

# Fundamentals of Pilates

We all aspire to be better. For many, this desire means finding an exercise program to improve or maintain body figure.

Do you dream of having a sleek dancer's silhouette, or a well-toned swimmer's physique? Do you wish to be bodybuilder-buff? Or do you simply want to look healthier or more attractive? Whatever your reason for attaining or maintaining physical fitness, the end result will be a feeling of being engaged, refreshed, stronger and mentally alert. And regardless of your requirements, the Pilates Method can be the right fitness plan for you.

The Pilates Method of training focuses on enhancing the strength and flexibility of the total body, without building excess bulk or weight. More than simply an exercise program, the Pilates Method is a series of controlled movements that engages both your body and mind. These controlled movements are performed on a mat with carefully implemented guidelines, or on a set of specially designed apparatus. Trained Pilates teachers should lead Pilates group classes and individual lessons.

## The Origin of Pilates

Joseph Pilates developed the Pilates Method of training in the 1920s. A German-born performer and a boxer who lived in England, Pilates was placed under the forced internment along the other German nationals in Lancaster, England during the outbreak of the World War I. It was while detained in close quarters that Pilates taught his fellow camp members about his concepts and exercises. These fundamentals had been developed through Pilates' self-study and apprenticeship in yoga, Zen, and the ancient Roman and Greek physical regimens. At that time, Joseph Pilates devised his original system of exercises, now known as the mat work.

## Benefits of Pilates

As often maintained by the practitioners of Joseph Pilates Method of training, the series of movements involved in the approach provides a refreshing and energizing workout. The program gives people of all ages and abilities a feeling of balance and physical harmony.

Today, there are several sessions maintained under the Joseph Pilates Method of training. When you begin a Pilates program, you'll be expected to complete a one-on-one session with a certified teacher of Joseph Pilates Method of training. Ideally, this will be done individually, or as part of a well-supervised small group. This initial meeting will allow your trainer to devise a session that's fitted perfectly for your specific needs.

In addition to being a dominant mode of body conditioning, the Pilates Method is very beneficial in areas of injury prevention. Many rehabilitative exercise and physical therapy programs are integrated with the Pilates Method. This gentle yet highly effective program can actually speed the recovery of soft tissue injuries. Aside from that, the Pilates Method can be performed during pregnancy, helping to ensure proper breathing and body alignment. Some women report more acute concentration during childbirth, as well as an easier recovery of body shape after delivery.

With so many benefits, it's no surprise that the Pilates Method of training is so highly acclaimed by millions of people worldwide. So, whether you're exercising to get in shape or stay in shape, start with the fundamentals of Pilates, and see how quickly everything else shapes up.