



Introduction to Pilates

Vocabulary

Powerhouse: The core of the body, includes the abdominals, glutes and lower back muscles. The Powerhouse is the center of your strength and muscle control where all exercise and movements begin and are sustained.

Pilates Stance or “V” Position: A concentrated alignment position where your legs are externally rotated with your heels together and toes slightly apart. This move is to be initiated from the Powerhouse, rotating the legs from the hips (not the knees or ankles). Then a wrapping sensation takes over involving the buttocks and the back of the legs. The feet naturally open into a “V” position and the toes will come apart as is comfortable to each individual.

Tucking: Tilting the pelvis.

Imprinting: Describes the position of the spine. The spine is long and pushes into a flat surface (mat or wall) using strong abdominals while moving. The coccyx (tailbone) is also on the flat surface. (Imprinting is done without tucking the pelvis under or shortening the waist.)

In and Up: A contraction of the abdominals and pelvic floor which draws the belly wall in and up against the spine activating the transversus abdominis to stabilize the spine. The rest of the body should be relaxed when performing “in and up”.

C-Curve: Relates to the shape of the spine. When you contract the abdominals in and up and curl the coccyx under, your spine will round and resemble a C-shape. This motion works from the abdominals lengthening the lower back while curling under the coccyx, creating space and elongating the lower back.

Key Principles

Alignment: Attending to the design of your body for safe and effective use and balance of muscles.

Control: A conscious (mindful) understanding and which allows for experiencing form, function, alignment, and amount of effort during exercise.

Fluidity: Flowing graceful movements which are integrated into a rhythmic whole body experience.

Centering: Movement beginning in the mind and flowing through the body’s center. (FitMamas center consists of the soul or the center of each person who is created by God.)

Concentration: Continual mental and physical awareness of the body’s movement.

Precision: Honoring the body’s design in the use of muscles by efficiently and with appropriate effort encouraging the whole body’s integration.

Breath: Linking the body and the mind through breathing. Breathing in harmony with movement focuses attention, improves the flow of oxygen, connects the body and mind and activates targeted muscles.

Bibliography

Pro-Roller Pilates Essentials, Angela Kneale OTD, OTR
Pilates Triad Ball Manual, Michael Fritzke & Ton Voogt