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Acknowledgements

I’ve learned a lot from the process of developing these training materials, including that writing a manual is not as easy as reading one. And, the truth is, I never found reading manuals particularly delightful, either. The revised edition would not have been possible without the input, teaching and tireless love of Poolates from Master Instructors Lisa Gibson, Michelle A. Martin and Michele Morrow. Thanks also are a must for Susan Hamilton Colucci and Chris Pfeiffer for demonstrating, and to every one of my clients and students for allowing me to work in the water, making work and play sometimes not seem so very opposite.

And, last but first, “thank you” to Joseph Pilates, a true visionary, for developing the enormously brilliant principles – and movements which are really a way of life-- and for teaching, with Clara, the Elders, who have shaped how we learn Pilates today. No Thanks would be complete without mentioning the modern visionaries, who support the continued evolution of Pilates today.

Rebecca “Boo” Pfeiffer,
Innovator of Poolates
Introduction

Poolates marries the principles of the Pilates method with the benefits of water exercise. Poolates helps improve posture, build core strength, enhance flexibility, shape legs and arms and develop balance and stability. Poolates does all this in one simple workout that leaves participants feeling refreshed and invigorated!

I began to develop the Poolates program after teaching Pilates and other land-based programs. I had several clients who wanted to incorporate water exercise into their routines for various reasons. It seemed to me that there should be a way to bring the Pilates principles to the pool in a fun and challenging manner. So, based on my research on Pilates and aquatic exercise, many patient clients willing to experiment, and consultations with physical therapists and chiropractors, Poolates was born.

The Pilates system of exercise for core strength and flexibility was developed by Joseph H. Pilates in the 1930’s. Pilates has since been adapted for use for physical therapy, sports performance, rehabilitation and general fitness. Traditional Pilates exercises focus on developing strength in the powerhouse or core, and in uniting limbs to the core, so arm and leg movements are powered from the core. This reduces wear and tear on the joints and improves grace and sport performance. We see Poolates as the third corner of the Pilates triangle: mat on one corner, apparatus on the second and the pool on the third corner. Poolates is very three-dimensional; connecting the abs and back through the obliques, wrapping and centering is completely necessary in order to perform the movements successfully in the pool.

Principle Benefits of Aquatic Exercise

The aquatic environment has long been championed as the ideal place for rehabilitation and exercise for those people who prefer not to, or are recommended not to, exercise on a hard surface. According to the American Arthritis Foundation, aquatic exercise is preferred because the warmth and buoyancy of warm water make it a safe, ideal environment for relieving arthritis pain and stiffness; immersing in warm water raises your body temperature, causing your blood vessels to dilate and increasing circulation; water supports joints to encourage free movement, and also provides resistance to help build muscle strength. Poolates brings a new way of looking at aquatics; traditionally, the water’s buoyancy has been used to make exercise easier or more gentle; Poolates requires the resistance of buoyancy to increase instability, continuously engaging the core in order to stabilize the body, an aspect that makes the work more challenging than both traditional water exercise and traditional Pilates work. In short, in traditional aquatic exercise, buoyancy makes exercise easier, in Poolates increased buoyancy makes exercise more difficult. Poolates increases range of motion and flexibility in fit populations and because the exercises can be easily progressed and regressed is more accessible to special populations of exercisers.

Many seasoned athletes cross-train in pools by running or walking in deep water because of the strength-training benefits the resistance provides, with minimal impact. Water has seven
times the resistance of air and is soothing on the skin. Many people find that stretching and flexibility is greatly enhanced by moving in warm water. (80-84 degrees). Additionally, the aquatic environment is the ideal location for working to improve balance, a key component in injury prevention, because there is reduced fear of falling in the water as opposed to on the ground, and a greatly reduced risk of injury. Swimming pools provide walls and steps as well as varying depths of water, making it ideal for progressive training. Aquatic exercise is preferred for those with back pain and reduced flexibility, and can be a great addition to a swimmer’s training.

Poolates exercises can be varied to provide safety and challenge for participants. In this manual, progressions and regressions for several common ailments are highlighted. For more information on working with special populations, using props to regress or progress workouts, and extreme Poolates, we hope you consider participating in additional Poolates instructor education courses.

Pool as apparatus

What elements of a pool make it function as a piece of Pilates equipment?

**Buoyancy:**
Buoyancy increases the difficulty of an exercise, the more buoyant someone is, the harder the core has to work to stabilize, especially during movement.

**Resistance:**
Water has seven times the resistance of air and can increase or decrease exercise difficulty.

**Depth Gradient:**
The varying depth of some swimming pools can be a great advantage for exercisers as moving through varying depths can alter the degree of challenge of certain exercises.

**Walls:**
Pool walls can be used as balance aids in the leg shaping movements, as support in the advanced abdominal movements and to aid in pushups, leg curls and certain stretches

**Steps:**
The steps are used for the seated stomach series and for advanced exercises like plank, elephant, leg pulls and the rolling star series.

**Railings:**
Railings are used in the intermediate series for Sues Spiral, advanced biceps and many other exercises.
Benefits of Poolates

Posture
Teaching people neutral spine improves their posture and quality of life!

Proper breathing
Most people use only one third of their lung capacity, when the shoulders are down and integrated with the core it allows the neck to relax and the chest to open increasing lung capacity and energy.

Strength and Strength building
Poolates builds strength without building bulk and for challenged populations without the fear of falling.

Flexibility
Increasing flexibility and ROM helps prevent injury.

Bringing people to Pilates or other land-based workouts
Welcome to the Poolates family of instructors and congratulations on taking this step to add new depth to your Pilates and aquatics teaching career. As Poolates instructors, we are charged not only with being sure that our clients have a safe and effective workout each time they come to class or session, but to ensure that they learn something from every session that they can take into “real life.” We do not just work their bodies for them for an hour; we have the opportunity to use our knowledge of posture, lifestyle and body mechanics to improve the quality of their health and lives. Please take this opportunity and this responsibility seriously, but remember, unless you are a licensed health care provider such as a doctor or physical therapist, it is not your charge to offer medical or rehabilitative advice; that is beyond the scope of this training.

Water safety
• Before we get into the principles and exercises a few notes on pool safety:
• Always know where there is a phone
• Always know where the life preservers and backboard are.
• Know if there is an AED at the facility, and if there is, where it is and who is qualified to use it.
• Same for the First Aid Kit.
• Do not hold class during lightening storms!
• For more info on physical plant safety visit: www.redcross.com

Class safety
Do not perform any standing movements in water beyond shoulder depth and go shallower for people with balance or sensory challenges and non-swimmers.
For balance exercises participants should either be in open water where a fall only means a splash, or be holding onto the side of the pool for balance.
Chapter 1

Key Concepts & Pilates Principles

Posture & Proper Breathing

Posture
Poolates will help put the body back into proper alignment by performing the exercises while “turning on” some muscles or muscle groups and “turning off” others. There are several key aspects to Poolates posture, including:

• control of abdominal muscles and breath
• pelvic floor muscle control
• neutral spine and back control
• integrating the shoulder girdle with the core, and
• balance

Abdominal Muscle Control
Is intimately tied in with breathing. Inhalation fills the diaphragm, expanding the abdominal cavity; exhalation closes the cavity, and can be enhanced by consciously trying to close the ribs towards each other and pulling the navel to the spine.

Pelvic Floor Muscle Control
Complete core control requires the use of the deep Pelvic Floor muscles; internal (think “kegel” and external think “psoas”). Engaging the PF helps support the entire abdominal and lumbo-sacral complex. PF control also aids balance. To access the internal PF muscles, think of trying not to urinate or pass gas in the pool—without clenching glutes.

Neutral Spine
Every spine has a natural curve at the neck and at the lumbar area or low back. However, many people, either as a function of muscular imbalance, tightness or habit, or for medical reasons, have either too much or too little lumbar curve. The effect of improper spinal alignment is a poor relationship to gravity, which can result in malfunctioning use patterns, and eventually, injury.

The easiest way to learn how to bring the spine to neutral is to stand naturally, and imagine a clock face from the chest to the pelvis. Where the ribs come together under the breastbone, there is a soft area called the xyphoid process. Think of this as 12 o’clock. The pelvis, or flat area below the lower abdominals and above the genitalia, is 6 o’clock. The goal is to have a straight line from 12 o’clock to 6 o’clock.

Shoulder Girdle Control:
So many people carry tension in their necks that their shoulders tend to spend much of their time around their ears. This shortening of the neck muscles pulls the shoulders out of their
natural alignment, and often causes a lot of stress to the shoulder girdle as well as the neck, when shoulder or arm movements are initiated.

To help attain the proper posture that integrates the shoulder to the core, stand neutral, with your arms by your sides. Draw the fingertips down away from ears. You should feel the shoulder blade and collarbone depress or lower slightly. When initiating movement in the shoulder, think of pushing the shoulder blade up from the back, rather than lifting up from neck.

Proper posture reintegrates the shoulder to the core, allows the neck to relax, the head to lift, the chest to open, and thus increases the ability of air to expand in the lungs, increasing energy. So it’s true that stress saps energy in more ways than one!

**Balance** is a critical part of injury prevention and basic to good posture. We will be dealing quite a bit with balance. *First some global definitions:*

**Balance**
The dynamic three dimensional integration of information from all of our body systems during a functional task, using that information to displace our center of gravity We can further break down balance into two primary types

**Static Balance**
A state in which a body or object remains reasonably steady in particular position while resting on a base that is narrower or smaller relative to it’s other dimensions (Gray Institute Feb 2012). A good example of this would be tree pose in yoga

**Dynamic Balance**
Successfully displacing one’s center of gravity for the purpose of returning back to where one started or to transfer into another direction, (Gray Institute Feb 2012) A good example of this is walking.
We use dynamic balance far more than static balance in our daily lives, but in the exercise world we typically train and test for static balance. The beauty of Poolates is that we train both, but our main focus is dynamic balance.

When working with your classes in the pool make sure they are aligned in neutral spine, knees over ankles, hips over knees, shoulders over hips and ears over shoulders. Their weight will be evenly distributed across the triangle of each foot – at the ball of the foot under the big toe and little toe, and at the heel. Knees should be soft, not locked, and weight should be even across both hips with feet hip width apart. To be sure weight balance is even, lift and lower the toes.
Initiation Of Movement
When posture is good, it becomes much more natural to move the limbs from the core – the ultimate goal for injury prevention, enhanced flexibility and sports performance improvement. Since the core is the biggest sources of power in your body, why not use it?

Proper Breathing
Using the breath in Poolates will help control and develop abdominal muscles, increase body awareness and help improve coordination and balance. Coordinating the breathe with all the Poolates exercises takes some practice, but the awareness of how to breathe properly and when to breathe to maximize the effect of the movement enhances the practice and benefits. With PF engaged, relax shoulders by dropping them away from ears, place hands on waist and inhale, lengthening the space between ribs and hips (without using the neck and chest!) and widening the space between the ribs. Exhale, pulling the navel and spine toward each other and ribs together. Think of lengthening on the inhale and strengthening on the exhale. Typically people use only one third of their breathing capacity (emergency breathing)

Joseph Pilates said “To breathe correctly you must completely exhale and inhale, always trying very hard to squeeze every atom of impure air form your lungs in much the same manner you would wring every drop of water from a wet cloth” In this manual we give you specific breathing patterns for each exercise, but if nothing else, make sure your classes or clients are not holding their breath! Breathing properly is one of the primary Principles of Pilates.
Beyond Breathing…the rest of the Pilates Principles

**Centering:** Three dimensional integration of abs, back and waist; centering head over body and mind within body; centering weight through navel and spine thru inner thighs to tripod of feet.

**Concentration:** Focus on correct movement and form each time you do the exercise, be connected to your body and focus on precision and control. To help with balance in the pool, focus on a non-moving object or point at eye level.

**Control:** Keeping the non-moving part of the body quiet and properly organized. Joseph “Ideally, our muscles should obey our will, Reasonably, our will should not be dominated by the reflex actions of our muscles.”

**Precision:** The art of control; in addition, making exact movements with moving parts while controlling non-moving parts. Joseph, “Correctly executed and mastered to the point of subconscious reaction, these exercises will reflect grace and balance in your routine activities.”

**Awareness:** Being aware of the body’s stillness and movement, In the pool, being aware of the movement of the water, and what else is going on in the water; how that may affect other principles. (Progressions/regressions, instability)

**Efficiency of Movement:** Initiating the movement of the extremities from the core. Firing from the deepest muscles first. Minimum number of repetitions, but executed as perfectly as possible each time.

**Flow/Fluidity:** Within each movement and between movements. Suppleness, grace and beauty of movement
Chapter 2

Anatomy & Water

Anatomy for Poolates
Pilates and Poolates work because they retrain the body to function from the inside, out. This means that the deeper muscles, those closest to the bones, are the ones we want to train to fire, and the more superficial muscles are the ones we sometimes want to shut down, so the inner unit can do the work.

The Inner Unit: Abs and Back
Transversus Abdominus (TVA); anterior thoracic, lies under the rectus abdominus, internal and external obliques and lower ribs
Multifidus; posterior thoracic, each muscle spans one/two vertebra from sacrum to C-2 deep rotators of spinal vertebra
   Diaphragm; anterior thoracic, lies under the ribs/intercostals aids in respiration
   PFM muscles, internal and external
   Levator prostatae and vaginae. pubo rectalis, iliococcygeus.

The Outer Unit
   Rectus Abdominus; anterior thoracic, flexor, extensor muscle
   Erector Spinae; posterior, rise from the lumbar, span several vertebra and attach to the ribs, principle extensors of the spine.
   Internal and External Obliques; anterior and posterior muscles, principle rotators of the torso
   Quadratus lumborum; posterior extensors of the lumbar vertebra and lateral flexor muscles, extend from the hip to the 12th rib.
   Serratus Anterior; anterior and posterior, protracts the scapula, aids in downward rotation and scapular depression.

The Deep Six Hip Complex
   Obdurator Internus and Externus; anterior lateral rotators
   Superior and Inferior Gemellus; posterior lateral rotators
   Quadrator Femorus; posterior lateral rotator
   Piriformis; posterior rotator

The Shoulder Complex and Neck
Rhomboids; posterior, connect the scapula with the spinal vertebra, aid in scapular retraction
Levator Scapulae; posterior, lie under the trapezius, assist with elevation of the scapulae
Latissimus Dorsi; posterior, medial rotators, assist with elevation and extension of the shoulder
Pectoralis; Major and Minor; anterior, upper flexor and medial rotators of the shoulder. Pec minor assists serratus in scapular protraction
   Trapezius; posterior, used for scapular stabilization
A System of Systems
The body is composed of numerous systems that work together in an intricate and delicate balance. While we are primarily concerned with the muscular and skeletal systems, we must be aware of the interaction of the nervous system with any muscular or skeletal movement. Other systems may play a part in some clients’ experience as well. For example, people with problems with their digestive system, such as irritable bowel or constipation, may have difficulty feeling the access to their TVA. Women who have had interruptions to their reproductive systems—pregnant women or women who have had some surgeries, will have a different experience accessing PFM and deep abdominal muscles as well.

The Kinetic Chain: Defined as the efficient transfer of energy in the system to achieve a desired result. Our many systems are interconnected, and we have complex connections within the systems as well. The kinetic chain can be thought of as the interplay between the muscular, skeletal and fascial systems. We are connected from head to foot by bones, and the muscles and fascia that move them. For example, a short levator scapula muscle in the neck can pull the shoulder out of alignment, thus stressing back muscles. This can in turn affect the lumbar-pelvic area, causing mis-function in the hip joint. A misaligned hip can stress knees and ankles. And the reverse process up the line is also true. This is why posture and a proper relationship with gravity are so crucial to healthy life function.

Stability and balancing
Balance capability tends to diminish as people age, there are many reasons for this, cumulative injuries or compensations for injuries frequently throw the body out of alignment, inner ear fluid can also decrease as we age. The good news is balance ability can increase with practice and the pool is the perfect place to practice! It is important therefore to make sure your class participants understand neutral spine, the balance points on the feet and the interrelationship of the feet, knees and lumbar-sacral complex Your master instructor will show you simple exercises to help your classes feel this in their bodies (without causing any harm of course)
Chapter 3

Class Environment and Cueing

Class Environment
We talked earlier about pool and class safety, now we are going to go through some guidelines for structuring your class. Courtesy of Lawrence Biscontini at http://findlawrence.com/ and the American Council on Exercise at http://www.acefitness.org/, you may already be familiar with many of them.

Setting up your space
Just like landbased classes, your class area needs to be checked before your participants enter to begin their workout. Make sure the deck is clear of unnecessary equipment, toys and if there is commonly furniture present, make sure it is out of the way. Check the pool bottom! I have found band-aids (gross) jewelry, swim goggles and toys on the pool floor. Encourage you class members to bring non breakable water bottles to the pool so they stay hydrated and make sure they take them with them at the end of class.

Music
In Poolates music is in the background, if used at all. Natatoriums tend to be very live, sound wise, and usually echo badly. It can make it very difficult for your class members to hear you with music playing and because most Poolates instructors are in and out of the pool for cueing, wearing a headset is not practical. If you are accustomed to using music and can be clearly understood over it, by all means use it, but is not an essential component of the class. You can find terrific aqua mind-body music at http://findlawrence.com/ and at http://www.clickmix.com/

Class dress
Bathing suits, obviously, rash guard shirts for warmth, I did have a class member get a tropical weight wetsuit as she was always cold. Even with our preferred temperature range of 80-84 degree water, hypothermia is still a concern, make sure your participants are comfortable and that you can see their bodies, (so extra large t-shirts are out!). Class participants are barefoot. We do not wear aqua shoes in Poolates for two reasons, first people need to be able to feel the balance points of their feet on the pool floor and second, shoes typically change the center of balance for most people. If they want to wear shoes into the deck area that’s fine, but they should remove them before entering the pool. All of this also applies to you the instructor. Poolates is focused on proper execution, balance and neutral spine, it is critical that your class see you modeling these concepts, if you are wearing t-shirts, sarongs (yes someone did wear one in a training) or towels wrapped around you, not only are you not practicing what you are preaching, but your class will not be able to see the alignment or correct execution of the exercise. This also applies to shoes, i.e. no aqua shoes on the deck; we are evaluating the toe shoes.
Scripting your class
People remember the first five minutes and the last five minutes of your class. There are three major class segments; opening, transition and closing.

Opening
The first five minutes of your class should contain;
• a welcome to the class
• addressing people new to the class
• theme for the day
• format/purpose

Transition
Transition includes a teaser, something that will happen in the second half of the class

Close
The last five minutes of your class should contain
• a thank you
• restatement of purpose
• teaser for the next class
• announcements
• questions
• transcend the class into real life

Cueing
We will be discussing cuing from three perspectives, types of cuing, the delivery format and how to cue for multilevel classes or how we progress and regress Poolates exercises through cuing methods.

Cue types
You should always be cuing as though there were a person in your class who was blind, a person who was deaf, or a person who does not understand the language you are speaking. To accomplish this we divide cuing types into two broad categories, kinesthetic, and verbal/visual

Visual/verbal Cues; there are many kinds of visual cues, directional, indicating a body part being worked or where you should be feeling the work, such as pointing to the biceps during Popeyes, or pointing to change the movement direction of an exercise. Holding our fingers up to count down the remaining repetitions of an exercise is another visual cue. All indicator/directional movements should be direct, clear and precise.

Mirror: in mirror, you are standing in front of the class working the opposite way they are, so that they are working the same side you are cuing. For example, in mirror, when you say “take
your right foot out to the side" you will be taking your left foot out to the side. Sounds complicated, but we tend to do it automatically.

**Textbook:** exactly what it sounds like, in Seated Frog, for example, it would sound like this. “sit on the edge of the pool step, with the crease of the glutes a handwidth away from the edge of the stair. Pull the abdominals in toward the spine and up toward the sternum. The legs are rotated in the hip socket, the bottoms of the feet are together” etc.

**Tactile, touching:** typically we place our hands on someone to gently change a body position, or achieve a desired result. For those clients who cannot be, or do not like to be touched the same end result can be achieved by placing our hand to the position we would like the client to be in and asking them to move the appropriate body part to meet our hand. Always ask permission before you touch someone.

**Corrective:** pretty self-explanatory, watching your class and adding cues to create changes in execution to achieve a more desirable result. Be sure to keep these corrections generic to the class. It is generally not helpful to single out single individuals for correction during a class.

**Kinesthetic Cues:** In kinesthetic cuing we use analogy to create a visual sense of the exercise. We create visual images not directly exercise related (see textbook) so the class can sense or feel what the exercise should look like. Examples; imagine you are stacking your vertebrae like legos, feel like you are zipping up a pair of tight jeans, see the headlights on your hips are pointing straight forward, my glass of wine is on your back and you don’t want to spill it.

In order to reach our blind, deaf and non English speaking class you will be using all of these cuing types all of the time, now we are going to add the structure in which you are going to present your cues.

Formatting your cues, the five P’s

**Purpose/Pattern:** Purpose is your exercise set up, what you are doing. For example, “in Seated Frog we will be making the core work harder to stabilize the body, by extending the legs” Stabilize first then add movement. Pattern is for cardio only and is used minimally in Poolates.

**Position:** stabilize, then mobilize or get them set up and then get them moving.

**Progression/regression:** when the class is moving through the exercise, you can add progressions and regressions, we will discuss ways of doing this separately.

**Prana:** breath, or breath patterns, in Poolates as in Pilates, breath patterns are important, but the most important concern is that your class is breathing! People have a tendency to hold
their breath when exerting themselves or doing something unfamiliar, it is more important that they breathe through the exercise than that they have the perfect breath pattern.

**Personality**: this how you distinguish yourself from other instructors. The other four P's are the what’s, what do you do. **Personality** is a how, how you deliver the information. This portion is where you educate and entertain your class participants. All successful instructors are both professional and popular, the previous four P’s are the professional, your personality is where the popular comes in.

**Progressions and Regressions**

One of the beauties of Poolates is that we can progress or regress any exercise, making all of our class participants immediately successful. Executing an exercise perfectly does not mean diligently trying to do everything the model on the DVD does or even what the class instructor does for demo, it means executing a given exercise as perfectly as possible with correct form for that body, on that day, at that time. It is not just our job to teach an exercise, it is our job to make our class participants succeed to the best of their ability and take that success out into the world beyond the pool. This is how we progress and regress Poolates exercises.

**ROM range of motion**: increasing ROM increases the difficulty of an exercise. In the water greater ROM creates more turbulence, more turbulence creates more instability forcing the core to work harder to stabilize. Obviously then, decreasing ROM makes an exercise easier. **Resistance**: adding resistance, usually in the form of foam rollers, dumbbells or water gloves, or greater buoyancy increases exercise difficulty.

**Contact Points**: increasing or decreasing contact points, decreases or increases the exercise difficulty. For example having your student stand with both feet in contact with the pool floor and one hand on the pool wall will be easier than standing in the middle of the pool.

**Lever Length**: although we don’t use it very often in Poolates, decreasing or increasing lever length, typically arms or legs can increase or decrease resistance.

**Stability**: works with contact points, increasing stability, for example, standing with one hand on the pool wall, decreases exercise difficulty, moving that same exercise out into the middle of the pool, decreases stability and therefore increases difficulty. Increasing buoyancy decreases stability.

**Buoyancy**: in Poolates, buoyancy is not your friend. Increasing buoyancy increases exercise difficulty by making the core work harder to stabilize. This is one of the big differences between Poolates and other aqua exercise programs. In aqua aerobic programs buoyancy makes exercises easier and the focus is on heart rate and cardio work, in Poolates buoyancy makes exercise more difficult, we use the resistance of the water as a strength building tool and we focus on the core, firing muscles from the inside out, from the deepest to the most superficial.
Chapter 4

The Exercises

I. Movement Steps

Cross Step

• **Stance:** Neutral standing - Poolates hands
• **Depth:** Waist deep
• **Description:** Start in proper Poolates posture at one side of the pool step out sideways about shoulder width with the leg furthest from the pool wall then the other leg steps across and in front of the first leg i.e., if you are standing with your right side to the pool wall, you will step out with the left leg and the right leg will cross over
• **Breath:** Inhale cross, exhale step out
• **Reps:** no given number-use this step to move about the pool
• **Cues:** Hips stay square to front, no twisting side to side in order to get the leg to cross, find stable focal point at eye level. You should feel a stretch in the outside thigh muscles of the crossing leg. Shoulders are down and engaged. Grapevine but WITHOUT twisting hips
• **Modifications:** arms out to side, length of steps, crossing behind, meeting foot instead of crossing.
Living dead forward and back (single leg pull)

- **Stance**: Neutral standing

- **Depth**: varies; preferably move shallow to deep or deep to shallow

- **Description**: Raise arms at shoulder height and extend straight in front palms down, parallel to pool bottom. Raise straight right leg towards right hand initiating movement from back of the thigh where the hamstring meets the glute—body stays in neutral stance—leg comes only as high as possible while maintaining neutral spine. Point toe on the inhale/raise; flex on exhale/lower.

- Backwards- arms come down beside body palms facing back without arching back left leg as high as possible to the back and place foot back on pool floor- alternate legs.

- **Breath**: inhale up, exhale down; Point toe on the inhale/raise; flex on exhale/lower.

- **Reps**: no given number; use this to move about the pool.

- **Cues**: Initiate the movement from the back of the thigh where the hamstring meets the glute. Do not sacrifice form for leg height, be sure there is no buckling forward, backwards, or sideways at the waist—i.e. waist is wrapped like a burrito. The sensation should be a hamstring stretch.

- **Modifications**: If pool depth allows these exercises can be done end to end instead of side to side so participants can experience the exercise in different depths, Stay at one depth and travel side to side Less flexible people start in deeper water, balance challenged in shallower. Height and length of steps can be modified to maintain correct form.
Marching

- **Stance**: Neutral standing
- **Depth**: waist deep
- **Description**: Standing in proper Poolates posture with hands on hips, raise right knee to chest at 90 degree angle. Alternate right and left legs.
- **Breath**: inhale up exhale down
- **Reps**: No given number; use this to move about pool; or in place for 60 seconds
- **Cues**: Initiate the movement from the PFM and lower ab/back muscles, do not lean forward, backward or sideways. Wrap the burrito. The closer the knee comes to the chest the easier the exercise.
- **Modifications**: Elbow to knee alternating sides, clasp hand under knee while adding Serratus flex.
II: Abdominal Specific Moves

Seated Step Series

Leg Circles

- **Stance**: seated neutral
- **Depth**: seated waist deep
- **Description**: start seated with genie arms and legs extended straight out in front; toes not breaking the surface of the water- externally rotate legs from hip, open to hip width apart and lower toward the pool floor, rotate back to neutral and raise back to the start position.
- **Breath**: inhale, open and lower exhale close and raise
- **Reps**: 6-8 then reverse
- **Cues**: keep movements precise and controlled; do not flail legs open or let feet break water surface. Drill sitz bones into the steps; fire down the backside. Think snow angels or leg circles on apparatus. Legs should feel like they are getting longer with each repetition.
- **Modifications**: size of circles- hand placement- the hand can be on the hips, use genie arms or overhead.
Seated Frog

- **Stance:** neutral seated
- **Depth:** seated waist deep on pool steps
- **Description:** with legs externally rotated bend knees while keeping the heels together. Lace fingers together in front of the chest and inhale. Exhale and straighten the arms and legs.
- **Reps:** 6
- **Breath:** Inhale in, exhale out
- **Cues:** Frog. Drill sitz bones into the steps; fire down the backside. Be sure there is a hand’s distance between back and previous step.
- **Modifications:** Reduce/eliminate arm movement, decrease range of motion, scoop stance. This exercise is contradicted for people with medial knee pain.
Step Scissors

- **Stance**: neutral seated feet flexed
- **Depth**: seated waist deep
- **Description**: extend legs parallel to pool bottom with feet flexed. Keeping legs completely stable, point one foot and lower toward the pool floor on the exhale; inhale flex the foot and return to start. Alternate legs being sure the movement of one leg is complete before beginning the movement of the other leg.
- **Breath**: exhale down inhale up.
- **Reps**: 6-8 each leg
- **Cues**: single blade scissor, lengthen front of the thigh when leg lowers, back of thigh when the leg raises. Do not lean back. Be very careful with balance challenged participants. Drill sitz bones into the steps; fire down the backside.
- **Modifications**: Alter leg range of motion, depth, changing the arm position either on hips, genie arms or arms straight out in front or overhead.
Saltando

- **Stance:** hinged
- **Depth:** shoulder deep
- **Description:** In hinge position with thighs knees and ankles snapped together arms extended out to sides at shoulder height with palms down on top of the water. Engage abs and PFM and lift knees to chest (feet come off of the pool bottom) Do not jump! try to return to same spot on the pool floor each time-
- **Breath:** inhale up- exhale down
- **Reps:** 45 – 60 seconds.
- **Cues:** send energy through arms as well as the legs, the arms should feel like they are pushing down on the water but shoulders stay down. It should feel like the stomach is lifting the legs and the back is lowering the legs. Similar feel to Can-Can.
- **Modifications:** Rotate side to side after feet touch down in between. Rotation contra-indicated for late term pregnancy and lower disc bulge.
Washing Machine

- **Stance:** neutral standing with knees bent feet double hip width apart
- **Depth:** chest deep
- **Description:** Stand in chest deep water with feet double hip width apart knees slightly bent and pointing over the second toe, arms extended in front of the body with the palms of the hands together. Engage abdominals, inhale lifting the ribs off the hips while rotating the waist to the right, exhale and return to center, Alternate sides.
- **Breath:** inhale rotate, exhale return
- **Reps:** 8 sets
- **Cues:** Keep hips square to the front and initiate the movement from the waist or obliques only. It is almost as if the opposite hip is pushing back. Do not let participants lead with the shoulders. Keep the shoulders level, do not let one shoulder hike up during rotation Think of using the breath to elongate the waist without allowing the shoulders to rise.
- **Modifications:** To regress this can be started with the hands on the hips or Poolates hands in order to feel the obliques. This is also an excellent way to see what the range of motion is without the arm involvement, then progress to standard form. To progress try it with the arms out to the sides.
Moving Tree

- **Stance**: neutral standing
- **Depth**: waist deep
- **Description**: Standing sideways to pool wall at arms length weight centered, shift weight to inner thigh of the inside (supporting) leg, raise the outside leg straight up with knee bent to form 90 degree angle, rotating the leg in hip socket and keeping the hips square bring the outside foot to cup the knee of the supporting leg forming a triangle, then slide the foot down the back of the inside (supporting) leg until it touches the pool floor, rotate the working leg in the hip socket back to parallel and start again.
- **Breath**: one full breath per movement.
- **Reps**: 6 each leg
- **Cues**: tree pose (yoga). Do not arch back to increase ROM. Hips to stay square to front at all times, proper form is more important than ROM no death grip on pool edge! Watch for hip hiking; lengthen sitz bones to bottom of pool. Body weight should be traveling down the midline from the pelvis through the inner thigh to the three balance points on the feet.
- **Modifications**: reduce ROM for people with medial knee issues
Mashed Potato

- **Stance**: neutral standing slight turn out heels together
- **Depth**: high waist deep
- **Description**: Stand in Poolsates posture sideways to the pool wall at arms length hand resting on the wall. Raise the outside leg to the side and bring it across the front of the supporting leg so that the heel of the outside leg crosses the toes of supporting leg for five counts then cross the working leg to the back of the supporting leg so the heel of the working leg meets or crosses the heel of the supporting leg. complete all reps then turn and do the other side
- **Breath**: breathe
- **Cues**: hips stay level and forward at all times. Do not sink into supporting hip or twist to increase range of motion
- **Reps**: 5/5 4/4 3/3 2/2 1/1
- **Modifications** ROM and water depth: do not cross all the way front or back, leg height, no wall for balance, stand on tiptoe- smaller tap more precise, larger requires more core stabilization.
Skate

- **Stance**: hinged (at hip) feet double hip width legs turned out from the hip
- **Depth**: hip deep
- **Description**: Start in a bent knee position while hinged. Place hands on thighs, inhale shifting weight to the right leg and straighten both legs (left leg will raise) the right leg will be weight bearing, the left will be extended out to the left side, exhale place the left leg back on the pool floor and bend both knees, inhale shift weight to the left leg, and straighten both legs (right leg will raise). Whole exercise takes place in hinged position
- **Breath**: inhale up, exhale down
- **Reps**: 8-16
- **Cues**: push through sits bones to maintain neutral spine-knees don’t go past toes when knees are bent, entire exercise takes place in hinged position. Keep the upper body quiet. Make sure participants are coming through the center each time and not just rocking from side to side. Weight bearing leg is always slightly bent.
- **Modifications**: arms out to side for balance- no turn out.
Knee Bend

- **Stance:** hinged (at hip) feet double hip width legs turned out from the hip
- **Depth:** hip deep
  - **Description:** Same as skate with eight kicks to the side with non weight bearing leg when weight has shifted.
- **Breath:** inhale up, exhale down
- **Reps:** 8/8
- **Cues:** Keep the knees soft, do not hike hip on kicking side.
- **Modifications:** arms out to side for balance- no turn out.
IV. Footwork

Prancing

- **Stance**: neutral standing or hinged; feet hip width apart
- **Depth**: Waist deep
- **Breath**: breathe
- **Reps**: 8 sets
- **Description**: Rise on the balls of both feet with knees bent and weight centered, drop one heel to pool floor while staying on the ball of the other foot, alternate feet.
- **Cues**: Not riding a bike; think of prancing on Reformer. prancing horse- upper body stays still
- **Modifications**: Can be done on step to get more calf stretch. If wobbly, reduce height of raise on ball of foot; performing upright is easier than hinge.
**ATB**

- **Stance:** hinged at hip, feet hip width apart
- **Depth:** waist deep
- **Description:** bend knees inhale rise onto toes, exhale bring both heels halfway down to pool floor - repeat 8 times.
- **Breath:** inhale up, exhale down
- **Reps:** 8
- **Cues:** stay in bent knee position - should feel like dropping heel off of a step, push through the Achilles tendon. Fire down the backside, pool spine to navel.
- **Modifications:** the foot drop can go all the way to the pool floor, reversing breath makes exercise more difficult
Frog I

- **Stance:** neutral, standing feet double or triple hip width apart (2\textsuperscript{nd} pos.) legs rotated out, knee over 2d toe.
- **Depth:** Waist deep
- **Description:** inhale, bend the knees as far as possible while keeping feet flat on the pool floor, then raise the heels, exhale straighten the legs then lower the heels, inhale and repeat all
- **Breath:** inhale bend knees, heels raise exhale straighten legs, heels down inhale bend knees heels up
- **Reps:** 8-12
- **Cues:** lengthen tailbone to pool bottom bends the knees; like footwork on reformer; when rising, think of zipping on tight pants.
Frog II

- **Stance:** Same as above but with heels touching, external rotation (first position) in Pilates “V”
- **Depth:** Waist deep
- **Description:** Inhale, bend the knees as far as possible while keeping feet flat on the pool floor, then raise the heels, exhale straighten the legs then lower the heels, inhale and repeat all
- **Breath:** Inhale bend knees, heels raise exhale straighten legs, heels down inhale bend knees heels up
- **Cues:** Use inner thigh muscles not glutes to straighten legs. Upper body is quiet and long. PFM is critical as is QL and multifidus! Think of zipping up tight jeans; don’t look at your feet.
- **Modifications:** Heels not touching, parallel instead of turn out., change depth
Side Step Series

- **Stance**: mermaid on pool steps, with one side of the body facing step bottom and the knee of the bottom leg bent.
- **Depth**: waist deep on step
- **Description**: Sit sideways on step with one arm on the next highest step, waist lifted, neutral spine, top leg extended straight out with foot flexed- then lift and lower top leg for eight counts
  (a) leg Circles inside and outside eight counts
  (b) bicycles 8 counts- change sides
- **Reps**: 6/8
- **Cues**: core must stay stable, waist lifted, hips stacked - long extended leg.
- **Modifications**: hands behind head, mermaid arms. alternate sides on each exercise.
IV. Balance and Stability Moves

Fifty-fifty

- **Stance:** neutral standing feet hip width apart, arms at sides palms facing forward
- **Depth:** slightly above elbow deep mid pool, can also be done with one arm on the pool wall and facing forward
- **Description:** from initial stance, engage PFM and shift weight to inner thigh of right leg, extending the left leg to the front with toes slightly lifted off of pool floor. Push straight arms through the water to the front with the palms facing forward while inhaling and exhaling for 5 beats, 5 times. Then, push arms to the rear palms facing back and change legs.
- **Breath:** inhale five exhale five rhythmic, not percussive
- **Reps:** 5 sets of 10 each leg.
- **Cues:** arms straight from shoulder to fingers, fingers stay close together. Try to engage biceps on forward movement and triceps on back. Do not sink into standing hip; lift out of standing leg. Do not grip pool bottom with toes.
- **Modifications:** hold onto pool wall-and pump one arm at a time; lower non weight bearing leg; Rotate arms on beats.
Hip Circles

- **Stance**: Neutral standing
- **Depth**: Waist deep
- **Description**: With feet hip width apart engage PFM and inner thigh muscles on the leg closest to the pool wall, hand gently cupping pool wall. Extend outside leg to front with toe pointed and make 5 baseball sizes circles then flex the foot and make 5 baseball sized circles counterclockwise touch down to the pool floor if necessary to regain balance then extend the outside leg on a diagonal- and draw softball-sized circles as above then extend the outside leg to side, foot flexed and slightly lower, and draw football sized circles as above. Switch legs (turn around or transition to other side of pool.)
- **Breath**: one full breath per circle
- **Reps**: see description—generally 5/5 x 3 each leg.
- **Cues**: leg only comes as high as possible without compromising neutral spine pull up on the standing leg- fix eyes on a stable point on the wall. Hips stay square to front at all times. Externally rotate leg on diagonal and side positions think of lengthening legs out of hip socket
- **Modifications**: touch toe down between change of position, alternate hand positions, change depth.
**Protractor**

- **Stance:** neutral standing
- **Depth:** waist deep
- **Description:** Stand in waist deep water a arms length from pool wall in good Poolates posture engage PFM and shift weight to the inner thigh of the leg, closest to the pool wall inhale pick up the outside leg with a bent knee, to form a ninety degree with the torso exhale extend the lower leg, inhale externally rotate leg in the hip socket and move it to the diagonal, exhale return the leg to the front inhale bend the knee, exhale return to pool floor.
- **Breath:** inhale up exhale extend the lower leg inhale move the leg to the diagonal exhale return the leg to the front exhale bend the knee and return the leg down to the pool floor
- **Reps:** 6
- **Cues:** Hips and torso stay square to front at all times do not sink into standing leg or lean in to pool wall, can be performed with a bent leg and will look more like moving tree Easier to balance in shallow water but extension and rotation are easier in deeper water
- **Modifications:** do not use wall; change height of working leg
Chair Legs

- **Stance**: seated neutral
- **Depth**: shallow
- **Breath**: inhale up, exhale down
- **Description**: Start in a seated position with back against the wall (like a straight back chair, neutral spine) with hands on thighs or Poolates hands. Engage PFM and core and lift one foot off the pool floor on the inhale with a bent knee so the calf is at ninety degrees to the thigh replace it on the pool floor on the exhale, alternate legs- keep weight centered, no shifting side to side.
- **Reps**: 6 alternating
- **Cues**: marching in place on formal throne- do not raise shoulders do not shift side to side, soft knee on extension
- **Modifications**: to progress add leg extension; to regress, arms pressed to wall
Wall Push-ups

- **Depth**: low chest
- **Stance**: neutral standing- arms slightly wider than shoulder width
- **Breath**: inhale in to the pool wall, exhale return to start
- **Description**: first with two arms, then with alternating arms, press body toward wall, elbows down.
- **Reps**: 16 (4 with both, 6 and 6 each arm)
- **Cue**: think of body as a plank- lean is from ankles- nothing bends but the elbows do not collapse the back or let abs sag
- **Modifications**: narrow the arm distance, use one arm with the other arm in the small of the back or alongside the body
V. Upper body flexibility and shaping

Float Away Arms

- **Stance**: wide plie (feet triple hip width apart, turned out, knees bent, tailbone lengthening to pool bottom)
- **Depth**: Chest deep
- **Description**: Plie squat in chest deep water, let the arms float in front of the body on the surface of the water with fingers hands forearms completely relaxed.
- **Breath**: breathe, focusing on buoyancy and resisting buoyancy
- **Reps**: 1 minute
- **Cues**: arms should feel like they’re not there.
- **Modifications**: add heels or toes up, coordinated with breath
Arm Circles

- **Stance**: neutral standing or plie
- **Depth**: shoulder deep (or chest deep and plie)
- **Description**: extend arms in front of body at shoulder height inhale prepare, exhale open arms to side and press down; inhale as arms float back to surface. After 8 reps, reverse.
- **Breath**: coordinate so exhale when chest is open
- **Reps**: 8 each direction
- **Cues**: Snow angel. Use bottom point of shoulder blade to initiate the movement. Make sure shoulders are underwater and think of the shoulder blades making circles in the back and releasing all the muscles in the shoulder, chest, neck and upper back.
- **Modifications**: can be done in plie squat in shallower water; can be coordinated with heels or toes up or frog footwork as well.
Triceps Press

- **Stance**: hinged or plie or neutral
- **Depth**: depends on stance; triceps must be covered
- **Breath**: exhale down inhale at bottom, exhale up
- **Description**: rest forearms on the water, exhale straighten forearms to bottom of the pool, inhale, at the bottom of the movement, exhale return to starting position
- **Breath**: exhale down inhale at bottom, exhale up
- **Reps**: 8 either together or alternate arms
- **Cues**: shoulders stay down and engaged- imagine pushing a heavy weight through the water and having that weight on the top of your hand on the return
- ** Modifications**: single arm, on toes; combine with footwork
Shoulder Press

- **Stance**: neutral, plie or hinged
- **Depth**: at waist deep hinged bent knee, at chest deep neutral standing, soft knee
- **Description**: Inhale extend arm straight to the front, at shoulder height, exhale, push the arms down through the water, inhale at the bottom, exhale and push arms up back to start position
- **Breath**: Exhale down, inhale at the bottom of the movement, exhale, return to start
- **Reps**: 8
- **Cues**: Shoulders are down and engaged do not let them creep up around the ears-arms stay close to body and parallel to each other- push water both ways- arm is one piece from shoulder to fingertip
- **Modifications**: Can be done with arms alternating, with both arms at the same time, on toes, combined with ATB or prancing
Popeye & Chest Squeeze

- **Stance:** Plie squat
- **Depth:** Chest Deep
- **Description:** extend arms in front of body parallel to pool floor palms of the hand open, turned up to face the ceiling and resting on the water do not let shoulders release forward- engage brain and biceps and on the inhale curl the lower arm up to form a ninety degree angle between the upper and the lower arm on the exhale extend the lower arm down to the start position, repeat eight times, then retract shoulder blades and take arms to the side and curl and open for eight counts- leave arms out to the sides ,curled up, palms open and squeeze both arms into the center of the chest inhaling as the arms close in front of the chest and exhaling as the arms return to the start position. Repeat for sixteen counts.
- **Breath:** inhale squeeze, exhale open
- **Reps:** 8/8- 16
- **Cues:** As if lifting very heavy weight and lowering very heavy weight for Popeyes; for chest squeeze, think of shoulder blades opening and closing so work is initiated from upper back/shoulder, not chest.
- **Modifications:** Can also be done hinged or seated
Vi. Length and Strength for Back

Fly Me to the Moon

- **Stance**: hinged. Torso parallel to the water; hands on thighs- feet hip width apart
- **Depth**: Shallow (3 \(\frac{1}{2}\)-4 ft)
- **Description**: Engage abdominal muscles and flex forward from the hip. You should be parallel to and slightly above the water with feet hip width apart. Scoop in the abdominals so that the back is rounded slightly on the inhale, exhale and extend returning to the flat back position extending through the sitz bones and the top of the head.
- **Breath**: inhale on scoop, exhale on extend.
- **Reps**: 5
- **Cues**: The movement on the inhale should feel as though someone punched you in the bellybutton, causing the low back to round. On the exhale it should feel like you are mooning someone behind you. Pushing through the sitz is subtle but will stretch the low back, glutes and hamstrings.
- **Modifications**: place hands on glutes instead of thighs to find sitz bones
Swimming

- **Stance:** hinged parallel to the water hands on the rail
- **Depth:** shallow (thigh deep)
- **Description:** flex forward at the hip to bring the torso parallel to the water with a neutral spine. Abdominals must be engaged to support back and hip bones stay square to pool bottom and the feet are underneath the hips. With hands on the pool rail, inhale, raise right leg straight back and lift left arm slightly, exhale and return to the start position then inhale and switch sides raising left leg and right arm.
- **Breath:** inhale extend exhale down
- **Reps:** 8 alternating
- **Cues:** swimming, initiate leg movement from the crease where the hamstrings meet the glutes. Push through the heel of the standing leg. Do not let the back sag. Some abduction of the standing leg may be helpful.
- **Modifications:** To decrease challenge hands may be kept on the pool wall with the elbows slightly bent. To increase challenge, take the hands off the wall, or keep one leg extended while swimming with the arms for ten counts then switch legs. The arm stroke for this can be varied i.e. crawl, butterfly or breast. To really increase challenge use Mio balls for swimming arms.
Open Door

- **Stance**: hinge back
- **Depth**: shallow
- **Description**: from the down position of side dog remove your left hand from the wall, raise the arm to the head and rotate from the waist to open and lengthen the waist while both feet remain in contact with the wall
- **Breath**: inhale open exhale close
- **Reps**: 8 round trips
- **Cues**: figure skater in death spiral. This movement originates in the obliques, maintain neutral spine and PFM Control; hips stay square to wall.
- **Modifications**: Not appropriate for people with neck or shoulder injuries
VIi. Additional Flexibility and High Intensity Moves

Flexibility

**Quad & Hip Flexor Stretch**
Stand with right hand on pool wall, good Poolates posture. Abduct weight to right leg. Bend left knee so left foot nears left buttock. Reach left hand around to hold left foot. Hold for 30 seconds then, to increase stretch for hip flexor, pull foot back and up—away from buttock but higher. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat on other side. Breathe naturally; 2-3 reps each leg. Should not feel any discomfort in knees; keep knees together and facing down; tuck tail to protect back.

**Modifications:** Do this as an assisted stretch, with instructor supporting foot on stretching side.

**Hamstring & Inner Thigh Stretch**
Stand near pool steps or ladder. Place right foot on step or rung so right leg is at 90 degree angle to left and parallel to pool bottom. Flex right foot. Keep hips square, rotate from waist and reach arms toward right foot. Hold for 30-40 seconds. Repeat on left side. Keep abs in on rotation.

**Modifications:** To ease difficulty, use a lower step or rung. For further ease, do not reach toward extended leg.

**Waist Stretch**
Stand in just-above waist deep water in good Poolates posture. Place the right elbow at waist and contract right scapula. Keeping hips still, bend toward the right. Extend left arm overhead and reach open palm to right. Hold for 30 seconds, and repeat other side. Do this 2-3 times each side. It is as if the waist is enveloping the arm as the waist is folded over the arm.

**Modifications:** Instead of crunching over right arm, extend it to the wall, so the right arm is pushing against the wall while the left arm reaches towards the wall. Can also be done seated in Mermaid or Indian position.

**Glute Stretch**
Stand in shallow end of pool, in neutral stance. Cross right ankle above left knee, inhale, lifting ribs off hips, exhale, hinge forward at the hip and sit down. Place hands on calf. Hold for 30 seconds, switch sides, repeat 3x. Keep spine neutral while “sitting” Looks almost like an ice-skater’s spin

**Modifications:** hands may be out to the side or one hand resting on wall for balance. Individuals will vary as to how “deep” to sit. Watch knee and ankle alignment.

**Roll down/stomach punch transition**
Use this as a transition when coming out of seated or plie positions as a way to add spine sequencing to the Poolates workout. Feet in parallel, knees bent, hands on thighs, hinged at the hip with neutral spine. Inhale, exhale as if being punched in the stomach, and roll up, one
vertebra at a time, pulling through abs as if using the abdominal muscles to place the vertebrae in line.

Higher Intensity Moves

**Rapid marching** is as it sounds—Marching, but not necessarily coordinating with breath, so participants can go faster. Still maintain upright posture and pull leg from core. March in place and have each foot land where it took of from, so participants still practice control.

**Criss-Cross** is like March step, but, using waist, bring opposite elbow to raised knee.

**Aerobic Saltando**: instead of matching the lift/lower to breath, perform as rapidly as good form allows; trying to land feet to the point from which they left.

**Russian Dancer**: good for shallow water retreat to deeper water, or from deep water movement step to Russian Dancer as water gets shallower. Movement is extending legs from bent knees; with genie arms.

**Charlie Chaplin Steps**: Start in Pilates stance; knees bent, lift right leg knee high, lower, and switch to left. Can also be done with feet hip width apart, but still be turned out.

**Core running**: chest deep water, hinge forward, engage core, run in place, knees as high as possible but keep shoulders pressing down.
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