

Armchair

A DETAILED GUIDE FOR PRACTICING PILATES



ARM CHAIR

A DETAILED GUIDE FOR TEACHING PILATES

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ARM WORK: FOAM ROLLER

SEATED FACING FORWARD

Springs: Light to Medium

Accessories: Roller, ball (up to 12")

The **Seated Facing Forward** exercises with the Foam Roller repeat the same movement patterns as the supine Warm up exercises on the Foam Roller. The addition of resistance from the springs acts to enhance scapular awareness and stability and to engage the core, chest and arms in a more intense way.

STARTING POSITION

- ▶ Sit on the Arm Chair facing forward and place the Foam Roller between the spine and the back of the chair. Line the spine up along the roller.
- ▶ Place the feet flat on the floor with the knees flexed and in line with the hips and a small ball between the knees to activate the inner thighs.
- ▶ Hold the handles attached to the light or medium springs and bring the arms in front of the shoulders with the palms facing inward.
- ▶ **This is the Arm Work:** Foam Roller starting position.

SCAPULA RETRACTION

Exhale: Engage the abdominals and sit tall against the Foam Roller.

Inhale: Reach the arms away from the torso and slightly forward to protract the scapulae and pull them away from the roller.

Exhale: Squeeze the roller with the scapulae to return to the starting position. Maintain the stability of the torso as the arms move.

Repeat 4-8x. ▼



1. Starting position. Seated tall against foam roller with arms at shoulder height, palms facing forward.



2. Reach arms forward to lift scapula from foam roller.

SNOW ANGELS

Exhale: Engage the abdominals and bring the arms down to the hips with the palms facing forward.

Inhale: Abduct the arms to shoulder height.

Exhale: Adduct the arms back to the starting position.

Repeat 4-8x. ▼

HUG A TREE

Inhale: Begin with the arms abducted to just below shoulder height with the elbows slightly bent, and the palms facing forward.

Exhale: Engage the abdominals and bring the fingertips together over the chest.

Inhale: Open the arms to return to the starting position. Keep the scapulae on the Foam Roller throughout the movement sequence.

Repeat 4-8x. ▼



1. Starting position. Arms at sides holding handles with tension on springs, palms face forward.



1. Starting position. Arms at shoulder height, palms facing forward.



2. Bring arms to shoulder height while maintaining spring tension, shape of arms and upright torso against foam roller.



2. Bring fingertips toward one another while maintaining arm shape.

ARM WORK: HANDS AT HIPS

SEATED FACING FORWARD

Springs: Light to Medium

Accessories: Ball (up to 12")

These variations challenge the upright posture against the Arm Chair while maintaining scapular stability and glenohumeral mobility.

STARTING POSITION

- ▶ Seated Facing Forward.
- ▶ Hold the handles with the hands level with the hips, the elbows slightly flexed and the palms facing forward.

SCOOP

This is a great exercise to reset the neutral alignment of the spine and scapulae.

Exhale: Scoop the arms forward to shoulder height keeping the elbows slightly flexed and the palms up.

Inhale: Lower the arms to return to the starting position. ▼

Variations

- ▶ Both arms moving in parallel.
- ▶ Both arms moving in opposition.
- ▶ Single arm.

OFFERING

Exhale: Scoop the arms forward to shoulder height with the palms facing up.

Inhale: Open the arms to the side, keeping them at shoulder height with the palms facing up. Lower the arms back to the starting position with the hands by the hips, palms facing forward. ▼



1. Starting position. Hands at hips with palms forward.



1. Starting position. Hands at hips with palms forward.



2. Scoop arms forward to shoulder height.



2. Scoop arms forward to shoulder height.



3. Open arms to sides keeping palms facing upward.

BILATERAL STRETCHES

This exercise tests the coordination and balance of the torso as well as the stability of the shoulders.

Breath: Move the arms from the hips to slightly higher than a 45 degree angle. One arm goes forward, the other goes slightly back at a 45 degree angle by the hips. Repeat as if 'swimming' through the air.

- ▶ Move to a 90 degree position and repeat.
- ▶ Move to a 45 degree position above the shoulders and repeat. Combine all three positions for a very challenging torso stability and coordination exercise.
- ▶ Perform 2-4 sets of each variation. ▼

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Keep the elbows soft and the fingertips light on the handles.
- ▶ Keep tension on the springs throughout the entire movement.
- ▶ Be sure to keep the scapulae against the Arm Chair and the spine upright and neutral.



1. Press left arm forward of hips and right arm slightly behind hips while maintaining upright torso.



2. Repeat 'swimming' motion with arms moving forward and back at 45 degree angle.



3. Move arms to 90 degree angle and continue motion.



4. Maintain the position of the scapulae and spinal position while arms move.

LEG WORK WITH TORSO ROTATION

Exhale: Place the hands behind the head and lift the head and shoulders off of the floor

Inhale: Drag the foot along the floor for the hamstring contraction.

Exhale: Rotate the torso toward the moving leg as the hip and knee flex to 90 degrees.

Inhale: Lower the foot to the floor and rotate the torso back to center.

Exhale: Slide the heel along the floor to return the leg to the starting position while lower the head and torso.

Repeat each exercise 6–10x on each side. ▼



1. Starting position. Lie supine with hands behind head and strapped leg long with free leg bent on chair.



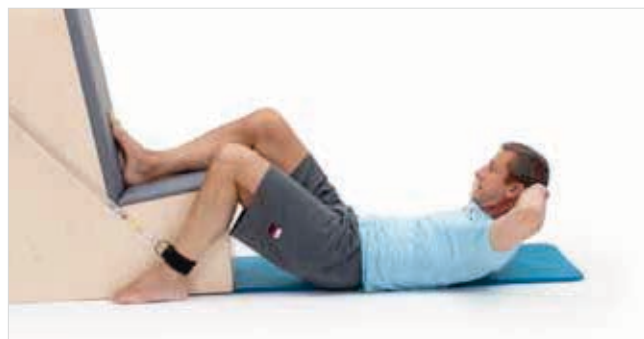
2. Flex spine to lift head and shoulder off floor.



3. Drag left foot along floor while maintaining flexed upper body.



4. Rotate torso toward left thigh while bringing left knee above hip.



5. Simultaneously rotate torso to center while lowering strapped foot to floor with a bent knee.



6. Slide left foot along floor to starting position while lowering upper body.

KNEE AND HAMSTRING CONTRACTION COMBO

This exercise combines the above two exercises in a challenging crawl type exercise that can be done in both directions.

Inhale: Drag the heel along the floor in line with the sit bone.

Exhale: Engage the core and flex the hip to a 90 degree angle while the knee flexes to 90 degrees to keep the heel level with the knee. Extend the knee and lower the leg back to the starting position.

To reverse the movement, start with the leg straight and lift it up towards the ceiling then flex the hip and knee to 90 degrees before placing the foot on the floor and sliding it back to the starting position. ▼

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Engage the abdominals to stabilize the pelvis as the leg moves.
- ▶ Keep the shoulders pressed down and away from the ears.



1. Starting position. Lie supine with left ankle in strap and in line with sit bone.



2. Drag left foot along floor to engage hamstrings.



3. While maintaining tension on the strap, lift left knee to 90 degrees of hip flexion.

ARMCHAIR
