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INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAIR

The Pilates Chair

The Pilates Chair that Joseph Pilates called the “Wunda” Chair is the most challenging piece of Pilates equipment for building strength. Exercises on the Chair are great for skiers, runners, tennis players and golfers and for clients looking to increase power in the upper body for throwing, lifting and racquet sports.

The Wunda Chair is based on the original designed by Joseph Pilates for his clients who lived in small New York City apartments. It was literally an exercise machine that could be converted into a Chair and put in the living room. It is a simple piece of equipment consisting of a seat and a hinged foot pedal that springs attach to. You can sit, lie or stand on the Chair or the floor and push the pedal with your hands or feet. There are over 25 different exercise categories on the Chair focusing on core strength, leg strength, shoulder girdle stability, mobility and strength and functional movements such as standing, climbing, pushing and lifting.

BALANCED BODY COMBO AND WUNDA CHAIR ANATOMY

All the Pilates Chairs consist of a seat, a base, a pedal or pedals and spring attachment points. The Combo and Wunda Chairs also have handles. The Wunda, CenterLine™ and EXO Chairs are 21” high with two springs and the pedal is close to the seat in the resting position. The Wunda and CenterLine have one pedal and the EXO comes with either a single or a split pedal. The Combo Chair is 24” high, has a split foot pedal, a narrower seat and 4 springs. The Combo Chair is designed to be the same height as the Trapeze Table so it can be used in conjunction with it. All of the Chairs can be used for most of the exercises in the manual except where the pedal is split.
HAMSTRING STRETCH 2
BEGINNING • 4 REPS

**Springs:** Combo – 2 L2 to 2 H1  Wunda/EXO – 1 H3 to 2 H1  **Pedal:** Together

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**STARTING POSITION**
Stand behind the Chair with the legs parallel or turned out. Short clients may need to stand on pads or a small box.

**MOVEMENT SEQUENCE**

**Inhale:** Reach the arms overhead.

**Exhale:** Engage the abdominals and starting with the top of the head, roll down one vertebra at a time until the hands reach the pedal. Continue pressing the pedal down as far as the back and hamstring flexibility will allow. The back will move from round to flat as the pedal presses down.

**Inhale:** Keeping the torso in position, bend and straighten the elbows pressing the pedal down and up 4 times. Finish with the arms straight.

**Exhale:** Return by engaging the abdominals and uncurling the spine. Keep the weight on the center of the feet while rolling up. Don’t let the hips move back.

**VARIATIONS**

**One arm**
Roll down and reach the pedal with one arm. Continue pushing the pedal down as you reach the free arm back. Bend and straighten the elbow 4 times and roll back up to standing.

**Back position**
Depending on the application, the lumbar spine can be in flexion to focus on both back and hamstring flexibility or if possible, it can move into a neutral position to focus on hamstring flexibility.
LUNGES
INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED • 10 REPS

Springs: Combo – 2 H2 to 2 H4  Wunda/EXO – 2 H2 to 2 H4
Pedal: Together  Handles: In

STARTING POSITION
To get into this position, stand in front of the Chair, press the pedal down with one foot (instructor can assist) and step up onto the seat with one foot, then the other. If you are short, step up onto the Chair from the back using a Reformer box or moon box to assist.

Keeping the hips level, reach one foot down to the pedal. Place the ball of the foot on the pedal with the heel lifted.

ARM POSITIONS
» Holding onto the handles.
» Crossed in front of the chest.
» Reaching out to the sides.
» Holding a Pilates ring overhead.

Beginning Lunge – No Weight Shift | Intermediate

MOVEMENT SEQUENCE

Inhale: Step up onto the seat keeping the hips level and the front knee lined up over the toe. Do not let the front knee move forward of the toe. Rise up as far as you can without losing the tension on the pedal.

Exhale: Lower the pedal toward the floor but do not let the pedal come all the way down between repetitions.

Repeat 10 to 15x on each leg.

1. Starting position with handles. Hold onto the handles and place one foot on the seat.
2. Rise up onto the front leg keeping the knee behind the toes.

1. Starting position genie arms. Place one foot on the seat keeping the hips level.
2. Rise up keeping the back foot on the pedal and the hips level.
Side Lunge - No Weight Shift | Advanced

STARTING POSITION

Stand facing the side of the Chair. Step onto the pedal with the heel at the end closest to you. Press the pedal down to the platform. Place the other leg on the farthest corner of the Chair seat in turnout. Place the legs to minimize torque on the hips and to keep the hips facing forward parallel to the edge of the Chair.

MOVEMENT SEQUENCE

Inhale: Step up onto the seat keeping the hips level and the knee lined up over the toe. Rise up as far as possible without losing the tension on the pedal. Do not let the front knee move forward of the toe. Keep the weight centered between the two legs rather than shifting it all to the front leg.

Exhale: Lower the pedal toward the floor but do not let it come all the way down between repetitions.

CHALLENGE

Side Lunge with Weight Shift

Once the pedal is as high as possible, take the foot off the pedal and shift the weight to the foot on the seat. Keep the hips level as the weight shifts to the seat and as the foot reaches for the pedal.