hip distance apart. Arms relaxed by the sides. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, squeeze the knees toward each other, pressing in on the circle"



"INHALE, release the circle, keeping some tension on it"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone tight, abdominals flat and scooped"***
- "Keep the pelvis still with even weight on both buttocks"***
- "Neutral spine, tailbone down"***
- "Squeeze and release the circle evenly with both legs"
- "Keep your shoulder blades down and back and head relaxed into the mat"
- "Imagine the hip bones drawing in toward each other"
- "Try to keep the feet still on the floor"

To Make it Easier

- "Fully release the circle and reset the T-Zone each time"

To Make it Harder

- "Squeeze harder on the circle"
- "Hold the squeeze for longer"
- "Don't fully release the pressure on the circle"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Posteriorly tilting the pelvis and lifting the tailbone
- Letting the pelvis rotate to one side
- Letting the T-Zone go and the Rectus Abdominus popping out
- Arching the lower back and using the lower back muscles
- Not squeezing and releasing the circle evenly with both legs
- Hunching the shoulders, tensing the neck
- Not keeping the circle horizontal between the thighs
- Incorrect circle placement – should be equal distance between both knees
- Having the feet too wide on the mat – not keeping the feet hip distance apart

Encourage and Inspire

- "Great work controlling that circle!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, squeeze the circle"
- "INHALE, release the circle"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: T-Zone Activation Exercise, Oblique Activation Exercise

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Adductors to squeeze the circle and bring the knees closer together (hip adduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and draw the abdominals flat
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Check neutral spine and ensure that the back is not arching
- Try using an imprinted spine
- If the client has an increased Lordosis, try placing the feet up onto a chair, ball or other object with the feet supported and legs in tabletop position – knees bent to 90 degrees

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, squeeze the circle"



"INHALE, release the circle"



Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Take care with this exercise as it uses the Adductors strongly and creates tension through the Pubic Symphysis joint
- There should be no Pubic Bone or Adductor pain with this exercise
- Check the T-Zone activation
- Ensure that both legs are working evenly and the pelvis is still
- Cue the client not to squeeze the circle as hard, instead focus on keeping T-Zone activated
- If the circle is too hard, try squeezing a cushion or a rolled towel instead
- If pain persists, cease the exercise

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- A great warm up exercise prior to performing other exercises with the circle – it helps clients to focus on keeping the T-Zone activated and the abdominals flat and scooped whilst squeezing the circle
- Great for all levels – resistance is easily modified by how hard the client squeezes on the circle
- Good for a group class as you can have various people performing different levels ie. option of Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle or Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
- Goes well before or after Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle Intensity=2 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: It is important that the circle is placed horizontally or it can fly out from in between the thighs and injure a client.

Name of Exercise

"Inner Thigh Squeeze with the Circle in Tabletop"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the inner thigh muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the legs in tabletop position. Place the circle horizontally between the inner thighs, just above the knees, spine imprinted. Arms relaxed by the sides. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, squeeze the knees toward each other, pressing in on the circle"



"INHALE, release the circle"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep your T-Zone tight so that the abdominals don't pop out"***
- "Keep the pelvis still with even weight on both buttocks"***
- "Keep your spine imprinted and your tailbone down"***
- "Make sure that your knees don't come too close to your chest or drop away from you"***
- "Keep the shins parallel to the floor and parallel to each other"***
- "Squeeze and release the circle evenly with both legs"
- "Keep your shoulder blades down and back and head relaxed into the mat"

To Make it Easier

- "If the back is arching, draw the knees slightly in toward the chest (but don't lift the tailbone)"
- "Go back to Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle"

To Make it Harder

- "Squeeze harder on the circle"
- "Hold the squeeze for longer"
- "Don't fully release the pressure on the circle"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the T-Zone and letting the Rectus Abdominus pop out
- Drawing knees too close to the chest, lifting the tailbone
- Letting the knees drop away from the body, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Letting the pelvis rotate to one side
- Abducting and externally rotating the hips (weak Iliacus and Adductors) – shins should stay parallel to one another
- Internally or externally rotating the hips when squeezing the circle – focus on drawing the knees together rather than the feet (ie. pure hip adduction)
- Not squeezing and releasing the circle evenly with both legs
- Hunching the shoulders, tensing the neck
- Not keeping the circle horizontal between the thighs

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nice work everyone!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, squeeze the circle"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "INHALE, release the circle"

Ending the Exercise

- "… remove the circle and lower the legs one at a time back to the mat and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle
- Ability to hold tabletop position with correct spinal position and abdominal activation

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Adductors to squeeze the circle and bring the knees closer together (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back arching
- Hip Flexors to hold the legs up into tabletop position (hip flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and draw the abdominals flat
- Iliacus to draw the thigh bone into the hip socket (stabilise the hip joint)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Can hurt the back if done incorrectly or the client is not strong enough for this exercise
- Check T-Zone and imprinted spine
- Try drawing the knees closer to the chest (keeping the tailbone down)
- Try using a neutral spine position and see if it feels more comfortable
- If this does not help, stick to Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle

Hip Pain or Hip Flexor Cramps

- If a client has a weak T-Zone or Iliacus, the dominant Hip Flexors (usually TFL) will be overused
- Cue the client to use Iliacus and Adductors to hold the legs up – cue the inner thighs to squeeze the circle, cue Iliacus activation by drawing the thigh bone into the hip socket
- Remove the circle and place a cushion between the thighs instead, squeezing on the cushion
- If this doesn't help, stick to Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Take care with this exercise as it uses the Adductors strongly and creates tension through the Pubic Symphysis joint
- There should be no Pubic Bone or Adductor pain with this exercise
- Check the T-Zone activation
- Ensure that both legs are working evenly and the pelvis is still
- Cue the client not to squeeze the circle as hard, instead focus on keeping T-Zone activated
- If the circle is too hard, try squeezing a cushion or a rolled towel instead
- If pain persists, stick to Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle or avoid this exercise

Programming Advice

- A great warm up exercise prior to performing other exercises in tabletop with the circle
- Ensure that clients are safe in tabletop position before doing this exercise
- Good for a group class as you can have various people performing different levels ie. option of Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle or Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
- When demonstrating this exercise, you may demonstrate two levels (feet down and tabletop) and give the class the option to choose their level
- Goes well before or after Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) + Circle

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=1

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: It is important that the circle is placed in the correct position or it can fly out from in between the thighs and injure a client.

Name of Exercise

"Abdominal Curl with the Circle, Feet Down"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominals and inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet on the floor. Place the circle horizontally between the inner thighs, just above the knees, feet hip distance apart. Hands behind the head, elbows wide, head relaxed into the hands. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the circle slightly"



"EXHALE, draw the ribs toward the hips,
lifting the head and shoulders,
eyes on the knees"



"INHALE, lower the body back down"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone tight, abdominals flat and scooped"***
- "Use your abdominals to curl the body up, sliding the ribcage down as you breathe out"***
- "Neutral spine, tailbone down"***
- "Squeeze evenly on the circle with both legs, keeping the pelvis still"***
- "Keep your shoulder blades down and back, elbows wide, head relaxed into your hands"***
- "Eyes on the knees, small gap in between the chin and chest"***
- "Keep a constant squeeze on the circle so the knees point up toward the ceiling"
- "You should feel it working in the abdominals and inner thighs, not the back or neck"

To Make it Easier

- "Completely release the squeeze on the circle and reset the T-Zone each time"
- "Don't squeeze as hard on the circle"

To Make it Harder

- "Draw the ribs to the hips, curl up as high as you can, flattening and scooping the abdominals"
- "Squeeze harder on the circle"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Posteriorly tilting the pelvis and lifting the tailbone
- Letting the T-Zone go and the Rectus Abdominus popping out
- Letting the pelvis twist or rotate
- Hunching the shoulders, pulling on the head with the hands, sticking the chin out
- Not keeping the elbows wide
- Pushing through the feet and using the Hamstrings and Gluteal muscles
- Placing the feet too wide (won't be able to adduct the thighs properly on the circle)
- Placing the feet too close together (the circle will cause the feet to roll out)
- Not maintaining even pressure on the circle
- Not keeping the circle horizontal between the thighs

Encourage and Inspire

- "Keep it up, just a few more to go!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, curl up"
- "INHALE, lower back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to draw ribs to hips and curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Adductors to squeeze the circle and bring the knees closer together (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Check the neutral spine and ensure that the back is not arching
- Try using an imprinted spine
- Try squeezing a cushion between the knees instead of the circle
- If the client has an increased Lordosis, try placing the feet up onto a chair, ball or other object with the feet supported and legs in tabletop position – knees bent to 90 degrees

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl up"



"INHALE, lower back down"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Take care with this exercise as it uses the Adductors strongly and creates tension through the Pubic Symphysis joint
- There should be no Pubic Bone or Adductor pain with this exercise
- Check the T-Zone activation
- Ensure that both legs are working evenly and the pelvis is still
- Cue the client not to squeeze the circle as hard, instead focus on keeping T-Zone activated
- If the circle is too hard, try squeezing a cushion or a rolled towel instead
- If pain persists, stick to Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) without the circle

Shoulder Pain

- Do not take the elbows as wide, keep the shoulders down and back
- Try placing the arms across the chest rather than behind the head
- Try the modification with the with the alternate arm position below

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, draw the ribs toward the hips, lifting your head and shoulders, hands past the hips, eyes on the knees"



"INHALE, return the fingers to the ceiling, resting the shoulders back down"



Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- As this exercise involves neck flexion, avoid for clients with a cervical Disc Bulge
- Ensure that clients do not pull on the head with the hands – they can either place the hands on the head just behind the ears or interlace them behind the head, whichever is comfortable
- Cue to keep the neck and head relaxed into the hands, chin tucked in, eyes on the knees
- Initiate the movement by activating the abdominals/ribs to hips, not by lifting the head
- If pain persists, stick to performing abdominal exercises with the head down such as the basic stability exercises and Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle, or the more challenging abdominal exercises like Hundreds + Circle or Beats + Circle with the head down
- Try the modification with the arms by the side

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- As this exercise involves two components, an abdominal curl and an inner thigh squeeze, it is best programmed after performing the individual movements first – first perform an abdominal curl exercise without the circle followed by an inner thigh squeeze exercise with the head down then finish with the abdominal curl with the circle bringing the two movements together
- Great for all levels as you can have various people in the class performing different levels ie. option of Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle or Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
- You can easily alter or modify the exercise to suit the individual eg. if some clients were having Pubic Bone or Adductor pain, they could continue with Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) on the mat without the circle, if others were having neck pain they could continue with Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle leaving the head down

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) + Circle

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: It is important that the circle is placed in the correct position or it can fly out from in between the thighs and injure a client.

Name of Exercise

"Abdominal Curl Using the Circle in Tabletop"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominals and inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the legs in tabletop position. Place the circle horizontally between the inner thighs, just above the knees, spine imprinted. Hands behind the head, elbows wide, head relaxed into the hands. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the circle slightly"



"EXHALE, draw the ribs toward the hips,
lifting the head and shoulders,
eyes on the knees"



"INHALE, lower the body back down"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Use your abdominals to curl the body up, not your neck or arms"***
- "Keep your T-Zone tight so that the abdominals don't pop out"***
- "Keep your spine imprinted and tailbone down, draw the ribs toward the hips to curl up"***
- "Keep a constant squeeze on the circle so the knees point up toward the ceiling"***
- "Squeeze evenly with both legs, keeping the pelvis still"***
- "Keep the knees directly over your hips, shins parallel to the floor and each other"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, elbows wide, head relaxed into the hands"***
- "Eyes on the knees, chin tucked in"
- "You should feel it working in the abdominals and inner thighs, not the back or neck"

To Make it Easier

- "Release the squeeze on the circle slightly and reset the T-Zone each time"
- "If the back is arching, draw the knees slightly in toward the chest (but don't lift the tailbone)"
- "Go back to Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle"

To Make it Harder

- "Curl up a little higher, really use the breath out to activate the abdominals"
- "Squeeze harder on the circle"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Hunching shoulders, pulling on the head with the hands, sticking the chin out
- Not keeping the elbows wide
- Losing the T-Zone and letting the Rectus Abdominus pop out
- Lifting the tailbone, drawing knees too close to the chest
- Letting the pelvis twist or rotate
- Letting the knees drop away from the body, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Internally or externally rotating the hips when squeezing the circle – focus on drawing the knees together rather than the feet (ie. pure hip adduction)
- Not maintaining even pressure on the circle with both legs
- Not keeping the circle horizontal between the thighs

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nice work! Really squeeze that circle!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, curl up"
- "INHALE, lower down"

Ending the Exercise

- "… remove the circle and lower the legs one at a time back to the mat and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to draw ribs to hips and curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Adductors to squeeze the circle and bring the knees closer together (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors and Adductors to hold the legs up into tabletop position (hip flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Can hurt back and neck if done incorrectly or the client is not strong enough for this exercise
- Check T-Zone and imprint
- Try squeezing a cushion between knees instead of the circle
- Try drawing the knees closer to the chest (but keeping the tailbone down)
- Try with a neutral spine position and see if it feels more comfortable
- If this doesn't help, stick to Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hip Pain or Hip Flexor Cramps

- If a client has a weak T-Zone or Iliacus, the dominant Hip Flexors (usually TFL) will be overused
- Some clients find it easier with the circle as it uses the inner thighs more and switches off the lateral Hip Flexors which tend to cramp, but other clients will find it harder with the circle
- Cue the client to use Iliacus and Adductors to hold the legs up – cue the inner thighs to squeeze the circle, cue Iliacus activation by drawing the thigh bone into the hip socket
- Remove the circle and place a cushion between the thighs instead, squeezing on the cushion
- If this doesn't help, stick to Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Take care with this exercise as it uses the Adductors strongly and creates tension through the Pubic Symphysis Joint
- There should be no Pubic Bone or Adductor pain with this exercise
- Check the T-Zone activation
- Ensure that both legs are working evenly and the pelvis is still
- Cue the client not to squeeze the circle as hard, instead focus on keeping T-Zone activated
- If the circle is too hard, try squeezing a cushion or a rolled towel instead
- If pain persists, stick to Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) without the circle

Shoulder Pain

- Do not take the elbows as wide, keep the shoulders down and back
- Try placing the arms across the chest rather than behind the head
- Try the modification with the with the alternate arm position below

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, slide the ribs to the hips, lifting the head and shoulders"



"INHALE, return the fingers to the ceiling, resting the shoulders back down"



Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- As this exercise involves neck flexion, avoid for clients with a cervical Disc Bulge
- Ensure that clients do not pull on the head with the hands – they can either place the hands on the head just behind the ears or interlace them behind the head, whichever is comfortable
- Cue to keep the neck and head relaxed into the hands, chin tucked in, eyes on the knees
- Initiate the movement by activating the abdominals/ribs to hips, not by lifting the head

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that the chin isn't too tucked in
- If lifting the head is too hard, perform Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle instead
- Try the modification with the arms by the side

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- As this exercise involves two components, an abdominal curl and an inner thigh squeeze, it is best programmed after performing the individual movements first – first perform an abdominal curl exercise without the circle followed by an inner thigh squeeze exercise with the head down then finish with the abdominal curl with the circle bringing the two movements together
- Ensure that clients are safe in tabletop position before doing this exercise
- Great for all levels as you can have various people in the class performing different levels ie. option of Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle or Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
- When demonstrating this exercise, you may demonstrate two levels (feet down and tabletop) and give the class the option to choose their level
- You can easily alter or modify the exercise to suit the individual eg. if some clients were having Pubic Bone or Adductor pain, they could remove the circle, if others were having neck pain they could continue with Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle leaving the head down

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Single Leg Circle + Band

Intensity=1 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: The band assists with this exercise and supports the leg. For more support and assistance, pull the band taut and grab higher onto the band.

Name of Exercise

"Single Leg Circle with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominals and inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet hip distance apart. Place the middle of the band around the arch of one foot. Extend that leg up toward the ceiling and turn it out from the hip joint, toes pointed. Hold the band so that the elbows are bent to 90 degrees, resting on the floor by the waist. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, lower the leg down the centre toward the floor"



"INHALE, circle the leg out to the side, around…"



"…and back up"

Perform 6-10 circles on the same side, then change the direction of the circle so that you –



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, circle the leg out to the side…"



"… and down away from you"



"INHALE, raise the leg back up the centre to the start position"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Only make the circles as large as possible without letting your pelvis rock – start with dinner plate size circles and increase from there"***
- "Keep your T-Zone and Obliques activated, spine neutral, no arching the lower back"***
- "Keep your leg turned out from the hip so that you are looking at the inside of your knee"***
- "Point and really reach through your toes, lengthening the leg"***
- "Focus on using your inner thigh to perform the movement"***
- "Try not to move the arms, keep the elbows tucked in by the waist on the mat"***
- "Imagine that your toes are a pencil and you are drawing circles on the roof"
- "Keep your pelvis still and the tailbone down, even weight through both buttocks"
- "Keep the hip bones pointing straight up toward the ceiling"
- "Keep the supporting leg pointing straight up toward the ceiling – don't let it roll to the side"
- "Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Make the circles smaller"

To Make it Harder

- "Make the circles larger"
- "Reverse the circle"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the T-Zone, rocking through the hips and pelvis
- Losing the Oblique activation, ribcage popping and lower back arching
- Overusing the lateral Hip Flexors (losing the external rotation of the leg and not using the Adductors enough – keep cueing to turn the leg out and use the inner thigh)
- Taking the leg too high and the tailbone lifting
- Taking the leg too low and the back arching
- Taking the leg too wide and the hips rocking
- Letting the leg become parallel, not keeping the leg turned out at the hip
- Not keeping the toes pointed - flexing the foot can engage the Quadriceps too much (which can tilt the pelvis and arch the back)
- Incorrect band placement on the foot - not having the band flat around the arch of the foot
- The supporting leg rolls out to the side to help stabilise
- Moving the arms or pulling too hard on the band and tensing the neck and shoulders

Encourage and Inspire

- "Wonderful effort!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, lower the leg down"
- "INHALE, circle back up and around"

Ending the Exercise

- "… bend the knee and rest back down"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Bent Knee Fallouts, Lift and Extend

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Adductor muscles to circle the leg (the hip in external rotation works the Adductor muscles)
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back from arching

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Accessory Muscles

- Hip Flexors to raise the leg (hip flexion) and lower the leg down (eccentrically controlling hip extension)
- Adductors to draw the leg up and in (hip flexion and adduction) and lower the leg down and out (eccentrically controlling hip extension and abduction) – please note that the Adductors will only work if the leg is turned out from the hip joint
- Biceps to hold onto the band and support the leg

Stabilising Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus to prevent the hips from rocking
- Iliacus to draw the thigh bone into the hip socket (stabilise the hip joint)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Joint Mobility

- Mobilises the hip into external rotation and abduction
- Stretches the Hamstrings if they are tight

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Try with smaller circles, focus on keeping the pelvis still
- Cue clients to hold the band tighter to give the leg more support (not by pulling harder, simply hold higher up on the band to increase the tension but keep the arms relaxed by the waist)
- Try with an imprinted spine position, this may help the Oblique muscles to activate

Sciatica

- Take care or avoid this exercise as it involves a neural tension position
- Ensure that the leg doesn't come up too high as this increases the neural tension
- If pain persists, discontinue the exercise

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the arms are relaxed by the sides and encourage clients not to pull on the band
- Keep the shoulders and head relaxed back on the mat
- Draw the shoulder blades down and back and keep the chin tucked in

Tight Hamstrings

- If a client has tight Hamstrings, they may not be able to get their leg all the way up to vertical
- Only raise the leg as high as possible without lifting the tailbone
- Bending the knee slightly is not an option when using the band as it takes the tension away from the band and the band can slide off the foot

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hip Pain, Hip Clicking or Hip Flexor Cramps

- The band helps to support the leg and prevent pain, clicking or cramps from happening
- They usually occur because the client has lost the external rotation through their hip joint
- Tighten the band to give more support if needed
- Turn the leg out more into more external rotation to switch off the TFL and activate the Adductors and Iliacus muscles more
- Cue the client to use more Iliacus – drawing the thigh bone into the hip socket and using the inner thigh not the outer thigh to circle the leg
- Keep the circles smaller
- Ensure that the T-Zone is tight

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- As this exercise uses the Adductors and opens the leg into an abduction range of movement, it may exacerbate Pubic Bone pain
- Keep the range of movement small and avoid if pain persists

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- If a client is struggling to perform Single Leg Circle on the mat, you could give them this modification as an easier option
- This exercise is easier than performing the same exercise without the band as the use of the band over the foot helps to support the weight of the leg – making it easier to keep the spine and pelvis still and helps prevent hip clicking, pain or cramps
- Holding the band tauter makes this exercise easier as it gives the legs more support but it makes it harder on the arms
- The ideal foot position is relaxed, slightly pointed – if the foot is too pointed the calf can cramp and the band can slide off, if the foot is too flexed the leg will be in a neural tension position and the Quadriceps will overwork

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #2: Oblique Lines
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #3: From the Front of the Shoulder
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Bicycle Legs + Band

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to Bicycle Legs on the mat as you perform all of the repetitions on one side before swapping and repeating with the other leg, rather than alternating legs after each repetition.

The band assists with this exercise and supports the leg. For more support and assistance, pull the band taut and grab higher onto the band.

Name of Exercise

"Bicycle Legs with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the spine imprinted, legs in tabletop position. Place the band around the arch of one foot, foot relaxed. Hold the band so that the elbows are bent to 90 degrees, tucked in by the waist, just off the floor. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl up and draw the ribs to the hips, lifting the head and shoulders, hold this position"



"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, press into the band, extending the leg out, straightening the knee"



"INHALE, return the leg back in"

"Continue on the same side"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Continue bending and extending the same leg and…"

Concentration Points

- "Use the abdominals to curl up and keep the ribs drawing toward the hips the whole time"***
- "Only extend the leg as low as you can maintain imprint and the abdominal connection"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight, spine imprinted, ribcage down"***
- "Keep the tabletop leg still in tabletop, no rocking or twisting through the pelvis"***
- "Only bring the leg back to tabletop position, not closer to the chest"***
- "Chin tucked in, eyes on the knees, shoulder blades down and back"***
- "Try not to move the arms, keep the elbows tucked in by the waist, just off the floor"***
- "Keep both kneecaps pointing straight up toward the ceiling"
- "Keep the legs hip distance apart and fully straighten the knee"
- "You should feel it working in the abdominals, not the back or neck"

To Make it Easier

- "Extend the leg up higher"
- "If your neck gets tired place your head down on the mat"

To Make it Harder

- "Extend the leg down lower"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the T-Zone go (abdominals popping out)
- Losing the Oblique muscles (losing the imprinted spine and arching the lower back)
- Losing the ribcage position, letting the upper body lower back down toward the floor
- Rocking/twisting the pelvis
- Not completely straightening the knee as the leg extends
- Kicking the legs out to the side rather than keeping them hip distance apart
- Rolling the knee in as the leg extends
- Drawing the knee back in closer to the chest rather than tabletop position, lifting the tailbone
- Moving the arms or pulling too hard on the band, tensing the neck and shoulders

Encourage and Inspire

- "Impressive effort everyone! Looking good!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, extend the leg"
- "INHALE, return"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… come back into tabletop position, and rest back down"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop), Lift and Extend

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine imprinted, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors to hold the leg in tabletop position, draw the knee in toward the chest (hip flexion) and to extend and lower the leg out (eccentrically controlling hip extension)
- Quadriceps to straighten the knee (knee extension)
- Biceps to hold onto the band and support the leg

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Iliacus to stop the hips from clicking

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- This exercise can hurt the lower back if the client is not strong enough or performs the exercise incorrectly
- Check the T-Zone, imprinted spine and abdominal activation
- Extend the leg up higher
- Cue clients to hold the band tighter to give the leg more support (not by pulling harder, simply hold higher up on the band to increase the tension but keep the arms relaxed by the waist)
- Try with a neutral spine position and see if it feels more comfortable

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Shoulder blades down and back, eyes on the knees, chin not tucked in too far or poking out

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that the arms are relaxed by the sides and encourage clients not to pull on the band
- Ensure that the abdominal curl is maintained to prevent the neck from straining
- Keep the head down on a head cushion or on the mat
- For clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down

Hip Pain, Hip Clicking or Hip Flexor Cramps

- The band helps to support the leg and prevent pain, clicking or cramps from happening
- Extend the leg up higher
- Tighten the band to give more support if needed
- Ensure that the spine is imprinted and the T-Zone and Iliacus are working
- Cue the client to use more Iliacus – drawing the thigh bone into the hip socket and using the inner thigh not the outer thigh
- Keep the legs hip distance apart and do not let the knees roll in

Knee Pain

- Clients can feel pain or clicking in their knee if it is unstable or they have Patellofemoral tracking problems
- Extend the leg up higher
- Make sure that the kneecap stays pointing up toward the ceiling
- Cue clients to engage more buttocks by pressing the heel into the band as they extend the leg
- Cue clients to activate the VMO (drawing the kneecap upward and inward as the leg extends)
- If the pain occurs through a certain part of the movement then restrict the movement to the pain-free range (ie. not fully extending the leg or not bending it back in all the way)
- Loosen the band
- Discontinue if it is still uncomfortable

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- If a client is struggling to perform Bicycle Legs on the mat, you could give them this modification as an easier option
- This exercise is easier than performing the same exercise without the band as the band helps to support the weight of the leg – this can be helpful for clients who arch their back or whose hips click as the legs extend
- Clients with neck pain may be better off performing this exercise without the band – that way they can use their hands to support their head rather than holding onto the band and having the head unsupported
- If the band is too tight, it can place strain on the neck and it will become more of a Quadriceps exercise rather than an abdominal exercise as the Quadriceps would need to work hard to stretch the band out

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #3: From the Front of the Shoulder
- Leg Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Bicycle Legs + Ball

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to Bicycle Legs on the mat as it is performed in a neutral spine position. This is because the feet are supported on the ball.

Name of Exercise

"Bicycle Legs with the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

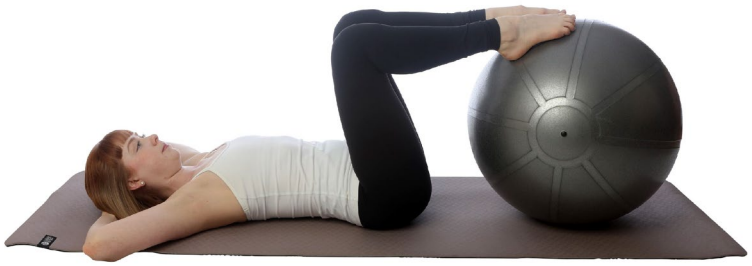
"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, soles of the feet on the ball, hip distance apart, knees over hips. Hands behind the head, elbows wide, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl up and draw the ribs to the hips, lifting the head and shoulders, hold this position"



"INHALE, lift one foot slightly off the ball"



"EXHALE, roll the ball away from you, straightening the knee"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"INHALE, roll the ball back in and…"



"…swap the feet over"



"EXHALE, roll the ball away from you, straightening the other knee"



"INHALE, roll the ball back in and…"



"…swap the feet again"



Permission to Continue

- "Continue alternating sides and…"

Concentration Points

- "Use the abdominals to curl up and keep the ribs drawing toward the hips the whole time"***
- "Only roll the ball out as far as you can maintain the abdominal connection, neutral spine"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to keep the abdominals flat and scooped"***
- "Maintain a neutral spine with the tailbone down, keeping the pelvis still on the mat"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, elbows wide, chin tucked in, eyes on the knees"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Keep the free leg still in tabletop position, knee over hip, shin parallel to the floor"***
- "Keep the extending leg in line with the hip, don't let the ball roll in or out to the side"***
- "Keep the kneecaps pointing straight up toward the ceiling and the legs hip distance apart"
- "Only bring the leg back to tabletop position, not closer to the chest"
- "Really extend the leg out straight, reaching through your toes"
- "You should feel it working in the abdominals, not the back or neck"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't roll the ball out as far"
- "If your neck gets tired place your head down on the mat"

To Make it Harder

- "Roll the ball out further"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the T-Zone go (abdominals popping out)
- Losing the Oblique muscles (hence losing the neutral spine and arching the lower back)
- Losing the ribcage position, letting the upper body lower back down toward the floor
- Hunching the shoulders, using the arms to pull the upper body up rather than the abdominals
- Letting chin stick out, not keeping the elbows wide
- Not keeping the free leg still in tabletop position (lifting up too high or in toward the chest)
- Rolling the ball out to the side rather than in line with the hip
- Not keeping both knees pointing up toward the ceiling, letting the thighs roll in or out
- Drawing the knee back in closer to the chest rather than tabletop position, lifting the tailbone
- Rocking/twisting the pelvis
- Not pointing and reaching through the toes – flexing the foot rather than pointing can engage the Quadriceps too much (which can tilt the pelvis and arch the back), pointing the toes assists correct activation of the Iliacus
- Losing control of the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Wonderful effort everyone! Looking great!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, roll the ball away, straightening the knee"
- "INHALE, return back in and swap the feet"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and roll the ball back in and rest back down"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Lift Foot + Ball, Leg Slides + Ball, Abdominal Curl + Ball

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine neutral, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors to hold the leg in tabletop position, draw the knee in toward the chest (hip flexion) and to extend and lower the leg out (eccentrically controlling hip extension)
- Quadriceps to straighten the knee (knee extension)
- Hamstrings to prevent the ball from rolling away (eccentrically controlling knee extension) and draw it back in (knee flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Iliacus to stop the hips from clicking

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone, neutral spine and abdominal activation (rib to hip connection)
- Try with an imprinted spine position and see if it feels more comfortable
- Do not roll the ball out as far
- Ensure that the ball is the correct size for the individual

Hip Pain, Hip Clicking or Hip Flexor Cramps

- The ball should help with hip pain and clicking as it takes the weight of the extending leg
- Ensure that the spine is neutral and the T-Zone and Iliacus are working
- Cue the client to use more Iliacus – drawing the thigh bone into the hip socket, think of using the inner thigh rather than the outer thigh to extend the leg and reaching through the toes
- Ensure that the legs stay hip distance apart rather than abducting further apart, kneecaps pointing toward the ceiling (don't let the knees roll in)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Knee Pain

- Clients can feel pain or clicking in their knee if it is unstable or they have Patellofemoral tracking problems
- Keep the kneecaps pointing up toward the ceiling
- Cue clients to activate the VMO (drawing the kneecap upward and inward as the leg extends)
- If the pain occurs through a certain part of the movement then restrict the movement to the pain-free range (ie. extend up higher, or don't fully extend the leg or bend it all the way in)

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Ensure that the shoulder blades are down and back and the elbows are wide
- Ensure that the head is relaxed into the hands and the hands are not pulling on the head
- Ensure that the chin is not tucked in too far or poking out and the eyes are on the knees
- Ensure that the abdominal curl is maintained to prevent the neck from straining
- Try the modification with the arms by the side instead of behind the head
- Keep the head down on a head cushion or on the mat with the arms by the side
- For clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down

Shoulder Pain

- Do not take the elbows as wide, keep the shoulders down and back
- Try placing the arms across the chest rather than behind the head
- Try the modification with the with the alternate arm position below

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, draw the ribs toward the hips,
lifting your head and shoulders,
hands past the hips, eyes on the knees"



"INHALE, return the fingers to the ceiling,
resting the shoulders back down"



Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- Always cue to lift the body before you cue to extend the legs
- A great exercise to do after Abdominal Curl+ Ball and before Criss Cross + Ball
- A good option for neck pain as you can keep the head down
- Bicycle Legs + Ball is easier to perform than Bicycle Legs on the mat as the legs are supported, which means that the abdominals and Hip Flexors do not need to work as hard
- Clients with a Lordosis posture will find this exercise easier than Bicycle Legs on the mat as the extending leg is not as low – this makes it easier for the Obliques and abdominals to engage and prevent the lower back from arching
- If someone is having trouble with the coordination, you can perform all reps on one side first then repeat on the other side

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes
- Arm Positioning #2: Reaching Through the Fingers
- Ball Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
- Ball Positioning #3: Guiding Ball Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Criss Cross + Ball

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to Criss Cross on the mat as it is performed in a neutral spine position. This is because the feet are supported on the ball.

As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Name of Exercise

"Criss Cross with the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

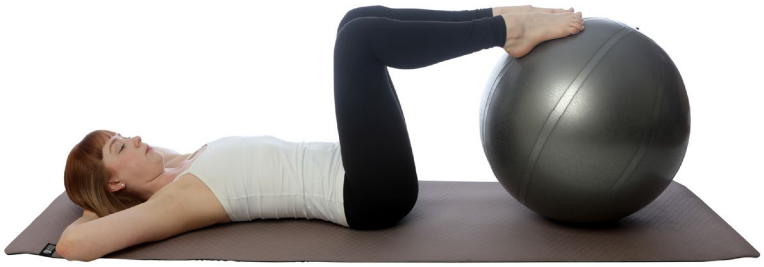
"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, soles of the feet on the ball, hip distance apart, knees over hips. Hands behind the head, elbows wide, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine, T-Zone tight."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, lift one foot slightly off the ball"



"EXHALE, curl the body and rotate toward the lifted knee and roll the ball away, straightening the leg"



"INHALE, roll the ball back in and rotate the body back to the centre and…"

"…swap the feet over"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, rotate to the other side, rolling the ball away"



"INHALE, roll the ball back in and body back to centre and…"

"…swap the feet again"



Permission to Continue

- "Continue alternating sides and…"

Concentration Points

- "Rotate toward the bent knee, extending the other leg out"
- "Draw the ribcage toward the opposite hip, or the shoulder toward the bent knee"***
- "Keep the free leg still in tabletop position, knee over hip, shin parallel to the floor"***
- "Only roll the ball out as far as you can maintain the abdominal connection, neutral spine"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to keep the abdominals flat and scooped"***
- "Maintain a neutral spine with the tailbone down, keeping the pelvis still on the mat"***
- "Keep the elbows wide, shoulder blades down and back, head relaxed into the hands"***
- "Use your breath out to tighten the Obliques to curl up and rotate the body"
- "Chin tucked in and eyes looking to the side of the room just past the knees"
- "Keep the extending leg in line with the hip, don't let the ball roll in or out to the side"
- "Keep the kneecaps pointing straight up toward the ceiling and the legs hip distance apart"
- "Only bring the leg back to tabletop position, not closer to the chest"
- "Really extend the leg out straight, reaching through your toes"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't roll the ball out as far"
- "You can rest your head and shoulders down on the mat and rest between each repetition"

To Make it Harder

- "Roll the ball out further"
- "Don't rest the head and shoulders between each repetition"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Rotating the body the wrong way (ie. to the extended leg rather than the bent knee)
- Keeping the ball under the leg in tabletop rather than rolling the ball out
- Losing the T-Zone, Obliques and neutral spine
- Using the arms and the neck to pull up with rather than the abdominals
- Hunching the shoulders, sticking the chin out
- Not keeping the elbows wide
- Bringing the knees in too close toward the chest
- Not keeping the kneecaps pointing straight up toward the ceiling (legs abducting or rotating)
- Kicking the legs out to the side rather than keeping them hip distance apart or rolling the knees inward as the leg extends
- Twisting or rotating the pelvis
- Laterally flexing the spine instead of pure rotation
- Posteriorly tilting the pelvis and lifting the tailbone
- Not pointing and reaching through the toes – flexing the foot rather than pointing can engage the Quadriceps too much (which can tilt the pelvis and arch the back), pointing the toes assists correct activation of the Iliacus

Encourage and Inspire

- "Fabulous! Keep it up!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, rotate toward the lifted knee and roll the ball away"
- "INHALE, back to centre and swap the feet"
- "EXHALE, rotate and roll the ball away"
- "INHALE, return"

Ending the Exercise

- "… come back into tabletop position, and rest back down"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Bicycle Legs + Ball, Oblique Curl 2 (Tabletop)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up and rotate the body (thoracic flexion and rotation), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine neutral, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors to move the legs into tabletop position (hip flexion) and to lower the legs (eccentrically controlling hip extension)
- Quadriceps to straighten the knee (knee extension)
- Hamstrings to prevent the ball from rolling away (eccentrically controlling knee extension) and draw it back in (knee flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Iliacus to stop the hips from clicking

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check T-Zone and Oblique activation, neutral spine
- Try with an imprinted spine position and see if it feels more comfortable
- Do not roll the ball out as far
- Ensure that the ball is the correct size for the individual
- Rest the head and shoulders down onto the mat after each repetition to reset the T-Zone
- Perform Bicycle Legs + Ball or Oblique Curl + Ball instead

Hip Pain, Hip Clicking or Hip Flexor Cramps

- The ball should help with hip pain and clicking as it takes the weight of the extending leg
- Check the T-Zone and Obliques and ensure that the pelvis is staying still on the mat
- Cue the client to use more Iliacus – drawing the thigh bone into the hip socket, think of using the inner thigh rather than the outer thigh to extend the leg and reaching through the toes
- Ensure that the legs stay hip distance apart rather than abducting further apart, kneecaps pointing toward the ceiling (don't let the knees roll in)

Upper Back Pain

- There is a lot of rotation and flexion through the thoracic spine with this exercise so if it is a stretch pain that is okay, if it is a bad pain then decrease the range of motion
- Check the T-Zone and Oblique activation and ribcage positioning
- If pain persists, discontinue until stronger and more flexible, or go back to Bicycle Legs + Ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Cue to use the abdominals more to curl the body up rather than using the neck or arms
- Ensure that the shoulder blades are down and back and the elbows are wide
- Ensure that the head is relaxed into the hands and the hands are not pulling on the head
- Ensure that the chin is not tucked in too far or poking out and the eyes are on the knees
- Try the modification with the arms by the side instead of behind the head
- For clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down

Shoulder Pain

- Do not take the elbows as wide, keep the shoulders down and back
- Try placing the arms across the chest rather than behind the head
- Try the modification with the with the alternate arm position below

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl the body up and rotate one shoulder toward the opposite hip, one hand reaching between the thighs"



"INHALE, return the fingers to the ceiling, resting the head and shoulders back down"



Knee Pain

- Clients can feel pain or clicking in their knee if it is unstable or they have Patellofemoral tracking problems
- Keep the kneecaps pointing up toward the ceiling
- Cue clients to activate the VMO (drawing the kneecap upward and inward as the leg extends)
- If the pain occurs through a certain part of the movement then restrict the movement to the pain-free range (ie. not fully extending the leg or not bending it back in all the way)

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- A great exercise to do after Bicycle Legs + Ball and Oblique Curl + Ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- This exercise is harder to coordinate than the matwork version and requires more stability, however the version on the ball is easier on the abdominals and Hip Flexors
- If a client is having trouble with the coordination, you can perform all reps on one side first then repeat on the other side
- Clients with a Lordosis will find it easier than Criss Cross on the mat as the extending leg is not as low, making it easier for the Obliques and the abdominals to engage and prevent the lower back from arching
- A great addition to group classes where there are some clients who are unable to hold tabletop position for long periods or who have difficulty extending their legs – you can simply add the ball for those clients and everyone in the class can perform the same exercise

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #2: Oblique Lines
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Ball Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
- Ball Positioning #3: Guiding Ball Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pendulum + Ball

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to Pendulum on the mat as it is performed in a neutral spine position. This is because the feet are supported on the ball.

It also differs in that the legs are hip distance apart rather than together. This helps prevent the ball from popping out as the legs go over to the side.

As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Name of Exercise

"Pendulum with the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominals, especially the sides of the waist"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, Calves on the ball, hip distance apart, knees over hips. Arms out to the sides with the palms facing up, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral Spine, T-Zone tight."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, slowly lower the legs over to the side rolling the ball and rotating the spine, one hip lifts off the floor slightly"



"EXHALE, draw the legs back to the centre"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"INHALE, slowly lower the legs over to the other side, rolling the ball"



"EXHALE, return the legs back to the centre"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, alternating sides and…"

Concentration Points

- "Only go over as far as can be controlled – it is not about how far you go it is about using the abdominals and keeping control"***
- "Use the abdominals/Obliques to control the movement in both directions – to control the legs going over to the side and to draw the legs back to centre"***
- "Keep the shoulders relaxed – one hip will lift off the floor, shoulders stay on the mat" ***
- "Really use the breath out to tighten the abdominals and draw the legs back to centre"***
- "Maintain a neutral spinal position throughout, T-Zone on, tailbone down"***
- "Move the ball, legs and pelvis as one unit as you go over to the side and back again"***
- "Make sure that the thighs are vertical and not falling away from the body/toward the floor – keep the knees in line with the hips"***
- "Keep even length through both sides of the waist, try not to hitch one hip up"
- "Even though your spine is rotating, make sure that you keep your ribs towards your hips so that the back doesn't arch, keeping your spine neutral"
- "If you go over to the side and the lower back arches and you see your ribs flaring out then you've gone too far"
- "Try not to push through your arms, keep your palms up"
- "Keep the knees above the hips, try not to let the ball roll away or come in toward the chest"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't go over as far, use a smaller range of movement"
- "Support more of the Calves on the ball"

To Make it Harder

- "Lower the legs further over to the side, rolling the ball further"
- "Have only the edge of the heels on the ball"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Laterally flexing the spine rather than a pure rotation, hitching one hip up toward the ribcage and twisting the hips
- Arching the lower back and flaring the ribs – ball rolling away or going too far over to the side
- Lifting the tailbone off the mat/posteriorly tilting the pelvis – knees too close to the chest
- Legs dropping away from the vertical or the knees opening wider that hip width
- Losing the T-Zone and the stomach bulging out
- Gripping with and using the back muscles or leg muscles (Hip Flexors) to bring the legs back to the centre (rather than using the abdominals)
- Pushing through the arms and tensing the neck and shoulders – keep the palms up
- Losing contact with both shoulders on the floor
- Making the range of movement too large and not controlling the movement

Encourage and Inspire

- "Brilliant!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, take the legs over to the side"
- "EXHALE, return the legs to centre"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Oblique Curl + Ball
- No lumbar disc injuries

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to control lowering the knees to the side and to draw them back again (lumbar and thoracic spine rotation) and prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Accessory Muscles

- Hip Flexors and Adductors to hold the legs up in tabletop position (hip flexion and adduction)
- Hamstrings to prevent the ball from rolling away (knee flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the spine, drawing the abdominals flat and prevent one hip from hitching
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Joint Mobility

- Increases thoracic and lumbar spine rotation range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Check T-Zone and Oblique activation and neutral spine position
- Decrease the range of movement
- Try using an imprinted spine and see if it feels more comfortable
- Avoid for anyone who has any disc issues and be very careful with anyone who has back pain

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Ensure that the head and neck are relaxed on the mat
- Ensure that the shoulder blades are down and back and the chin is tucked in
- Cue clients to keep the palms facing up and not to push through the arms
- Decrease the range of movement so that clients do not have to push through the arms or strain the neck to control the rotation

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)

Programming Advice

- This exercise works well in group classes as you can cater for different levels (Pendulum + Ball, Pendulum + Circle as well as the matwork variations)
- This exercise is much easier than the version on the mat as the ball helps to support the legs
- The ball helps to prevent the hips from twisting or hitching because it forces the legs, hips and pelvis to move as one unit
- A good option for Lordotic clients who find it difficult to stop the back arching in Pendulum 1 (Tabletop) on the mat
- A great exercise for anyone with neck pain as you can keep the head down

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #2: Oblique Lines
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Ball Positioning #2: Tabletop Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pendulum 1 (Tabletop) + Circle

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Name of Exercise

"Pendulum in Tabletop with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominals, sides of the waist and the inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back, spine imprinted, legs in tabletop position. Place the circle horizontally between the inner thighs, just above the knees. Arms out to the sides with the palms facing up, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. T-Zone tight, squeeze the circle slightly."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, slowly lower the legs over to the side rotating the spine, one hip lifts off the floor slightly"



"EXHALE, draw the legs back to the centre"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"INHALE, slowly lower the legs over to the other side"



"EXHALE, return the legs back to the centre"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, alternating sides and…"

Concentration Points

- "Only go over as far as can be controlled – it is not about how far you go it is about using the abdominals and keeping control"***
- "Use the abdominals/Obliques to control the movement in both directions – to control the legs going over to the side and to draw the legs back to centre"***
- "Keep the shoulders relaxed – one hip will lift off the floor, shoulders stay on the mat" ***
- "Really use the breath out to tighten the abdominals and draw the legs back to centre"***
- "Maintain an imprinted spinal position throughout, T-Zone tight, tailbone down"***
- "Squeeze the knees together, keeping even pressure on the circle – shins parallel to the ground and parallel to each other"***
- "Make sure that the thighs are vertical and not falling away from the body/toward the floor – keep the knees in line with the hips"***
- "Even though your spine is rotating, make sure that you keep your ribs towards your hips so that the back doesn't arch, keeping your spine imprinted"
- "Keep even length through both sides of the waist, try not to hitch one hip up"
- "When rotating to the side if the lower back arches the ribs flare out, you've gone too far"
- "Try not to push through your arms, keep your palms up"
- "Move the pelvis and legs together as one unit"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't go over as far, use a smaller range of movement"
- "Don't squeeze in as hard on the circle"

To Make it Harder

- "Lower the legs further over to the side"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Squeeze the circle harder"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Legs dropping away from the vertical – either too close to the chest or too far away
- Internally or externally rotating the hips when squeezing the circle – focus on drawing the knees together rather than the feet (ie. pure hip adduction)
- Arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Lifting the tailbone off the mat/posteriorly tilting the pelvis – knees too close to the chest
- Losing T-Zone and the stomach bulging out
- Gripping with and using the back muscles or leg muscles (Hip Flexors) to bring the legs back to the centre (rather than using the abdominals)
- Pushing through the arms and tensing the neck and shoulders – keep the palms up
- Laterally flexing the spine rather than pure rotation – hitching one hip up and twisting the hips
- Losing contact with both shoulders on the floor
- Making the range of movement too large and not controlling the movement
- Not squeezing the circle evenly with both legs
- Not keeping the circle horizontal between the thighs

Encourage and Inspire

- "Fantastic!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, take the legs over to the side"
- "EXHALE, return the legs to centre"

Ending the Exercise

- "… remove the circle and lower the legs one at a time back to the mat and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Inner Thigh Squeeze + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Pendulum 1 (Tabletop)
- No lumbar disc injuries

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques control lowering the knees to the side and drawing them back (lumbar and thoracic spine rotation), prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs flaring
- Adductors to squeeze the circle (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Hip Flexors and Adductors to hold the legs up in tabletop position (hip flexion and adduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the spine, drawing the abdominals flat and prevent one hip from hitching
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Joint Mobility

- Increases thoracic and lumbar spine rotation range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain or Hip Flexor Cramps

- If a client has a weak T-Zone or Iliacus, the dominant Hip Flexors (usually TFL) will be overused
- Some clients find it easier with the circle as it uses the inner thighs more and switches off the lateral Hip Flexors which tend to cramp, but other clients will find it harder with the circle
- Cue the client to use Iliacus and Adductors to hold the legs up – cue the inner thighs to squeeze the circle, cue Iliacus activation by drawing the thigh bone into the hip socket
- Remove the circle and place a cushion between the thighs instead, squeezing on the cushion
- If this does not help try the modification with the feet on the ball

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Take care as the Adductors work strongly, this creates tension in the Pubic Symphysis joint
- There should be no Pubic Bone or Adductor pain with this exercise
- Check the T-Zone activation
- Ensure that both legs are working evenly
- Cue the client not to squeeze the circle as hard, instead focus on keeping T-Zone activated
- If the circle is too hard, try squeezing a cushion or a rolled towel instead
- If pain persists, remove the circle or stick to Pendulum + Ball

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the head and neck are relaxed on the mat
- Ensure that the shoulder blades are down and back and the chin is tucked in
- Cue clients to keep the palms facing up and not to push through the arms

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Decrease the range of movement so that clients do not have to push through the arms or strain the neck to control the rotation

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Check T-Zone and Oblique activation and imprint position
- Decrease the range of movement
- Try using a neutral spine and see if it feels more comfortable
- Try squeezing a cushion between knees instead of the circle or drawing the knees closer to the chest (keeping the tailbone down)
- Perform with the feet on the ball instead of in tabletop position (this is much easier)
- Avoid for anyone who has any disc issues and be very careful with anyone who has back pain

"INHALE, take the legs over to the side"



"EXHALE, return the legs to centre"



Programming Advice

- This exercise is more difficult than Pendulum 1 (Tabletop) on the mat as there is the added work on the Adductors to squeeze the circle
- Squeezing the circle can be helpful for clients who find they get Hip Flexor cramping or tightness as squeezing the circle engages the Adductors and Iliacus which helps to switch off the Hip Flexors
- Good for group classes as you can cater for different levels (Pendulum + Ball, Pendulum + Circle as well as the matwork variations)
- A great exercise for anyone with neck pain as you can keep the head down

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #2: Oblique Lines
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to Nutcracker 1 (Tabletop) on the mat as it is performed in a neutral spine position. This is because the feet are supported on the ball.

Name of Exercise

"Nutcracker with the Legs on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet on top of the ball, legs squeezed together, knees over hips. Arms straight up toward the ceiling with the hands together, one hand behind the other. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, open the knees, draw the ribs toward the hips, lifting the head and shoulders and reach between the legs"



"INHALE, return to the start position, hands toward the ceiling, knees together"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone tight, abdominals flat and scooped"***
- "Maintain a neutral spine, keep the tailbone down"***
- "Keep your feet together as you open your knees"***
- "Only open your knees to about shoulder width apart"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight, especially as the legs open"***
- "Keep the thighs vertical, don't let the ball roll away from you"***
- "Draw the ribs to the hips and use the abdominals to curl the body up"
- "Really reach through the legs with the hands"
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the ball"

To Make it Easier

- "Keep your head down on the mat"

To Make it Harder

- "Curl up higher and really reach through your fingers"
- "Add in some pulses"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Opening the legs too wide (losing the T-Zone and bulging through the abdominals)
- Hunching the shoulders and poking the chin out
- Losing the Obliques and arching the lower back
- Letting the ball roll in, bringing the legs too close to the chest and lifting the tailbone
- Letting the ball roll away so that the knees straighten/move away from the body

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking good team!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, curl up and reach through the knees"
- "INHALE, rest back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest back down"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Abdominal Curl + Ball

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine neutral, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors to hold the legs up in tabletop position (hip flexion)
- Adductors to squeeze the legs together (hip adduction)
- Hamstrings to maintain tabletop position and prevent the ball from rolling away (knee flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone and neutral spine
- Ensure that the ball is the correct size for the individual
- Ensure that the legs are in tabletop position and that the ball has not rolled away
- Try bringing the knees slightly closer to the chest, without lifting the tailbone
- Keep the head down
- Cue clients not to open the knees as wide
- Try with an imprinted spine and see if it feels more comfortable, otherwise discontinue the exercise until the abdominals are stronger

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Initiate the movement by activating the abdominals/ribs to hips, not by lifting the head
- Ensure that clients keep the shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked and eyes on the ball
- Ensure that the chin isn't tucked in too far
- If pain persists, keep the head down on a cushion with the chin tucked in
- For clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down and focus on drawing the ribs towards the hips as you reach through the legs

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- This exercise is easier than Nutcracker 1 (Tabletop) on the mat as the ball gives the legs more support which can take load off the Hip Flexors, make it easier to activate the Obliques and prevent the lower back from arching
- Useful in a class setting to use a ball to assist any client who is struggling to hold tabletop position – enabling them to continue performing the same exercise with the rest of the group
- A good exercise for a group class as there are many variations, some clients can progress to the harder variation Nutcracker 2 (Ball in Hands) + Ball whilst others can perform the matwork variations, Nutcracker 1 (Tabletop) and Nutcracker 2 (Legs Extended)
- A great exercise to team up with Abdominal Curl + Ball and Oblique Curl + Ball
- Can be done just before Nutcracker 2 (Ball in Hands) + Ball as a preparation

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement
- Arm Positioning #2: Reaching Through the Fingers
- Ball Positioning #2: Tabletop Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Nutcracker 2 (Ball in Hands) + Ball

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Nutcracker with the Ball in the Hands"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"



Set Up

"Lying on the back holding onto the ball with the arms up toward the ceiling, above the chest. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Spine imprinted, take the legs into tabletop position, knees squeezed together."

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl up, open the legs out and extend them into a 'V' shape, reaching the ball between the legs"



"INHALE, bend the knees back to tabletop position, lower the upper body and take the hands toward the ceiling"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Curl up and really reach the ball through the legs"***
- "Reach through your toes as you extend the legs"***
- "Just open the legs wide enough to fit the ball through"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight, especially as the legs open"***
- "Keep the spine imprinted and the tailbone down"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the knees"***
- "Keep the elbows straight and unlocked, really reaching through the legs"
- "Think of drawing the hip bones toward each other as the legs open"
- "Ribs to the hips/use the abdominals to curl the body up"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't open the legs as wide"
- "Don't curl up as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Curl up higher and really reach through the legs"
- "Open the legs wider"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Opening the legs too wide, losing the T-Zone and bulging through the abdominals
- Arching the lower back
- Hunching the shoulders and poking the chin out
- Bringing the legs too close to the chest and lifting the tailbone, especially when extending
- Taking the arms too far back over the head, the hands should start over the chest
- Not straightening the knees fully
- Not pointing and reaching through the toes - flexing rather than pointing engages the Quadriceps (tilting the pelvis and arching the back), pointing assists with Iliacus activation
- Locking the elbows or bending the elbows too much

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking great team!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, curl up and reach through the legs, straightening the knees"
- "INHALE, bend the knees and rest back down"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… come back into tabletop position and rest back down"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine imprinted, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring

Accessory Muscles

- Deltoids, Latissimus Dorsi and Pectoralis Major to hold the ball and raise and lower the arms
- Triceps to hold the arms straight (isometric elbow extension)
- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors to hold the legs up in the air (hip flexion)
- Adductors to squeeze the legs together (hip adduction)
- Quadriceps to straighten the legs (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone and imprinted spine
- Try bringing the knees slightly closer to the chest, without lifting the tailbone
- Keep the head down
- Perform without the ball in the hands or try Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball
- Try with a neutral spine and see if it feels more comfortable, otherwise discontinue the exercise until the abdominals are stronger

Tight Hamstrings

- The client may not be able to fully straighten their knees if the Hamstrings are tight
- Try extending the legs lower – but only if strong enough to do this without arching the back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Alternatively, keep the knees slightly bent

Pubic Bone Pain

- Do not open the legs as wide
- Try Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball or perform the variation on the mat
- Try performing the exercise with the circle in the hands instead



"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl up and reach the circle through the knees"



"INHALE, rest back down, fingers to the ceiling"

Shoulder Pain

- Try with a smaller ball or with the circle in the hands
- If pain persists, perform the variation on the mat instead

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Initiate the movement by activating the abdominals/ribs to hips, not by lifting the head
- Ensure that clients keep the shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked and eyes on the ball
- Ensure that the chin isn't tucked in too far
- If the ball is too heavy, try using a smaller ball or a circle instead
- If pain persists, keep the head down on a cushion with the chin tucked in
- For clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down

Pregnancy

- Avoid during pregnancy as it is quite intense on the abdominals

Programming Advice

- Using the ball increases the load on the abdominals to curl the body up – ensure that the weight of the ball is not too heavy and causing tension in the neck or shoulders
- Perform the exercise with a smaller ball or circle to decrease the resistance
- Less flexible clients who cannot open the legs wide will need to use a smaller ball or circle
- Perform after Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball or Nutcracker 2 (Legs Extended) on the mat
- Great for a group class as some clients can perform the easier variations Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Bal) + Ball or Nutcracker 1 (Tabletop) or Nutcracker 2 (Legs Extended) on the mat

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Leg Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement
- Arm Positioning #2: Reaching Through the Fingers

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hundreds + Ball

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to Hundreds on the mat as it is performed in a neutral spine position as the feet are supported on the ball.

This exercise works best when the edge of the heel is placed on the inner edge of the ball. This allows space for the ball to roll out underneath the leg for Hundreds Level 3.

For clients performing Hundreds Level 2, about halfway through the exercise, cue them to swap to extend the other leg.

Note the additional demonstration section below. We recommend that you perform a demonstration before cueing all exercises.

Name of Exercise

"Hundreds with the Legs on the Ball"

What and/Where it Works

"This works the abdominal muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Demonstration

Cue the following while demonstrating each level –

"There are 3 levels for Hundreds with the Ball: Level 1 - heels on the ball in tabletop position with the knees squeezed together; Level 2 - one leg in tabletop position with the heel on the ball and the other leg extended straight up toward the ceiling, toes pointed; Level 3 - roll the ball out, straightening the knees, feet flexed and turned out with the Calves resting on the ball. You'll be curled up and holding this position while beating the arms one hundred times. If your neck gets tired, place your hand behind the head or rest the head on the mat."

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, heels on top of the ball, squeezed together, knees over hips. Hands on the knees, shoulder blades down and back and chin tucked in. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl the body up first, reach the hands down past the hips, then take your legs into level 1, 2 or 3. Hold this position and pulse the arms up and down"

"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
"EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"



Level 1 (Tabletop)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



Level 2 (Vertical Leg)



Level 3 (Legs Lowered to 45 Degrees)

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "When you INHALE, flatten your T-Zone"***
- "When you EXHALE, draw the ribs to hips, curling up a little bit further"***
- "Keep the spine neutral, tailbone down"***
- "Eyes on the knees, chin tucked in, shoulder blades down and back"***
- "Keep the pelvis and the ball still, don't let the ball roll side to side or in or out"***
- "Keep the knees squeezed together"***
- "Curl up higher and reach through the fingers, keep the arms straight as you pulse them"***
- "For Level 2, point the toes of the extended leg"
- "For Level 3, flex the feet and squeeze the heels together"

To Make it Easier

- "If the neck gets tired place one hand behind your head, or the head on the mat"
- "Drop back to an easier level or take a rest then come back up again"

To Make it Harder

- "Curl up higher and really reach through the fingers, squeeze the legs together"
- "Choose a harder level"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the T-Zone and letting the stomach bulge out
- Using the neck to pull up with rather than the abdominals
- Hunching the shoulders, poking the chin out
- Not curling the upper body up high enough (then the neck strains)
- Bringing the legs too close toward the chest, rounding the lower back or lifting the tailbone
- Letting the ball roll out too far and letting the lower back arch
- Letting the ball move side to side and rocking the pelvis

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Separating the legs (the knees should stay squeezing together)
- In Hundreds Level 2, not pointing the toes – pointing rather than flexing in this position activates the Iliacus muscles and switches off the Quadriceps
- In Hundreds Level 3, not turning the feet out and flexing them – turning the feet out and flexing them helps to activate the Adductors, switching off the Quadriceps
- Bending and straightening the elbows rather than keeping the arms straight when pulsing

Encourage and Inspire

- "Keep going, 2 breaths to go, doing really well!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
- "EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"

Ending the Exercise

- "… come back into tabletop position, and rest back down"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Tip:

Demonstration

In your demonstration, you need to show and say the following -

- Curling the body up and demonstrating the 3 levels
    1. **Bent knees** (keep both legs in tabletop position on the ball, squeezed together)
    2. **One leg extended straight** (up to ceiling, knee straight, toes pointed, other leg in tabletop position on the ball)
    3. **Legs straight, turned out and heels resting on the ball** (legs externally rotated, squeezed together and extended as far possible with the Calves resting on the ball, keeping the spine neutral and feet flexed)
- You'll be holding this position while beating the arms one hundred times
- If your neck gets tired, place your hand behind the head or the head on the mat

Cueing

One hundred beats (or 10 breaths) should take approximately one minute to complete. Here is an example of how to cue this exercise for 10 breaths.

Name of Exercise		Hundreds with the Ball
Where it Works		"This works the abdominals"
Set Up		"Lying on the back with the knees bent, heels on top of the ball, squeezed together, knees over hips. Hands around the knees, shoulder blades down and back and chin tucked in. Neutral spine."
Breathing and Movement	Initial Breath Into Level 1, 2 or 3	"INHALE, T-Zone EXHALE, curl the ribs to the hips lifting the head and shoulders, reach the hands down past the hips and take your legs into level 1, 2 or 3. Hold this position and pulse the arms up and down"
	Breath 1	"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5" EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
	Breath 2	"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5" "EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
	Breath 3	"INHALE, T-Zone" "EXHALE, ribs to hips"
	Breath 4	"INHALE, flatten the T-Zone" "EXHALE, really curl up"
Permission to Continue + Concentration Points	Breath 5	"Keep going… if you are doing Level 2, swap the legs over now"
	Breath 6	"Eyes on the knees, chin tucked in, shoulder blades down and back"
To Make it Easier	Breath 7	"If the neck gets tired place one hand behind your head, or the head on the mat"
To Make it Harder	Breath 8	"Really reach through the fingers, squeeze the legs together"
Encourage and Inspire	Breath 9	"Keep going, 2 breaths to go, doing really well"
Remind and Recycle	Breath 10	"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5" "EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5 and back into tabletop position, head down and hands on the knees to rest."

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Abdominal Curl + Ball (for Level 1), Lift Foot + Ball (for Level 2), Leg Slides + Ball (for Level 3)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine neutral, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors and Adductors to hold the legs up in the air and squeeze the legs together (hip flexion and adduction)
- Quadriceps to straighten the knees (knee extension)
- Hamstrings to prevent the ball from rolling away (isometric knee flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone and neutral spine, ribs to hips and tailbone down
- Ensure that the ball is the correct size for the individual
- Keep the knees bent in tabletop position (Level 1) and bring them closer to the chest (but not so far that the tailbone lifts)
- Keep the head down on the mat
- Some clients may become tired after X amount of pulses and begin to feel it in their back or lose technique - if this is this case, rest and perform another set later (some clients cannot perform 100 pulses in a row but can do 4 sets of 25 or 2 sets of 50 and hold it quite well)
- Try with an imprinted spine to see if it feels more comfortable, otherwise discontinue the exercise until the abdominals are stronger

Hip Pain, Hip Clicking or Hip Flexor Cramps

- The ball should help to prevent Hip Flexor pain and cramps
- Cue clients to tighten the T-Zone and abdominals more
- Ensure that the legs are squeezed together
- Try placing a cushion between the knees to activate the Iliacus

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Choose an easier modification and draw the legs closer to the chest (don't lift the tailbone)

Tight Hamstrings

- Limits the amount of hip flexion available when the legs are straight
- In level 2, try bending the knee slightly, but keep the knees squeezed together
- Stretch the Hamstrings prior to this exercise

Sciatica

- Avoid Level 2 and Level 3 as these involve a neural tension position

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Cue clients to use the abdominals more and curl the body up higher – takes strain off the neck
- Cue to keep the chin tucked in, eyes on the knees, shoulder blades down and back
- Ensure that the chin is not tucked in too far
- If the neck is still sore, cue the client to place one or both hands behind the head to support the neck or place the head down on the mat or a cushion
- For clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- Using the ball for Hundreds makes it easier as the ball supports the legs
- This exercise is a great way for clients who have difficulty holding their legs up or who tend to arch their lower back to still be able to perform Hundreds
- Hundreds is a staple Pilates exercise that you should include in most of your classes
- A great exercise for neck pain as clients can keep their head down
- Perform after other exercises with the legs supported on the ball as it flows on nicely
- Perfect for group classes as there are several different levels
- A good exercise for less coordinated or new clients as it is intense but easy to perform
- You can start off not performing the full 100 pulses and work up to 100
- Ensure that for Level 2, you cue to swap the legs over halfway through the exercise

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Leg Positioning #1: Squeeze the Legs Together
- Arm Positioning #2: Reaching Through the Fingers
- Ball Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
- Ball Positioning #3: Guiding Ball Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hundreds Preparation + Circle

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: For any exercise where you are curling the body up and extending the legs, always cue to curl the body up prior to moving the legs. It will be a simultaneous movement, but the upper body should initiate the movement.

Name of Exercise

"Hundreds Preparation with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominals and inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the legs in tabletop position. Place the circle vertically between the shins, just above the ankles, spine imprinted. Arms straight up toward the ceiling, palms facing the knees, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl the body up, hands past the hips, extend the legs toward the ceiling, toes pointed, squeezing the circle"



"INHALE, return the head and shoulders to the floor, arms to the ceiling, knees in tabletop"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "T-Zone tight, maintain an imprinted spine"***
- "Reach through the fingers"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, eyes on the knees, chin tucked in"***
- "Keep the pelvis still on the mat, tailbone down"***
- "Squeeze the circle, straighten the knees and really point and reach through the toes"***
- "Use the breath out to activate the abdominals to curl up"

To Make it Easier

- "Keep the head down on the mat or cushion or place one hand behind your head if your neck gets tired"

To Make it Harder

- "Curl the body up higher and squeeze the circle harder to feel it working more"
- "Extend the legs closer toward the floor"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the T-Zone and the abdominals bulging out, lower back arching and the ribs flaring
- Hunching the shoulders, sticking the chin out
- Bringing the legs too close toward the chest and lifting the tailbone
- Extending the legs too low and arching the lower back
- Incorrect coordination of the arms and legs
- Not keeping the legs parallel
- Not squeezing the circle, not reaching through the toes and not fully straightening the legs
- Not having the circle even between the legs, and not squeezing equally with both legs

Encourage and Inspire

- "Best technique I've seen all day!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, curl up, hands past the hips, extend the legs"
- "INHALE, rest back down, knees in tabletop, fingers to the ceiling"

Ending the Exercise

- "… come back into tabletop position, and rest back down"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Hundreds Preparation

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine imprinted, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring
- Adductors to squeeze the circle (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors to hold the legs up in the air (hip flexion)
- Quadriceps to straighten the knees (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone and Oblique activation and imprint, tailbone down
- Bring the legs slightly closer to the chest (but keep the tailbone down)
- Bend the knees slightly, especially if the Hamstrings are tight
- Try with a neutral spine if more comfortable, if not, cease until the abdominals are stronger

Hip Pain or Hip Flexor Cramps

- Some clients find it easier with the circle as it uses the inner thighs more and switches off the lateral Hip Flexors which tend to cramp, other clients will find it harder with the circle
- Tighten the T-Zone and abdominals more
- Try turning the feet out and flexing them (like in Hundreds Level 3 position) as this helps to activate the Adductors and Iliacus
- Cue clients to squeeze the legs harder to activate the Iliacus and Adductors
- Try drawing the legs closer to the chest (but don't lift the tailbone)
- Remove the circle to see if this helps, if pain persists, discontinue the exercise

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Sciatica

- Be careful with or avoid this exercise as it involves a neural tension position

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Take care as the Adductors work strongly and this creates tension in the Pubic Symphysis joint
- There should be no Pubic Bone or Adductor pain with this exercise
- Check the T-Zone activation, both legs are working evenly and the pelvis is still
- Cue clients not to squeeze as hard on the circle, instead focus on keeping the T-Zone activated
- If the circle is too hard, try squeezing a cushion or a rolled towel instead
- If pain persists, remove the circle

Tight Hamstrings

- The client may not be able to fully straighten their knees
- Try extending the legs lower but only if strong enough to do this without arching the back
- Alternatively, keep the knees slightly bent

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Cue clients to use the abdominals to curl up higher and reach through the fingers
- Shoulders down and back, eyes on the knees, chin tucked in (but not too far)
- Clients can place one hand behind the head to support the neck
- If pain persists or for clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down on the mat or cushion

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- Always cue to lift the body before you cue to extend the legs
- Good option for clients with a Lordosis as it is easier to keep the spine imprinted than exercises with the legs lowering away from the body
- In a group, most clients can perform Hundreds Preparation on the mat, some can perform Hundreds Preparation + Circle to challenge or Hundreds Preparation + Band to make it easier
- A good exercise to perform as a precursor for Hundreds + Circle
- Keep in mind that exercises with the circle are quite tough on the inner thighs, so try not to program too many circle exercises in a row without giving the inner thighs a break in between

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement
- Arm Positioning #2: Reaching Through the Fingers
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hundreds Preparation + Band

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: For any exercise where you are curling the body up and extending the legs, always cue to curl the body up prior to moving the legs. It will be a simultaneous movement, but the upper body should initiate the movement.

This exercise differs to the matwork variation in that the arms don't straighten and reach down past the hips, instead the elbows stay bent and the hands stay in front of the body. It also differs in that the feet are relaxed rather than the toes being pointed.

Name of Exercise

"Hundreds Preparation with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominals"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back, legs in tabletop position. Place the band around the arches of the feet, one at a time, feet relaxed. Squeeze the legs together, spine imprinted. Hold the band so that the elbows are bent to 90 degrees, tucked in by the waist, just off the floor. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl the body up,
extend the legs toward the ceiling"



"INHALE, return the head and shoulders
to the floor, knees in tabletop"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "T-Zone tight, maintain an imprinted spine"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, eyes on the knees, chin tucked in"***
- "Keep the pelvis still on the mat, tailbone down"***
- "Keep the legs squeezed together and really straighten the knees"***
- "Use the breath out to activate the abdominals to curl up"
- "Keep the band open flat, around the arches of the feet with the feet relaxed"
- "Try not to move the arms, keep the elbows tucked in by the waist just off the floor"

To Make it Easier

- "Keep the head down on the mat or cushion or place one hand behind your head if your neck gets tired"

To Make it Harder

- "Curl the body up higher and squeeze the legs harder to feel it working more"
- "Extend the legs closer toward the floor"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the T-Zone and the abdominals bulging out, lower back arching and the ribs flaring
- Hunching the shoulders, sticking the chin out
- Bringing the legs too close toward the chest and lifting the tailbone
- Extending the legs too low and arching the lower back
- Incorrect coordination of the arms and legs
- Separating the knees and not fully straightening the legs
- Not keeping the feet relaxed - flexing the feet too much can engage the Quadriceps too much (which can tilt the pelvis and arch the back)
- Moving the arms or pulling too hard on the band and tensing the neck and shoulders

Encourage and Inspire

- "Superb technique everyone!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, curl up, extend the legs"
- "INHALE, rest back down, knees in tabletop"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… come back into tabletop position, and rest back down"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine imprinted, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors and Adductors to hold the legs up in the air and squeeze the legs together (hip flexion and adduction)
- Quadriceps to straighten the knees (knee extension)
- Biceps to hold onto the band and support the legs (isometric elbow flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone Oblique activation and imprint, tailbone down
- Bring the legs slightly closer to the chest (but keep the tailbone down)
- Bend the knees slightly, especially if the Hamstrings are tight
- Try with a neutral spine and see if it feels more comfortable, otherwise discontinue the exercise until the abdominals are stronger

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Cue clients to use the abdominals to curl up higher and reach through the fingers
- Ensure that the band isn't too tight or it makes the exercise very hard on the arms and can place strain on the neck
- Shoulders down and back, eyes on the knees, chin tucked in (but not too far)
- Clients can place one hand behind the head to support the neck

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- If pain persists, keep the head down on the mat or cushion
- For clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down

Sciatica

- Be careful with or avoid this exercise as it involves a neural tension position

Tight Hamstrings

- The client may not be able to fully straighten their knees
- Try extending the legs lower but only if strong enough to do this without arching the back
- Alternatively, keep the knees slightly bent

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- Using the band makes this exercise easier as the legs are more supported, making it easier to hold them up and to not arch the lower back
- If someone in the class is struggling to perform the matwork variation of Hundreds Preparation, you can give them this exercise as an easier modification
- A great exercise for clients with a Lordosis as it is relatively easy to keep the spine imprinted
- Holding the band tighter makes this exercise easier as it gives the legs more support but it makes it harder on the arms
- A good exercise to perform as a precursor for Hundreds + Band
- A great exercise to do in a group as the majority of clients can perform Hundreds Preparation on the mat and to challenge, some clients can perform Hundreds Preparation + Circle or to make it easier Hundreds Preparation + Band
- The ideal foot position is relaxed, slightly pointed – if the foot is too pointed the calf can cramp and the band can slide off, if the foot is too flexed the leg will be in a neural tension position and the Quadriceps will overwork

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #3: From the Front of the Shoulder
- Leg Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hundreds + Band

Intensity=2-3 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Note the additional demonstration section below. While we recommend that you perform a demonstration before cueing all exercises, the demonstration for Hundreds is very specific as it needs to include all 3 levels and some safety points. As such, we have included an additional Demonstration section for this exercise.

Name of Exercise

"Hundreds with the Band"

What and/Where it Works

"This works the abdominals and the arms"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

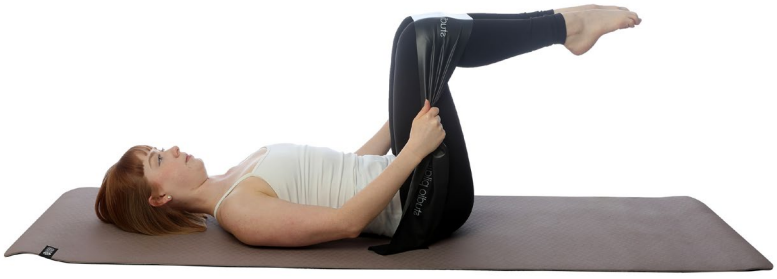
Demonstration

Cue the following while demonstrating each level –

"There are 3 levels in Hundreds with the Band: Level 1 is with the band over the knees and the legs in tabletop position; Level 2 is with the band over the arches of the feet and the legs extended straight up toward the ceiling; Level 3 is with the band around the arches of the feet and the legs extended and lowered to 45 degrees, with the feet turned out. You'll be curled up and holding this position while beating the arms one hundred times. Whichever level you choose, ensure that the band is secure and does not slip off. To help with this, pull the band tight and keep the arm movement small beside the hips. If your neck gets tired, place your hand behind the head or the head on the mat"

Set Up

"Lying on the back, spine imprinted, legs in tabletop position squeezed together, band either over the knees or around the arches of the feet. Hold the band and tuck the elbows in by the waist, making sure that the band is not too taut. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in."



Level 1 Set Up



Levels 2 and 3 Set Up

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl the body up first, take your legs into level 1, 2 or 3 and straighten the arms down past the hips, then. Hold this position and pulse the arms up and down"

"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
"EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"



Level 1 (Tabletop)



Level 2 (Vertical Legs)



Level 3 (Legs Lowered to 45 Degrees)

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Only perform small movements with the arms"***
- "Don't let the band go slack, keep it taut the entire time"***
- "When you INHALE, flatten your T-Zone"***
- "When you EXHALE, draw the ribs to hips, curling up a little bit further"***
- "Keep the spine imprinted, tailbone down"***
- "Eyes on the knees, chin tucked in, shoulder blades down and back"***
- "Squeeze the knees together"***
- "Curl up higher, keep the arms straight and really pull the arms down as you pulse them"***
- "For Hundreds Level 2, keep the band flat around the arches, feet relaxed, knees straight"***
- "Keep the upper body still and curled up as high as you can, don't bob up and down as you pulse the arms"

To Make it Easier

- "If the neck gets tired place the head on the mat"
- "Drop back to an easier level or take a rest then come back up again"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

To Make it Harder

- "Curl up higher and really reach through the fingers, squeeze the legs together"
- "Choose a harder level"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the T-Zone and letting the stomach bulge out
- Taking the legs too low and letting the lower back arch, losing the imprint
- Using the neck to pull up with rather than the abdominals
- Hunching the shoulders, poking the chin out
- Bringing the legs too close toward the chest and lifting the tailbone
- Not curling the upper body up high enough (then the neck strains)
- In Hundreds Level 2, not keeping the feet relaxed - flexing the feet can engage the Quadriceps too much (which can tilt the pelvis and arch the back)
- In Hundreds Level 3, not turning the feet out and flexing them – turning the feet out and flexing them helps to activate the Adductors, switching off the Quadriceps
- Bending and straightening the elbows rather than keeping the arms straight when pulsing
- Making the arm pulses too large
- Losing the band position on the legs/feet

Encourage and Inspire

- "Keep going, 2 breaths to go, doing really well!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
- "EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"

Ending the Exercise

- "… come back into tabletop position, hands on the knees and rest back down"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Tip:

Demonstration

In your demonstration, you need to show and say the following -

- Curling the body up and demonstrating the 3 levels
    1. **Bent knees** (keep the legs in tabletop with the band over the knees)
    2. **Legs extended straight** (up to ceiling, band around the arches of the feet, knees straight, squeezed together, feet relaxed)
    3. **Legs straight, turned out and lowered** (band around arches of the feet, legs externally rotated, squeezed together and lowered as far possible, spine imprinted, feet flexed)
- You'll be holding this position while beating the arms one hundred times
- If your neck gets tired, place your hand behind the head or the head on the mat

Cueing

One hundred beats (or 10 breaths) should take approximately one minute to complete. Here is an example of how to cue this exercise for 10 breaths.

Name of Exercise		Hundreds with the Band
Where it Works		"This works the abdominals and arms"
Set Up		"Lying on the back, spine imprinted, legs in tabletop position squeezed together, band either over the knees or around the arches of the feet. Hold the band and tuck the elbows in by the waist, making sure that the band is not too taut. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in."
Breathing and Movement	**Initial Breath Into Level 1, 2 or 3**	"INHALE, T-Zone" "EXHALE, curl the ribs to the hips lifting the head and shoulders, reach the hands down past the hips and take your legs into level 1, 2 or 3. Hold this position and pulse the arms up and down"
	Breath 1	"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5" "EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
	Breath 2	"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5" "EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
	Breath 3	"INHALE, T-Zone" "EXHALE, ribs to hips"
	Breath 4	"INHALE, flatten the T-Zone" "EXHALE, really curl up"
Permission to Continue + Concentration Points	**Breath 5**	"Keep going… spine imprinted, tailbone down"
	Breath 6	"Eyes on the knees, chin tucked in, shoulder blades down and back"
To Make it Easier	**Breath 7**	"If the neck gets tired place the head on the mat"
To Make it Harder	**Breath 8**	"Really stretch the band pulling the arms down, squeeze the legs together"
Encourage and Inspire	**Breath 9**	"Keep going, 2 breaths to go, doing really well"
Remind and Recycle	**Breath 10**	"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5" "EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5 and back into tabletop position, head down and hands on the knees to rest."

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Hundreds Preparation + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine imprinted, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring
- Latissimus Dorsi and Triceps to pull on the band and draw the arms down (shoulder extension) and Triceps to keep the elbows straight (isometric elbow extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors and Adductors to hold the legs up in the air and squeeze the legs together (hip flexion and adduction)
- Quadriceps to straighten the knees (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone and imprinted spine, ribs to hips
- Bring the knees/legs closer to the chest (but keep the tailbone down)
- Keep the knees bent in tabletop position
- Keep the head down on the mat
- Some clients may become tired after X amount of pulses and begin to feel it in their back or lose technique - if this is this case, rest and do another set later (some clients cannot perform 100 pulses in a row but can do 4 sets of 25 or 2 sets of 50 and hold it quite well)
- Try with a neutral spine in tabletop position to see if it feels more comfortable, otherwise discontinue the exercise until the abdominals are stronger

Hip Pain or Hip Flexor Cramps

- Cue the client to tighten the T-Zone and abdominals more
- Cue clients to squeeze the legs together to activate the Iliacus
- Choose an easier modification or draw the legs closer to the chest (but don't lift the tailbone)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Hold the band tighter to support the legs more, but do not tense the neck and shoulders

Sciatica

- Avoid Levels 2 and 3 as these involve a neural tension position

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Ensure that the band is not too tight or it becomes hard on the arms and can cause neck strain
- Cue clients to use the abdominals more and curl the body up higher – takes strain off the neck
- Keep the chin tucked in, eyes on the knees, shoulder blades down and back.
- Ensure that the chin is not tucked in too far
- If pain persists, place the head down on the mat or a cushion, or perform without the band
- For clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down

Tight Hamstrings

- Tight Hamstrings prevent hip flexion with straight legs, so the legs need to be lower if straight
- However, if the legs are lower, it makes it harder to prevent the lower back from arching
- Bending the knees is not an option when using the band as the band may slip off the feet
- Stretch the Hamstrings prior to this exercise

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- This exercise is both easier and harder than Hundreds on the mat for the following reasons -
    - Easier since the band helps to support the weight of the legs and can assist with the curl up and maintaining the curl as well as making it less likely to arch the lower back
    - Becomes harder if clients make the band tight and really pulse the arms up and down as it works the arms and the abdominals more
- This exercise is a good option for those who are Lordotic, find it hard to hold tabletop position or extend their legs without back pain/arching or hip pain/clicking
- Holding the band tighter is more supportive for the legs, back and abdominals but ensure it is not too tight or it can cause the neck to strain
- It is not the best choice of all of the Hundreds variations for clients with neck pain
- A great exercise to perform after Hundreds Preparation + Band

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Leg Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Leg Positioning #1: Squeeze the Legs Together
- Arm Positioning #2: Reaching Through the Fingers

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Scapula Setting #3: From the Front of the Shoulder

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hundreds + Circle

Intensity=2.5-3.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Note the additional demonstration section below. While we recommend that you perform a demonstration before cueing all exercises, the demonstration for Hundreds is very specific as it needs to include all 3 levels and some safety points. As such, we have included an additional Demonstration section for this exercise.

Fitness Australia Members: Please note that level 3 of this exercise is considered to be an advanced exercise and does not fall within the scope of practice for a Fitness Australia Registered Exercise Professional.

Name of Exercise

"Hundreds with the Circle"

What and/Where it Works

"This works the abdominals and inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Demonstration

Cue the following while demonstrating each level –

"There are 3 levels in Hundreds. Level 1 is with the legs in tabletop position (circle between the inner thighs, just above the knees), Level 2 is with the legs extended straight up toward the ceiling, toes pointed (circle between the shins, just above the ankles). Level 3 is with the legs extended and lowered to 45 degrees, with the feet flexed and turned out (circle between the shins, just above the ankles). You'll be curled up and holding this position while beating the arms one hundred times. If your neck gets tired, place your hand behind the head or the head on the mat."

Set Up



Level 1 Set Up

"Lying on the back with the legs in tabletop position. Place the circle either between the inner thighs or shins, spine imprinted. Hands around the knees, shoulder blades down and back and chin tucked in."



Levels 2 and 3 Set Up

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl the body up first,
reach the hands down past the hips,
then take your legs into level 1, 2 or 3.
Hold this position and pulse the arms up and down"

"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
"EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"



Level 1 (Tabletop)



Level 2 (Legs Vertical)



Level 3 (Legs Lowered to 45 Degrees)

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "When you INHALE, flatten your T-Zone"***
- "When you EXHALE, draw the ribs to hips, curling up a little bit further"***
- "Keep the spine imprinted, tailbone down"***
- "Eyes on the knees, chin tucked in, shoulder blades down and back"***
- "For Level 1, squeeze the thighs together on the circle, keeping the knees directly over your hips, shins parallel to the floor and each other"***
- "For Levels 2 and 3, squeeze the legs together against the circle, knees straight"***
- "Squeeze evenly with both legs, keeping the pelvis still"***
- "Curl up higher and reach through the fingers, keep the arms straight as you pulse them"***

To Make it Easier

- "If the neck gets tired place one hand behind your head, or the head on the mat"
- "Drop back to an easier level or take a rest then come back up again"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

To Make it Harder

- "Curl up higher and really reach through the fingers, squeeze the legs together"
- "Choose a harder level"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the T-Zone and letting the stomach bulge out
- Taking the legs too low and letting the lower back arch, losing the imprint
- Using the neck to pull up with rather than the abdominals
- Hunching the shoulders, poking the chin out
- Bringing the legs too close toward the chest and lifting the tailbone
- Not curling the upper body up high enough (then the neck strains)
- In Hundreds Level 1, internally or externally rotating the hips when squeezing the circle – focus on drawing the knees together rather than the feet (ie. pure hip adduction)
- In Hundreds Level 2, not squeezing the circle enough and not pointing the toes – pointing rather than flexing activates the Iliacus muscle and switches off the Quadriceps in this position
- In Hundreds Level 3, not squeezing the circle enough and not flexing and turning out the feet – flexing and turning out the feet helps to activate the Adductors, switching off the Quadriceps
- Bending and straightening the elbows rather than keeping the arms straight when pulsing
- Not having the circle even between the legs, and not squeezing equally with both legs

Encourage and Inspire

- "Keep going, two breaths to go, doing really well!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
- "EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"

Ending the Exercise

- "… come back into tabletop position, hands on the knees and rest back down"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Tip:

Demonstration

In your demonstration, you need to show and say the following -

- Curling the body up and demonstrating the 3 levels
    1. **Bent knees** (legs in tabletop, circle between the inner thighs)
    2. **Legs extended straight** (up to ceiling, knees straight, circle between the shins, squeezed together, toes pointed)
    3. **Legs straight, turned out and lowered** (circle between the shins, legs externally rotated, squeezed together and lowered as far possible, keeping the spine imprinted and feet flexed)
- You'll be holding this position while beating the arms one hundred times
- If your neck gets tired, place your hand behind the head or the head on the mat

Cueing

One hundred beats (or 10 breaths) should take approximately one minute to complete. Here is an example of how to cue this exercise for 10 breaths.

Name of Exercise		Hundreds with the Circle
Where it Works		"This works the abdominals and inner thighs"
Set Up		"Lying on the back with the legs in tabletop position. Place the circle either between the inner thighs or shins, spine imprinted. Hands around the knees, shoulder blades down and back and chin tucked in."
Breathing and Movement	Initial Breath Into Level 1, 2 or 3	"INHALE, T-Zone" "EXHALE, curl the ribs to the hips lifting the head and shoulders, reach the hands down past the hips and take your legs into level 1, 2 or 3. Hold this position and pulse the arms up and down"
	Breath 1	"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5" "EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
	Breath 2	"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5 EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5"
	Breath 3	"INHALE, T-Zone" "EXHALE, ribs to hips"
	Breath 4	"INHALE, flatten the T-Zone" "EXHALE, really curl up"
Permission to Continue + Concentration Points	Breath 5	"Keep going… spine imprinted, tailbone down"
	Breath 6	"Eyes on the knees, chin tucked in, shoulder blades down and back"
To Make it Easier	Breath 7	"If the neck gets tired place one hand behind your head, or the head on the mat"
To Make it Harder	Breath 8	"Really reach through the fingers, squeeze the circle"
Encourage and Inspire	Breath 9	"Keep going, 2 breaths to go, doing really well"
Remind and Recycle	Breath 10	"INHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5" "EXHALE, 2, 3, 4, 5 and back into tabletop position. Head down and hands on the knees to rest."

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Hundreds Preparation + Circle

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine imprinted, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring
- Adductors to squeeze the circle (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors to hold the legs up in the air (hip flexion)
- Quadriceps to straighten the knees (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone and imprinted spine, ribs to hips
- Bring the knees/legs closer to the chest (but keep the tailbone down)
- Keep the knees bent in tabletop position
- Keep the head down on the mat
- Some clients may become tired after X amount of pulses and begin to feel it in their back or lose technique - if this is this case, rest and do another set later (some clients cannot perform 100 pulses in a row but can do 4 sets of 25 or 2 sets of 50 and hold it quite well)
- Try with a neutral spine in tabletop position or a neutral spine with the feet down on the floor to see if it feels more comfortable, otherwise discontinue the exercise until the abdominals are stronger

Hip Pain or Hip Flexor Cramps

- Some clients find it easier with the circle as it uses the inner thighs more and switches off the lateral Hip Flexors which tend to cramp, but other clients will find it harder with the circle
- Tighten the T-Zone and abdominals more
- For levels 2 and 3, try turning the feet out and flexing them as this helps to activate the Adductors and Iliacus
- Cue clients to squeeze the legs harder to activate the Iliacus and Adductors

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Choose an easier modification or draw the legs closer to the chest (but don't lift the tailbone)

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Take care with this exercise as it uses the Adductors strongly and creates tension through the Pubic Symphysis joint
- There should be no Pubic Bone or Adductor pain with this exercise
- Check the T-Zone activation
- Ensure that both legs are working evenly and the pelvis is still
- Cue clients not to squeeze as hard on the circle, instead focus on keeping the T-Zone activated
- If the circle is too hard, try squeezing a cushion or a rolled towel instead
- If pain persists, remove the circle

Sciatica

- Avoid Levels 2 and 3 as these involve a neural tension position

Tight Hamstrings

- Limits the amount of hip flexion available when the legs are straight, so the legs will either need to be lower in order to keep them straight or slightly bent
- However, if the legs are lower, it makes it harder to prevent the lower back from arching
- If the client is not strong enough to have their legs lower, allow them to slightly bend their knees rather than lowering the legs
- Stretch the Hamstrings prior to this exercise

Knee Pain

- Occasionally, using the circle can exacerbate medial knee pain
- Omit the circle if performing level 3 or go back to performing level 1 or 2 with the circle

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Cue clients to use the abdominals more and curl the body up higher – takes strain off the neck
- Keep the chin tucked in, eyes on the knees, shoulder blades down and back
- Ensure that the chin is not tucked in too far
- Clients can place one or both hands behind the head to support the neck
- If pain persists, keep the head down on the mat or cushion
- For clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- Generally, Hundreds is harder with the circle as it works the Adductors and adds resistance
- Squeezing the circle can be helpful for clients who get Hip Flexor cramping or tightness as squeezing the circle engages the Adductors and Iliacus which can switch off the Hip Flexors

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- It can also be helpful for clients who tend to arch their lower back, as using the Adductors switches of the Quadriceps and other Hip Flexors and also assists in abdominal activation
- Perfect for group classes as there are several different levels
- Perfect to do after Hundreds Preparation + Circle and in conjunction with exercises that stem from Hundreds + Circle such as Beats + Circle
- Keep in mind that exercises with the circle are quite tough on the inner thighs, so try not to program too many circle exercises in a row without giving the inner thighs a break in between

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Leg Positioning #2: Tabletop Position
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Arm Positioning #2: Reaching Through the Fingers
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Double Leg Stretch Preparation + Circle

Intensity=3 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: In this exercise, the arms are moving to challenge the abdominals rather than the legs. This is the preparation exercise for the full exercise "Double Leg Stretch" which is covered in the Matwork Progressions course.

Name of Exercise

"Double Leg Stretch Preparation with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominals and inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the legs in tabletop position. Place the circle between the shins, just above the ankles, spine imprinted. Hands on the knees, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in. Squeeze the circle slightly."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl the body up, sweep the hands past the hips and extend the legs up toward the ceiling. We will be holding this position and lifting and lowering the arms three times…"



"INHALE, take the hands up toward the ceiling, keeping the body curled up"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, sweep the hands back to the hips"



"INHALE, raise the hands up,
maintain the curl"



"EXHALE, lower the hands back down"



"INHALE, raise the arms"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, lower the arms"



"INHALE, lower the body back down and bring the legs into tabletop position, hands on the knees"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, curling up and holding, raising and lowering the arms three times, then resting back down"

Concentration Points

- "As you raise the arms over the shoulders, keep the body curled up as high as possible"***
- "Keep the eyes on the knees, don't look at your hands as they move toward the ceiling"***
- "Only raise the arms as far as you can without losing the upper body curl"***
- "Chin tucked in, shoulder blades down and back"***
- "Keep the ribs curled toward the hips, do not lose the abdominal connection – keep the body curled up high the whole time"***
- "Squeeze evenly with both legs, keeping the pelvis still"***
- "Draw the ribs toward the hips, using the abdominals to stop the lower back arching"
- "T-Zone tight, maintain the imprinted spine and keep the tailbone down"
- "Keep the toes pointed"

To Make it Easier

- "Perform one repetition at a time then lower back down to reset"

To Make it Harder

- "Stay curled up for more repetitions before resting back down"
- "Squeeze the circle harder"
- "Extend your legs lower (without arching the lower back and losing the abdominals)"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Not keeping the body curled up high enough the whole time
- Not maintaining the upper body curled up as the arms raise up toward the ceiling
- Raising the arms up too far, losing control, arching the lower back and flaring the ribcage
- Hunching the neck and shoulders, poking the chin out, looking at the hands as they raise up
- Sweeping the hands down too quickly, overusing the arms rather than the abdominals
- Letting the T-Zone go and the abdominals bulge out
- Extending the legs too high toward the ceiling, lifting the tailbone
- Extending the legs too low, arching the lower back
- Not squeezing the circle, not reaching through the toes and not fully straightening the legs
- Not having the circle even between the legs, and not squeezing equally with both legs

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's it, really keep the body curled up."

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, hands up toward the ceiling"
- "EXHALE, sweep the hands back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "… place the hands onto the knees and rest back down"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Hundreds Preparation + Circle

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine imprinted, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring as the arms move
- Adductors to squeeze the circle (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Hip Flexors to raise the legs up (hip flexion)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Quadriceps to straighten the knees (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Iliacus to stabilise the hips

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the spine is imprinted and the abdominals are tight
- Ensure that the body is curled up as high as possible
- Try not to take the arms up too far overhead
- Have frequent rests, only performing a few repetitions before resting back down
- Remove the circle if this feels better
- Keep the legs in tabletop position rather than extending the legs (circle between the thighs) and perform the same arm movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl up and sweep the hands past the hips"



"INHALE, hands up toward the ceiling"



"EXHALE, sweep the hands back down"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Sciatica

- Use the modification with the legs in tabletop position

Hip Pain or Hip Flexor Cramps

- Some clients find it easier with the circle as it uses the inner thighs more and switches off the lateral Hip Flexors which tend to cramp, other clients will find it harder with the circle
- Cue the client to tighten the T-Zone and abdominals more
- Try turning the feet out and flexing them (like in Hundreds Level 3) as this helps to activate the Adductors and Iliacus
- Squeeze the legs harder to activate the Iliacus and Adductors
- Draw the legs closer to the chest (but keep the tailbone down)
- Choose an easier modification

Tight Hamstrings

- Limits the amount of hip flexion available when the legs are straight, so the legs will either need to be lower in order to keep them straight or slightly bent
- However, if the legs are lower, it makes it harder to prevent the lower back from arching
- If the client is not strong enough to have their legs lower, allow them to slightly bend their knees rather than lowering the legs
- Stretch the Hamstrings prior to this exercise

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- There should be no Pubic Bone or Adductor pain with this exercise
- Check the T-Zone activation
- Ensure that both legs are working evenly and the pelvis is still
- Do not squeeze as hard on the circle, focus on being able to keep the T-Zone activated
- If the circle is too hard, try squeezing a cushion or a rolled towel instead
- If pain persists remove the circle and continue the exercise without the circle

Shoulder Pain

- Cue clients to take the arms back up to shoulder height only, not further
- Try a smaller range of motion ie. don't raise the arms as far overhead
- Do not let the shoulders hunch up or round forward, keep the shoulder blades down and back
- Avoid if pain persists – not the best choice of abdominal exercise for clients with shoulder pain

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Keep the upper body curled up high – if it starts to lower toward the mat, the neck will strain
- The eyes should keep looking at the knees rather than following the hands
- Check the neck position – chin tucked in, shoulders down and back
- Cue the client to use the abdominals more and not to take the arms as far overhead
- Place the head down on a cushion or the mat
- For a cervical Disc Bulge, keep head down

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- The use of the circle for this exercise makes it harder and also works the inner thighs more
- A good option for a harder abdominal exercise for clients with a Lordosis who have difficulty lowering their legs without arching their lower back, as the arms are the body part that move to add resistance to the exercise rather than the legs lowering
- Not a great exercise for clients with neck pain as they can easily lose the correct technique and place strain on their neck
- Follows on well after performing Hundreds Preparation + Circle or Hundreds + Circle (Level 2) with the legs extended up toward the ceiling
- Keep in mind that exercises with the circle are quite tough on the inner thighs, so try not to program too many circle exercises in a row without giving the inner thighs a break in between

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes
- Arm Positioning #2: Reaching Through the Fingers
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Beats + Circle

Intensity=3.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Beats with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominals and inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Exercise Tip: It is important that the circle is placed in the correct position or it can fly out from in between the shins and injure somebody.

This exercise involves curling up into the Hundreds Level 3 position, then beating the heels 3 times, then returning back into the start position.

For any exercise where you are curling the body up and extending the legs, always cue to curl the body up prior to moving the legs. It will be a simultaneous movement, but the upper body should initiate the movement.

This exercise differs from the matwork variation in that after you curl up and extend the legs, you don't cue clients to "INHALE, separate the feet" as the circle will drop. Instead cue "INHALE, T-Zone"

Fitness Australia Members: Please note that this exercise is considered to be an advanced exercise and does not fall within the scope of practice for a Fitness Australia Registered Exercise Professional.

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the legs in tabletop position. Place the circle vertically between the shins, just above the ankles, spine imprinted. Hands around the knees, shoulder blades down and back and chin tucked in."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, curl the body up, hands past the hips. Extend the legs out straight, feet turned out, flexed and squeezed together"



"INHALE, T-Zone, release the circle slightly"

"EXHALE, squeeze the circle 3 times"

"INHALE, bend the knees back into tabletop, hands around the knees, head and shoulders back down on the mat"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Think about trying to squeeze in on the circle to activate the inner thighs"***
- "T-Zone tight, spine imprinted, tailbone down"***
- "Keep the legs straight and turned out, feet flexed"***
- "Reach through the fingers to maintain the curl"***
- "Ribs to the hips/use the abdominals"
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the knees"
- "Squeeze the circle evenly with both legs, keeping the pelvis still on the mat"

To Make it Easier

- "Take your legs higher up toward the ceiling"
- "Don't squeeze as hard on the circle"

To Make it Harder

- "Squeeze the circle harder"
- "Lower your legs as far as you can without arching the lower back and losing the abdominals"
- "Keep the body curled up and continue to beat the heels for several breaths without coming back in to tabletop position. Follow the breathing pattern of -"

  "INHALE, separate the legs"
  "EXHALE, squeeze the circle 3 times"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the T-Zone and imprinted spine
- Not squeezing evenly on the circle and letting the pelvis rotate/rock side to side
- Opening the legs too wide, taking tension off the circle and dropping the circle
- The circle sitting unevenly between the shins or not squeezing evenly with both legs
- Hunching the shoulders, poking the chin out
- Bringing the legs closer toward the chest and lifting the tailbone
- Lowering the legs too far and arching the lower back
- Not turning the feet out and flexing them – turning the feet out helps to activate the Adductors, switching off the Quadriceps, flexing the feet also helps Adductor activation

Encourage and Inspire

- "Fantastic work everyone! Keep beating those legs!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, curl up and extend the legs, feet turned out and flexed"
- "INHALE, T-Zone"
- "EXHALE, squeeze the circle three times"
- "INHALE, rest back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "… come back into tabletop position, hands on the knees and rest back down"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Hundreds + Circle (Level 3)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques to curl the body up (thoracic flexion), draw the ribs toward the hips, keep the spine imprinted, prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs from flaring
- Adductors to squeeze the circle (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to curl the body up (thoracic flexion)
- Adductors to squeeze the legs together (hip adduction)
- Hip Flexors and to hold the legs up in the air (hip flexion)
- Quadriceps to straighten the knees (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back, prevent the hips from rocking and draw the abdominals flat
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical spine flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the T-Zone and imprinted spine
- Bring the legs slightly closer toward the chest (without lifting the tailbone)
- Try using a neutral spine position and see if it feels more comfortable
- Remove the circle if necessary

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Clients can perform the exercise in tabletop position with the circle between the thighs and squeeze in on the circle

"INHALE, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, curl up and squeeze the circle slightly, sweeping the hands past the hips"



"INHALE, T-Zone"
"EXHALE, squeeze the circle three times"
"INHALE, rest back down"

Sciatica

- Avoid this exercise for clients with Sciatica as it involves a neural tension position
- Perform the exercise in tabletop position with the circle between the thighs instead

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Cue clients to use the abdominals to curl up rather than the neck
- Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the knees
- Ensure that the chin is not poking out or too tucked in
- Keep the head down on a cushion
- For clients with a Disc Bulge, keep the head down

Hip Pain or Hip Flexor Cramps

- Some clients find it easier with the circle as it uses the inner thighs more and switches off the lateral Hip Flexors which tend to cramp, other clients will find it harder with the circle
- Cue clients to tighten the T-Zone and abdominals more
- Cue clients to squeeze the legs harder to activate the Iliacus and Adductors
- Choose an easier modification or draw the legs closer to the chest (but don't lift the tailbone)

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Take care with this exercise as it uses the Adductors strongly and creates tension through the Pubic Symphysis joint
- There should be no Pubic Bone or Adductor pain with this exercise
- Check the T-Zone activation
- Ensure that both legs are working evenly and the pelvis is still

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Do not squeeze as hard on the circle, focus on being able to keep the T-Zone activated
- If pain persists, remove the circle or discontinue the exercise

Knee Pain

- Occasionally, using the circle can exacerbate medial knee pain
- Omit the circle for this exercise

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester of pregnancy (as long as the client feels comfortable)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- The addition of the circle makes the exercise Beats harder and works the inner thighs more
- Note that for some clients, depending on the shape of their shins, when placing the circle between the shins and externally rotating their legs it is very difficult to hold the circle without dropping it – If needed, turn the legs back into parallel
- A great exercise for people who get Hip Flexor cramps or overuse the TFLs with their legs extended – squeezing the circle engages the Adductors more and takes pressure off the more lateral Hip Flexors
- A good exercise for clients with a Lordosis as you can keep the legs up high and the back does not arch as easily as in exercises where legs extend lower
- If clients already know Hundreds, you could just use the cue of "EXHALE and curl up into Hundreds Level 3"
- Keep in mind that exercises with the circle are quite tough on the inner thighs, so try not to program too many circle exercises in a row without giving the inner thighs a break in between

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Arm Positioning #2: Reaching Through the Fingers
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Advantages and Disadvantages of Sitting on the Ball

Advantages

- Abdominal exercises are more accessible to people who cannot lie supine or perform plank exercises eg. elderly or pregnant clients
- Helps to recruit smaller stability muscles due to the unstable nature of sitting on the ball
- Engages the buttock muscles as well as the pelvic and spinal stability muscles together
- A very functional way to perform exercises as it transfers forces from the lower body to the trunk and vice versa

Disadvantages

Sitting on the ball can be unstable at times so take care with clients who have poor balance, vertigo, dizziness or are too weak to stabilise themselves on the ball.

Ball Size

The ideal ball size should be an appropriate height for the client so that when they are sitting on the ball both their hips and knees are bent to 90 degrees.



Good Height Ball



Ball Too Large

Ball Safety

- As the ball is supporting the entire body weight in this series of exercises, it is crucial to ensure that the ball is inflated correctly and is anti-burst to provide enough support whilst sitting
- Ensure that you are close to clients at all times in case they lose balance, particularly at-risk clients such as pregnant or elderly clients or those with poor balance

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- If there is enough space, you can have clients perform the exercise next to a wall or a sturdy object that they can easily grab onto to help regain balance if needed
- Ensure that the bottom is in the centre of the ball, not too far forward or backward
- Ensure that the feet are hip distance apart



Bottom in Centre of Ball



Bottom Too Far Forward on Ball



Bottom Too Far Back on Ball



Feet Hip Distance Apart

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



Feet Too Close Together



Feet Too Far Apart

In the Set Up we have provided the brief version assuming clients are familiar with sitting on the ball. If clients are new to this series of exercises, you can use the following cues to instruct them how to sit on the ball safely.

Cue	Picture
"Standing in front of the ball, feet hip distance apart"	
"Squat down, placing the hands onto the ball to support it and poke your bottom backward"	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"Gently sit onto the centre of the ball"	

If clients are new to this series of exercises, you can use the following cues to instruct them how to stand up off the ball safely.

Cue	Picture
"Making sure that the feet are hip distance apart, lean forward T-Zone tight and squeeze the buttocks"	
…to stand up off the ball"	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: For this exercise to work best, the ball should be an appropriate height for the client so that when they are sitting on the ball both their hips and knees are bent to 90 degrees.

If this is the first exercise a client is performing in this series, please explain how to sit on the ball safely. In the Set Up we have provided the brief version assuming clients are familiar with sitting on the ball.

Name of Exercise

"Pelvic Tilt, Sitting on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This exercise works on pelvic control and stability"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"



Set Up

"Sitting in the centre of the ball with the feet on the floor, hip distance apart, arches of the feet lifted. Hands on the hips, lengthen through the crown of the head, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button, tucking the pelvis under and drawing the ball forward slightly"



"INHALE, press the tailbone back, arching the back and rolling the ball backward"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Draw the Pubic Bone toward the belly button, tucking the pelvis under"***
- "Initiate the movement by tucking the bottom/pelvis under rather than rounding the back***
- "Sit up tall, through neutral spine as you press the ball back and then arch the lower back"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the upper body still, no leaning forward or backward"***
- "Draw the ribs toward the hips and use the abdominals to round the spine"***
- "Draw the ribs toward the hips/keep the abdominals on to support the back as it arches" ***
- "Keep the pelvis in the centre of the ball and even weight through both buttocks"***
- "Keep the knees in line with the hips and the second and third toes"***
- "Keep even weight through both feet, arches lifted"
- "Keep the shoulders down and back, lengthen through the crown of the head"
- "Keep the chin tucked in and the back of the neck long, eye gaze straight ahead"

To Make it Easier

- "Stop and re-set the T-Zone in between repetitions"
- "Keep the range of movement smaller ie. don't tilt forward and backward as far"

To Make it Harder

- "Make the movement larger, but don't round the shoulders forward or flare the ribs out"
- "Perform the movement slightly faster"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Trying to make the movement too large – initiating the movement from the spine (either the lower back or upper back/neck/shoulders) rather than the pelvis
- Not controlling the movement on the way forward, letting the ball travel forward too far, the body will lean backward
- Arching the back too far, flaring the ribs and letting the Obliques go
- Hunching the shoulders and tensing the neck
- Shoulders/upper back rounding forward, poking the chin out
- Leaning forward or backward with the body
- Moving the pelvis – letting one hip hitch up, rotate forward or backward or shift to one side
- Letting the knees roll inward or fall to one side,
- Not keeping even weight through both legs, feet pointing straight ahead, arches lifted
- Starting with the feet too far away from the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Excellent work, really keep that T-Zone on!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "EXHALE, tuck the pelvis under"
- "INHALE, press the tailbone back"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and come back up to a neutral spine and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: T-Zone Activation Exercise, Oblique Activation Exercise

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus and Pelvic Floor muscles to stabilise the lower back and pelvis and prevent the hips and ball from rocking side to side
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to tuck the pelvis under (posterior pelvic tilt)
- Erector Spinae and Quadratus Lumborum to tilt the pelvis forward (anterior pelvic tilt) and arch the lower back (lumbar extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteal muscles and Hamstrings to tuck the pelvis under (posterior pelvic tilt)
- Hip Flexors to tilt the pelvis forward (anterior pelvic tilt)
- Hamstrings to flex the knees slightly, drawing the pelvis forward over the ball
- Quadriceps to straighten the knees slightly, to push the pelvis back onto the ball (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Ensure that the feet are hip distance apart to maintain a stable base of support
- Decrease the range of movement, do not tuck under or arch as far
- Use the breath out to activate the abdominals when tucking the pelvis under
- Keep the T-Zone tight the whole time

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that the lower back does not arch too much – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- If a client has a lumbar Disc Bulge or pain with lumbar flexion, omit the flexion component of this exercise – start in neutral and extend the spine, returning back to neutral each time
- If a client has a Lordosis or pain with lumbar extension, omit the extension component of this exercise – start in neutral and just flex the spine, returning back to neutral each time

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- Ensure that the feet are hip distance apart to maintain a stable base of support
- Perform near a wall and have the client lightly touch their fingertips to the wall for balance
- Stand next to the client and be there ready to assist them

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first and second trimesters (avoid in the third trimester as the baby will get in the way of the lumbar flexion)
- Use caution with balance and stand close by to provide support if needed

Programming Advice

- This exercise can be a great way to help clients find their neutral spine – cue clients to tuck under to round their back, then stick their bottom back to arch their back, then come back and find the middle point which will be their neutral spine
- Great for clients with a Lumbar Lordosis as it really focusses on reversing the Lordosis and posteriorly tilting the pelvis
- Good for clients with a Flatback posture as they learn how to move into an anterior pelvic tilt with a natural arch in their lower back
- Great warm up exercise and for beginners to learn how to control and move their pelvis and use their abdominals to do this
- Pregnant women usually love this exercise, particularly in the first and second trimesters, as it reverses their Lordosis and stretches their lower back – however once the belly grows too large, it gets in the way, preventing the posterior tilt and making the exercise feel uncomfortable

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Head Positioning #3: Deep Neck Flexors
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Ball Positioning #1: Preventing the Ball from Moving

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Sitting Twist + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: For this exercise to work best, the ball should be an appropriate height for the client so that when they are sitting on the ball both their hips and knees are bent to 90 degrees.

If this is the first exercise a client is performing in this series, please explain how to sit on the ball safely. In the Set Up we have provided the brief version assuming clients are familiar with sitting on the ball.

Name of Exercise

"Sitting Twist on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This exercise works on abdominal control and stability, and stretches the spine"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sitting in the centre of the ball with the feet on the floor, hip distance apart, arches of the feet lifted. Hands on the hips, lengthen through the crown of the head, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, rotate the body to one side"



"INHALE, rotate back to the centre"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, rotate the body toward the other side"





"INHALE, rotate back to the centre"

"Alternate sides"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, alternating sides and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone tight to keep the lower body and pelvis still"***
- "Use the abdominals to rotate the body, starting from the upper back then rotating further down into the lower back, one vertebra at a time"***
- "Draw the ribs toward the hips to stop the back arching and to rotate the torso"***
- "Maintain a neutral spine, keep the body upright, don't round forward or arch backward"***
- "Keep the pelvis in the centre of the ball and even weight through both buttocks"***
- "Keep the knees in line with the hips and facing over the second and third toes"***
- "Keep even weight through both feet, arches lifted"
- "Keep the shoulders down and back, lengthen through the crown of the head"
- "Keep the chin tucked in and the back of the neck long, eye gaze straight ahead"

To Make it Easier

- "Stop and re-set the T-Zone in between repetitions"
- "Keep the range of movement smaller i.e. don't rotate to the side as far"

To Make it Harder

- "Make the movement larger, rotating as far as you can without moving the pelvis"
- "Hold the arms out to the sides at shoulder height"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



Modification with the Arms Out to the Side

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Trying to make the movement too large – rotating the pelvis, arching the lower back or rounding the shoulders
- Not controlling the movement and letting the ball move
- Letting the Obliques go, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Hunching the shoulders and tensing the neck
- Shoulders/upper back rounding forward, poking the chin out
- Leaning forward or backward with the body
- Moving the pelvis – letting one hip hitch up, rotate forward or backward or shift to one side
- Letting the knees roll inward or fall to one side
- Not keeping even weight through both legs, feet pointing straight ahead, arches lifted

Encourage and Inspire

- "Excellent work, really keep that ball still!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, rotate the body"
- "INHALE, return to centre"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus and Pelvic Floor muscles to stabilise the lower back and pelvis and prevent the hips from rocking and the ball from moving side to side
- Internal and External Obliques to rotate the torso (thoracic and lumbar rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and keep it still
- Hamstrings and Quadriceps to hold the ball still (isometric knee flexion/extension)
- Multifidus to stabilise the segments of the spine as they rotate
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Joint Mobility

- Increases thoracic spine rotation range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Take care for clients with lumbar disc problems as the lower back rotates a little – the majority of the rotation comes from the thoracic spine and there is no flexion, so it should be safe to perform for most clients, start with small movements and monitor the client's response
- Ensure that the feet are hip distance apart to maintain a stable base of support
- Ensure that the lower back is not arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- If the client is slouching or rounding the lower back, cue for more anterior tilt of the pelvis (sitting on the sit-bones, tall through the crown of the head)
- Focus on the exhale breath to help engage the abdominals
- Decrease the range of movement – rotate through the upper back rather than the lower back
- Cue the client to keep the T-Zone tight to keep the pelvis still as the body rotates

Shoulder Pain

- Keep the hands on the hips (avoid the modification with the arms extended out straight)
- Ensure that the shoulders are not rounding as the client rotates
- Cue the client to rotate from the spine, not the shoulders or arms

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- Not the best choice of exercise for clients with vertigo/dizziness as it involves trunk rotation on an unstable surface which may be aggravating
- Ensure that the feet are hip distance apart to maintain a stable base of support
- Perform near a wall and have the client lightly touch their fingertips to the wall for balance

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Stand next to the client and be there ready to assist them

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform during all three trimesters
- As the stomach grows, the range of movement will be limited
- Use caution with balance and stand close by to provide support if needed

Programming Advice

- A simple yet effective exercise for increasing rotation in the spine and learning how rotate the spine without the body moving
- A great exercise for clients with stiff thoracic spines
- Works well programmed before Pendulum exercises to assist in rotation range of movement
- An exercise that most clients can perform, works well as a warm up exercise when performed in conjunction with Sitting Lift Foot + Ball and Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball
- Clients with weak abdominals and excessive lumbar Lordosis may struggle to stop the lower back from arching/taking over, so you need to remind clients of their rib to hip connection

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #2: Oblique Lines
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Head Positioning #3: Deep Neck Flexors
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Ball Positioning #1: Preventing the Ball from Moving

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Sitting Lift Foot + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: For this exercise to work best, the ball should be an appropriate height for the client so that when they are sitting on the ball both their hips and knees are bent to 90 degrees.

If this is the first exercise a client is performing in this series, please explain how to sit on the ball safely. In the Set Up we have provided the brief version assuming clients are familiar with sitting on the ball.

For clients with poor balance, it is a good idea to perform this exercise standing close to a wall so that they can touch the wall if they need to for stability.

Name of Exercise

"Lift Foot, Sitting on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This exercise works the abdominals, hips and balance"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sitting in the centre of the ball with the feet on the floor, hip distance apart, arches of the feet lifted. Hands on the hips, lengthen through the crown of the head, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, press one foot into the floor"



"EXHALE, lift the other foot up off the floor, keeping the pelvis and spine still"

"INHALE, lower the foot back to the floor"



"Alternate sides"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, alternating sides and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone tight and don't let the hips rock"***
- "Keep the pelvis in the centre of the ball and even weight through both buttocks"***
- "As you exhale, draw your ribs toward your hips so your back doesn't arch"***
- "Press through the foot on the floor, keep the arch lifted and the tripod position"***
- "Keep the knees hip distance apart and the kneecaps pointing straight ahead"***
- "Draw the thigh bone into the hip socket prior to lifting the leg"
- "Think about using the inner thigh rather than the outer thigh to lift and lower the leg"
- "Keep the shoulders down and back, lengthen through the crown of the head"
- "Keep the chin tucked in and the back of the neck long, eye gaze straight ahead"
- "Keep the beltline parallel to the floor"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lift the leg as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Lift the leg higher"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the T-Zone go, the pelvis will rock or the ball will move
- Letting the Obliques go, the back will arch
- Moving the pelvis – letting one hip hitch up, rotate forward or backward or shift to one side
- Lifting the leg too high and tucking the tailbone under/rounding the back
- Not keeping the feet pointing straight ahead or the arches lifted
- Rolling the supporting knee in – press through the heel to activate the buttocks on that side
- Hunching the shoulders
- Losing balance or falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Outstanding team!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, lift the leg"
- "INHALE, lower the leg"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Lift Foot

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus and Pelvic Floor muscles to stabilise the lower back and pelvis and prevent the hips from rocking and the ball from moving side to side
- Hip Flexor muscles (Iliacus, Psoas, Tensor Fascia Latae, Quadriceps Femoris) to raise the leg (hip flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings and Quadriceps on the stationary leg to hold the ball still (isometric knee flexion/extension)
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus on the stationary leg to maintain hip stability on the ball

Stabilising Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus and Pelvic Floor to stabilise the lower back and pelvis
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Iliacus to draw the thigh bone into the hip socket (stabilise the hip joint)
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators to stabilise the pelvis, keep it still and prevent the knees from rolling in
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- The client may feel it in their back if their stability is not good enough for this exercise
- Cue clients to concentrate on their T-Zone and ribs to hips
- Ensure that clients press the heel into floor to activate the buttock muscles
- Ensure that the lower back is not arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- If the client is slouching or rounding the lower back, cue for more anterior tilt of the pelvis (sitting on the sit-bones, tall through the crown of the head)
- Do not lift the leg as high

Hip Flexor Cramps

- Ensure that the T-Zone is on and cue to activate the Iliacus muscle to lift the leg
- Do not lift the leg as high

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that the leg is lifting straight up, not twisting out to the side

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- Ensure that the feet are hip distance apart to maintain a stable base of support
- Perform near a wall and have the client lightly touch their fingertips to the wall for balance
- Stand next to the client and be there ready to assist them

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first and second trimesters (avoid in the third trimester as the baby will get in the way when lifting the foot)
- As the stomach grows, range of movement will be limited
- Use extreme caution with balance and ensure that you stand close by to provide support – the client can hold onto your hand or a wall for extra balance

Programming Advice

- Great basic exercise for beginners, low level clients with poor abdominal strength and lower back pain or clients who need to improve their balance and stability
- For clients with hip pain or tight TFLs and cramping hips, use this exercise for Iliacus activation
- Can be used as an Iliacus activation exercise OR an abdominal and pelvic stability exercise – change your cueing accordingly based on what you want the client to focus on

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Head Positioning #3: Deep Neck Flexors
- Ball Positioning #1: Preventing the Ball from Moving

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

PLANK ABDOMINAL SERIES

The Plank Abdominal Series can be divided into two categories -

1. Planks (supporting the legs on the ball)
2. Reverse Planks (supporting the upper body on the ball)

Planks

Planks on the ball are performed in a prone position with the legs supported on the ball and the hands on the floor supporting the upper body. Using the ball makes the exercises easier on the abdominals than Plank 2 (on the Feet) on the mat as the ball supports some of the bodyweight.

The addition of the ball provides an added challenge for balance and stability than when performing the exercises without the ball. This instability can help to engage the deep stability muscles in the body and also gives feedback to the client helping them to activate their abdominals correctly in order to stay balanced. Take care with clients with poor balance and weak abdominals as they can fall.

Making it Easier/Harder

Performing Planks on the ball is also beneficial in that the client can control just how difficult the plank is by moving the ball further up or down the legs.

If the ball is far back underneath the ankles and shins, this makes the exercise harder. If the ball is moved further up the legs underneath the thighs, this makes the exercise easier.



Plank Ball Under Shins or Ankles (Harder)



Plank Ball Under Thighs (Easier)

Getting onto the Ball

Although the ball makes the plank exercises easier on the abdominals as opposed to performing it on the mat, it can be quite an unstable position and requires stability through the T-Zone and pelvis to maintain control on the ball.

When getting onto the ball, it is sometimes necessary for you as an instructor to hold the ball to prevent it from moving while the client gets into the correct position. Once clients are familiar with the plank position on the ball, they can usually lie the ball independently.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Reverse Planks

Reverse planks involve placing the elbows on the ball to support the upper body and the feet on the floor. This is a very challenging way to work the abdominals and also extremely difficult on the shoulders and scapula stability due to the instability of the ball. As the body weight is supported on the ball via the elbows, it is important that the ball is correctly inflated otherwise it will not provide a firm enough surface to stabilise correctly.

The correct upper body alignment should be with the elbows or hands directly underneath the shoulders. Do not let the ball roll away from the body or this will place added strain on the neck and shoulders and also makes the exercise more difficult on the abdominals.



Elbows on Ball Stacked Under Shoulders



Back Arching



Elbows on Ball Too Far in Front

Ball Size

For the plank exercises, ideally the body should be horizontal, however a slight upward incline is also acceptable (ie. legs slightly lower than the upper body). Try to avoid a downward incline (ie. legs higher than the upper body).

For the reverse plank exercises, the body will be on an incline with the upper body slightly higher than the legs. The more horizontal the body position, the harder it will make the exercise ie. a smaller ball will make the body more horizontal and therefore makes the exercise more difficult. However, if the ball is too large the back will arch and it will be difficult to engage the abdominals.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Safety When Using the Ball to Perform Plank Exercises

Clients can easily lose balance and fall off the ball during these exercises – they do not have far to fall and usually will not hurt themselves if they do fall, however still ensure you stand close by to assist them if necessary and only prescribe these exercises to clients with good balance and stability.

These exercises are not recommended for those with poor balance, vertigo or dizziness as the combination of the head down position and instability of the ball makes it difficult for these clients.

There are several reasons why a client may lose balance in these exercises:

- The have walked the hands out too fast or moved too quickly into the position
- They don't have their legs or arms centred on the ball
- They walk out crookedly
- They use one side of their body more than the other ie. more weight through one hand, more weight through one leg or using one side of the abdominals more than the other
- They lose their T-Zone and abdominal connection
- As they are ending the exercise, they let their abdominals go before safely ending the exercise

It is really important to activate all of the abdominals before walking out into the plank position otherwise the lower back may strain and the client may fall off. It is all really important to monitor the clients' techniques and not hold the plank for longer than they can maintain good technique, and can control the ending the exercise well.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Plank + Ball

Intensity=2-3 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Ideally hold the plank position for 10 breaths and think of cueing in a similar way to Hundreds ie. once you have cued the client into the plank position, for the next few breaths, say "INHALE, T-Zone. EXHALE, ribs to hips." Then move onto the Permission to Continue and Concentration Points.

Clients can easily lose balance and fall off the ball with this exercise – they don't have far to fall and usually will not hurt themselves if they do, but still ensure that you stand close by to assist them if necessary.

Name of Exercise

"Plank with the Feet on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the shoulders, chest and abdominals"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Demonstration

Cue the following while demonstrating each level –

"There are 3 levels for this exercise: Level 1 – the ball is under the thighs; Level 2 – the ball is under the shins; Level 3 – the ball is under the ankles. You'll be holding the plank position for ten breaths."

Set Up

"Lower the stomach onto the ball and place the hands on the floor. Walk the hands out until the ball is under the ball under the legs in either level 1, 2 or 3. Body in one long line, legs extended straight, toes pointed. Hands shoulder width apart, shoulder blades down and back, upper back up against the shoulder blades. Chin tucked in, neck long and eyes on the floor, neutral spine. Hold this position"



Level 1 (Ball Under Thighs)



Level 2 (Ball Under Shins)



Level 3 (Ball Under Ankles)

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, concentrate on drawing the ribs toward the hips to activate the abdominals"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep holding this position and…"

Concentration Points

- "Really use the abdominals, T-Zone tight to keep the ball still"***
- "Draw the ribs toward the hips and tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button to prevent any dipping through the back"***
- "Think of lifting the spine up away from the floor, taking the body weight off the hands"***
- "Keep the shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the floor" ***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through and that your ribcage is up against the shoulder blades – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "Keep a neutral spine with the body in one long line, make sure that the bottom isn't sticking up in the air and the back is not arching – try to look like a 'plank,' not a 'camel' or a 'hammock'"***
- "Keep the elbows unlocked"
- "Take even weight through the hands and both legs"
- "Keep the neck up in line with the body, lengthen through the crown of the head, chin tucked in and eyes looking toward the floor"

To Make it Easier

- "Roll further back onto the ball to an easier level"
- "Only hold in the plank position for a few breaths and rest back down when needed"

To Make it Harder

- "Roll further forward onto the ball to a harder level"
- "Hold out in the plank for longer before resting back down"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Lifting the hips too far upwards rounding the back like a camel
- Sagging through the lower back like a hammock, the hips are too low and the lower back arches (letting the abdominals relax)
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowering toward the floor
- Collapsing through the shoulders and letting the thoracic spine sink away from the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Locking the elbows and winging the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Shoulder blades hunching up toward the ears/overusing the Upper Trapezius muscles
- Chin sticking out/hyperextending the neck (not engaging the Deep Neck Flexors)
- Hands too close to each other or too far apart
- Rolling the bodyweight side to side and letting the ball move
- Losing balance or falling off the ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Fabulous effort team!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, focus on the T-Zone"
- "EXHALE, draw the ribs to the hips"

Ending the Exercise

- "…Walk the hands back, rolling the body back over the ball until the feet return back to the mat and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Plank 1 (On the Knees)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques to hold the plank position, keep the body lifted and prevent the lower back from arching or dipping

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Pectoralis Major and Minor and Deltoids to hold the plank position
- Triceps to support the body weight (when the elbows are unlocked)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Serratus Anterior to prevent the shoulder blades winging and the upper body sagging through (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors the keep the chin tucked in and the neck long (upper cervical flexion)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check that the lumbar spine position is in neutral and the lower back is not arching
- Ensure that the hips aren't too low as this can cause strain on the lower back
- Ensure that the T-Zone is tight and the abdominals are not bulging out
- Check the rib to hip/Oblique activation
- Have more frequent rests as needed – if the client loses their abdominal activation they may feel strain in the lower back
- Walk the hands back toward the ball so that the ball is higher up underneath the thighs

Wrist Pain

- Try with the hands a little wider apart and the hands turned out slightly
- Try placing a folded towel, mat or block under the heel of the hands
- Focus on placing more weight through the fingers rather than the heel of the hands
- Focus on lifting the body weight up off the hands by using the abdominals and Serratus Anterior
- Cue for Serratus Anterior activation
- Keep the elbows unlocked otherwise a lot of extra weight gets placed on the wrists
- Walk the hands back toward the ball so that the ball is higher up underneath the thighs – more weight will be on the legs rather than the wrists in this position
- If pain persists, try Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball

Shoulder Pain

- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Ensure that the hands are underneath the shoulders and that the upper back is lifted
- Focus on lifting the body weight up off the hands by using the abdominals
- Keep the elbows unlocked to help the Serratus Anterior to activate (and prevent winging)
- Try with the hands a little wider apart on the mat
- Walk the hands back toward the ball so that the ball is higher up underneath the thighs, this will support more of the body weight and take some pressure off the shoulders
- If pain persists, perform Plank 1 (On the Knees) without the ball or discontinue the exercise

Neck Pain

- Check the neck position – maintain a neutral neck position with the chin tucked in and the neck long, eyes on the floor
- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Focus on lifting the body weight up off the hands by using the abdominals
- Keep the elbows unlocked to help the Serratus Anterior activation
- Walk the hands back toward the ball so that the ball is higher up underneath the thighs, this will support more of the body weight and take some pressure off the neck and shoulders
- If pain persists, perform Plank 1 (On the Knees) without the ball or discontinue the exercise

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- This exercise is not recommended for those with poor balance, vertigo or dizziness as the combination of the head being down and the instability of the ball combined with a large amount of work in the abdominals makes this exercise too dangerous

Pregnancy

- Generally safe to perform in Level 1 position during the first trimester of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- The addition of a ball for this exercise helps the abdominals to activate as they have to work effectively otherwise you fall off the ball
- The ball allows for the client to have more control over the exact difficulty of the exercise by moving the ball in or out slightly as needed, compared to when performing it on the mat you either have to perform the exercises on the knees or feet, and there is no in between option.
- Good for a group class as there are lots of different levels and options to suit all people
- You may wish to demonstrate the easier and harder options for this exercise and encourage the class participants to choose the option which suits them best
- This exercise challenges the abdominals when performed straight after the Supine Abdominal Series
- This exercise challenges the arm and shoulder muscles when performed after other arm and shoulder exercises

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #3: Plank
- Head Positioning #2: Plank

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pilates Push Ups + Ball

Intensity=3-4 Difficulty=3.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Pilates Push Ups with the Feet on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the shoulders, arms, chest and abdominals"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Note: the prerequisite for this exercise is Plank + Ball. If your class is not familiar with the plank position on the ball, provide a full cue on how to get into this position.

Clients can easily lose balance and fall off the ball with this exercise – they don't have far to fall and usually will not hurt themselves if they do, but still ensure that you stand close by to assist them if necessary.

Demonstration

Cue the following while demonstrating each level –

"There are 3 levels for this exercise: Level 1 – the ball is under the thighs; Level 2 – the ball is under the shins; Level 3 – the ball is under the ankles."

Set Up

"Lower the stomach onto the ball and place the hands on the floor. Walk the hands out until the ball is under the ball under the legs in either level 1, 2 or 3. Body in one long line, legs extended straight, toes pointed. Hands slightly wider than shoulder width apart, shoulder blades down and back, upper back up against the shoulder blades. Chin tucked in, neck long and eyes on the floor, neutral spine, T-Zone."



Level 1 (Ball Under Thighs)



Level 2 (Ball Under Shins)



Level 3 (Ball Under Ankles)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, and bend the elbows, lowering the body down in one…"



"… two …"



"… three stages"



"EXHALE, press back up, straightening the elbows in one continuous breath"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Focus on drawing the ribs to the hips, using the abdominals to keep the body in a firm and steady plank position, preventing any dipping through the back"***
- "Think of lifting the spine up away from the floor, taking the body weight off the hands"***
- "Keep the shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the floor"***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through and that your ribcage is up against the shoulder blades – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "Keep a neutral spine with the body in one long line"***
- "Lower the chest toward the floor in 3 phases; press back up in one strong movement"***
- "As you bend the elbows, lower the shoulders, torso and pelvis together in one long line"***
- "Make sure that the hands are in line with the shoulders, a little wider than shoulder width apart"
- "Focus on bending the elbows out to the side to work the arms"
- "Take even weight through the hands and legs"
- "Keep the ball still, even weight through both legs and the body in one long line"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

To Make it Easier

- "Don't bend the elbows as far or lower your body as close to the floor"
- "Roll further back onto the ball to an easier level"
- "Lower the body in one smooth movement, omitting the three isolated movements"

To Make it Harder

- "Bend the elbows further and lower the body closer to the floor"
- "Roll further forward onto the ball to a harder level"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Sagging through the body to lower the body rather than keeping the body in a firm plank position and bending the elbows to lower the body
- Lifting the hips too far upward, rounding the back like a camel
- Sagging through the lower back like a hammock
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowering toward the floor
- Collapsing through the shoulders, the thoracic spine sinking away from the shoulder blades
- Shoulder blades hunching up toward the ears/overusing the Upper Trapezius muscles
- Chin sticking out/hyperextending the neck
- Elbows pointing too far out to the side, sitting forward in relation to the shoulders – this causes the shoulders to hunch and round forward
- Rolling the bodyweight side to side and letting the ball move
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Woo hoo! Great technique everyone!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, lower the body down in three stages"
- "EXHALE, press back up, straightening the elbows"

Ending the Exercise

- "… walk the hands back, rolling the body back over the ball until the feet return back to the mat and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Plank + Ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Pilates Push Ups 1 (On the Knees)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Pectoralis Major to push the body up and slowly lower it down (shoulder horizontal adduction and eccentrically controlling horizontal abduction)
- Triceps to press the body up and straighten the elbows, as well as lowering down/bending the elbows (elbow extension and eccentrically controlling flexion)
- Internal and External Obliques to hold the plank position, keep the body lifted and prevent the lower back from arching or dipping

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to prevent the back from arching
- Deltoids to support the shoulders

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Serratus Anterior to prevent the shoulder blades winging and the upper body sagging through (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors the keep the chin tucked in and the neck long (upper cervical flexion)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check that the lumbar spine position is in neutral and the lower back isn't arching
- Ensure that the hips aren't too low as this can cause the back to strain – the hips should be up in line with the shoulders
- Ensure that the T-Zone is tight and the abdominals are not bulging out
- Check the rib to hip/Oblique activation
- Have more frequent rests if the client feels any strain in the lower back
- Walk the hands back toward the ball so that the ball is higher up underneath the thighs
- Substitute for the matwork exercise Pilates Push Up 1 (On the Knees) or Chest Press + Circle

Wrist Pain

- Try with the hands a little wider and the hands turned out slightly
- Try placing a folded towel, mat or block under the heel of the hands
- Focus on placing more weight through the fingers rather than the heel of the hands
- Focus on lifting the body weight up off the hands by using the abdominals and Serratus Anterior
- Cue for Serratus Anterior activation

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Walk the hands back toward the ball so that the ball is higher up underneath the thighs – more weight will be on the legs rather than the wrists in this position
- If pain persists, substitute for Chest Press + Circle

Shoulder Pain

- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Try with the hands a little wider apart on the mat
- Cue clients not to go as deep into the push up
- Watch out for the elbows flaring too wide as this can strain the shoulders, keep the elbows a little closer to the body
- Walk the hands back toward the ball so that the ball is higher up underneath the thighs, this will support more of the body weight and take some pressure off the shoulders
- If pain persists, discontinue the exercise

Neck Pain

- Check the neck position – maintain a neutral neck position with the chin tucked in and the neck long, eyes on the floor
- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back, and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Cue clients not to go as deep into the push up
- Walk the hands back toward the ball so that the ball is higher up underneath the thighs – more weight will be on the legs rather than the wrists in this position
- If pain persists, substitute for the matwork exercise Pilates Push Ups 1 (On the Knees) or Chest Press + Circle

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- This exercise is not recommended for those with poor balance, vertigo or dizziness as the combination of the head being down and the instability of the ball combined with a large amount of work in the abdominals makes this exercise too dangerous

Pregnancy

- Generally safe to perform in Level 1 position during the first trimester of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- It is important to cue the clients to focus on holding the plank position correctly
- This exercise is often best performed after other abdominal and shoulder blade exercises so that the muscles are already activated and warmed up
- It is good idea to perform Plank + Ball first, then Pilates Push Ups + Ball
- This exercise goes well after Plank + Ball, but be mindful of wrist pain when prescribing several exercises in a row in the plank position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #3: Plank
- Head Positioning #2: Plank

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Tucks + Ball

Intensity=3 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Tucks on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the shoulders, chest and abdominals"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lower the stomach onto the ball and place the hands on the floor. Walk the hands out until the ball is under the ball under the shins. Body in one long line, legs extended straight, toes pointed. Hands shoulder width apart, shoulder blades down and back, upper back up against the shoulder blades. Chin tucked in, neck long and eyes on the floor, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button and draw the knees under the chest, rolling the ball forward"



"INHALE, straighten the legs back out into the plank position"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Exercise Tip: Note: the prerequisite for this exercise is Plank + Ball. If your class is not familiar with the plank position on the ball, provide a full cue on how to get into this position.

Clients can easily lose balance and fall off the ball with this exercise – they don't have far to fall and usually will not hurt themselves if they do, but still ensure that you stand close by to assist them if necessary.

This exercise can be made easier by starting with the ball further up the shins, closer to the knees. Alternatively, it can made harder by starting with the ball, closer to the ankles.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Think of rounding your spine and using your abdominals to draw the knees in, rather than pulling with your legs and moving your hips"***
- "Really scoop the abdominals, rounding the lower back and tucking the pelvis under"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and initiate the movement by drawing the ribs toward the hips"***
- "When returning to the plank position, keep the T-Zone tight and draw the ribs toward the hips to prevent any dipping through the back"***
- "Think of lifting the spine up away from the floor, taking the body weight off the hands"***
- "Keep the shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in" ***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through and that your ribcage is up against the shoulder blades – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "As you tuck, the eyes should look back toward your knees, as you move into the plank position, eyes look straight down toward the floor"***
- "Keep the neck in line with the body, lengthen through the crown of the head, chin tucked in"
- "Keep the body moving, don't rest in either the tuck or plank positions"
- "Keep even weight through both legs on the ball and keep the hips square to the floor"
- "Keep the elbows unlocked"
- "Take even weight through the hands and legs"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't tuck as far"

To Make it Harder

- There is no way to make this exercise harder

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- When tucking the knees in – bending from the hips and using the legs only to move the ball rather than rounding the spine and using the abdominals as well
- As the legs straighten into the plank position – sagging through the lower back like a hammock, the hips are too low and the lower back arches (letting the abdominals relax)
- Resting in either the plank or tuck position rather than keeping the movements flowing – often people let their abdominals go and just hang off their ligaments to have a rest
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowering toward the floor
- Collapsing through the shoulders and letting the thoracic spine sink away from the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Locking the elbows and winging the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Shoulder blades hunching up toward the ears/overusing the Upper Trapezius muscles
- Chin sticking out/hyperextending the neck (not engaging the Deep Neck Flexors) – not using the correct eyeline throughout the movement
- Hands too close to each other or too far apart
- Losing control of the ball or using one side of the body more than the other
- Placing the ball too high or too low on the legs
- Letting the hips rotate or shift to one side

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Fantastic effort!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, tuck the knees in underneath the body"
- "INHALE, release into a plank"

Ending the Exercise

- "… walk the hands back, rolling the body back over the ball until the feet return back to the mat and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Plank + Ball (Level 2)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to round the spine as the knees tuck in (spinal flexion), to hold the plank position, keep the body lifted and prevent the lower back from arching or dipping

Accessory Muscles

- Pectoralis Major and Minor and Deltoids to hold the plank position
- Triceps to support the body weight (when the elbows are unlocked)
- Hip Flexor muscles (Iliacus, Psoas, Quadriceps Femoris) to draw the knees in (hip flexion)
- Gluteus Maximus and Hamstrings to extend the legs into the plank position (hip extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Serratus Anterior to prevent the shoulder blades winging and the upper body sagging through (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors the keep the chin tucked in and the neck long (upper cervical flexion)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Avoid for a lumbar Disc Bulge as this exercise includes spinal flexion
- Check the lumbar spine position is neutral in the plank position and the lower back is not arching, it is most common to lose control when rolling the ball back out to the plank position
- Ensure that the T-Zone is tight and the abdominals are not bulging out
- Check the rib to hip/Oblique activation, particularly as the legs extend out into the plank
- Ensure that the client is using their abdominals to round the spine and draw their knees in rather than just flexing the hips and letting the abdominals go
- Decrease the range of movement
- Start with the ball slightly further up the shins so that the ball gives you more support
- Have more frequent rests as needed – if the client loses their abdominal activation they may feel strain in the lower back

Wrist Pain

- Try with the hands a little wider and the hands turned out slightly
- Try placing a folded towel, mat or block under the heel of the hands
- Focus on placing more weight through the fingers rather than the heel of the hands
- Focus on lifting the body weight up off the hands by using the abdominals and Serratus Anterior
- Cue for Serratus Anterior activation
- Start with the ball slightly further up the shins so that the ball provides more support
- Keep the elbows unlocked otherwise a lot of extra weight gets placed on the wrists
- Discontinue the exercise if pain persists

Shoulder Pain

- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Try with the hands a little wider apart on the mat
- Keep the elbows unlocked to help the Serratus Anterior to activate (and prevent winging)
- Start with the ball slightly further up the shins so that the ball provides more support
- If pain persists, try Plank + Ball instead (to work on static control) or discontinue the exercise

Neck Pain

- Check the neck position – maintain a neutral neck position with the chin tucked in and the neck long, eyes on the floor when in plank, on the knees when up in the tuck
- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Keep the elbows unlocked to help the Serratus Anterior activation
- Start with the ball slightly further up the shins so that the ball provides more support
- If pain persists, try Plank + Ball instead (to work on static control) or discontinue the exercise

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- This is a fairly advanced exercise and not recommended for those with poor balance, vertigo or dizziness as the combination of the head being down and the instability of the ball combined with a large amount of work in the abdominals makes this exercise too dangerous

Pregnancy

- Avoid throughout pregnancy

Programming Advice

- This is a great exercise to perform after Plank + Ball – it really challenges the abdominals and is also a fun and popular exercise
- Only prescribe this exercise to clients who have great technique and endurance with Plank + Ball – Level 2 and who have great balance
- This exercise challenges the abdominals when performed straight after the Supine Abdominal Series and other plank exercises
- This exercise challenges the arm and shoulder muscles when performed after other arm and shoulder exercises
- Take care not to program too many plank exercises in a row as it can place too much pressure on the wrists

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #3: Plank
- Head Positioning #2: Plank

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pikes + Ball

Intensity=3.5 Difficulty=4

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Note: the prerequisite for this exercise is Tucks + Ball. If your class is not familiar with the plank position on the ball, provide a full cue on how to get into this position.

Clients can easily lose balance and fall off the ball with this exercise – they don't have far to fall and usually will not hurt themselves if they do, but still ensure that you stand close by to assist them if necessary.

Name of Exercise

"Pikes on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the shoulders, chest and abdominals"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lower the stomach onto the ball and place the hands on the floor. Walk the hands out until the ball is under the ankles. Body in one long line, legs extended straight, toes pointed. Hands shoulder width apart, shoulder blades down and back, upper back up against the shoulder blades. Chin tucked in, neck long and eyes on the floor, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, keep the legs straight and pike the bottom up toward the ceiling, rolling the ball in"



"INHALE, lower the body back out into the plank position"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Really use the abdominals to pike up and draw the bottom up toward the ceiling"***
- "As you pike, keep your toes pointed – the ball should roll over the tops or your feet"***
- "Really stick your bottom out and up toward the ceiling, keeping a neutral spine"***
- "When returning to the plank position, keep the T-Zone tight and draw the ribs toward the hips to prevent any dipping through the back"***
- "Think of lifting the spine up away from the floor, taking the body weight off the hands"***
- "Try not to move the body forward and backward too much, try to think about bending from the hips and lifting and lowering the pelvis to draw the ball in and out"***
- "Your shoulders should stay directly over your hands the whole time"***
- "As you pike up, the eyes should look back toward your knees, as you move into the plank position, eyes look straight down toward the floor"***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through and that your ribcage is up against the shoulder blades – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "Keep the elbows straight but not locked"
- "Place even weight through the hands and feet"
- "Keep even weight through both legs on the ball and keep the hips square to the floor"
- "Keep the movements flowing, try not to stop in any position"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't pike the bottom up as high"
- "Start with the ball higher up under the shins, closer to the knees"

To Make it Harder

- "Pike up as high as you can and hold at the top for a second"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Rounding the spine rather than keeping a neutral spine
- Not returning to a correct plank position – either not lowering the hips far enough down in line with the body or doing the opposite and sagging through the lower back like a hammock, the hips are too low and the lower back arches (letting the abdominals relax)
- Moving the body forward and backward ie. not keeping the shoulders directly over the hands
- Collapsing through the shoulders and letting the thoracic spine sink away from the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Locking the elbows and winging the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Shoulder blades hunching up toward the ears/overusing the Upper Trapezius muscles
- Chin sticking out/hyperextending the neck (not engaging the Deep Neck Flexors) or not keeping the correct eyeline
- Hands too close to each other or too far apart
- Not keeping the toes pointed – flexing the feet and coming up onto the balls of the feet
- Placing the ball too high or too low on the legs
- Resting into the plank position in between repetitions rather than keeping the movements flowing – letting the abdominals go and hanging off the ligaments

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Losing control of the ball or using one side of the body more than the other
- Letting the hips rotate or shift to one side
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Superb effort!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, pike the bottom up toward the ceiling, keeping the legs straight"
- "INHALE, release into a plank"

Ending the Exercise

- "… walk the hands back, rolling the body back over the ball until the feet return back to the mat and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Tucks + Ball, Plank + Ball – Level 3

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- External and Internal Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to assist with the pike, hold the plank position, keep the body lifted and prevent the lower back from arching or dipping
- Hip Flexor muscles (Iliacus, Psoas, Quadriceps Femoris) to draw the legs in (hip flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Pectoralis Major and Minor and Deltoids to hold the plank position
- Triceps to support the body weight (when the elbows are unlocked)
- Quadriceps to keep the knees straight (isometric knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to hold the plank position, keep the body lifted and prevent the lower back from arching or dipping
- Serratus Anterior to prevent the shoulder blades winging and the upper body sagging through (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Deep Neck Flexors the keep the chin tucked in and the neck long (upper cervical flexion)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check the lumbar spine position is neutral in the plank position and the lower back is not arching, it is most common to lose control when rolling the ball back out to the plank position
- Ensure that the T-Zone is tight and the abdominals are not bulging out
- Check the rib to hip/Oblique activation throughout the entire movement
- Do not pike up as high
- Have more frequent rests as needed – if the client loses their abdominal activation they may feel strain in the lower back
- Start with the ball higher up under the shins, closer to the knees
- Perform the exercise Tucks + Ball or Plank + Ball instead

Sciatica

- Avoid this exercise for clients with Sciatica as it places the body in a neural tension position

Hamstring Tightness

- As you come up into the pike, if the Hamstrings are tight this will limit the height of the pike and cause the pelvis to posteriorly tilt and the lower back to round
- Stretch the Hamstrings prior to performing this exercise
- Decrease the height of the pike

Wrist Pain

- Try with the hands a little wider and the hands turned out slightly
- Try placing a folded towel, mat or block under the heel of the hands
- Focus on placing more weight through the fingers rather than the heel of the hands
- Focus on lifting the body weight up off the hands by using the abdominals and Serratus Anterior
- Cue for Serratus Anterior activation
- Keep the elbows unlocked otherwise a lot of extra weight gets placed on the wrists
- Ensure that the body has not moved forward and that the shoulders are directly over the hips
- Start with the ball higher up under the shins, closer to the knees
- Discontinue the exercise if pain persists

Shoulder Pain

- This is not a great exercise for shoulder pain as it involves weightbearing through the arms and going into an overhead shoulder position which is quite difficult to control
- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Try with the hands a little wider apart on the mat
- Keep the elbows unlocked to help the Serratus Anterior to activate (and prevent winging)
- Start with the ball higher up under the shins, closer to the knees

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- If shoulder pain persists, try the exercise Tucks + Ball or discontinue the exercise

Neck Pain

- Check the neck position – maintain a neutral neck position with the chin tucked in and the neck long, eyes on the knees when up in the pike, on the floor when in plank
- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Keep the elbows unlocked to help the Serratus Anterior activation
- Start with the ball higher up under the shins, closer to the knees
- If neck pain persists, perform Tucks + Ball instead or discontinue the exercise

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- This is a fairly advanced exercise and not recommended for those with poor balance, vertigo or dizziness as the combination of the head being down and the instability of the ball combined with a large amount of work in the abdominals makes this exercise too dangerous

Pregnancy

- Avoid throughout pregnancy

Programming Advice

- This is a great exercise to perform after Tucks + Ball – it really challenges the abdominals and is also a fun and popular exercise
- This is challenging exercise so you do not need to perform many repetitions
- Only prescribe this exercise to clients who have great technique and endurance with Plank + Ball when the ball is under their feet, who can do Tucks + Ball well and who also have great balance, shoulder and abdominal strength
- Take care not to program too many plank exercises in a row as it can place too much pressure on the wrists

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #3: Plank
- Head Positioning #2: Plank

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Ideally hold the plank position for 10 breaths and think of cueing in a similar way to Hundreds ie. once you have cued the client into the plank position, for the next few breaths, say "INHALE, T-Zone. EXHALE, ribs to hips." Then move onto the Permission to Continue and Concentration Points.

Clients can easily lose balance and fall off the ball with this exercise – they don't have far to fall and usually will not hurt themselves if they do, but still ensure that you stand close by to assist them if necessary.

Name of Exercise

"Plank on the Knees with the Arms on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the shoulders, chest and abdominals"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Kneeling facing the ball, legs hip distance apart. Place the wrists on top of the ball, shoulder width apart, palms facing in. Bend the hips and lower the forearms onto the ball so that the elbows are under the shoulders. Shoulders down and back, upper back up against the shoulder blades. Chin tucked in and neck long, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, keeping the elbows under the shoulders, roll the ball forward and lower the pelvis down so that the body is straight in one long line between the shoulders, hips and knees. Hold this position and…"



"INHALE, concentrate on tightening the T-Zone more"

"EXHALE, draw the ribs toward the hips"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Really use the abdominals, keeping the T-Zone tight and drawing the ribs toward the hips to prevent any dipping through the back"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Keep a neutral spine with the body in one long line, make sure that the bottom isn't sticking up in the air and the back is not arching – try to look like a 'plank,' not a 'camel' or a 'hammock'"***
- "Think of lifting the spine away from the floor, taking the body weight up off the elbows"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, neck long, eyes on the ball"***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through and that your ribcage is up against the shoulder blades – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "Place even weight through the elbows and knees"
- "Keep the ball still and keep the elbows directly under the shoulders"
- "Even weight through both arms, don't let the ball roll sideways"

To Make it Easier

- "Only hold in the plank position for a few breaths and rest back down when needed"

To Make it Harder

- "Hold out in the plank for longer before resting back down"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Lifting the hips too far upwards rounding the back like a camel
- Sagging through the lower back like a hammock (letting the abdominals relax)
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowering toward the floor
- Collapsing through the shoulders and letting the thoracic spine sink away from the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Winging the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Shoulder blades hunching up toward the ears/overusing the Upper Trapezius muscles
- Chin sticking out/hyperextending the neck (not engaging the Deep Neck Flexors)
- Placing the elbows too close or far apart or placing them unevenly on the ball
- Rolling the bodyweight side to side and letting the ball move sideways
- Allowing to ball to roll forward – not keeping the elbows directly under the shoulders
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking really strong and steady! Good job!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, focus on the T-Zone"
- "EXHALE, draw the ribs to the hips"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Plank 1 (On the Knees)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques to hold the plank position, keep the body lifted and prevent the lower back from arching or dipping
- Pectoralis Major, Minor and Deltoids to hold the plank position (isometric shoulder horizontal adduction and flexion)
- Latissimus Dorsi to keep the elbows directly under the shoulders and keep the ball still (isometric shoulder extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Pectoralis Major, Minor and Deltoids to hold the plank position (isometric shoulder horizontal adduction and flexion)
- Latissimus Dorsi to keep the elbows directly under the shoulders and keep the ball still (isometric shoulder extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Serratus Anterior to prevent the shoulder blades winging and the upper body sagging through (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors the keep the chin tucked in and the neck long (upper cervical flexion)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check that the lumbar spine position is in neutral and the lower back is not arching
- If the hips are too low this can cause a lot of strain on the back
- Ensure that the T-Zone is tight and the abdominals are not bulging out
- Check the rib to hip/Oblique activation
- Have frequent rests as needed – if the client loses their abdominal activation, they may feel strain in the lower back (encourage clients to stop and reset)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that the ball is not rolling too far away from the body
- Ensure that the ball is not too large otherwise the lower back can arch

Shoulder Pain

- This is not the best choice of plank exercise for clients with shoulder pain
- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Ensure that the elbows are underneath the shoulders
- Try with the elbows a little wider apart on the ball
- If pain persists, try Plank + Ball

Neck Pain

- Check the neck position – maintain a neutral neck position with the chin tucked in and the neck long, head in line with the body and eyes on the floor
- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Cue to use the abdominals and Serratus Anterior to keep the body weight lifted up off the ball
- Keep even weight between the arms and legs
- If pain persists, try Plank + Ball or the matwork exercise, Plank 1 (On the Knees)

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- This is a fairly advanced exercise and not recommended for those with poor balance, vertigo or dizziness as the combination of the head being down and the instability of the ball combined with a large amount of work in the abdominals makes this exercise too dangerous

Knee Pain

- If a client experiences pain in kneeling, try folding over the mat or placing some padding under the knee to take the pressure off
- If pain persists, perform Reverse Plank 2 (On the Feet) + Ball or a different abdominal exercise

Pregnancy

- Avoid throughout pregnancy

Programming Advice

- Compared to performing planks on the mat or with the legs on the ball, this exercise is a lot more unstable and requires more shoulder strength
- It is an exercise favoured by men and also by women who have strong shoulders
- This exercise is best performed after other abdominal exercises
- This is quite an advanced exercise requiring significant abdominal and scapula stability
- Only prescribe this exercise to clients who are already good at the matwork exercise Plank 1 (On the Knees) and who have strong shoulders and no neck or shoulder pain
- This exercise challenges the abdominals when performed after the Supine Abdominal Series
- This exercise challenges the arm and shoulder muscles when performed after other arm and shoulder exercises

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #3: Plank
- Head Positioning #2: Plank

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Reverse Plank 2 (On the Feet) + Ball

Intensity=3 Difficulty=3.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Ideally hold the plank position for 10 breaths and think of cueing in a similar way to Hundreds ie. once you have cued the client into the plank position, for the next few breaths, say "INHALE, T-Zone. EXHALE, ribs to hips." Then move onto the Permission to Continue and Concentration Points.

Clients can easily lose balance and fall off the ball with this exercise – they don't have far to fall and usually will not hurt themselves if they do, but still ensure that you stand close by to assist them if necessary.

Name of Exercise

"Plank on the Feet with the Arms on the ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the shoulders, chest and abdominals"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up



"Kneeling facing the ball, legs hip distance apart, feet flexed. Place the wrists on top of the ball, shoulder width apart, palms facing in. Bend the hips and lower the forearms onto the ball so that the elbows are under the shoulders. Shoulders down and back, upper back up against the shoulder blades. Chin tucked in and neck long, neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, keeping the elbows under the shoulders, roll the ball forward and lift the knees up off the mat into the plank position, so that the body is straight, one long line between the shoulders, hips and knees. Hold this position and…"

"INHALE, concentrate on tightening the T-Zone more"

"EXHALE, draw the ribs toward the hips"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep holding this position and…"

Concentration Points

- "Really use the abdominals, keeping the T-Zone tight and drawing the ribs toward the hips to prevent any dipping through the back"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Keep a neutral spine with the body in one long line, make sure that the bottom isn't sticking up in the air and the back is not arching – try to look like a 'plank,' not a 'camel' or a 'hammock'"***
- "Think of lifting the spine away from the floor, taking the body weight up off the elbows"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, neck long, eyes on the ball"***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through and that your ribcage is up against the shoulder blades – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "Place even weight through the elbows and feet"
- "Keep the ball still and keep the elbows directly under the shoulders
- "Even weight through both arms, don't let the ball roll sideways"

To Make it Easier

- "Only hold in the plank position for a few breaths and rest back down when needed"
- "Lower the knees to the mat and return to Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball"

To Make it Harder

- "Hold out in the plank for longer before resting back down"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Lifting the hips too far upwards rounding the back like a camel
- Sagging through the lower back like a hammock (letting the abdominals relax)
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowering toward the floor
- Collapsing through the shoulders and letting the thoracic spine sink away from the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Winging the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Shoulder blades hunching up toward the ears/overusing the Upper Trapezius muscles
- Chin sticking out/hyperextending the neck (not engaging the Deep Neck Flexors)
- Placing the elbows too close or far apart or placing them unevenly on the ball
- Rolling the bodyweight side to side and letting the ball move sideways
- Allowing to ball to roll forward – not keeping the elbows directly under the shoulders
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Such fantastic work!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, T-Zone"
- "EXHALE, draw the ribs to the hips"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… return the knees back to the mat and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques to hold the plank position, keep the body lifted and prevent the lower back from arching or dipping

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Pectoralis Major, Minor and Deltoids to hold the plank position (isometric shoulder horizontal adduction and flexion)
- Latissimus Dorsi to keep the elbows directly under the shoulders and keep the ball still (isometric shoulder extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Serratus Anterior to prevent the shoulder blades winging and the upper body sagging through (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors the keep the chin tucked in and the neck long (upper cervical flexion)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check that the lumbar spine position is in neutral and the lower back isn't arching
- Ensure that the hips aren't too low as this can cause strain on the lower back
- Ensure that the T-Zone is tight and the abdominals are not bulging out
- Check the rib to hip/Oblique activation
- Have more frequent rests if the client is feeling strain in the lower back
- Ensure that the ball is not rolling too far away from the body
- Ensure that the ball is not too large otherwise the lower back can arch
- Perform the exercise with the knees down, Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Shoulder Pain

- This is not the best choice of plank exercise for clients with shoulder pain
- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Ensure that the elbows are underneath the shoulders
- Try with the elbows a little wider apart on the ball
- If pain persists, perform with the knees down – Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball or perform Plank + Ball

Neck Pain

- Check the neck position – maintain a neutral neck position with the chin tucked in and the neck long, head in line with the body and eyes on the floor
- Focus on the shoulder blades drawing down and back and the ribcage drawing up into the shoulder blades so they are not winging
- Cue to use the abdominals and Serratus Anterior to keep the body weight lifted up off the ball
- Keep even weight between the arms and legs
- If pain persists, perform the exercise with the knees down – Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball or perform Plank + Ball

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- This is a fairly advanced exercise and not recommended for those with poor balance, vertigo or dizziness as the combination of the head being down and the instability of the ball combined with a large amount of work in the abdominals makes this exercise too dangerous

Pregnancy

- Avoid throughout pregnancy

Programming Advice

- Compared to performing planks on the mat or with the feet on the ball, this exercise is more unstable and requires more shoulder strength
- It is an exercise favoured by men and also by women who have strong shoulders
- A good exercise to perform in a group as some clients can perform the easier version, Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball while others perform this version it on the feet
- This is quite an advanced exercise requiring significant abdominal and Scapula stability
- It is quite difficult to stabilise and not let the ball move – ensure that there is even weight through each of the elbows and that the elbows are placed evenly on the ball in the Set Up
- Often you will see the ball moving slightly or the shoulder muscles shaking as the client tries to use their shoulder muscles to keep the ball centred

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #3: Plank
- Head Positioning #2: Plank

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SUPINE BUTTOCK SERIES

Pelvic Curl Exercises with the Band

Benefits of Using the Band

- Emphasises work in the Gluteal muscles, especially if the client focuses on pressing out into the band with the thighs
- Provides more support to the pelvis and lower back by activating the buttocks
- Great for clients who tend to get cramps in their Hamstrings – since the band works the Gluteal muscles, this takes pressure off the Hamstrings and makes them less likely to cramp

Band Size

The tighter the band, the harder it makes the exercise. Ensure that clients choose a band of an appropriate length taking into account their leg (thigh) diameter and Gluteal muscle strength.

If the band is too loose, it will not provide enough resistance and the client may tend to increase their range of motion too much to compensate. If the band is too tight, it may dig into the thighs and be uncomfortable and the client may use other muscles, such as the lower back or thigh muscles to help press against the resistance.

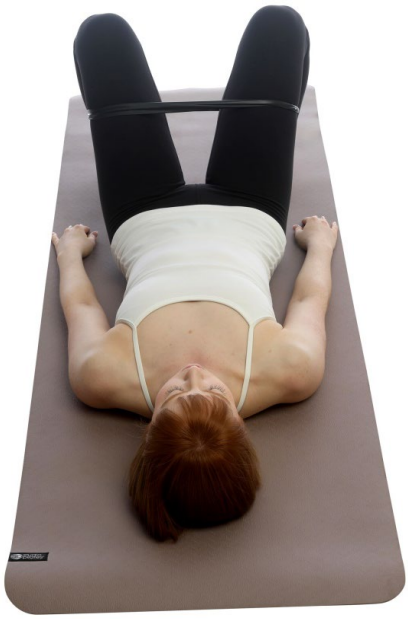
Putting the Band On

To place the band around the thighs, instruct clients to put the band around both feet and then pull it up to sit around the thighs, just above the knees.

Instruct clients to try to find the most comfortable position for the band to sit on the legs. They should try to keep the band as flat and open as possible to avoid it digging in to the thighs.



Band Flat Around Thighs (Correct)



Band Bunched Up Around Thighs (Incorrect)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Safety When Using the Band for Pelvic Curl Exercises

Generally using the band for the pelvic curl exercises is extremely safe and can often make the exercises safer due to the fact that they help the buttock muscles to activate.

Occasionally a client may feel pressure on their outer thighs where the band feels like it is digging into and hurting them. Often this can be alleviated by moving the band slightly up or down and by making sure that the band is open and flat as a rolled-up band can dig into the leg more. Loosening the band may help alleviate any pressure as well.

Some clients may feel particularly sensitive on their outer thigh and ITB area, if it is too uncomfortable, discontinue use of the band and perform the exercise without it.

Whilst most clients can safely place the band around their thighs, extra caution should be taken for clients who have the following conditions:

- Clients with hairy legs – the band can pull on the hairs and rip them out
- Elderly clients or clients with thinning skin
- Clients with varicose veins over their outer thighs
- Clients who bruise easily or have bleeding or blood clotting problems
- Clients who have very tight or sensitive ITBs

Pelvic Curl Exercises with the Circle

Benefits of Using the Circle

- Places more work through the Adductor muscles, especially if the client focuses on squeezing in on the circle with their thighs
- Squeezing the circle increases activation of the T-Zone, giving more support to the lower back
- Great for clients who tend to get cramps in their Hamstrings – since the circle works the inner thigh muscles, this takes the pressure off the Hamstrings and makes them less likely to cramp



Circle Between Inner Thighs (Correct)



Circle Between Inner Thighs (Incorrect)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Placement of the Circle

The circle is placed between the inner thighs just above the knees. Important considerations when using the circle between the thighs are:

- Never place the circle over the knee joint itself, it should be just above the knees
- The circle should be on a 45 degree angle so that the handles sit flat against the inner thighs
- The circle should be placed so that it is equal distance to both knees
- Always ensure that clients squeeze the circle evenly with both legs

Safety When Using the Circle

Generally using the circle for the Pelvic Curl Series is safe, just ensure that the clients have the circle in the correct position, it is even on both legs and are they are squeezing evenly otherwise e the circle may fly out and injure a client.

Ensure that the client is strong enough in their inner thighs to add the circle into the exercises, otherwise they may end up feeling it in their lower back or place strain on the Adductors and Pubic Bone. Signs that the client may not be strong enough to use the circle include:

- Tensing the neck and shoulders
- Holding their breath
- Losing correct technique or spinal position
- Shaking or quivering
- Unevenly squeezing the circle
- The circle slipping or moving out of place

Occasionally a client may feel pressure on their inner thighs where the circle feels like it is digging in and hurting them. Often this can be alleviated by moving the circle slightly up or down and also making sure that the circle is straight (not higher or lower on one side) as this can make the edge of the handles (rather than the flat part of the handles) press against the legs.

Some clients may feel particularly sensitive in their inner thighs and shins. If it is too uncomfortable, discontinue use of the circle and perform the exercise without it, or you can place the circle more in between the knees or ankles.

While most clients can safely place the circle between their legs, extra caution should be taken for clients who have the following conditions:

- Clients with Pubic Bone or Adductor pain
- Elderly clients or clients with thinning skin
- Clients with varicose veins over their inner thighs
- Clients who bruise easily or have bleeding or blood clotting problems

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pelvic Curl Exercises with the Ball

Benefits of Using the Ball

- Increases the work of the Hamstrings, required to prevent the ball from rolling away
- Challenges balance and stability, greater pelvic and abdominal control is required to prevent the ball from moving side to side
- Adds an element of fun to the exercises

Ball Size

It is important that the ball is the correct size for the individual. If the ball is too large, the back will arch and it will be difficult to engage the buttocks and the abdominals. If the ball is too small, it becomes extremely difficult to balance.



Correct Ball Size



Incorrect Ball Size (Ball Too Big)

Safety When Using the Ball for Pelvic Curl Exercises

The ball is used in this series to add an element of instability. As the ball is a moving surface, it is important to be selective with who you choose to give these exercises to. Clients who are elderly, have poor balance, vertigo or dizziness would not be suitable for these exercises.

Also, since the Hamstrings have to work a lot harder when using the ball, they tend to cramp more. Clients who cramp easily in their Hamstrings are better off performing the exercises on the mat.

Bridging on the Ball Exercises

The bridging on the ball exercises are a unique series to the Ball, Circle and Band Course. The exercises involve lying supine onto the ball where the ball is underneath the upper back to support the upper body and the feet are on the ground.

Benefits of the Bridging on the Ball Series

- Engages the Gluteal muscles in hip extension (a good functional position for the hip and good for clients who have hip pain in flexion positions)
- Uses the abdominal muscles and the buttock muscles together to stabilise and move the body
- Can engage the stability muscles more due to the body having to prevent the ball from moving

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Safety Considerations

There are some important safety considerations for this series. Ensure that you safely cue clients how to get into position and how to end the exercise. Ensure that you use the Concentration Points to assist with maintaining correct body position and muscle activation. Some important technical points to ensure safety are -

- Keeping the feet hip distance apart to help with balance
- Keeping the hips lifted and the buttocks squeezed to support the lower back
- Ensure that the head is supported and in line with the shoulders with the chin tucked in

While lying supine on the ball is great for improving stability and balance, be careful which clients you prescribe these exercises to as it is quite easy to fall off. Extra caution should be taken for clients who have the following conditions -

- Vertigo
- Dizziness
- Elderly
- Poor balance
- Pregnant clients

Ball Size

For this series of exercises the feet are supported on the floor, therefore the ball must be about the same height as the client's lower leg so that their body is in a horizontal line between the shoulders, hips and knees when lying supine on the ball. If the ball is too big, the back will arch and it will be difficult to engage the abdominals and Gluteal muscles.



Correct Ball Size



Incorrect Ball Size (Ball Too Big)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Band

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement. To finish the exercise, be sure to cue the clients to roll back down, one vertebra at a time.

Do not use a pillow under the neck for this exercise as it can place strain on the neck.

Note: It is important that the band is not too loose for this exercise, otherwise the legs will have to open wider than hip distance apart to feel any resistance from the band.

Name of Exercise

"Pelvic Curl with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and the back of the thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both thighs, just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet hip distance apart, knees pointing straight up. Arms resting by the sides, shoulders relaxed. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone and press out into the band slightly"



"EXHALE, tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button and roll the pelvis and the spine up off the mat one vertebra at a time, starting with the tailbone, then the lower back, rolling up onto the shoulders, neutral spine at the top"



"INHALE, hold the hips up, T-Zone"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, roll back down…"



"… imprinting the vertebrae one at a time back onto the mat"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, rolling up and down and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttocks to press out on the band, tuck the bottom under and lift the pelvis"***
- "Make sure that you are rolling the spine one vertebra at a time"***
- "Don't arch the lower back at the top – keep the abdominals tight and to maintain a neutral spine, make sure that the ribs are not popping out and are still connected toward the hips"***
- "Keep pressing the thighs out into the band, don't let the knees roll in"***
- "Really press the heels into the mat to make the buttocks work harder"***
- "Don't roll up too high – aim for the shoulder blades to be still touching the mat"
- "Try not to press through the arms to help you lift up"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't press out as hard into the band"
- "Don't roll up quite so high"

To Make it Harder

- "Press out more into the band, opening the knees wider"
- "Roll up as high as you can without arching the lower back at the top"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Lifting the body straight up rather than rolling up one vertebra at a time (unless you have specifically given this modification)
- Overusing the lower back muscles, letting the abdominals and buttock muscles go
- Overusing the Quadriceps – causes the lower back to arch and hinge up rather than rolling up
- Overusing the Hamstrings rather than the buttock muscles – can cause Hamstring cramps
- Taking the hips too high and arching the lower back
- Hunching the shoulders, pressing through the hands
- Letting the knees roll in, not pressing out enough into the band

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Opening the knees too wide and rolling onto the outside edges of the feet (T-Zone letting go)
- Using one leg more than the other, letting the pelvis twist or rotate

Encourage and Inspire

- "Awesome work with this one"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, tuck the bottom under and roll up"
- "INHALE, hold"
- "EXHALE, roll back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "EXHALE and roll the spine back down onto the mat, one vertebra at a time, and rest."

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus and Hamstrings to tuck the pelvis under and lift the pelvis off the ground (posterior pelvic tilt and hip extension)
- Gluteus Maximus, Medius and Minimus to press out into the band and stabilise the pelvis (hip abduction and external rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to tuck the pelvis under and initiate the roll up and down of the spine (lumbar and thoracic spine flexion)
- Deep Hip Rotators and Piriformis to open the knees (hip external rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking

Joint Mobility

- Increases lumbar and thoracic flexion range of movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Ensure that the band is not too tight
- Check that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work
- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary and do not lift the hips as high – only go as far as you can control the movement
- Get the client to place their thumbs on the base of their ribs and fingers on their hip bones to ensure that they maintain their rib to hip connection
- Disc Bulge – this exercise involves lumbar flexion so avoid for a lumbar spine Disc Bulge (a person with a Disc Bulge will be better choosing the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time)

Pelvic Lift with a Neutral Spine

"INHALE, T-Zone and squeeze the buttocks"



"EXHALE, lift the pelvis straight up until the shoulders, hips and knees are in one straight line"

"INHALE, hold the hips up, squeeze the buttocks"



"EXHALE, lower the pelvis back down onto the mat, maintaining a neutral spine"



Hamstring Cramps

- Often, using the band for this exercise helps prevent Hamstring cramps as the focus is more on the buttocks rather than the Hamstrings
- Alter the leg position – try with the feet closer in or further away from the bottom, or with the knees wider apart and legs externally rotated
- Choose the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the band is around the thighs and not over the knee joint
- Stretch the Quadriceps prior to performing this exercise
- Cue to use the buttocks more than the thighs throughout the movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Cue the client not to open the knees as wide
- Alter the leg and foot position – try with the feet further apart, further away from the buttocks or with the knees wider apart and legs externally rotated

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Remove any pillow or towels from under the neck for this exercise
- Check that the shoulders and neck are relaxed and in the correct position
- Do not roll up too far onto the neck (just onto the shoulder blades)
- Try not to push through the arms
- Avoid for a Disc Bulge in the neck

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable)
- Avoid after the first trimester as the client can become uncomfortable lying supine

Programming Advice

- The addition of a band for this exercise really works the buttock muscles harder
- The band helps clients who tend to cramp in their Hamstrings as it assists in activating the buttocks and in turn takes pressure off the Hamstrings
- Works well in a class setting as you can have some clients using a band and others without
- If you have a limited number of bands, a circle can also be used in the same way by placing the legs through the circle so the circle is against the outside of the thighs, above the knees
- The circle is more rigid than the band so the legs will not be able to open as far however it will work the buttock muscles in the same way



Modification with the Circle Around the Thighs

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Band

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement. To finish the exercise, be sure to cue the clients to roll back down, one vertebra at a time.

Do not use a pillow under the neck for this exercise as it can place strain on the neck.

Note: It is important that the band is not too loose for this exercise, otherwise the legs will have to open wider than hip distance apart to feel any resistance from the band.

Name of Exercise

"Pelvic Curl Openings with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and the back of the thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both thighs, just above the knees"



Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet hip distance apart, knees pointing straight up. Arms resting by the sides, shoulders relaxed. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone and press out into the band slightly"

"EXHALE, tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button and roll the pelvis and the spine up off the mat one vertebra at a time, starting with the tailbone, then the lower back, rolling up onto the shoulders, neutral spine at the top"



"INHALE, hold the hips up, T-Zone"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, open the knees, pressing out into the band"



"INHALE, release"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, pressing out into the band and…"

Concentration Points

- "Really squeeze the buttocks to open the knees out on the band and lift the pelvis up"***
- "Make sure that you are rolling the spine one vertebra at a time"***
- "Don't arch the lower back at the top – keep the abdominals tight and to maintain a neutral spine, make sure that the ribs are not popping out and are still connected toward the hips"***
- "Keep your hips up high as you open the knees – don't let your hips drop"***
- "Keep pressing the thighs out into the band, don't let the knees roll in"***
- "Really press the heels into the mat to make the buttocks work harder"***
- "Don't roll up too high – aim for the shoulder blades to be still touching the mat"
- "Try not to press through the arms to help you lift up"
- "Squeeze the buttocks and tuck the bottom under before you roll up"
- "Try to keep the feet on the floor, try not to roll out too far onto the edges of the feet"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't open the knees as wide"
- "Don't roll up quite so high"

To Make it Harder

- "Press out more into the band, opening the knees wider"
- "Roll up as high as you can without arching the lower back at the top"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the one or both hips drop as you open the knees
- Lifting the body straight up rather than rolling up one vertebra at a time (unless you have specifically given this modification)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Overusing the lower back muscles, letting the abdominals and buttock muscles go
- Overusing the Quadriceps – causes the lower back to arch and hinge up rather than rolling up
- Overusing the Hamstrings rather than the buttock muscles – can cause Hamstring cramps
- Taking the hips too high and arching the lower back
- Hunching the shoulders, pressing through the hands
- Opening the knees too wide and rolling onto the outside edges of the feet (T-Zone letting go)
- Using one leg more than the other, letting the pelvis twist or rotate

Encourage and Inspire

- "Awesome work with this one"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, tuck the bottom under and roll up"
- "INHALE, hold"
- "EXHALE, open the knees"
- "INHALE, return the knees" (open and close as many times as required)
- "EXHALE, roll back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "EXHALE, return the knees to parallel and roll the spine back down onto the mat, one vertebra at a time, and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus and Hamstrings to tuck the pelvis under and lift the pelvis off the ground (posterior pelvic tilt and hip extension)
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to open and close the knees (hip internal and external rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to tuck the pelvis under and initiate the roll up and down of the spine (lumbar and thoracic spine flexion)
- Deep Hip Rotators and Piriformis to open the knees (hip external rotation)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking

Joint Mobility

- Increases lumbar and thoracic flexion range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Ensure that the band is not too tight
- Check that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight, and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work
- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary and do not lift the hips as high – only go as far as you can control the movement
- Get the client to place their thumbs on the base of their ribs and fingers on their hip bones to ensure that they maintain their rib to hip connection
- Don't open the legs as wide
- Disc Bulge – this exercise involves lumbar flexion so avoid for a lumbar spine Disc Bulge (a person with a Disc Bulge will be better choosing the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time)

Hamstring Cramps

- Often using the band for this exercise helps prevent Hamstring cramps as the focus is more on the buttocks rather than the Hamstrings
- Alter the leg position – try with the feet closer in or further away from the bottom, or with the knees wider apart and legs externally rotated
- Choose the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time

Knee Pain

- Take care using this exercise for clients with medial knee pain
- Ensure that the band is around the thighs and not over the knee joint
- Stretch the Quadriceps prior to doing this exercise
- Cue to use the buttocks more than the thighs throughout the movement
- Alter the leg and foot position – try with the feet further apart, further away from the buttocks or with the knees wider apart and legs externally rotated

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Remove any pillow or towels from under the neck for this exercise
- Check the shoulders and neck are relaxed and in the correct position
- Do not roll up too far onto the neck (just onto the shoulder blades)
- Try not to push through the arms

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Avoid for a Disc Bulge in the neck

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable)
- Avoid after the first trimester as the client can become uncomfortable lying supine

Programming Advice

- The addition of a band for this exercise really works the buttock muscles harder as well as limiting the range of movement when opening the legs, facilitating correct technique
- The band helps clients who tend to cramp in their Hamstrings as it assists in activating the buttocks and in turn takes pressure off the Hamstrings
- Perform after Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Band for a great buttock workout
- A great way to challenge the stronger clients in a group class
- If you have a limited number of bands, a circle can also be used in the same way by placing the legs through the circle so the circle is against the outside of the thighs, above the knees
- The circle is more rigid than the band so the legs will not be able to open as far however it will work the buttocks muscles in the same way

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Circle

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement. To finish the exercise, be sure to cue the clients to roll back down, one vertebra at a time.

Do not use a pillow under the neck for this exercise as it can place strain on the neck.

Name of Exercise

"Pelvic Curl Openings with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet hip distance apart, place the circle between the thighs just above the knees. Arms resting by the sides, shoulders relaxed. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone and squeeze the circle"



"EXHALE, tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button and roll the pelvis and the spine up off the mat one vertebra at a time, starting with the tailbone, then the lower back, rolling up onto the shoulders, neutral spine at the top"



"INHALE, hold the hips up, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, roll the spine back down…"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"… imprinting the vertebrae one at a time back onto the mat"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, squeezing the circle and…"

Concentration Points

- "Really squeeze the buttocks to tuck the bottom under and lift the pelvis up"***
- "Use both inner thighs evenly to squeeze in on the circle the whole time"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the hips even"***
- "Make sure that you are rolling the spine one vertebra at a time"***
- "Don't arch the lower back at the top – keep the abdominals tight and to maintain a neutral spine, make sure that the ribs are not popping out and are still connected toward the hips"***
- "Really press the heels into the mat to make the buttocks work harder"***
- "Keep the knees pointing straight up toward the ceiling"***
- "Don't roll up too high – aim for the shoulder blades to be still touching the mat"
- "Try not to press through the arms to help you lift up"
- "Try to keep the feet on the floor, try not to roll out too far onto the edges of the feet"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't squeeze as hard on the circle"
- "Don't roll up quite so high"

To Make it Harder

- "Squeeze the circle as hard as you can the whole time"
- "Roll up as high as you can without arching the lower back at the top"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Lifting the body straight up rather than rolling up one vertebra at a time (unless you have specifically given this modification)
- Overusing the lower back muscles, letting the abdominals and buttock muscles go
- Overusing the Quadriceps – causes the lower back to arch and hinge up rather than rolling up
- Overusing the Hamstrings rather than the buttock muscles – can cause Hamstring cramps
- Taking the hips too high and arching the lower back
- Hunching the shoulders, pressing through the hands
- Not squeezing hard enough on the circle
- Using one leg more than the other, letting the pelvis twist or rotate
- Not having the circle even between the thighs

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Awesome work"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, tuck the bottom under and roll up"
- "INHALE, hold"
- "EXHALE, roll back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "EXHALE and roll the spine back down onto the mat, one vertebra at a time, and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus and Hamstrings to tuck the pelvis under and lift the pelvis off the ground (posterior pelvic tilt and hip extension)
- Adductors to squeeze the circle and bring the knees closer together (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to tuck the pelvis under and initiate the roll up and down of the spine (lumbar and thoracic spine flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking

Joint Mobility

- Increases lumbar and thoracic flexion range of movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Check to see that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work
- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary and do not lift the hips as high – only go as far as you can control the movement
- Get the client to place their thumbs on the base of their ribs and fingers on their hip bones to ensure that they maintain their rib to hip connection
- Do not squeeze as hard on the circle or remove the circle
- Disc Bulge – this exercise involves lumbar flexion so avoid for a lumbar spine Disc Bulge (a person with a Disc Bulge will be better choosing the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time)

<u>Pelvic Lift with a Neutral Spine</u>

"INHALE, T-Zone and squeeze the buttocks"



"EXHALE, lift the pelvis straight up until the shoulders, hips and knees are in one straight line"

"INHALE, hold the hips up, squeeze the buttocks"



"EXHALE, lower the pelvis back down onto the ball, maintaining a neutral spine"



Hamstring Cramps

- Alter the leg position – try with the feet closer in or further away from the bottom
- Choose the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time
- Remove the circle or try using a band instead

Knee Pain

- Avoid this exercise for medial knee pain
- Ensure that the circle is not against the knee joint itself
- Stretch the Quadriceps prior to performing this exercise
- Cue to use the buttocks more than the thighs throughout the movement
- Alter the leg and foot position – try with the feet further away from the buttocks or closer in

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Remove the circle or discontinue the exercise

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Avoid or take care for clients with these issues as pressing in on the circle uses the Adductors and can place strain on the Pubic Symphysis joint
- Ensure that the circle is even between the legs and press evenly with both legs
- Keep the T-Zone tight and focus on the hip bones drawing across toward each other
- Don't press as hard on the circle or remove the circle

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Remove any pillow or towels from under the neck for this exercise
- Check that the shoulders and neck are relaxed and in the correct position
- Do not roll up too far onto the neck (just onto the shoulder blades)
- Try not to push through the arms
- Avoid for a Disc Bulge in the neck

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable)
- Avoid after the first trimester as the client can become uncomfortable lying supine

Programming Advice

- The addition of the circle for this exercise really works the inner thigh muscles as well as improving activation of the T-Zone
- Good to program before or after Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle as the circle is in the same position between the thighs
- Perform before Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Circle for a great buttock and inner thigh workout
- Take care if programming too many circle exercises in a row as it can become quite tough on the inner thigh muscles

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Circle

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement. To finish the exercise, be sure to cue the clients to roll back down, one vertebra at a time.

Do not use a pillow under the neck for this exercise as it can place strain on the neck.

Name of Exercise

"Pelvic Curl Openings with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet hip distance apart, place the circle between the thighs just above the knees. Arms resting by the sides, shoulders relaxed. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone and squeeze the circle slightly"



"EXHALE, tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button and roll the pelvis and the spine up off the mat one vertebra at a time, starting with the tailbone, then the lower back, rolling up onto the shoulders, neutral spine at the top"



"INHALE, hold the hips up, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, squeeze the circle"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"INHALE, release the circle"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, squeezing the circle and…"

Concentration Points

- "Really squeeze the buttocks to tuck the bottom under and lift the pelvis up"***
- "Use both inner thighs evenly to squeeze in on the circle"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and release the circle with control"***
- "Make sure that you are rolling the spine one vertebra at a time"***
- "Don't arch the lower back at the top – keep the abdominals tight and to maintain a neutral spine, make sure that the ribs are not popping out and are still connected toward the hips"***
- "Keep your hips up high as you open the knees – don't let your hips drop"***
- "Really press the heels into the mat to make the buttocks work harder"***
- "Don't roll up too high – aim for the shoulder blades to be still touching the mat"
- "Try not to press through the arms to help you lift up"
- "Squeeze the buttocks and tuck the bottom under before you roll up"
- "Try to keep the feet on the floor, try not to roll out too far onto the edges of the feet"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't squeeze as hard on the circle"
- "Don't roll up quite so high"

To Make it Harder

- "Squeeze the circle harder"
- "Don't release the circle as much between squeezes"
- "Roll up as high as you can without arching the lower back at the top"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the one or both hips drop as you open the knees
- Lifting the body straight up rather than rolling up one vertebra at a time (unless you have specifically given this modification)
- Overusing the lower back muscles, letting the abdominals and buttock muscles go
- Overusing the Quadriceps – causes the lower back to arch and hinge up rather than rolling up
- Overusing the Hamstrings rather than the buttock muscles – can cause Hamstring cramps
- Taking the hips too high and arching the lower back
- Hunching the shoulders, pressing through the hands
- Not squeezing hard enough on the circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Using one leg more than the other, letting the pelvis twist or rotate
- Not having the circle even between the thighs

Encourage and Inspire

- "Awesome work with this one"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, tuck the bottom under and roll up"
- "INHALE, hold"
- "EXHALE, squeeze the circle"
- "INHALE, release the circle" (open and close as many times as required)
- "EXHALE, roll back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "EXHALE, maintain the squeeze on the circle, keeping the knees parallel and roll the spine back down onto the mat, one vertebra at a time, and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus and Hamstrings to tuck the pelvis under and lift the pelvis off the ground (posterior pelvic tilt and hip extension)
- Adductors to squeeze the circle and bring the knees closer together (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to tuck the pelvis under and initiate the roll up and down of the spine (lumbar and thoracic spine flexion)
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus, Deep Hip Rotators and Piriformis to open the knees (hip external rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Joint Mobility

- Increases lumbar and thoracic flexion range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Check to see that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work
- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary and do not lift the hips as high – only go as far as you can control the movement
- Get the client to place their thumbs on the base of their ribs and fingers on their hip bones to ensure that they maintain their rib to hip connection
- Disc Bulge – this exercise involves lumbar flexion so avoid for a lumbar spine Disc Bulge (a person with a Disc Bulge will be better choosing the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time)

Hamstring Cramps

- Alter the leg position – try with the feet closer in or further away from the bottom
- Choose the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time
- Remove the circle or try using a band instead

Knee Pain

- Avoid this exercise for medial knee pain
- Ensure that the circle is not against the knee joint itself
- Stretch the Quadriceps prior to performing this exercise
- Cue to use the buttocks more than the thighs throughout the movement
- Alter the leg and foot position – try with the feet further away from the buttocks or closer in
- Remove the circle or discontinue the exercise

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Avoid or take care for clients with these issues as pressing in on the circle uses the Adductors and can place strain on the Pubic Symphysis joint
- Ensure that the circle is even between the legs and press evenly with both legs
- Keep the T-Zone tight and focus on the hip bones drawing across toward each other
- Don’t press as hard on the circle or remove the circle

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Remove any pillow or towels from under the neck for this exercise
- Check that the shoulders and neck are relaxed and in the correct position
- Do not roll up too far onto the neck (just onto the shoulder blades)
- Try not to push through the arms
- Avoid for a Disc Bulge in the neck

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable)
- Avoid after the first trimester as the client can become uncomfortable lying supine

Programming Advice

- The addition of the circle for this exercise really works the inner thigh muscles as well as improving activation of the T-Zone
- Perform this exercise after Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Circle for a great buttock and inner thigh workout
- If programming this exercise after Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Circle, you may not need to perform a full demonstration and instead use arm gestures to show the squeezing and releasing movement while performing a full cue

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement. To finish the exercise, be sure to cue the clients to roll back down, one vertebra at a time.

Do not use a pillow under the neck for this exercise as it can place strain on the neck.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Name of Exercise

"Pelvic Curl with the Feet on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and the back of the thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the feet on the ball hip distance apart, soles of the feet pressing down on top of the ball, knees pointing straight up. Arms resting by the sides, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the buttocks"

"EXHALE, keeping the ball still, push down onto the ball, tucking the Pubic Bone toward the belly button and roll the pelvis and spine up off the ball one vertebra at a time, starting with the tailbone, then the lower back, rolling up onto the shoulders"



"INHALE, hold the hips up, squeezing the buttocks, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, keep the ball still and roll back down…"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"… imprinting the vertebrae one at a time back onto the mat"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttocks and tuck the bottom under before you roll up"***
- "Make sure that you are rolling the spine up and down one vertebra at a time"***
- "Don't arch the lower back at the top – keep the abdominals tight and to maintain a neutral spine, make sure that the ribs are not popping out and are still connected toward the hips"***
- "Don't roll up too high – aim for the shoulder blades to be still touching the mat"***
- "Really press the feet down onto the ball to make the buttocks work harder"***
- "Keep thinking about bending the knees and pushing up on the ball, drawing the heels in toward the bottom to keep the ball still throughout the movement"***
- "Keep your hips at even height – don't let one hip drop"
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to keep the hips centred and stop the ball from moving side to side"
- "Keep the knees pointing straight up toward the ceiling and press evenly though both legs"
- "Try not to press through the arms to help you lift up, shoulders down and back"
- "Think of drawing the heels in toward the buttocks to keep the ball still"
- "Focus on keeping the ball still as you roll up and down"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't roll up quite so high"

To Make it Harder

- "Roll up as high as you can without arching the lower back at the top"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Lifting the body straight up rather than rolling up one vertebra at a time (unless you have specifically given this modification)
- Overusing the lower back muscles, letting the abdominals and buttock muscles go
- Overusing the Quadriceps – causes the lower back to arch and hinge up rather than rolling up
- Overusing the Hamstrings rather than the buttock muscles – can cause Hamstring cramps
- Lifting the hips too high and arching the lower back
- Losing control of the ball and/or T-Zone and letting the hips move laterally
- Letting the ball roll away, letting the bottom sag or the back arch
- Losing balance and falling off the ball
- Letting one hip drop so that the pelvis isn't square to the floor
- Rolling the knees in or out, rather than keeping them pointing straight up toward the ceiling

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Hunching the shoulders, pressing through the hands
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's great spinal control everyone!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, tuck the bottom under and roll up"
- "INHALE, hold"
- "EXHALE, roll back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "EXHALE, holding the ball still, roll the spine back down onto the mat, one vertebra at a time, and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus and Hamstrings to tuck the pelvis under and lift the pelvis off the ground (posterior pelvic tilt and hip extension)
- Hamstrings to keep the knees bent and the ball still (knee flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to tuck the pelvis under and initiate the roll up and down of the spine (lumbar and thoracic spine flexion) and prevent the lower back from arching

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking

Joint Mobility

- Increases lumbar and thoracic flexion range of movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Ensure that the ball is the correct size
- Check that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work
- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary and do not lift the hips as high – only go as far as you can control the movement
- Get the client to place their thumbs on the base of their ribs and fingers on their hip bones to ensure that they maintain their rib to hip connection
- Try moving the ball in closer or further away from the bottom before rolling up
- If pain persists, remove the ball and perform on the mat, or discontinue the exercise
- Disc Bulge – this exercise involves lumbar flexion so avoid for a lumbar spine Disc Bulge (a person with a Disc Bulge will be better choosing the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time)

<u>Pelvic Lift with a Neutral Spine</u>

"INHALE, T-Zone and squeeze the buttocks"



"EXHALE, lift the pelvis straight up until the shoulders, hips and knees are in one straight line"

"INHALE, hold the hips up, squeeze the buttocks"



"EXHALE, lower the pelvis back down onto the ball, maintaining a neutral spine"



Hamstring Cramps

- Alter the leg position – try with the knees wider apart and legs externally rotated
- Try moving the ball in closer or further away from the body
- Choose the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time
- If pain persists, remove the ball and perform on the mat, add a band or circle around the outside of the thighs or discontinue the exercise

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



Modification with the Band Around the Thighs

Calf Cramps or Foot Cramps

- Press down through the heels rather than the soles of the feet

Knee Pain

- If a client is too tight in the Quadriceps, they may feel pain at the front of their knees
- Open the knees wider and externally rotate the legs to take the Quadriceps off stretch
- Stretch the Quadriceps prior to performing this exercise
- Cue to use the buttocks more than the thighs throughout the movement
- Think about pressing down with the heels/arches into the ball and lifting the hips up
- Try moving the ball in closer or further away from the body

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- This exercise is harder on the neck than the matwork variation as you have to roll the body up higher, placing the neck in more flexion
- Remove any pillow or towels from under the neck for this exercise
- Check that the shoulders and neck are relaxed and in the correct position
- Do not roll up too far onto the neck (just onto the shoulder blades)
- Try not to push through the arms
- Avoid for a Disc Bulge in the neck

Poor Balance

- While this exercise helps to improve balance, it is not recommended for clients with terrible balance or the elderly as they can easily fall off

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable)
- Avoid after the first trimester as the client can become uncomfortable lying supine

Programming Advice

- Performing Pelvic Curl on the ball works the Hamstrings more than when performing it on the mat because the Hamstrings have to work hard to keep the ball still
- The further away the ball is from the bottom, the harder it is to balance and the more the Hamstrings work

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- This is an excellent exercise to improve balance and stability
- Ensure that the feet are placed in the correct position, evenly spaced, on top of the ball – otherwise balance may be an issue
- For a large group, you could give the whole group Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) on the mat while a few clients perform Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball as a progression
- This is a great exercise for clients with a Lordosis as it focusses on working the Hamstrings, buttock muscles and abdominals and facilitates spinal flexion, reversing the Lordosis
- A great exercise for body awareness and learning not to arch the lower back

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl
- Ball Positioning #1: Preventing the Ball from Moving

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement. To finish the exercise, be sure to cue the clients to roll back down, one vertebra at a time.

Do not use a pillow under the neck for this exercise as it can place strain on the neck.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Name of Exercise

"Pelvic Curl Openings with the Feet on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and the back of the thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the feet on the ball hip distance apart, soles of the feet pressing down on top of the ball, knees pointing straight up. Arms resting by the sides, shoulder blades down and back, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the buttocks"

"EXHALE, keep the ball still, push down onto the ball, tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button and roll the pelvis and spine up off the ball one vertebra at a time, starting with the tailbone, then the lower back, rolling up onto the shoulders. Neutral spine at the top"



"INHALE, hold the hips up, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, open the knees"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying pr*

"INHALE, close the knees"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, opening and closing the knees and…"

Concentration Points

- "Really squeeze the buttocks to open the knees and keep the pelvis up"***
- "Don't arch the lower back at the top – keep the abdominals tight and to maintain a neutral spine, make sure that the ribs are not popping out and are still connected toward the hips"***
- "Keep your hips up as you open/close the knees – don't let your hips drop"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to keep the hips centred and stop the ball from moving side to side"
- "Don't roll up too high – aim for the shoulder blades to be still touching the ball"***
- "Really press the heels down onto the ball to make the buttocks work harder"***
- "Keep thinking about bending the knees, drawing the heels in toward the bottom to keep the ball still throughout the movement"***
- "Try to keep the soles of the feet flat on the ball, try not to roll out onto the edges of the feet or twist the feet – the movement should come from the buttocks"
- "Try not to press through the arms to help you lift up, shoulders down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Roll back down if you need a rest, then roll back up and continue with the openings"
- "Don't roll up quite so high and don't open the knees as wide"

To Make it Harder

- "Roll up as high as you can without arching the lower back at the top"
- "Open the knees a little wider (but only so wide that the hips don't drop)"
- "Be sure to keep the ball completely still the whole time"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the ball roll away, letting the bottom sag or the back arch
- Letting one or both hips drop as you open the knees
- Lifting the body straight up rather than rolling up one vertebra at a time (unless you have specifically given this modification)
- Overusing the lower back muscles, letting the abdominals and buttock muscles go
- Overusing the Quadriceps – causes the lower back to arch and hinge up rather than rolling up
- Overusing the Hamstrings rather than the buttock muscles – can cause Hamstring cramps
- Lifting the hips too high and arching the lower back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Twisting/turning the feet or rolling onto the edges of the feet/ankles
- Hunching the shoulders, pressing through the hands
- Opening the knees too wide and rolling onto the outside edges of the feet (T-Zone letting go)
- Losing control of the ball and/or T-Zone and letting the hips move laterally
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Awesome work with this one"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, open the knees"
- "INHALE, return the knees"

Ending the Exercise

- "EXHALE, holding the ball still, roll the spine back down onto the mat, one vertebra at a time, and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus and Hamstrings to tuck the pelvis under and lift the pelvis off the ground (posterior pelvic tilt and hip extension)
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to open and close the knees (hip internal and external rotation)
- Hamstrings to keep the knees bent and the ball still (knee flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to tuck the pelvis under and initiate the roll up and down of the spine (lumbar and thoracic spine flexion) and prevent the lower back from arching
- Deep Hip Rotators and Piriformis to open the knees (hip external rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking and the knees from rolling inward

Joint Mobility

- Increases lumbar and thoracic flexion range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Ensure that the ball is the correct size
- Check that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work
- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary and do not lift the hips as high – only go as far as you can control the movement
- Get the client to place their thumbs on the base of their ribs and fingers on their hip bones to ensure that they maintain their rib to hip connection
- Don't open the legs too wide
- Perform only a few repetitions then roll the spine back down to the mat to reset
- Try moving the ball in closer or further away from the body
- If pain persists, remove the ball and perform on the mat, or discontinue the exercise
- Disc Bulge – this exercise involves lumbar flexion so avoid for a lumbar spine Disc Bulge (a person with a Disc Bulge will be better choosing the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time)

Hamstring Cramps

- Alter the leg position – try with the knees wider apart and legs externally rotated
- Try moving the ball in closer or further away from the body
- Choose the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time
- If pain persists, remove the ball and perform on the mat, add a band or circle or discontinue the exercise altogether



Modification with the Band Around the Thighs



Modification with the Circle Between the Thighs

Calf Cramps or Foot Cramps

- Press down through the heels rather than the soles of the feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Knee Pain

- Avoid this exercise for medial knee pain
- If a client is too tight in the Quadriceps, they may feel pain at the front of their knees
- Open the knees wider and externally rotate the legs to take the Quadriceps off stretch
- Stretch the Quadriceps prior to performing this exercise
- Limit the range of movement when opening the legs
- Cue to use the buttocks more than the thighs throughout the movement
- Ensure that the heels are on the top of the ball to help engage the Hamstrings, if the feet are too low down on the ball, it will bias the Quadriceps
- Try moving the ball in closer or further away from the body

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- This exercise is harder on the neck than the matwork variation as you have to roll the body up higher, placing the neck in more flexion
- Remove any pillow or towels from under the neck for this exercise
- Check that the shoulders and neck are relaxed and in the correct position
- Do not roll up too far onto the neck (just onto the shoulder blades)
- Try not to push through the arms
- Avoid for a Disc Bulge in the neck

Poor Balance

- While this exercise helps to improve balance, it is not recommended for clients with terrible balance or the elderly as they can easily fall off

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable)
- Avoid after the first trimester as the client can become uncomfortable lying supine

Programming Advice

- Performing Pelvic Curl on the ball works the Hamstrings more than when performing it on the mat because the Hamstrings have to work hard to keep the ball still
- This is an excellent exercise to improve balance and stability
- Ensure that the feet are placed in the correct position, evenly spaced, on top of the ball – otherwise balance may be an issue
- Perform this exercise after Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball for a great buttock workout
- If programming this exercise after Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball, you may not need to perform a full demonstration for Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball instead use arm gestures to show the opening movement while performing a full cue
- For a large group, you could give the whole group to Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) on the mat while a few clients perform Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball as a progression

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl
- Ball Positioning #1: Preventing the Ball from Moving

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift) + Ball

Intensity=4 Difficulty=3.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement. To finish the exercise, be sure to cue the clients to roll back down, one vertebra at a time.

Do not use a pillow under the neck for this exercise as it can place strain on the neck.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Name of Exercise

"Pelvic Curl with the Feet on the Ball, Single Leg Lift"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and the back of the thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the feet on the ball, slightly closer than hip distance apart, soles of the feet pressing down on top of the ball, knees pointing straight up. Arms resting by the sides, shoulder blades down and back, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the buttocks"



"EXHALE, keeping the ball still, tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button and roll the pelvis and spine up off the ball one vertebra at a time, starting with the tailbone, then the lower back, rolling up onto the shoulders, neutral spine at the top"

"INHALE, squeeze the buttocks, press one foot down onto the ball, T-Zone"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, extend the other leg straight up toward the ceiling, toes pointed"





"INHALE, return the foot to the ball"

"Alternate sides"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, alternating sides, and…"

Concentration Points

- "Make sure that you roll the spine up one vertebra at a time"***
- "Squeeze the buttocks and tuck the bottom under before you roll up"***
- "Really press the heel down onto the ball, squeezing the buttocks before you lift the leg"***
- "Squeeze the stabilising leg buttocks – don't let the hip/s drop as you lift/lower the leg"***
- "Point and reach through the toes toward the ceiling to help keep the hips high"***
- "Don't arch the lower back at the top – keep the abdominals tight and to maintain a neutral spine, make sure that the ribs are not popping out and are still connected toward the hips"***
- "Don't roll up too high – aim for the shoulder blades to be still touching the mat" ***
- "Keep thinking about bending the knee of the leg on the ball, drawing the heel in toward the bottom to keep the ball still throughout the movement"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to keep the hips centred and stop the ball from moving side to side"
- "Keep the bent knee pointing straight up toward the ceiling, don't let it roll in or out"
- "Try to place the feet down with control"
- "Try not to press through the arms to help you, shoulders down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't roll up quite so high"
- "You can lift one leg, lower it and roll back down, then roll back up and lift the other leg"
- "Continue with Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball instead of lifting the leg"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

To Make it Harder

- "Roll up as high as you can without arching the lower back at the top"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting one or both hips drop as you extend the leg
- Laterally flexing through the waist as the leg lifts (to appear to keep the hips up)
- Losing control of the ball and/or T-Zone and letting the hips move laterally
- Losing balance and falling off the ball
- Lifting the body straight up rather than rolling up one vertebra at a time (unless you have specifically given this modification)
- Overusing the lower back muscles, letting the abdominals and buttock muscles go
- Overusing the Quadriceps or Hamstrings rather than the buttock muscles on the stabilising leg – this usually means the buttock muscles are not working effectively and leads to the pelvis dropping or rotating as the leg lifts
- Lifting the hips too high and arching the lower back
- Not pointing the toes – pointing and reaching through the toes encourages the hips to lift up/maintain their height
- Hunching the shoulders, pressing through the hands
- Letting the ball roll away, letting the bottom sag or the back arch
- Rolling the knees in or out, rather than keeping them pointing straight up toward the ceiling
- Placing the feet back down on the ball in the wrong position (too narrow or too wide) which will cause the weight to shift and the ball to move

Encourage and Inspire

- "Really great work extending those legs!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, extend one leg up to the ceiling"
- "INHALE, return the leg to the ball"

Ending the Exercise

- "EXHALE, place both feet back onto the ball, holding the ball still roll the spine back down onto the mat, one vertebra at a time, and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus and Hamstrings to tuck the pelvis under and lift the pelvis off the ground (posterior pelvic tilt and hip extension)
- Gluteus Maximus of the supporting leg to keep the hips high as the leg lifts (hip extension)
- Hamstrings to keep the knee bent and the ball still (knee flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to tuck the pelvis under and initiate the roll up and down of the spine (lumbar and thoracic spine flexion) and prevent the lower back from arching
- Hip Flexors and Quadriceps to lift the leg and extend the knee (hip flexion and knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back
- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking and the knee from rolling inward

Joint Mobility

- Increases lumbar and thoracic flexion range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Ensure that the ball is the correct size
- Be very careful of this exercise for anyone with lower back pain as it is a difficult to stabilise
- Cue to squeeze the buttock of the stabilising leg and ensure that one or both hips don't drop as the leg lifts – avoid this exercise if the client can't maintain the stability
- Check that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work
- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary and do not lift the hips as high – only go as far as you can control the movement
- Get the client to place their thumbs on the base of their ribs and fingers on their hip bones to ensure that they maintain their rib to hip connection
- Try moving the ball in closer or further away from the body
- If pain persists, remove the ball and perform on the mat, or discontinue the exercise
- Disc Bulge – this exercise involves lumbar flexion so avoid for a lumbar spine Disc Bulge (a person with a Disc Bulge will be better choosing the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hamstring Cramps

- Cue to squeeze the buttocks to stabilise as the leg lifts rather than the Hamstring, if the client isn't using their buttocks enough they will over use their Hamstrings and they can then cramp
- Try moving the ball in closer or further away from the body
- Choose the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time
- If pain persists, discontinue the exercise or try it on the mat instead

Calf Cramps or Foot Cramps

- Press down through the heels rather than the soles of the feet

Knee Pain

- This exercise often needs to be avoided for clients with knee pain
- Try placing ball slightly further away or closer in to see if this helps

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- This exercise is harder on the neck than the matwork variation as you have to roll the body up higher, placing the neck in more flexion
- Remove any pillow or towels from under the neck for this exercise
- Check that the shoulders and neck are relaxed and in the correct position
- Do not roll up too far onto the neck (just onto the shoulder blades)
- Try not to push through the arms as you lift the leg
- Avoid for a Disc Bulge in the neck

Poor Balance

- This exercise is not recommended for those with poor balance as it is very difficult stability wise and easy to lose balance and fall off

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable)
- Avoid after the first trimester as the client can become uncomfortable lying supine

Programming Advice

- This exercise is a lot harder on the ball than on the mat as the ball makes is very unstable plus the Hamstrings have to work hard to prevent the ball from rolling away
- Only prescribe to clients who can easily perform the matwork variation with perfect technique
- This is an advanced exercise in which many clients have poor technique
- Encourage clients to slow the movement down and focus on control
- Perform this exercise after Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball for a challenge
- If teaching a large group, you could give the whole group Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift) on the mat while a few clients perform Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift) + Ball as a progression

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes
- Ball Positioning #1: Preventing the Ball from Moving

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hamstring Curl 1 (Double Leg) + Ball

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement. To finish the exercise, be sure to cue the clients to roll back down, one vertebra at a time.

Please note that the breathing differs to the Pelvic Curls in that you INHALE to roll the spine back down.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Name of Exercise

"Hamstring Curl with the Feet on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and the back of the thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the feet on the ball hip distance apart, soles of the feet pressing down on top of the ball, knees pointing straight up. Arms resting by the sides, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the buttocks"

"EXHALE, tuck the Pubic Bone toward the belly button and…"



"… roll the pelvis and spine up off the mat one vertebra at a time, keeping the ball still, squeeze the buttocks"



"INHALE, roll the ball out, straightening the knees"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, bend the knees, rolling the ball back in'



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, rolling the ball in and out, and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttocks and tuck the bottom under as you roll up and to keep the hips up"***
- "Make sure that you are rolling the spine up and down one vertebra at a time"***
- "Keep the body in one long line – don't arch the lower back at the top – keep the abdominals tight and to maintain a neutral spine, make sure that the ribs are not popping out and are still connected toward the hips"***
- "Don't roll up too high – aim for the shoulder blades to be still touching the mat"***
- "Keep the hips lifted as the ball rolls back in, tucking the Pubic Bone to the belly button"***
- "Keep your hips at even height – don't let one hip drop"***
- "Use both legs evenly to control the ball"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to keep the hips centred and stop the ball from moving side to side"
- "Use the Hamstrings to stop the ball from rolling out too far and to roll it back in"***
- "Keep the knees pointing straight up toward the ceiling and press evenly though both legs"
- "Keep the ball still while rolling up and down"
- "Really press the heels down onto the ball to make the buttocks work harder"
- "Keep the knees pointing straight up toward the ceiling, don't let them roll in or out"
- "Try not to press through the arms, shoulders down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't roll up quite so high"
- "Don't roll the ball out as far"
- "You can come back in and roll back down to re-set after each repetition"

To Make it Harder

- "Keep the curl up and continue to roll the ball in and out for a number of repetitions without rolling back down in between"
- "Roll up as high as you can without arching the lower back"
- "Be sure to keep the ball completely still as you roll up and down"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Lifting the body straight up rather than rolling up one vertebra at a time
- Not keeping the hips up as the ball rolls back in
- Straightening the legs all the way, locking the knees out and resting on an arched back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Overusing the lower back muscles, letting the abdominals and buttock muscles go
- Overusing the Quadriceps – causes the lower back to arch and hinge up rather than rolling up
- Overusing the Hamstrings rather than the buttock muscles – can cause Hamstring cramps
- Lifting the hips too high and arching the lower back
- Losing control of the ball and/or T-Zone and letting the hips move laterally
- Letting one hip drop so that the pelvis isn't square to the floor
- Hunching the shoulders, pressing through the hands
- Letting the ball roll away without control, letting the bottom sag or the back arch
- Rolling the knees in or out, rather than keeping them pointing straight up toward the ceiling
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking strong everyone! Keep those hips up"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, tuck the bottom under and roll up"
- "INHALE, hold the hips up and roll the ball away"
- "EXHALE, bend the knees, rolling the ball back in"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and roll the ball all the way back in and INHALE, holding the ball still, roll the spine back down onto the mat, one vertebra at a time, and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus and Hamstrings to tuck the pelvis under and lift the pelvis up off the ground (posterior pelvic tilt and hip extension)
- Hamstrings to roll the ball in and out (knee flexion and eccentrically control knee extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to tuck the pelvis under and initiate the roll up and down of the spine (lumbar and thoracic spine flexion) and prevent the lower back from arching

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back

Joint Mobility

- Increases lumbar and thoracic flexion range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Ensure that the ball is the correct size
- Check that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work
- Cue clients to roll the ball back in and roll back down and re-set after every repetition or if they start to feel it in their back
- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary and do not lift the hips as high
- Make sure that clients only roll the ball out as far as they can control the movement
- Get the client to place their thumbs on the base of their ribs and fingers on their hip bones to ensure that they maintain their rib to hip connection
- Disc Bulge – this exercise involves lumbar flexion so avoid for a lumbar spine Disc Bulge (a person with a Disc Bulge will be better choosing the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time)
- If pain persists, try Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball or remove the ball and perform Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) on the mat instead

Hamstring Cramps

- Alter the leg position – try with the knees wider apart and legs externally rotated
- The Hamstrings tend to cramp most when the knees are bent, so try to avoid rolling the ball all the way back in toward the body
- Choose the modification with the straight back, maintaining a neutral spine instead of curling up one vertebra at a time
- Ensure that clients come back in to roll down and re-set after every repetition or before they start to feel it cramping

Calf Cramps or Foot Cramps

- Press down through the heels rather than the soles of the feet

Knee Pain

- If a client is too tight in the Quadriceps, they may feel pain at the front of their knees
- Open the knees wider and externally rotate the legs to take the Quadriceps off stretch
- Stretch the Quadriceps prior to performing this exercise
- Ensure that the soles of the feet are on the top of the ball to help engage the Hamstrings, if the feet are too low down on the ball, it will bias the Quadriceps

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Cue to use the buttocks more than the thighs throughout the movement

Neck Pain or Cervical Disc Injuries

- Remove any pillow or towels from under the neck for this exercise
- Check that the shoulders and neck are relaxed and in the correct position
- Do not roll up too far onto the neck (just onto the shoulder blades)
- Try not to push through the arms
- Encourage clients to roll the ball back in, roll down and re-set after a few repetitions in order to give the neck a break
- Avoid for a Disc Bulge in the neck

Poor Balance

- While this is a great exercise to improve the balance, it is quite difficult and not recommended for anyone who has poor balance as it is quite an unstable exercise and clients can easily fall

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable)
- Avoid after the first trimester as the client can become uncomfortable lying supine

Programming Advice

- This exercise gives an intense Hamstrings workout and really challenges balance and stability – only prescribe it to clients who are already good at performing Pelvic Curls on the ball
- Clients with a Lordosis may find it hard to not arch their lower back, so stretching the Quadriceps first may help with this, as may opening the knees slightly and turning them out as this takes the Quadriceps off stretch
- It is a good idea to warm up the Hamstrings and buttock muscles with any of the Pelvic Curl exercises (either on the mat or using the ball) prior to performing Hamstring Curl 1 (Double Leg) + Ball to practice the posterior pelvic tilt and maintaining a neutral spine

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl
- Ball Positioning #3: Guiding Ball Movement
- Ball Positioning #1: Preventing the Ball from Moving

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pelvic Lift + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Pelvic Lift on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sit on the ball and walk the feet out in front, rolling the ball up the spine until it is under the shoulder blades. Hands behind the head, lower the head back to rest on the ball, elbows wide, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in. supine. Feet hip distance apart, under the knees, lift the hips up in line with the body. Arches of the feet lifted. Neutral spine, T-Zone."

Exercise Tip: For this exercise to work best, the ball should be an appropriate height for the client so that when they are lying on the ball the knees are bent to 90 degrees so their body is in a horizontal line.

You can make the Set Up of how to get on the ball more concise if your clients are already familiar with how to do this.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement.

As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, lower the hips down toward the floor"



"EXHALE, squeeze the buttocks to lift the hips up"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Press the heels into the mat and squeeze the buttocks to lift the pelvis"***
- "Don't arch the lower back at the top – keep the abdominals tight and to maintain a neutral spine, make sure that the ribs are not popping out and are still connected toward the hips"***
- "Keep your spine neutral and abdominals tight as you lower the hips down"***
- "Press evenly through both legs and both buttocks, try not to let the ball move"
- "Keep your hips at even height – don't let one hip drop"
- "Keep the elbows wide, head relaxed into the hands, shoulders down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lift the hips as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Lift the hips as high as you can without arching your lower back"
- "Really squeeze the buttocks and hold at the top before lowering back down"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Not pressing evenly through both legs and letting the pelvis twist to one side
- Overusing the lower back muscles, letting the abdominals and buttock muscles go
- Taking the hips too high and arching the lower back
- Letting one hip drop so that the pelvis isn't square to the floor
- Hunching the shoulders, tensing the neck, letting the chin poke out or the head hang back
- Overusing the Quadriceps which can cause the lower back to arch and hinge up
- Having the ball too high or low on the back
- Letting the ball move, losing balance or falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking good!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, lift the hips"
- "INHALE, lower the hips"

Ending the Exercise

- "Start walking the feet back in and place the hands onto the ball behind you, walk the feet all the way back in and press the body back up into sitting"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to lift the pelvis up (hip extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Quadriceps and Hamstrings to assist with the movement and keep the knees directly over the ankles (hip flexion and extension), preventing the ball from rolling forward and backward (isometric knee flexion/extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the ball is the correct size
- Check that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work
- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary
- Do not lift the hips as high – only go as far as you can control the movement
- If pain persists, perform Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) on the mat instead

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knees are directly above the ankles
- If a client is too tight in the Quadriceps they may feel pain at the front of their knees
- Open the knees wider and externally rotate the legs to take the Quadriceps off stretch
- Stretch the Quadriceps prior to doing this exercise
- Cue to use the buttocks more than the thighs throughout the movement

Shoulder Pain

- Do not open the elbows as wide or perform Pelvic Curl on the mat instead

Neck Pain

- Check that the shoulders and neck are in the correct position and are supported by the ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Try tucking the chin in a little more to see if this helps

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- This exercise is not recommended for those with poor balance, vertigo or dizziness as the combination of the instability of the ball combined with a large amount of work in the abdominals makes this exercise too dangerous

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester only

Programming Advice

- This is a good exercise for people with a Flatback posture as it encourages a neutral spine rather than a posterior pelvic tilt
- A better option for clients who tend to get Hamstring cramps in the pelvic curl exercises as it uses the Hamstrings less and focuses more on the Gluteus Maximus
- A great exercise for body awareness and learning not to arch the lower back
- A benefit of this exercise is that it challenges balance and stability and helps the abdominal muscles to engage in order to prevent falling off the ball
- This exercise works the abdominals and leg muscles in a similar way to Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling up and Down) on the mat
- In a group setting, if you only have a few balls available, you could give the whole group Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) while some clients perform Pelvic Lift + Ball as a progression

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl
- Ball Positioning #1: Preventing the Ball from Moving

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Bridge Twist + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Bridge Twist on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the abdominals, buttocks and increases spinal mobility"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sit on the ball and walk the feet out in front, rolling the ball up the spine until it is under the neck and shoulders, head resting on the ball. Arms straight up toward the ceiling, palms together, shoulders down and back. Feet hip distance apart, under the knees, squeeze the buttocks to lift the hips up in line with the body, neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, keep the hips still, rotate the upper body to one side rolling the ball onto one shoulder blade"

"INHALE, return to centre"

Exercise Tip: For this exercise to work best, the ball should be an appropriate height for the client so that when they are lying on the ball the knees are bent to 90 degrees so their body is in a horizontal line.

You can make the Set Up of how to get on the ball more concise if your clients are already familiar with how to do this.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement.







© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



"EXHALE, rotate the other way, rolling onto the other shoulder blade"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, alternating sides and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttocks to keep the pelvis lifted, don't let the hips sag toward the floor"***
- "Use the abdominals to rotate the upper body, keeping the pelvis still"***
- "Keep your hands directly in line with the centre of your chest as you rotate"***
- "Only roll as far as you can control the ball"***
- "Don't arch the lower back at the top – keep the abdominals tight and to maintain a neutral spine, make sure that the ribs are not popping out and are still connected toward the hips"***
- "Really press the heels into the mat to make the buttocks work harder"
- "Keep your hips at even height – don't let one hip drop or pop out to the side"
- "Keep the arms straight and the head supported on the ball"
- "Keep the eyes following the hands, don't turn the head and look to the side of the room"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't rotate quite as far"

To Make it Harder

- "Rotate as far as you can without losing control of the ball or your pelvis"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the pelvis drop or twist to one side
- Rotating too far and losing control of the ball
- Moving the arms rather than the body, not keeping the hands in line with the chest
- Overusing the lower back muscles, letting the abdominals and buttock muscles go
- Taking the hips too high and arching the lower back
- Taking the arms too high (not keeping the arms over the shoulders)
- Taking the eye sight too far over to the side of the room (not keeping the eyes on the hands)
- Letting one hip drop or pop out to side so that the pelvis isn't square
- Hunching the shoulders, tensing the neck, letting the chin poke out or the head hang back
- Having the ball too high or low under the spine
- Losing balance or falling off the ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's great rotation everyone!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, rotate the body to one side"
- "INHALE, return to centre"

Ending the Exercise

- "Start walking the feet back in and place the hands onto the ball behind you, walk the feet all the way back in and press the body back up into sitting"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Pelvic Lift + Ball, Sitting Twist + Ball

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques to rotate the torso (thoracic rotation) and stop the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Maximus to hold the pelvis up (hip extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Quadriceps and Hamstrings to assist with the movement and keep the knees directly over the ankles (hip flexion and extension), preventing the ball from rolling forward and backward (isometric knee flexion/extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the pelvis from rocking

Joint Mobility

- Increases thoracic rotation range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Ensure that the ball is the correct size

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Check to see that the buttock muscles and T-Zone are tight, and that the lumbar spine extensors are not doing too much work
- Do not lift the hips as high
- Do not rotate as far – only go as far as you can control the movement
- Change to an imprinted spinal position at the top if necessary
- Avoid for a lumbar spine Disc Bulge as this exercise involves lumbar rotation

Upper Back Pain

- Clients may feel a stretch through the upper back, but should not feel any pain
- Do not rotate as far or discontinue the exercise

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knees are directly above the ankles
- If a client is too tight in the Quadriceps they may feel pain at the front of their knees
- Open the knees wider and externally rotate the legs to take the Quadriceps off stretch
- Stretch the Quadriceps prior to performing this exercise
- Cue to use the buttocks more than the thighs throughout the movement

Neck Pain

- Check that the shoulders and neck are in the correct position (head in line with the shoulders, shoulders down and back)
- Try tucking the chin in a little more to see if this helps
- Ensure that the ball is high enough that it is supporting the neck
- Keep the eye gaze on the hands

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- This exercise is not recommended for those with poor balance, vertigo or dizziness as the combination of the instability of the ball combined with a large amount of work in the abdominals makes this exercise too dangerous
- Limit the range of movement through the neck and keep the eye gaze on the hands
- Stand next to the client in case you need to stabilise the ball

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first trimester only

Programming Advice

- A great exercise for working on pelvic control and isolating spinal rotation
- A benefit of this exercise is that it challenges balance and stability and helps the abdominal muscles to engage in order to prevent falling off the ball
- Works well before or after Pelvic Lift + Ball
- A similar movement to Sitting Twist + Ball but much more challenging and harder to balance
- It is best to perform this exercise after performing other abdominal and buttock exercises as these muscles will already be warmed up and will stabilise the body better

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #2: Oblique Lines
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #7: Pelvic Curl
- Ball Positioning #3: Guiding Ball Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Using the Band in the Side Lying Series

A band can be used in all of the buttock exercises in the Side Lying Series. To do this, you will need to tie the short band into a loop and place it around the thighs.

Benefits of Using the Band

- Adds resistance to challenge the buttock muscles for stronger clients
- Works the underneath buttock as well as the top buttock (this is because the underneath leg needs to press down into the band for stability)
- Can encourage stubborn Gluteal muscles to activate (by pressing against the resistance)
- Limits how much the leg lifts or moves back – this can be good for clients who tend to move the leg too far and lose the correct spinal and pelvic position

Band Size

The tighter the band, the harder it makes the exercise. Ensure that clients choose a band of an appropriate length taking into account their leg (thigh) diameter and Gluteal muscle strength.

If the band is too loose, it will not provide enough resistance and the client may tend to increase their range of motion too much to compensate. If the band is too tight, it may dig into the thighs and be uncomfortable and the client may use other muscles, such as the lower back or thigh muscles to help press against the resistance.

Putting the Band On

To place the band around the thighs, instruct clients to put the band around both feet and then pull it up to sit around the thighs, just above the knees.

Instruct clients to try to find the most comfortable position for the band to sit on the legs. They should try to keep the band as flat and open as possible to avoid it digging in to the thighs.



Band Flat Around Thighs (Correct)



Band Bunched Up Around Thighs (Incorrect)

Safety When Using the Band in the Side Lying Series

As a general rule, using the band for the Side Lying Series is extremely safe as long as you ensure that the client is strong enough to tolerate the added resistance to their buttock exercises. If using the band makes the exercise too difficult, clients may begin to cheat by using the wrong muscles and risk injuring themselves.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Regularly ask clients where they are feeling it – they should be feeling it in their buttocks, not their lateral thigh or shin. If performing a number of side lying buttock exercises in a sequence, instruct clients that they can remove the band at any time if the exercise becomes too difficult.

Occasionally a client may feel pressure on their outer thighs where the band feels like it is digging into and hurting them. Often this can be alleviated by moving the band slightly up or down and by ensuring that the band is open and flat as a rolled-up band can dig into the leg more. Loosening the band may help alleviate any pressure as well.

Some clients may feel particularly sensitive on their outer thigh and ITB area, if it is too uncomfortable, discontinue use of the band and perform the exercise without it.

While most clients can safely place the band around their thighs, extra caution should be taken for clients who have the following conditions:

- Clients with hairy legs – the band can pull on the hairs and rip them out
- Elderly clients or clients with thinning skin
- Clients with varicose veins over their outer thighs
- Clients who bruise easily or have bleeding or blood clotting problems
- Clients who have very tight or sensitive ITBs

Using the Circle in the Side Lying Series

There are 2 ways the circle is used in the Side Lying Series -

1. Under the top leg for the Inner Thigh Lift exercises
2. Between both legs for the Double Leg Lift exercises

Circle Under the Top Leg for the Inner Thigh Lift Exercises

The circle is a great addition to the Inner Thigh Lift exercises. It makes the exercise easier to perform for clients who do not have enough hip and knee flexibility to place the top leg in the correct position to perform the matwork variation of the exercise. However, the addition of the circle makes the exercise more unstable and therefore harder to balance.

Placement of the Circle

For these exercises, the circle should be vertical with the top leg resting on the top handle (the inner part of the lower shin, just above the ankle).



Good Vertical Circle Position



Poor Circle Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Circle Between Both Legs for the Double Leg Lift Exercises

The circle makes the Double Leg Lift exercises harder, working both the side of the waist and inner thigh muscles more intensely.

The circle should sit evenly in between both shins, just above the ankles. It should be vertical and both handles flat against the inner shins.



Good Vertical Circle Position



Poor Circle Position

Clients can often place the circle between their ankles themselves, however some clients will need you to place the circle in between their legs for them. Some clients may also need assistance to reposition the circle to ensure that it feels even and comfortable.

Safety When Using the Circle in the Side Lying Series

As a general rule, using the circle for the Side Lying Series is extremely safe as long as you ensure that the client is actually strong enough to add resistance to their side and inner thigh muscles. If adding the circle is too challenging, clients may begin to cheat by using the wrong muscles and risk injuring themselves. If performing a number of side lying exercises in a sequence, instruct clients that they can remove the circle at any time if the exercise becomes too difficult.

Occasionally a client may feel pressure on their shins where the circle feels like it is digging in and hurting them. Often this can be alleviated by moving the circle slightly up or down and by ensuring that the circle is vertical with the handles flat against the shins.

Some clients may have particularly sensitive shins. If it is too uncomfortable, discontinue use of the circle and perform the exercise without it.

While most clients can safely place the circle between their shins, extra caution should be taken for clients who have the following conditions:

- Elderly clients or clients with thinning skin
- Clients with varicose veins over their outer thighs
- Clients who bruise easily or have bleeding or blood clotting problems
- Clients who don’t have much muscle or fatty tissue over their shins

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Please note for all buttock exercises in the Side Lying Series, you can either place the hand on the floor in front or on the top hip to press the hip away from the shoulder. If you would like to feel the muscles working, place your hand on the side of the hip.

Name of Exercise

"Clams with the Band, Feet Down"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the side of the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both thighs, just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the knees bent, feet back in line with the body, arm extended long under the head, head relaxed on the arm. One long line between the hand, hip and feet. Hips stacked one on top of each other. Create a small gap between the waist and the floor, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the heels together and squeeze the top buttock"



"EXHALE, open the top knee up toward the ceiling, keeping the feet together"

"INHALE, lower the knee back down"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttock before you move the leg; squeeze the heels to activate the buttock"***
- "Only raise the knee as high as you can without rolling backward"***
- "Maintain the T-Zone – draw the top hip toward the bottom hip along the horizontal line"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Keep the hips stacked one on top of the other, don't roll backward – if you find that you are rolling backward, roll your top hip forward slightly to prevent this"***
- "You can place your top hand on the top hip and press it away from your shoulder to keep the gap between the waist and the floor"
- "Poke your bottom out so that it isn't tucked under, neutral spine"
- "Lower the top leg slowly with control, resisting the band"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't open the knee as far"

To Make it Harder

- "Open the knee up higher (but only as high as possible without the hips rolling backward)"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Hitching the top hip up toward the shoulder/losing the gap between the waist and the floor
- Tucking the pelvis under when squeezing the buttock
- Rolling the hips backward as the leg lifts, losing the T-Zone (roll the top hip forward slightly)
- Not keeping the feet together
- Arching the lower back, not maintaining the rib to hip connection
- Using the thigh and not the buttock to open the leg
- Not controlling the top leg as it lowers, letting the band pull the leg and losing neutral spine

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking good everyone, just a few more reps to go!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, open the knee"
- "INHALE, close the knee"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Clam 1 (Feet Down)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus, Piriformis and Deep Hip Rotators to open the knee (hip external rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus, Piriformis and Deep Hip Rotators to hold the underneath leg stable

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain

- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators – palpation may be required to feel for this
- Draw the thigh bone into the hip socket in the Set Up
- Place a cushion between the knees to place the top leg in a more comfortable start position
- Avoid this exercise if lying on the hip causes pain
- Remove the band

Overactive Quadriceps

- Roll the top hip forward slightly to switch the Quadriceps off (keeping the spine in neutral)
- Squeeze the heels together to activate the buttock before lifting the leg

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight, use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral
- Do not let the top hip hitch up toward the shoulder as this activates the lower back muscles (Quadratus Lumborum) rather than the Gluteus Medius
- If pain persists, remove the band

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable and they have no pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- A great warm up buttock exercise that most people can do
- The easiest of all of the buttock exercises in the Side Lying Series
- For people who find it difficult to activate their buttock muscles, get them to place their hand on the buttock muscles to feel the muscles working
- The addition of the band is helpful for clients who tend to roll the hips back with this exercise as it limits the range of movement
- A good exercise to perform in a group class as some clients can perform the exercise with a band and others without
- This is a really good exercise to warm up the buttock muscles prior to performing other exercises in the Side Lying Series which also work the buttocks eg. Circles or Rectangles (with or without the band) as using the band helps to activate the buttock muscles

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #1: Heels Together

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Clams with the Band, Feet Up"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise,
place the band around both thighs,
just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the knees bent, feet back in line with the body, arm extended long under the head, head relaxed on the arm. One long line between the hand, hip and feet. Hips stacked one on top of each other. Create a small gap between the waist and the floor, neutral spine. Lift both feet off the floor, keeping them together."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the heels together and squeeze the top buttock"



"EXHALE, open the top knee up toward the ceiling, keeping the feet together"



"INHALE, lower the knee back down"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttock before you move the leg; squeeze the heels to activate the buttock"***
- "Only raise the knee as high as you can without rolling backward"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Keep the hips stacked one on top of the other, don't roll backward – if you find that you are rolling backward, roll your top hip forward slightly to prevent this"***
- "Keep the feet still, just open the knee and keep the feet together at all times"***
- "Maintain the T-Zone – draw the top hip toward the bottom hip along the horizontal line"***
- "Keep the spine neutral"
- "You can place your top hand on the top hip and press it away from your shoulder to keep the gap between the waist and the floor"
- "Poke your bottom out so that it isn't tucked under, neutral spine"
- "Lower the top leg slowly with control, resisting the band"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't open the knee as far"

To Make it Harder

- "Open the knee further (but only as far as possible without the hips rolling backward)"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Tucking the pelvis under when squeezing the buttock
- Rolling the hips backward as the leg lifts, losing the T-Zone (roll the top hip forward slightly)
- Not keeping the feet together/moving the feet
- Arching the lower back, not maintaining the rib to hip connection
- Losing the gap between the waist and the floor
- Using the thigh and not the buttock to open the leg
- Not controlling the top leg as it lowers, letting the band pull the leg and losing neutral spine

Encourage and Inspire

- "Excellent, you should really be feeling those buttock muscles working!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, open the knee"
- "INHALE, return the knee"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Clam 2 (Feet Up)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus, Piriformis and Deep Hip Rotators to open the knee (hip external rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus, Piriformis and Deep Hip Rotators to hold the underneath leg stable

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain

- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators – palpation may be required to feel for this
- Draw the thigh bone into the hip socket in the Set Up
- If pain or discomfort is still present, try Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or remove the band

Overactive Quadriceps

- Roll the top hip forward slightly to switch the Quadriceps off (keeping the spine in neutral)
- Squeeze the heels together to activate the buttock before lifting the leg

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight, use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral
- Maintain the gap between the waist and the floor, put the top hand on the hip to press it away from the shoulder
- If pain or discomfort is still present, try Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or remove the band

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable and they have no pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)

Programming Advice

- A great warm up buttock exercise that most people can do
- Great as an alternative to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band
- Some people find Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band easier than Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band as it allows more range of movement to open the knee and this helps to stop the body rolling backward
- A good exercise to perform in a group class as some clients can perform the exercise with a band and others without
- This is a really good exercise to warm up the buttock muscles prior to performing other exercises in the Side Lying Series which also work the buttocks eg. Circles or Rectangles (with or without the band) as using the band helps to activate the buttock muscles

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #1: Heels Together

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Clams with the Band, Legs at 90 Degrees"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise,
place the band around both thighs,
just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the hips and knees bent to 90 degrees, arm extended long underneath the head, head relaxed on the arm. Hips are stacked vertically, create a small space between your waist and the floor, feet on the floor. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the heels and squeeze the top buttock"



"EXHALE, slowly open top knee up, keeping the feet together"

"INHALE, lower the leg back down"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the hips stacked one on top of the other"***
- "Only raise the knee as high as you can without the hip rolling back – visualise the top hip drawing across the imaginary T-Zone line toward the bottom hip"***
- "As you open the knee, keep the knee and shin directly over the bottom knee and shin"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Squeeze the buttock before you move the leg – tightening the deep hip rotators"***
- "Keep the T-Zone on and the spine neutral as the buttock is squeezed and the leg is lifted – the pelvis will want to tuck under"***
- "Think of the thigh bone drawing back into the hip socket to activate the Deep Hip Rotators"
- "You can place your top hand on the top hip and press it away from your shoulder to keep the gap between the waist and the floor"
- "Close the top leg slowly with control, resisting the band"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't open the leg as far"

To Make it Harder

- "Open the leg further (but only as far as possible without the hips rolling backward)"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Tucking the pelvis under when squeezing the buttock
- Rolling the hips backward as the leg lifts, losing the T-Zone (roll the top hip forward slightly)
- Arching the lower back, not maintaining the rib to hip connection
- Using the thigh and not the buttocks to perform the movement
- Not controlling closing of the knees, letting the band pull the leg and losing neutral spine

Encourage and Inspire

- "Fantastic everyone, that's the best technique I've seen all day!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, lift the top leg"
- "INHALE, lower the leg back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Clam 3 (90 Degrees)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Deep Hip Rotators to open the knee (hip external rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Medius and Minimus to help open the knee (hip external rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus, Piriformis and Deep Hip Rotators to hold the underneath leg stable

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain

- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Deep Hip Rotators – palpation may be required to feel for this (note that the client should feel a different part of the buttock working in this exercise than Clam 1 or 2 as it works the Deep Hip Rotators rather than the Gluteus Medius or Minimus)
- If the TFL is taking over, focus on activating the buttocks and the Deep Hip Rotators prior to opening the knee and ensure that the knee is leading rather than the foot
- Draw the thigh bone into the hip socket in the Set Up
- Check the Set Up position to ensure that the legs aren't too close to the chest (90 degrees) and the lifting thigh does not move closer to the chest than the 90 degree angle
- Place a cushion between the knees to place the top leg in a more comfortable start position
- If this position causes pain, remove the band or go back to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight and use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral, maintain the gap between the waist and the floor
- If pain or discomfort is still present, try Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or remove the band

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable and they have no pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- A great warm up buttock exercise that most people can do
- Great as an alternative to the other Clams
- Focusses more on the Deep Hip Rotators for hip stability
- If clients are having difficulty activating their Gluteal muscles in Clam 1 or 2, sometimes performing Clam 3 prior to these exercises can help facilitate better activation
- The addition of the band is helpful for clients who tend to roll the hips back with this exercise as it limits the range of movement
- A good exercise to perform in a group class as some clients can perform the exercise with a band and others without
- This is a really good exercise to warm up the buttock muscles prior to performing other exercises in the Side Lying Series which also work the buttocks eg. Straight Leg Raise or Hot Potato (with or without the band) as using the band helps to activate the buttock muscles

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #1: Heels Together

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Name of Exercise

"Clam Kickout with the Band, Feet Down"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both thighs, just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the knees bent, feet back in line with the body, arm extended long under the head, head relaxed on the arm. One long line between the hand, hip and feet. Hips stacked one on top of each other. Create a small gap between the waist and the floor. Neutral spine, T-Zone tight, squeeze the heels together to squeeze the buttock."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, open the top knee keeping the feet together"



"EXHALE, extend the leg out straight back and up, in line with the body, toes pointed"



"INHALE, bend the knee and bring the feet back together, keeping the knee high"



"EXHALE, bring the knees back together"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Extend the leg all the way straight, reach through the toes"***
- "Extend the leg back in line with the body – you shouldn't be able to see your toes"***
- "Keep the kneecap facing forward (not downward) as you extend the leg"***
- "Squeeze the buttock before moving the leg, make sure that it is doing the work, not the thigh"***
- "You can place your top hand on the top hip and press it away from your shoulder to keep the gap between the waist and the floor"***
- "Keep a neutral spine, think of ribs to hips as the legs extends, don't arch the lower back"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to stop the hip rolling back – think of the top hipbone drawing toward the bottom hipbone along the horizontal line of the T"***
- "Keep the hips stacked one on top of the other, don't roll backward – if you are finding that you are rolling backward, roll your top hip slightly forward to prevent this"***
- "Only take the leg as high as you can without the top hip rolling back"***
- "Keep the top knee lifted against the band as you draw the feet back together"
- "Lower the top leg slowly with control, resisting the band"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't extend the leg quite so high or as far back"

To Make it Harder

- "Extend the leg higher and further back (as far as possible without losing the neutral spine)"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Rolling the hips backward as the leg lifts, losing the T-Zone (roll the top hip forward slightly)
- Extending the leg out too far behind the body and arching the lower back
- Extending the leg too far in front of the body and using the thigh rather than the buttock
- Collapsing through the waist and hitching the top hip up toward the shoulder – maintain a space between the waist and the floor, hips stacked one on top of the other
- When squeezing the buttock watch for the pelvis tucking under
- Letting the knee roll toward the floor/internal rotation of the leg as it extends
- Not keeping the feet together when performing the Clam before the kickout
- Not fully straightening the knee and reaching through the toes – reaching through the toes elongates the body and makes it less likely to hitch the top hip/lose the gap between the waist and the floor
- Rushing the return movement, not keeping the knee lifted as the feet come back together and letting the band pull the leg down

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Those Clam Kickouts are looking so good!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, open the knee"
- "EXHALE, extend the leg back"
- "INHALE, feet together"
- "EXHALE, knees together"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Clam 1 (Feet Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus, Piriformis and Deep Hip Rotators to open the knee (hip external rotation)
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Gluteus Maximus to lift and extend the leg back (hip abduction and extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Quadriceps to straighten the knee (knee extension) – try not to focus on using this too much, focus on the buttock muscles extending the hip

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus, Piriformis and Deep Hip Rotators to hold the underneath leg stable

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain

- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators – palpate to check
- Cue to draw the thigh bone into the hip socket in the Set Up before raising the leg
- If pain or discomfort persists, perform Clam 1 (Feet Down) +Band, omitting the kickout
- Remove the band

Overactive Quadriceps

- Roll the top hip forward slightly
- Squeeze the heels together to activate the buttock before lifting the leg, squeeze the buttocks
- Ensure that the client extends the leg back in line with the body (not kicking the leg forward)
- Remove the band

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight, use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral
- Ensure that clients keep the gap between the waist and the floor – press the top hip away from the shoulder and focus on pointing the toes and lengthening the leg
- Do not arch the back as the leg extends (ribs to hips and don't kick the leg as far back)
- If pain or discomfort persists, perform Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band, omitting the kickout
- Remove the band

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow, and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable and they have no pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)

Programming Advice

- A great warm up buttock exercise that most people can do
- A great progression from Clam 1 (Feet Down)
- A prerequisite to performing any of the harder buttock exercises from the Side Lying Series
- The kickout movement engages the Gluteus Maximus muscle, it is important to keep the knee straight as it extends back against the band otherwise the Hamstrings will do the work instead
- In a group class, some clients can perform the exercise with the band, others without
- There are two ways to modify down this exercise if a client is finding the exercise too challenging, you can either remove the band or you can perform Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Name of Exercise

"Clam Kickout with the Band, Feet Up"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both thighs, just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the knees bent, feet back in line with the body, arm extended long under the head, head relaxed on the arm. One long line between the hand, hip and feet. Hips stacked one on top of each other. Create a small gap between the waist and the floor, neutral spine. Lift both feet off the floor, keeping them together."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, open the top knee keeping the feet together"



"EXHALE, extend the leg out straight back and up, in line with the body, toes pointed"



"INHALE, bend the knee and bring the feet back together, keeping the knee high"



"EXHALE, bring the knees back together"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the hips stacked one on top of the other, don't roll backward – if you are finding that you are rolling backward, roll your top hip slightly forward to prevent this"***
- "Extend the leg all the way straight, reach through the toes"***
- "Extend the leg back in line with the body – you shouldn't be able to see your toes"***
- "Keep the kneecap facing forward (not downward) as you extend the leg"***
- "Keep the underneath leg still"***
- "Squeeze the buttock before moving the leg, make sure that it is doing the work, not the thigh"***
- "You can place your top hand on the top hip and press it away from your shoulder to keep the gap between the waist and the floor"***
- "Keep a neutral spine, think of ribs to hips as the legs extends, don't arch the lower back"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to stop the hip rolling back – think of the top hipbone drawing toward the bottom hipbone along the horizontal line of the T"***
- "Only take the leg as high as you can without the top hip rolling back"
- "Poke the bottom out so that it doesn't tuck under, neutral spine"
- "Keep the top knee lifted against the band as you draw the feet back together"
- "Lower the top leg slowly with control, resisting the band"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't extend the leg quite as far back or as high" (needs to be at least at hip height though)

To Make it Harder

- "Extend the leg higher and further back (as far as possible without losing the neutral spine)"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Rolling the hips backward as the leg lifts, losing the T-Zone (roll the top hip forward slightly)
- Extending the leg out too far behind the body and arching the lower back
- Extending the leg in front of the body and using the thigh rather than the buttock
- Collapsing through the waist – maintain a space between the waist and the floor, hips stacked one on top of the other
- When squeezing the buttock watch for the pelvis tucking under
- Letting the knee roll toward the floor/internal rotation of the leg as it extends
- Not keeping the feet together when performing the Clam before the kick out
- Not fully straightening the knee and reaching through the toes – reaching through the toes elongates the body and makes it less likely to hitch the top hip/lose the gap between the waist and the floor
- Rushing the return movement, not keeping the knee lifted as the feet come back together and letting the band pull the leg

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking really strong everyone! That's the way!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, open the knee"
- "EXHALE, extend the leg back"
- "INHALE, feet together"
- "EXHALE, knees together"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Clam 2 (Feet Up)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus, Piriformis and Deep Hip Rotators to open the knee (hip external rotation)
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Gluteus Maximus to left and extend it back (hip abduction and extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Quadriceps to straighten the knee (hip extension) – try not to focus on using this too much, focus on the buttock muscles extending the hip

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus, Piriformis and Deep Hip Rotators to hold the underneath leg stable

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain

- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators – palpation may be required to feel for this
- Cue to draw the thigh bone into the hip socket in the Set Up
- If pain or discomfort persists, either modify to Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band, omitting the kickout
- Remove the band

Overactive Quadriceps

- Roll the top hip forward slightly
- Squeeze the heels together to activate the buttock before lifting the leg, squeeze the buttocks
- Ensure that the leg is extending backward, not forward in front of the body
- Remove the band

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight, use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral
- Ensure that clients keep the gap between the waist and the floor – press the top hip away from the shoulder and focus on pointing the toes and lengthening the leg
- Do not to arch the back as the leg extends (ribs to hips and don't kick the leg as far back)
- If pain or discomfort persists, either modify to Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band, omitting the kickout
- Remove the band

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow, and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable and they have no pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)

Programming Advice

- Some people find this exercise more comfortable than Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band as it allows them more range of movement when opening the knee
- Clients may often feel this exercise strongly in the buttock of their underneath leg as the underneath leg needs to work hard to stabilise the body
- Clients with poor abdominal and pelvic control may find this exercise more difficult to stabilise
- The kickout movement engages the Gluteus Maximus muscle, it is important to keep the knee straight as it extends back against the band otherwise the Hamstrings will do the work instead
- In a group class, some clients can perform the exercise with the band, others without

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- There are many ways to modify down this exercise if a client is finding the exercise too challenging, you could remove the band and continue to perform Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up), you could keep the band on and omit the kickout performing Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band, alternatively you could also perform Clam 1 (Feet Down) or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) with or without the band

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Clam Kickout with the Band, Legs at 90 Degrees"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise,
place the band around both thighs,
just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the hips and knees bent to 90°, arm extended long underneath the head, head relaxed on the arm. Hips are stacked vertically, create a small space between your waist and the floor, feet on the floor. Neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the top buttock"



"EXHALE, slowly lift the top leg separating the knees and the feet"



"INHALE, lower the leg back down"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Only raise the knee as high as you can without the hip rolling back – visualise the top hip drawing across the imaginary T-Zone line toward the bottom hip"***
- "Squeeze the buttock before you move the leg – using the Deep Hip Rotators"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to prevent the hips rolling back"
- "Keep the spine neutral, think of poking the bottom out (don't tuck the pelvis under)"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Keep the shin parallel with the floor (don't let the knee roll down to point toward the floor – lead with the knee not the foot)"***
- "Keep the top knee directly over the bottom knee as you raise the leg"***
- "Keep the hips stacked vertically, don't roll backward"
- "Lower the top leg slowly with control, resisting the band"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't open the leg as far, keeping the movement smaller"

To Make it Harder

- "Open the leg further (but only as far so that the hips don't roll backward)"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- When squeezing the buttock watch for the pelvis tucking under
- Rolling the hips backward as the leg lifts, losing the T-Zone (roll the top hip forward slightly)
- Flexing the hip as it is abducting ie. drawing it closer toward the chest as it is lifting
- Collapsing through the waist – maintain a space between the waist and the floor, hips stacked one on top of the other
- Rolling the knee toward the floor (hip internal rotation), leading with the foot not the knee
- Rushing the return movement, letting the band pull the leg down and losing neutral spine

Encourage and Inspire

- "Excellent technique everyone! Keep it going!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, raise the leg straight up"
- "INHALE, lower the leg back down"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Deep Hip Rotators to open the knee (hip external rotation)
- Gluteus Medius to lift the leg (hip abduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus, Piriformis and Deep Hip Rotators to hold the underneath leg stable

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain

- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Deep Hip Rotators – palpation may be required to feel for this (note that the client should feel a different part of the buttock working in this exercise than Clam 1 or 2 as it works the Deep Hip Rotators rather than the Gluteus Medius or Minimus)
- Activate the Deep Hip Rotators prior moving the leg – draw the thigh bone into the hip socket
- Ensure that the client is leading with the knee not the foot and that the shin is parallel to the floor, the foot should not be higher than the knee at any time
- If pain or discomfort is still present, perform Clam 3 (90 degrees) + Band
- If the client experiences pain in their hip when it is flexed to 90 degrees, try Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band instead
- Remove the band

Overactive Hip Flexors

- Squeeze the heels together to activate the buttock before lifting the leg
- Ensure that the hip is not flexing more and the thigh is not moving closer toward the chest as it lifts – keep the thigh over the underneath thigh as it lifts
- Check that the knee is not lower than the foot when lifting – lead with the knee, not the foot
- Remove the band

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight and use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral
- Maintain the gap between the waist and the floor – clients can place their top hand on the top hip and press it away from your shoulder
- Ensure that clients are only raising the knee as high as they can without the hip rolling back – cue to visualise the top hip drawing across the imaginary T-Zone line toward the bottom hip
- If pain or discomfort is still present, perform Clam 3 (90 degrees) + Band
- Remove the band

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow, and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable and they have no pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)

Programming Advice

- The band is a great addition to this exercise at limits the range of motion, preventing clients from lifting the leg too far and losing the correct spinal and pelvic positions
- Focusses more on the Deep Hip Rotators for hip stability
- A good exercise for people who overuse their Piriformis and Quadriceps as this position helps to switch those muscles off
- In a group class, some clients can perform the exercise with the band, others without
- There are two ways to modify down this exercise if a client is finding the exercise too challenging, you can either remove the band or you can keep the band on and go back to performing Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Circles + Band

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Use arm gestures to mimic the leg movement and enhance your clients' understanding of the movement.

Note, you can change the direction of the circles as a challenge.

Name of Exercise

"Circles with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise,
place the band around both thighs,
just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the knees bent, feet back in line with the body, arm extended long under the head, head relaxed on the arm. One long line between the hand, hip and feet. Hips stacked one on top of each other. Create a small gap between the waist and the floor, neutral spine. Take the top leg back up in line with the body at hip height or slightly higher, toes pointed."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, then begin to circle the leg"

"EXHALE, for a few circles"
"INHALE, for a few circles"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep circling the leg and…"

Concentration Points

- "Reach through the toes, leg straight and at hip height back in line with the body"***
- "Stretch the band as you circle the leg back and up"***
- "Keep the pelvis and back still, no rocking or moving the hips"***
- "Abdominals tight to keep the body still"***
- "Keep the gap between the waist and the floor – you can put your hand on your top hip to push the hip away from the shoulder"***
- "Squeeze the buttock to perform the movement – use the buttock and not the thigh"***
- "Initiate the circling from the hip not the knee or the ankle, or the back or pelvis"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Keep the knee facing forward, don't let it roll in toward the floor or fall below hip height"***
- "Only make the circles as big as you can without moving the body"***
- "Squeeze the buttock to draw the leg further back and up, pressing against the band"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lift the leg quite so high, but keep it up at least at hip height"
- "Stop, rest, reset and squeeze the buttock if you feel the thigh taking over"

To Make it Harder

- "Raise the leg a little higher (as high as possible without hitching the top hip up toward the shoulder and losing the gap between the waist and the floor)"
- "You can also extend the bottom leg straight in line with the body rather than having it bent"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- When lifting the leg – collapsing through the side of the waist and losing the gap between the waist and the floor, letting the top hip hitch up toward the shoulder
- When taking the leg back – losing the neutral spine and arching the back
- Losing the T-Zone and rocking the pelvis backward and forward
- Not taking the leg back or high enough, or rotating the kneecap toward the floor
- Using the thigh rather than the buttock
- Not fully straightening the knee and reaching through the toes – reaching through the toes makes it less likely to hitch the top hip/lose the gap between the waist and the floor

Encourage and Inspire

- "Don't give up! Just a few more circles!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, for a few circles"
- "EXHALE, for a few circles"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITE: Circles

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus to raise/circle the leg (hip abduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Deep Hip Rotators on the underneath leg to keep it stable

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain

- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators – palpation may be required to feel for this
- Ensure that the circling leg is not in front of the body, keep it back in line with the body
- If the underneath hip is hurting, extend the underneath leg straight in line with the body rather than keeping the leg bent
- If pain or discomfort persists, modify to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band
- Remove the band

Overactive Quadriceps

- Roll the top hip forward slightly
- Ensure that the leg is back in line with the body
- Perform Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band to get into the start position more slowly
- Point and reach through the toes to help switch off the Quadriceps
- Remove the band

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight, use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral
- Ensure that clients keep the gap between the waist and the floor and also not to arch the back as the leg extends (ribs to hips and don't kick the leg as far back)
- If pain persists, modify to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band
- Remove the band

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable and they have no pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- A great warm up buttock exercise that most people can do
- A great progression from Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band – you can even flow the two exercises together, on the last repetition of the kickout, hold the leg up and circle the leg
- You can reverse the direction of the circles
- You may choose to place the underneath leg straight in line with the body to challenge clients
- The sweeping back portion of the exercise engages the Gluteus Maximus muscle, it is important that the knee is kept straight as it extends back against the band otherwise the Hamstrings will do the work instead
- In a group class, some clients can perform the exercise with the band, others without
- There are two ways to modify down this exercise if a client is finding the exercise too challenging, you can either remove the band or you can revert back to performing easier Clam exercises with the band on – (keep in mind that it takes more time to remove the band and get set up in the correct position again, however to perform a different exercise you will need to provide different cues, you can choose which option you give to clients depending on the size and ability of the group and the individual)
- If this exercise is toward the end of a long buttock series and the clients are fatiguing, allow them to take the band off

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Straight Leg Raise + Band

Intensity=3 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Use arm gestures to mimic the leg movement and enhance your clients' understanding of the movement.

Name of Exercise

"Straight Leg Raise with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both thighs, just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the knees bent, feet back in line with the body, arm extended long under the head, head relaxed on the arm. One long line between the hand, hip and feet. Hips stacked one on top of each other. Create a small gap between the waist and the floor, neutral spine. Straighten the top leg, lift it up to hip height and sweep it out in front of the body, turn the knee and toes toward the floor, foot relaxed."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, raise the leg up"



"INHALE, lower the leg without touching the floor"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep lifting the leg up and down and…"

Concentration Points

- "Lead with the heel to lift the leg, toes turned down – keep the leg turned in from the hip"***
- "Raise your leg at least up to hip height each time"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Perform the movement from the hip – keep the back and waist completely still"***
- "Spine neutral – stick the bottom out, don't let the pelvis tuck under"***
- "Keep the gap between the waist and the floor, don't let the top hip hitch up toward the shoulder – you can place your hand on your top hip and press it away from your shoulder"***
- "Squeeze the buttock to perform the movement, pressing up against the band"***
- "Maintain the neutral spine, as the leg is turned in the hip will want to roll forward"***
- "Slowly raise and lower the leg don't throw the leg up and down"
- "Try to resist the band on the way down, don't let the band pull the leg"
- "Aim to have your top thigh directly over your underneath thigh"

To Make it Easier

- "Go slower with the movement"
- "Don't take your leg as far forward or quite as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Speed up the movement and INHALE for a few pulses, EXHALE for a few pulses"
- "Take the top leg further forward in front of the body (keeping your spine neutral)"
- "Lift the top leg higher"
- "You can also extend the bottom leg straight in line with the body rather than having it bent"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- When lifting the leg – collapsing through the side of the waist, hitching the top hip up toward the shoulder and losing the gap between the waist and the floor
- When sweeping the leg forward and turning the toes down – losing the neutral spine and rounding the lower back
- Losing the T-Zone and abdominals and moving the back and pelvis
- Not leading with the heel and keeping the toes pointing down
- Not lifting the leg high enough – at least to hip height
- Using the thigh rather than the buttocks
- Tucking the bottom under and losing the neutral spine
- Flexing or pointing the foot rather than keeping it relaxed – flexing it can cause the Quadriceps to overwork, and pointing the toes feels uncomfortable

Encourage and Inspire

- "Excellent work! You should be really feeling those buttocks work!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, raise the leg"
- "INHALE, lower the leg"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Straight Leg Raise

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Minimus to lift the leg up and turn the toes down (hip abduction in internal rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Deep Hip Rotators on the underneath leg to keep it stable

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain or Overactive Hip Flexors

- Clients should try not to sweep the leg as far forward or turn the toes toward the floor – keep the toes facing straight forward and keep the leg back in line with the body
- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators – palpation may be required to feel for this
- Really focus on using the buttocks to do the work, squeeze the buttocks
- If the underneath hip is hurting, extend the underneath leg straight in line with the body rather than keeping the leg bent
- If pain or discomfort persists, modify to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Circles + Band
- Remove the band

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight, use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral, maintain the gap between the waist and the floor
- Ensure that the pelvis isn't tucking under – stick the bottom out
- Don't take the top leg as far forward
- If pain or discomfort persists, modify back to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band
- Remove the band

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Sciatica

- Avoid sweeping the leg too far forward as that can place the body in a neural tension position

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow, and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable and they have no pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)

Programming Advice

- This is a much harder buttock exercise, best done after other warm up buttock exercises
- This is not the best exercise for someone with hip pain or quite weak buttock muscles
- This is one of most poorly performed exercises where most people hitch their top hip up or rolling the pelvis forward
- Quite a simple but very effective and intense exercise
- In a group class, some clients can perform the exercise with the band, others without
- There are two ways to modify down this exercise if a client is finding the exercise too challenging, you can either remove the band or you can perform an easier buttock exercise with the band on – (keep in mind that it takes more time to remove the band and get set up in the correct position again, however to perform a different exercise you will need to provide different cues, you can choose which option you give to clients depending on the size and ability of the group and the individual)
- If this exercise is toward the end of a long buttock series and the clients are fatiguing, allow them to take the band off

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hot Potato + Band

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Use arm gestures to mimic the leg movement and enhance your clients' understanding of the movement.

Name of Exercise

"Hot Potato with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both thighs, just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the knees bent, feet back in line with the body, arm extended long under the head, head relaxed on the arm. One long line between the hand, hip and feet. Hips stacked one on top of each other. Create a small gap between the waist and the floor, neutral spine. Straighten the top leg and raise it up to hip height, foot relaxed. T-Zone tight."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, sweep the leg forward and turn the top knee and toes down toward the floor"



"EXHALE, pulse the leg down…"



"… and up twice in front of the body"



"INHALE, sweep the leg back just behind the body"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, pulse the leg down…"



"… and up twice behind the body"



"INHALE, sweep the leg forward"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, 2 pulses in front of the body, 2 pulses behind the body, and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttock to pulse the leg up and down"***
- "Maintain the gap underneath the waist, keep the hips stacked – you can put your hand on your hip to push your shoulder away"***
- "Keep the toes turned down toward the floor"***
- "Keep the spine neutral, move from the hip and keep the spine completely still"***
- "Abdominals on to stabilise the back and stop it from arching"***
- "Don't pulse the foot too close toward the floor and make sure to lift it back up above hip height as it sweeps forward and backward"
- "Try to sweep the leg all the way back in line with the body, keep the knee straight and really squeeze the buttocks to press the leg back against the band"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't take the leg as far forward or backward when pulsing"

To Make it Harder

- "Pulse the leg further forward and back behind the body" (keep the pelvis and spine still)
- "You can also extend the bottom leg straight in line with the body rather than having it bent"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- When lifting the leg – collapsing through the side of the waist and hitching the top hip up toward the shoulder
- When taking the leg back – losing the neutral spine and arching the back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- When taking the leg forward – tucking the pelvis under – focus on poking the bottom out
- Losing the T-Zone and abdominals and moving the pelvis and back
- Not lifting the leg high enough – at least hip height or higher (sweeping forward/backward)
- Flexing or pointing the foot rather than keeping it relaxed – flexing it can cause the Quadriceps to overwork, pointing the toes feels uncomfortable

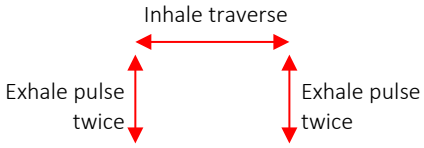
Encourage and Inspire

- "Great technique everyone!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, sweep the leg forward"
- "EXHALE, pulse down and up twice in front of the body"
- "INHALE, sweep the leg back"
- "EXHALE, pulse down and up twice behind the body"



Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Straight Leg Raise + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITE: Hot Potato

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Minimus to lift the leg up and turn the toes down (hip abduction in internal rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Medius to raise the leg up (hip abduction)
- Gluteus Maximus to sweep the leg back behind the body (hip extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Deep Hip Rotators on the underneath leg to keep it stable

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain or Overactive Hip Flexors

- Try not to sweep the leg as far forward or backward or turn the toes toward the floor as much
- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators – palpation may be required to feel for this
- Really focus on using the buttocks to do the work, squeeze the buttocks
- If the underneath hip is hurting, extend the underneath leg straight in line with the body rather than keeping the leg bent
- If pain or discomfort persists, modify to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Circles + Band
- Remove the band

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight, use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral, maintain the gap between the waist and the floor
- Ensure that the pelvis isn't tucking under and the lower back isn't arching or moving
- Don't take the top leg as far forward, backward or as high
- If pain or discomfort persists, modify to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Straight Leg Raise + Band
- Remove the band

Sciatica

- Avoid sweeping the leg too far forward as that can place the body in a neural tension position

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow, and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable and they have no pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)

Programming Advice

- This is a much harder buttock exercise, best done after other warm up buttock exercises, in particular after Straight Leg Raise + Band
- This is not the best exercise for someone with hip pain or quite weak buttock muscles
- In a group class, some clients can perform the exercise with the band, others without
- There are two ways to modify down this exercise if a client is finding the exercise too challenging, you can either remove the band or you can perform an easier buttock exercise with the band on – (keep in mind that it takes more time to remove the band and get set up in the correct position again, however to perform a different exercise you will need to provide

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

different cues, you can choose which option you give to clients depending on the size and ability of the group and the individual)
- If this exercise is toward the end of a long buttock series and the clients are fatiguing, allow them to take the band off

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Rectangles + Band

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Use arm gestures to mimic the leg movement and enhance your clients' understanding of the movement.

Note, you can change the direction of the rectangles as a challenge.

Name of Exercise

"Rectangles with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both thighs, just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the knees bent, feet back in line with the body, arm extended long under the head, head relaxed on the arm. One long line between the hand, hip and feet. Hips stacked one on top of each other. Create a small gap between the waist and the floor, neutral spine. Raise the top leg to hip height in line with the body, toes pointed."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, sweep the leg back just behind the body…"



"…and raise it up"



"INHALE, sweep the leg forward…"

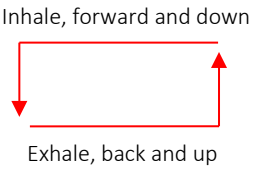


© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"… and lower it to hip height"



Permission to Continue



- "Keep going, EXHALE back and up, INHALE forward and down, and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttock to perform the movement, really reach through the toes and draw rectangles with the toes"***
- "Imagine your toes are a pencil and you are drawing rectangles on the wall"***
- "Maintain the gap underneath the waist, keep the top hip away from your shoulder"***
- "Maintain the height of the leg don't let it drop down below hip height"***
- "Don't let the top knee roll in – keep the knee facing forward"***
- "Keep the pelvis and spine completely still"***
- "The long sides of the rectangles are the forward and backward movements, the short sides are up and down"***
- "Squeeze the buttock to draw the leg further back and up, pressing against the band"

To Make it Easier

- "Perform smaller rectangles"

To Make it Harder

- "Perform larger rectangles"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- When the leg raises - collapsing through the side of the waist
- When taking the leg back – losing the neutral spine and arching the back
- When taking the leg forward – tucking the pelvis under
- Losing the T-Zone and rolling the hips or moving the pelvis
- Allowing the leg to drop below hip height – keep it up high
- Rolling the knee in to face toward the floor – keep it facing forward
- Not reaching through the toes and pointing the foot – pointing the foot guides the movement of drawing rectangles and elongates the body making it less likely for the top hip to hitch up/lose the gap between the waist and the floor, it also helps the Gluteal muscles to activate

Encourage and Inspire

- "Let's keep it up, nearly there!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, take the leg back then up"
- "INHALE, take the leg forward then down"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Circles + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Rectangles

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus hold the leg up at hip height and lift it higher from there (hip abduction)
- Gluteus Maximus to sweep the leg back in line with the body (hip extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Deep Hip Rotators and Piriformis to stop the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Deep Hip Rotators on the underneath leg to keep it stable

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain or Overactive Hip Flexors

- Keep the range of movement of the rectangles smaller
- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators – palpation may be required to feel for this
- Really focus on using the buttocks to do the work, squeeze the buttocks
- Ensure that the top leg is up at least at hip height (not lower) or the hip can click and hurt
- Keep the knee facing forward, don't let the kneecap roll down and face toward the ground; the knee should never be lower than the foot

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- If pain or discomfort persists, modify to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Circles + Band
- Remove the band

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight, use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral, maintain the gap between the waist and the floor
- Ensure that the pelvis isn't tucking under and the lower back isn't arching or moving
- Don't take the leg as far forward or backward – perform smaller rectangles
- If pain or discomfort persists, modify back to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Circles + Band
- Remove the band

Sciatica

- Avoid sweeping the leg too far forward as that can place the body in a neural tension position

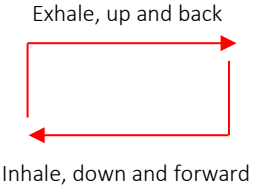
Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow, and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy (if the client is comfortable and they have no pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)

Programming Advice



- This exercise is a great variation on Circles + Band, and more challenging
- You can reverse the direction of the rectangles, ensure that clients still EXHALE as the leg sweeps backward
- The backward portion of the exercise engages the Gluteus Maximus muscle, it is important that the knee is kept straight as it extends back against the band otherwise the Hamstrings will do the work instead
- In a group class, some clients can perform the exercise with the band, others without
- There are two ways to modify down this exercise if a client is finding the exercise too challenging, you can either remove the band or you can perform an easier buttock exercise with the band on – (keep in mind that it takes more time to remove the band and get set up in the correct position again, however to perform a different exercise you will need to provide different cues, you can choose which option you give to clients depending on the size and ability of the group and the individual)

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Bicycles + Band

Intensity=3 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Use arm gestures to mimic the leg movement and enhance your clients' understanding of the movement.

As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Name of Exercise

"Bicycles with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both thighs, just above the knees"

Set Up

"Lying on the side with the knees bent, feet back in line with the body, arm extended long under the head, head relaxed on the arm. One long line between the hand, hip and feet. Hips stacked one on top of each other. Create a small gap between the waist and the floor, neutral spine. Raise the top leg up to hip height. T-Zone tight."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, bend the knee forward, directly over the bottom leg"



"EXHALE, straighten the leg out in front of the body, flex the foot and…"



"… sweep back in line with the body"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Really squeeze the buttock to sweep the leg all the way back in line with the body"***
- "Keep the knee straight as you sweep back and press back against the band"***
- "Maintain the gap underneath the waist"***
- "Maintain the height of the leg, don't let it drop down lower than hip height"***
- "Prevent the knee from rolling in when the knee bends toward the chest – keep the kneecap facing forward and make sure that the foot is never higher than the knee"***
- "Keep the torso and pelvis completely still"***
- "Only take the leg as far forward as you can without tucking the bottom under – for most of you this will be taking your top knee directly over your bottom knee"***
- "Sweep the leg as far back as possible without arching the lower back"***
- "Flex the foot and really press through the heel to sweep the leg back"***
- "Keep the body and pelvis completely still"

To Make it Easier

- "Make the bicycles smaller"

To Make it Harder

- "Make the bicycles bigger, bringing the knee closer to the chest" (keep the bottom poking out)

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Collapsing through the side of the waist and hitching the top hip up toward the shoulder
- When taking the leg back – losing the neutral spine and arching the back
- When taking the leg forward – bringing it too far forward, tucking the pelvis under (most people will not be able to take their knee any further forward than their other knee without tucking the pelvis under due to Hamstring tightness or poor stability/control)
- Not fully straightening the knee before sweeping back, and not sweeping the leg all the way back in line with the body (this is usually because clients try to mimic the action of actually riding a bike, which is a slightly different movement)
- Not lifting the leg high enough – minimum at hip height or higher, kneecap facing forward
- Rolling the knee in toward the floor
- Pointing the foot rather than flexing it as the leg sweeps back – flexing the foot encourages full hip extension, pointing it can cause Calf and foot cramps

Encourage and Inspire

- "Great Bicycles everyone, keep on cycling!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, bend the knee forward"
- "EXHALE, straighten the knee and sweep the leg back"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band and Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Straight Leg Raise

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Gluteus Maximus hold the leg up at hip height (hip abduction) and prevent the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Gluteus Maximus to sweep the leg back in line with the body (hip extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Deep Hip Rotators and Piriformis to stop the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back and stop the hips from rocking backward
- Internal and External Obliques and Rectus Abdominus to prevent the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus, Deep Hip Rotators on the underneath leg to keep it stable

Injuries/Caution

Hip Pain, Hip Clicking or Overactive Hip Flexors

- Ensure that the top leg is up at least at hip height and not lower otherwise the TFL and Gluteus Medius tendons can click over the hip bone (Greater Trochanter) and cause pain
- Keep the range of movement of the bicycles smaller
- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) or Piriformis taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators – palpation may be required to feel for this
- Really focus on using the buttocks to do the work, squeeze the buttocks
- Keep the knee facing forward, don't let the kneecap roll down and face toward the ground; the knee should never be lower than the foot
- If pain or discomfort persists, modify back to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Circles + Band
- Remove the band

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Lower Back Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone stays tight, use the T-Zone to draw the top hip bone across the imaginary horizontal line toward the underneath hip bone
- Keep the pelvis still, spine neutral, maintain the gap between the waist and the floor
- Ensure that the pelvis isn't tucking under and the lower back isn't arching or moving
- Don't take the top leg as far forward or backward
- If pain or discomfort persists, modify back to Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band or Circles + Band
- Remove the band

Sciatica

- Avoid sweeping the leg too far forward as that can place the body in a neural tension position

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow, and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Can perform throughout the first trimester of pregnancy – after this it can place too much strain on the pelvis

Programming Advice

- This is a really tough buttock exercise as it goes through a large range of motion and uses all of the buttock muscles – great for a hard workout
- The addition of the band makes it even harder – often clients will decrease the range of their bicycles and drop their leg below hip height with the band on, so you really need to cue to sweep the leg all the way back and to keep it at hep height or above
- As this exercise is often programmed at the end of a long buttock series, you will find that some clients will be fatigued and need to remove the band throughout the exercise
- Clients generally find it difficult to keep their pelvis still in this exercise – a hand on the hip helps them to self-monitor their pelvic position
- The sweep back portion of the exercise engages the Gluteus Maximus muscle, it is important that the knee is kept straight as it extends back against the band otherwise the Hamstrings will do the work instead
- In a group class, some clients can perform the exercise with the band, others without

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle Intensity=2 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Inner Thigh Lift with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the inner thigh muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"



Set Up

"Place the circle vertically on its handle across one end of the mat. Place your underneath leg through the circle, resting the outer shin on the handle, just above the ankle."

"Lie the body down on the side and place the other leg on the top of the handle. Legs down straight, underneath arm extended with the head relaxing on the arm. Hand, shoulders, hips and legs should be in one long line. Place the top hand on the floor in front. Underneath leg extended long, toes pointed. Neutral spine, hips stacked one on top of the other with a small gap between the waist and the floor"



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, lift the bottom leg up"



"INHALE, lower the leg back down without resting"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "T-Zone to keep the body and the circle still"***
- "Maintain a small gap between the waist and the floor"***
- "Keep the underneath leg straight and in line with the body, knee and foot facing forward"***
- "Lower the leg but try not to touch the circle"***
- "Squeeze the inner thigh to lift the leg, and press down on the circle with the top leg"
- "Hips stacked one on top of the other, keep the hips still"
- "Elongate the bottom leg and lengthen through the toes"
- "Keep the circle vertical, pressing down slightly with the top leg to keep it still"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lift the leg as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Hold the leg up high and do small pulses"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Rolling the body forward or backward – not having the hips stacked
- Bending the underneath knee
- Rotating the underneath leg up or down rather than it facing straight to the front
- Losing the gap between the waist and the floor, hitching the top hip up toward the shoulder
- Not having the circle vertical and letting the circle move

Encourage and Inspire

- "Getting closer everyone, looking excellent"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, lift the leg"
- "INHALE, lower the leg"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Inner Thigh Lift

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- The Adductor muscles to raise the leg (hip adduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to keep the pelvis still
- The Adductor Muscles of the top leg to stabilise the leg to hold the circle in position

Injuries/Caution

Knee Pain

- Avoid for Medial Ligament problems
- Ensure that the underneath leg is straight and facing straight forward

Hip Pain

- This exercise is easier to perform for people with hip pain compared to the version on the mat as the client does not need to place the foot in front of the body
- If lying directly on the hip is uncomfortable, try folding the mat up for extra padding

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Avoid or closely monitor, stop if the client experiences any pain
- Ensure that the T-Zone is tight before the leg lifts

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone is on and that the back is not arching as the leg lifts

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the client is not pressing through their hand or tensing their neck

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform throughout the first trimester
- Use with caution after the first trimester
- Avoid for any clients with pelvic or Pubic Bone pain

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- This is a good option for clients who are unable to get their top leg on the floor in front of the body in order to perform Inner Thigh Lift on the mat as the circle supports the top leg
- It is more difficult to stabilise the body than in Inner Thigh Lift on the mat because both legs are extended out straight, making the position more unstable
- The circle can cause the top leg to roll forward and backward if the client does not have enough stability to maintain control in this position
- This exercise differs to the matwork variation as the inner thigh of the top leg works to stabilise rather than the buttock muscles of the top leg
- A great inner thigh exercise that most people can do
- Works well in a series before or after Double Leg Lift

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Inner Thigh Lift 2 (Circles) + Circle

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Inner Thigh Circles with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the inner thigh muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Place the circle vertically on its handle across one end of the mat. Place your underneath leg through the circle, resting the outer shin on the handle, just above the ankle."



"Lie the body down on the side and place the other leg on the top of the handle. Legs down straight, underneath arm extended with the head relaxing on the arm. Hand, shoulders, hips and legs should be in one long line. Place the top hand on the floor in front. Underneath leg extended long, toes pointed. Neutral spine, hips stacked one on top of the other with a small gap between the waist and the floor"



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, lift the bottom leg slightly"



"EXHALE, to circle the leg back…"
"… and up"



"INHALE, to circle the leg forward and down"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "T-Zone to keep the body and the circle still"***
- "Maintain a small gap between the waist and the floor"***
- "Try to trace the circumference of the circle with the underneath foot"***
- "Keep the underneath leg straight, knee and foot facing straight forward"***
- "Squeeze the inner thigh to perform the circles"
- "Hips stacked one on top of the other, keep the hips still"
- "Elongate the bottom leg and lengthen through the toes"
- "Keep the circle vertical, pressing down slightly with the top leg to keep it still"

To Make it Easier

- "Make the circles smaller"

To Make it Harder

- "Make the circles larger, trying to touch the top of the circle, but keep the body still"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Rolling the body forward or backward – not having the hips stacked
- Bending the underneath knee
- Rotating the underneath leg up or down rather than it facing straight to the front
- Losing the gap between the waist and the floor, hitching the top hip up toward the shoulder
- Jerky/uncoordinated circle movements
- Not having the circle vertical and letting the circle move

Encourage and Inspire

- "Almost there everyone, looking brilliant"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, circle the leg back and up"
- "INHALE, circle the leg forward and down"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- The Adductor muscles to raise and circle the leg (hip adduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to keep the pelvis still
- The Adductor Muscles of the top leg to stabilise the leg to hold the circle in position

Injuries/Caution

Knee Pain

- Avoid for Medial Ligament problems
- Ensure that the underneath leg is straight and facing straight forward

Hip Pain

- This exercise is easier to perform for people with hip pain compared to the version on the mat as the client does not need to place the foot in front of the body
- If lying directly on the hip is uncomfortable, try folding the mat up for extra padding

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Avoid or closely monitor, stop if the client experiences any pain
- Ensure that the T-Zone is tight before the leg lifts

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone is on and that the back is not arching as the leg lifts
- Only make the circles as large as possible whilst keeping the body and pelvis still

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the client is not pressing through their hand or tensing their neck

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform throughout the first trimester
- Use with caution after the first trimester
- Avoid for any clients with pelvic or Pubic Bone pain

Programming Advice

- A more intense inner thigh exercise than Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle as the circling movement requires a lot more strength in the Adductors to perform
- Works well in a series after Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle and before or after Double Leg Lift
- You can reverse the direction of the circles, but ensure that clients still EXHALE as the leg sweeps up and back
- This is a good option for clients who are unable to get their top leg on the floor in front of the body in order to perform Inner Thigh Lift on the mat as the circle supports the top leg
- This exercise is more difficult than Inner Thigh Lift + Circle in that as the circling of the legs makes the position more unstable

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Double Leg Lift and its variations are the only exercises in the Side Lying Series where the aim is to lose the gap between the waist and the floor.

It can be quite difficult for some clients to place the circle between the ankles themselves and then lie down without it falling out. You may need to do it for them once they are already in the correct side lying position.

You may also need to adjust the circle position for the clients throughout the exercise to ensure it is vertical and even.

Name of Exercise

"Double Leg Lift with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the side of the waist and the inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sitting on the mat, rock the pelvis to one side and lean back onto that elbow to place the circle in between the shins, just above the ankles"



"Extend the legs out straight and lie down onto the side, underneath arm extended long, head resting on the arm, top hand on the floor in front. Shoulder down and back. Legs extended straight in line with the body, so there is one long line between the hand, hips and toes. Toes pointed and legs squeezed together. Hips stacked one on top of the other, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, squeeze the top side of the waist to lift both legs off the floor"



"INHALE, lower the legs back down"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Really squeeze the side of the waist drawing the top hip up toward the ribcage"***
- "Make sure that the back is not arched and ribs aren't flaring"***
- "Really use the breath out to engage your abdominals and use your stomach muscles to lift the legs rather than using your back muscles to lift your legs"***
- "Make sure that the hips aren't rolling forward or backward"***
- "Squeeze the legs against the circle to keep it vertical and centred between both legs"***
- "Use the top hand for balance only and not to push through"
- "Keep the legs straight and toes pointed – one long line between the arm, head, shoulders, hips, knees and feet"
- "Chin tucked in, head in line with the rest of the spine, shoulders down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lift the legs quite so high"

To Make it Harder

- "Lift the legs higher"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Rolling the body forward and overusing the lower back muscles (particularly the Quadratus Lumborum and Erector Spinae) to lift the legs
- Rolling the body backward and overusing the Hip Flexor muscles to lift the legs
- Arching the lower back, letting the Obliques go, the ribcage flaring out
- Letting the T-Zone go, the abdominals bulging out
- Tensing/hunching the shoulders, sticking the chin out/head forward
- Pressing through the top hand or the underneath arm to help lift the legs
- Not pointing the toes – flexing can make the Quadriceps overwork rather than the Adductors
- Bending the underneath knee, using the leg to support the weight of the top leg and the circle
- Not keeping one long line between the hand, hips and toes
- Losing/dropping the circle

Encourage and Inspire

- "Terrific! This exercise is so good for sculpting the side of your waist!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, to lift the legs"
- "INHALE, to lower the legs"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Quadratus Lumborum to lift the legs (lumbar spine lateral flexion)
- Adductors to squeeze the circle and raise the underneath leg (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Medius of the top leg to help lift the leg (hip abduction)
- Gluteus Maximus to assist lifting the top leg and to keep the legs back in line with the body (hip abduction and extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs flaring
- Transversus Abdominus to stop the hips from rocking
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical flexion)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back isn't arching and the body is not rolling forward
- Check that the abdominals are working (T-Zone on and ribs to hips at the front of the body)
- Ensure that clients are using the abdominals and not the lower back muscles to lift the legs
- Take the legs further forward which does not stretch the Hip Flexors as much and makes it less likely for a client to arch their back if they are Lordotic
- Try using an imprinted spinal position, this will assist the Obliques to activate more easily
- When using the circle, clients have to laterally flex their spine more for the legs to clear the floor, which some clients will find difficult – remove the circle if necessary

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hip Pain

- Some people will feel that their underneath hip is hurting and digging into the floor – you can double up the mat to create more padding, or roll the hips ever so slightly backward to roll off the hip joint (without rolling too far back and using incorrect technique)
- When using the circle, the hips are placed in more abduction, which some clients will find difficult – remove the circle if necessary

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Avoid or take care when using the circle for this exercise
- Focus on keeping the T-Zone tight and don't squeeze too hard on the circle

Knee Pain

- If a client has medial knee pain, omit the circle for this exercise

Neck Pain

- Try not to push through your top hand
- Keep the shoulder blade down and back, neck in align with the body, chin tucked in
- Keep the head relaxed on the arm or use a cushion instead of the arm if more comfortable

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester (if the client does not have any pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)
- Omit the circle after the first trimester of pregnancy
- As the belly grows, balance can be extremely difficult in the second and third trimesters, as such, most clients will need to avoid this exercise at this stage

Programming Advice

- More challenging than Double Leg Lift on the mat as holding the circle between the legs makes it more unstable and difficult to control the pelvis from rolling forward or backward
- The addition of the circle makes the inner thighs work harder than the matwork variation
- A good exercise for a class setting as you can give options for different levels ie. Double Leg Lift 1 or 2 with or without the circle
- Goes well before or after Inner Thigh Lift + Circle
- Can be used in a sequence before Double Leg Lift + Circle 2, 3 or 4

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting) + Circle

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Double Leg Lift and its variations are the only exercises in the Side Lying Series where the aim is to lose the gap between the waist and the floor.

It can be quite difficult for some clients to place the circle between the ankles themselves and then lie down without it falling out. You may need to do it for them once they are already in the correct side lying position.

You may also need to adjust the circle position for the clients throughout the exercise to ensure it is vertical and even.

Name of Exercise

"Double Leg Lift with the Circle and the Upper Body Lifting"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the side of the waist and the inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sitting on the mat, rock the pelvis to one side and lean back onto that elbow to place the circle in between the shins, just above the ankles"



"Extend the legs out straight and lie down onto the side, underneath arm extended long, head resting on the arm, top hand resting on the thigh. Shoulder down and back. Legs extended straight in line with the body, so there is one long line between the hand, hips and toes. Toes pointed and legs squeezed together. Hips stacked one on top of the other, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, squeeze the top side of the waist to lift both legs off the floor, lifting the head and shoulders and sliding the top hand along the thigh toward the knee"



"INHALE, lower the legs and body back down"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Really squeeze the side of the waist drawing the top hip up toward the ribcage"***
- "Reach the hand down the thigh as far as you can"***
- "Make sure that the back is not arched and ribs aren't flaring"***
- "Really use the breath out to engage your abdominals and use your stomach muscles to lift your legs and upper body rather than using your back muscles"***
- "Keep your T-Zone tight to make sure that your hips aren't rolling forward or backward"***
- "Squeeze the legs against the circle to keep it vertical and centred between both legs"***
- "Keep the legs straight and toes pointed – one long line between the arm, head, shoulders, hips, knees and feet, don't let the body or legs move forward as you lift them"***
- "Chin tucked in, head in line with the rest of the spine, shoulders down and back"***

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lift the legs or body quite so high"
- "Keep the head down on the arm and place your top hand on the floor in front of you"

To Make it Harder

- "Lift the legs and body higher, really reach the hand down the thigh"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Arching the lower back, letting the Obliques go, the ribcage flaring out
- Letting the T-Zone go, the abdominals bulging out
- Tensing/hunching the shoulders
- Not keeping the upper body in a straight line with the legs – allowing the head to move forward and sticking the chin out
- Lifting the head too high, too much lateral flexion in the cervical spine (keep it as a gentle lateral flexion curve that follows the thoracic spine position)
- Rolling the body backward and overusing the Hip Flexor muscles to lift the legs
- Rolling the body forward and overusing the lower back muscles (particularly the Quadratus Lumborum) to lift the legs
- Pressing through the underneath arm to help lift the legs
- Not pointing the toes – flexing can make the Quadriceps overwork rather than the Adductors
- Bending the underneath knee, using the leg to support the weight of the top leg and the circle
- Losing/dropping the circle

Encourage and Inspire

- "Keep going, you're doing really well"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, to lift the legs and the upper body, hand sliding along the thigh"
- "INHALE, to lower the upper body and the legs"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Quadratus Lumborum to lift the legs and upper body (lumbar and thoracic spine lateral flexion)
- Adductors to squeeze the circle and raise the underneath leg (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Medius of the top leg to help lift the leg (hip abduction)
- Gluteus Maximus to assist lifting the top leg and to keep the legs back in line with the body (hip abduction and extension)
- Scalenes and Sternocleidomastoid to lift the head (cervical lateral flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs flaring
- Transversus Abdominus to stop the hips from rocking
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical flexion)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back isn't arching and the body isn't rolling forward or backward
- Check that the abdominals are working (T-Zone on and ribs to hips at the front of the body)
- Ensure that clients are using the abdominals and not the lower back muscles to lift the legs

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Take the legs further forward which does not stretch the Hip Flexors as much and makes it less likely for a client to arch their back if they are Lordotic
- Try using an imprinted spinal position, this will assist the Obliques to activate more easily
- Go back to Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle or remove the circle
- When using the circle, clients have to laterally flex their spine more for the legs to clear the floor, which some clients will find difficult – remove the circle if necessary

Hip Pain

- Some people will feel that their underneath hip is hurting and digging into the floor – you can double up the mat to create more padding, or roll the hips ever so slightly backward to roll off the hip joint (without rolling too far back and using incorrect technique)
- When using the circle, the hips are placed in more abduction, which some clients will find difficult – remove the circle if necessary

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Avoid or take care when using the circle for this exercise
- Focus on keeping the T-Zone tight and don't squeeze too hard on the circle

Knee Pain

- If a client has medial knee pain, omit the circle for this exercise

Neck Pain

- Keep your neck in line with the rest of the body as you lift, don't lift the head too high
- Try not to push through your top hand
- Keep the shoulder blade down and back, chin tucked in
- If pain or discomfort persists, go back to Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester (if the client does not have any pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)
- Omit the circle after the first trimester of pregnancy
- As the belly grows, balance can be extremely difficult in the second and third trimesters, as such, most clients will need to avoid this exercise at this stage

Programming Advice

- This exercise is harder than the matwork variation in that it is more challenging on the balance and stability and it is harder to lift the legs with the circle
- Goes well before or after Inner Thigh Lift on the mat or with the circle
- Can be used in a sequence after Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle or before Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats) + Circle or Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors) + Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- A good exercise for a class setting as you can give options for different levels ie. Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) or Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting) with or without the circle
- When demonstrating this exercise, you may demonstrate two levels and give the class the option to choose their level – when cueing the exercise, cue to raise the legs and either keep the upper body resting on the mat or lift the head and shoulders
- There are two ways to modify down this exercise if a client is finding the exercise too challenging, you can either remove the circle and continue lifting the upper body, or you can keep the circle and keep the upper body and head down on the mat

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats) + Circle

Intensity=3.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Double Leg Lift and its variations are the only exercises in the Side Lying Series where the aim is to lose the gap between the waist and the floor.

It can be quite difficult for some clients to place the circle between the ankles themselves and then lie down without it falling out. You may need to do it for them once they are already in the correct side lying position.

You may also need to adjust the circle position for the clients throughout the exercise to ensure it is vertical and even.

Name of Exercise

"Double Leg Lift Beats with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the side of the waist, inner thigh and buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sitting on the mat, rock the pelvis to one side and lean back onto that elbow to place the circle in between the shins, just above the ankles"



"Extend the legs out straight and lie down onto the side, underneath arm extended long, head resting on the arm, top hand on the floor in front. Shoulder down and back. Legs extended straight in line with the body, so there is one long line between the hand, hips and toes. Toes pointed and legs squeezed together. Hips stacked one on top of the other, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze slightly on the circle"

"EXHALE, squeeze the top side of the waist and lift the legs up and hold this position"



"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, squeeze the circle with the underneath leg"



"INHALE, release the circle"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Focus on using the inner thigh of the underneath leg to squeeze against the circle and lift it up to the top leg"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight as you squeeze and release the circle slowly, with control"***
- "Keep the top leg still and raised up high"***
- "Try to keep the circle vertical and centred between both legs"***
- "Really squeeze the side of the waist drawing the top hip up toward the ribcage"***
- "Make sure that the back is not arched and ribs aren't flaring"***
- "Use your stomach muscles to lift the legs rather than using your back muscles"***
- "Make sure that the hips aren't rolling forward or backward"***
- "Use the top hand for balance only and not to push through"
- "Keep the legs straight and toes pointed – one long line between the arm, head, shoulders, hips, knees and feet"
- "Chin tucked in, head in line with the rest of the spine, shoulders down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lift the legs as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Lift the legs higher"
- "Pulse the leg faster - if you choose this option, simply breathe naturally as you pulse the leg"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Moving the top leg or lowering the top leg
- Bending the underneath knee
- Rolling the body forward and overusing the lower back muscles to lift the legs
- Rolling the body backward and overusing the Hip Flexor muscles to lift the legs
- Arching the lower back, letting the Obliques go, the ribcage flaring out
- Letting the T-Zone go, the abdominals bulging out
- Tensing/hunching the shoulders, sticking the chin out/head forward
- Pressing through the top hand to help lift the legs
- Not keeping one long line between the hand, hips and toes
- Losing/dropping the circle

Encourage and Inspire

- "Great job with those beats, that's fantastic!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, lift the leg squeeze the circle,"
- "INHALE, lower the leg, release the circle"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUSITES: Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Quadratus Lumborum to lift the legs and hold them up (lumbar spine lateral flexion)
- Adductors to squeeze the circle and raise the underneath leg (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Medius of the top leg to help lift the leg (hip abduction)
- Gluteus Maximus to assist lifting the top leg and to keep the legs back in line with the body (hip abduction and extension)
- Scalenes and Sternocleidomastoid to lift the head (cervical lateral flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs flaring
- Transversus Abdominus to stop the hips from rocking
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical flexion)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back isn't arching and the body isn't rolling forward or backward
- Check that the abdominals are working (T-Zone on and ribs to hips at the front of the body)
- Ensure that clients are using the abdominals and not the lower back muscles to lift the legs

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Take the legs further forward which does not stretch the Hip Flexors as much and makes it less likely for a client to arch their back if they are Lordotic
- Try using an imprinted spinal position, this will assist the Obliques to activate more easily
- When using the circle, clients have to laterally flex their spine more for the legs to clear the floor, which some clients will find difficult – remove the circle if necessary

Hip Pain

- Some people will feel that their underneath hip is hurting and digging into the floor – you can double up the mat to create more padding, or roll the hips ever so slightly backward to roll off the hip joint (without rolling too far back and using incorrect technique)
- When using the circle, the hips are placed in more abduction, which some clients will find difficult – remove the circle if necessary

Knee Pain

- If a client has medial knee pain, omit the circle for this exercise

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- As this exercise works the Adductors and these muscles attach on to the Pubic Bone, avoid if there is any pain in the Pubic Bone or Adductors

Neck Pain

- Try not to push through your top hand
- Keep the shoulder blade down and back, neck in line with the body, chin tucked in
- Keep the head relaxed on the arm or use a cushion instead of the arm if more comfortable

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester (if the client does not have any pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)
- Omit the circle after the first trimester of pregnancy
- As the belly grows, balance can be extremely difficult in the second and third trimesters, as such, most clients will need to avoid this exercise at this stage

Programming Advice

- A great exercise to do after Inner Thigh Lift on the mat or with the circle
- This exercise is much more intense on the inner thighs than Inner Thigh Lift on the mat due to the resistance of the circle to beat the legs together
- It is also more difficult to balance when using the circle
- Works well after Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle or Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting) + Circle
- You may not need to perform a full demonstration for Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats) + Circle instead use arm gestures to show the legs beating while performing a full cue

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- When performing Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats) + Circle straight after Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle, you may choose to flow straight into the beats variation without resting down – to do this, cue to hold the legs up on the last repetition and beat the bottom leg down and up to the top leg

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors) + Circle

Intensity=3 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Double Leg Lift and its variations are the only exercises in the Side Lying Series where the aim is to lose the gap between the waist and the floor.

It can be quite difficult for some clients to place the circle between the ankles themselves and then lie down without it falling out. You may need to do it for them once they are already in the correct side lying position.

You may also need to adjust the circle position for the clients throughout the exercise to ensure it is vertical and even.

Name of Exercise

"Double Leg Lift Scissors with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the side of the waist, inner thigh and buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"



Set Up

"Sitting on the mat, rock the pelvis to one side and lean back onto that elbow to place the circle in between the shins, just above the ankles"

"Extend the legs out straight and lie down onto the side, underneath arm extended long, head resting on the arm, top hand on the floor in front. Shoulder down and back. Legs extended straight in line with the body, so there is one long line between the hand, hips and toes. Toes pointed and legs squeezed together. Hips stacked one on top of the other, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, squeeze the top side of the waist and lift the legs up and hold the legs up in this position"



"INHALE, draw the top leg forward and the bottom leg back, rotating the circle slightly"



"EXHALE, draw the top leg back and the bottom leg forward, rotating the circle back slightly"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the legs up as high as possible as you scissor the legs"***
- "Keep the pelvis completely still"***
- "Really squeeze the side of the waist drawing the top hip up toward the ribcage"***
- "Make sure that the back is not arched and ribs aren't flaring"***
- "Use your stomach muscles to lift the legs rather than using your back muscles"***
- "The circle will rotate slightly as you move the legs, only rotate as far as you can maintain control without rocking the pelvis"***
- "Use the top hand for balance only and not to push through"
- "Point the toes and keep the legs straight"
- "Chin tucked in, head in line with the rest of the spine, shoulders down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lift the legs as high"
- "Make the movement smaller"

To Make it Harder

- "Lift the legs higher"
- "Make the movement slightly larger"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Moving the pelvis as you rotate the circle (making the movement too large)
- Dropping the legs
- Rolling the body forward and overusing the lower back muscles to lift the legs
- Rolling the body backward and overusing the Hip Flexor muscles to lift the legs
- Arching the lower back, letting the Obliques go, the ribcage flaring out
- Letting the T-Zone go, the abdominals bulging out
- Tensing/hunching the shoulders, sticking the chin out/head forward
- Pressing through the top hand to help lift the legs
- Not keeping one long line between the hand, hips and toes
- Losing/dropping the circle

Encourage and Inspire

- "Keep holding up as high as you can, great job!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, rotate the circle forward"
- "INHALE, rotate the circle backward"

Ending the Exercise

- "… bring the legs back to centre, lower them down and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques and Quadratus Lumborum to lift the legs (lumbar spine lateral flexion)
- Adductors to squeeze the circle (hip adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Medius of the top leg to help lift the leg (hip abduction)
- Scalenes and Sternocleidomastoid to lift the head (cervical lateral flexion)
- Hip Flexors to sweep the leg forward (hip flexion) and Gluteus Maximus to sweep it back (hip extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back from arching and the ribs flaring
- Transversus Abdominus to stop the hips from rocking
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical flexion)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back isn't arching and the body isn't rolling forward or backward
- Check that the abdominals are working (T-Zone on and ribs to hips at the front of the body)
- Ensure that clients are using the abdominals and not the lower back muscles to lift the legs
- Take the legs slightly further forward, and try using more of an imprinted spinal position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- When using the circle, clients have to laterally flex their spine more for the legs to clear the floor, which some clients will find difficult – remove the circle if necessary

Hip Pain

- Some people will feel that their underneath hip is hurting and digging into the floor – you can double up the mat to create more padding, or roll the hips ever so slightly backward to roll off the hip joint (without rolling too far back and using incorrect technique)
- When using the circle, the hips are placed in more abduction, which some clients will find difficult – remove the circle if necessary

Pubic Bone Pain or Adductor Pain

- Avoid or take care when using the circle for this exercise
- Focus on keeping the T-Zone tight and don't squeeze too hard on the circle

Knee Pain

- If a client has medial knee pain, omit the circle for this exercise

Neck Pain

- Try not to push through your top hand
- Keep the shoulder blade down and back, neck in line with the body, chin tucked in
- Keep the head relaxed on the arm or use a cushion instead of the arm if more comfortable

Shoulder Pain

- If the client is unable to lie with their arm extended, try placing a pillow under the head, bend the elbow and bring the arm forward in front of the body or avoid the exercise completely

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester (if the client does not have any pelvic or Pubic Bone pain)
- Omit the circle after the first trimester of pregnancy
- As the belly grows, balance can be extremely difficult in the second and third trimesters, as such, most clients will need to avoid this exercise at this stage

Programming Advice

- This exercise is harder than the matwork variation in that it is more challenging on stability, it is harder to lift the legs and the weight of the circle adds resistance to holding the legs up
- Can be used in a sequence after any other Double Leg Lift exercises with or with the circle
- Works well after Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle
- When performing Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors) + Circle straight after Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle, you may choose to flow straight into the scissors variation without resting down - to do this, cue to hold the legs up on the last repetition and scissor the legs forward and backward

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #1: Side Lying
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Circle Positioning #1: Circle Placement
- Circle Positioning #2: Squeezing the Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Use of the Band in the Kneeling Series

The band is used to add resistance in the Kneeling Series. Lengthening the band will make the exercises easier, shortening the band will make the exercises harder.

Safety When Using the Long Band in the Kneeling Series

When using the long band in 4-point kneeling ensure that clients are gripping the band securely so that it does not slip out of their hands. You may even wish to have them wind the band around their hands before gripping the band or leaning on the band to provide extra security.



Band Looped Around Both Hands

Usually if you let go of the band and it flies away from you, the direction of the band flying goes away from the body. However in the kneeling series, if you lose grip on the band, it actually flies toward your face. As such, it's safer during the kneeling series to wrap the band around the hand.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Ensure that the band is underneath the opposite hand to the leg that is moving and that both sides of the band are sitting between the knees.

This exercise differs to Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) on the mat as the foot is relaxed rather than pointed.

For additional safety in this exercise, you can wrap the band around the hand before leaning on the band.

Name of Exercise

"Horsekick with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"



Set Up

"Kneeling on the mat, feet flexed, sit back on the heels and place the centre of the band around the arch of one foot"

"Come onto all fours and place both ends of the band underneath the opposite hand and the band in between the knees. Hands under the shoulders and knees under the hips. Neutral spine, shoulders down and back, upper back up against the shoulder blades. Chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head"



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, and squeeze the buttocks"

"EXHALE, extend the leg out straight behind you up in line with the body, foot relaxed"



"INHALE, bend the knee bringing it back underneath the hip without touching the floor"

"Continue on the same side"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttock to extend the leg, don't just go through the motion"***
- "Take the leg straight out and up, lift the leg up to hip height with the knee straight"***
- "Keep a neutral spine, T-Zone tight – the body and pelvis should stay still"***
- "Only lift the leg as high as possible without arching the lower back"***
- "Reach through the leg as much as possible to work the buttocks"***
- "Keep the foot relaxed, don't actively point or flex the foot"***
- "Keep the stabilising hip directly over the knee, don't let it move forward or sideways"***
- "Most of the weight should be on the stabilising knee, not the hands"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, eye gaze straight down to the floor"***
- "Keep the pelvis facing square to the floor, don't rotate the hips"***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "When you draw the knee back in, bring it underneath the hip and no further"
- "Use the breath out to really activate the abdominals to stop the back arching as the leg lifts"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Don't extend the leg quite so high"
- "Rest the knee down on the mat between each repetition"

To Make it Harder

- "Extend the leg up higher – as high as you can without arching the back – and really reach through the leg to stretch the band further"
- "Keep the weight back off the hands and mostly on the stabilising knee"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Moving through the hips and body – letting the hips move over to the side/rotating the pelvis
- Losing the T-Zone and Obliques, dipping through the lower back
- Dropping the head down or looking forward
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowers toward the floor
- Sagging the upper back through the shoulder blades (losing Serratus Anterior activation)
- Weight too far forward – too much weight through the arms rather than the supporting knee
- Kicking the leg too high and arching the lower back, T-Zone tight, think of ribs to hips
- Drawing the knee back in too far under the body and rounding the lower back
- Not fully straightening the knee before lifting the leg up – a bent knee means that the Hamstring muscles rather than the Gluteus Maximus are working
- Drawing the knee back in too far under the body and rounding the lower back
- Not keeping the foot relaxed (flexing the foot overworks the Quadriceps, pointing the toes overworks the Hamstrings, a relaxed foot works the buttocks most effectively)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Fantastic effort everyone, just a few more to go!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, kick the leg out"
- "INHALE, draw the knee back in"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to extend the leg and raise it up (hip extension)
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators to stabilise the supporting leg

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings to extend the leg and raise it up (hip extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the spine and prevent the pelvis from rocking or twisting
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back form arching
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Serratus Anterior to stop the Scapulae from winging/the upper body sagging through the shoulder blades (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- If the abdominals and buttocks are not activating properly the lower back will arch, the hips and pelvis will shift to one side or the pelvis will rotate, causing strain on the lower back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Check technique to ensure that there is no dipping through the back or rotation through the pelvis and, discontinue if discomfort continues
- Cue the client not to kick the leg as high
- If a client is not strong enough in their buttocks to stabilise themselves in this exercise, remove the band or modify to a buttock exercise in the Side Lying Series instead

Hip Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone and abdominals are switched on
- Check correct alignment of the pelvis (ie. to flexion/extension, lateral flexion or rotation)
- Avoid this exercise if pain persists

Knee Pain

- If a client experiences pain in kneeling, try folding over the mat or placing some padding under the knee to take the pressure off
- If pain persists, have the client perform the movement standing with their hand resting on a wall for support, leaning the body slightly forward and kicking the leg behind them or try Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Ensure that the weight is back over the knee, not forward on the arms
- Shoulder blades down and back, neck long and chin tucked in, eyes looking toward the floor
- Cue to use Serratus Anterior so that the upper back doesn't sag through the shoulder blades
- Check that are elbows are not locked, keep them soft

Wrist Pain

- If this exercise is hurting the wrists then it usually means the client is taking too much weight through their arms rather than their stabilising knee
- Cue the clients to think of their weight moving backward or their buttocks moving backward as though they were trying to sit on their heels, and lifting the body weight up off the hands by using the abdominals and Serratus Anterior
- Check that are elbows are not locked, keep them soft
- Ensure that the wrists are not in too much extension – you can do this by focussing on pressing through the fingers and knuckles of the hands rather than the heels of the hands or try rolling the mat up and placing it under the heels of the hands
- Try to weight bear on the fists or fingertips rather than the palms of the hands

Pregnancy

- Can be performed during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Avoid during the second and third trimesters as it requires a great deal of abdominal stability
- Alternatively, after the first trimester, omit the band and perform Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) on the mat instead

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- Using the band adds extra resistance to the extending leg, working the buttocks of the extending leg harder and forces the abdominals to stabilise more
- In the matwork variation, some people feel this exercise working more through the buttock of the balancing leg rather than the kicking leg, whereas when adding the band, the exercise is often felt more in the extending leg
- This exercise works better after performing other buttock exercises first eg. side lying buttock exercises with the band
- Perform all repetitions on one side before swapping to the other side
- You can add in Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band and Horsekick 3 (Sidekick) + Band before swapping sides to really challenge the buttock muscles
- A great buttock exercise for people who overuse their Quadriceps and TFLs during buttock exercises in the Side Lying Series – as you move into hip extension, the Hip Flexors switch off
- A good exercise to use in a group setting as there are many different variations – some clients can perform the exercise with a band, some without a band and clients who cannot kneel can do it in standing using the ball ie. Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball
- Encourage clients to really lengthen the leg and straighten the knee – however, do not use the cue that is used in matwork to reach through the toes, otherwise the band will slip off

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Gluteal Activation #3: Gluteus Maximus
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Ensure that the band is underneath the opposite hand to the leg that is moving and that both sides of the band are sitting between the knees.

This exercise differs to Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) on the mat as the foot is relaxed rather than pointed.

For additional safety in this exercise, you can wrap the band around the hand before leaning on the band.

Name of Exercise

"Horsekick Pulses with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"



Set Up

"Kneeling on the mat, feet flexed, sit back on the heels and place the centre of the band around the arch of one foot"



"Come onto all fours and place both ends of the band underneath the opposite hand and the band in between the knees. Hands under the shoulders and knees under the hips. Neutral spine, shoulders down and back, upper back up against the shoulder blades. Chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head."

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, T-Zone and squeeze the buttocks"

"EXHALE, extend the leg out straight behind you up in line with the body, foot relaxed"



"INHALE, lower the leg down"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



"EXHALE, raise the leg back up"

"Continue on the same side"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttock to extend the leg, don't just go through the motion"***
- "Keep a neutral spine, T-Zone tight – the body and pelvis should stay still"***
- "Only lift the leg as high as possible without arching the lower back"***
- "Aim to lift the leg up to hip height with the knee straight"***
- "Reach through the leg as much as possible to work the buttocks"
- "Keep the stabilising hip directly over the knee, don't let it move forward or sideways"***
- "Most of the weight should be on the stabilising knee, not the hands"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, elbows unlocked, chin tucked in, eyes on the floor"***
- "Keep the pelvis facing square to the floor, don't rotate the hips"***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "Use the breath out to really activate the abdominals to stop the back arching as the leg lifts"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Don't extend the leg as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Extend the leg up higher – as high as you can without arching the back – and really reach through the leg to stretch the band further"
- "Keep the weight mostly on the stabilising and off the hands"
- "Pulse the leg up and down faster - if choosing this, just breathe naturally as you pulse the leg"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Moving through the hips and body – letting the hips move over to the side/rotating the pelvis
- Losing the T-Zone and Obliques, dipping through the lower back
- Dropping the head down or looking forward
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowers toward the floor
- Sagging the upper back through the shoulder blades (losing Serratus Anterior activation)
- Weight too far forward – too much weight through the arms rather than the supporting knee
- Kicking the leg too high and arching the lower back
- Not fully straightening the knee – a bent knee means that the Hamstring muscles rather than the Gluteus Maximus are working

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Not keeping the foot relaxed (flexing the foot overworks the Quadriceps, pointing the toes overworks the Hamstrings, a relaxed foot works the buttocks most effectively)

Encourage and Inspire

- "Magnificent, that's the way!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, raise the leg"
- "INHALE, lower the leg"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Horsekick 2 (Pulses)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to raise the leg up (hip extension)
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators to stabilise the supporting leg

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings to raise the leg up (hip extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the spine and prevent the pelvis from rocking or twisting
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back form arching
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Serratus Anterior to stop the Scapulae from winging/the upper body sagging through the shoulder blades (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Do not lift the leg as high, keep the movement smaller
- If the abdominals and buttocks are not activating properly the lower back will arch, the hips and pelvis will shift to one side or the pelvis will rotate, causing strain on the lower back
- Check technique to ensure that there is no dipping through the back or rotation through the pelvis and, discontinue if discomfort continues
- Really use the breath out to draw the ribs toward the hips as the leg lifts
- If a client is not strong enough in their buttocks to stabilise themselves in this exercise, remove the band or modify to Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band instead

Hip Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone and abdominals are switched on
- Check correct alignment of the pelvis (ie. to flexion/extension, lateral flexion or rotation)
- Avoid this exercise if pain persists

Knee Pain

- If a client experiences pain in kneeling, try folding over the mat or placing some padding under the knee to take the pressure off
- If pain persists, try Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball instead

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Ensure that the weight is back over the knee, not forward on the arms
- Shoulder blades down and back, neck long and chin tucked in, eyes looking toward the floor
- Cue to use Serratus Anterior so that the upper back doesn't sag through the shoulder blades
- Check that the elbows are not locked

Wrist Pain

- If this is hurting the wrists then usually it means the client is taking too much weight through their arms rather than their stabilising knee
- Cue the clients to think of their weight moving backward or their buttocks moving backward as though they were trying to sit on their heels, and lifting the body weight up off the hands by using the abdominals and Serratus Anterior
- Check that the elbows are unlocked
- Ensure that the wrists are not in too much extension – you can do this by focussing on pressing through the fingers and knuckles of the hands rather than the heels of the hands or try rolling the mat up and placing it under the heels of the hands

Pregnancy

- Can be performed during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Avoid during the second and third trimesters as it requires a great deal of abdominal stability
- Alternatively, after the first trimester, omit the band and perform Horsekick 2 (Pulses) on the mat instead

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- People with a Lordosis often find it difficult not to arch their lower back with this exercise
- This exercise works better after performing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band
- Do all the repetitions on one side before swapping to the other side
- You can add in Horsekick 3 (Sidekick) + Band before swapping sides to really challenge the buttock muscles
- A great buttock exercise for people who overuse their Quadriceps and TFLs during buttock exercises in the Side Lying Series – as you move into hip extension, the Hip Flexors switch off
- The Hamstrings and Gluteus Maximus on the kicking leg work really hard in this exercise
- A good exercise to use in a group setting as there are many different variations – some clients can perform the exercise with a band, some without a band and clients who cannot kneel can do it in standing using the ball ie. Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball
- Encourage clients to really lengthen the leg and straighten the knee – however, do not however use the cue that is used in matwork to reach through the toes, otherwise the band will slip off

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Gluteal Activation #3: Gluteus Maximus
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Horsekick 3 (Sidekick) + Band

Intensity=3.5 Difficulty=3.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Ensure that the band is underneath the opposite hand to the leg that is moving and that both sides of the band are sitting between the knees.

This exercise differs to Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) on the mat as the foot is relaxed rather than pointed.

For additional safety in this exercise, you can wrap the band around the hand before leaning on the band.

Name of Exercise

"Horsekick with a Sidekick and the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"



Set Up

"Kneeling on the mat, feet flexed, sit back on the heels and place the centre of the band around the arch of one foot"

"Come onto all fours and place both ends of the band underneath the opposite hand and the band in between the knees. Hands under the shoulders and knees under the hips. Neutral spine, shoulders down and back, upper back up against the shoulder blades. Chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone and squeeze the buttocks"

"EXHALE, extend the leg out straight behind you up in line with the body, turn the leg out, foot relaxed"

"INHALE, hold the leg up at this height, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, sweep the leg slightly out to the side"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



"INHALE, bring it back to the centre"

"Continue on the same side"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Hold the leg up as high as possible as you sweep it side to side – don't let it drop"***
- "Only sweep out to the side as far as possible without the hips moving or twisting"***
- "Keep the pelvis facing square to the floor, don't rotate the hips"***
- "Keep a neutral spine, T-Zone tight – the body and pelvis should stay still"***
- "Only lift the leg as high as possible without arching the lower back"***
- "Keep the leg turned out from the hip joint the whole time"***
- "Keep the stabilising hip directly over the knee, don't let it move forward or sideways"***
- "Most of the weight should be on the stabilising knee, not the hands"***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "Squeeze the buttock to lift the leg, keeping the knee completely straight"
- "Shoulder blades down and back, elbows unlocked, chin tucked in, eyes on the floor"***
- "Use the breath out to really activate the abdominals as the leg sweeps to the side"
- "Keep the torso completely still – no arching the back, rotating or leaning to one side"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Don't extend the leg quite so high or sweep the leg as far out to the side"

To Make it Harder

- "Extend the leg up higher – as high as you can without arching the back – and sweep the leg further out to the side, really squeezing the buttock"
- "Keep the weight mostly on the stabilising knee and off the hands"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Sweeping the leg too far out to the side and twisting the pelvis/hips
- Rotating the pelvis rather than it facing square to the floor
- Bending from the side of the waist (lumbar spine lateral flexion) as the leg sweeps sideways
- Losing the T-Zone and Obliques, dipping through the lower back
- Dropping the head down or looking forward
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowers toward the floor

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Sagging the upper back through the shoulder blades (losing Serratus Anterior activation)
- Weight too far forward – too much weight through the arms rather than the supporting knee
- Kicking the leg too high and arching the lower back
- Not fully straightening the knee – a bent knee means the Hamstring muscles rather than the Gluteus Maximus are working
- Not keeping the leg turned out – turning the leg out helps to activate the Deep Hip Rotators and Gluteus Medius muscles

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking good team, let's keep it up!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, leg out to the side"
- "INHALE, return the leg"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band, Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Horsekick 3 (Sidekick)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to raise the leg up (hip extension)
- Gluteus Medius, Minimus and Maximus to turn the leg out and sweep the leg out to the side (hip external rotation and abduction)
- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators to stabilise the supporting leg

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings to raise the leg up (hip extension)
- Deep Hip Rotators to turn the leg out (hip external rotation)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the spine and prevent the pelvis from rocking or twisting
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back form arching and the torso rotating

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Serratus Anterior to stop the Scapulae from winging/the upper body sagging through the shoulder blades (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- If the abdominals and buttocks are not activating properly the lower back will arch, the pelvis will shift to one side or rotate, causing strain on the lower back
- Check technique to ensure that there is no dipping through the back or rotation through the pelvis and, discontinue if discomfort continues
- Do not take the leg as high or sweep it as far out to the side
- If a client is not strong enough in their buttocks to stabilise themselves in this exercise, remove the band or modify to Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band instead

Hip Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone and abdominals are switched on
- Check correct alignment of the pelvis (ie. to flexion/extension, lateral flexion or rotation)
- Avoid this exercise if pain persists

Knee Pain

- If a client experiences pain in kneeling, try folding over the mat or placing some padding under the knee to take the pressure off
- If pain persists, try Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball instead

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Ensure that the weight is back over the knee, not forward on the arms
- Shoulder blades down and back, neck long and chin tucked in, eyes looking toward the floor
- Cue to use Serratus Anterior so that the upper back doesn't sag through the shoulder blades
- Ensure that the elbows are not locked

Wrist Pain

- If this is hurting the wrists then usually it means the client is taking too much weight through their arms rather than their stabilising knee
- Cue the clients to think of their weight moving backward or their buttocks moving backward as though they were trying to sit on their heels, and lifting the body weight up off the hands by using the abdominals and Serratus Anterior
- Check that the elbows are unlocked
- Ensure that the wrists are not in too much extension – you can do this by focussing on pressing through the fingers and knuckles of the hands rather than the heels of the hands, or try rolling the mat up and placing it under the heels of the hands

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Can be performed during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester of pregnancy or omit the band and perform Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend), Horsekick 2 (Pulses) on the mat instead

Programming Advice

- This exercise is harder with a band as the band adds resistance to both the hip extension and abduction movements, increasing the work for the Gluteus Maximus of the kicking leg
- The stabilising leg and abdominals also have to work harder to keep the pelvis and body still against the extra resistance
- A lot of people cheat and have poor technique with this exercise, in particular they try to sweep the leg too wide and drop the leg, as well as laterally flexing the lumbar spine and moving the hips
- Using the band helps to limit the range of movement when sweeping the leg out to the side, helping clients to maintain good technique
- This exercise works better after performing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band and Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band
- Perform all the repetitions on one side before swapping to the other side

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Gluteal Activation #3: Gluteus Maximus
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle

Intensity=3 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Name of Exercise

"Hinge with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works and stretches the front of the thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"



Set Up

"Kneeling on the mat with the knees hip distance apart, feet flat on the mat and toes pointed. Hold onto the circle, arms stretched out in front at shoulder height, palms facing in. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine, T-Zone."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, lean the whole body backward in one line like a falling tree, squeezing the circle slightly"



"EXHALE, return back up to vertical"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep your body in one straight line – one long line between shoulders, hips and knees"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Use the abdominals (ribs to hips) to stop the lower back from arching"***
- "Squeeze the buttocks to keep the bottom tucked under and in – don't let it stick out"***
- "Only go back as far as you can maintain control"***
- "Squeeze on the circle slightly as you lean the body backward"
- "Use the front of the thighs to stop you leaning too far back and to pull you back up"
- "Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in eyes facing forward"
- "Keep the rib to hip connection as the body leans backward"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lean as far back"

To Make it Harder

- "Lean back further and pause there for a second before coming back up"
- "Squeeze the circle harder as you lean back"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Sticking the bottom out behind the body (not squeezing the buttocks)
- Arching the lower back (losing the abdominal connection)
- Leaning back too far and losing control
- Hunching the shoulders

Encourage and Inspire

- "Great stuff everyone. Looking perfect!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, hinge back"
- "EXHALE, return to vertical"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITE: Hinge 1 (Arms in Front)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Quadriceps work stop the body leaning too far backward (eccentrically controlling knee flexion) and to return the body to the start position (knee extension)
- Stretches the Quadriceps

Accessory Muscles

- Deltoids to hold the circle up (shoulder flexion)
- Pectoralis Major to squeeze in slightly on the circle (shoulder horizontal adduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to support the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Maximus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the bottom from sticking out
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Knee Pain

- Avoid this exercise if you have knee pain on kneeling or Patellofemoral problems
- Hinge can be hard on the knees even if the client has no pre-existing knee problems, clients may wish to put a pillow/towel under the knees or fold the mat up for more cushioning
- Try with the knees slightly wider than hip distance apart – this takes the Quadriceps off stretch
- Try reducing the range of movement
- Discontinue if discomfort or pain persists

Lower Back Pain

- This exercise is difficult for clients who have a large lumbar spine Lordosis
- Avoid for clients who have very tight Quadriceps and poor abdominal control
- Do not lean back as far and check the neutral spine, T-Zone and rib to hip connection

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Cue to keep the shoulders down and back
- Hold the circle a little lower
- Remove the circle and place the arms across the chest instead of out in front of the body at shoulder height if needed

Calf Cramps or Ankle Pain

- Flex the foot and rest on the balls of the toes on the mat, instead of the top of the foot

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Can perform during the first and second trimesters of pregnancy
- Avoid this exercise after the second trimester of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- The addition of the circle to this exercise can make it slightly easier as the weight of the circle in front acts as a counterbalance to falling backward
- The circle can help the Lower Trapezius and Serratus Anterior to activate and stabilise the shoulder blades and may be a good option for clients with neck pain, however a heavy circle can make it more difficult to hold the arms up and harder on the neck and shoulders
- The addition of a squeeze on the circle makes this exercise harder on the arms and chest
- This exercise requires a strong eccentric contraction of the Quadriceps and often clients will feel sore in their thighs the next day
- Many clients with knee problems cannot do this exercise – for these clients you can replace this exercise with a Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch or Kneeling Quad Stretch instead as often they are very tight in these muscles

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Pelvic Positioning #2: Preventing Hip Flexion
- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hinge 2 (Arms Overhead) + Circle

Intensity=3.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

This exercise differs to Hinge 2 (Arms Opening) on the mat in that the arms reach overhead instead of opening.

Name of Exercise

"Hinge with Circle taking the Arms Overhead"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works and stretches the front of the thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"



Set Up

"Kneeling on the mat with the knees hip distance apart, feet flat on the mat and toes pointed. Hold onto the circle, arms stretched out in front at shoulder height, palms facing in. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine, T-Zone."

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, lean the whole body backward in one line squeezing the circle slightly"



"EXHALE, reach the arms overhead"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"INHALE, return the arms back to the front"



"EXHALE, return back up to vertical"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Use the abdominals and squeeze the buttocks to stop the lower back from arching"***
- "Use your breath out to keep the rib to hip connection as the arms reach overhead"***
- "Keep the body still as the arms reach overhead – don't let the back arch"***
- "Make sure that the bottom doesn't stick out – keep the bottom tucked under and in"***
- "Squeeze on the circle slightly as you lean the body backward"
- "Use the front of the thighs to stop you leaning too far back and to pull you back up"
- "Keep your body in one straight line – one long line between shoulders, hips and knees"
- "Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in eyes facing forward"
- "Only go back so far that you can maintain control"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lean as far back"
- "Don't raise the arms as far"
- "Leave the arms in front of the body at shoulder height rather than raising them"

To Make it Harder

- "Lean back further and raise the arms higher"
- "Hold the hinge position and raise the arms several times before returning to vertical"
- "Squeeze the circle as you lean back and raise the arms"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Sticking the bottom out behind the body
- Arching the lower back and allowing the ribs to flare as the arms raise
- Leaning back too far and losing control
- Hunching the shoulders

Encourage and Inspire

- "Getting closer, you're nearly there!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, hinge back"
- "EXHALE, raise the arms"
- "INHALE, return the arms in front"
- "EXHALE, return to vertical"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Hinge 2 (Arms Opening)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Quadriceps work stop the body leaning too far backward (eccentrically controlling knee flexion) and to return the body to the start position (knee extension)
- Stretches the Quadriceps

Accessory Muscles

- Deltoids to raise the circle up overhead (shoulder flexion)
- Pectoralis Major to squeeze in slightly on the circle (shoulder horizontal adduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to support the lower back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Gluteus Maximus to stabilise the pelvis and prevent the bottom from sticking out
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Knee Pain

- Avoid this exercise if you have knee pain on kneeling or Patellofemoral problems or if knee pain/discomfort continues
- Hinge can be hard on the knees even if the client has no pre-existing knee problems, clients may wish to put a pillow/towel under the knees or fold the mat up for more cushioning
- Try with the knees slightly wider than hip distance apart – this takes the Quadriceps off stretch

Lower Back Pain

- This exercise is difficult for clients who have a large lumbar spine Lordosis
- Avoid for clients who have very tight Quadriceps and poor abdominal control
- Do not lean back as far and check the neutral spine, T-Zone and rib to hip connection

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Cue to keep the shoulders down and back
- Hold the circle a little lower and do not raise the arms as far
- You can remove the circle or keep the arms out in front rather than raising them overhead

Calf Cramps or Ankle Pain

- Flex the foot and rest on the balls of the toes on the mat, instead of the top of the foot

Pregnancy

- Can perform during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Avoid this exercise after the second trimester of pregnancy as it requires too much abdominal stabilisation

Programming Advice

- This exercise works the Quadriceps intensely, especially as the arms move overhead
- It also works the chest and shoulder muscles – the circle acts like a light weight and makes it harder to raise the arms up and the chest muscles work if you squeeze in on the circle
- Works well after a set of Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle
- If programming this exercise after Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle, you may not need to perform a full demonstration for Hinge 2 (Arms Overhead) + Circle, instead use arm gestures to show the arms raising while performing a full cue
- Many clients with knee problems cannot do this exercise – for these clients you can replace this exercise with a Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch or Kneeling Quad Stretch instead as often they are very tight in these muscles

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Pelvic Positioning #2: Preventing Hip Flexion
- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Triceps + Band

Intensity=3 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: A good starting point for holding onto the band is for there to be no slack in the band when the elbow of the moving arm is bent to 90 degrees and tucked into the side of the waist. From there you can place more or less tension on the band to make the exercise harder/easier.

Name of Exercise

"Triceps with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the back of the arms"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Kneeling on all fours place the end of the band under one hand, hands directly underneath the shoulders, knees under the hips. Grab the band with the other hand, bend the elbow and tuck it in to the side of the waist, palm facing in. Shoulders down and back, upper back up against the shoulder blades. Chin tucked in and neck long. Neutral spine"



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, straighten the elbow"



"INHALE, bend the elbow"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the shoulders down and back, don't let the shoulders round forward or hunch up"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through and that your ribcage is up against the shoulder blades – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "Keep the elbow of the moving arm close to the body, keep it completely still"***
- "Keep the elbow of the stabilising arm soft and unlocked"
- "Maintain a neutral spine, keep the shoulders and hips facing square to the floor"***
- "Chin tucked in, eyes toward the floor, neck long"***
- "Keep the abdominals tight so the lower back doesn't arch"***

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Don't straighten the elbow as much"

To Make it Harder

- "Straighten the elbow fully, really reaching all the way past the hip"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Moving elbow pointing out to the side or moving up and down as the arm bends/straightens
- Not fully straightening the elbow
- Locking the elbow
- Turning the palm so that it faces backward – not keeping the palm facing in
- Losing shoulder stability – sagging, winging, hunching or rounding the shoulder blades forward
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowering toward the floor
- Arching the lower back and sagging through the upper body
- Looking forward and hyperextending the neck
- Dropping the head too low and looking back at the knees
- Keeping too much weight on the wrist and not placing enough weight into the legs
- Moving too far backward and sitting the bottom on the heels

Encourage and Inspire

- "You should really be feeling the back of your arms working here! That's what we want!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, straighten the arm"
- "INHALE, bend the elbow"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- Serratus Anterior Activation Exercise
- Flight
- Ability to weight bear through the wrists

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Triceps to straighten the elbow (elbow extension) as well as controlling the elbow as it bends (eccentrically controlling elbow flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Pectoralis Major and Minor and Deltoids of the stabilising arm to support the body weight
- Triceps to support the body weight (when the elbows are unlocked)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the spine and prevent the pelvis from rocking or twisting
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back form arching
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Serratus Anterior to stop the Scapulae from winging/the upper body sagging through the shoulder blades (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)

Injuries/Caution

Wrist Pain

- Usually wrist pain will be felt in the stabilising wrist on the mat
- Avoid this exercise if the client cannot weight bear through the wrists
- Focus on lifting the body weight up off the hands by using the abdominals and Serratus Anterior
- Try with the hand a little wider and the hands turned out slightly
- Do not move the bodyweight forward over the hands, keep some weight back over the legs
- Try placing a folded towel, mat or block under the heel of the hand (reduces wrist extension)
- Try coming up onto a fist rather than having a flat palm
- Ensure that there is no locking of the elbows

Elbow Pain

- Limit the range of movement ie. do not bend the elbow as far or don't fully extend (depending where in the range of movement the pain occurs)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Allow the elbow to point out to the side rather than facing backward toward the knees
- Ensure that there is no locking of the elbow
- Decrease the tension on the band
- Avoid this exercise if elbow pain or discomfort continues

Shoulder Pain

- Try placing the stabilising hand wider
- Focus on drawing the shoulder blades down and back, and lifting the ribcage up into the shoulder blades to prevent winging
- Ensure that there is no locking of the elbow
- Allow the moving elbow to point out to the side rather than facing backward toward the knees

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the neck is neutral with the chin tucked in and the neck long, eyes on the floor
- Focus on drawing the shoulder blades down and back and lifting the ribcage up into the shoulder blades to prevent winging
- Make the movement smaller and easier by not bending or straightening the elbow as much and also by loosening the band

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the spine is in a neutral position
- Ensure that the T-Zone and abdominals are activated

Knee Pain

- If a client experiences pain in kneeling, try folding over the mat or placing some padding under the knee to take the pressure off
- If pain persists, perform the exercise standing behind a chair, ballet barre, reformer footbar, table or bench so that you can rest one end of the band on the surface (with one hand on top) while performing the exercise

Pregnancy

- Can be performed throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- This is a very effective Triceps exercise that most clients can easily perform
- To really challenge the Triceps, perform this exercise in conjunction with Flight or Tricep Circles on the mat or Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band in the Back Rowing Series
- For clients with wrist issues, try not to program several wrist weight-bearing exercises in a row as they will more likely be able to tolerate performing just one of these exercises at a time
- Flight on the mat is a good alternative exercise for someone who cannot perform this exercise due to an inability to weight bear through the wrists or due to shoulder or elbow pain

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #1: Four Point Kneeling
- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Head Positioning #2: Plank

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Foot Positioning

Foot position is one of the most important factors for correct muscle activation when standing as it dictates the direction of the load transfer to the rest of the body, particularly the knees and hips.

What to Watch for	How to Correct
Feet turned out to the sides (externally rotated)	Cue to turn the toes to face straight ahead
Pronated (flattened arches)	Cue to lift the arches of the feet May need strengthening of the foot muscles
Increased arches, rolling out of the ankles	Cue to keep the ball of the foot down underneath the big toe so as to not let the ankle roll out
Weight distribution over feet, not too far forward or backward	Needs coaching on using the tripod foot position Cue to lift the toes off the floor



Normal Foot Position



Feet Externally Rotated



Pronated Feet



Increased Arches



Weight Too Far Forward



Weight Too Far Back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

The Tripod Foot Position

Tripod foot positioning refers to an even distribution of weight across three main points on the sole of the feet. These points include –

1. The ball of the foot (near the big toe)
2. The ball of the foot (near the little toe / outside edge of the foot)
3. The centre of the heel

When standing, the knee should face forward, directly over the second or third toe of the foot. The natural arch of the foot should be lifted.

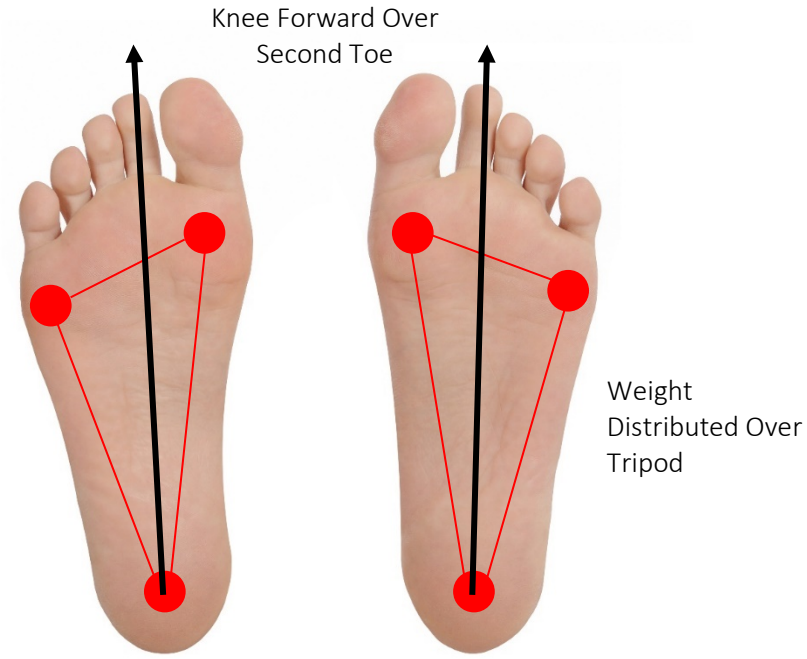


Image adapted from (Shutterstock.com, 2016)

Knee Alignment

In order to protect the knees and allow correct gluteal activation, the knees must be in the correct position for the specific exercise.

What to Watch for	How to Correct
Locked/hyperextended	Hypermobile, needs postural retraining VMO Strengthening Cue to soften the knees (but not bent)
Internally rotated	Cue to keep the knee in line with the second-third toe (but ensure that they do not compensate by rolling the ankle out) Place the hand on the inside of the knee and instruct to turn the knee out away from your hand

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



Knees Internally Rotated



Knees Hyperextended

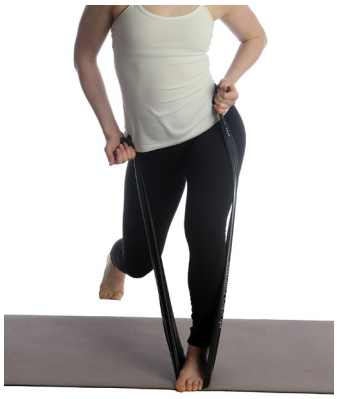
Pelvic Alignment

The pelvis must be in the correct alignment in order for the Gluteal muscles to activate correctly and prevent the lower back from taking the load.

What to Watch for	How to Correct
Rotated	Cue to keep both hip bones facing straight ahead
One hip higher than the other (hitching)	Most likely compensating for weak Gluteal muscles Cue to keep the movement smaller Focus on activation of the buttocks
Anterior tilt/Lordosis	Cue to keep the ribcage drawing toward the hips Cue to keep the Pubic Bone drawing up toward the belly button If in a squat position, do not squat as low Ensure that the knees are not locked or hyperextended
Posterior tilt/Flatback	Try bending the knees slightly Cue to sit the hips back further Keep the knees above the ankles, not coming in front of the toes



Pelvis Rotated



Hip Hitching



Anterior Tilt/Lordosis



Posterior Tilt/Flatback

Using the Circle in the Standing Series

The circle can be used in the standing series in two ways -

1. Squeezed in between the thighs
2. Held in the hands

Using the circle between the thighs helps to engage the inner thigh muscles and can also help the T-Zone and VMO muscles to work better by placing the legs in the correct alignment. When the circle is used in between the thighs, ensure that the circle is placed above the knees (not over the knee joint itself) and it is evenly spaced between both knees so that the handles sit flat against the inner thighs.

When the circle is held in the hands it allows the combination of upper body and lower body exercises to be performed together. This is a very functional was of moving as we often use our upper body and lower body together in day to day life. Keep in mind that the combined movements require more coordination to perform and clients should be proficient at performing the movements separately before combining them, otherwise the wrong muscles can take over.

Safety with Using the Circle in the Standing Series

Always ensure that the circle is in the correct position, not over the knee joint itself and take care with clients who bruise easily.

The circle can fling out and injure a client if the circled is being squeezed too strongly. Ensure that clients focus on technique rather than pure strength. Look out for any clients who may be shaking, tensing the neck and shoulders or holding the breath as this can be an indicator that they are squeezing too hard. The circle handles should always be in the horizontal position and shouldn't start to rotate whilst squeezing.

Using the Band in the Standing Series

Both the short band and long band are used in this series.

The short band is used around the shins, just above the ankles and also around the thighs, just above the knees. The band encourages the thighs to abduct in order to press out against the band which increases activation of the Gluteal muscles. Ensure that the band is not too loose or the clients legs will have to abduct too much to create tension on the band which will make it difficult for the buttocks to activate as the legs will not be in the correct position.

The long band is held in the hands and allows combination of upper body and lower body movements to be performed at the same time. At times, using the band to perform the upper body movement (bicep curl) can actually help to facilitate the correct lower body movement (squat).

Safety with Using the Band in the Standing Series

Ensure that the short band is never placed around the knee joint itself. Take care with clients with sensitive skin, who bruise easily or who have hairy legs.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

When holding onto the band, ensure that the band is wrapped around the hands and is held very firmly with all five fingers to prevent it from slipping and injuring a client.

Using the Ball in the Standing Series

The ball is used in three ways throughout the standing series -

1. To support the body weight against the wall
2. To support one leg while standing on the other leg
3. To support the upper body

The ball can be placed against the wall to support the lower back while performing squat movements. This helps in a number of ways:

- Allows some bodyweight to be offloaded, making the exercise easier on the Gluteal muscles
- Helps to maintain correct body alignment (prevents hip hitching and the pelvis from rotating)
- Prevents the back from rounding as the ball sits in and supports the lumbar curve
- Encourages the buttocks to poke backward during the squat (anterior pelvic tilt)

The ball is used in the Scooter exercises to support the weight of the back leg and allows movement to occur due to the ball rolling. The most important consideration with these exercises is the size of the ball. If the ball is too large, it will raise the back leg too high and cause the lower back to arch.



Correct Ball Size



Incorrect Ball Size (Ball Too Big)

Thirdly, the ball is used to support the upper body to allow single leg exercises to be performed. Exercises such as Horsekick and Sidekick are normally performed in a kneeling position on the mat. The addition of the ball allows these exercises to be performed in a standing position, making them more accessible for clients who cannot kneel.

Safety with Using the Ball in the Standing Series

Whenever the ball is used, safety is paramount as clients may fall. Take care when prescribing these exercises for clients who have poor balance, the elderly or pregnant women. You may be required to hold the ball for clients whilst they get set up into the correct position. You may also instruct clients to perform the exercise standing near a wall for added balance and support if required.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Crab Walking + Band

Intensity=2 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Crab Walking with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both shins, just above the ankles"

Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, feet facing forward, arches of the feet lifted. Hands on the hips, shoulders down and back. Squat down, sticking the bottom out and bending the knees to face over the second and third toes. Neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, step one leg out to the side stretching the band"

"INHALE, step the other leg in slightly, keeping tension on the band"

Perform 15 steps in the same direction, then change direction to crab walk the other way.

Exercise Tip: Ensure that the band is not too loose otherwise the feet will need to be too far apart in order to place any tension on the band.

It is easier to teach this exercise by performing the exercise facing the group and having them mirror you, ensure that everyone in the group is moving in the same direction to avoid confusion.

Alternate standing front-on and side-on as you demonstrate so that clients can observe the movement pattern in different planes of movement.







© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the upper body centred over both legs, try not to lean the body to the side"***
- "Keep the pelvis square to the front, no twisting or rotating"***
- "Keep the beltline parallel to the floor, try not to hitch the hip up or pop out to the side"***
- "Squeeze both buttocks evenly to maintain tension on the band – don't use the thighs"***
- "Maintain tension on the band the whole time, don't step the feet closer than hip width"***
- "Keep the knees facing over the second and third toes to activate the buttocks"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"***
- "Poke the bottom out behind you to squat, the knees should stay behind the toes"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't step out as far"
- "Don't squat down as low"
- "Step a little faster and breathe naturally, maintaining control"

To Make it Harder

- "Step out further"
- "Squat a bit deeper"
- "Step more slowly"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the upper body lean to the side or letting one hip drop out to the side
- Rotating the pelvis – shoulders, hips and feet should stay facing straight ahead
- Hitching one hip up (laterally flexing through the waist to compensate)
- Using one leg more than the other, not keeping the weight even between both legs
- Letting the knees roll in or collapsing the arches of the feet
- Bending the knees too much (in front of the toes) – not poking the bottom back far enough
- Not keeping the feet pointing straight ahead, letting them turn out
- Moving too quickly
- Stepping the feet too close together and losing tension on the band
- Arching the lower back or tucking the bottom under
- Leaning the body forward too much in the squat, keeping the hips high
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankles roll out
- Hunching the shoulders, looking down

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nice crab walking team!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, step one foot out to the side"
- "INHALE, step the other foot in"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Gluteus Medius Activation Exercise, Clam 1 (Feet Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to press out against the band (hip abduction), stabilise the pelvis and prevent the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to assist with pressing the band out (hip abduction) and hold the squat (isometric hip flexion)
- Quadriceps to hold the squat (isometric knee flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators to stop the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arches of the feet (supination)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecaps

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (touching the Gluteal muscles can help to switch them on)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that clients are maintaining a neutral spine and not going into a posterior pelvic tilt (the knees should be back behind the toes, think about sitting the hips back rather than bending the knees, the weight should be in the heels and the balls of the feet, not the toes)
- Ensure that the body is not leaning to the side and the pelvis is not rotating
- Decrease the range of motion (try short scurrying steps instead of large steps)
- Use a longer band
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knees are not bent too deeply in the squat
- Ensure that the knees are not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heels to keep their knees turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure correct buttock activation
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise eg. from the Side Lying Series until stronger

Hip Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (the Gluteus Medius should be working rather than the TFL)
- Do not step out as far, ensure that the hip does not pop out to the side
- Use a longer band or remove the band
- Do not squat as low
- Ensure that the knees do not roll in
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- There is a lot of weight shift and shearing through the pelvis with this exercise which can place strain on the Sacroiliac Joint and Pubic Bone
- Ensure correct buttock activation (ensure that the Gluteus Medius is doing the work)
- Ensure that the T-Zone is on as the legs open
- Take shorter steps
- Remove the band
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

Pregnancy

- This exercise can be performed throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy
- Only prescribe to clients who do not have Pubic Bone or SIJ pain

Programming Advice

- A great activation exercise for the Gluteal muscles
- A functional exercise that teaches clients how to use their Gluteal muscles in a weightbearing position and on one leg, necessary for activities like stairs and walking
- As this exercise requires squatting, it is not easy to control and is not a good first choice for clients with acute lower back, pelvic, hip or knee pain – however once Gluteal strength has improved using non-weight bearing exercises (eg. Clams), this exercise is a great progression

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that the crab walks are performed in both directions
- This is a really fun exercise that can bring the class together
- An easy exercise which you can give clients to do at home for a home exercise program
- This exercise is very intense on the buttock muscles so doesn't have to be performed for long

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Penguin Walking + Band

Intensity=2 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Ensure that the band is not too loose otherwise the feet will need to be too far apart in order to place any tension on the band.

It is easier to teach this exercise by performing the exercise facing the group and having them mirror you, ensure that everyone in the group is moving in the same direction to avoid confusion.

Alternate standing front-on and side-on as you demonstrate so that clients can observe the movement pattern in different planes of movement.

Name of Exercise

"Penguin Walking with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both shins, just above the ankles"



Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, feet facing forward, arches of the feet lifted. Hands on the hips, shoulders down and back. Squat down, sticking the bottom out and bending the knees to face over the second and third toes. Neutral spine, T-Zone"

Breathing and Movement

"Breathe naturally as you take small steps forward"



Perform 15 steps in the same direction, then change direction to penguin walk backward.



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the upper body centred over both legs, try not to lean the body or rock to the side"***
- "Keep the pelvis square to the front, no twisting or rotating"***
- "Keep the beltline parallel to the floor, try not to hitch the hip up or pop out to the side"***
- "Squeeze both buttocks evenly to maintain tension on the band – don't use the thighs"***
- "Maintain tension on the band the whole time, don't step the feet closer than hip width"***
- "Keep the knees facing over the second and third toes to activate the buttocks"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"***
- "Poke the bottom out behind you to squat, the knees should stay behind the toes"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't step out as far"
- "Don't squat down as low"
- "Step a little faster and breathe naturally, maintaining control"

To Make it Harder

- "Step out further"
- "Squat a bit deeper"
- "Step more slowly"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the upper body lean to the side or letting one hip drop out to the side
- Rotating the pelvis – shoulders, hips and feet should stay facing straight ahead
- Hitching one hip up (laterally flexing through the waist to compensate)
- Letting the knees roll in or collapsing the arches of the feet
- Bending the knees too much (in front of the toes) – not poking the bottom back far enough
- Not keeping the feet pointing straight ahead, letting them turn out
- Moving too quickly
- Stepping the feet too close together and losing tension on the band
- Arching the lower back or tucking the bottom under
- Leaning the body forward too much in the squat, keeping the hips high
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankles roll out
- Hunching the shoulders, looking down

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nice penguin walking team!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "Breathing naturally, take small steps forward"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Gluteus Medius Activation Exercise, Clam 1 (Feet Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to press out against the band (hip abduction), stabilise the pelvis and prevent the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to assist with pressing the band out (hip abduction) and hold the squat (isometric hip flexion)
- Quadriceps to hold the squat (isometric knee flexion/extension) and to step forward (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators to stop the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arches of the feet (supination)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecaps

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (touching the Gluteal muscles can help to switch them on)
- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that clients are maintaining a neutral spine and not going into a posterior pelvic tilt (the knees should be back behind the toes, think about sitting the hips back rather than bending the knees, the weight should be in the heels and the balls of the feet, not the toes)
- Ensure that the body is not leaning to the side and the pelvis is not rotating
- Decrease the range of motion (try short scurrying steps instead of large steps)
- Use a longer band
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knees are not bent too deeply in the squat
- Ensure that the knees are not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heels to keep their knees turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure correct buttock activation
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise eg. from the Side Lying Series until stronger

Hip Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (the Gluteus Medius should be working rather than the TFL)
- Do not step forward as far, ensure that the hip does not pop out to the side
- Use a longer band or remove the band
- Do not squat as low
- Ensure that the knees do not roll in
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- There is a lot of weight shift and shearing through the pelvis with this exercise which can place strain on the Sacroiliac Joint and Pubic Bone
- Ensure correct buttock activation (ensure that the Gluteus Medius is doing the work)
- Ensure that the T-Zone is on as the legs open
- Take shorter steps
- Remove the band
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

Pregnancy

- This exercise can be performed throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy
- Only prescribe to clients who do not have Pubic Bone or SIJ pain

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- A great activation exercise for the Gluteal muscles
- Some clients will find that walking backward helps the buttock muscles switch on better
- A functional exercise that teaches clients how to use their Gluteal muscles in a weightbearing position and on one leg, necessary for activities like stairs and walking
- As this exercise requires squatting, it is not easy to control and is not a good first choice for clients with acute lower back, pelvic, hip or knee pain – however once Gluteal strength has improved using non-weight bearing exercises (eg. Clams), this exercise is a great progression
- Ensure that the penguin walks are performed in both directions
- A fun exercise that can bring the class together, you can even have the class walk in a circle
- An easy exercise which you can give clients to do at home for a home exercise program
- This exercise is very intense on the buttock muscles so doesn't have to be performed for long

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Standing Hip Abduction + Band

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Ensure that the band is not too loose otherwise the leg will have to kick out to the side too far in order to place any tension on the band.

It is easier to teach this exercise by performing the exercise facing the group and having them mirror you, ensure that everyone in the group is moving in the same direction to avoid confusion.

Name of Exercise

"Standing Hip Abduction with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both shins, just above the ankles"



Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, feet facing forward, arches of the feet lifted. Hands on the hips, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, Neutral spine. Take most of the weight through one leg and rest the other foot lightly onto the mat"

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the buttocks"

"EXHALE, lift the leg straight out to the side"



"INHALE, return the foot toward the mat without resting on it"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Try not to lean the body to the side or let the hip pop out to the side"***
- "Keep the beltline parallel to the floor, try not to hitch the hip up"***
- "Keep the pelvis square to the front, no twisting or rotating"***
- "Kick the leg straight out to the side, don't let it come in front of the body"***
- "Keep the knee of the standing leg straight but soft and unlocked, arch of the foot lifted"***
- "Keep the knee facing over the second and third toes to activate the buttocks"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't kick the leg out as far"
- "Stop and reset"
- "Hold onto a wall for balance"

To Make it Harder

- "Kick the leg out further"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the upper body lean to the side or letting the hip drop out to the side
- Rotating the pelvis – shoulders, hips and feet should stay facing straight ahead
- Hitching the hip up (laterally flexing through the waist to compensate)
- Letting the knee roll in or collapsing the arch of the foot
- Not keeping the foot pointing straight ahead, letting it turn out
- Bending the knee too much (in front of the toes)
- Moving too quickly, using momentum
- Arching the lower back or kicking the leg too far back behind the body
- Kicking the leg forward in front of the body, this will overuse the Quadriceps and TFL
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankles roll out
- Hunching the shoulders, looking down
- Falling over and loosing balance

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's great! See if you can resist that band."

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, step one foot out to the side"
- "INHALE, step the other foot in"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Crab Walking + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus on both sides to press out against the band (hip abduction), stabilise the pelvis and prevent the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to assist with pressing the band out (hip abduction) and hold the body upright (hip extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arch of the foot (supination)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (touching the Gluteal muscles can help to switch them on)
- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that the hip is not hitching, the body is not leaning over and the pelvis is not rotating
- Ensure that the leg is not too far forward to too far back
- Decrease the range of motion
- Use a longer band or remove the band and continue performing the same exercise
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knee is not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heel to keep their knee turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure correct buttock activation
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise eg. from the Side Lying Series until stronger

Hip Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (the Gluteus Medius should be working rather than the TFL)
- Ensure that the hip does not pop out and that the body is not leaning over to the side
- Ensure that the leg is not too far forward to too far back
- Use a longer band or remove the band
- Ensure that the knee does not roll in
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- This position can be aggravating as the weight is on one leg and the other leg is abducting which can place strain on the Sacroiliac Joint and Pubic Bone
- Ensure correct buttock activation (ensure that the Gluteus Medius is doing the work)
- Ensure that the T-Zone is on as the leg opens
- Decrease the range of movement or remove the band
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

Poor Balance

- Ensure that you stand next to anyone with poor balance to assist them and add stability
- Clients can lightly touch a wall with their fingertips to help with balance

Pregnancy

- This exercise can be performed throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy – omit the band and hold a wall for balance in the later trimesters
- Only prescribe to clients who do not have Pubic Bone or SIJ pain

Programming Advice

- A great challenging exercise for the Gluteal muscles as it is in standing
- A functional exercise that teaches clients how to use their Gluteal muscles in a weightbearing position and on one leg, necessary for activities like stairs and walking or kicking and running
- For clients with poor balance or pregnant women, utilise the option of resting the fingertips against the wall to help with balance
- When using the wall for balance, try to avoid leaning against the wall and placing too much body weight through the hand – instead just lightly touch the fingertips for balance
- An easy exercise which you can give clients to do at home for a home exercise program
- This exercise is very intense on the buttock muscles so doesn't have to be performed for long

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Standing Hip Extension + Band

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Ensure that the band is not too loose otherwise the leg will have to kick back too high in order to place any tension on the band.

It is easier to teach this exercise by performing the exercise facing the group and having them mirror you, ensure that everyone in the group is moving in the same direction to avoid confusion.

Name of Exercise

"Standing Hip Extension with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around both shins, just above the ankles"



Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, step one leg back behind you, keeping the knee straight, resting on the ball of the foot. Feet facing forward, arch of the front foot lifted. Hands on the hips, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in. Neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, lift the back leg straight out behind you, keeping the knee straight"



"INHALE, return the leg toward the mat without resting it"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttock of the stabilising leg to keep the body still"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Keep the beltline parallel to the floor, try not to hitch the hip up"***
- "Keep the pelvis square to the front, no twisting or rotating"***
- "Squeeze the buttocks to kick the leg out behind you, keeping the knee straight"***
- "Keep the knee of the standing leg straight but soft and unlocked, arch of the foot lifted"***
- "Keep the knee facing over the second and third toes to activate the buttocks"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't kick the back as high"
- "Stop and reset"
- "Hold onto a wall for balance"

To Make it Harder

- "Kick the leg back further"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the upper body lean to the side or letting the hip drop out to the side
- Rotating the pelvis – shoulders, hips and feet should stay facing straight ahead
- Hitching the hip up (laterally flexing through the waist to compensate)
- Letting the knee roll in or collapsing the arch of the foot
- Not keeping the foot pointing straight ahead, letting it turn out
- Bending the knee of the standing leg too much (in front of the toes)
- Moving too quickly, using momentum
- Arching the lower back or kicking too far back
- Bending the knee of the kicking leg, this will overuse the Hamstrings
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankles roll out
- Hunching the shoulders, looking down
- Falling over and loosing balance

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's great! See if you can resist that band"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, lift the leg back and up"
- "INHALE, lower it down"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Penguin Walking + Band (backward walking)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus on the kicking leg to raise the leg up (hip extension)
- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus on the standing leg to press against the band (hip abduction), stabilise the pelvis and prevent the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus on the standing leg to hold the body upright (isometric hip extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arch of the foot (supination)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (touching the Gluteal muscles can help to switch them on)
- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Try leaning the body forward slightly to help prevent the back from arching
- Ensure that the hip is not hitching, the body is not leaning over and the pelvis is not rotating
- Decrease the range of motion
- Use a longer band or remove the band and continue performing the same exercise
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knee is not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heel to keep their knee turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure correct buttock activation
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise eg. from the Side Lying Series until stronger

Hip Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (the Gluteus Medius should be working rather than the TFL)
- Ensure that the hip does not pop out and that the body is not leaning over to the side
- Use a longer band or remove the band
- Ensure that the knee does not roll in
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- This position can be aggravating as the weight is on one leg which can place strain on the Sacroiliac Joint and Pubic Bone
- Ensure correct buttock activation (ensure that the Gluteus Medius is doing the work)
- Ensure that the T-Zone is on as the leg kicks back
- Decrease the range of movement or remove the band
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

Poor Balance

- This exercise requires balance
- Ensure that you stand next to anyone with poor balance to assist them and add stability
- Clients can lightly touch a wall with their fingertips to help with balance

Pregnancy

- This exercise can be performed throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy – omit the band and hold a wall for balance in the later trimesters
- Only prescribe to clients who do not have Pubic Bone or SIJ pain

Programming Advice

- A great challenging exercise for the Gluteal muscles as it is in standing
- A functional exercise that teaches clients how to use their Gluteal muscles in a weightbearing position and on one leg, necessary for activities like stairs and walking or kicking and running
- For clients with poor balance or pregnant women, utilise the option of resting the fingertips against the wall to help with balance
- When using the wall for balance, try to avoid leaning against the wall and placing too much body weight through the hands – instead just lightly touch the fingertips for balance
- An easy exercise which you can give clients to do at home for a home exercise program
- This exercise is very intense on the buttock muscles so doesn't have to be performed for long

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Squats + Band (Around Thighs)

Intensity=2 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Squats with the Band Around the Thighs"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and the front of the thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the short band for this exercise, place the band around the thighs, just above the knees"

Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, thighs pressing out on the band slightly, feet facing forward, arches of the feet lifted. Hands on the hips, shoulders down and back. Neutral spine, T-Zone"

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, squat down bending the knees, sticking the bottom out"

"EXHALE, squeeze the buttocks to stand back up"

Exercise Tip: Ensure that the band is not too loose otherwise the feet will need to be too far apart in order to place any tension on the band.

As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Stand in front of the clients and use your body to demonstrate the exercise. Alternate standing front-on and side-on as you demonstrate so that clients can observe the movement pattern in different planes of movement.







© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Press out with both legs evenly on the band the whole time"***
- "Control the squat on the way down and to stand up"***
- "Keep the knees facing over the second and third toes, don't let the knees roll in"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"***
- "Poke the bottom out behind you to squat, the knees should stay behind the toes"***
- "Keep the pelvis centred over both legs, with even weight on both feet"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"***
- "Keep the pelvis square to the front, no twisting/rotating"
- "Squeeze the bottom and straighten the hips to stand up, don't just straighten the knees"
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't squat down as low"
- "Don't press out as much on the band"

To Make it Harder

- "Press out more on the band"
- "Squat a bit deeper"
- "Hold down in the squat and press the knees out and in against the band, never letting the knees come closer than hip width, breathing naturally"



Holding the Squat and Pressing Out and In on the Band

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Pressing more with one leg than the other, not keeping the weight even between both legs
- Rotating the pelvis to one side

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Arching the lower back or tucking the bottom under
- Leaning the body forward too much in the squat, keeping the hips high
- Letting the knees roll in or collapsing the arches of the feet
- Not keeping the feet pointing straight ahead, letting them turn out
- Bending the knees too much (in front of the toes) – not poking the bottom back far enough
- Flicking the knees straight and keeping the hips flexed when standing up from the squat
- Legs too close together or too far apart
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankles roll out
- Hunching the shoulders, looking down

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nice work, keep pressing out into the band!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, squat down"
- "EXHALE, stand up"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to press out against the band (hip abduction)
- Gluteus Maximus to assist with pressing the band out (hip abduction), squat down (eccentrically controlling hip flexion) and to straighten the hips to stand up (hip extension)
- Quadriceps to squat down (eccentrically controlling knee flexion) and to straighten the knees and stand up (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators to stop the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecaps
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arches of the feet (supination)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the buttock activation is correct (touching these muscles can help to switch them on)
- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that clients are maintaining a neutral spine and not going into a posterior pelvic tilt (the knees should be back behind the toes, think about sitting the hips back rather than bending the knees, the weight should be in the heels and the balls of the feet, not the toes)
- Ensure that the body is not leaning to the side and the pelvis is not rotating
- Decrease the range of motion (don't squat as low)
- Do not press out as much into the band
- If pain persists, remove the band or try a different buttock exercise eg. Wall Squats + Ball or any buttock exercises form the Side Lying Series

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knees are not bent too deeply in the squat
- Ensure that the knees are not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heels to keep their knees turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure correct buttock activation
- Do not press out too much on the band or remove the band
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise eg. from the Side Lying Series until stronger

Hip Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (the Gluteus Medius should be working rather than the TFL)
- Do not press out into the band as hard
- Use a longer band or remove the band
- Do not squat as low
- Ensure that the knees do not roll in
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

Pregnancy

- This exercise can be performed throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy
- You may need to reduce the range of movement of the squat as the client's belly grows

Programming Advice

- This exercise is more effective at engaging the Gluteus Medius and Minimus than a standard squat as these muscles have to keep the thigh bones externally rotated out against the band to resist being pulled inward
- A great activation exercise for the Gluteal muscles

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- A functional exercise as it is weight bearing in a squat position (necessary for activities like standing up and sitting down from a chair)
- As this exercise requires squatting, it is not easy to control and is not a good first choice for clients with acute lower back, pelvic, hip or knee pain – however once Gluteal strength has improved using non-weight bearing exercises (eg. Clams), this exercise is a great progression
- A circle can also be used around the outside of the thighs in the same way as the band
- As this exercise involves moving the body in multiple planes of movement, it is a good idea to demonstrate both the front and side on angles to your clients
- As you walk around observing and correcting clients, be sure to observe them from both the front and side planes of movement as you will notice different things from the different angles

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Squats + Circle (Between Thighs)

Intensity=2 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Stand in front of the clients and use your body to demonstrate the exercise. Alternate standing front-on and side-on as you demonstrate so that clients can observe the movement pattern in different planes of movement.

Name of Exercise

"Squats with the Circle Between the Thighs"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the front of the thighs and the inner thighs"

Equipment Set Up

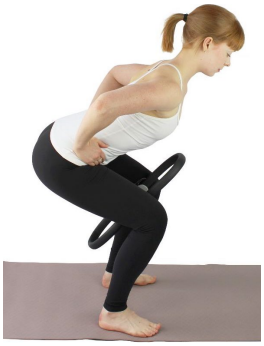
"You will need the circle for this exercise, place the circle between the thighs, just above the knees"



Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, squeezing in on the circle, feet facing forward, arches of the feet lifted. Hands on the hips, shoulders down and back. Neutral spine, T-Zone"

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, squat down bending the knees, sticking the bottom out"



"EXHALE, squeeze the buttocks to stand back up"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep an even squeeze on the circle the whole time with both legs"***
- "Control the squat on the way down and to stand up"***
- "Keep the knees facing over the second and third toes to activate the buttocks"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"***
- "Poke the bottom out behind you to squat, the knees should stay behind the toes"***
- "Keep the pelvis centred over both legs, with even weight on both feet"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"***
- "Keep the pelvis square to the front, no twisting/rotating"
- "Squeeze the bottom and straighten the hips to stand up, don't just straighten the knees"
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't squat down as low"
- "Don't squeeze in as hard on the circle"

To Make it Harder

- "Squeeze harder on the circle"
- "Squat a bit deeper"
- "Hold the squat and keep the squeeze on the circle"
- "Hold down in the squat and squeeze in and out on the circle, breathing naturally"



Holding the Squat and Squeezing In and Out on the Circle

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Pressing more with one leg than the other, not keeping the weight even between both legs
- Arching the lower back or tucking the bottom under

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Leaning the body forward too much, keeping the hips high and not bending the knees enough
- Letting the knees roll in or collapsing the arches of the feet
- Not keeping the feet pointing straight ahead, letting them turn out
- Bending the knees too much (in front of the toes) – not poking the bottom back far enough
- Flicking the knees straight and keeping the hips flexed when standing up from the squat
- Not maintaining the squeeze on the circle or squeezing unevenly
- Legs too close together or too far apart
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankles roll out
- Hunching the shoulders, looking down

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nice work, keep that pressure on the circle!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, squat down"
- "EXHALE, stand up"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Clam 3 (90 Degrees)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Adductors to squeeze the circle and bring the knees closer together (hip adduction)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecaps
- Gluteus Maximus to squat down (eccentrically controlling hip flexion) and to straighten the hips to stand up (hip extension)
- Quadriceps to squat down (eccentrically controlling knee flexion) and to straighten the knees and stand up (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators, Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and stop the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arches of the feet (supination)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (touching the Gluteal muscles can help to switch them on)
- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that clients are maintaining a neutral spine and not going into a posterior pelvic tilt (the knees should be back behind the toes, think about sitting the hips back rather than bending the knees, the weight should be in the heels and the balls of the feet, not the toes)
- Decrease the range of motion (don't squat as low)
- Do not squeeze as hard on the circle
- If pain persists, remove the circle or try a different buttock exercise eg. Wall Squats + Ball or any buttock exercises form the Side Lying Series

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knees are not bent too deeply in the squat
- Ensure that the knees are not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heels to keep their knees turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure correct buttock activation
- Do not squeeze as hard on the circle or remove the circle
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise eg. from the Side Lying Series until stronger

Pubic Bone or Adductor Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone is on as the thighs squeeze
- Do not squeeze as hard on the circle
- Avoid this exercise or remove the circle or use the band instead

Pregnancy

- This exercise can be performed throughout the first trimester of pregnancy – after this you may need to remove the circle as it can place strain on the Pubic Symphysis
- Only prescribe to clients who have no Pubic Bone or SIJ pain
- You may need to reduce the range of movement of the squat as the client's belly grows

Programming Advice

- Squeezing the circle makes this exercise is more effective at engaging the Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) than a standard squat
- A functional exercise as it is weight bearing in a squat position (necessary for activities like standing up and sitting down from a chair)
- As this exercise requires squatting, it is not easy to control and is not a good first choice for clients with acute lower back, pelvic, hip or knee pain – however once Gluteal strength has improved using non-weight bearing exercises (eg. Clams), this exercise is a great progression

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- As this exercise involves moving the body in multiple planes of movement, it is a good idea to demonstrate both the front and side on angles to your clients
- As you walk around observing and correcting clients, be sure to observe them from both the front and side planes of movement as you will notice different things from the different angles

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet
- Leg Positioning #6: VMO

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Squats + Circle (Chest Press)

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Stand in front of the clients and use your body to demonstrate the exercise. Alternate standing front-on and side-on as you demonstrate so that clients can observe the movement pattern in different planes of movement.

Name of Exercise

"Squats with a Chest Press with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttocks, legs and the arms"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, feet facing forward, arches of the feet lifted. Holding the circle in front of the thighs, arms straight, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine, T-Zone."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, squat down and raise the arms to shoulder height and squeeze the circle"



"EXHALE, stand back up and lower the arms back down and release the circle"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the knees facing over the second and third toes to activate the buttocks"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"***
- "Poke the bottom out behind you to squat, the knees should stay behind the toes"***
- "Focus on squeezing the circle as you squat down"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"***
- "Keep the pelvis centred over both legs, with even weight on both feet"

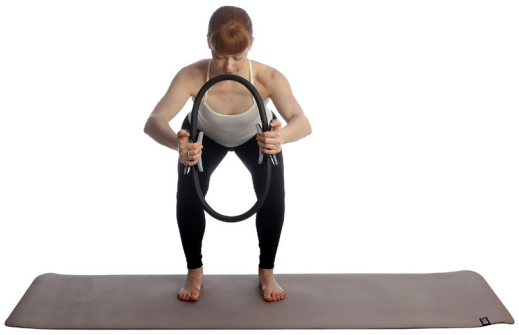
To Make it Easier

- "Don't squat down as low"
- "Don't squeeze as hard on the circle"

To Make it Harder

- "Squat a bit deeper"
- "Squeeze the circle more"
- "Raise the arms higher"
- "Hold down in the squat and continue performing several chest presses in this position following the breathing pattern of -

"EXHALE, squeeze the circle"





"INHALE, release the circle"

"If you choose to squeeze the circle faster, simply breathe naturally"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Hunching the shoulders, tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius and Levator Scapulae
- Keeping the arms too straight or locking the elbows
- Not keeping the weight even between both legs
- Arching the lower back or tucking the bottom under
- Bending the knees too much (in front of the toes) – not poking the bottom back far enough
- Leaning the body forward too much in the squat, keeping the hips high
- Letting the knees roll in or collapsing the arches of the feet
- Legs too close together or too far apart
- Not keeping the feet pointing straight ahead, letting them turn out

Encourage and Inspire

- "Great job coordinating this movement everyone!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, squat down, raise the arms and squeeze the circle"
- "EXHALE, stand up and lower the arms"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Squats + Circle (Between Thighs), Chest Press + Circle

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to squat down (eccentrically controlling hip flexion) and to straighten the hips to stand up (hip extension)
- Quadriceps to squat down (eccentrically controlling knee flexion) and to straighten the knees and stand up (knee extension)
- Pectoral Muscles to squeeze the circle (shoulder horizontal adduction)
- Anterior Deltoids to hold the arms up (shoulder flexion) and to assist squeezing on the circle (shoulder horizontal adduction)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Accessory Muscles

- Biceps to assist in raising the arms (shoulder flexion) and squeezing the circle (elbow flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators, Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and stop the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecaps
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arches of the feet (supination)
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Serratus Anterior to keep the shoulder blades connected to the rib cage, preventing winging as the arms sweep forward (Scapula protraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (touching the Gluteal muscles can help to switch them on)
- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that clients are maintaining a neutral spine and not going into a posterior pelvic tilt (the knees should be back behind the toes, think about sitting the hips back rather than bending the knees, the weight should be in the heels and the balls of the feet, not the toes)
- Decrease the range of motion (do not squat as low) or do not raise the arms as high
- If pain persists, remove the circle or try a different exercise eg. Squats + Circle (Between Thighs) or Chest Press + Circle

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knees are not bent too deeply in the squat
- Ensure that the knees are not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heels to keep their knees turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure correct buttock activation
- If pain persists, remove the circle or try a different exercise eg. Squats + Band (Around Thighs), Squats + Circle (Between Thighs) or perform Chest Press + Circle

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them can be very helpful
- Stop and reset the Lower Trapezius in between repetitions
- Decrease the height of the arms
- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Don’t squeeze as hard on the circle or remove the circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Omit the arm movements and perform squats with the hands by the sides or on the hips

Shoulder Pain

- Think of drawing the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets – activating the Rotator Cuff
- Decrease the range of motion (keep the arms lower)
- Rest back down after a few repetitions to reset the Lower Trapezius
- Don't squeeze as hard on the circle or remove the circle
- Omit the arm movements and perform squats with the hands by the sides or on the hips

Pregnancy

- This exercise can be performed throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy
- In the later stages of pregnancy, the posture becomes more Lordotic so this may not be the best exercise as it creates more lordosis
- You may need to reduce the range of movement of the squat as the client's belly grows

Programming Advice

- A good option for clients who tend round their back and tuck their bottom under rather than sticking their bottom out as the arm movement helps to facilitate the correct squat movement
- Not the best exercise for clients with Lordotic postures – raising the arms can encourage further Lordosis as it is harder to maintain the rib to hip connection when the arms raise
- If you do not have access to a circle, you can perform the exercise with a ball in the hands instead or raise the arms without holding any equipment

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Squats + Band (Bicep Curl)

Intensity=2 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Squats with a Bicep Curl and the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttocks, legs and the arms"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Standing holding onto the ends of the band. Step onto the centre of the band with the feet hip distance apart, feet facing forward, arches of the feet lifted. Arms relaxed by the sides, palms facing forward, take up the slack in the band. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

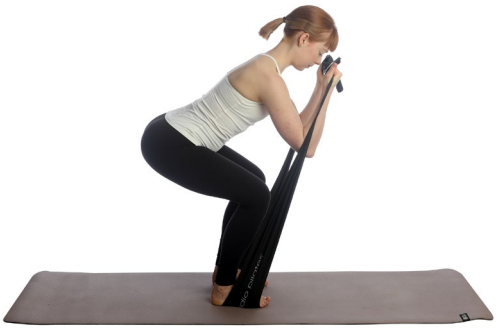
"EXHALE, squat down and bend the elbows bringing the hands up toward the shoulders"

"EXHALE, stand back up and straighten the arms down"

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to the other squat exercises in that the breathing is reversed so that you exhale when you squat down and inhale to stand up. This is because the main effort is when you perform the bicep curl.

Stand in front of the clients and use your body to demonstrate the exercise. Alternate standing front-on and side-on as you demonstrate so that clients can observe the movement pattern in different planes of movement.







© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the knees facing over the second and third toes to activate the buttocks"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"***
- "Poke the bottom out behind you to squat, the knees should stay behind the toes"***
- "Keep the pelvis centred over both legs, with even weight on both feet"***
- "Keep the elbows still – don't let them lift and lower as you perform the movement"***
- "Focus on squeezing the biceps to bend the elbows, not lifting the shoulders"***
- "Don't poke the head forward – bring the hands to the head not the head to the hands"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

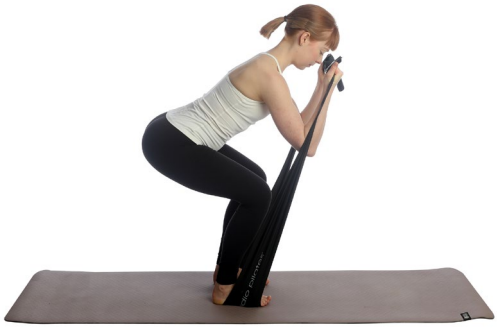
To Make it Easier

- "Don't squat down as low"
- "Lengthen the band"
- "Don't bend the elbows as much"

To Make it Harder

- "Squat a bit deeper"
- "Bend the elbows more"
- "Shorten the band"
- "Hold down in the squat and continue performing several bicep curls in this position following the breathing pattern of -

"EXHALE, bend the elbows"



"INHALE, release"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Hunching the shoulders, tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius and Levator Scapulae
- Lifting and lowering the upper arms throughout the movement
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Not keeping the weight even between both legs
- Arching the lower back or tucking the bottom under
- Bending the knees too much (in front of the toes) – not poking the bottom back far enough
- Leaning the body forward too much in the squat, keeping the hips high
- Letting the knees roll in or collapsing the arches of the feet
- Legs too close together or too far apart
- Not keeping the feet pointing straight ahead, letting them turn out

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nice depth to those squats!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, squat down and bend the elbows"
- "EXHALE, stand up and straighten the elbows"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Squats + Band (Around Thighs), Standing Biceps + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to press the legs out against the band (hip abduction)
- Biceps to bend the elbows (elbow flexion)
- Gluteus Maximus to squat down (eccentrically controlling hip flexion) and to straighten the hips to stand up (hip extension)
- Quadriceps to squat down (eccentrically controlling knee flexion) and to straighten the knees and stand up (knee extension)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators to stop the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecaps
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arches of the feet (supination)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (touching the Gluteal muscles can help to switch them on)
- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that clients are maintaining a neutral spine and not going into a posterior pelvic tilt (the knees should be back behind the toes, think about sitting the hips back rather than bending the knees, the weight should be in the heels and the balls of the feet, not the toes)
- Decrease the length of the band
- Do not squat down as low or bend the elbows as much
- If pain persists, try Standing Biceps + Band

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knees are not bent too deeply in the squat
- Ensure that the knees are not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heels to keep their knees turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure correct buttock activation
- Lengthen the band
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise or perform Standing Biceps + Band

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them can be very helpful
- Stop and reset the Lower Trapezius in between repetitions
- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Ensure that the hands are shoulder width apart and not too close into the midline
- Try different modifications – limit the speed/range of motion
- Lengthen the band

Shoulder Pain

- Keep the shoulders down and back and the arm bones drawing back into the shoulder sockets
- Keep the elbows lower – even down by the waist if this works best
- Limit the range of motion (don't bend and straighten the elbows as far)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that the shoulders aren't hunching up, rounding or moving up and down
- Ensure that the hands are shoulder width apart and not too close into the midline
- Try different modifications – limit the speed/range of motion
- Lengthen the band

Hand, Wrist or Elbow Pain

- Ensure that the wrists are in a neutral position
- Try a different grip (palms up/in)

Pregnancy

- This exercise can be performed throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy
- Be mindful of balance as a pregnant client progresses through the trimesters
- You may need to reduce the range of movement of the squat as the client's belly grows

Programming Advice

- This exercise is more effective at engaging the Gluteus Medius and Minimus than a standard squat as these muscles have to keep the thigh bones externally rotated out against the band which is wanting to pull them inward
- As this involves a combined movement, if clients haven't already mastered correct technique in the separate movements of a squat and a bicep curl they will find this exercise difficult
- As this exercise requires coordination, you can hold the arms still and just perform a squat, then add the arm movement when they feel comfortable
- As this exercise involves moving the body in multiple planes of movement, it is a good idea to demonstrate both the front and side on angles to your clients
- As you walk around observing and correcting clients, be sure to observe them from both the front and side planes of movement as you will notice different things from the different angles

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Lunges + Band

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Stand in front of the clients and use your body to demonstrate the exercise. Alternate standing front-on and side-on as you demonstrate so that clients can observe the movement pattern in different planes of movement.

Name of Exercise

"Lunges with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and the front of the thigh"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Standing holding onto the ends of the band. Step onto the centre of the band with one foot and step the other leg back behind you, feet facing forward, hip distance apart. Come up onto the ball of the back foot, raising the heel and keep the arch of the front foot lifted. Grab further down on the band and bring the hands up to the hips. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine, T-Zone."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, bend both knees, lowering the body straight down"



"EXHALE, press through the front leg to stand back up"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep most of the weight through the front heel, staying up on the ball of the back foot"***
- "Lower the back knee straight down toward the ground, don't lean forward or backward"***
- "Keep the front knee directly over the ankle and in line with the second and third toes"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arch of the front foot lifted"***
- "Keep the upper body centred over the pelvis, try not to lean the body to the side"***
- "Keep the pelvis square to the front, no twisting or rotating"***
- "Keep the beltline parallel to the floor – don't let one hip drop down or hitch up"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"***
- "Squeeze the bottom and straightening the hips to stand up, don't just straighten the knees"
- "Squeeze the buttocks to control the lunge on the way down and to stand up"
- "Keep the hands still by the hips, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, neck long"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lunge as low"
- "Lengthen the band"

To Make it Harder

- "Lunge a bit deeper"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the buttock activation on the stabilising leg which may lead to – the foot/knee rolling in, pelvis rotating to one side, one hip dropping or leaning the body to one side
- Arching the lower back or tucking the bottom under
- Leaning the body forward too much in the lunge
- Letting the front knee roll in and collapsing the arch of the front foot
- Bending the front knee too much (in front of the toes)
- Placing too much weight in the back leg – overusing the Quadricep of the back leg
- Flicking the knee straight and keeping the hip flexed when standing up from the squat
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankle roll out
- Legs too close together or too far apart
- Not keeping the feet pointing straight ahead, letting them turn out
- Pulling on the band or moving the arms
- Hunching the shoulders, looking down

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nice lunges!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, lunge down"
- "EXHALE, stand up"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Squats + Band (Around Thighs)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus of the front leg to stabilise the pelvis, stop one hip from dropping (hip abduction), prevent the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation) or the trunk from leaning to one side (trunk lateral flexion)
- Gluteus Maximus to assist with pressing the band out (hip abduction), squat down (eccentrically controlling hip flexion) and straighten the hips to stand up (hip extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings to lunge down (eccentrically controlling hip flexion) and straighten the hips to stand up from the squat (hip extension)
- Quadriceps to squat down (eccentrically controlling knee flexion) and straighten the knees to stand up from the squat (knee extension)
- Biceps to hold the band (isometric elbow flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators to stop the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecap
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arch of the foot (supination)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the buttock activation is correct (touching these muscles can help to switch them on)
- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that clients are maintaining a neutral spine and not going into a posterior pelvic tilt (the front knee should be back behind the toes, think about sitting the hips straight down rather than bending the knee forward, the weight should be in the heel and ball of the foot of the front leg, not the toes)
- Decreasing the range of motion (do not lunge as deep)
- Keep the stance short (ie. not a large distance between the feet)
- Separate the feet slightly wider than hip distance apart to increase the base of support
- If pain persists, remove the band or try Squats + Band (Around Thighs)

Hip Pain or SIJ Pain

- If the client is not strong enough to stabilise correctly, they could risk injuring these areas
- This is generally not a great exercise for someone who is very unstable in these areas as the split stance can aggravate an unstable pelvic area
- Keep the stance short (ie. not a large distance between the feet)
- Separate the feet slightly wider than hip distance apart to increase the base of support
- Ensure that the correct muscles are activating and stabilising effectively
- Decrease the range of movement

Overactive Quadriceps

- While the Quadriceps do need to work in this exercise, most of the work should be felt in the buttocks of the front leg
- Stick the bottom out, don't bend the knee too much, squat down by bending from the hips
- Focus on keeping the arch of the foot lifted, the standing knee turned out over the second and third toes and pressing through the front heel

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the front knee is not rolling in, encourage the client to corkscrew through their heel to keep the knee turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure that the correct muscles are activating and stabilising effectively (buttocks and VMO)
- Ensure that the knees are not locking or hyperextending
- Decrease knee flexion in the front leg (do not lunge as low or bring the knee forward)
- Separate the feet slightly wider than hip distance apart to increase the base of support
- Remove the band to see if that helps
- If pain persists, try Squats + Band (Around Thighs) or another buttock exercise

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Poor Balance

- This exercise requires balance
- Ensure that you stand next to anyone with poor balance to assist them and add stability

Pregnancy

- This exercise can be performed throughout the first trimester of pregnancy, and use with caution after this
- Only prescribe to clients who do not have Pubic Bone or SIJ pain
- Be mindful of balance as a pregnant client progresses through the trimesters

Programming Advice

- This is a good exercise to bridge between the easier double leg squat exercises and the more advanced single leg standing exercises
- The band adds resistance making this exercise harder on the buttocks than a regular lunge
- Goes well after Squats + Band (Bicep Curl) as you are using the same band in a similar position
- Best performed after other buttock exercises as the buttocks will already be activated
- A good exercise to perform before Scooter exercises
- A great activation exercise for the Gluteal muscles and a great functional exercise as it is weight bearing in a split stance (necessary for activities like stairs, walking and running)

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Wall Squats + Ball

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=1

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Correct ball placement behind the back is extremely important to maintain correct spinal alignment and perform the exercise correctly.

Name of Exercise

"Wall Squats with the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the thighs and buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"



Set Up

"Standing, place the ball against the wall behind you and press your lower back into the ball. Step your feet slightly forward so the feet are straight and hip distance apart, arches lifted. Hands on the hips, shoulders down and back, neutral spine, T-Zone."

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, squat down bending the knees, sticking the bottom out"



"EXHALE, squeeze the buttocks to stand back up"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Keep the pelvis centred over both legs, with even weight on both feet"***
- "Poke the bottom out behind you, curving your back around the ball"***
- "Knees facing over the second and third toes and don't let them move in front of the toes"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Control the squat on the way down and to stand up"
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"
- "Squeeze the bottom and straighten the hips to stand up, don't just straighten the knees"
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't squat down as low"

To Make it Harder

- "Squat a bit deeper"
- "Hold the squat and breath naturally"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Not keeping the weight even between both legs
- Arching the lower back or tucking the bottom under
- Leaning the body forward too much in the squat
- Bending the knees too much (in front of the toes) – not poking the bottom back far enough
- Letting the knees roll in or collapsing the arches of the feet
- Not keeping the feet pointing straight ahead, letting them turn out
- Flicking the knees straight and keeping the hips flexed when standing up from the squat
- Legs too close together or too far apart
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankles roll out
- Hunching the shoulders, looking down

Encourage and Inspire

- "Great technique everyone!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, squat down"
- "EXHALE, stand up"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Clam 3 (90 Degrees)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to squat down (eccentrically controlling hip flexion) and to straighten the hips to stand up (hip extension)
- Quadriceps to squat down (eccentrically controlling knee flexion) and to straighten the knees and stand up (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators, Gluteus Medius and Minimus to stabilise the pelvis and stop the knees from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecaps
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arches of the feet (supination)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (touching the Gluteal muscles can help to switch them on)
- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that clients are maintaining a neutral spine and not going into a posterior pelvic tilt (the knees should be back behind the toes, think about sitting the hips back rather than bending the knees, the weight should be in the heels and the balls of the feet, not the toes)
- Decrease the range of motion (don't squat as low)
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knees are not bent too deeply in the squat
- Ensure that the knees are not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heels to keep their knees turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure correct buttock activation

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Add a circle between the knees or a band around the thighs to help with the VMO and Gluteal activation and assist with correct knee alignment throughout the exercise
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise eg. from the Side Lying Series until stronger

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in all three trimesters
- Pregnant clients may need your assistance to place the ball on the wall
- You may need to reduce the range of movement of the squat as the client's belly grows

Programming Advice

- The most supportive of the squat exercises in this series, in particular for the lower back – as it can rest against the ball throughout the movement
- Good for teaching clients not to round their back/tuck their tailbone under when performing a squat as the ball sits in the lumbar curve and the bottom has to poke back under the ball
- A great activation exercise for the Gluteal muscles and a great functional exercise as it is weight bearing in a squat position (necessary for activities like standing up and sitting down)
- As this exercise involves moving the body in multiple planes of movement, it is a good idea to demonstrate both the front and side on angles to your clients
- As you walk around observing and correcting clients, be sure to observe them from both the front and side planes of movement as you will notice different things from the different angles
- To increase work of the VMO you can add a circle to this exercise – you can also hold down in the squat and press in and out on the circle
- To increase work of the Gluteal muscles you can add a band to this exercise – you can also hold down in the squat and press out and in on the band



Holding the Squat and Pressing In and Out on the Circle



Holding the Squat and Pressing Out and In on the Band

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Correct ball placement behind the back is extremely important to maintain correct spinal alignment and perform the exercise correctly.

Name of Exercise

"Single Leg Wall Squats with the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the thigh and buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"



Set Up

"Standing, place the ball against the wall behind you and press your lower back into the ball. Step your feet slightly forward so the feet are straight and hip distance apart, arches lifted. Hands on the hips, shoulders down and back, neutral spine, T-Zone, lift one leg up out in front to hip height with the knee bent"

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, squat down bending the knee, sticking the bottom out"



"EXHALE, squeeze the buttocks to stand back up"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Keep the upper body centred over the pelvis, try not to lean the body to the side"***
- "Keep the beltline parallel to the floor – don't let one hip drop down or hitch up"***
- "Poke the bottom out behind you, curving your back around the ball"***
- "Knee facing over the second and third toes and don't let it move in front of the toes"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the foot parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arch of the foot lifted"***
- "Keep the pelvis square to the front, no twisting or rotating"***
- "Keep the rib to hip connection – don't let the back arch or the body lean forward"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the spine neutral"***
- "Try to keep the free leg still and up at hip height"
- "Squeeze the buttocks to control the squat on the way down and to stand up"
- "Squeeze the bottom and straighten the hip to stand up, don't just straighten the knee"
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't squat down as low"

To Make it Harder

- "Squat a bit deeper"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the buttock activation on the stabilising leg which may lead to – the knee rolling in, pelvis rotating to one side or one hip dropping or leaning the body to one side
- Collapsing the arch of the foot
- Arching the lower back or tucking the bottom under
- Leaning the body forward too much in the squat, keeping the hips high
- Bending the knee too much (in front of the toes) – not poking the bottom back far enough
- Flicking the knee straight and keeping the hip flexed when standing up from the squat
- Not keeping the foot pointing straight ahead, letting them turn out
- Not keeping the free leg still and up in front of the hip
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankle roll out
- Hunching the shoulders, looking down
- Losing balance and falling over

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nice squats!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, squat down"
- "EXHALE, stand up"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Wall Squats + Ball, Lunges + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to stabilise the pelvis, stop one hip from dropping (hip abduction), prevent the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation) or the trunk from leaning to one side (trunk lateral flexion)
- Gluteus Maximus to squat down (eccentrically controlling hip flexion) and to straighten the hips to stand up (hip extension)
- Quadriceps to squat down (eccentrically controlling knee flexion) and to straighten the knees and stand up (knee extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators to stop the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecap
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arch of the foot (supination)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure correct buttock activation (touching the Gluteal muscles can help to switch them on)
- Ensure that clients are not becoming Lordotic (arching their lower back and flaring the ribs) – cue for T-Zone and Oblique activation
- Ensure that clients are maintaining a neutral spine and not going into a posterior pelvic tilt (the knees should be back behind the toes, think about sitting the hips back rather than bending the knees, the weight should be in the heels and the balls of the feet, not the toes)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Decrease the range of motion (try not to squat as low)
- If pain persists, go back to any of the squat variations using both legs or try Lunges + Band

Hip Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- If a client is not strong enough to stabilise correctly, they could risk injuring these areas
- This is generally not a great exercise for someone who is very unstable in these areas as the single leg stance can aggravate an unstable pelvic area
- Ensure that the correct muscles are activating and stabilising effectively
- Decrease the range of movement
- Try pressing the back more firmly into the ball to see if this helps to de-load the working leg

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knee is not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heel to keep their knee turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure that the correct muscles are activating and stabilising effectively (buttocks and VMO)
- Ensure that clients are not locking or hyperextending their knee
- Decrease the range of motion (try not to squat as low)
- Try pressing the back more firmly into the ball to see if this helps to de-load the working leg
- If pain persists, go back to any of the squat variations using both legs or try Lunges + Band

Poor Balance

- Avoid this exercise for clients with poor balance

Pregnancy

- Can be performed during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Often this exercise is too challenging to maintain balance after the first trimester
- Take care as it places the pelvis in an unstable and asymmetrical position

Programming Advice

- A great activation exercise for the Gluteal muscles and a great functional exercise as it is weight bearing on one leg (necessary for activities like stairs, walking and running)
- Not a good choice for clients with acute lower back, pelvic or knee pain – however, once clients have improved their strength and gluteal activation using double leg squat exercises this exercise is an excellent progression
- This exercise is best performed after Wall Squats + Ball and other buttock exercises
- As this exercise involves moving the body in multiple planes of movement, it is a good idea to demonstrate both the front and side on angles to your clients
- As you walk around observing and correcting clients, be sure to observe them from both the front and side planes of movement as you will notice different things from the different angles

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #5: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #10: Standing
- Pelvic Positioning #11: Anterior Pelvic Tilt

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Standing Sidekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise works best with a larger size ball. A smaller ball can be used however the client will have to lean over further to reach the ball.

This exercise is best taught with the clients performing the exercise with you as you demonstrate.

Name of Exercise

"Standing Sidekick with the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"



Set Up

"Standing with the ball beside you, lean to the side, place the fingertips on the ball so the hand is under the shoulder, other hand on the hip. Place the outer leg to the side in line with the body, toes pointed, touching the floor. Standing leg toes and knee facing forward, arch of the foot lifted. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, lift the outer leg up"



"INHALE, lower the leg back down but don't touch the floor"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- “Keep going and…”

Concentration Points

- “Squeeze the buttock to lift the leg”***
- “Keep the leg back in line with the body as you lift it – don’t let it creep forward”***
- “Keep your bottom tucked in so it is in line with your shoulders and knee – don’t allow the bottom to stick out behind you”***
- “Keep the spine and pelvis completely still – no movement of the waist when the leg lifts”***
- “Take most of the weight through the supporting leg, not the hand”***
- “Hips and shoulders open and square to the front, don’t roll forward to face the floor”***
- “Use your top hand to push your hip away from your shoulder so it doesn’t hitch up”***
- “Maintain neutral spine – keep ribs toward the hips so there is no arch in the lower back”***
- “Keep the stabilising leg as vertical as possible with the foot underneath the hip”***
- “Keep the stabilising knee unlocked and in line with the second and third toes”***
- “Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel”***
- “Keep the T-Zone tight and the bodyweight still, don’t let the ball move”***
- “Aim to lift the leg up to hip height”
- “Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neck long”

To Make it Easier

- “Don’t lift the leg quite so high
- “Rest the foot on the mat each time”

To Make it Harder

- “Lift the leg up higher
- “Don’t let touch the ground when the leg lowers”
- “Hold the leg up high for some pulses, breathing naturally”
- “Place your top hand behind your head instead of on your hip”



Modification with the Hand Behind the Head

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Moving and collapsing the side of the waist as the leg lifts
- Losing the buttock activation on the stabilising leg which may lead to – the foot and knee rolling in, pelvis rotating to one side, one hip dropping or leaning the body to one side
- Hips and shoulders rolling forward to face the floor or ceiling rather than square to the front
- Losing the abdominal activation – ribs flaring and arching the lower back
- Locking the knee of the standing leg
- Kicking the leg in front of the body
- The bottom sticking out behind the body (try to keep the pelvis in line with the hand and foot)
- Placing too much weight on the hand rather than the foot
- Not pointing the toes – pointed feet elongate the body, making it less likely to hitch the top hip up, flexing the foot can cause the Quadriceps to overwork rather than using the buttocks
- Collapsing the arch of the standing foot
- Eyes looking at the ground, or dropping the head down or forward
- Hunching the shoulders

Encourage and Inspire

- "This is a really challenging exercise, but you can do it!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, lift the leg"
- "INHALE, lower the leg"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Circles, Straight Leg Raise

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to lift the top leg (hip abduction)
- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to stabilise the supporting leg

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Accessory Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to help raise the leg (hip abduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Gluteus Maximus to keep the supporting hip still
- T-Zone to stabilise the spine, keep the pelvis still and prevent the hips from rolling backward
- Internal and External Obliques to keep the spine neutral, prevent the back from arching and the ribs from flaring
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical flexion)
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arch of the foot (supination)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Keep the ribs toward the hips so the lower back does not arch
- Tuck the bottom under (Pubic Bone toward the belly button) – do not stick the bottom out
- Lift the leg from the hip rather than the waist – keep the abdominals tight and spine still
- Choose an easier option – place the hand on the hip rather than the head
- Do not lift the leg as high
- If pain or discomfort continues, modify this exercise to be side lying and get the client to perform the exercise Straight Leg Raise on the mat instead

SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Avoid this exercise as it places the pelvis in an open and unstable position

Hip Pain or Overactive Hip Flexors

- Choose the easier option with the hand on the hip rather than on the head
- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius on both sides – palpation may be required to feel for this and ask the client where they are feeling it (ensure that the buttocks are working)
- Ensure that the lifting leg is back in line with the body
- Tuck the bottom under (Pubic Bone toward the belly button) – do not stick the bottom out
- If pain or discomfort continues, perform Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball instead

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, head in line with the body, eye gaze ahead
- If pain or discomfort continues, perform Straight Leg Raise in side lying on the mat

Poor Balance

- As the ball is an unstable moving surface, take care with anyone with poor balance

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Can be safely performed during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Often this exercise is too challenging to maintain balance after the first trimester
- Take care as it places the pelvis in an unstable and asymmetrical position

Programming Advice

- Standing Sidekick + Ball is easier than Kneeling Sidekick because you do not need as much hip abduction range of movement to lift the leg off the mat, making it a good exercise for clients with stiff or painful hips
- A good alternative for clients who cannot perform Kneeling Sidekick due to pain in the knees or the wrists with weightbearing
- Performing the exercise in standing challenges balance and stability more than when performed in kneeling
- This is an intense exercise that really works the buttocks
- Works well after warming up the buttocks with some Side Lying Series buttock exercises

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Pelvic Positioning #2: Preventing Hip Flexion
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Standing Sidekick 2 (Side to Side) + Ball

Intensity=3 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise works best with a larger size ball. A smaller ball can be used however the client will have to lean over further to reach the ball.

This exercise is best taught with the clients performing the exercise with you as you demonstrate.

Name of Exercise

"Standing Sidekick Side to Side with the ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"



Set Up

"Standing with the ball beside you, lean to the side, place the fingertips on the ball so the hand is under the shoulder, other hand on the hip. Place the outer leg to the side in line with the body, toes pointed, touching the floor. Standing leg toes and knee facing forward, arch of the foot lifted. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, lift the outer leg up as high as you can and hold this position…"



"INHALE, sweep the leg forward"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"EXHALE, sweep the leg back"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttock to lift the leg and hold it up as high as possible, don't let it drop"***
- "Only sweep the leg forward as far as you can without tucking the bottom under or moving the pelvis"***
- "Only sweep the leg as far back as you can without arching the lower back"***
- "Keep the spine and pelvis completely still – no movement of the waist"***
- "Keep your bottom tucked in so it is in line with your shoulders and knee – don't allow the bottom to stick out behind you"***
- "Take most of the weight through the supporting leg, not the hand"***
- "Hips and shoulders open and square to the front, don't roll forward to face the floor"***
- "Use your top hand to push your hip away from your shoulder so it doesn't hitch up"***
- "Maintain neutral spine – keep ribs toward the hips so there is no arch in the lower back"***
- "Keep the stabilising leg as vertical as possible with the foot underneath the hip"***
- "Keep the stabilising knee unlocked and in line with the second and third toes"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the bodyweight still, don't let the ball move"***
- "Aim to keep the leg up at hip height"
- "Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neck long"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lift the leg quite so high and perform smaller movements forward and backward"

To Make it Harder

- "Hold the leg up higher and perform larger movements forward and backward"
- "Place your top hand behind your head instead of on your hip"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Performing the movement from the waist – moving and collapsing the side of the waist as the leg lifts, arching or flattening the lower back as the leg moves backward and forward
- Losing the buttock activation on the stabilising leg which may lead to – the foot and knee rolling in, pelvis rotating to one side, one hip dropping or leaning the body to one side

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Hips and shoulders rolling forward to face the floor or ceiling rather than square to the front
- Losing the abdominal activation – ribs flaring and arching the lower back
- Locking the knee of the standing leg
- Kicking the leg in front of the body
- The bottom sticking out behind the body (try to keep the pelvis in line with the hand and foot)
- Placing too much weight on the hand rather than the foot
- Not pointing the toes – pointed feet elongate the body, making it less likely to hitch the top hip up, flexing the foot can cause the Quadriceps to overwork rather than using the buttocks
- Collapsing the arch of the standing foot
- Eyes looking at the ground, or dropping the head down or forward
- Hunching the shoulders

Encourage and Inspire

- "Keep the leg up high just a few more to go!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, sweep the leg forward"
- "EXHALE, sweep the leg back"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Standing Sidekick 1 (Up and Down)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to lift the top leg (hip abduction)
- Gluteus Maximus to help raise the leg and sweep it backward (hip abduction and extension)
- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus to stabilise the supporting leg

Accessory Muscles

- Hip Flexors to sweep the leg forward

Stabilising Muscles

- Gluteus Medius, Gluteus Minimus and Gluteus Maximus to keep the supporting hip still
- T-Zone to stabilise the spine, keep the pelvis still and prevent the hips from rolling backward

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Internal and External Obliques to keep the spine neutral, prevent the back from arching and the ribs from flaring
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in (upper cervical flexion)
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arch of the foot (supination)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Keep the ribs toward the hips so the lower back doesn't arch – use the exhale to really focus on the abdominals as the leg sweeps backward
- Tuck the bottom under (Pubic Bone toward the belly button) – do not stick the bottom out
- Lift the leg from the hip rather than the waist – keep the abdominals tight and spine still
- Use a smaller range of motion for the sweeping and don't lift the leg as high
- Choose an easier option – place the hand on the hip rather than the head
- Do not lift the leg as high
- If pain or discomfort continues, modify this exercise to be side lying and get the client to perform the exercise Rectangles

SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Avoid this exercise as it places the pelvis in an open and unstable position

Hip Pain or Overactive Hip Flexors

- Choose the easier option with the hand on the hip rather than on the head
- Watch out for the Tensor Facia Latae (TFL) taking over and doing the work instead of the Gluteus Medius on both sides – palpation may be required to feel for this and ask the client where they are feeling it (ensure that the buttocks are working)
- Use a smaller range of motion for the sweeping and do not lift the leg as high
- Tuck the bottom under (Pubic Bone toward the belly button) – do not stick the bottom out
- If pain or discomfort continues, perform Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball instead

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, head in line with the body, eye gaze ahead
- If pain or discomfort continues, perform Rectangles in side lying

Poor Balance

- As the ball is an unstable moving surface, take care with anyone with poor balance

Pregnancy

- Can be safely performed during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Often this exercise is too challenging to maintain balance after the first trimester
- Take care as it places the pelvis in an unstable and asymmetrical position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- This is an intense exercise that really works the buttock muscles and challenges stability
- Works well after warming up the buttocks with exercises from the Side Lying Series and Standing Sidekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball
- Usually you would always perform Standing Sidekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball prior to this exercise in a class setting

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Pelvic Positioning #2: Preventing Hip Flexion
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise works best with a larger size ball. A smaller ball can be used however the client will have to lean over further to reach the ball.

Name of Exercise

"Standing Horsekick with the Ball,
Bend and Extend"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and challenges stability"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"



Set Up

"Standing with the ball in front, feet hip distance apart facing forward. Lean forward and place the fingertips on the ball, shoulder width apart, hands under the shoulders. Lift one foot just off the floor and bend the other knee slightly, knee facing over the second and third toe, arch of the foot lifted. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neutral Spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, extend the free leg out straight behind you up in line with the body, toes pointed"



"INHALE, bend the knee bringing it back underneath the hip without touching the floor"

"Continue on the same side"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttock to extend the leg, don't just go through the motion"***
- "Reach through the toes and lengthen the leg as much as possible to work the buttocks"***
- "Kick the leg straight out and up as high as possible without arching the lower back"***
- "Use the breath out to activate the abdominals to stop the back arching as the leg lifts"***
- "Pelvis square to the front, beltline parallel to the floor – no twisting or rotating"***
- "Most of the weight should be on the standing leg, not the hands"***
- "Keep the standing hip directly over the foot – don't let it move forward or sideways"***
- "Keep the front knee slightly bent and in line with the second and third toes"***
- "Don't let the knee move in front of the toes – think about poking the bottom backward"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the bodyweight still, don't let the ball move"***
- "Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the ball"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't extend the leg quite so high"
- "Rest the foot down on the mat between each repetition"

To Make it Harder

- "Extend the leg up higher – as high as you can without arching the back – and really reach through the toes, squeezing the buttock"
- "Keep the weight back off the hands and mostly on the standing leg"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the buttock activation on the stabilising leg which may lead to – the foot/knee rolling in, pelvis rotating to one side, one hip dropping or leaning the body to one side
- Collapsing the arch of the foot and losing the tripod position
- Losing the T-Zone and Obliques, dipping through the lower back
- Overusing the Quadriceps rather than the buttocks on the standing leg – too much bend in the knee, the knee moving forward in front of the toes or the knee bending and straightening
- Kicking the leg too high and arching the lower back, T-Zone tight, think of ribs to hips
- Not fully straightening the knee before lifting the leg up – a bent knee means that the Hamstring muscles rather than the Gluteus Maximus are working
- Not reaching through the pointed toes (assists in keeping the knee straight)
- Dropping the head down or looking forward
- Hunching the shoulders
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowers toward the ball
- Sagging the upper back through the shoulder blades (losing Serratus Anterior activation)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Fantastic effort everyone, really try to keep that ball still!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, extend the leg out"
- "INHALE, draw the knee back in"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Lunges + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to extend the leg and raise it up (hip extension)
- Gluteus Medius, Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators to stabilise the pelvis and standing leg

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings to extend the leg and raise it up (hip extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the spine and prevent the pelvis from rocking or twisting
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back form arching
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arch of the foot (supination)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- If the abdominals and buttocks are not activating properly the lower back will arch, the hips and pelvis will shift to one side or the pelvis will rotate, causing strain on the lower back
- Ensure that there is no dipping through the back or rotation through the pelvis

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Do not kick the leg as high
- If a client is not strong enough in their buttocks to stabilise themselves in this exercise, perform Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) on the mat instead, or modify to any of the squat exercises or any buttock exercises from the Side Lying Series with or without the band

Hip Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone and abdominals are switched on
- Check correct alignment of the pelvis (ie. to flexion/extension, lateral flexion or rotation)
- If the pain is acute, stick to exercises in which you are standing on both feet
- If the client is not strong enough to stabilise correctly, they could risk injuring these areas
- This is not a great exercise for someone who is very unstable in these areas as the single leg stance can aggravate an unstable pelvic area
- Avoid this exercise if pain persists

Knee Pain

- Easier on the knees compared to the Kneeling Horsekick exercises on the mat
- If a client has poor stability and the knee is rolling in and out, this can place strain on the knee
- Keep the standing knee still, not too bent and facing directly over the second and third toes
- Only bend the knee slightly
- Maintain the tripod foot position
- If pain persists, perform a different buttock exercise instead eg. Squats + Band (Around Thighs) or buttock exercises from the Side Lying Series

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Ensure that the weight is in the standing leg, not forward over the ball
- Shoulder blades down and back, neck long, chin tucked in, eyes looking toward the ball

Poor Balance

- As the ball is an unstable moving surface, take care with anyone with poor balance
- You may need to support the ball and hold it still for safety

Pregnancy

- Can be safely performed during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Often this exercise is too challenging to maintain balance after the first trimester
- Take care as it places the pelvis in an unstable and asymmetrical position

Programming Advice

- Horsekick performed standing is a lot more challenging on the balance and stability than when performed kneeling and really works the buttock muscles of the standing leg
- A great option for clients who cannot perform Horsekick on the mat due to pain in the knees or the wrists with weightbearing
- A good option for clients with poor Scapula control as there is not much weight going through the arms and shoulders
- Maintaining a tripod foot position is paramount to be able to perform this exercise correctly

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- This exercise works best after performing other buttock exercises first eg. buttock exercises from the Side Lying Series with or without the band or Crab Walking + Band
- Perform all the repetitions on one side before swapping to the other side
- Add in Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball before swapping sides to really challenge the buttock muscles
- In a group class, you can have some clients performing the matwork variation in kneeling, while others perform it standing using the ball – you would use the kneeling option for clients with poor balance and stability, the standing option for clients who can't kneel or weight bear through their wrists
- When the leg extends out in line with body it will not be horizontal, it will be pointing down to the floor on a diagonal, note this when you are observing clients

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Gluteal Activation #3: Gluteus Maximus
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise works best with a larger size ball. A smaller ball can be used however the client will have to lean over further to reach the ball.

Name of Exercise

"Standing Horsekick with the Ball, Pulses"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttock muscles and challenges balance"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Standing with the ball in front, feet hip distance apart facing forward. Lean forward and place the fingertips on the ball, shoulder width apart, hands under the shoulders. Lift one foot just off the floor and bend the other knee slightly, knee facing over the second and third toe, arch of the foot lifted. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neutral Spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, extend the free leg out straight behind you up in line with the body, toes pointed"



"INHALE, lower the leg down"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



"EXHALE, raise the leg back up"

"Continue on the same side"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the buttock to extend the leg, don't just go through the motion"***
- "Reach through the toes and lengthen the leg as much as possible to work the buttocks"***
- "Kick the leg straight out and up as high as possible without arching the lower back"
- "Use the breath out to activate the abdominals to stop the back arching as the leg lifts"***
- "Pelvis square to the front, beltline parallel to the floor – no twisting or rotating"***
- "Most of the weight should be on the standing leg, not the hands"***
- "Keep the standing hip directly over the foot – don't let it move forward or sideways"***
- "Keep the front knee slightly bent and in line with the second and third toes"***
- "Don't let the knee move in front of the toes – think about poking the bottom backward"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight and the bodyweight still, don't let the ball move"***
- "Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the ball"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't raise the leg as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Raise the leg up higher, as high as you can without arching the back and really reach through the toes, squeezing the buttock"
- "Keep the weight mostly on the stabilising leg and off the hands"
- "Pulse the leg up and down faster, just breathe naturally as you pulse the leg"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the buttock activation on the stabilising leg which may lead to – the foot/knee rolling in, pelvis rotating to one side, one hip dropping or leaning the body to one side
- Collapsing the arch of the foot and losing the tripod position
- Losing the T-Zone and Obliques, dipping through the lower back
- Overusing the Quadriceps rather than the buttocks on the standing leg – too much bend in the knee, the knee moving forward in front of the toes or the knee bending and straightening

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Kicking the leg too high and arching the lower back, T-Zone tight, think of ribs to hips
- Not fully straightening the knee before lifting the leg up – a bent knee means that the Hamstring muscles rather than the Gluteus Maximus are working
- Not reaching through the pointed toes (assists in keeping the knee straight)
- Dropping the head down or looking forward
- Hunching the shoulders
- Squeezing the shoulder blades back too much and the chest lowers toward the ball
- Sagging the upper back through the shoulder blades (losing Serratus Anterior activation)

Encourage and Inspire

- "Magnificent, that's the way!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, raise the leg"
- "INHALE, lower the leg"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to raise the leg up (hip extension)
- Gluteus Medius, Minimus and Deep Hip Rotators to stabilise the supporting leg and pelvis

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings to raise the leg up (hip extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the spine and prevent the pelvis from rocking or twisting
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back form arching
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arch of the foot (supination)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- If the abdominals and buttocks are not activating properly the lower back will arch, the hips and pelvis will shift to one side or the pelvis will rotate, causing strain on the lower back.
- Ensure that there is no dipping through the back or rotation through the pelvis
- Do not kick the leg as high
- If a client is not strong enough in their buttocks to stabilise themselves in this exercise, perform Horsekick 2 (Pulses) on the mat instead, or modify to any of the squat exercises or any buttock exercises from the Side Lying Series with or without the band

Hip Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Ensure that the T-Zone and abdominals are switched on
- Check correct alignment of the pelvis (ie. to flexion/extension, lateral flexion or rotation)
- If the pain is acute, stick to exercises in which you are standing on both feet
- If the client is not strong enough to stabilise correctly, they could risk injuring these areas
- This is not a great exercise for someone who is very unstable in these areas as the single leg stance can aggravate an unstable pelvic area
- Avoid this exercise if pain persists

Knee Pain

- Easier on the knees compared to the Kneeling Horsekick exercises on the mat
- If a client has poor stability and the knee is rolling in and out, this can place strain on the knee
- Keep the standing knee still, not too bent and facing directly over the second and third toes
- Only bend the knee slightly
- Maintain the tripod foot position
- If pain persists, perform a different buttock exercise instead eg Squats + Band (Around Thighs) or buttock exercises from the Side Lying Series

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Ensure that the weight is in the standing leg, not forward over the ball
- Shoulder blades down and back, neck long, chin tucked in, eyes looking toward the ball

Poor Balance

- As the ball is an unstable moving surface, take care with anyone with poor balance
- You may need to support the ball and hold it still for safety

Pregnancy

- Can be safely performed during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Often this exercise is too challenging to maintain balance after the first trimester
- Take care as it places the pelvis in an unstable and asymmetrical position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Advice

- People with a Lordosis often find it difficult not to arch their lower back with this exercise
- Some people will feel this working more through the buttock of the balancing leg rather than the kicking leg, this is okay as it is stabilising the body
- This exercise works well after performing Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball
- A great buttock exercise for people who overuse their Quadriceps and TFLs in other exercises such as buttock exercises from the Side Lying Series exercises because as you move into hip extension the Hip Flexors switch off
- The Hamstrings and Gluteus Maximus on the kicking leg work really hard
- A great option for clients who cannot perform Horsekick on the mat due to pain in the knees or the wrists with weight bearing

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Gluteal Activation #3: Gluteus Maximus
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Scooter + Ball

Intensity=2 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Scooter with the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttocks of the standing leg"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Standing with the ball behind you, hold onto the ball with the fingertips, step one foot forward in front of you with the toes facing straight. Place the front of the other foot on top of the ball, knee bent, pointing straight down. Hands on the hips. Lean the body forward slightly, softening the front knee, keeping it in line with the second and third toes, arch of the foot lifted. Pelvis square to the front, neutral spine, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, straighten the back knee rolling the ball behind you"

"INHALE, bend the back knee, rolling the ball back in"

Exercise Tip: Ensure that the ball is not too large otherwise it will make the exercise more difficult.

For clients with poor balance, it is a good idea to perform this exercise standing close to a wall so that they can touch the wall if they need to for stability.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.







© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and …"

Concentration Points

- "Keep most of the weight through front leg, you should feel the buttocks working"***
- "Keep the front knee bent and in line with the second and third toes"***
- "Keep the front knee directly over the ankle – think about poking the bottom backward"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the bodyweight still, don't let the body move backward/forward with the ball"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to stabilise – nothing should move except the back leg"***
- "Keep the pelvis square to the front, no twisting or rotating"***
- "Keep the beltline parallel to the floor – don't let one hip drop down or hitch up"***
- "Only press the ball away as far as possible without arching the lower back"***
- "Keep the shoulders stacked above the hips, don't lean the body to one side"
- "Draw the ball in and out slowly, with control"
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't roll the ball out as far"
- "Don't bend the front knee as much"
- "Place one hand against a wall if you are finding it hard to balance"



Modification with the Hand Resting Against the Wall

To Make it Harder

- "Roll the ball out further"
- "Bend the front knee more"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the buttock activation on the stabilising leg which may lead to – the foot/knee rolling in, pelvis rotating to one side, one hip dropping or leaning the body to one side
- Arching the lower back and losing the abdominal connection

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Overusing the Quadriceps rather than the buttocks on the standing leg – too much bend in the knee, the knee moving forward in front of the toes or the knee bending and straightening
- Not keeping the weight over the front leg – allowing the body weight to move backward as the ball rolls away and move forward as the ball rolls back in
- Not keeping the legs shoulder distance apart
- Resting too much weight on the ball, the weight should be over the front knee
- Using the lower back, leaning the body too far forward
- Tucking the bottom under, this will cause the front knee to bend more
- Hyperextending or locking the standing knee
- Letting the foot and knee roll in, arch collapsing
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankle roll out
- Not controlling the ball as it rolls out or not drawing it all the way back in
- Hunching the shoulders, looking down
- Losing balance and falling over

Encourage and Inspire

- "Great stability now everyone!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, roll the ball away"
- "INHALE, roll the ball back in"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and slowly roll the ball all the way back in, return the foot to the floor and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Lunges + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus of the front leg to hold the lunge
- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus of the front leg to stabilise the pelvis, stop one hip from dropping (hip abduction), prevent the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Quadriceps of the front leg to hold the lunge
- Gluteus Maximus of the back leg to roll the ball out (hip extension)
- Quadriceps of the back leg to straighten the knee (knee extension)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Hip Flexors of the back leg to roll the ball back in (hip flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators to stop the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arch of the foot (supination)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecap
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the ball is the correct size and not too large or the back will arch
- Don't press the ball out as far
- Focus on maintaining neutral spine, pelvis square to the front, beltline parallel to the floor
- Check that the T-Zone is activating and the rib to hip connection is strong
- Think about squeezing the buttock of the back leg slightly
- Stick to the easier modification with the hand on the wall
- Decrease the springs slightly

Hip Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- If the client is not strong enough to stabilise correctly, they could risk injuring these areas
- This is generally not a great exercise for someone who is very unstable in these areas as the split stance can aggravate an unstable pelvic area
- Make sure that the correct muscles are activating and stabilising effectively
- Stick to the modification with the hands on the wall or work on Gluteal strength using other exercises and try again when stronger
- Decrease the springs slightly

Overactive Quadriceps

- While the Quadriceps do need to work in this exercise, most of the work should be felt in the buttocks of the standing leg
- Stick the bottom out, don't bend the knee too much, squat down by bending from the hips, focus on keeping the arch of the foot lifted and the standing knee turned out over the second and third toes

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knee is not rolling in, encourage the client to corkscrew through their heel to keep their knee turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure that the correct muscles are activating and stabilising effectively (buttocks and VMO)
- Ensure that they are not locking or hyperextending their knees
- Do not bend the front knee as much
- Decrease the range of motion of the back leg moving in and out

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- If pain persist, try a different buttock exercise eg. Lunges+ Band as having both feet on the ground shares the load more evenly and is more stable

Poor Balance

- This is a very advanced exercise and is not advisable for anyone with poor balance
- Try performing the exercise near a wall for added safety
- Performing this exercise on a mat can make it harder to balance as the mat is a softer surface, try performing the exercise on the floor off the mat to help with balance

Pregnancy

- Can be performed during the first and second trimesters of pregnancy
- Some clients may be able to perform in the third trimester if they feel comfortable but have the pregnant client to hold onto a wall for support
- Avoid if the pregnant client has any pelvic or Pubic Bone pain

Programming Advice

- A great functional exercise as the movement closely mimics walking and running
- Ask the clients where they are feeling it – it might look like they are performing the exercise correctly but they may be feeling it in their Quadriceps
- If they are feeling it too much in the Quadriceps of the front leg, ensure that the front knee is not too bent and that it is not too far forward/ in front of the toes
- The Scooter exercises are great when combined together – perform them together on the same side before switching sides to get the maximum effect
- A client's ability to perform this exercise comfortably will depend on their height – shorter individuals may need a smaller ball, taller clients may get away with a larger ball, the priority is that the ball is not too large for the individual or it will cause the back to arch
- Someone who is Lordotic or tight in the Hip Flexors may struggle to keep the spine neutral with this exercise, especially if the ball is too large relative to their height
- It is a good idea to warm the buttock muscles up with another series of exercises first as clients can struggle to switch them on in this position, particularly if they are Quadriceps dominant and tend to use their thighs

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet
- Ball Positioning #1: Supporting the Ball During the Set Up

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Scooter Lunges + Ball

Intensity=3 Difficulty=3.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Ensure that the ball is not too large otherwise it will make the exercise more difficult.

For clients with poor balance, it is a good idea to perform this exercise standing close to a wall so that they can touch the wall if they need to for stability.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Name of Exercise

"Scooter Lunges with the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttocks of the standing leg"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"



Set Up

"Standing with the ball behind you, hold onto the ball with the fingertips, step one foot forward in front of you with the toes facing straight. Place the front the other foot on top of the ball and roll it out behind you slightly so the knee is behind your body and the foot is still on the ball. Arms by the sides, pelvis square to the front, neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, lunge down over the front leg, reach the arms up to shoulder height, extending the back leg to roll the ball away"



"INHALE, stand back up and roll the ball back in, arms return to the sides"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep most of the weight over the front leg, you should feel the buttocks working"***
- "The body goes straight up and down, don't let the body move backward"***
- "Keep the front knee directly over the ankle – think about poking the bottom backward"***
- "Keep the knees facing over the second and third toes, don't let them roll in"***
- "Maintain the tripod foot position – even pressure through the ball of the foot underneath the big toe and little toe as well as in the centre of the heel"***
- "Keep the T-Zone tight to stabilise, particularly as you stand back up again"***
- "Keep the pelvis square to the front, no twisting or rotating"***
- "Keep the beltline parallel to the floor – don't let one hip drop down or hitch up"***
- "Use the exhale breath to draw the ribs toward the hips as you press the ball away"
- "Only press the ball away as far as possible without arching the lower back"***
- "Keep the shoulders stacked above the hips, don't lean the body to one side"
- "Really reach forward through the fingers to keep the weight forward"
- "Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lunge down as far"
- "Keep the arms by the sides the whole time or place the hands on the hips"
- "Place one hand against a wall if you are finding it hard to balance"

To Make it Harder

- "Lunge down lower"
- "Add a hold at the bottom of the movement"
- "Hold down and pulse at the bottom of the movement"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Losing the buttock activation on the stabilising leg which may lead to – the foot/knee rolling in, pelvis rotating to one side, one hip dropping or leaning the body to one side
- Arching the lower back and losing the abdominal connection
- Overusing the Quadriceps rather than the buttocks on the standing leg – too much bend in the knee, the knee moving forward in front of the toes or the knee bending and straightening
- Resting too much weight on the ball, the weight should be over the front leg
- Using the lower back, leaning the body too far forward
- Tucking the bottom under, this will cause the front knee to bend more
- Hyperextending or locking the standing knee
- Letting the foot and knee roll in, arch collapses
- Clawing the toes or letting the ankle roll out
- Not controlling the ball as it rolls out or not drawing it all the way back in

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Hunching the shoulders, looking down
- Not keeping the legs shoulder distance apart

Encourage and Inspire

- "Wow, great depth on those lunges! Very impressive!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, lunge down"
- "INHALE, stand back up"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and slowly draw the ball all the way back in and place the foot on the floor to rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Scooter + Ball, Lunges + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus of the front leg to lower down into the lunge (eccentrically controlling hip flexion) and stand back up (hip extension)
- Gluteus Medius and Gluteus Minimus of the front leg to stabilise the pelvis, stop one hip from dropping (hip abduction), prevent the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation)

Accessory Muscles

- Quadriceps of the front leg to control the lunge
- Gluteus Maximus of the back leg to roll the ball out (hip extension)
- Quadriceps of the back leg to straighten the knee (knee extension)
- Hip Flexors of the back leg to roll the ball back in (hip flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to draw the abdominals in and stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to prevent the lower back arching
- Deep Hip Rotators to stop the knee from rolling in (hip external rotation)
- Vastus Medialis Oblique (VMO) to stabilise the kneecap
- Tibialis Posterior to maintain the arch of the foot (supination)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the ball is the correct size and not too large or the back will arch
- Don't press the ball out as far
- Focus on maintaining neutral spine, pelvis square to the front, beltline parallel to the floor
- Check that the T-Zone is activating and the rib to hip connection is strong
- Think about squeezing the buttock of the back leg slightly
- Decrease the springs slightly

Hip Pain, SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- If the client is not strong enough to stabilise correctly, they could risk injuring these areas
- This is generally not a great exercise for someone who is very unstable in these areas as the split stance can aggravate an unstable pelvic area
- Make sure that the correct muscles are activating and stabilising effectively
- Stick to the modification with the hands on the footbar or work on Gluteal strength using other exercises and try again when stronger
- Decrease the springs slightly
- Stick to Scooter + Ball or a different exercise to work on Gluteal strength and try again when stronger and more stable

Overactive Quadriceps

- While the Quadriceps do need to work in this exercise, most of the work should be felt in the buttocks of the standing leg
- Stick the bottom out, don't bend the knee too much, squat down by bending from the hips, focus on keeping the arch of the foot lifted and the standing knee turned out over the second and third toes

Knee Pain

- Ensure that the knee is not rolling in, encourage clients to corkscrew through their heel to keep their knee turned out over the second and third toes
- Ensure that the correct muscles are activating and stabilising effectively (buttocks and VMO)
- Ensure that the knees are not locking or hyperextending
- Decrease the range of motion (do not lunge down as far)
- If pain persists, try a different buttock exercise eg. Lunges + Band as having both feet on the ground shares the load more evenly and is more stable

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Keep the shoulder blades down and back and the chin tucked in
- Cue the client not to raise the arms as high
- Omit the arm movement and place the hands on the hips instead

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Poor Balance

- This is a very advanced exercise and is not advisable for anyone with poor balance

Pregnancy

- Can be performed during the first and second trimesters of pregnancy
- Some clients may be able to perform in the third trimester if they feel comfortable but have the pregnant client to hold onto a wall for support
- Avoid if the pregnant client has any pelvic or Pubic Bone pain

Programming Advice

- This is the buttock exercise which challenges the balance and stability the most
- This exercise works best when the Gluteal muscles and Quadriceps are already warmed up using other exercises and is often performed just after Scooter + Ball
- It is easy to lose balance and fall over with this exercise – raising the arms can help with this as well as thinking about using the buttock muscles and abdominals for stability
- Only prescribe this exercise to clients who have good balance and can already perform Lunges + Band well
- You will often need to help the client get their leg up onto the ball and assist them throughout the movement if the ball starts to roll away

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #2: Deep Hip Rotator
- Feet Positioning #2: Lifting the Arches of the Feet
- Ball Positioning #1: Supporting the Ball During the Set Up

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Benefits of Using the Ball for the Prone Lying Series

Using the ball for the Prone Lying Series is beneficial as it makes these exercises more accessible for people who may not be able to lie on the floor to perform the exercises on the mat. It is particularly useful for clients with a Kyphosis, Lordosis, lower back pain, Pubic Bone pain and shoulder pain.

Kyphosis

Because the ball is curved, it allows the upper body to begin in a more flexed position than when lying on the floor. This means that clients with a Kyphotic posture do not have to extend as much through the upper back in order to raise the body off the ball as they would on the mat.

Lordosis and Lower Back Pain

Using the ball can help clients who feel the prone lying exercises in their lower backs in three ways -

- As the ball is a moving surface, the deep stabilising muscles are recruited more to help balance the body and support the spine when lying on the ball
- The lower back is less likely to arch as the body/legs don't have to lift into full extension to clear the floor when performing the exercises on the ball (rather than the mat)
- The roundness of the ball puts the body into a position that facilitates recruitment of the abdominal muscles, helping to facilitate the rib to hip connection and support the lower back

Shoulder Pain

Clients with stiff or painful shoulders usually struggle with placing the arms in the correct position when lying on the mat due to the significant amount of shoulder flexion and horizontal abduction range of movement required to raise the arms off the floor. By performing the exercises on the ball, the shoulders can be placed in a more comfortable position while still targeting the midback muscles.

Pubic Bone Pain

The ball is a great option for clients who experience pain as their Pubic Bone digs into the mat. The ball is soft and curved and other parts of the body such as the front of the lower abdomen/pelvis and upper thighs take some of the weight rather than it all going through the Pubic Bone.

Balance and Safety

As the ball is a moving unstable surface, avoid or take care with these exercises for clients who have vertigo, dizziness or poor balance as they may fall.

To maximise safety and balance when lying on the ball, ensure that the hands or feet remain shoulder/hip distance apart on the floor to help with stability. Stay close by any client who may need assistance to help them on and off the ball and also throughout the exercise.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Modifying Ball Exercises to Make Them Easier/Harder

Upper Body Exercises

For upper body exercises using the ball, the higher up the ball is underneath the chest, the more support it will give to the upper body as it lifts. To make these exercises harder, walk the body forward over the ball slightly so that the ball sits at the bottom of the ribcage. This will give the upper body less support and increase the range of movement available to lift the chest and shoulders.



Placing the Ball Higher Under the Chest (Easier)



Placing the Ball Lower Under the Ribs (Harder)

Lower Body Exercises

For lower body exercises using the ball, the higher up the ball is underneath the pelvis, the less support it will give to the legs as they lift. To make these exercises easier, walk the body forward over the ball slightly so that the ball sits at the top of the thighs. This will give the legs more support however it will decrease the range of movement available to lift the legs. Please note that the ball cannot be too far down the thighs otherwise you it is impossible to raise the legs up off the ball.



Correct Position– Ball Under Pelvis



Incorrect Position– Ball Too Far Down the Thighs

Also keep in mind that the higher the ball is underneath the pelvis/stomach, the more support it will give the lower back. As such, there will be a sweet spot for each individual where the ball is providing enough support for the lower back and the abdominals are able to engage correctly however the legs are also given enough support and they are able to lift up in line with the body without dragging on the back.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ball Size

Upper Body Exercises

For upper body exercises, the ball should be at a height so that when the legs are straight and the chest is on the ball, there is one long line between the shoulders, hips, knees and feet. There should not be any excessive arching in the lower back which will occur if the ball is too large.



Back Arching (Ball Too Big)

Lower Body Exercises

For lower body exercises, the ball should be at a height so that when the arms are extended straight (but not locked) and the legs are up in line with the body, the shoulders, hips, knees and feet should be in one long line with no dipping or arching in the back. If the ball is too small, the elbows will be too bent. If the ball is too large, the back will arch and it will be difficult to reach the floor with the hands and raise the legs.



Elbows Bent (Ball Too Small)



Back Arching (Ball Too Big)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Swan + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Swan on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the upper back, lower back and shoulder muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Kneeling with the ball in front of you, place the elbows and stomach on the ball, press through the feet and lift the knees up so that the ball is directly underneath the stomach. Lower the chest forward over the ball and lift the arms out to the sides, elbows bent to 90 degrees, hands in line with the head, palms facing down. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neck long. Neutral spine, T-Zone."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, and extend through the upper back, lifting the chest and head slightly"



"EXHALE, lower back down"



Exercise Tip: Note the breathing for this exercise. You INHALE as you extend through the upper back as the inhalation assists the thoracic extension. As the movement of this exercise begins on an INHALE breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement.

Permissions to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Anchor your ribs and Pubic Bone into the ball and lift the abdominals up to prevent the lower back from arching"***
- "Use the spinal muscles in the upper back only and keep the lower back muscles relaxed"***
- "Initiate the movement from the upper back – pivot around a point in between the shoulder blades"***
- "Keep the eyes looking toward the floor in front of you, chin tucked in, elongate the neck and lengthen through the crown of the head"***
- "No pain or hyperextension in the lower back or neck"***
- "It is only a small movement, focus on keeping the bottom of your ribs on the ball as you arch through the upper back"***
- "Keep the knees straight, even weight through both legs and the T-Zone tight to keep the pelvis and the ball still"
- "Keep the elbows wide and the shoulders down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lift the body up as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Lift the upper body a little higher, as high as you can without arching the lower back"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Tilting the head backward/over extending the neck
- Arching through the lower back
- Lifting the whole torso from the lower back
- Making the movement too large
- Hunching the shoulders
- Losing the T-Zone or rotating the pelvis
- Ball placement too high or too low under the body
- Losing balance and falling off the ball
- Leading the movement with the arms rather than the upper back
- Letting the hands and arms drop down lower than 90 degrees

Encourage and Inspire

- "Excellent work!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, lift the chest"
- "EXHALE, lower back down"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… and return the forearms back onto the ball and lower the knees to the mat to rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Swan Preparation

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Thoracic Erector Spinae to extend the upper back (thoracic extension)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to support the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back

Joint Mobility

- Increases thoracic spine extension range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Anyone with overactive lumbar spine extensors or a large Lordosis may find it difficult during this exercise to switch off the lower back muscles and to isolate the upper back extension
- Cue to tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball, lifting the abdominals up off the ball, ribs to hips
- Try not lifting the upper body as high and place your hands on your clients to facilitate where you want the client to lift from (ie. lift from the upper back, not the lower back)

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the neck remains neutral, not hyperextended – chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head, eyes looking at the floor in front

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Shoulder Pain

- Can use the alternate arm position with the forearms on the ball



Modification with the Forearms on the Ball

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- Take care with this exercise as it can be quite unstable

Pregnancy

- Avoid during pregnancy

Programming Advice

- Clients with a very stiff thoracic spine and limited thoracic extension will be better off doing this exercise on the ball rather than the mat as they don't have to lift as high to clear the mat and they can start in some flexion, allowing a larger range of movement
- The ball helps prevent the lower back from arching too much, especially when you focus on tucking the Pubic Bone and ribs into the ball
- A great exercise for anyone who has a Kyphosis, or a Kyphosis/Lordosis posture as it can help reverse the Kyphotic position
- People with a rigid/stiff Kyphosis will find it difficult to perform this exercise and may only be able to lift a small amount
- A great exercise to learn how to isolate thoracic extension while not extending through the lumbar or cervical spine

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #2: Prone Extension
- Pelvic Positioning #5: Prone
- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Head Positioning #1: Prone Extension

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Breaststroke Arms + Ball

Intensity=3 Difficulty=3.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Breaststroke Arms on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the shoulder blade muscles, shoulders, upper and lower back muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Kneeling with the ball in front of you, place the elbows and stomach on the ball, press through the feet and lift the knees up so that the ball is directly underneath the stomach. Lower the chest so the body is in one long line arms out to the side, elbows bent, palms facing in. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, shoulders down and back…"



"EXHALE, reach the arms forward overhead"



"INHALE, turn the palms out…"



Exercise Tip: The Breathing and Movement in this exercise differs slightly to the version on the mat in that T-Zone is cued on the INHALE breath. On the mat, T-Zone is in the Set Up because the client INHALES to lift the head off the floor. However, on the ball, the head is already lifted.

You can make the Set Up of how to get on the ball more concise if your clients are already familiar with how to do this.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

As this is a difficult exercise to teach and perform, it is sometimes easier to initially cue the clients through the movement and then add the breathing in.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"… sweep the hands out to the side…"



"… and around to the thighs, lifting the chest"



"EXHALE, lower the body to just off the ball, bend the elbows …"



"… and reach overhead, palms facing in"



From here, keep cueing to INHALE, palms out, lift the chest and sweep hands to hips. EXHALE, lower the body and arms overhead, palms in (as referred to in Remind and Recycle)

As this is a difficult exercise to teach and perform, cue the Breathing and Movement 3-4 more times then…

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Keep the eyes on the mat throughout the entire movement, chin tucked in, neck long"***
- "Keep the shoulder blades down and back, particularly as the arms reach overhead"***
- "Keep the T-Zone drawing toward the spine the whole time; tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball to lift the abdominals off the ball"***
- "Extend from the upper back, not the lower back – there should be no pain in the lower back"***
- "Make sure that your elbows are not higher than your hands"
- "Keep the knees straight, even weight through both legs and the T-Zone tight to keep the pelvis and the ball still"
- "Reach through the fingers when the hands are past the hips, opening the chest and drawing the shoulder blades down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Use a smaller range of movement ie. don't take the arms all the way overhead or out to the sides as far"
- "Don't raise the upper body as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Raise the upper body a little higher"
- "Really reach through the arms and fully extend the elbows"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Hunching the shoulders and overusing the Upper Trapezius rather than the Lower Trapezius
- Hyperextending the neck rather than extending the thoracic spine
- Dipping through the lower back, letting the T-Zone touch the ball
- Not reaching the hands out far enough forward, or far enough down to the thighs
- Bending the elbows rather than keeping them straight when reaching forward or past the hips
- Lifting the elbows higher than the hands ie. internally rotating the shoulders
- Losing the T-Zone or rotating the pelvis
- Ball placement too high or too low under the body
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Don't give up everyone! Getting closer!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, turn the palms out, sweep the hands to the thighs lifting the chest"
- "EXHALE, lower the body, arms overhead, palms in"
- "INHALE, Lift the body, sweep hands to the hips"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "EXHALE, lower the body, arms overhead"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and return the forearms back onto the ball and lower the knees to the mat to rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Swan + Ball
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Breaststroke Arm Preparation 2 (Head Up)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Thoracic Erector Spinae muscles to lift the chest (thoracic and spine extension)
- Deltoids to lift the arms and raise them overhead (shoulder horizontal abduction and flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Rhomboids to draw the shoulder blades back (Scapula retraction)
- Latissimus Dorsi to sweep the arms toward the sides (shoulder adduction)
- Rotator Cuff to assist in raising the arms up (shoulder abduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- T-Zone to support the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back is not hyperextending – keep the abdominals tight and tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball, extend through the upper back rather than the lower back
- Try not to lift the upper body too high off the ball or go back to Breaststroke Arm Preparation 1 (Head Down) on the mat
- Ensure that the legs are not lifting off the floor

Neck Pain

- Focus on keeping the shoulder blades down and back, especially as the arms move forward

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Decrease the range of movement, as it is easier to keep the shoulder blades down and back
- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate their activation can be very helpful (performing the physical correction Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades)
- Keep the neck in a neutral position, eyes facing the floor, chin tucked in, neck long
- Try not to lift the upper body too high off the ball, or go back to Breaststroke Arm Preparation 1 (Head Down) on the mat
- Extend through the upper back rather than the neck to lift the upper body

Shoulder Pain

- Cue the client to draw their shoulder blades down and back throughout the movement
- Do not lift the arms as high
- Decrease the range of movement ie. do not take the arms as far forward or out to the sides
- If pain persists, perform Swan + Ball, Breaststroke Arm Preparation 1 (Head Down) on the mat or Breaststroke Arm Preparation 2 (Head Up) on the mat

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- Take care with this exercise as it can be quite unstable

Pregnancy

- Avoid during pregnancy

Programming Advice

- Works well after Swan + Ball as the clients have learned the preparatory movement involving thoracic extension prior to moving the arms
- Works well before or after Freestyle Arms + Ball as the body is in the same position
- A good exercise to give to the group as some clients can perform Breaststroke Arms on the mat while others perform it on the Ball
- Clients with stiff shoulders and thoracic spine and will be better off doing this exercise on the ball rather than the mat as they don't have to lift the arms or body as high to clear the mat
- Clients with poor balance will be better off performing the exercise on the mat
- The ball helps to prevent the lower back from arching too much, especially when you focus on tucking the Pubic Bone and ribs into the ball
- This is a difficult exercise to cue and also to perform – generally clients will make lots of mistakes and use the wrong muscles
- You will usually need to keep repeating the cueing over and over, decreasing the amount of words you use each time

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #2: Scapula Resetting
- Pelvic Positioning #5: Prone
- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #2: Prone Extension
- Head Positioning #1: Prone Extension

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Freestyle Arms + Ball

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: The Breathing and Movement in this exercise differs slightly to the version on the mat in that T-Zone is cued on the INHALE breath. On the mat, T-Zone is in the Set Up because the client INHALES to lift the head off the floor. However, on the ball, the head is already lifted.

You can make the Set Up of how to get on the ball more concise if your clients are already familiar with how to do this.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

As this is a difficult exercise to teach and perform, it is sometimes easier to initially cue the clients through the movement and then add the breathing in.

Name of Exercise

"Freestyle Arms on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the shoulder blade muscles, shoulders, upper and lower back muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Kneeling with the ball in front of you, place the elbows and stomach on the ball, press through the feet and lift the knees up so that the ball is directly underneath the stomach. Raise the upper back slightly, lift the arms overhead, palms facing down. Chin tucked in, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, shoulders down and back…."



"EXHALE, start to alternate lowering and lifting the arms…"

"INHALE, lower and lift the arms for a few beats"



"EXHALE, lower and lift the arms for a few beats"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Keep the shoulder blades down and back at all times"***
- "Lift and lower the arms from the shoulder joints - keep the elbows straight"***
- "Keep the T-Zone off the ball the whole time, Pubic Bone tucking in to the ball"***
- "Use the abdominals to stop the body rocking from side to side"***
- "Keep the eyes on the mat, chin tucked in, and lengthen through the crown of the head"***
- "Keep the knees straight, even weight through both legs and the T-Zone tight to keep the pelvis and the ball still"
- "No pain in the lower back - focus on the upper back doing the work"

To Make it Easier

- "Beat the arms a little slower and just breathe naturally"
- "Don't raise the arms or body as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Raise the arms and body as high as possible without arching the lower back"
- "Beat the arms as fast as you can control without rocking the body"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Hunching the shoulders and overusing the Upper Trapezius
- Dipping/arching through the lower back
- Raising the upper body too high
- Letting the abdominals go and the T-Zone touch the ball
- Rocking the body side to side (letting the Oblique muscles relax)
- Not reaching the arms out far enough in front of the body, bending the elbows
- Letting the upper body drop down when the arms are extended
- Losing the T-Zone or rotating the pelvis
- Ball placement too high or too low under the body
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Terrific! Let's keep it up!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, lower and lift the arms for a few beats"
- "EXHALE, lower and lift the arms for a few beats"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… and return the forearms back onto the ball and lower the knees to the mat to rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Swan + Ball
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Lower Trapezius Activation 1 (Arms Overhead)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Thoracic Erector Spinae muscles to lift the chest (thoracic spine extension)
- Deltoids to lift the arms (shoulder flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Rhomboids to draw the shoulder blades back (Scapula retraction)

Stabilising Muscles

- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- T-Zone to support the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching and the body rocking
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back is not hyperextending – keep the abdominals tight and tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball (this is challenging for Lordotic clients)
- Think of using the abdominals to prevent the body from rocking or twisting side to side
- Do not lift the upper body too high
- Extend through the upper back rather than the lower back
- Avoid this exercise if pain continues

Neck Pain

- If clients are not strong enough in the Lower Trapezius, the Upper Trapezius will overwork and cause neck pain – avoid if pain or discomfort continues
- Focus on keeping the shoulder blades down and back
- Use a smaller range of movement with the arms

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate their activation can be very helpful (performing the physical correction Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades)
- Keep the neck in a neutral position, eyes facing the floor, chin tucked in, neck long
- Ensure that the upper body is not lifting too high
- Extend through the upper back rather than the neck to lift the upper body
- Perform Swan + Ball or Lower Trapezius Activation 1 (Arms Overhead) on the mat instead

Shoulder Pain

- This exercise is generally best avoided for shoulder pain
- Ensure that the shoulder blades are down and back throughout the movement
- Try not to raise the arms as high
- If a client has difficulty raising the arms due to poor shoulder flexibility (usually from tight Latissimus Dorsi and Pectoralis Major), try taking the arms slightly wider than shoulder width apart as this takes those muscles off stretch and provides more flexibility through the shoulder
- Perform Swan + Ball or any other Lower Trapezius Activation exercises on the mat that are comfortable for the shoulder instead

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- Take care with this exercise as it can be quite unstable

Pregnancy

- Avoid this exercise during pregnancy

Programming Advice

- It is much easier to perform this exercise on the ball rather than the mat, especially for clients with stiff shoulders and thoracic spine and clients who tend to arch their lower back in the Prone Lying Series
- Clients with poor balance may find this exercise harder than when performing it on the mat
- Perform a Chest Stretch and a stretch for the Latissimus Dorsi (eg. Prayer Stretch + Ball or Mermaid Stretch + Ball) prior to this exercise to increase the range of motion in the shoulders
- This exercise follows on nicely after warming up the Lower Trapezius and Erector Spinae muscles with Lower Trapezius Activation + Band and Swan + Ball
- Works well before or after Breaststroke Arms + Ball as the body is in the same position
- A good exercise to give to the group as some clients can perform Freestyle Arms on the mat while others perform it on the Ball

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #2: Scapula Resetting
- Pelvic Positioning #5: Prone
- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #2: Prone Extension
- Head Positioning #1: Prone Extension

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Breaststroke Legs + Ball

Intensity=3 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Breaststroke Legs on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttocks, back of the thighs and the lower back muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lower the stomach onto the ball and place the hands on the floor. Walk the hands out until the ball is under the pelvis lifting the legs up so the body is in one long line. Legs extended straight, turned out, feet flexed, heels together. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine, T-Zone."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, squeeze the buttocks and lift the legs"



"EXHALE, begin beating the heels, opening the feet…"



"… and closing the feet"

"INHALE, for a few beats"
"EXHALE, for a few beats"



Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

You can make the Set Up of how to get on the ball more concise if your clients are already familiar with how to do this.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep beating the legs and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone lifting up away from the ball, tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball and think of ribs to hips"***
- "Squeeze the buttocks to lift the legs and beat the heels"***
- "Lift the legs by using the buttock muscles, not the lower back muscles – there should be no pain in the lower back"***
- "Squeeze the thighs to really straighten the knees"***
- "Think of lengthening through the heels/reaching the heels to the wall behind you"***
- "Turn the legs out from the hip joints as much as possible"***
- "Keep the thighs as high as possible without arching the lower back"***
- "Think of lifting the spine up away from the floor, taking the body weight up off the hands"***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through and that your ribcage is up against the shoulder blades – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "Keep the shoulder blades down and back, elbows unlocked"
- "Keep the neck up in line with the body, lengthen through the crown of the head, chin tucked in and eyes looking toward the floor"
- "Keep the pelvis and the ball still, T-Zone tight"
- "Don't take the legs too wide – just to shoulder width apart"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't raise the legs as high or open the feet as wide"
- "Beat the heels slower and breathe naturally"
- "Rest after a few heel beats"

To Make it Harder

- "Raise the legs as high as you can without arching the lower back"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Dipping through the lower back, letting the T-Zone and abdominals relax
- Bending the knees – indicates that the Hamstring muscles are working instead of the buttocks
- Pointing rather than flexing the feet and not keeping the legs turned out enough – turning the legs out helps to activate the Deep Hip Rotators and Gluteus Medius muscles and it is easier to turn out the legs with flexed feet
- Opening the legs too wide (letting the T-Zone go)
- Raising the legs too high, using the lower back rather than the buttocks and Hamstrings (arching the lower back)
- Not raising the legs high enough (usually due to tight Hip Flexors or not using the buttock muscles enough)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Collapsing through the shoulders and letting the thoracic spine sink away from the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Locking the elbows and winging the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Shoulder blades hunching up toward the ears/overusing the Upper Trapezius muscles
- Chin sticking out/hyperextending the neck (not engaging the Deep Neck Flexors)
- Hands too close to each other or too far apart
- Rolling the bodyweight side to side and letting the ball move
- Ball placement too high or too low under the body
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nearly there! I know you're really feeling this!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, for a few beats"
- "EXHALE, for a few beats"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and walk the hands back in, returning the knees to the mat"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Plank + Ball – Level 1
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Gluteus Maximus Activation Exercise

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to raise the legs (hip extension)
- Gluteus Medius and Deep Hip Rotators to turn the feet out and open the legs (hip external rotation and abduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings to assist in raising the legs (hip extension)
- Adductor muscles to draw the heels back together, closing the legs (hip adduction)
- Pectoralis Major and Minor and Deltoids to hold the plank position
- Triceps to support the body weight (when the elbows are unlocked)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to support the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back
- Serratus Anterior to prevent the shoulder blades winging and the upper body sagging through (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Deep Neck Flexors the keep the chin tucked in and the neck long

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Use caution for anyone with SIJ (Sacroiliac Joint) problems, lumbar spine instability, a large lumbar spine Lordosis or overactive lower back muscles/Erector Spinae muscles
- Really tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball and lift the abdominals up to protect the lower back
- Don't lift the legs too high or the lower back will arch

Shoulder Pain

- Cue the client to draw the shoulders down and back
- Ensure that the hands are directly under the shoulders

Pubic Bone Pain

- Focus on the T-Zone and do not open the legs too wide or raise them too high
- Ensure that the ball is not directly under the Pubic Bone
- Performing this exercise on the ball is much easier for people with Pubic Bone pain compared to on the mat as the Pubic Bone does not dig into the mat causing pain

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- Take care with this exercise as it can be quite unstable

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester of pregnancy or until the baby starts to show

Programming Advice

- This exercise is much easier on the ball than on the mat, particularly for clients with tight Hip Flexors or a Lordosis as you can perform the movement in less hip extension because the legs do not have to lift as high to clear the floor
- Using the ball requires more abdominal and Scapula stability than when performing it on the mat, so clients with neck pain may be better performing it on the mat instead
- Using the ball makes this exercise much more comfortable for clients with Pubic Bone pain

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- If someone has very tight Hip Flexors or a large Lordosis, performing a Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch from matwork prior to this exercise will help increase hip extensions range of movement and clients will be able to lift their legs higher
- This exercise works best when the buttock muscles are already warmed up – eg. use Pelvic Curl + Ball first the prior to this exercise to isolate and activate the buttock muscles
- You can add a circle between the shins (just above the ankles) to work the inner thighs more

Breaststroke Legs + Ball + Circle

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the buttocks and lift the legs"



"EXHALE, squeeze the circle"



"INHALE, release"



- You can add the band around the shins (just above the ankles) to work the buttocks more – cue the client to start with the legs open so that the band is taut

Breaststroke Legs + Ball + Band

"INHALE, T-Zone, squeeze the buttocks and lift the legs"



"EXHALE, open the legs, stretching the band"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



"INHALE, release slightly"

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Pelvic Positioning #5: Prone
- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Gluteal Activation #1: Gluteus Medius
- Gluteal Activation #3: Gluteus Maximus
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Leg Positioning #4: Turning the Leg Out from the Hip Joint
- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Head Positioning #2: Plank

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Freestyle Legs + Ball

Intensity=3 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

You can make the Set Up of how to get on the ball more concise if your clients are already familiar with how to do this.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement.

Name of Exercise

"Freestyle Legs on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the buttocks, back of the thighs and the lower back muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lower the stomach onto the ball and place the hands on the floor. Walk the hands out until the ball is under the pelvis lifting the legs up so the body is in one long line. Legs extended straight, hip distance apart and toes pointed. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine, T-Zone."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, squeeze the buttocks and lift the legs"



"EXHALE, hold this position as you start to scissor the legs up and down"



"INHALE, scissor the legs for a few kicks"

"EXHALE, scissor the legs for a few kicks"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone lifting up away from the ball; tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball and think of ribs to hips"***
- "Lift the legs by using the buttock muscles, not the lower back muscles – there should be no pain in the lower back"***
- "Squeeze the thighs to really straighten the knees as you kick the legs"***
- "Think of lengthening through the toes/reaching the toes toward the wall behind you"***
- "Squeeze the buttocks to lift the legs"***
- "Keep the thighs as high off the floor as possible without arching the lower back"***
- "Keep the abdominals tight to stop the hips rocking side to side"***
- "Think of lifting the spine up away from the floor, taking the body weight up off the hands"***
- "Keep the shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the floor" ***
- "Make sure that your upper back doesn't sag through and that your ribcage is up against the shoulder blades – imagine a piece of string pulling the upper back up toward the ceiling to touch the shoulder blades"***
- "Keep the elbows unlocked"
- "Keep the neck up in line with the body, lengthen through the crown of the head, chin tucked in and eyes looking toward the floor"
- "Keep the pelvis and the ball still, T-Zone tight"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't raise the legs as high"
- "Scissor the legs a little slower to keep the control and breathe naturally"

To Make it Harder

- "Raise the legs as high as you can without arching the lower back"
- "Scissor the legs as fast as you can without rocking the pelvis"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Dipping through the lower back, letting the T-Zone and abdominals relax
- Extending through the lower back to lift the legs rather than extending from the hips
- Rocking the body side to side (letting the Oblique muscles relax)
- Bending the knees – indicates that the Hamstring muscles are working instead of the buttocks
- Not reaching through the pointed toes (assists in keeping the knees straight)
- Collapsing through the shoulders and letting the thoracic spine sink away from the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Locking the elbows and winging the shoulder blades (poor Serratus Anterior activation)
- Shoulder blades hunching up toward the ears/overusing the Upper Trapezius muscles
- Chin sticking out/hyperextending the neck (not engaging the Deep Neck Flexors)
- Hands too close to each other or too far apart

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Rolling the bodyweight side to side and letting the ball move
- Ball placement too high or too low under the body
- Losing balance and falling off the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's the way everyone! Spectacular!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, scissor the legs for a few kicks"
- "EXHALE, scissor the legs for a few kicks"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisite

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Breaststroke Legs + Ball
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Horsekick 2 (Pulses)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Gluteus Maximus to raise the legs (hip extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings to assist in raising the legs (hip extension)
- Pectoralis Major and Minor and Deltoids to hold the plank position
- Triceps to support the body weight (when the elbows are unlocked)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to support the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching and the body rocking
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back
- Serratus Anterior to prevent the shoulder blades winging and the upper body sagging through (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Deep Neck Flexors the keep the chin tucked in and the neck long

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Use caution for anyone with SIJ (Sacroiliac Joint) problems, lumbar spine instability, a large lumbar spine Lordosis or overactive lower back muscles/Erector Spinae muscles
- It is difficult for Lordotic clients with tight Hip Flexors to raise the legs without arching the back
- Tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball and lift the abdominals up to protect the lower back
- Try not to lift the legs too high as this can cause the lower back to arch
- Scissor the legs slower to stop the hips from rocking

Shoulder Pain

- Cue the client to draw the shoulders down and back
- Ensure that the hands are directly under the shoulders

Pubic Bone Pain

- Performing this exercise on the ball is much easier for people with Pubic Bone pain compared to on the mat as the Pubic Bone does not dig into the mat causing pain
- Decrease the scissoring range and speed (may take away some of the shearing forces)
- Ensure that the ball it is not directly under the Pubic Bone

Hamstring Cramps

- Focus on keeping the knees straight and using the buttock muscles rather than the Hamstrings

Calf Cramps

- Relax the feet and don't point the toes

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- Take care with this exercise as it can be quite unstable

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform in the first trimester of pregnancy or until the baby starts to show

Programming Advice

- This exercise is much easier on the ball than on the mat, particularly for clients with tight Hip Flexors or a Lordosis as you can perform the movement in less hip extension because the legs do not have to lift as high to clear the floor
- Using the ball requires more abdominal and Scapula stability than when performing it on the mat, so clients with neck pain may be better performing it on the mat instead
- Using the ball makes this exercise much more comfortable for clients with Pubic Bone pain
- If someone has very tight Hip Flexors or a large Lordosis, performing the Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch from matwork prior to this exercise will help to increase the hip extension range of movement that is needed to be able to lift the legs up in line with the body

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- This exercise works best after the buttock muscles are already warmed up – it is especially good after performing Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball as both of these exercises work the buttock muscles into hip extension
- A good exercise to give to a group as some clients can perform Freestyle Legs on the mat while some can perform it on the ball and others with the circle to challenge
- Choose to give the ball version of the exercise to clients with good balance
- You can add a circle between the shins (just above the ankles) to work the inner thighs more

Freestyle Legs + Ball + Circle



"INHALE, squeeze the buttocks and lift the legs"

"EXHALE, raise one leg, lowering the other, rotating the circle slightly"

"INHALE, rotate the circle the other way, swapping the leg positions over"

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Pelvic Positioning #5: Prone
- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Gluteal Activation #3: Gluteus Maximus
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes
- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Head Positioning #2: Plank

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Freestyle + Ball

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=3.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Freestyle on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the back and shoulder blade muscles, shoulders, buttocks and the back of the thighs"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Kneeling, legs hip distance apart with the ball in front of you. Place the elbows and stomach on the ball, press through the feet and lift the knees up so that the ball is directly underneath the stomach. Raise the upper back slightly, lift the arms overhead, palms facing down, chin tucked in, neutral spine"



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, shoulders down and back"

"EXHALE, raise the opposite arm and leg"



"INHALE, lower back down"



"EXHAL, raise the other arm and leg"



Exercise Tip: The Breathing and Movement in this exercise differs slightly to the version on the mat in that T-Zone is cued on the INHALE breath. On the mat, T-Zone is in the Set Up because the client INHALES to lift the head off the floor. However, on the ball, the head is already lifted.

As this is a difficult exercise to teach and perform, it is sometimes easier to initially cue the clients through the movement and then add the breathing in.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying*

"INHALE, lower back down"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep alternating arms and legs and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the T-Zone lifted away from the ball"***
- "Use the abdominals to stop the body from rocking and keep the ball still"***
- "No pain or hyperextension in the lower back – tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball"***
- "Keep the shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the mat, elongate the neck"***
- "Squeeze the buttocks to lift the legs"***
- "Reach the arms as far out in front as you can, elbows straight"***
- "Squeeze the thighs to really straighten the legs, point and really reach through the toes"
- "Raise the arms and legs as high as possible without arching the lower back"

To Make it Easier

- "Raise the arms and legs slower"
- "Don't raise the arms and legs as high"
- "Rest your legs on the mat and simply move your arms"

To Make it Harder

- "Raise the arms and legs as fast as you can without rocking the ball"
- "Raise the arms and legs as high as you can without arching your lower back"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Dipping through the lower back and rocking the body
- Letting the ball move, losing balance or falling off
- Letting the T-Zone touch the ball
- Shoulders hunching and overusing the Upper Trapezius
- Poking the chin out and looking forward rather than down on the mat
- Becoming uncoordinated with the movement, not moving opposite arm with the opposite leg
- Bending the legs (kicking from the knees, rather than from the hips) – this means the Hamstrings are overworking rather than the buttocks
- Not reaching through the pointed toes (assists in keeping the knees straight)
- Rocking the body side to side (letting the Oblique muscles relax)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Keep going everyone, this is a tough exercise, great work"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE to lift one leg and the opposite arm"
- "INHALE to lower"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Freestyle Arms + Ball, Freestyle Legs + Ball

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Thoracic Erector Spinae muscles to lift the chest (thoracic and spine extension)
- Deltoids to lift the arms (shoulder flexion)
- Gluteus Maximus to raise the legs higher off the floor (hip extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Hamstrings to assist with raising the legs off the floor (hip extension)
- Rhomboids to draw the shoulder blades back (Scapula retraction)

Stabilising Muscles

- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- T-Zone to support the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching and the body rocking
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Multifidus to stabilise the lower back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Do not give this exercise to anyone who has poor stability and control as they will lose their spinal position and may feel it in their lower back
- Avoid for anyone with SIJ (Sacroiliac Joint) problems, lumbar spine instability, a large lumbar spine Lordosis or overactive lower back muscles/Erector Spinae muscles
- Cue clients not to lift the legs or upper body too high or the lower back will arch – extend through the upper back rather than the lower back
- Ensure that the lower back is not hyperextending – keep the abdominals tight and tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball
- Raise the arms and legs slower to stop the hips from rocking and focus on the T-Zone
- Think of using the abdominals to prevent the body from rocking or twisting side to side

Neck Pain

- If clients are not strong enough in the Lower Trapezius, the Upper Trapezius will overwork and cause neck pain – avoid if neck pain continues
- Focus on keeping the shoulder blades down and back
- Decrease the arm range of movement (easier to keep the shoulder blades down and back
- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them can be very helpful (Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades)
- Keep the neck in a neutral position, eyes facing the floor, chin tucked in, neck long
- Do not lift the upper body too high
- Extend through the upper back rather than the neck to lift the upper body
- Stick to Freestyle Legs + Ball

Shoulder Pain

- This exercise is generally best avoided for shoulder pain
- Ensure that the shoulder blades are down and back throughout the movement
- Do not lift the arms as high
- Omit the arms and perform Freestyle Legs + Ball
- If a client has difficulty raising the arms due to poor shoulder flexibility (usually from tight Latissimus Dorsi and Pectoralis Major), try taking the arms slightly wider than shoulder width apart as this takes those muscles off stretch and provides more flexibility through the shoulder

Pubic Bone Pain

- Performing this exercise on the ball is much easier for people with Pubic Bone pain compared to on the mat as the Pubic Bone does not dig into the mat causing pain
- Decrease the scissoring range and speed (may take away some of the shearing forces)
- Avoid placing the ball directly under the Pubic Bone

Calf Cramps

- Relax the feet and avoid pointing the toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hamstring Cramps

- Focus on keeping the knees straight and using the buttock muscles rather than the Hamstrings

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- Take care with this exercise as it can be quite unstable

Pregnancy

- Avoid this exercise during pregnancy

Programming Advice

- Using the ball makes this exercise harder on balance and stability – should only be given to clients who have good balance and stability
- Using the ball makes this exercise easier for clients who are Lordotic with tight Hip Flexors or those who are stiff in their shoulders as they do not need a lot of hip or shoulder flexibility to lift the arms and legs off the floor when using the ball
- This exercise is often performed poorly with a lot of body rocking and back arching
- Teach Freestyle Arms + Ball, then Freestyle Legs + Ball, then put it all together
- Clients with a Lordosis and/or Kyphosis, will find this exercise difficult – prior stretching of the Quadriceps/Hip Flexors and Latissimus Dorsi will increase the range of motion available
- In a group, some clients can perform the exercise on the mat and others on the ball
- Choose to give the ball version of the exercise to clients with good balance

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #2: Scapula Resetting
- Thoracic Spine Positioning #2: Prone Extension
- Pelvic Positioning #5: Prone
- Gluteal Activation #3: Gluteus Maximus
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Feet Positioning #3: Reaching Through the Toes
- Head Positioning #1: Prone Extension

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Use of the Band in the Back Rowing Series

- The band is used to add resistance in the Back Rowing Series
- Lengthening the band will make the exercises easier
- Shortening the band will make the exercises harder

Safety When Using the Long Band in the Back Rowing Series

- Ensure that the band is flat so that it doesn't bunch up and flick off the feet
- Ensure that the band is actually around the arches of the feet (not the toes)
- Keep the toes pointed rather than flexing the feet so that the band doesn't slip off
- Encourage clients to wear non-slip socks or remove their socks to increase grip
- Ensure that there is not too much tension on the band
- Clients can wrap the band around their hands for increased grip
- Ensure that clients are gripping the band with all five fingers securely
- Explain to clients that If the band does slip off, they should close their eyes and turn the head to the side



Correct Sitting Position with the Band



Incorrect Sitting Position with the Band

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Lower Trapezius Activation + Band

Intensity = 1.5 Difficulty = 1

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Lower Trapezius Activation with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"The shoulder blade muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, holding onto the band, take the arms overhead, slightly wider than shoulder width apart. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, slide the shoulder blades down and back, separating the hands slightly"



"INHALE, release"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Drawing the shoulder blades down and back into a 'V' shape toward the lower back"***
- "It is only a small movement – focus on moving the shoulder blades rather than the arms"***
- "The arms appear to shorten and the lengthen as the shoulder blades move down and up"***
- "Keep the elbows straight but unlocked"***
- "Concentrate hard rather than try hard - otherwise you will tense the wrong muscles –"
- "Keep the underarm muscles (Latissimus Dorsi) muscles relaxed"
- "Keep the neck and Upper Trapezius relaxed"
- "Keep the abdominals on to stop the back from arching; ribs to hips"
- "Keep the knees unlocked and facing over the second and third toes"
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Don't draw the shoulder blades down and back as much"

To Make it Harder

- "Glide the shoulder blades down and back further, opening the arms slightly wider"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Bending the elbows
- Making the movement too large – moving from the arms rather than the shoulder blades
- Tightening the neck and Upper Trapezius muscles
- Losing the abdominals, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Incorrect foot position – not facing straight forward or not maintaining the arches of the feet
- Locking the knees

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's the way everyone! Looking good!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, slide the shoulder blades down and back, separating the hands"
- "INHALE, release"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- Ability to hold the arms overhead
- MATWORK PREREQUISITE: Lower Trapezius Activation 1 (Arms Overhead)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Accessory Muscles

- Deltoids to hold the arms overhead (isometric shoulder abduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to support the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)

Injuries/Caution

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Observe and palpate to ensure that the Lower Trapezius are activating and the Upper Trapezius and Latissimus Dorsi are staying relaxed – Lower Trapezius isolation is the goal
- Take the hands a little wider if there is shoulder pain
- Ensure that the neck is in a neutral position (the head is not poking forward)
- Perform Lower Trapezius Activation 2 (Arms at 90 Degrees) or Lower Trapezius Activation 3 (Arms by Side) on the mat if the client has shoulder pain getting in the arms overhead position
- In extreme cases, even though the Upper Trapezius may feel relaxed, the client may still feel this exercise in their neck – you may need to try a different arm position eg. Lower Trapezius Activation 2 (Arms at 90 Degrees) or Lower Trapezius Activation 3 (Arms by Side) on the mat or perform exercises with the arms lower down eg. External Rotation + Band or Rowing + Band
- If pain persists, discontinue the exercise and recommend massage or physiotherapy

Lower Back Pain

- Keep the abdominals tight and draw the ribs toward the hips to stop the back from arching and the back muscles from overworking (Lordotic clients find this difficult)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that the knees and feet are facing straight forward, knees unlocked and arches of the feet lifted to activate the buttock muscles

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- A great way to activate the Lower Trapezius for clients who cannot lie on their stomach
- A very basic activation exercise that can be used for people who have major difficulty in activating their Lower Trapezius, or as a warm up exercise
- Probably too easy to use in a large group fitness class, also difficult to teach to a large group as they find it hard to understand what you mean without palpating and guiding their movement
- This exercise can be performed sitting or standing depending on the client's needs and ability
- This exercise can be combined with sitting on the ball for an added challenge to balance and stability in the abdominals and lower body – ensure that the clients are sitting in the centre of the ball, the feet are hip distance apart and the ball is kept still



Modification Sitting on the Ball

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

External Rotation + Band

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"External Rotation with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the back of the shoulders
and the shoulder blade muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, holding onto the band. Elbows bent to 90 degrees, tucked in to the side of the waist, palms facing in. Neutral spine, chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head."



Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, T-Zone, shoulder blades down and back"

"EXHALE, rotate the forearms out to the side, keeping the elbows still"



"INHALE, slowly return the forearms back to the start position"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the shoulder blades drawing down and back into a 'V' shape toward the lower back"***
- "Draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets – on the way out and back in"***
- "Draw ribs toward the hips/use the abdominals as you exhale to stop the back arching"***
- "Stand up tall, neutral spine, T-Zone tight to stabilise"***
- "Chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head, eye gaze straight ahead"***
- "Keep the elbows tucked in close by the sides of the waist, it's not a large movement"***
- "Rotate the forearm around the upper arm whilst keeping the upper arm still"***
- "Keep the elbows still and the wrists neutral, palms facing inward"
- "Ensure it is the midback working and not the lower back or neck"
- "Keep the knees unlocked and facing over the second and third toes"
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Stop and re-set the shoulder blades in between repetitions"
- "Keep the range of motion smaller ie. don't take the hands out to the side as far"

To Make it Harder

- "Rotate the arms further out to the side"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Trying to make the movement too large – letting the elbows come away from the waist
- Not controlling the movement on the way forward, letting the shoulders round forward
- Hunching the shoulders or tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius and Levator Scapulae
- Letting the shoulders round forward or taking the elbows back too far behind the body
- Squeezing the shoulder blades too hard and directly in toward each other, overusing the Rhomboids (rather than gently drawing down and back)
- Letting the Obliques go, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Looking up or down
- Bending and/or extending the wrists, not keeping them in a neutral position
- Turning the palms to face up as the hands move out to the sides
- Bending or straightening the elbows as the hands rotate out to the sides
- Incorrect foot position – not facing straight forward or not maintaining the arches
- Locking the knees

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Great control with this one!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, rotate the arms out to the side"
- "INHALE, rotate the arms back to the front"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITE: Lower Trapezius Activation 3 (Arms by Sides)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Rotator Cuff to externally rotate the shoulder (Infraspinatus and Teres Minor)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Accessory Muscles

- Biceps to keep the elbows bent 90 degrees (isometric elbow flexion)
- Rhomboids to draw the shoulder blades back (Scapula retraction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back is not arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- Focus on the exhale breath to help engage the abdominals
- Ensure that the knees and feet are facing straight forward, knees unlocked and arches of the feet lifted to activate the buttock muscles

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Neck Pain

- Relax the shoulders and neck – shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them or resetting the Lower Trapezius in between repetitions
- Try different modifications – limit the speed or range of motion, palms facing up or down
- Lengthen the band

Shoulder Pain

- Focus on keeping the shoulders down and back
- Cue to draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff activation)
- Ensure that the shoulders aren't rounding forward
- Limit the range of motion (don't take the hands out as wide)
- Try different modifications – limit the speed/range of motion, palms facing up/down
- Loosen the tension on the band

Hand, Wrist or Elbow Pain

- Ensure that the wrists are in a neutral position
- Try a different grip position

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- A good basic activation exercise, useful for clients with neck or shoulder pain as it does not involve a large amount of movement through the shoulder joint as the arms are by the sides
- A good exercise for clients who round the shoulders forward when the arms are straight
- Clients with weak abdominals and excessive lumbar Lordosis may struggle to prevent the lower back from arching and taking over
- If a client is very Kyphotic, ensure that their head does not come forward and that the chin is tucked in gently – cueing them to look through the top of their eyes at the wall ahead can help with head positioning (lengthening through the crown of the head)
- A difficult exercise for clients with poor control of their Lower Trapezius or who are very tight in the Pectoral muscles – stretching these muscles first can assist with maintaining the correct position eg. the matwork exercise Chest Stretch on the wall
- This exercise can be combined with sitting on the ball for an added challenge to balance and stability in the abdominals and lower body – ensure that the clients are sitting in the centre of the ball, the feet are hip distance apart and the ball is kept still

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



Modification Sitting on the Ball

- For clients who are struggling to feel this exercise evenly on both sides or for those who are weaker on one side, they can sit on the band on the mat and perform one side at a time – ensure that they are not leaning to the side



Modification Sitting and Performing with One Arm

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #2: Scapula Resetting
- Scapula Setting #3: From the Front of the Shoulder
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement
- Arm Positioning #3: Relocation of Humerus

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Rowing + Band

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: Take care with this exercise as the band can slip off and injure a client. To prevent this from occurring ensure that -

- The band is not too tight
- The band Is flat around the arches
- Clients are holding the band securely

If a client cannot sit with a neutral spine with the legs out straight, cue them to bend their knees slightly.

Name of Exercise

"Rowing with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the shoulders, arms and shoulder blade muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sitting on the mat with the knees bent out in front, legs together. Place the band flat around the arches of the feet, straighten the knees, toes pointed. Cross the band over and grab onto the band so there is no slack. Arms out in front, palms facing down. Neutral spine, chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, shoulder blades down and back"



"EXHALE, draw the elbows slightly back behind the body, bringing the hands toward the shoulders"

"INHALE, slowly return the arms forward to the start position"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Squeeze the shoulder blades to draw the elbows back and out to the sides"***
- "Focus on moving the shoulder blades rather than pulling with the arms"***
- "Keep the shoulder blades drawing down and back into a 'V' shape toward the lower back"***
- "Draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets – on the way back and forward"***
- "Draw ribs toward the hips/use the abdominals as you exhale to stop the back arching"***
- "Sit up tall, neutral spine, T-Zone tight to help stabilise"***
- "Open the chest, don't let the shoulders round forward or hunch up toward the ears"***
- "Slowly control the release without leaning forward or rounding the shoulders forward"***
- "Ensure it is the midback working and not the lower back or neck"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Stop and re-set the shoulder blades in between repetitions"
- "Lower the arms and keep the elbows in closer by the side of the waist ie. don't take the elbows out to the side as wide"

To Make it Harder

- "Raise the arms higher and open the elbows out wider, without hunching the shoulders"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Hunching the shoulders or tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius and Levator Scapulae
- Letting the shoulders round forward or taking the elbows back too far
- Squeezing the shoulder blades too hard and directly in toward each other, overusing the Rhomboids (rather than gently drawing down and back)
- Letting the Obliques go, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Leaning forward or backward with the body
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Looking up or down
- Bending and/or extending the wrists, not keeping them in a neutral position
- Turning the palms to face up as the elbows draw back
- Bending or straightening the elbows too much as the arms draw back
- Sitting with a posterior tilt of the pelvis, rounding the lower back

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking really strong everyone! That's the way!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "EXHALE, draw the elbows back"
- "INHALE, release the arms back in front"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: External Rotation + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Posterior Deltoid to draw the arms back (shoulder extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Rhomboids to draw the shoulder blades back (Scapula retraction)
- Deltoids to hold the arms up out to the side (shoulder abduction)
- Biceps to bend the elbows as the hands draw back

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching as the hands draw back
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back isn't arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- Don't draw the arms as far back
- Focus on the exhale breath to help engage the abdominals
- Bend the knees slightly to take the pressure off the lower back in the seated position and allow a neutral spine



Modification with Bent Knees

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Tight Hamstrings

- If a client has tight Hamstrings the pelvis will posteriorly tilt and the lower back will round
- Bend the knees slightly to allow a neutral spine

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them or resetting the Lower Trapezius in between repetitions
- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Try different modifications – limit the speed or range of motion, palms facing in or down
- Lengthen the band

Shoulder Pain

- Focus on keeping the shoulders down and back
- Cue to draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff activation)
- Change the degree of shoulder abduction (elbows in a little closer or a little wider depending on the client's pain and ability to activate the Lower Trapezius)
- Limit the range of motion (try not to take the elbows as far back)
- Ensure that the shoulders are not rounding forward at the end of the movement (cue to not draw back as far and focus on keeping the shoulder back rather than pulling with the arms)
- Slow down to control the release – focus on the shoulders drawing back into the sockets
- Try different modifications – limit the speed or range of motion, palms face in or down
- Lengthen the band

Hand, Wrist or Elbow Pain

- Ensure that the wrists are in a neutral position
- Try a different grip (palms face in or down)

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first and second trimesters of pregnancy
- Some clients may find sitting in this position uncomfortable during the third trimester or find it difficult to get up and down off the floor

Programming Advice

- This is a good exercise for clients who are best at activating in the matwork exercise Lower Trapezius Activation 2 (Arms at 90 Degrees)
- A good exercise for clients who tend to round the shoulders forward when the arms are straight or who cannot get their arms overhead
- Clients with weak abdominals and excessive lumbar Lordosis may struggle to prevent the lower back from arching and taking over
- If a client is very Kyphotic, ensure that their head does not come forward and the chin is tucked in gently – cueing them to look through the top of their eyes at the wall ahead can help with head positioning (lengthening through the crown of the head)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- A difficult exercise for clients with poor control of their Lower Trapezius or who are very tight in the Pectoral muscles – stretching these muscles first can assist with maintaining the correct position eg. the matwork exercise Chest Stretch on the wall

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #3: From the Front of the Shoulder
- Head Positioning #3: Deep Neck Flexors
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Biceps Half Rollback + Band

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Biceps Half Rollback with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the front of the arms and the abdominals"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sitting on the mat with the legs extended straight out in front, legs together. Place the band flat around the arches of the feet, straighten the knees, toes pointed. Hold the band so there is no slack, with the arms extended in front of the body, palms facing up. Neutral spine, chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, shoulder blades down and back"

"EXHALE, tuck the Pubic Bone up toward the belly button and roll the spine backward one vertebra at a time into a 'C' shaped curve, ribs toward hips"



"INHALE, hold this position, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, bend the elbows, drawing the hands up toward the shoulders"



"INHALE, straighten the elbows, reaching out in front"



Exercise Tip: Take care with this exercise as the band can slip off and injure a client. To prevent this from happening ensure that -

- The band is not too tight
- The band Is flat around the arches
- Clients are holding the band securely

Please note that there is a specific way to end this exercise and it is incredibly important to cue clients how to rest back down and complete the movement. To finish the exercise, be sure to cue the clients to curl back up, one vertebra at a time.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going, holding this position while bending and straightening the elbows and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the abdominals tight to maintain the 'C' shape of the spine – with every breath out think of drawing the ribs toward the hips, rounding the spine"***
- "T-Zone tight to flatten the abdominals and support your spine"***
- "Keep the shoulder blades drawing down and back into a 'V' shape toward the lower back"***
- "Draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets the whole time"***
- "Chin tucked in, lengthening through the crown of the head, eye gaze straight ahead"***
- "Keep the elbows still – don't let them lift and lower as you perform the movement"
- "Focus on squeezing the biceps to bend the elbows, not lifting the shoulders"
- "Don't poke the head forward – bring the hands to the head, not the head to the hands"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Hold the elbows lower eg. chest or waist height"
- "Stop and re-set the shoulder blades in between repetitions"
- "Don't roll back as far, but be sure to keep the 'C' shape of the spine"

To Make it Harder

- "Hold the elbows higher – making sure that the shoulders don't hunch up or round forward"
- "Curl the spine back further, be sure not to arch the back"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Leaning back rather than curling the spine back, not keeping a 'C' shape in the spine
- Letting the Obliques go, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Hunching the shoulders or tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius and Levator Scapulae
- Lifting and lowering the arms throughout the movement
- Letting the band slip up on the feet or move into an insecure position, the potential to slip off
- Not keeping the palms directly facing upwards/toward the shoulders
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Looking up or down
- Letting the elbows turn out to the sides, they should stay pointing downward
- Bending and/or extending the wrists rather than keeping them in a neutral position

Encourage and Inspire

- "Power through guys! Amazing!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, bend the elbows"
- "INHALE, straighten the elbows"

Ending the Exercise

- "EXHALE, curl the body back up one vertebra at a time, folding forward from the ribs and sitting up tall to rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Standing Biceps + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: T-Zone Activation Exercise and Oblique Activation Exercise
- No lumbar disc injuries

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Biceps to bend the elbows (elbow flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Anterior Deltoid to hold the elbows up at shoulder height (shoulder flexion)
- Rectus Abdominus and Internal and External Obliques to curl the body (spinal flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Joint Mobility

- Increases lumbar and thoracic flexion range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Avoid for a Disc Bulge as this exercise involves spinal flexion
- Ensure that the lower back is not arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Cuing to tilt the Pubic Bone toward the belly button can help to maintain the spinal flexion
- Focus on the exhale breath to help engage the abdominals
- If pain persists, perform Standing Biceps + Band instead
- Do not roll back as far or sit up straight – bend the knees if needed to achieve a neutral spine



Modification with a Neutral Spine

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them or resetting the Lower Trapezius in between repetitions
- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Keep the arms lower – even down by the waist if this works best
- Ensure that the hands are shoulder width apart and not too close into the midline
- Limit the speed or range of motion
- Sitting up more or not rolling back as far can help to prevent the shoulders rounding forward
- Lengthen the band and focus on activation of the Lower Trapezius
- If pain persists, try Standing Biceps + Band instead

Shoulder Pain

- Focus on keeping the shoulders down and back
- Cue to draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff activation)
- Limit the range of motion (do not bend and straighten the elbows as far)
- Keep the arms lower – even down by the waist if this works best
- Ensure that the shoulders aren't hunching up, rounding or moving up and down
- Sitting up taller or not rolling back as far can help to keep the shoulders from rounding forward – but be sure that the back does not arch
- Ensure that the hands are shoulder width apart and not too close into the midline
- Limit the speed or range of motion
- Lengthen the band

Hand, Wrist or Elbow Pain

- Ensure that the wrists are in a neutral position
- Try a different grip (palms up or palms in)

Tight Hamstrings

- Bend the knees

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Only perform the roll back movement in the first trimester
- After the first trimester, the pregnant client can perform the exercise sitting up straight, omitting the roll back movement
- During the third trimester, the pregnant client may find it uncomfortable to sit in this position or get up and down off the mat
- If the client is uncomfortable, perform Standing Biceps + Band instead

Programming Advice

- When performed after abdominal exercises, this exercise can really be felt in the abdominals, when performed after other Biceps exercises it is felt more in the arms
- A good exercise for Lordotic clients as it can help to facilitate the abdominal activation in the flexed spine position, particularly those who tend to arch their back in other Biceps exercises
- As this exercise requires sustained lumbar flexion, it should be avoided for clients who get lower back pain with flexion or have a lumbar Disc Bulge
- This is a difficult exercise for clients who are weak in the midback/posture muscles as having the arms in front tends to make the shoulders round forward
- If a client is very Kyphotic, ensure that their head does not come forward and the chin is tucked in gently – cueing them to look through the top of their eyes at the wall ahead can help with head positioning (lengthening through the crown of the head)

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Head Positioning #3: Deep Neck Flexors
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Standing Biceps + Band

Intensity=2 Difficulty=1

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Standing Biceps with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the front of the arms"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"



Set Up

"Standing on the mat, holding onto the ends of the band. Step onto the centre of the band so it is under the arches of the feet, feet hip distance apart. Arms relaxed by the sides, palms facing forward, take up the slack in the band. Neutral spine, chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, shoulder blades down and back"



"EXHALE, bend the elbows, drawing the hands up toward the shoulders"

"INHALE, straighten the arms, keeping the elbows still"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Concentration Points

- "Keep the elbows still – don't let them lift and lower as you perform the movement"***
- "Focus on squeezing the biceps to bend the elbows, not lifting the shoulders"***
- "Don't poke the head forward – bring the hands to the head not the head to the hands"***
- "Keep the shoulder blades drawing down and back into a 'V' shape toward the lower back"***
- "Draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets the whole time"***
- "Draw ribs toward the hips/use the abdominals as you exhale to stop the back arching"***
- "Stand up tall, neutral spine, T-Zone tight to help stabilise, don't lean backward"***
- "Chin tucked in, lengthening through the crown of the head, eye gaze straight ahead"***
- "Bring the hands up toward the shoulders, keep the hands shoulder width apart"
- "Slowly control the release without leaning forward or letting the shoulders round forward"
- "Keep the knees unlocked and facing over the second and third toes"
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Don't bend the elbows as much"
- "Stop and re-set the shoulder blades in between repetitions"

To Make it Harder

- "Bend the elbows more"
- "Don't release the band completely each time"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Arching the lower back and leaning backward with the body
- Hunching the shoulders or tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius and Levator Scapulae
- Lifting and lowering the upper arms throughout the movement
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Squeezing the elbows too close together – this engages the Pectoral muscles and will round the shoulders forward
- Not keeping the palms directly facing upwards/toward the shoulders
- Looking up or down
- Letting the elbows turn out to the sides, they should stay pointing downward
- Bending and/or extending the wrists, rather than keeping them in a neutral position
- Incorrect foot position – not facing straight forward or not maintaining the arches
- Locking the knees

Encourage and Inspire

- "Nearly there, I know you're really feeling this!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, bend the elbows"
- "INHALE, straighten the elbows"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: External Rotation + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Biceps to bend the elbows (elbow flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Rhomboids to draw the shoulder blades back (Scapula retraction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back isn't arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- Focus on the exhale breath to help engage the abdominals
- Ensure that the knees and feet are facing straight forward, knees unlocked and arches of the feet lifted to activate the buttock muscles
- Lengthen the band

Neck Pain

- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them or resetting the Lower Trapezius in between repetitions
- Ensure that the hands are shoulder width apart and not too close into the midline
- Try different modifications – limit the speed or range of motion
- Lengthen the band

Shoulder Pain

- Focus on keeping the shoulders down and back
- Cue to draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff activation)
- Limit the range of motion (do not bend and straighten the elbows as far)
- Ensure that the shoulders are not hunching up, rounding or moving up and down
- Ensure that the hands are shoulder width apart and not too close into the midline
- Try different modifications – limit the speed or range of motion
- Lengthen the band

Hand, Wrist or Elbow Pain

- Ensure that the wrists are in a neutral position
- Try a different grip (palms up or in)

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- This is a good exercise to combine with other Biceps exercises for clients who want to work hard eg. Biceps Half Rollback + Band and Biceps + Circle
- Clients with weak abdominals and excessive lumbar Lordosis may struggle to prevent the lower back from arching and taking over
- If a client is very Kyphotic, ensure that their head does not come forward and that the chin is tucked in gently – cueing them to look through the top of their eyes at the wall ahead can help with head positioning (lengthening through the crown of the head)
- This exercise can be combined with sitting on the ball for an added challenge to balance and stability in the abdominals and lower body – ensure that the clients are sitting in the centre of the ball, the feet are hip distance apart and the ball is kept still



Modification Sitting on the Ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

FRONT ROWING SERIES

Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band

Intensity=2 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Offering with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the chest and shoulder muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, place the band flat around the middle of the back and hold onto the band, elbows bent by the sides of the waist, palms facing up. Neutral spine, chest open, chin tucked in, neck long."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, shoulder blades down and back"

"EXHALE, reach the hands forward, straightening the arms out to chest height"



"INHALE, bend the elbows, slowly returning to the start position"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the shoulder blades drawing down and back into a 'V' shape toward the lower back"***
- "Focus on squeezing the front of the shoulders to reach the arms up to chest height"***
- "Keep the chest open, shoulders down and back"***
- "Draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets"***
- "Squeeze in between the shoulder blades as the elbows come back behind the body"***
- "Chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head, eye gaze straight ahead"***
- "Draw ribs toward the hips/use the abdominals as you exhale to stop the back arching"***
- "Stand up tall, lifting through the crown of the head, neutral spine, T-Zone tight"***
- "Keep the hands shoulder width apart and the palms facing up"
- "Keep the elbows tucked in close to the body as they bend and extend"
- "Keep the knees unlocked and facing over the second and third toes"
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Don't reach the arms up as high"

To Make it Harder

- "Reach the arms to shoulder height, without the shoulders hunching up or rounding forward"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Using momentum to lift the arms too high (above shoulder height)
- Hunching the shoulders and tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius muscles
- Letting the shoulders round forward – not keeping the arm bones drawing back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff) and shoulder blades down and back (Lower Trapezius)
- Not keeping the palms facing up as the arms bend and extend
- Letting the elbows wing out to the sides, not keeping them tucked in by the waist
- Letting the Obliques go, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Looking up or down
- Incorrect foot position – not facing straight forward or not maintaining the arches
- Locking the knees

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's the way everyone! Looking good!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, reach the arms forward, straightening the elbows"
- "INHALE, bend the elbows"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: T-Zone and Oblique Activation exercises and Lower Trapezius Activation 2 (Arms at 90) and 3 (Arms by Side)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Anterior and Middle Deltoids to sweep the arms up (shoulder flexion)
- Pectoral Muscles to help raise the arms the hands in up and keep them in line with the shoulders (shoulder flexion and horizontal adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Long Head of Biceps to assist the Deltoids in raising the arms out in front (shoulder flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Serratus Anterior to keep the shoulder blades connected to the rib cage and prevent winging of the Scapula as the arms sweep forward (Scapula protraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back is not arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight
- Focus on the exhale breath to help engage the abdominals and draw the ribs toward the hips
- Ensure that the knees and feet are facing straight forward, knees unlocked and arches of the feet lifted to activate the buttock muscles

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Try kneeling or sitting instead of standing to see if this is more comfortable

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them or resetting the Lower Trapezius in between repetitions
- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Keep the arms lower – do not reach as high up with the hands
- Watch for overuse of the Pectoral muscles (hands too close together) and Upper Trapezius (shoulders hitching up)
- Lengthen the band

Shoulder Pain

- Cue to draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff activation)
- Decrease the range of motion (do not reach up as high or bring the hands back past the hips)
- Watch for overuse of the Pectoral muscles (hands too close together) and Upper Trapezius (shoulders hitching up)
- Lengthen the band and focus on keeping the shoulders down and back

Hand Pain or Wrist Pain

- Ensure that the wrists are in a neutral position
- Try a different grip (closed fists/open palms)

Pregnancy

- Can be performed throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- A good exercise to give a class as the intensity can be altered easily by modifying the range of motion and the resistance of the band
- This is a good exercise to combine with Biceps exercises for clients who want to work hard eg. Standing Biceps + Band, as the Biceps are used as an accessory muscle in this exercise
- This exercise can be performed sitting or standing depending on the client's needs and ability
- This exercise can be combined with sitting on the ball for an added challenge to balance and stability in the abdominals and lower body – ensure that the clients are sitting in the centre of the ball, the feet are hip distance apart and the ball is kept still





Modification Sitting on the Ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hug a Tree + Band

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Name of Exercise

"Hug a Tree with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the chest, shoulders and arms"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, place the band flat around the middle of the back and hold onto the band, elbows bent by the sides of the waist. Reach the arms out in front of the chest, round the elbows and touch the hands together, palms facing the body, making a circle with the arms. Neutral spine, T-Zone tight. Shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, open the arms out to the sides, keeping a slight bend in the elbows"



"EXHALE, close the arms back in front of the body, like you are hugging a tree"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the chest open, shoulder blades down and back – don't hunch forward"***
- "Don't open the arms too wide, make sure that the elbows stay in front of the body"***
- "Keep the elbows bent and arms rounded, like you are reaching around a big tree trunk"***
- "Squeeze the front of the chest and shoulders when squeezing the fingertips together"***
- "Chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head, eye gaze straight ahead"***
- "Draw ribs toward the hips/use the abdominals as you exhale to stop the back arching"***
- "Stand up tall, lifting through the crown of the head, neutral spine"
- "Keep the knees unlocked and facing over the second and third toes"
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"
- "Draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Don't raise the hands up as high – lower them to belly button height"
- "After a few repetitions, you can release the hands back down by the hips to rest"

To Make it Harder

- "Sweep the hands up higher – to shoulder height"
- "Hold the arms up and keep hugging the tree without coming back in and resting"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Making the movement too large – using momentum to lift the arms above shoulder height
- Opening the arms too wide, losing the abdominals and letting the ribs flare out
- Hunching the shoulders and tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius muscles
- Letting the shoulders round forward – not keeping the arm bones drawing back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff) and shoulder blades down and back (Lower Trapezius)
- Not keeping the palms facing in as the arms open and close
- Keeping the arms too straight – using the Pectoral muscles rather than the Deltoids and Biceps
- Letting the Obliques go, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Looking up or down
- Incorrect foot position – not facing straight forward or not maintaining the arches
- Locking the knees

Encourage and Inspire

- "Excellent work! This is a tough exercise!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, open the arms out to the side"
- "EXHALE, squeeze the hands together"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Pectoral Muscles to bring the fingertips together (shoulder horizontal adduction)
- Anterior and Middle Deltoids to hold the arms up (shoulder flexion and abduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Long Head of Biceps to assist the Deltoids in raising the arms (shoulder flexion) and keeping the elbows slightly bent (isometric elbow flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching as the hands sweep back
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Serratus Anterior to keep the shoulder blades connected to the rib cage, preventing winging as the arms sweep forward (Scapula protraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back is not arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- Focus on the exhale breath to help engage the abdominals
- T-Zone tight to prevent the body from rocking
- Ensure that the knees and feet are facing straight forward, knees unlocked and arches of the feet lifted to activate the buttock muscles

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Try sitting instead of standing to see if this is more comfortable

Neck Pain

- Keep the arms lower – at belly button or chest height rather than shoulder height

- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles can help facilitate them, as can resting every few repetitions then reactivating the Lower Trapezius
- Lengthen the band

Shoulder Pain

- Cue to draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff activation)
- Decrease the range of motion (keep the arms lower and don't open as wide)
- Try the movement with the palms facing up rather than in
- Rest after a few repetitions to reset the Lower Trapezius
- Lengthen the band and focus on keeping the shoulders down and back
- If pain persists, perform a different exercise instead eg. Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band

Hand Pain or Wrist Pain

- Ensure that the wrists are in a neutral position
- Try a different grip (closed fists/open palms)

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- This exercise can be tough for clients who have neck or shoulder injuries, when programming a class have an alternate exercise in mind for clients who cannot perform this exercise
- A lot of clients will feel okay in their neck with this exercise if they stop and rest frequently ie. bring their arms back in by their side and reset their Lower Trapezius after a few repetitions
- Works well after Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band to really work the shoulders
- This exercise can be combined with sitting on the ball for an added challenge to balance and stability in the abdominals and lower body – ensure that the clients are sitting in the centre of the ball, the feet are hip distance apart and the ball is kept still



Modification Sitting on the Ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band

Intensity=3 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Single Arm Overhead Triceps with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the back of the arms"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"



Set Up

"Standing with the feet hip distance apart, hold near the end of the band with one hand, raise the arm up toward the ceiling, bend the elbow lowering the hand behind the head and the band behind the back. Grab onto the band with the other hand, straighten the elbow, hand resting by the hip. Elbow pointing up toward the celling, arms close to the ear. Neutral spine, chin tucked in, neck long."

Breathing and Movement



"INHALE, T-Zone, shoulder blades down and back"

"EXHALE, straighten the elbow, extending the arm straight up to the ceiling"



"INHALE, slowly bend the elbow and return the hand behind the head"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the shoulder blades drawing down and back into a 'V' shape toward the lower back"***
- "Keep the top arm close to the ear and elbow pointing upward, don't let it wing out to the side or move forward"***
- "Move only from the elbow, the upper arm and shoulder should stay still"***
- "Draw the ribs toward the hips/use the abdominals to stop the back from arching"***
- "Chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head, eye gaze straight ahead"***
- "Really straighten the top arm out all the way, without letting the shoulder hunch up"
- "Lower the hand all the way back behind the head"
- "Squeeze the back of the arm to extend the hand straight up to the ceiling"
- "Keep the stationary arm completely still, with the shoulder down and back"
- "Keep the knees unlocked and facing over the second and third toes"
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Don't straighten the elbow as much"

To Make it Harder

- "Straighten the arm out all the way"
- "Add a hold and bend the elbow more slowly"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Letting the elbow/upper arm/shoulder move back and forward, rather than moving the elbow
- Not keeping the upper arm close to the side of the head
- Not controlling the band as the elbow bends
- Hunching the shoulders and tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius muscles
- Letting the shoulders round forward – not keeping the arm bones drawing back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff) and shoulder blades down and back (Lower Trapezius)
- Arching the lower back/letting the ribs flare as the hands come back behind the head
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Looking up or down
- Incorrect foot position – not facing straight forward or not maintaining the arches
- Locking the knees

Encourage and Inspire

- "You should really be feeling the back of the arm working, just a few more!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, straighten the elbow"
- "INHALE, bend the elbow"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Lower Trapezius Activation + Band
- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Lower Trapezius Activation 1 (Arms Overhead)

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Triceps of the moving arm to extend the arm (elbow extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Anterior and Middle Deltoids to hold the arm overhead (shoulder flexion)
- Latissimus Dorsi and Triceps of the stabilising arm to keep the arm straight and down by the side (isometric shoulder and elbow extension)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Serratus Anterior to keep the shoulder blades connected to the rib cage, preventing winging (Scapula protraction)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back is not arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- Ensure that the knees and feet are facing straight forward, knees unlocked and arches of the feet lifted to activate the buttock muscles

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Try an alternative Triceps exercise in which the lower back is less likely to arch eg. Triceps + Band from the Kneeling Series

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them can be very helpful
- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Ensure that the head isn't coming forward of the shoulders
- Watch for overuse of the Upper Trapezius (shoulders hitching up)
- Decrease the range of motion – do not bend the elbows all the way or straighten them fully
- Lengthen the band
- If all of this fails, try a different Triceps exercise eg. Triceps + Band from the Kneeling Series

Shoulder Pain

- Cue to draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff activation)
- Decrease the range of motion (do not extend the arms up too high)
- Let the elbows open to the side slightly
- Lengthen the band
- If all of this fails, try a different Triceps exercise eg. Triceps + Band from the Kneeling Series

Elbow Pain

- This exercise can be difficult for clients with elbow pain
- Try not bending and straightening the elbows as much/decreasing the range
- Try opening the elbow further out to the side
- If pain persists, discontinue the exercise or try an alternative Triceps exercise instead

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- Clients with a large Lordosis may find it difficult not arch their lower back with this exercise, and they may be better off performing other Triceps exercises
- If clients are struggling with controlling the abdominals, try teaching them Arm Preparation on the mat first to teach them how to engage their Obliques when the arms go overhead

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SIDE ARM SERIES

Draw a Sword + Band

Intensity=3 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: If a client can't kneel comfortably, cue them to sit with their legs crossed or with the legs out in front, either slightly bent or straight.

When holding onto the band, ensure that there is enough length in the band to be able to fully extend the elbow, if the band is not long enough you may need to kneel more to one side.

Name of Exercise

"Draw a Sword with the Band"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the shoulder, back of the arm and shoulder blade muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

""Kneeling onto the centre of the Band with the knees hip distance apart, feet flat on the mat and toes pointed. Reach across your body and grab onto the band with one hand, leaving the band slack, wrap the band around the hand. Elbow bent, hand across the body in line with the opposite hip, band loose, palm facing in. Opposite hand on the hip. Neutral spine, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head"



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone, shoulder blades down and back"

"EXHALE, bring the elbow up to the side in line with the shoulder, then continue to straighten the elbow out, reaching the hand out to the side, thumb pointing up"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



"INHALE, bend the elbow and return the hand back to the start position in line with the opposite hip"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Lead out with the elbow first, then extend the arm, try not to use too much momentum"***
- "Rotate the hand as you extend the arm, finishing with the thumb up toward the ceiling and the palm facing forward"***
- "Keep the shoulder blades drawing down and back into a 'V' shape toward the lower back"***
- "Focus on drawing the arm bone back into the shoulder socket as you move the arm"***
- "Sit up tall, lifting through the crown of the head, neutral spine, T-Zone tight"***
- "Chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head, eye gaze straight ahead"***
- "Imagine reaching across to draw a sword from your beltline and extending it out to the side"
- "Don't let the shoulders hunch up toward the ears or round forward"
- "Use the Obliques to stop the body from rotating, twisting or leaning to the side"
- "Ensure it is the shoulder working and not the neck"

To Make it Easier

- "Lengthen the band"
- "Stop and re-set the shoulder blades in between repetitions"
- "Don't extend the arm as high – keep it to chest height rather than shoulder height"
- "Only perform the first half of the movement – don't extend the elbow out all the way"

To Make it Harder

- "Extend the arm higher, to shoulder height – without the shoulders hunching or neck tensing"
- "Add a hold and return slowly"
- "Shorten the band"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Trying to make the movement too large – using momentum or hitching the shoulder
- Letting the shoulder round forward (taking the arm too high, not drawing the arm bone back into the shoulder socket, not engaging the Lower Trapezius/midback muscles enough)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Hunching the shoulder and tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius and Levator Scapulae
- Twisting the torso or leaning to the side
- Not externally rotating through the shoulder as the arm extends – finishing with the thumb facing forward or down
- Not controlling the movement on the way back down (letting the band pull the arm)
- Letting the Obliques go, rotating the torso, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Looking up or down/tilting the head to the side
- Bending and/or extending the wrist
- Having too much tension on the band to begin with – if the band is taut initially it makes it very hard to extend the arm

Encourage and Inspire

- "Wonderful work!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, extend the arm up to shoulder height, straightening the elbow"
- "INHALE, bend the elbow, taking the hand back in line with the opposite hip"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: External Rotation + Band
- No shoulder problems

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Deltoids to raise the arm out to the side (shoulder abduction)
- Triceps to straighten the elbow (elbow extension)

Accessory Muscles

- Supraspinatus to assist with raising the arm out to the side (shoulder abduction)
- Infraspinatus and Teres Minor to externally rotate the shoulder/turn the thumb up as the elbow straightens (shoulder external rotation)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Stabilising Muscles

- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- T-Zone to stabilise the spine and pelvis
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the body from rotating or leaning to one side and prevent the lower back from arching
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back is not arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- Ensure that the torso is not rotating – cue them to engage the opposite Oblique to stop the body from twisting, do not take the arm out to the side as far
- If the client is slouching or rounding the lower back, cue for more anterior tilt of the pelvis (sitting on the sit-bones, tall through the crown of the head)
- Try sitting with the legs out in front (either legs straight or knees slightly bent)
- Focus on the exhale breath to help engage the abdominals
- Do not extend the arm out as far to help limit rotation through the torso

Hip Pain, Knee Pain or Inflexibility

- If a client cannot sit comfortably with their legs crossed on the mat, then you can have them perform the exercise in kneeling instead, with the body up tall and the band under the knees
- Alternatively, perform the exercise sitting on a ball with the band under the buttocks – see the Programming Advice section of this exercise for more information on this

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them can be very helpful
- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Ensure that clients are not tilting the head to the side or lifting the shoulder – overusing the Upper Trapezius muscles
- Try different modifications – limit the speed or range of motion
- Lengthen the band

Shoulder Pain

- Take care with new or symptomatic shoulder injuries, avoid this exercise until pain settles
- As the arm extends – ensure that the palm is facing forward, thumb pointing up to the ceiling as this encourages external rotation of the shoulder, decreasing the likelihood of impingement
- Limit the range of motion (do not extend the arm as high or extend the elbow out all the way)
- Ensure that the shoulder is not rounding forward at any time during the movement
- Try different modifications – limit the speed or range of motion
- Lengthen the band and focus on keeping the shoulders down and back

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Pregnancy

- Can be performed during the first and second trimester of pregnancy or as long as the client is comfortable sitting cross legged and is comfortable getting up and down off the mat
- If a client cannot sit cross legged, perform the exercise kneeling instead

Programming Advice

- This is an advanced exercise and requires a significant amount of strength in the shoulder muscles and the Rotator Cuff
- A difficult exercise for clients with poor control of their Lower Trapezius or who are very tight in the Upper Trapezius – stretching first can assist with maintaining the correct position
- This exercise works well after performing External Rotation + Band and Rowing + Band
- This exercise can be combined with sitting on the ball for an added challenge to balance and stability in the abdominals and lower body – ensure that the clients are sitting in the centre of the ball, feet hip distance apart and the ball is kept still



Modification Sitting on the Ball

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Scapula Setting #3: From the Front of the Shoulder
- Arm Positioning #3: Relocation of Humerus
- Head Positioning #3: Deep Neck Flexors
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Safety with the Circle

When using the circle in the hands there are some important safety considerations -

- Ensure that the circle handles are sitting flush with the hands and/or the shoulder
- Ensure that both handles are pressed directly in toward each other (not rotating)
- Always ensure correct technique, shoulder hunching, neck tensing or breath holding can be signs that the client is squeezing the circle too hard and may lose control
- Ensure that the client is not shaking or they can lose control of the circle
- For Bicep Press + Circle, ensure that the circle is as vertical as possible (without the client hitting themselves in the head with their hand)



Circle Good Vertical Position (Correct)



Circle on an Angle (Incorrect)



Circle Rotated (Incorrect)

- For Chest Press + Circle, ensure that the hands are at chest height not at face height (this will prevent the circle from hitting the client in the face if they lose control of the circle)



Hands at Chest Height (Correct)



Hands at Face Height, Circle Rotated (Incorrect)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hand, Wrist, Elbow or Forearm Pain

Some clients may complain of hand, wrist, elbow or forearm pain when using the circle in the hands. Some things to check include -

- Keep the wrists neutral (ie. no flexion/extension, no lateral deviation)
- Ensure that clients press through the heel of the hand on the circle rather than the fingers
- Press evenly through the heel of the hand (even pressure through the thumb side and the little finger side of the hand)
- Try to keep the fingers relaxed
- Press the two handles directly in toward each other
- Focus on using the proximal muscles (Biceps and Pectoral Muscles) to perform the movement, rather than the forearm and hand muscles
- Try not to squeeze the circle as hard

Standing Position

As these exercises are in standing, it is important to cue the standing position also. Important concentration points include -

- Stand up straight, no leaning to the side
- Keep the knees in line with the second and third toes
- Tripod foot position
- Arches of the feet lifted
- Gently think of turning the knees outward to activate the buttocks
- Keep the T-Zone activated



Correct Standing Alignment



Leaning to One Side (Incorrect)



Arches Collapsing (Incorrect)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Bicep Press + Circle

Intensity=3 Difficulty=1.5

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Biceps Press with the Circle"

What and/or Where it Works

"This works the front of the arm"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Standing on the mat, grab the circle by the handle and place the other handle on top of the shoulder so that the circle is vertical. Elbow out to the side slightly, heel of the hand on top of the circle. Stand up tall, feet hip distance apart. Neutral spine, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, press down on the circle bending the elbow"



"INHALE, release"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the elbow pointing out to the side slightly, not too wide or too narrow"***
- "Try to keep the elbow still, don't let it move up and down"***
- "Focus on squeezing the bicep to squash the circle, bending the elbow"***
- "Keep the shoulder blade drawing down and back into a 'V' shape toward the lower back"***
- "Draw ribs toward the hips/use the abdominals as you exhale to stop the back arching"***
- "Stand up tall, neutral spine, T-Zone tight to help stabilise, don't lean to the side"***
- "Chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head, eye gaze straight ahead"***
- "Try to keep the wrist neutral, pressing through the heel of the hand on the circle"
- "Keep the circle vertical as much as possible, pressing the handle straight down"
- "Keep the knees unlocked and facing over the second and third toes"
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't press down as much on the circle"
- "Stop and re-set the shoulder blades in between repetitions"

To Make it Harder

- "Don't release the circle completely each time"
- "Add a hold each time you squeeze the circle"
- "Perform faster movements/pulses, keeping it controlled"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Arching the lower back or leaning to one side
- Hunching the shoulders and tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius muscles
- Lifting and lowering the elbow throughout the movement – trying to use the Latissimus Dorsi
- Elbow pointing forward – this engages the Pectoral muscles and rounds the shoulders forward
- Elbow too far out to the side – this places strain on the shoulder
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Looking up or down
- Bending and/or extending the wrists, rather than keeping them in a neutral position
- Moving the circle move from the vertical position
- Locking the knees, letting the knees roll in or collapsing the arches of the feet

Encourage and Inspire

- "Just a few more reps to go!"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, press down on the circle"
- "INHALE, release the circle"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Lower Trapezius Activation + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Biceps to bend the elbow (elbow flexion)

Accessory Muscles

- Deltoid to hold the arm up and keep the elbow still (shoulder abduction)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back is not arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- Focus on the exhale breath to help engage the abdominals
- Ensure that the knees and feet are facing straight forward, knees unlocked and arches of the feet lifted to activate the buttock muscles
- Ensure that the client is not leaning to one side
- Try performing the exercise sitting instead

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them or resetting the Lower Trapezius in between repetitions
- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Try different modifications – limit the speed or range of motion
- Try Biceps Half Rollback + Band if this one is too hard on the neck

Shoulder Pain

- Keep the shoulders down and back
- Cue to draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff activation)
- Limit the range of motion (do not bend and straighten the elbows as far)
- Ensure that the shoulders are not hunching up, rounding or moving up and down
- Ensure that the elbow is not too wide or too narrow, it should just be in a comfortable position, not forced too far forward or backward
- Try different modifications – limit the speed or range of motion
- Try Standing Biceps + Band if this one is too hard on the shoulders

Elbow Pain

- Ensure that the elbow is not pointing straight forward, or too far out to the side – it should sit comfortably in between these two positions
- Do not press down as hard
- Can try performing the exercise with a flat palm instead of the fingers curled around the circle (however this modification will not work for stronger clients as their fingers will hit their head as they bend the elbow)
- Discontinue the exercise if pain persists

Hand Pain or Wrist Pain

- Ensure that the wrist is in a neutral position
- Ensure that clients press evenly through the heel of the hand on the handle of the circle

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform throughout all three trimesters of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- This is a good exercise to combine with other Biceps exercises for clients who want to work hard eg. Biceps Half Rollback + Band and Standing Biceps + Band
- Clients with weak abdominals and excessive lumbar Lordosis may struggle stop the lower back from arching as the arm is overhead
- If a client is very Kyphotic, ensure that their head does not come forward and that they keep their chin tucked in gently – cueing their eyeline is important
- This exercise can be combined with sitting on the ball for an added challenge to balance and stability in the abdominals and lower body – ensure that the clients are sitting in the centre of the ball, the feet are hip distance apart and the ball is kept still

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*



Modification Sitting on the Ball

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Chest Press + Circle

Intensity=2.5 Difficulty=2

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

“Chest Press with the Circle”

What and/or Where it Works

“This works the chest, shoulders and arms”

Equipment Set Up

“You will need the circle for this exercise”

Set Up

“Standing on the mat, feet hip distance apart. Hold the circle by both handles, raise the arms to chest height, rounding the elbows slightly. Neutral spine, chin tucked in.”

Breathing and Movement



“INHALE, T-Zone, shoulder blades down and back”



“EXHALE, squeeze the circle”

”INHALE, release”



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Keep the shoulder blades drawing down and back into a 'V' shape toward the lower back"***
- "Don't hunch forward, keep the chest open, shoulders down and back"***
- "Keep the elbows bent ever so slightly, arms rounded"***
- "Squeeze into the front of the chest and shoulders when squeezing the circle"***
- "Chin tucked in, lengthen through the crown of the head, eye gaze straight ahead"***
- "Draw ribs toward the hips/use the abdominals as you exhale to stop the back arching"***
- "Draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets"
- "Try to keep the wrists neutral pressing through the heels of the hands on the circle"
- "Keep the circle vertical, pressing the handles straight in"
- "Keep the knees unlocked and facing over the second and third toes"
- "Keep the feet parallel (pointing straight ahead) and the arches of the feet lifted"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't press in as much on the circle"
- "Bring the circle closer toward the chest"
- "Stop and re-set the shoulder blades in between repetitions"

To Make it Harder

- "Reach the arms further away from the chest"
- "Lower the arms slightly"
- "Don't release the circle completely each time"
- "Add a hold when you squeeze the circle"
- "Perform faster movements/pulses, keeping the control

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Hunching the shoulders and tensing the neck, overusing Upper Trapezius
- Letting the shoulders round forward – not keeping the arm bones drawing back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff) and shoulder blades down and back (Lower Trapezius)
- Keeping the arms too straight or locking the elbows
- Letting the Obliques go, arching the lower back and flaring the ribs
- Letting the chin poke out or the head come forward in front of the shoulders
- Looking up or down
- Bending and/or extending the wrists, rather than keeping them in a neutral position
- Lowering the arms as fatigue sets in
- Locking the knees, letting the knees roll in or collapsing the arches of the feet

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Encourage and Inspire

- "Excellent work! Really squeeze that circle!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "EXHALE, squeeze the circle"
- "INHALE, release the circle"

Ending the Exercise

- "…and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Pectoral Muscles to squeeze the circle (shoulder horizontal adduction)
- Anterior Deltoids to hold the arms up (shoulder flexion) and to assist squeezing on the circle (shoulder horizontal adduction)

Accessory Muscles

- Biceps to assist in holding the arms up (shoulder flexion) and squeeze the circle (elbow flexion)

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching as the hands sweep back
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Serratus Anterior to keep the shoulder blades connected to the rib cage, preventing winging as the arms sweep forward (Scapula protraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Injuries/Caution

Neck Pain

- Ensure that the Lower Trapezius muscles are activating correctly – touching these muscles to facilitate them can be very helpful
- Decrease the range of motion (keep the arms lower)
- Rest back down after a few repetitions to reset the Lower Trapezius
- Relax the shoulders and neck, shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in
- Try Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band if this one is too hard on the neck and shoulders
- Perform the exercise lying on the back with the circle above the chest



Modification Lying on the Back

Shoulder Pain

- Keep the shoulders down and back
- Cue to draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets (Rotator Cuff activation)
- Keep the arms lower
- Rest back down after a few repetitions to reset the Lower Trapezius
- If pain persists, discontinue the exercise and perform a different exercise instead eg. Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band or Standing Biceps + Band
- Perform the exercise lying on the back with the circle above the chest

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the lower back isn't arching – keep the T-Zone and abdominals tight (ribs to hips)
- Focus on the exhale breath to help engage the abdominals
- T-Zone tight to prevent the body from rocking
- Keep the arches of the feet lifted and engage the buttocks
- Perform the exercise lying on the back with the circle above the chest

Hand Pain or Wrist Pain

- Ensure that the wrists are in a neutral position
- Ensure that clients press evenly through the heel of the hand on the handle of the circle

Pregnancy

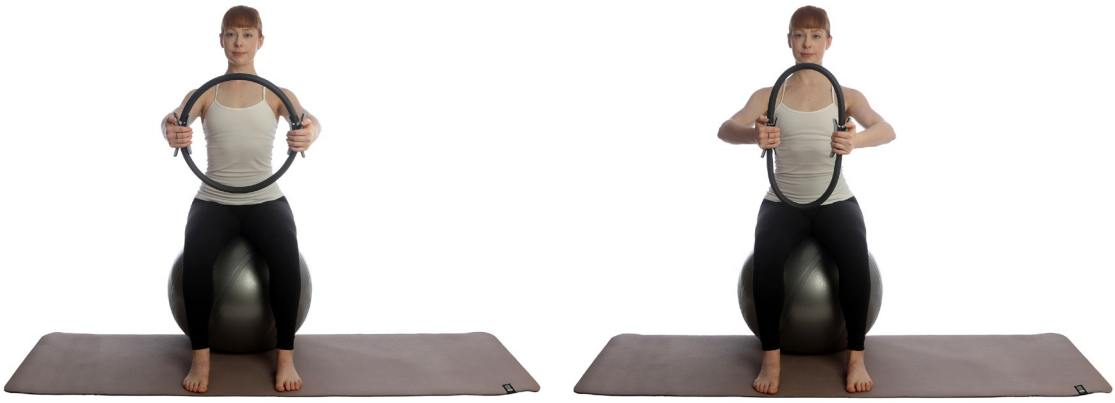
- Safe to perform during all three trimesters of pregnancy

Programming Advice

- As clients fatigue, they can start to feel this exercise in their neck – if so, allow them to rest frequently ie. bring their arms back by their side and reset the Lower Trapezius

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Works well after Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band or Hug a Tree + Band as clients will have already learned a similar movement
- This exercise can be combined with sitting on the ball for an added challenge to balance and stability in the abdominals and lower body – ensure that the clients are sitting in the centre of the ball, the feet are hip distance apart and the ball is kept still



Modification Sitting on the Ball

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Prone Quad Stretch + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: You can make the Set Up of how to get on the ball more concise if your clients are already familiar with how to do this.

You may need to assist clients by holding the ball and stay close by in case they lose balance.

Name of Exercise

"Quad Stretch on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This stretches the front of the thigh"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lower the stomach onto the ball and place the hands on the floor under the shoulders. Legs extended straight, feet flexed on the floor, hip distance apart. Lift the left hand and foot off the floor, bend the knee and grab around the foot or ankle, drawing the heel toward the bottom, lifting the thigh up. Shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, neutral spine."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, draw the heel closer to the bottom and lift the knee up, tucking the Pubic Bone into the ball"



Hold for 5-10 breaths, tucking a little further with each breath out, then repeat on the other side

Permission to Continue

- "Hold this position and…"

Concentration Points

- "Use the abdominals to tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball, tucking the bottom under"***

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Really draw the heel toward the bottom and lift the knee up to feel the thigh stretching"***
- "Keep the hips square to the floor, T-Zone tight, neutral spine"***
- "Keep the knees close together"***
- "Focus on keeping the T-Zone tight to maintain balance on the ball"
- "Keep the upper back against the shoulder blades, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in, eyes on the floor"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't draw the foot as close to the buttock"
- "Don't lift the thigh as much"

To Make it Harder

- "Draw the foot closer to the buttock"
- "Lift the thigh more"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Arching the lower back and not getting the pelvic tilt right
- Pulling the leg too far back or lifting it up too high
- Letting the knees separate too much
- Rotating the pelvis/not keeping the pelvis square to the floor
- Losing balance and control of the ball
- Shoulder blades winging or hunching
- Poking the chin out or not keeping the head in line with the body
- Incorrect ball placement – too high up under the chest or too low under the legs
- Locking the elbows
- Taking the legs too wide apart or taking the leg out to the side
- Not going into enough hip extension to feel the stretch (not raising the thigh up enough)

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking good, you should really feel the front of the thigh stretching!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, T-Zone"
- "EXHALE, tuck the Pubic Bone into the ball and draw the heel toward the bottom"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Oblique Activation Exercise, Serratus Anterior Activation Exercise
- Reasonable balance

Muscles and Movement

Target Muscles

- Stretches the Quadriceps muscles

Accessory Muscles

- Rectus Abdominus and Internal and External Obliques to tuck the pelvis under and prevent the lower back from arching (posterior pelvic tilt and lumbar spine flexion)
- Biceps and Latissimus Dorsi to bend the knee and lift the thigh (elbow flexion and shoulder extension)
- Pectoralis Major and Minor and Deltoids to hold the plank position
- Triceps to support the body weight (when the elbows are unlocked)

Stabilising Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus to stabilise the lumbar spine
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching and the body rocking
- Serratus Anterior to prevent the shoulder blades winging and the upper body sagging through (Scapula protraction and lateral rotation)
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors the keep the chin tucked in and the neck long

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the pelvic tilt is correct, abdominals are tight, so there is no arch in the lower back
- Ensure that the hips are not rotated
- If the Quadriceps are tight, there may be an increased arch in the lower back – if this is the case, choose one of the options from the To Make it Easier section

Knee Pain

- Stretching the Quadriceps can help knee pain
- If a client's knee becomes sore while in this stretch, try changing the knee position slightly
- Do not pull the heel in toward the buttock or lift the thigh as much

Neck Pain

- Cue the client to keep the chin tucked in and the neck long

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Cue the client to draw the shoulders down and back
- If pain persists, perform a Kneeling Quad Stretch on the mat instead

Shoulder Pain

- If a client cannot comfortably reach their ankle, perform Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch or Kneeling Quad Stretch on the mat instead

Vertigo, Dizziness or Poor Balance

- Take care with this exercise as it can be quite unstable
- Perform the same movement lying on the stomach on the mat



Modification Lying on the Stomach

Pregnancy

- Avoid this exercise during pregnancy

Programming Advice

- This is a good exercise for clients with knee pain as they do not have to kneel
- A good way to stretch the Quadriceps prior to performing prone exercises on the ball which require hip extension eg. Breaststroke Legs + Ball and Freestyle Legs + Ball
- A great stretch for anyone with a lumbar spine Lordosis posture
- When performed at the start of a class, this stretch may assist clients to keep their spine in neutral (not arch the lower back) during the exercises
- Hold the stretch for 6-10 breaths

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #1: T-Zone
- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #4: Four Point Kneeling
- Pelvic Positioning #6: Posterior Pelvic Tilt
- Ball Positioning #1: Supporting the Ball During the Set Up
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position
- Head Positioning #2: Plank

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Mermaid Stretch + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=2.5

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: This exercise differs to Mermaid Stretch on the mat in that you are using the opposite arm and leaning in the opposite direction. It is more similar to Mermaid Stretch on the reformer.

This exercise is best taught with the clients performing the exercise with you as you demonstrate.

As the movement of this exercise begins on an inhale breath, T-Zone is mentioned in the exercise Set Up rather than in the Breathing and Movement.

Name of Exercise

"Mermaid Stretch on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This stretches down the side of the body and the lower back"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up

"Sitting with the ball on your left side, left hand resting on the side of the ball. Feet folded to the right side, the right leg out to the side on the floor, the left leg folded in front of the body with the foot resting against the right knee. Right hand placed on the right ankle. Shoulders down and back, lengthen through the crown of the head. Neutral spine, T-Zone."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, reach the right arm up overhead, reaching through the fingertips"



"EXHALE, lean the body toward the ball, rolling the ball away and placing the free hand on the ball…"



"… rotate the body to face the floor, feeling the stretch down the lengthened side of the body"



© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

"INHALE, sit up tall, the right arm overhead, bend the elbow to roll the ball back in"



"EXHALE, lower the right hand back onto the ankle"



Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Reach up through the fingertips to elongate the side before leaning the over to the side"***
- "Keep the buttock of the side you are stretching down on the mat"***
- "Keep the pelvis facing as square to the front as you rotate the shoulders"***
- "Shoulder blades down and back"***
- "Focus on keeping the T-Zone tight to maintain balance"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't lower the chest down as much"
- "Don't roll the ball out or lean over as far"
- "Don't rotate the body as much"

To Make it Harder

- "Lower the chest down further"
- "Roll the ball out further and lean over more"
- "Rotate the body more"
- "Hold the stretch for several breaths before coming back up"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Hunching the shoulders
- Rotating the hips or lifting the hip off the mat
- Leaning straight over to the side rather than reaching up as high as possible first
- Reaching over the wrong way with the wrong arm

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Losing control of the ball

Encourage and Inspire

- "This one should feel really nice, stretching through the side of the waist!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, take the arm off the ankle and reach overhead"
- "EXHALE, roll the ball out, place both hands on the ball, rotate the chest to face the floor"
- "INHALE, roll the ball back in, reach the arm up"
- "EXHALE, lower the arm"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Mermaid Stretch
- No lumbar disc injuries

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Stretches the Latissimus Dorsi, Quadratus Lumborum and lower back muscles

Stabilising Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus to stabilise the lumbar spine
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Accessory Muscles

- Deltoids to roll the ball away and raise the arm up (shoulder flexion)
- Pectoralis Major and Latissimus Dorsi to prevent the ball from rolling out to far and to draw it back in (shoulder adduction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints

Joint Mobility

- Increases lumbar spine and thoracic spine lateral flexion and rotation range of movement
- Increases hip flexion, abduction and external rotation range of motion of the front leg

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Increases hip flexion and internal rotation range of motion of the back leg

Injuries/Caution

Knee Pain or Hip Pain

- Avoid this exercise if the client cannot comfortably sit in this position

Lower Back Pain

- Avoid for an acute disc problem as it involves lumbar flexion and rotation
- Perform Mermaid stretch on the mat instead as it does not involve flexion and rotation
- Ask the client where they are feeling this stretch – if they are feeling it in the muscles of their lower back on the side they are meant to be stretching, then this is okay, but if they are feeling it in lumbar spine joints or discs the exercise should be discontinued immediately
- Focus on reaching up with the hand before reaching over to the side as this elongates the spine and stops the joints and discs from compressing
- Ensure that the client does not lean over or rotate as far
- Keep the abdominals activated to support the lower back

Neck Pain or Shoulder Pain

- Keep the shoulder blades down and back, chin tucked in and neck following the line of the thoracic spine
- Keep the palm of the hand reaching over facing downward
- Keep the range of movement smaller, by not rolling the ball out as far
- Keep the hands wider apart on the ball
- Avoid lowering the chest as far
- If neck or shoulder pain continues, avoid this exercise

Pregnancy

- Can be performed in the first two trimesters of pregnancy
- In the later stages of pregnancy, the belly limits movement
- Avoid for any pregnant women with pelvic or hip pain

Programming Advice

- A smaller ball works best as it allows more spinal flexion, increasing the stretch
- A great stretch for anyone with tight upper and lower back muscles and tight Latissimus Dorsi
- This exercise differs to Mermaid Stretch on the mat as it involves spinal flexion and rotation rather than lateral flexion – in a group class, clients with lower back pain or disc problems would be better off performing the matwork stretch while the others perform it using the ball
- Clients need to be flexible in the hips and knees to be able to perform this exercise
- A great stretch to perform after Double Leg Lift with or without the circle (as Mermaid Stretch stretches the same muscles)
- It is easier to teach this exercise by performing the exercise facing the group and having them mirror you, everyone in the group moving in the same direction to avoid confusion
- If lefts and rights are confusing to either you or your clients, use alternate cues

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Some clients may find it more comfortable to start with their free hand resting on their ankle rather than their knee
- Hold the stretch for 6-10 breaths

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #4: Prone Ab Activation
- Arm Positioning #1: Guiding Arm Position and Movement
- Scapula Setting #1: In Between the Shoulder Blades

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Prayer Stretch + Ball

Intensity=1 Difficulty=1

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Prayer Stretch on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This stretches under the arms and also stretches the lower back if tight"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"



Set Up

"Kneeling with the hands on top of the ball in front of you. Knees hip distance apart and hands shoulder distance apart. Shoulder blades down and back, neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, sit back drawing the buttocks toward the heels, rolling the ball forward as far as possible and lowering the chest down toward the floor"



Permission to Continue

- "Hold this position and…"

Concentration Points

- "With every breath out, relax further into the stretch"***
- "Stretch the arms out as far as possible, elbows close to the ears and keep rolling the ball away to further increase the stretch"***
- "Try to relax the body and lower it down as close to the knees and floor as possible"***
- "Keep the abdominals tight prevent the back from arching"***
- "Try to turn the tailbone down toward the heels and the forehead down toward the floor"
- "Relax and lengthen the spine"
- "Keep the head up and the neck in one long line, shoulder blades down and back"

To Make it Easier

- "Don't sit back as far with the bottom"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- "Don't lean the body as close to the floor"
- "Don't roll the ball out as far"

To Make it Harder

- "Roll the ball further out along the floor"
- "Lower the body down further"

Also, to increase the stretch the instructor may press on the base of the pelvis/sacrum to draw the bottom closer to the heels

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Leaving the bottom up in the air rather than sitting back on the heels
- Not rolling the ball forward enough
- Arching the lower back
- Having the hands too close together or too far apart
- Having the hands too low on the ball
- Dropping the head down
- Hunching the shoulders up toward the ears
- Bending the elbows and taking them out to the side (rather than close to the ears and straight)

Encourage and Inspire

- "Looking good, let's really stretch"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, T-Zone"
- "EXHALE, sit back on the heels and roll the ball forward"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- MATWORK PREREQUISITES: Prayer Stretch

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Stretches the Latissimus Dorsi muscles
- Stretches the lower back muscles – Quadratus Lumborum and lumbar Erector Spinae if tight

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lumbar spine
- Internal and External Obliques to stop the lower back from arching
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Rotator Cuff to stabilise the shoulder joints
- Deep Neck Flexors to tuck the chin in (upper cervical flexion)

Joint Mobility

- Increases shoulder flexion range of movement
- Increases thoracic extension range of movement
- Increases hip and knee flexion range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Calf Cramps

- Flex the feet rather than pointing the feet

Lower Back Pain or Lumbar Disc Injuries

- Keep the abdominals tight to support the back
- For an acute Disc Bulge – maintain a neutral spine by keeping the hips higher up in the air (rather than sitting back onto the heels)
- Discontinue if there is any pain or discomfort in the lower back



Modification Keeping the Hips Higher

Hip Pain or Knee Pain

- Do not focus on leaning the body back as far and roll the ball further forward instead
- Perform the modification keeping the hips higher

Shoulder Pain

- Try taking the hands wider on the ball and don’t reach as far forward

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- If pain persists, perform Prayer Stretch on the mat – the modification with arms by the sides

Pregnancy

- Can perform this exercise throughout pregnancy – modify the exercise as the belly grows but cueing the client to lift the pelvis up away from the feet to make room for the baby
- Refer to pregnancy guidelines by trimester

Programming Advice

- An easier way to perform Prayer Stretch for clients who have hip or knee problems as it can easily be performed without sitting back on the heels
- Good to perform prior to exercises such as Breaststroke or Freestyle with or without the ball to increase shoulder range of movement, enabling clients to take the arms overhead more easily
- Great for anyone with a stiff thoracic spine and shoulders and decreased shoulder flexion
- An excellent gentle stretch for a tight upper back and Kyphosis posture
- Hold the stretch for 6-10 breaths

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Pelvic Positioning #9: Prayer Stretch

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Thoracic Extension Stretch + Ball

Intensity=2 Difficulty=3

Cueing Formula

Exercise Tip: You can modify how high or low on the thoracic spine you place the ball depending on where you feel needs stretching the most. You can perform this stretch with the ball in just one position, or move the ball up or down slightly and repeat the stretch again.

Name of Exercise

"Thoracic Extension Stretch on the Ball"

What and/or Where it Works

"This stretches the upper back, chest and shoulders"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the ball for this exercise"

Set Up



"Sit on the ball and walk the feet out in front, rolling the ball up the spine until it is under the upper and middle back. Hands behind the head, lower the head back to rest on the ball, elbows wide, shoulders down and back, chin tucked in Feet hip distance apart, under the knees, neutral spine."

Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"



"EXHALE, slowly lower the pelvis down and arch the upper back further over the ball"

"Hold this position for 6-10 breaths, trying to relax the spine further over the ball"

Permission to Continue

- "Keep going and…"

Concentration Points

- "Every time you exhale, relax the spine further over the ball, opening the elbows wider"***
- "Focus on arching the upper back – think of the rib to hip connection so lower back doesn't arch too much"***
- "Head relaxed into the hands, chin tucked in, eye gaze at the ceiling"***
- "You should feel this stretching through the upper back"***
- "Keep the knees bent, the feet flat on the floor"***
- "Keep the T-Zone on to support the lower back as the upper back extends"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

To Make it Easier

- “Don’t extend back over the ball as far”
- “Raise the hips higher”

To Make it Harder

- “Extend further back over the ball and open the elbows wider”
- “Lower the hips more”
- “Reach the arms overhead and arch back further”



Modification with Arms Overhead

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Hyperextending the neck and sticking the chin out, or letting the head hang back unsupported
- Hunching the neck and shoulders
- Losing the abdominals and overarching the lower back – it should be mostly thoracic extension rather than lumbar extension
- Straightening the legs or letting the hips lower down toward the floor too much – this will increase the load on the lower back
- Placing the ball too high up on the neck, or too low into the lower back – aim to keep the ball somewhere under the upper and middle back
- Taking the feet too far away from the ball – not keeping the knees over the feet
- Taking the feet too wide on the floor

Encourage and Inspire

- “Wow look at that spine extension!”

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- “INHALE, T-Zone”
- “EXHALE, relax the upper back over the ball”

Ending the Exercise

- “Start walking the feet back in and place the hands onto the ball behind you, walk the feet all the way back in and press the body back up into sitting"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Prayer Stretch

Muscles and Movements

Target Muscles

- Increases flexibility of the thoracic spine into extension
- Stretches the Pectoralis Major muscles

Stabilising Muscles

- T-Zone to stabilise the lower back
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)
- Deep Neck Flexors to keep the chin tucked in and the neck long

Joint Mobility

- Increases thoracic extension range of movement
- Increases shoulder horizontal abduction and external rotation range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Check T-Zone and Oblique activation – arch the upper back rather than the lower back
- Try lifting the bottom a bit higher and using an imprinted spine
- Do not lean over the ball as far

Upper Back Pain

- It is okay to feel the stretch in this area but no pain
- If there is pain, check the technique and modify the position of the ball under the back
- Don't lean over the ball as far, or open the elbows as wide

Shoulder Pain

- Draw the elbows closer together and keep the shoulders down and back
- If pain persists, avoid the exercise

Neck Pain

- Try not to pull on the head with the hands, keep the neck relaxed back into the hands
- Check the neck position – maintain a neutral spine with the chin tucked in and the neck long, eyes on the ceiling, do not allow the neck to hang backward

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Poor Balance or Dizziness

- You may need to stand beside the client when performing this exercise or hold the ball to provide additional stability
- Some clients may find that lowering their head back causes dizziness – if this is the case, move the ball up higher under the upper back and ensure that the neck is in a neutral position ie. not extended and lowered

Osteoporosis

- Avoid this exercise for severe Osteoporosis

Pregnancy

- This exercise can be performed during the first trimester
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester

Programming Advice

- Good to perform prior to exercises that involve full range of shoulder flexion, eg. Freestyle Arms + Ball, Lower Trapezius Activation + Band or Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band
- Good to perform prior to exercises in the Prone Lying Series which require thoracic extension
- This exercise requires a fair amount of spinal mobility to get into the position comfortably, if clients are stiff in the shoulders or thoracic spine they may feel more comfortable lifting the bottom up higher

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Ab Activation #3: Ribs to Hips (Obliques)
- Scapula Setting #3: From the Front of the Shoulder
- Ball Positioning #1: Supporting the Ball During the Set Up

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hamstring Stretch + Band

Intensity=1 Difficulty=1

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Hamstring Stretch with the Band"

What and/or where it works

"This stretches the back of the thigh"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the long band for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet hip distance apart. Hold onto the ends of the band and place the arch of one foot in the centre of the band, foot relaxed. Neutral spine, straighten the leg up toward the ceiling."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, straighten the knee and draw the leg as far as possible toward the head, keeping the tailbone down"



Permission to Continue

- "Hold this position and…"

Concentration Points

- "With every breath out, stretch a little further"***
- "Keep the tailbone down and a neutral spine"***
- "Straighten the knee and take the leg up as far as possible"***
- "Shoulders relaxed down and back"***

To Make it Easier

- "Bend the knee of the leg you are stretching ever so slightly"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

To Make it Harder

- "Draw the leg in closer toward the chest, keeping the knee straight"
- "Slide the bent leg out straight along the floor"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Lifting the tailbone, tucking the bottom under, losing neutral spine, rounding the lower back
- Bending the knee of the stretching leg too much
- Rotating the pelvis
- Pulling too much with the arms on the band and tensing the neck or hunching the shoulders
- The band placed incorrectly around the foot
- Flexing the foot instead of keeping the foot relaxed
- Sticking the chin out
- Letting either leg roll in or out – not keeping the kneecaps facing straight up toward the ceiling

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's the way! You should really be feeling that in the back of the thigh!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, T-Zone"
- "EXHALE, stretch a little further"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- None

Muscles and Movement

Target Muscles

- Stretches the Hamstring muscles

Accessory Muscles

- Biceps to hold the band (isometric elbow flexion)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Stabilising Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus to stabilise the lumbar spine
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Joint Mobility

- Increases hip flexion range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the spine is neutral with the tailbone down and the abdominals are tight, the lower back is not rounding and the pelvis and the hips are not rotating
- Choose the easier modification ie. with the underneath leg bent rather than straight

Sciatica

- Stretching the Hamstrings can help with sciatic pain in some clients, but for other clients it can make them worse
- Check that the stretch isn't exacerbating their sciatic pain and stretch lightly and carefully
- Keep the supporting leg on the floor bent
- Ensure that the foot is pointed rather than flexed, as flexing it further increases neural tension
- Avoid this exercise for a client with bad Sciatica

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester as it requires the client to lie on their back

Programming Advice

- A good alternative to Hamstring Stretch on the mat for people who cannot reach their leg
- Ensure that clients keep their foot relaxed – a flexed foot can cause the band to slip off and potentially cause an injury
- A great stretch for any clients with a Flatback posture or clients who have tight Hamstrings
- A great warm up stretch
- Hold the stretch for 6-10 breaths

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Hamstring Stretch + Circle

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=1

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Hamstring Stretch with the Circle"

What and/or where it works

"This stretches the back of the thigh"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet hip distance apart. Hold onto one handle of the circle and place the arch of one foot inside the circle, onto the opposite handle. Neutral spine, straighten the leg up toward the ceiling."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, straighten the knee and take the leg up as far as possible toward the head, keeping the tailbone down"



Permission to Continue

- "Hold this position and…"

Concentration Points

- "With every breath out, stretch a little further"***
- "Keep the tailbone down and a neutral spine"***
- "Straighten the knee and take the leg up as far as possible"***
- "Shoulders relaxed down and back"***

To Make it Easier

- "Bend the knee of the leg you are stretching ever so slightly"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

To Make it Harder

- "Draw the leg in closer toward the chest, keeping the knee straight"
- "Slide the bent leg out straight along the floor"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Lifting the tailbone, tucking the bottom under, losing neutral spine, rounding the lower back
- Bending the knee of the stretching leg too much
- Rotating the pelvis
- Pulling too much with the arms on the band and tensing the neck or hunching the shoulders

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's the way! Try to relax into the stretch!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, T-Zone"
- "EXHALE, stretch a little further"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Hamstring Stretch + Band

Muscles and Movement

Target Muscles

- Stretches the Hamstring muscles

Stabilising Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus to stabilise the lumbar spine
- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Joint Mobility

- Increases hip flexion range of movement, the modification of pointing and flexing the foot also adds a neural mobilisation

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the spine is neutral with the tailbone down and the abdominals are tight, the lower back is not rounding and the pelvis and hips are not rotating
- Choose the easier modification ie. with the underneath leg bent rather than straight

Sciatica

- Stretching the Hamstrings can help with sciatic pain in some clients, but for other clients it can make them worse
- Check that the stretch isn't exacerbating their sciatic pain and stretch lightly and carefully
- Keep the supporting leg on the floor bent
- Place the circle on the heel rather than the arch the foot can be pointed rather than flexed
- Avoid this exercise for a client with bad Sciatica

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform during the first trimester of pregnancy
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester as it requires the client to lie on their back

Programming Advice

- A good alternative to Hamstring Stretch on the mat for people who cannot reach their leg
- Hamstring Stretch + Circle is slightly more intense than Hamstring Stretch + Band as the circle has less give so provides a stronger stretch
- If someone is too inflexible to reach their foot with the circle, Hamstring Stretch + Band is a better option as it gives them more length
- A great stretch for anyone with a Flatback posture or who has tight Hamstrings
- A great warm up stretch
- Hold the stretch for 6-10 breaths

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Inner Thigh Stretch + Circle

Intensity=1.5 Difficulty=1

Cueing Formula

Name of Exercise

"Inner Thigh Stretch with the Circle"

What and/or where it works

"This stretches inner thigh muscles"

Equipment Set Up

"You will need the circle for this exercise"

Set Up

"Lying on the back with the knees bent, feet hip distance apart. Hold onto one handle of the circle and place the arch of one foot inside the circle, onto the opposite handle. Straighten the leg up toward the ceiling and lower the leg out to the side, keeping the pelvis still and spine neutral."



Breathing and Movement

"INHALE, T-Zone"

"EXHALE, take the leg as far out to the side as possible, without rocking the pelvis, allow the bent knee to fall to the opposite side"



Permission to Continue

- "Hold this position and…"

Concentration Points

- "With every breath out, stretch a little further"***
- "Keep the tailbone down and a neutral spine"***
- "Keep even weight on both buttocks, pelvis square to the ceiling"***
- "Straighten the knee and take the leg out to the side as far as possible"***
- "Shoulders relaxed down and back"

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

To Make it Easier

- "Don't take the leg out as far"
- "Bend the knee of the leg you are stretching ever so slightly"

To Make it Harder

- "Draw the leg further up toward the ceiling and further out to the side"
- "Keep the knee straight"

Corrections/Common Mistakes

Scan for and correct the following common mistakes using verbal corrections and physical palpations –

- Lifting the tailbone, tucking the bottom under, losing neutral spine, rounding the lower back
- Bending the knee of the stretching leg too much
- Rotating the pelvis
- Pulling too much with the arms on the circle and tensing the neck or hunching the shoulders

Encourage and Inspire

- "That's the way! Try to keep the pelvis nice and still!"

Remind and Recycle

Remind and recycle the most relevant concentration points or breathing and movement –

- "INHALE, T-Zone"
- "EXHALE, stretch a little further"

Ending the Exercise

- "… and rest"

Exercise Information

Prerequisites

- BALL, CIRCLE, BAND PREREQUISITES: Hamstring Stretch + Circle

Muscles and Movement

Target Muscles

- Stretches the Adductor muscles

Stabilising Muscles

- Transversus Abdominus to stabilise the lumbar spine

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Lower Trapezius to draw the shoulder blades down and back (Scapula depression and retraction)

Joint Mobility

- Increases hip abduction range of movement

Injuries/Caution

Lower Back Pain

- Ensure that the spine is neutral with the tailbone down and the abdominals are tight, the lower back is not rounding and the pelvis and hips are not rotating
- Do not raise the leg as high or take it out to the side as far

SIJ Pain or Pubic Bone Pain

- Reduce the range of movement or avoid the exercise

Sciatica

- Use with extreme caution or avoid this exercise (as it involves a neutral tension position)

Pregnancy

- Safe to perform during the first trimester of pregnancy (reduce the range of movement)
- Avoid this exercise after the first trimester as it requires the client to lie on their back

Programming Advice

- Great to perform after exercises using the circle as they work the Adductor muscles strongly
- Good to do after Hamstring Stretch + Circle
- A great warm up stretch
- Hold the stretch for 6-10 breaths

Palpations/Physical Corrections

- Pelvic Positioning #8: Preventing the Pelvis from Rocking
- Leg Positioning #3: Guiding Leg Height and Position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

CLASS PROGRAMMING

The following section discusses how to program your small equipment classes and provides sample class programs

PROGRAMMING BASICS

There are a number of factors to take into consideration when programming for your class. Outlined below are some of these factors which will determine how you choreograph your Pilates classes.

Small Equipment Programming Tips

It is possible to program a whole class using the small equipment exercises in this course. However, it also works quite well to incorporate the ball, circle or band exercises into a matwork class to add variety of positions for clients who may be restricted in their mobility or pregnant as well as to add a challenge for intermediate and advanced clients.

Which equipment you use will depend on your access to equipment and having enough of each piece of equipment for your class. Generally, the bands and circles are more portable, cost less and take up less room which is great if you run a mobile or outdoor business or work in a small studio. Some gyms will have circles and bands but if not then they are easy to carry and bring along with you (particularly the bands). Gyms often have balls and larger rooms so it can be a good option for group classes to use the balls. Pilates studios running small group sessions often have balls as well.

Here are some examples of how to incorporate the equipment into your classes -

- Program a regular matwork class and for some clients add the small equipment in to make exercises easier or harder eg. in the Supine Abdominal Series, have some clients using a ball under their legs if they're not strong enough to hold tabletop position, some clients adding a circle between the thighs to challenge and other clients performing the regular matwork variation
- Program a class with matwork and band exercises
- Program a class with matwork and circle exercises
- Program a class with matwork, circle and band exercises
- Program a class with matwork and ball exercises
- Program a class with matwork, ball, circle and band exercises
- Program a class with only ball, circle and band exercises

Type of Class (Individual, Small Group, Large Group)

The way in which you program a class will depend on the type of class you are running.

Individual Class

- You can tailor the workout to suit that particular client
- You can give the client the exact exercises to perform without options to make it easier or harder (as you will know what the client is capable of)
- It is safer to prescribe more ball exercises as you can be standing right next to the client the whole time
- You can also move quickly between each exercise with the small equipment as you can assist the client to swap equipment over and help the client to get into the correct position

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Large Group Class

- You will need to cater for all levels in the class and therefore need to choose specific exercises which you can cue harder or easier options for
- The small equipment actually helps you to do this as sometimes the equipment makes an exercise easier and other times harder
- You can have some clients in the class perform the matwork variation while others use the equipment to make it easier or harder
- At other times you can have the whole class using the equipment performing the same exercise
- You need to ensure that you have enough pieces of equipment for all of the class participants if you want all of the class to perform an exercise using it
- Integrating the circles and bands into a large group class is easier than using balls
- As you cannot be standing right next to each of the clients for each exercise, there are some exercises that are not practical to perform in a large group, or you need to ensure that clients are positioned next to a wall so that they can steady themselves if needed
- The balls take up a lot of space in a room and tend to roll away, so ensure that the room is large enough to accommodate this
- It is a good idea to program all of the ball exercises together at the beginning of the class (even if this means you will be working various muscle groups) and then instruct clients to put the balls away for the remainder of the class to prevent them from rolling around the room

Small Group Class

- You can still cater to each of the client's individual needs in a small group class
- You may have the whole class doing the same exercises or they may each be on an individual program
- The equipment makes it easier to have the whole class performing similar exercises at the same time – some clients can use the equipment if they want a challenge while other clients can omit the equipment when needed
- Balls are easier to use in a small group than large group setting as you can stand close to each of the clients and assist them when needed

Assessment Findings

If you are performing an initial assessment on a client, use the findings from this this assessment to develop the client's program. Take into consideration any injuries that the client may have, prescribing exercises to correct their postural type, the clients' ability to activate their core stability muscles and any areas they need to work on.

Injury or Pregnancy

Clients who have injuries can sometimes be limited as to what they can do in the matwork repertoire. Using the small equipment is great for injuries as it makes some of the exercises easier and supports the body more, it helps to activate the core muscles more effectively plus it also works the peripheral muscles that help support the shoulders and knees.

Pregnant clients are also quite limited to what they can do on the mat and also in working their abdominals, so adding the equipment is great for them as there are more standing and sitting

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

exercises as well as arm and leg exercises. Be mindful of the precautions and safety considerations of using the ball.

Use the guidelines that are outlined in this manual in the Injuries + Pregnancy section and the Injuries/Caution section of each exercise to assist you in programming for clients who have injuries.

If you are planning on specifically taking clients with back pain or pregnancy, it is recommended to also complete the courses Pilates for Pregnancy and Pilates for Back Pain as a great deal of specialised information is contained in these courses.

Please note that as a Pilates Instructor it is not your job to diagnose or treat injuries – you will need to refer your clients to a health professional for this. Ensure that you are in constant communication with any treating health professionals that your clients are seeing to gain information about what they should and should not be doing throughout their Pilates sessions at the various stages of their treatment and rehabilitation.

Understanding Client Goals

It is a good idea to find out what the clients are hoping to achieve from their Pilates class and alter the program sequencing and intensity accordingly. If the client purely wants to improve their lower back pain, then the intensity of the class does not need to be high. If a client really wants to tone up their arms, then you should layer a lot of arm exercises in this client's workout.

Sometimes the client's goals are different to what you think they should be working on in a class. For example, a client who has terribly weak shoulder stabilisers, weak upper back muscles and neck pain may come to your class, with the goal of toning their stomach and buttocks. In this case, you should include exercises to work on posture and neck/shoulder stability, but you will also need to include some intense lower body exercises that are safe to perform without causing neck pain. This will cater to both the desires of the client and also maintain their safety.

Client Prior Experience and Fitness Level

The small equipment is great for all fitness levels as it can actually make some exercises easier, and other harder.

If a client attends your class and has been performing Pilates for a long time and is fit, you can include more difficult and intense exercises in their program, and you will be able to move through the exercises faster.

Conversely, if a beginner is attending your class, or the client is not very coordinated, you will need to keep the exercises simple. If someone who is very unfit attends your class, you will need to use exercises with a low intensity.

Client Demographic

Your programming may also be dictated by the demographic of the clients in your class.

In general, females and males often like to work on different areas of the body. Females often like to work on abdominals, inner thighs, buttocks, thighs and Triceps. The small equipment adds in a lot more options to work all of these areas, including using the circle to work the inner thighs, adding the band to increase buttock work, using the ball to work the thighs and the band to work the Triceps.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Males often like to work their abdominals, sides, back, chest and arms and stretch their Hamstrings. Men often love using the ball and performing the Plank Series. Also, the circle and band give a lot more options for strengthening the arms.

Obviously, this differs from person to person, but generally these are the areas that are most commonly requested. You still need to work on all muscles for each client, but may focus more on their favourite ones.

Elderly clients may have difficulty getting up and down off the mat or transitioning from one start position to the next, taking longer to change position. The equipment adds more variety of exercises that can be performed in sitting or standing, which assists with this. Also, elderly people often have poor balance – whilst the ball can help to improve balance, be mindful of the safety considerations of using the ball.

If you are taking a class of athletes or dancers, you will obviously program different exercises for these clients, and there are a lot of fun and more advanced exercises you can perform using the equipment.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

CLASS TIME AND DURATION

How long your classes run is entirely up to you, however most classes run from 45 minutes to 1 hour.

45 Minute Class Option

If your class is 45 minutes in duration, it will usually mean that you may not get as much time to work on as many body parts/muscle groups in each session. You may need to focus the class more on certain body parts/muscle groups, then rotate the muscles that you are working on in the next session.

Be mindful of changing the equipment or body position too many times in a 45 minute class as each change takes time, and eats into the time that the clients are actually performing the exercises.

Often in a 45 minute class you will not have the time to perform as many stretches otherwise the intensity of the class diminishes.

When instructing a 45 minute class, it can often be better to use the demonstration method in which the class performs the exercise with you as you are demonstrating, as this will enable you to perform more exercise in a class. It is also very important to have a concise and succinct preamble so as to not take up too much time at the beginning of the class.

1 Hour Class Option

If you are running a 1 hour class, this gives you more time to work all of the body parts, swap the equipment around more and also add in more stretches. If your class is full of beginners, a 1 hour class is often preferable as it gives you time to explain the exercises more slowly and use the method of demonstration in which the class watches you demonstrate quickly, then performs the exercise next.

Duration of Each Exercise

In Pilates, we don't always give the number of repetitions for a particular exercise to the clients for 3 reasons –

1. There is no point in continuing on with an exercise once the client is so tired that they are losing their technique – this just reinforces bad movement patterns. Remember that 'control' is one of the principles of Pilates!
2. People will concentrate on completing the number of repetitions you prescribed rather than the technique required to perform the exercise effectively
3. The movements should be flowing and it is not necessary to stop at the end of each repetition

In reality, rather than prescribing a set time or number of repetitions to perform for each exercise, we prescribe an exercise and then watch to see how the participants respond to it, only then deciding how long to perform the exercise for, based on the clients' ability to proceed with good technique. Clients' technique will often deteriorate due to fatigue, particularly during harder exercises, or boredom in the easier exercises.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Occasionally as an instructor, you will cue numbers of repetitions, especially if it is an exercise that is simple to perform and unlikely for the client will start to fatigue or cheat during this time frame. Some clients do prefer to know how many reps they need to do in order to mentally prepare.

As a general guideline, it is a good idea to complete each exercise for approximately 1-1 ½ minutes. Please note that in some of the more intense or difficult exercises you may not need to go for this long.

The 1- 1 ½ minute time frame also gives you a chance to explain the exercise fully and give clients the opportunity to perfect the movement and technique and to feel the muscles working. In a large group class, this still caters to different levels of ability, as generally the clients who are regulars already know what they are doing and begin the exercise straight away, performing more repetitions. Beginners will take a while to get into the exercise and usually end up performing fewer repetitions, which works out well. Always tell the clients that they can rest at any time throughout the exercise if they feel that they are losing technique, and then join back in for the remainder of the exercise.

Ensure that you allow clients enough time to work out what they should be doing and to start to feel the muscles working. There is nothing more frustrating from a client perspective than to finally understand and perform an exercise correctly only for the instructor moves onto the new exercise straight away! On the flip side, in order to ensure that you are not teaching an exercise for too long, observe your clients and look for the following signs of fatigue -

- Losing technique
- Starting to use cheating/compensatory movements
- Facial strain
- Tensing the rest of the body including feet, hands and neck
- Grunting and groaning
- Uncontrollable shaking of the muscles

Note: in group class setting, clients will each start to fatigue at different times. If you notice that someone in your class is fatiguing but the rest of the class is going strong, then say “If you are getting too tired to maintain your technique, rest for a moment then join back in”.

The good thing about using equipment in the class is that in exercises where the equipment makes a matwork exercise harder, you can also remove the equipment and continue the exercise without it until the end.

Number of Exercises per Class

How many exercises you include in your class will vary greatly depending on the following factors -

- Duration of class – 45 minutes or an hour
- Duration of each exercise – 1- 1 ½ minutes
- Types of exercises given, how much explanation is needed for each exercise
- Speed at which you (and clients) transition between exercises
- The amount of times you need to totally change the Set Up position ie. lying down to kneeling, then standing, then lying again will slow things down.
- The amount of times you need to change the Equipment Set up ie. swap between ball, circle and band or have the equipment in a different position.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

As a rough guide, you may perform anywhere between **20-25 exercises for a 45 minute class, up to 30 exercises in an hour-long class**. Please note, when you perform an exercise on both sides, eg. Triceps + Band, this takes twice the time, so the exercise is counted twice (as 2 exercises). There is no right or wrong, as long as the clients feel like they have completed a safe and effective workout!

You may find that you don't get through quite as many exercises in a session when you add the equipment in as the clients will take time to swap the equipment over and get set up into the positions with the equipment.

Utilising the Ball, Circle, Band Class Preamble

In a large group class, or any class which contains new clients, you will always begin with the Ball, Circle, Band Class Preamble before moving on to any of the exercises. This preamble should be kept to as short a time as possible. Depending on what the clients have done before, this may include the Pilates Basics and/or a quick reference to the equipment. In an individual class or an injury class, you may go over the Pilates Basics more slowly if necessary.

Utilising Stretches Effectively in Your Class

Stretches can be performed at the beginning of the class, throughout the class or at the end of the class.

For the purpose of increasing muscle length, it is not necessary to perform stretches at the start of a class – the muscles actually stretch more effectively when warmed up. You can go straight into the abdominal exercises after the Ball, Circle, Band Class Preamble, however some clients will really like to stretch at the beginning of a class and feel the benefits of doing so. You may wish to instruct clients to perform their own stretches whilst they are waiting for the class to start as most clients arrive early.

If you choose to perform stretches at the beginning of an individual session, you should stretch the muscles that are specifically tight in that client. If performing stretches at the beginning of a large group class, choose the stretches that assist your clients to gain flexibility in the areas that they will need throughout the workout. For example, if the workout includes a lot of supine abdominal exercises with the legs extended up straight, a Hamstring Stretch + Circle or Band at the beginning of the class will enable the clients to raise their legs higher.

You can intersperse stretches throughout the workout, and stop to stretch the muscle group you have just finished working. It can feel great to stretch at the end of a series, for example, performing an Inner Thigh Stretch + Circle after a series of circle exercises which work the Adductors. Keep in mind though that each time you stop to stretch, the clients have a rest, decreasing the intensity of the workout.

You may decide to wait and perform all of the stretches at the end of the session. If you only stretch at the end of the class, the workout feels more intense. Even if you have performed stretches at the start and throughout the workout, always finish with some more stretches. Aim to stretch the muscles that have been challenged throughout the class. Stretching at the end of the class with have a better effect on muscle length as the muscles are usually more pliable and less resistant to stretching when warmed up.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Programming Using the Centering Principle

The Centering Principle states that you should activate the muscles at the centre of the body first, then work more peripherally. In Pilates, this principle also applies to programming and is why you should always start a class with abdominal exercises, as you need to warm up the abdominals and activate them for all of the other exercises performed, including buttock, shoulder blade and back exercises. If you skip the abdominal exercises and start with a buttock exercise for example, the abdominals will have a harder time trying to stabilise the spine and they haven't been switched on yet.

After working the abdominals, you can move on to work whichever muscle group you like. Remember that using the Centering Principle, you should work on the buttock muscles before performing any leg exercises, and the shoulder blade muscles before any arm exercises. You don't have to strictly follow this rule, but it is a good idea to do so if you have clients who have injuries or muscle activation issues.

You can choose the order of the muscles worked based on the needs of the client/s. If you have a client who has difficulty activating their buttock muscles, you may wish to work on those before any other leg exercises to ensure that the buttock muscles are activated correctly. If a client has neck pain, it is a good idea to work on their Lower Trapezius muscles early on in the session so that the muscles are activated for all other exercises.

Muscles that have worked in a previous exercise can have an affect where clients are likely to feel the next exercise. For example, when performing Inner Thigh Lift + Circle (Circles) prior to the Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats), clients might feel the side lying exercises more in their Adductors rather than their Oblique muscles. If Triceps + Band is done before Plank + Ball, Plank + Ball may be felt more in the arms and Triceps, whereas if Hundreds was performed beforehand, clients may feel it more in their Abdominals.

Layering Exercises for Target Muscles

When designing a class program, try to stick to working the same muscles for a few exercises before swapping to work a different muscle group. Layer more exercises for the same muscle group on top of the previous exercises. Layering exercises is important for a couple of reasons. Firstly, when you keep working the same muscle group to the point of fatigue, strength and endurance is built. The workout becomes more effective and the clients will really feel their muscles working, which most clients usually love! Also, Pilates focuses a lot on the concentration of correct muscle activation. When you perform the first exercise using a particular muscle group, you have to really focus on using that muscle and it can take a while to activate or feel it. If you move on to a different muscle straight away you then have to shift your focus and start activating a totally different muscle group when the first muscle group never really got a chance to work hard.

When targeting a muscle group, start with easier exercises to warm up and activate those particular muscles before moving on to the harder exercises for that muscle group. Please note that the exercises are organised in the manual from easiest to hardest within each series.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Here are some examples of layering exercises from easiest to hardest –

Abdominal Exercises	Buttock Exercises	Upper Back Exercises
Lift Foot + Ball ↓ Lift Foot + Ball ↓ Abdominal Curl + Ball ↓ Oblique Curl + Ball ↓ Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) + Circle ↓ Hundreds Preparation + Circle ↓ Hundreds + Circle ↓ Beats + Circle	Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band ↓ Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band ↓ Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band ↓ Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band ↓ Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Band ↓ Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band ↓ Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band ↓ Crab Walking + Band	Swan + Ball ↓ Breaststroke Arms + Ball ↓ Freestyle + Ball ↓ Lower Trapezius Activation + Band ↓ External Rotation + Band ↓ Rowing + Band ↓ Biceps Half Rollback + Band

When determining how long you should spend on each muscle group and the order in which you work the muscles, take into consideration the needs of the class along with your own preference. Below is an example of one way you may structure a 1 hour class and how long you can spend working each area of the body. Please note that the example below does not include stretches interspersed throughout the program, however this is definitely an option for you to include in your classes.

Focus	Time Code
Stretches (as clients are arriving)	3 minutes
Ball, Circle, Band Class Preamble	5-10 minutes (depending on client's needs); omit if not needed
Abdominals	10-15 minutes
Gluteals	10-12 minutes
Sides, Legs or Inner Thighs	10 minutes
Back, Shoulder Blades or Arms	10 minutes
Stretches	5 ½ minutes
Total Class Time	60 minutes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Caution When Layering Exercises

It is a good idea to keep in mind the cautions below when layering exercises.

Sustained Head Lifting	Weight Bearing Through the Wrists	Sustained Prone	Kneeling
Be careful not to program too many exercises in a row with sustained head lifting as the neck can begin to fatigue and start to strain.	Programming too many exercises in a row where clients need to weight bear through their wrists can cause wrist strain.	Staying in a prone position for multiple exercise can be uncomfortable for some clients can cause neck or back strain.	Be careful not to program too many kneeling exercises in a row as this can compress the structures around the knee joint and cause discomfort.
Sustained Use of the Circle Between Thighs	**Sustained Use of the Band Around Thighs**	**Exercises Requiring Balance**	
Be careful not to program too many inner thigh circle exercises in a row as you may start to feel strain in the lower back, Adductors and Pubic Bone and the circle digging into the inner thighs.	Programming too many exercises in a row where clients have the band around their thighs can cause pain where band digs into the thighs, and also strain the buttock muscles and pelvic joint.	Be careful programming exercises which require balance at the end of long series of working the muscles as the clients may fall eg Pikes after a long Plank abdominal series	

Creating a Flowing Sequence

Creating a class that flows well is very important for the client experience. Try to keep the class flowing so that you are not jumping between working different muscles groups all the time ie. a few back exercises, then a leg exercise, then an arm exercise, then back to a few abdominal exercises, and so on. Stick to working the same muscle group for 3 exercises at a minimum.

Try not to have your class changing position too often, for example rolling from side to side, then standing up, then lying on the stomach, then standing up, then lying on the back, then lying on the stomach. Try not to change the setup of the equipment too often, for example using the ball for one exercise, then the long band for one exercise, then the circle for one exercise, then the ball again, followed by the short band for one exercise. Changing positions/equipment too many times takes up valuable time in your class, especially as some clients take a long time to move around in between positions.

A better option is to have your clients perform a series of exercises in one position before changing positions. For example, if you were lying on your side, you would do all of the exercises on that side before swapping sides. If you are sitting on the ball, put a few seated or prone lying exercises on the ball together before removing the ball. When standing you may want to do a few standing exercises or stretches in a row before going back to lying.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

All Over Body Classes versus Programming for Specific Muscle Groups

As a general rule, try to program your workout so that you are working all over the body, with a good balance of lying on the front, back, sides and also working several different muscle groups. You should also to try to find a balance in the spinal movements that you are performing, aiming to perform a good mix of spinal flexion, extension, lateral flexion and rotation exercises. When performing an hour-long class, you have time to do this.

You may choose however to focus some sessions more on a particular area eg. work the buttocks hard in one session, the arms the next session. This works well when performing a shorter 45-minute class. Within each session you should still try to work at least several body parts, not just one or two muscle groups. Please note that all sessions need to start with abdominal exercises so these must be included in every class.

INTENSITY OF YOUR CLASS

Getting the intensity right for your class participants is extremely important. In this manual, each exercise is labelled with an Intensity Level (1-4) and Difficulty Level (1-4) to assist you in programming your class.

Difficulty is rated on how hard is to actually be able to perform an exercise – this could be due to strength, flexibility or coordination needed or a combination of all of these. Beginner, injured or uncoordinated clients usually require exercises that are on the lower end of the difficulty range, even if they want to work hard. You can increase their intensity by using more intense exercises that are not difficult to perform.

Intensity is how intense the exercise feels ie. how much the muscles burn. For clients wanting to work hard, choose exercises that are on the higher end of the intensity scale. For clients who are deconditioned, unfit or elderly choose exercises of a lower intensity.

Here are some examples of the difficulty and intensity levels that are suitable for specific clients:

Type of Client or Class	Intensity Level	Difficulty Level
Beginner client, wanting to work hard	2-3	1-2
Intermediate clients, wanting to work hard	3-4	2-4
Injured client whose only goal is injury rehab	1-2	1-2
Injured client who also wants to work hard	2-3	1-2
For an elite athlete or advanced/strong person	3-4	2-4
Large Group Class (never use extremely difficult exercises as this can be unsafe in a large group)	1-3	1-3

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Making Your Class Easier

- Use the equipment to make certain exercises easier eg. ball under legs for Supine Abdominal Series
- Choose exercises with a lower intensity level
- Perform less repetitions of each exercise
- Perform more of an all over body workout, without layering quite as many exercises working the same muscle group at a time
- Take more time between exercises
- Change apparatus around more frequently as this takes up time, giving clients a rest
- Intersperse stretches throughout the workout

Making Your Class Harder

- Use the equipment to make certain exercises easier eg. band around thighs for the Side Lying Series
- Choose exercises with a higher intensity level
- Perform more repetitions of each exercise
- Layer a large number of exercises working the same muscle groups one after the other
- Have less rest between each exercise
- Change equipment and body positions less frequently to save time and make transitions between exercises faster
- Leave all of the stretching until the end of the class

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

EXERCISE SUBSTITUTIONS

When programming for a large or small group class, there may often be one or several people in the class who cannot perform certain exercises. You have a few options in this scenario:

- Only use exercises that most or all clients can perform
- Use exercises in which you can give easier levels or modifications to – the equipment makes this much easier
- Have the client perform a substitution exercise that is similar to the one the rest of the class are doing, ideally working the same muscle group

If a client cannot do an exercise, the easiest thing to do is add or remove equipment to make it easier for them eg. if a client can't do Hundreds, adding a band makes it easier. If you were using a circle for Hundreds and it was too hard, remove the circle.

If a client cannot do an exercise, the easiest thing to do is add or remove equipment to make it easier for them eg. if a client cannot hold their legs up in the air to perform Hundreds, adding a band makes it easier.

Sometimes though you will still need to substituting with a completely different exercise, it is easiest to choose an exercise that is in the same series, but appears earlier in the manual and is easier.

A good example of this is in the Standing Series when performing Scooter + Ball or Scooter Lunges + Ball. You might give the option to do Lunges + Band instead for those who cannot balance. During the Kneeling Series, for those who can't do Single Leg Squats + Ball, you might give them the option to Wall Squats + Ball instead. Please see the following table for some Substitution Recommendations.

The substitution exercise that you choose will greatly depend on the reason why the client is unable to perform the exercise. For example, a client may not be able to perform the exercise because of an injury, pregnancy or weakness. As such, if injury or pregnancy are the reason behind the client's inability to perform the exercise, you also need to take into consideration the guidelines around these conditions when prescribing an alternative exercise. For example, in the following table, a recommended substitution for Beats + Circle is Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle, however if your client was heavily pregnant you would not use this substitution but would rather follow the recommended pregnancy guidelines.

If you do need to give a substitution exercise, bear in mind that you will need to cue the client/s quickly through the exercise or give them a quick demonstration of it. Never assume that the client knows how to perform this exercise even if they have performed it before. If your cueing or preventing the rest of the class from flowing well, this will impact the class experience for the other clients. If you are finding that a client requires a great deal of substitution, they may be better suited to a smaller group class or a private session, in which you are more easily able to tailor the class to their individual needs.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Substitution Recommendations

Exercise	Appropriate Substitution
SUPINE ABDOMINAL SERIES	
Lift Foot + Ball	Bent Knee Fallouts **Matwork**
	Lift Foot **Matwork**
Leg Slides + Ball	Lift Foot + Ball
	Leg Slides **Matwork**
Abdominal Curl + Ball	Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) **Matwork**
	Bent Knee Fallouts **Matwork**
	Lift Foot + Ball
Oblique Curl + Ball	Oblique Curl 1 (Feet Down) **Matwork**
	Bent Knee Fallouts **Matwork**
	Lift Foot + Ball
Abdominal Curl Over the Ball	Abdominal Curl + Ball
	Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) **Matwork**
Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle	Bent Knee Fallouts **Matwork**
Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle	Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle
Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle	Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) **Matwork**
	Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle
Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop) + Circle	Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) **Matwork**
	Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
Single Leg Circle + Band	Bent Knee Fallout **Matwork**
	Leg Slides + Ball
	Lift and Extend **Matwork**
Bicycle Legs + Band	Leg Slides + Ball
	Lift and Extend **Matwork**
Bicycle Legs + Ball	Abdominal Curl + Ball
	Leg Slides + Ball
Criss Cross + Ball	Oblique Curl + Ball
	Bicycle Legs + Ball
Pendulum + Ball	Oblique Curl + Ball
Pendulum 1 (Tabletop) + Circle	Pendulum 1 **Matwork**
	Pendulum + Ball
	Oblique Curl 2 (Tabletop) **Matwork**
Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball	Abdominal Curl + Ball
	Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) **Matwork**
Nutcracker 2 (Ball in Hands) + Ball	Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball
	Nutcracker 1 (Tabletop) **Matwork**
	Nutcracker 2 (Legs Extended) **Matwork**
Hundreds + Ball	Abdominal Curl + Ball
Hundreds Preparation + Circle	Hundreds Preparation **Matwork**
	Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet)Down+ Circle
	Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
Hundreds + Circle	Hundreds **Matwork**
	Hundreds + Ball
	Hundreds Preparation + Circle
	Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle
	Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
Hundreds Preparation + Band	Abdominal Curl + Ball
Hundreds + Band	Hundreds **Matwork**

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

	Hundreds Preparation + Band Hundreds + Ball
Double Leg Stretch Preparation + Circle	Abdominal Curl + Circle Hundreds Preparation + Circle
Beats + Circle	Beats **Matwork** Hundreds Preparation + Circle Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
SITTING ON THE BALL SERIES	
Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball	Bent Knee Fallout **Matwork**
Sitting Lift Foot + Ball	Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball Lift Foot + Ball
Sitting Twist + Ball	Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball Sitting Lift Foot + Ball Pendulum + Ball
PLANK ABDOMINAL SERIES	
Plank + Ball	Plank 1 (On the Knees) **Matwork** Supine Abdominal Series
Pilates Push Ups + Ball	Pilates Push Ups 1 (On the Knees) **Matwork** Supine Abdominal Series Chest Press + Circle Hug a Tree + Band
Tucks + Ball	Plank + Ball Pilates Push Ups + Ball Supine Abdominal Series
Pikes + Ball	Plank + Ball Tucks + Ball Supine Abdominal Series
Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball	Plank + Ball Plank 1 (On the Knees) **Matwork** Supine Abdominal Series Front Rowing Series
Reverse Plank 2 (On the Feet) + Ball	Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball Plank + Ball Plank 2 **Matwork** Supine Abdominal Series Front Rowing Series
BRIDGING ON THE BALL SERIES	
Bridge Twist + Ball	Pelvic Lift + Ball Abdominal Curl Over the Ball Pendulum + Ball Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) **Matwork**
Pelvic Lift + Ball	Pelvic Curl + Ball 1 (Rolling up and Down) Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) **Matwork**
PELVIC CURL SERIES	
Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Band	Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down * Matwork* Clam + Band Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band
Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Band	Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) **Matwork** Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) **Matwork** Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band Clam Kickout + Band

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

	Crab Walking + Band
Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Circle	Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) **Matwork**
Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Circle	Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) **Matwork** Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) **Matwork**
Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball	Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) **Matwork** Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Band Bridge Twist + Ball Pelvic Lift + Ball
Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball	Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) **Matwork** Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Band
Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift) + Ball	Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift) **Matwork**
Hamstring Curl 1 (Double Leg) + Ball	Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball Pelvic Lift + Ball
SIDE LYING SERIES	
Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band	Clam 1 (Feet Down) **Matwork**
Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band	Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band Clam 2 (Feet Up) **Matwork**
Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band	Clam 3 (90 Degrees) **Matwork** Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band
Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band	Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) **Matwork**
Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band	Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) **Matwork**
Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band	Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) **Matwork**
Circles + Band	Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band Circles **Matwork**
Hot Potato + Band	Circles + Band Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band Hot Potato **Matwork**
Straight Leg Raise + Band	Circles + Band Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band Straight Leg Raise **Matwork**
Rectangles + Band	Circles + Band Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band Rectangles **Matwork**
Bicycles + Band	Straight Leg Raise + Band Hot Potato + Band Bicycles **Matwork**
Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle	Inner Thigh Lift **Matwork** Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

	Bent Knee Fallout **Matwork**
Inner Thigh Lift 2 (Circles) + Circle	Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle Inner Thigh Lift **Matwork** Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle Bent Knee Fallout **Matwork**
Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle	Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) **Matwork** Pendulum 1 (Tabletop) + Circle Oblique Curl 1 (Feet Down) **Matwork** Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series **Matwork**
Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting) + Circle	Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting) **Matwork** Oblique Curl 2 (Tabletop) **Matwork** Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series **Matwork**
Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats) + Circle	Double Leg Lift 1 (Head Down) + Circle Double Leg Lift 3 (Beats) **Matwork** Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle
Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors) + Circle	Double Leg Lift 1, 2 or 3 + Circle Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors) **Matwork** Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
KNEELING SERIES	
Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band	Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) **Matwork** Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) **Matwork** Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band
Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band	Horsekick 2 (Pulses) **Matwork** Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) **Matwork** Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band
Horsekick 3 (Sidekick) + Band	Horsekick 2 (Sidekick) **Matwork** Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift) **Matwork** Bicycles + Band
Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle	Prone Quad Stretch + Ball Hip Flexor Stretch **Matwork** Squats + Circle (Between Thighs) Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) **Matwork**
Hinge 2 (Arms Overhead) + Circle	Prone Quad Stretch + Ball Hip Flexor Stretch **Matwork** Squats + Circle (Chest Press) Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) **Matwork**
Triceps + Band	Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band Serratus Anterior Activation **Matwork** Flight ** Matwork**
STANDING SERIES	
Crab Walking + Band	Squats + Band (Around Thighs) Buttock exercises + Band – Side Lying Series Wall Squats + Ball Pelvic Curl Series **Matwork** Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series **Matwork**
Penguin Walking + Band	Squats + Band (Around Thighs) Buttock exercises + Band – Side Lying Series

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

	Wall Squats + Ball Pelvic Curl Series **Matwork** Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series **Matwork*
Standing Hip Abduction + Band	Crab Walks + Band Squats + Band (Around Thighs)
Standing Hip Extension + Band	Penguin Walks + Band Squats + Band (Around Thighs)
Squats + Band (Around Thighs)	Wall Squats + Ball Crab Walking + Band Buttock exercises + Band – Side Lying Series Pelvic Curl Series **Matwork**
Squats + Circle (Between Thighs)	Squats + Band (Around Thighs) Wall Squats + Ball Pelvic Curl Series **Matwork**
Squats + Circle (Chest Press)	Squats + Circle (Between Thighs) Squats + Band (Around Thighs) Wall Squats + Ball Bicep Press + Circle
Squats + Band (Bicep Curl)	Squats + Band (Around Thighs) Squats + Circle (Between Thighs) Wall Squats + Ball
Lunges + Band	Crab Walking + Band Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball Buttock exercises + Band – Side Lying Series
Wall Squats + Ball	Pelvic Curl Series **Matwork**
Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball	Wall Squats + Ball Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series **Matwork**
Standing Sidekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball	Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball Kneeling Sidekick 1 (Up and Down) **Matwork** Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series **Matwork** Crab Walking + Band
Standing Sidekick 2 (Side to Side) + Ball	Kneeling Sidekick 1 + Ball (Up and Down) Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball Kneeling Sidekick (Side to Side) **Matwork** Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series **Matwork** Crab Walking + Band
Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball	Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) **Matwork** Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series **Matwork**
Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball	Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) **Matwork** Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series **Matwork**
Scooter + Ball	Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball Single Leg Wall Squat + Ball Lunges + Band Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series **Matwork**
Scooter Lunges + Ball	Scooter + Ball Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

	Single Leg Wall Squat + Ball Lunges + Band Buttock exercises – Side Lying Series *Matwork*
PRONE LYING SERIES	
Swan + Ball	Swan Preparation *Matwork* Serratus Anterior Activation Exercise *Matwork* Lower Trapezius Activation 2 (Arms at 90°)*Matwork* External Rotation + Band Lower Trapezius Activation 3 (Arms by Side) *Matwork*
Breaststroke Arms + Ball	Swan + Ball Breaststroke Arm Preparation 1 (Head Down) *Matwork* Breaststroke Arm Preparation 2 (Head Up) *Matwork* Rowing + Band
Freestyle Arms + Ball	Swan + Ball Lower Trapezius Activation 1 (Arms Overhead) *Matwork* Freestyle Arms *Matwork* Lower Trapezius Activation + Band
Breaststroke Legs + Ball	Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball Pelvic Curl + Band (Openings) Breaststroke Legs *Matwork*
Freestyle Legs + Ball	Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball Freestyle Legs *Matwork*
Freestyle + Ball	Freestyle Arms + Ball Freestyle Legs + Ball Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball Freestyle *Matwork*
BACK ROWING SERIES	
Lower Trapezius Activation + Band	Lower Trapezius Activation 1 (Arms Overhead) *Matwork* Lower Trapezius Activation 2 (Arms at 90°) *Matwork* Lower Trapezius Activation 3 (Arms by Side) *Matwork*
External Rotation + Band	Rowing + Band Lower Trapezius Activation + Band Lower Trapezius Activation 1, 2 or 3 *Matwork*
Rowing + Band	External Rotation + Band Lower Trapezius Activation + Band Lower Trapezius Activation 1, 2 or 3 *Matwork*
Biceps Half Rollback + Band	Rowing + Band Standing Biceps + Band Bicep Press + Circle
Standing Biceps + Band	Rowing + Band Biceps Half Rollback + Band Bicep Press + Circle
FRONT ROWING SERIES	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band	Rowing + Band Bicep Press + Circle
Hug a Tree + Band	Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band Rowing + Band Chest Press + Circle
Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band	Triceps + Band (Kneeling Series) Rowing + Band Flight **Matwork** Tricep Circles **Matwork**
SIDE ARM SERIES	
Draw a Sword + Band	Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band External Rotation + Band Rowing + Band
ARM SERIES WITH THE CIRCLE	
Bicep Press + Circle	Standing Biceps + Band Biceps Half Rollback + Band Lower Trapezius Activation + Band
Chest Press + Circle	Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band Hug a Tree + Band Serratus Anterior Activation Exercise **Matwork**
STRETCHING SERIES	
Prone Quad Stretch + Ball	Kneeling Quad Stretch **Matwork** Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch **Matwork**
Mermaid Stretch + Ball	Mermaid Stretch **Matwork** Prayer Stretch + Ball Prayer Stretch **Matwork** Chest Stretch**Matwork**
Prayer Stretch + Ball	Mermaid Stretch + Ball Chest Stretch **Matwork** Mermaid Stretch **Matwork**
Thoracic Extension Stretch + Ball	Prayer Stretch + Ball Mermaid Stretch + Ball
Hamstring Stretch + Band	Hamstring Stretch + Circle
Hamstring Stretch + Circle	Hamstring Stretch + Band
Inner Thigh Stretch + Circle	Hamstring Stretch + Circle

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SAMPLE CLASS #1

This program shows how you could create an entire class around using the ball. The modifications here to make it easier and harder are from the matwork repertoire of exercises. This shows you how you can sometimes challenge clients by removing the ball (making it harder) or eliminating the need for control and balance by performing the exercise on the mat instead (making it easier).

Note that there is more time allocated for the first exercise in each new position as this takes time with the ball. Subsequent exercises in the same position do not require as much time as the client will already be in the correct position.

Exercise Name	Easier	Harder
Class Preamble and Pilates Basics		
Lift Foot + Ball		Lift Foot
Leg Slides + Ball		Leg Slides
SWAP SIDES		
Leg Slides + Ball		Leg Slides
Abdominal Curl + Ball		Abdominal Curl 2 (Tabletop)
Oblique Curl + Ball		Oblique Curl 2 (Tabletop)
Pendulum + Ball		Pendulum 1 (Tabletop)
Bicycle Legs + Ball		Bicycle Legs
SWAP SIDES		
Bicycle Legs + Ball		Bicycle Legs
Criss Cross + Ball		Criss Cross
Hundreds + Ball		Hundreds
Plank + Ball	Plank 1 (On the Knees)	
Pilates Push Ups + Ball	Pilates Push Ups 1 (On the Knees)	
Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball	Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down)	
Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Ball	Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings)	
Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift) + Ball	Pelvic Curl 3 (Single Leg Lift)	
Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball	Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend)	
Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball	Horsekick 2 (Pulses)	
SWAP SIDES		
Standing Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Ball	Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend)	
Standing Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Ball	Horsekick 2 (Pulses)	
Swan + Ball	Swan Preparation	
Breaststroke Arms + Ball		Breaststroke Arms
Freestyle Arms + Ball		Freestyle Arms
Freestyle Legs + Ball		Freestyle Legs
Freestyle + Ball		Freestyle
Breaststroke Legs + Ball		Breaststroke Legs
Scooter + Ball		
Scooter Lunges + Ball		
SWAP SIDES		
Scooter + Ball		

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Scooter Lunges + Ball		
Wall Squats + Ball		
Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball	Wall Squats + Ball	
SWAP SIDES		
Single Leg Wall Squats + Ball	Wall Squats + Ball	
Prayer Stretch + Ball		Prayer Stretch
Quadriceps Stretch + Ball	Kneeling Quad Stretch	
SWAP SIDES		
Quadriceps Stretch + Ball	Kneeling Quad Stretch	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SAMPLE CLASS #2

This program shows how you can create an entire class with only using the circle and band. Modifications have been given to show where exercises can be made easier or harder by using an alternative piece of equipment or without any equipment at all.

Exercise Name	Easier	Harder
Class Preamble and Pilates Basics		
Single Leg Circle + Band		Single Leg Circle
SWAP SIDES		
Single Leg Circle + Band		Single Leg Circle
Bicycle Legs + Band		Bicycle Legs
SWAP SIDES		
Bicycle Legs + Band		Criss Cross
Hundreds Preparation + Circle	Hundreds Preparation + Band	
Hundreds + Circle	Hundreds + Band	
Abdominal Curl 2 + Circle	Abdominal Curl 1 + Circle	
Oblique Curl 2 + Circle	Oblique Curl 1 + Circle	
Pendulum + Circle	Pendulum 1 (Tabletop)	
Clam Kickout 2 + Band	Clam Kickout 2	
Clam Kickout 3 + Band	Clam Kickout 3	
Straight Leg Raise + Band	Straight Leg Raise	
SWAP SIDES		
Clam Kickout 2 + Band	Clam Kickout 2	
Clam Kickout 3 + Band	Clam Kickout 3	
Straight Leg Raise + Band	Straight Leg Raise	
Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting) + Circle	Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting)	
Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors) + Circle	Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors)	
SWAP SIDES		
Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting) + Circle	Double Leg Lift 2 (Upper Body Lifting)	
Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors) + Circle	Double Leg Lift 4 (Scissors)	
Lower Trapezius Activation + Band		
External Rotation + Band		
Rowing + Band		
Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band		
Draw a Sword + Band		
SWAP SIDES		
Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band		
Draw a Sword + Band		
Triceps + Band		
SWAP SIDES		
Triceps + Band		
Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle		Hinge 1 (Arms in Front)
Hinge 2 (Arms Overhead) + Circle		Hinge 2 (Arms Overhead)

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Squats (Chest Press) + Circle	
Squats + Circle (Between Thighs)	
Hamstring Stretch + Circle	Hamstring Stretch + Band
Inner Thigh Stretch + Circle	
SWAP SIDES	
Hamstring Stretch + Circle	Hamstring Stretch + Band
Inner Thigh Stretch + Circle	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SAMPLE CLASS #3

This class has been programmed to work each body part in a layered system. As such, there is some movement back and forth between using the various equipment. If taking a larger class, it would be best to program all of the ball exercises together at the beginning of the class then put the balls away so that they do not roll around the room.

Exercise	Easier	Harder
Class Preamble and Pilates Basics		
Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball		
Lift Foot + Ball		Lift Foot
Nutcracker + Ball (Legs on Ball)		Nutcracker 1 (Tabletop)
Nutcracker + Ball (Ball in Hands)	Nutcracker 2 (Legs Extended)	
Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle		Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle
Double Leg Stretch Preparation + Circle	Remove circle or perform in tabletop	
Beats + Circle	Beats	
Plank + Ball	Plank 1 (On the Knees)	
Tucks + Ball	Plank 1 (On the Knees)	
Abdominal Curl Over the Ball		
Bridge Twist + Ball	Oblique Curl 1 (Feet Down)	
Pelvic Lift + Ball	Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Band	
Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Ball	Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Band	
Hamstring Curl 1 (Double Leg) + Ball	Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Circle	
Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle		Inner Thigh Lift
Inner Thigh Lift 2 (Circles) + Circle		Inner Thigh Lift + Pulses
SWAP SIDES		
Inner Thigh Lift 1 (Up and Down) + Circle		Inner Thigh Lift
Inner Thigh Lift 2 (Circles) + Circle		Inner Thigh Lift + Pulses
Biceps Half Rollback + Band		
Standing Biceps + Band		
Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band		
Hug a Tree + Band		
Bicep Press + Circle		
SWAP SIDES		
Bicep Press + Circle		
Squats + Circle (Chest Press)	Chest Press + Circle	
Squats + Band (Around Thighs)	Wall Squats + Ball	
Crab Walking + Band	Squats + Band (Around Thighs)	
Standing Hip Extension + Band	Penguin Walking + Band	
SWAP SIDES		
Standing Hip Extension + Band	Penguin Walking + Band	
Scooter Lunges + Ball	Scooter + Ball	
SWAP SIDES		
Scooter Lunges + Ball	Scooter + Ball	
Prone Quad Stretch + Ball	Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SWAP SIDES	
Prone Quad Stretch + Ball	Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch
Mermaid Stretch + Ball	Mermaid Stretch
SWAP SIDES	
Mermaid Stretch + Ball	Mermaid Stretch

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SAMPLE CLASS #4

This is a sample pregnancy class program.

Exercise Name	Easier	Harder
Class Preamble and Pilates Basics		
Prayer Stretch + Ball		
Sitting Pelvic Tilt + Ball		
Sitting Twist + Ball		
Lower Trapezius Activation + Band		
External Rotation + Band		
Standing Biceps + Band		
Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band		
Hug a Tree + Band		
Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band		
SWAP SIDES		
Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band		
Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band	Clam 1 (Feet Down)	Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band
Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band	Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down)	Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band
Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band	Clam 3 (90 Degrees)	
Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band	Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees)	
Circles + Band	Circles	
Straight Leg Raise + Band	Straight Leg Raise	
SWAP SIDES		
Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band	Clam 1 (Feet Down)	Clam 2 (Feet Up) + Band
Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band	Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down)	Clam Kickout 2 (Feet Up) + Band
Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band	Clam 3 (90 Degrees)	
Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees) + Band	Clam Kickout 3 (90 Degrees)	
Circles + Band	Circles	
Straight Leg Raise + Band	Straight Leg Raise	
Squats + Band (Around Thighs)	Perform without band	
Rowing + Band		
Draw a Sword + Band		
SWAP SIDES		
Draw a Sword + Band		
Triceps + Band		
SWAP SIDES		
Triceps + Band		
Squats + Band (Bicep Curl)	Standing Biceps + Band	
Bicep Press + Circle		
SWAP SIDES		
Bicep Press + Circle		
Chest Press + Circle		
Squats + Circle (Between Thighs)	Squats + Band (Around Thighs)	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Squats + Circle (Chest Press)	Squats + Circle (Between Thighs)
Prayer Stretch + Ball	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SAMPLE CLASS #5

This is a sample program for clients with neck pain who struggles to lift their head in the abdominal exercises.

Exercise Name	Easier	Harder
Class Preamble and Pilates Basics		
Thoracic Extension Stretch + Ball		
Single Leg Circle + Band		Single Leg Circle
SWAP SIDES		
Single Leg Circle + Band		Single Leg Circle
Toe Taps		
Inner Thigh Squeeze 2 (Tabletop) + Circle	Inner Thigh Squeeze 1 (Feet Down) + Circle	
Pendulum + Ball		Pendulum 1 (Tabletop)
Pendulum + Circle	Pendulum 1 (Tabletop)	
Serratus Anterior Activation Exercise		
Plank 1 + Ball (Level 1)		
Breaststroke Legs + Ball	Breaststroke Legs	
Freestyle Legs + Ball	Freestyle Legs	
Standing Sidekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball		Kneeling Sidekick 1 (Up and Down)
Standing Sidekick 2 (Side to Side) + Ball		Kneeling Sidekick 2 (Side to Side)
SWAP SIDES		
Standing Sidekick 1 (Up and Down) + Ball		Kneeling Sidekick 1 (Up and Down)
Standing Sidekick 2 (Side to Side) + Ball		Kneeling Sidekick 2 (Side to Side)
Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band	Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down)	
Hot Potato + Band	Hot Potato	
Bicycles + Band	Bicycles	
SWAP SIDES		
Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down) + Band	Clam Kickout 1 (Feet Down)	
Hot Potato + Band	Hot Potato	
Bicycles + Band	Bicycles	
Squats + Band (Around Thighs)		
Swan Preparation + Ball		Swan Preparation
Lower Trapezius Activation 1 (Arms Overhead)	Lower Trapezius Activation 2 or 3	
Lower Trapezius Activation + Band	Lower Trapezius Activation 1, 2 or 3	
External Rotation + Band	Flight	
Rowing + Band		
Biceps Half Rollback + Band		
Triceps + Band	Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band	
SWAP SIDES		

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Triceps + Band	Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band
Prayer Stretch + Ball	Prayer Stretch
Mermaid Stretch + Ball	Mermaid Stretch
SWAP SIDES	
Mermaid Stretch + Ball	Mermaid Stretch
Chest Stretch	
Neck Stretch	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SAMPLE CLASS #6

This is a sample program for clients with poor abdominal and Gluteal strength who struggle to maintain tabletop position.

Exercise Name	Easier	Harder
Class Preamble and Pilates Basics		
Quadriceps Stretch + Ball	Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch	
SWAP SIDES		
Quadriceps Stretch + Ball	Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch	
Lift Foot + Ball		Lift Foot
Abdominal Curl + Ball	Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down)	
Oblique Curl + Ball	Oblique Curl 1 (Feet Down)	
Nutcracker 1 (Legs on Ball) + Ball		
Hundreds + Ball		Hundreds + Circle or Band
Bicycle Legs + Band		Bicycle Legs
SWAP SIDES		
Bicycle Legs + Band		Criss Cross
Hundred Preparation + Band		Hundreds Preparation
Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band	Clam 1 (Feet Down)	
Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band	Clam 3 (90 Degrees)	
SWAP SIDES		
Clam 1 (Feet Down) + Band	Clam 1 (Feet Down)	
Clam 3 (90 Degrees) + Band	Clam 3 (90 Degrees)	
Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down) + Band	Pelvic Curl 1 (Rolling Up and Down)	
Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings) + Band	Pelvic Curl 2 (Openings)	
Penguin Walking	Penguin Walking without band	
Squats + Band (Around Thighs)	Wall Squats + Ball	
Squats + Circle (Between Thighs)	Squats + Band (Around Thighs)	
Breaststroke Legs + Ball		Breaststroke Legs
Freestyle Legs + Ball		Freestyle Legs
Triceps + Band		
SWAP SIDES		
Triceps + Band		
Biceps + Band (Standing)		
Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band		
Hug a Tree + Band		
Bicep Press + Circle		
SWAP SIDES		
Bicep Press + Circle		
Chest Press + Circle		
Plank + Ball (Level 1)	Plank 1 (On the Knees)	
Pilates Push Ups + Ball	Pilates Push Ups 1 (On the Knees)	
Prayer Stretch + Ball		
Mermaid Stretch + Ball	Mermaid Stretch	
SWAP SIDES		

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Mermaid Stretch + Ball	Mermaid Stretch
Gluteal Stretch Supine	
SWAP SIDES	
Gluteal Stretch Supine	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

SAMPLE CLASS #7

This is a sample intermediate class program for clients with good upper body strength who want to be challenged and work hard.

Exercise Name	Easier	Harder
Class Preamble and Pilates Basics		
Abdominal Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle		
Oblique Curl 1 (Feet Down) + Circle		
Pendulum 1 + Circle	Pendulum 1 (Tabletop)	
Double Leg Stretch Preparation + Circle		
Hundreds + Band	Hundreds	
Nutcracker + Ball (Ball in Hands)	Nutcracker 2 (Legs Extended)	
Plank + Ball (Level 3)	Levels 1 or 2	
Pilates Push Ups + Ball (Level 3)	Levels 1 or 2	
Pikes + Ball	Tucks + Ball	
Reverse Plank 2 (On the Feet) + Ball	Reverse Plank 1 (On the Knees) + Ball	
Breaststroke Arms + Ball		
Freestyle Arms + Ball		
Freestyle + Ball		
External Rotation + Band		
Rowing + Band		
Biceps Half Rollback + Band		
Draw a Sword + Band		
SWAP SIDES		
Draw a Sword + Band		
Triceps + Band		
SWAP SIDES		
Triceps + Band		
Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band		
SWAP SIDES		
Single Arm Overhead Triceps + Band		
Offering 1 (Arms Extending) + Band		
Hug a Tree + Band		
Bicep Press + Circle		
SWAP SIDES		
Bicep Press + Circle		
Squats + Circle (Chest Press)	Chest Press + Circle	
Squats + Band (Bicep Curl)	Standing Biceps + Band	
Hinge 1 (Arms in Front) + Circle	Hinge 1 (Arms in Front)	
Hinge 2 (Arms Overhead) + Circle	Hinge 2 (Arms Overhead)	
Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band	Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend)	
Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band	Horsekick 2 (Pulses)	
Horsekick 3 (Sidekick) + Band	Horsekick 3 (Sidekick)	
SWAP SIDES		
Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend) + Band	Horsekick 1 (Bend and Extend)	

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Horsekick 2 (Pulses) + Band	Horsekick 2 (Pulses)	
Horsekick 3 (Sidekick) + Band	Horsekick 3 (Sidekick)	
Lunges + Band		Scooter Lunges + Ball
SWAP SIDES		
Lunges + Band		Scooter Lunges + Ball
Gluteal Stretch Prone		
SWAP SIDES		
Gluteal Stretch Prone		
Prayer Stretch + Ball		

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

PRACTISE PROGRAMMING A CLASS #1: GENERAL CLASS

Use the section below to practise writing your own class choreography. You do not need to complete this prior to attending the face to face course. Please note, times are based on a 1 hour class.

	Exercise Name	Duration	Notes
STRETCHES (3 minutes as clients are arriving)			
BALL, CIRCLE, BAND CLASS PREAMBLE (4 ½ minutes)	Class Preamble and Pilates Basics	4 ½ minutes	
ABDOMINALS (15 minutes)			
GLUTEALS (12 minutes)			
SIDES, LEGS OR INNER THIGHS (10 minutes)			

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

BACK, SHOULDER BLADES OR ARMS (10 minutes)			
STRETCHES (5 ½ minutes)			
Total Class Time =			

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

PRACTISE PROGRAMMING A CLASS #2: GENERAL CLASS WITH STRETCHES INTERSPERSED

Use the section below to practise writing your own class choreography. You do not need to complete this prior to attending the face to face course.

	Exercise Name	Duration	Notes
STRETCHES (as clients are arriving)			
BALL, CIRCLE, BAND CLASS PREAMBLE	Class Preamble and Pilates Basics (Omit if not required)		
ABDOMINALS			
BACK, SHOULDER BLADES OR ARMS			
STRETCHES			
GLUTEALS			

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

STRETCHES			
SIDES, LEGS OR INNER THIGHS			
STRETCHES			
Total Class Time =			

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

PRACTISE PROGRAMMING A CLASS #3: SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALISED CLASS

Use the section below to practise writing your own class choreography. You do not need to complete this prior to attending the face to face course.

Case Study: …….

Exercise Name	Duration	Notes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH + SAFETY

The following section looks at how to stay safe and minimise hazards in your career as a Pilates instructor

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Recommended Procedures

We always recommend keeping a cleaning and/or maintenance log for your Pilates equipment. The guidelines set by The Australian Fitness Industry Risk Management Manual states that -

- It is your responsibility to ensure that equipment in your facility is in good working order.
- You must instruct your participants on -
    - How to properly use and care for the equipment (eg. wiping down equipment after use),
    - How to properly use the equipment (following the cuing formula and supervision of safety),
    - Ensuring the equipment is appropriate for the physical size/skill level of the participant.
- Retaining manufacturer's instruction documents.
- Undertaking and documenting equipment safety inspections in both a formal and informal manner, according to manufacturer recommendations.

A great deal of negligence claims in the fitness industry are related to a participant's use of equipment. Incorrect use of equipment is one of the top six risk issues identified by Australian fitness industry professionals.

Maintaining accurate cleaning and maintenance logs are important to help prevent equipment breakdown and minimise any potential losses which may occur. Be sure to test equipment before use, follow manufacturer's instructions, keep equipment clean, disinfected and well ventilated, document equipment replacement, inspect and maintain exercise equipment and remove from use if unsuitable, ensure equipment is properly stored and not left lying around and maintain exercise equipment records such as cleaning, inspections, and maintenance.

Ball

Cleaning

The balls can be cleaned quite simply with disinfectant wipes, a cloth dampened with a mild soap and water mixture or Isopropyl (rubbing) Alcohol. Never use bleach solutions, oils or other chemicals as they can cause softening, discolouration and distortion of shape. How often they need cleaning will depend on the conditions and frequency of use. If they are being used frequently and not allowed to air dry properly in between uses, they will need to be cleaned more regularly. Always test the product you are using to ensure it does not damage the ball material and follow manufacturer's instructions.

Maintenance

As previously mentioned, try to choose balls which are durable and have high burst-resistance as they will not need replacing as frequently. Frequent and heavy use and less durable material will cause the balls to lose their burst resistance much faster.

Ensure that the ball is not over-filled with air. You want the ball to have a slight amount of give when used, this will prevent it from being too tight and round. If the ball is too full it will be more likely to

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

slide and roll out from underneath the client. For most exercises, you want to have a little give on the surface of the ball which provides more stability.

The balls tend to deflate over time, so you should regularly check that the balls are filled with the appropriate amount of air and if not, they will need to be inflated using a pump.

Remember to always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Inflation

Inflate your Pilates ball as per the manufacturer's instructions

Stretching

If you purchase a ball of low quality, over time the fabric/material stretches. The next time you pump the ball up, it can be bigger or warp. If this happens, you need to replace the ball immediately.

Trip Hazards

The balls can provide a trip hazard if there are too many clients in one room at a time, they are not put away correctly or they are allowed to roll around the room. It is important that the balls are stored appropriately and the classes are not overfull. A convenient way to prevent the balls from rolling around the room is to place them on the floor in the centre of the circle beside the mat. If the circle is being used, then a long and short band around the base of the ball will usually be enough to prevent them from rolling. The instructor should always keep an eye out for the location of all balls throughout the class to ensure that they are not rolling round the room.

Providing Additional Stability for Unstable Clients

As the ball is an unstable surface it is possible that it may move while the client is using it or about to use it. Take extra care with clients that are new, elderly or pregnant for any exercises which may be difficult to transition into and out of. For clients who need extra assistance preforming an exercise, they may be able to stand near a wall for extra stability until more confident. Alternatively, you should stand next to them to assist them if they start to lose balance.

Latex Allergies

Some exercise balls contain latex. Latex allergies are rare, but please be aware that some clients may have a latex allergy and if so, they may not be able to use the balls in your class. You can also purchase latex free balls.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

Circle

Cleaning

The circles can be cleaned quite simply with disinfectant wipes, a cloth dampened with a mild soap and water mixture or Isopropyl (rubbing) Alcohol. How often they need cleaning will depend on the conditions and frequency of use. If they are being frequently used and not allowed to air dry properly in between uses, they will need to be cleaned more regularly. Always test the product you are using to ensure it does not damage the circle material and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Trip Hazards

The circles can provide a trip hazard if there are too many clients in one room at a time or they are not put away correctly. It is important that the circles are stored appropriately and the classes are not overfull. The instructor should keep an eye out for the location of all circles throughout the class.

Maintenance

As previously mentioned, try to choose circles which are durable as they will not need replacing as frequently. Frequent and heavy use and less durable material will cause the circles to warp or deteriorate much faster.

When storing the circles, ensure that they are stacked one on top of the other. If they are squashed into one another the structure will bend and the foam may deteriorate. Keep an eye out for any circles which have warped into ovals, have tears in the foam or exposed pieces of metal or hard plastic which should be covered or any circles which have lost their tension and replace them immediately.

Safe Placement and Use of the Circle

The circle can be dangerous if used incorrectly as it basically acts as a spring-loaded weapon if it goes flying across the room. There are a few important considerations to ensure client's safety at all times.

- When the circle is held in the hands
    - Ensure that the hands are at chest height not at face height (this will prevent the circle from hitting the client in the face if they lose control of the circle)
    - Do not allow the shoulders to hunch up toward the ears
- When the circle is placed between the thighs
    - Ensure that it is not over the knee joint itself (if it is over the joint it can place too much pressure on the ligaments and cartilage structures in the knee)
    - Ensure that it is against the inner thigh muscles
    - The circle should be roughly horizontal
    - The circle may not always be completely horizontal but the priority is that the handles should be in complete contact with the thighs (sitting flat, not on an angle)
    - Beware of people who bruise easily
- When the circle is placed between the shins
    - Ensure that it is not over the ankle joint itself
    - Ensure that the legs are even and one is not dropping lower than the other

For any exercise using the circle it is more important that the client has correct technique than how hard they are squeezing the circle. If they lose technique, this is when the circle is likely to fly out and injure someone. Some indicators of poor technique/squeezing the circle too hard include -

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

- Shaking
- Holding the breath
- Shoulders hunching
- Pelvis rocking
- Uneven pressure through both sides

Band

Cleaning

The bands can be cleaned quite simply with disinfectant wipes, a cloth dampened with a mild soap and water mixture or Isopropyl (rubbing) Alcohol. How often they need cleaning will depend on the conditions and frequency of use. If they are being frequently used and not allowed to air dry properly in between uses, they will need to be cleaned more regularly. Sweat which remains on the band can erode the band so regular cleaning will prolong the life of the bands. Always test the product you are using to ensure it does not damage the band material and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Trip Hazards

The bands can provide a trip hazard if there are too many clients in one room at a time or they are not put away correctly. It is important that the bands are stored appropriately and classes are not overfull. The instructor should always keep an eye out for the location of all bands throughout the class.

Maintenance

As previously mentioned, try to choose bands which are durable as they will not need replacing as frequently. Frequent and heavy use and less durable material will cause the bands to tear or deteriorate much faster.

When storing or transporting the bands, ensure that they are stored out of direct sunlight. If they are exposed to sunlight for an extended period they can become brittle, lose their elasticity and break easily resulting in injury.

It is important as an instructor that you regularly check the bands. If you see any bands which have deteriorated, have nicks or tears in them, be sure to replace them immediately. Any bands with nicks or tears in them are highly dangerous as they can snap and break whilst under tension causing injury.

Safe Placement and Use of the Band

- When the short band is used around the thighs
    - Ensure that it is never placed over the knee joint itself (this can place strain on the knee ligaments and cartilages which is not good for the joint)
    - Spread the band out to ensure that it is not digging in
    - Beware of people who bruise easily
- When the long band is used around the feet in sitting
    - Ensure that the band is flat so that it doesn't bunch up and flick off the feet
    - Keep the knees slightly bent – this changes angle of foot so band is under arch of foot, making it more secure
    - Ensure that the band is actually around the arches of the feet not the toes

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

    - Encourage clients to wear non-slip socks or remove their socks to increase grip
    - Ensure that there is not too much tension on the band
    - Explain to clients that If the band does slip off, they should close their eyes and turn the head to the side
- When using the long band in four point kneeling
    - Loop the band around hand or grip onto the band for extra security and safety (rather than just placing flat underneath the hand) to prevent it from slipping out

For all of the band exercises -

- In the start position, just take up slack on the band, you do not need to have too much tension on the band to start as the work is throughout and at the end of the movements – if there is too much tension on the band it may snap due to no more length/stretch as it is pulled
- Hold onto the band tightly, with a closed fist (rather than just lightly between the fingers) or wrap the band around the hand
- Keep the wrists in a neutral position
- Take care with long nails, perhaps bunch the band up in the hand so that it is not flat and likely to tear with the nails poking into it

For any exercise using the band it is more important that the client has correct technique than how much tension they have on the band. If they lose technique, this is when they are likely to cause injury. Some indicators of poor technique/pressing out on the band too hard include -

- Shaking
- Holding the breath
- Shoulders hunching
- Pelvis rocking
- Ankles twisting/rolling
- Wrists flexing/extending or deviating laterally

Latex Allergies

Some bands contain latex. Latex allergies are rare, but please be aware that some clients may have a latex allergy and if so, they may not be able to use the bands in your class. You can also purchase latex free bands.

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*

REFERENCES

Bibliography of references contained in this manual

REFERENCES

Mayoclinic.org. (2016). Separation of the Abdominal Muscles During Pregnancy - Mayo Clinic. [online] http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/multimedia/separation-of-the-abdominal-muscles-during-pregnancy/img-20005895.

Merck Manuals Consumer Version. (2016). Pelvic Floor Disorders. [online] http://www.merckmanuals.com/home/women-s-health-issues/pelvic-floor-disorders/pelvic-floor-disorders.

Whitcome, K., Shapiro, L. and Lieberman, D. (2007). Fetal Load and the Evolution of Lumbar Lordosis in Bipedal Hominins. Nature, 450(7172), pp.1075-1078.

All images in this manual which are not cited remain the property of Studio Pilates International®

© Studio Pilates International *All rights reserved copying prohibited*