

REFORMER

USAGE SAFETY GUIDE

Balanced Body, Inc.

INTRODUCTION TO THE REFORMER

Safety and the Universal Reformer

The Pilates Universal Reformer, is designed to teach the exercise repertoire of Joseph H. Pilates. All utilization must take the unique functionality and design of the Reformer into account as well as the skill, expertise and education of the instructor. **Exercises outside of the intended use may cause damage to the equipment and may be dangerous to the client.** Furthermore, exercises improperly taught may result in loss of balance, coordination and control of the client on the moving carriage and may lead to injury. The Pilates Universal Reformer is only to be used under the supervision of a Pilates instructor specifically trained in the safe use of the Reformer.

Balance. Coordination. Control.

One of the unique features of the Reformer is the utilization of springs as resistance against the travel and movement of the Reformer carriage. In order for exercises to be performed safely, three important conditions must always be met.

- User must always maintain and be aware of balance when on the Reformer.
- User movements must coordinate with the speed, timing and variability of the spring resistance.
- User movements must be controlled and organized. There should NEVER be slack in the ropes or bouncing of the springs.
- User should move within their ability, strength, and flexibility.



Control Front Advanced Exercise. Reformer movements are complex and client must always move with Balance, Control and Coordination.

Finding an Instructor

Working with a qualified Pilates instructor who is certified to train on the Pilates Reformer is an important component to learn how to use the Reformer safely and effectively. There are many Pilates education programs and it is important for users to be discerning. Look for instructors who have taken a certification with no less than 200 hours on the Reformer.

Spring Resistance

For many new to Pilates anticipation of the spring resistance needs to be trained and understood for safe utilization of the Reformer. In addition, understanding relative spring weights, how to change springs safely, how to check the springs for wear and how to move the spring bar are an integral part of spring safety specific to exercise transitions and set up. Ensuring that the springs are set up appropriately for the specific client, are set on the hooks to prevent detachment of the spring, and are understood in relationship to the movement of the carriage will decrease potential incidents and increase success for both client and instructor.

Check the springs regularly for wear and replace as needed. We recommend replacing springs every 2 years - 1 year for group fitness classes.



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Inexperienced Clients

Pilates exercises are integrated, complex motor learning exercises. Practice and experience are necessary to progress. Instructors, please be cautious with how quickly you progress your clients, if they can maintain balance, coordination and control then adding additional complexity is possible. Clients, please be patient with the learning process and understand the value of balance, coordination and control.

Exercise Set Up. Reformer Mounting and Dismounting

Potential injuries may occur during the transitions between exercises as clients mount and dismount the Reformer. Proper instruction for exercise set up, mounting and dismounting as per the balance, control and coordination needed for a particular exercise, and for transitions between exercises, is primary to ensuring user success and to mitigate accidents or incidents of concern. For instructors, it is important, when in doubt, to refer to instructional manual and for clients to understand the importance of seeking out highly qualified instruction.

The Sitting Box and Foot Strap

Mounting of the box for exercises seated, (Short Box Series), exercises supine, (Backstroke and Teaser), exercises prone, (Overhead Press and Swan), all require specific mounting and dismounting instructions. When the footstrap is required, please make sure it is properly secured to your Reformer (see individual Reformer setup instructions). The strap must maintain contact with the clients foot at all times. Please review instructional manual for more specifics regarding the sitting box and footstrap. Some general suggestions are included here.*



Short Box correct sitting position. When the box is placed horizontally on the carriage for Short Box exercises, the ends extend beyond the carriage platform. For safe mounting clients must always sit toward the center of the box.



Short Box incorrect sitting position. When the box is placed horizontally do not sit on the edges of the box, the box will tip.



Short Box correct strap position. Make Sure the footstrap is securely attached to the Reformer and the foot is in contact with the strap at all times.



Long box correct box and body placement. For advanced exercises, such as Long Box Teaser, it is important that the box is correctly placed on the Reformer and the body position is optimal to maintain balance, control and coordination throughout the movement.

* Sitting Boxes are designed for sitting, lying and standing. It is not designed for jumping, stomping or step aerobic type activity.

The Ropes

The Rope adjustments and locking mechanisms differ from Reformer to Reformer. Safe utilization of the ropes require they are installed correctly. For all Reformers except the A2, ensure rope is threaded through eye straps and cam cleats as pictured. As for the A2, the locking mechanism is underneath the carriage. Make sure the ropes are secure prior to movement.



Picture of rope cleats

Standing Exercises

Standing exercises are part of the Pilates repertoire and are functional and integral to a complete exercise experience. However, standing on a moving carriage is complex, potentially dangerous and must be handled with appropriate caution. When possible, instructors are encouraged to spot and provide assistance. All other utilization must be done with caution, after the clients abilities have been assessed, and when instructor and client have created a level of trust and communication to minimize any potential loss of balance, coordination and control. Use of stability props, such as gondola poles, ballet bars or personal assistance, are encouraged as client is learning and based on client ability.



Standing Side Splits with Gondola Pole or spotter

Working off the Back End

There are some lovely contemporary exercise opportunities from the back end (riser end) of the Reformer. However, extreme caution is required. Do not let go or lose of contact with the carriage when the carriage pulled to the back end and the springs are extended fully. This will result in high velocity impact on the front end (footbar end) of the Reformer which may result in potential damage to the frame, bumpers, spring mechanism and more. Sitting, kneeling and pulling while on the long box prone are all possible from the back end. Caution is required.

The Footbar

There are many different footbars and depending on which Reformer you have the footbar may or may not have a locking mechanism. Please, make sure to always check that the footbar is in a secure position and if there is a locking mechanism that it is locked and secure.



The Allegro 1 Footbar has several locking positions. Please consult your Reformer's manual as footbars differ between Reformer models and options.

Set and Check

Whenever making any adjustments to the Reformer (ropes, footbar, risers) always set and check before using.

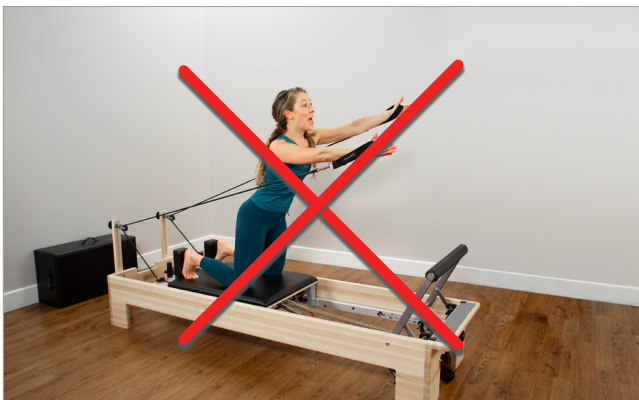
High Kneeling Exercises

Chest Expansion – The exercise Chest Expansion is a staple in the Pilates repertoire. It is considered an intermediate to advanced exercise because it requires upright balance on the moving carriage. Clients are facing the riser and the timing as a client moves and pulls the springs may create instability. When there is too little resistance, user may pull with too much force, the carriage will free roll and they may lose balance. Where there is too much resistance a client may find themselves losing balance and being pushed forward. **Please spot and use caution** until clients are comfortable with the exercise. **Standing facing risers with hands in straps is not recommended as there is a potential risk of falling and injury.**



Chest Expansion*

Kneeling Arms facing the footbar – This exercise can quickly become unsafe for clients. **We do not recommend this exercise kneeling or standing as there is a potential risk of falling and injury.** Also use caution when clients are in low kneeling as the position may be uncomfortable leading to clients adjusting and potentially losing balance.



Kneeling Arms Facing Footbar. We do not recommend as balance, control and coordination may be a challenge to maintain – there is a potential risk of falling and injury.

Ballistic Movements

Ballistic movements result in slack in the straps and a momentary floating of the carriage, an almost feeling of momentary weightlessness. When the straps become taught the resistance is reengaged. If not anticipated it may create stress in joints, a loss of control or balance for the user. **Under no circumstance should the carriage ever bang against the bumpers or against the back end.** Controlling movements is key to the success of Pilates conditioning and training.

Group Reformer

When teaching group, or taking a group Reformer class, it is important to ascertain the instructional quality of the teachers, the value that is placed on solid Pilates foundations and repertoire and the organizational philosophy on teaching Pilates. Maintaining Balance, Coordination and Control are key to successful and safe group Reformer class experiences.

Listening, the Client / Instructor relationship

In order to maximize the positive conditioning of the Pilates repertoire and Pilates inspired exercises, it is important for client and instructor to establish a good working relationship based on mutual trust and communication. If client indicates concern, caution or general discomfort, it is important to listen, assess and adapt as needed. Creating an environment for the client to share their experience on the Reformer will be key to making sure they are moving within safe ranges of motion, are moving safely and the exercise choices are effective and appropriate for their body.

Reformer Maintenance

Keeping your Reformer in good condition is key to keeping it working optimally for you and for your clients. The Safety Guide document included with your equipment has recommended schedules for inspection and replacement of wear parts. Balanced Body also offers an optional maintenance log that you may find helpful. Please follow recommended maintenance schedules and practices to optimize your Reformer's performance.

APPROVED EXERCISES AND POSITIONS

The following exercises and positions are generally considered to be safe when performed as directed by an instructor specifically trained on the use of the Reformer. While this list does not reflect every Pilates Reformer Exercise it represents safe primary exercises and body positions. Exercises and body positions which are not included on this list may not have been tested for safety and may cause injury to the user or damage to the equipment.

BEGINNER SUPINE EXERCISES



Supine feet on the footbar. Footwork Series



Supine feet on the footbar. Bridging



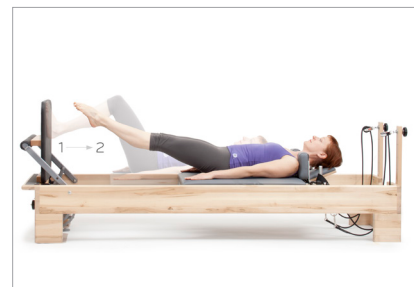
Supine feet on the footbar. Pelvic Lift



Supine arms in straps. Arm Series, Hundred



Supine feet on the footbar. Feet in Straps



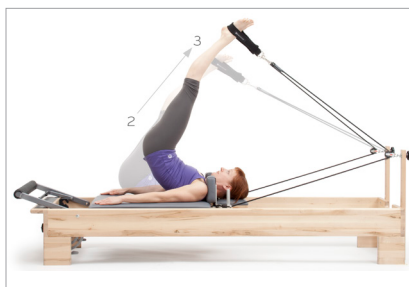
Supine feet on the footbar. Jumping.

INTERMEDIATE SUPINE EXERCISES

Intermediate exercises add complexity and user must first establish level of competency before attempting.



Supine on the box. Coordination and Teaser.



Short Spine and Long Spine.



Semi Circle

ADVANCED SUPINE EXERCISES / REVERSE PLANK

Advanced exercises add multiplanar complexity, increased balance and coordination challenges. Before attempting advanced exercises user should first obtain a high degree of skill and competence from a trained and qualified instructor.



Long Back Stretch. Advanced exercises require spotting and instruction



Jackknife. Advanced exercises require spotting and instruction



Control Back/Slide and Tendon Stretch. Advanced exercises require spotting and instruction.

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KNEELING EXERCISES



Kneeling sitting back on heels



High Kneeling Facing Riser. Chest Expansion (see high kneeling precautions above)*



Kneeling on all fours facing the risers. Kneeling abdominal series.



Kneeling facing the footbar. Down Stretch.



Kneeling facing the footbar. All Fours Abdominal series.



Kneeling facing the footbar. Knee Stretch Series.

ADVANCED KNEELING EXERCISES

Advanced exercises add multiplanar complexity, increased balance and coordination challenges. Before attempting advanced exercises user should first obtain a high degree of skill and competence from a trained and qualified instructor.



High Kneeling Facing Side Series.



High Kneeling Facing Side Series.



High Kneeling Facing Risers. Thigh Stretch

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SEATED EXERCISES



Seated Arm Work. Feet extended out in front.



Stomach Massage Series



Seated arm work facing risers. Legs Crossed.



Seated arm work facing risers. Legs extended.



Seated Roll Down. Knees Bent



Rowing Series. All Rowing exercises.



Seated on the Short Box Flat Back.



Seated on the Short Box Round Back



Seated on the Short Box Obliques

APPROVED EXERCISES AND POSITIONS

ADVANCED SEATED EXERCISE

Advanced exercises add multiplanar complexity, increased balance and coordination challenges. Before attempting advanced exercises user should first obtain a high degree of skill and competence from a trained and qualified instructor.



Seated on the Short Box. Climb a Tree (not pictured) and Advanced Abdominals



Seated on the Short Box. Backstroke (not pictured) and Teaser.



Seated on the Short Box. Horseback

SEATED LATERAL AND SIDE PLANK EXERCISES



Seated Mermaid and Cleopatra (not pictured)



Short Box Dive for a Pearl and Mermaid



Side Plank. Star

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PRONE/PLANK EXERCISES



Long Box Overhead Press



Long Box Swan



Breast Stroke



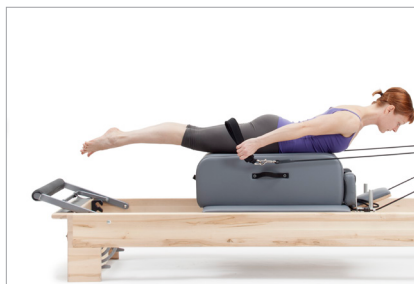
Long Stretch Series



Up Stretch



Arabesque



Pulling Straps Series



Elephant

ADVANCED PRONE EXERCISES WITH LONG BOX

Advanced exercises add multiplanar complexity, increased balance and coordination challenges. Before attempting advanced exercises user should first obtain a high degree of skill and competence from a trained and qualified instructor.



Long Box Grasshopper



Long Box Swan



Long Box Hamstring Curl / Rocking

APPROVED EXERCISES AND POSITIONS

ADVANCED PRONE / PLANK EXERCISES

Advanced exercises add multiplanar complexity, increased balance and coordination challenges. Before attempting advanced exercises user should first obtain a high degree of skill and competence from a trained and qualified instructor.



Control Front



Snake and Twist

APPROVED EXERCISES AND POSITIONS

STANDING EXERCISES

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Standing Side Splits



Eve's Lunge and Standing Lunge Series

ADVANCED STANDING EXERCISES

Advanced exercises add multiplanar complexity, increased balance and coordination challenges. Before attempting advanced exercises user should first obtain a high degree of skill and competence from a trained and qualified instructor.



Splits Facing Footbar



Splits Facing Risers



Advanced Side Split

SUPER ADVANCED USE EXTREME CAUTION

Advanced exercises add multiplanar complexity, increased balance and coordination challenges. Before attempting advanced exercises user should first obtain a high degree of skill and competence from a trained and qualified instructor.



Front Splits Upright



Back Splits Upright