

Basic 10 Challenge

July 1-31, 2014



“The Basic 10 Challenge”

Because many of my clients ask for Pilates routines that they can do if they can't come to class or are away on vacation, I've been suggesting a routine of 10 key exercises known as the Basic 10. Together, these exercises make up a complete, varied ensemble that's perfect for a quick, yet fulfilling, daily practice of approximately 10 minutes. And to encourage everyone to get going, particularly with summer in France meaning long holidays away, I developed the idea for a Challenge. The goal is to do them wherever you are! Everybody has an extra 10 minutes some time during the course of a day.

How does it work?

To facilitate your participation, I have put together descriptions of each of the exercises accompanied by photos that show how to do the movements properly. I developed this project for those who already are practicing Pilates and familiar with the exercises rather than those who want to get started. They can join in another time. After the descriptions and photos, you will find a Log to note where and when you did your “Basic 10” each day, followed by a space for comments about your workout. I especially want to invite you to write down your goals for participating and share them, with me, your Pilates instructor, or with the whole community participating via my Facebook page. The day you attend a Pilates class with your teacher counts as your workout that day and you don't have to do your Basic 10... but you can!

Have a great Challenge, have fun, and stay in shape! You'll enjoy your summer more.

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The Hundred



Repetitions: 10

Breathing and Instructions:

Start supine (lying on your back). Exhale to pick up your head and upper back. Exhale to pick up your legs. Arms are straight and to the side. Move arms up and down quickly without stopping for the duration of the exercise. Inhale for 5 seconds, exhale for 5 seconds.



Beginners: Keep your knees bent.

Intermediates: Keep your legs straight and high.



Advanced: Keep your legs straight and as low as possible.



Roll-Up

Repetitions: 3-5

Breathing and Instructions:

Start supine with arms reaching up to the ceiling. Inhale to pick up your head. Exhale to continue to lift your body off the mat stretching your spine forward. Inhale to begin rolling the spine back to the mat, exhale to finish.

Beginners: Bend your knees if needed and put your hands on the sides of your legs and walk them up your legs as you go.



Single Leg Circle



Repetitions: 5 each direction, a total of 10 for each leg

Breathing and Instructions:

Start supine, arms to the side on the mat. Stretch one leg towards the ceiling with foot pointed. The other leg stays straight on the ground with foot flexed. Draw a circle with the leg. Start by crossing the leg over your body. Then change directions. Inhale for the first half of the circle, exhale for the second half. Repeat with the other leg.

Beginners: Draw small circles

Intermediate/Advanced: Make the circles progressively bigger.



Rolling-like-a-ball

Repetitions: 5-8

Breathing and Instructions:

Start sitting slightly behind the sits bones, with hands on the tibias and feet just off the mat. Inhale to roll back, without putting the head down, exhale to roll back up.

Beginners: Put your hands on the backs of your thighs.

Intermediate: Put your hands on your tibias.

Advanced: Wrap your arms around your legs and draw them close to your body.



Single Leg Stretch



Repetitions: 5-8 each leg

Breathing and Instructions:

After the previous exercise keep the left leg bent, put the left hand on the left ankle, the right hand on the left knee, straighten the right leg and lie down on the mat just to the tips of the shoulder blades. Inhale to bring one leg close to you and straighten the other. Then switch and exhale.



Beginners: Keep the straight leg high.



Intermediate/Advanced: Bring the straight leg progressively lower.



Double Leg Stretch

Repetitions: 5

Breathing and Instructions:

After the previous exercise keep both legs bent with one hand placed on each knee. Inhale to stretch arms and legs upward at the same time, make a circle with the arms, exhale bending the legs and putting the hands back on the knees to return to the start position.

Beginners: Keep arms and legs high.

Intermediate/Advanced: Bring the arms and legs progressively lower.



Spine Stretch



Repetitions: 5-8

Breathing and Instructions:

Start seated on sits bones with straight legs open just slightly wider than the hips. Feet are flexed, arms are straight and reaching toward the ceiling, palms of the hand facing each other. Exhale to stretch the spine forward. Inhale to stack the spine back up.



Beginners: Arms reach forward, knees slightly bent.



Saw

Repetitions: 3-5 each side

Breathing and Instructions:

Remain in the same seated position as the previous exercise but now with arms reaching out to the side level with shoulders, palms facing down. Begin by inhaling then exhale to twist the spine to one side and stretch forward the little finger “saws” opposite little toe, the palm of the back hand faces up. Inhale to go back up exhale to repeat on the movement to the other side.

Beginners: Bend knees slightly.



Side Kick Series

Part I

Repetitions: 8

Breathing and Instructions:

Lie on the side with the forearm bent, head in hand. The other hand is on the mat placed in between the belly button and the chest, legs are straight at a 45° angle from the body. Pick up the top leg hip height. Inhale to kick the leg forward and a little further with foot flexed, exhale pointing the foot to kick back and a little further.

Beginners: Place arm flat on mat and rest head on your upper arm.



Side Kick Series



Part II

Repetitions: 4 of each

Breathing and Instructions:

Stay in the same position as the previous exercise and externally rotate the top leg. Point the foot and inhale to kick up, flex the foot and exhale to kick down. Then switch the foot choreography and do 4 more kicks.

Change sides and repeat the series with the other leg.



Seal

Repetitions: 5-8

Breathing and Instructions:

Start sitting slightly behind the sits bones, hands go inside the legs to grab the outside of the ankles. Clap the feet together like clapping hands 3 times. Inhale to roll back, clap the feet 3 times while suspended back without putting the head down. Exhale to return to starting position.

Beginners: Do not clap feet when you go back or just clap once then twice.



Goals

Before you begin: What are your goals, what do you expect from this challenge and/or what do you hope to accomplish?

Excercise Log

Day	Time	Place	Comments
Tuesday 1			
Wednesday 2			
Thursday 3			
Friday 4			
Saturday 5			
Sunday 6			
Monday 7			
Tuesday 8			
Wednesday 9			
Thursday 10			
Friday 11			
Saturday 12			
Sunday 13			
Monday 14			
Tuesday 15			
Wednesday 16			
Thursday 17			
Friday 18			
Saturday 19			
Sunday 20			
Monday 21			
Tuesday 22			
Wednesday 23			
Thursday 24			
Friday 25			
Saturday 26			
Sunday 27			
Monday 28			
Tuesday 29			
Wednesday 30			
Thursday 31			

31 Days Later...: How do you feel? Did you meet your objectives? What did you learn? Would you do the same challenge again?

