

THE BALANCED BODY® LADDER BARREL

The Ladder Barrel is used to increase the strength and flexibility of the spine in flexion, extension and lateral flexion. It is used in conjunction with the Reformer, Trapeze Table and Chair for a complete workout.

THE ANATOMY OF THE LADDER BARREL

The Ladder Barrel consists of a rounded surface called the barrel and a pair of wooden uprights tied together with cross pieces called the ladder. The distance between the barrel and the ladder can be adjusted to accommodate clients of different heights.

Our older ladder barrels adjust by loosening the four knobs on the rails underneath the barrel, sliding the barrel to the new position and tightening the knobs. The knobs don't need to be too tight to hold the barrel in place.

Our latest ladder barrels can adjust the distance between barrel and ladder with your foot, by pressing an easy-to-use adjustment pedal and then using the handles on the barrel to guide the apparatus into one of 10 fixed positions.

Both also have optional foot plates for standing between the rails or against the uprights.



The distance between the ladder & the barrel is adjustable.

SAMPLE EXERCISES

SWAN DIVE: INTERMEDIATE • 3-5 REPS

Starting Position

Press the feet against the lowest or second lowest rung of the Ladder Barrel in a slight turn out and lean prone over the barrel. The apex of the barrel should be at the top of the thigh. For taller clients, place the legs lower on the ladder or bend the knees.



1. Starting position. Lie over the barrel with the arms reaching behind, palms up.

Movement Sequence

- ▶ **Inhale:** Stretch the back as you lean over the barrel.
- ▶ **Exhale:** Engage the abdominals, engage the hamstrings and gluteals and extend the back. To increase the range of motion in the back extension, bend the knees as you rise up off the barrel



2. Extend the back and reach the arms overhead. Bend the knees to increase the range.

Cueing and Imagery

- ▶ Keep the curve in the spine even throughout the movement.
 - Draw the abdominals in to support the back.
 - Make sure the curve is not just happening in the low back.
 - Lift out of the hips as you extend the back.
- ▶ Keep the head in line with spine.
 - Lift the head at the same rate as the spine.
 - Don't let the head droop or lead the motion.
- ▶ Keep the shoulders down.

Purpose

- ▶ Strengthen the back extensors.
- ▶ Strengthen the gluteals and hamstrings.

Precautions

Back problems: Be careful with clients who don't tolerate extension or rotation or avoid.

DOUBLE LEG LIFTS:
ADVANCED • 3-5 REPS

Starting Position

Lie prone on the barrel with the apex of the barrel at the center of the hips and the hands on the low rung of the ladder with the elbows bent.

Movement Sequence

Exhale: Engage the abdominals, turn the legs out slightly and lift both legs up toward the ceiling.

Inhale: Lower the legs back down.



Purpose

- ▶ Strengthen the back extensors.
- ▶ Strengthen the hip extensors.
- ▶ Improve pelvic stability.

Precautions

Low back problems: Must tolerate extension or avoid.

Wrist, elbow and shoulder problems: Limit reps or avoid.

QUESTIONS?

Please call Balanced Body Technical Support at 1-800-PILATES (U.S.) or +1-916-388-2838 (International).

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SHORT BOX ABDOMINAL SERIES:
INTERMEDIATE • 4-6 REPS

Starting Positions

Sit just below the apex of the barrel with the feet on the ladder. Alternative positions include sitting lower on the barrel with the shins against the ladder.



1. Starting position. Sit on the barrel with the feet on the ladder and the arms in front of the chest.

Roll Backs – Round Back

Movement Sequence

Inhale: Draw the sit bones together.

Exhale: Narrow the pelvis, engage the abdominals and curve back. Keep a small amount of flexion in the low back as you roll.

Inhale: Take a small sip of air

Exhale: Roll back up to the starting position.



2. Roll back keeping the arms in line with the shoulders and the abdominals engaged.



3. Lift the bar up.



4. Lower the bar.