



Pilates and Basic core work take home exercises

NB: focus on hip disassociation, which basically means moving legs from the hip without tilting the pelvis and moving through the lower back. You'll achieve this by engaging your pelvic floor and deeper abdominal muscle (transverse abdominals- TA). Also imagine the ball and socket joint of the hip, the head of the thigh bone is the ball and it spins in the joint as the leg moves forwards/backwards or to the side.

Another thing to remember is the level of work (muscle recruitment) used is dependent on the exercise you are doing. Try not to overwork or brace unnecessarily.

When lying in supine in a neutral position focus on 3 points of heaviness in the spine, the head, the back of the ribcage and the pelvis.

You should have a natural curve under the lower back and behind the back of your neck.

Maintain length through the waist and keep the ribcage softening towards the pelvis so you avoid flaring the ribs upward.

1). KNEE DROPS *Hip Mobility/Pelvic and Lumbar Spine Stability*

Start as above, this time breathe out as you drop one knee to the side (keep feet on the floor), maintain equal weight through the back of the pelvis as the leg moves and keep the opposite hip on the floor and the opposite knee pointing to the ceiling! (Moving only from the hip)

Breathe in to bring the leg back to centre.

8 x reps each side, alternate legs, aiming to minimise movement of the pelvis by engaging pelvic floor and deep abdominals.

2). KNEE FOLDS *Hip Mobility/Pelvic and Lumbar Spine Stability*

Lying supine, find your neutral pelvis, legs bent and feet placed on the floor hip width apart. Breathe in to fold one leg up off the floor keeping pelvis neutral, breathe out to place foot back on the floor.

The knee floats to just above the hip. Repeat 10 x each side (alternate legs), aiming to minimise movement of the pelvis by engaging pelvic floor and deep abdominals.

NB trying to do the least amount of work possible with the legs and finding a deep crease at the hip joint with a focus on the thigh bone dropping and spinning in the hip socket.

3). SPINE CURL *Spine Mobility into Flexion/Glute Strength/Hamstring Strength/Core Strength*

Start as above, breathe out as you engage pelvic floor and TA and bring your pelvis into a gentle tilt, then roll one vertebra up off the floor at a time.

As you start, focus on gently drawing your sit bones together and working through the back of the leg, send the knees over the toes as you roll up and create a long line from the shoulder, hips and knees.

Keep your head, neck and shoulders soft, same with the ribcage and make sure you are not balancing on the back of the neck, but across the shoulder girdle.

Breathe in at the top and then breathe out to roll down, again one vertebra at a time, come back to a neutral position before you repeat. 8-10 reps

NB can use the ball with lower leg resting on top or with feet placed on for increased challenge

4). SPINE CURL/GLUTE WORK AGAINST THE WALL *Spine Mobility into Flexion/Glute Strength/Core Strength*

As above but the feet will be placed against the wall with the legs in a table top position.

As you roll up there is a little less emphasis on the hamstrings and more focus on the glutes.

You can then progress to single legs with the focus being on maintaining an equal pelvis as you lift.

5). INNER THIGH SQUEEZE *Adductor Strength/Pelvic and Lumbar Spine Stability*

Start as above, with legs and feet together, place a rolled up towel/circle/small cushion between your knees, breathe out as you draw the inner thighs together without tilting the pelvis or overworking the front of the hips. Breathe in to release. 8-10 reps

6). SIDE to SIDE *Lumbar Spine Mobility into Rotation/Core Control/Abdominal Strength*

Start as above with knees and feet together. Breathe in to drop the legs to one side rotating the lower spine, hips/waist and lowest ribs come off and breathe out as you draw them back, reversing the order. Can rest the legs on an exercise ball.

NB this is a rotation and not an extension of the spine. Keep the ribcage soft at the front.

7). CHEST LIFT *Thoracic Mobility into Flexion/Abdominal Strength/Pelvic Stability*

Start as above, with your hands behind your head elbows slightly forward of your face, allowing the ribs to stay soft.

Nod the chin to the chest but maintain some space between the two, allow your head to drop into your hands as you curl up as much as possible trying to maintain a neutral pelvis and avoid 'crunching' from the pelvis, breathe into your ribcage and as you exhale roll back down to your starting position maintaining a heaviness in the back of the ribcage and keeping the front of the ribcage softening down towards the pelvis.

8-10 reps

8). RECIPROCAL ARM ARCS & ARM ARCS *Head, Neck and Shoulder Organisation and Awareness/Shoulder Mobility*

Start as above with both arms reaching up, hands above the shoulders.

Breathe normally as you send one arm backwards over the head and the other down to the side. Focus on maintaining a good head, neck and shoulder position with the arms gliding/spinning in the shoulder joint, maintaining a long neck and keep the top of the shoulders even.

Arm arcs: as above with both arms moving together the focus is on keeping the torso steady and not flaring the ribs as the arms go over the head. NB you may not be able to get the arms to the floor

9). THORACIC SPINE STRETCH (upper back) *Thoracic Spine Mobility into Extension*

Start as above, place a rolled up towel/soft ball in-between your shoulder blades, hands behind your head.

Breathe in as you extend your spine over the towel, support your head the whole time, breathe out to nod your chin to your chest and roll back up, as in chest lift. Keep the connection through pelvic floor and deep abdominals to avoid hinging into the lower back.

10). SIDE LYING LEGS *Hip and Glute Strength/Pelvic and Lumbar Spine Stability in Side Lying/Core Control*

Start position: Lying on your right side with your head resting on your arm, maintain a neutral position by keeping the left shoulder on top of the right and the same with your hips.

Think of the points of heaviness from your supine position so that your head/rib cage and pelvis are on the same line and your gaze should be looking forward.

Again think of the front side of the ribcage softening towards the pelvis. The right hip lengthens away from the waist so you maintain the length on both sides of the waist, don't allow the left side of the waist drop into the floor.

The right leg is bent and the left leg is straight.

Straight leg lifts:

Start by lifting the left leg up to hip level, breathe out as you lift the leg up a few more inches, keeping the leg parallel. Breathe in as you lower the leg.

Keep the hip lengthening away from the waist as you lift up, maintaining the position of the body.

8-10 reps

Bent leg lifts:

Start as above but with top leg resting on underneath leg, both legs bent.

Breathe out as you lift the left leg up a few inches, keep the knee pointing forward and maintain the position of the hips.

8-10 reps

Clam:

Start as above for bent leg lifts.

Breathe out as you lift the top knee by rotating from the hip joint, keep the feet together and maintain the position of the hips.

11). BOOK OPENINGS *Thoracic Spine Rotation with Lumbar Stability*

Side lying as above, knees bent with heels in line with the tailbone.

Right arm bent underneath your head left arm stretched out in front.

Breathe out as you lift the left arm up look at your left hand so that your head turns with you as the arm passes the shoulder, rotate from the rib cage and gently squeeze the knees together trying to keep the hips in place but not ridged.

Breathe in to return 5-6 reps

NB this is a rotation and not an extension of the spine, avoid flaring the ribcage at the front.

Repeat all the above exercises on the opposite side.

12). HIP FLEXOR STRETCH *Lengthen Hip Flexor and Promote Deep Hip Flexion on Opposite Leg*

Lie in supine with the pelvis on top of the roller. Draw the right knee in towards your body and lengthen the left leg over the roller onto the floor, making sure you keep the left knee in line with the hip (try not to let the leg drift out to the side). Keep the connection through pelvic floor and deep abdominals to avoid hinging into the lower back.

Hold for 4/5 breaths and change legs.

13). HAMSTRING STRETCH *Lengthen Hamstrings*

Lie in supine, use a towel and place it around the right foot and use it to support the right leg as you straighten it to the ceiling and lengthen the left leg along the floor. Maintain the width across the chest and a good position of the head neck and shoulders

Hold for 4/5 breaths and change legs.

14). PRONE LEG LIFTS *Strengthen Hip Extensors (glutes)*

Lie on your front, with your head rested onto your hands, fingers together and elbows out to the side. Keep wide across the top of the back and gently draw the abdominals in and drop the pubic bone into the floor maintaining a long waist and length in the lower back. Your legs; run out from the hip in parallel.

Breathe out as you lift the right leg from the floor, focus on lifting from the very top of the hamstring without over working or squeezing the glute muscles.

Think of the leg lengthening behind you rather than up.

Keep both hip bones on the floor, to avoid rolling from side to side as you lift the legs.

8-10 each side (alternating legs).

15). HIP RELEASE/ROLL *Mobility of Hip, Pelvis and Lumbar Spine*

Lie in supine, right leg lengthened along the floor, left leg bent with foot flat.

As you breathe in push through left foot as you send the knee gently to the ceiling opening up through the left hip and rolling gently over the right thigh.

Breathe out as you roll the pelvis back to the start position. Repeat between 8-10 reps on each side

16) GLUTE ACTIVATION/HIP MOBILITY *Glute Strength/Hip Mobility, internal and external rotation*

Lie in Supine, with knees bent and feet placed wider than the hips. Roll the legs over to the right side, look down to make sure your left knee is in line with your left hip. Activate your left glute to push the hip forward and at the same time gently push the left knee towards the floor. You will feel a stretch through the front side of the left leg and an opening through the left hip.

17) ANKLE MOBILISATION w/ THERABAND *Ankle Mobility/calf stretch*

Place the theraband around the ball of the foot, slowly point the foot ensuring that the toes stay in line with the ankle. Then pull the ball of the foot back towards you and lengthen the heel of the foot away from the back of the knee creating flexion of the ankle joint and length through the calf muscle. Repeat this 5/10 times on each side.