

## Pilates Plus Water

Anna Shay McEntee, continuing education specialist for fitness and health education at All-American Pilates, in Wellington, Florida, developed the company's pool Pilates program when she realized that the water aerobics and Pilates she was teaching might complement one another. "It applies to almost every age and different level of fitness," she says of the regimen.

More often, water-based Pilates is implemented for people who are uncomfortable doing the exercises on land, such as those suffering from the chronic pain of rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia or multiple sclerosis. Some, such as patients in the Aqualates pool-based therapeutic Pilates program developed by Balanced Body Pilates of Gainesville, Florida, use it for rehab.

"Pilates is all about stability," says McEntee. "On land, it's much easier to stabilize—the gravity keeps you there—whereas in the water, you really have to use your core muscles to stabilize." She says people use more energy due to water being 800 times as dense as air, thus requiring more effort when moving arms and legs.

Still, the traditional Pilates system must be modified in order to make it work in the water. McEntee's program is done in chest-deep water and uses a pool "noodle" float for support. In her modified version of Rolling Like a Ball, for example, participants roll sideways while maintaining the standard ball shape. "I didn't just do any exercise and call it Pilates because I'm going to use core muscles," she says. "I was very true to Pilates."

Rebecca "Boo" Pfeiffer, a Pilates instructor and creator of Poolates, developed a program that uses different depths of water to replicate the action of the springs on traditional Pilates equipment. Her workouts can also use props such as resistance bands, Magic Circles, 12-inch foam rollers, and, for more advanced classes, a boogie board or kickboard.

"A lot of the traditional supine exercises, we do standing," she says. And many seated moves are done with participants sitting on a step in the water. "Not only is Pilates in the pool



### MAKE A SPLASH

Grab a water "noodle" and jump into these aqua adaptations of Pilates moves developed by Anna Shay McEntee for All-American Pilates.

your legs with your feet as far out of the water as possible while maintaining stability. Pulse your arms up and down while inhaling for 5 counts and exhaling for 5 counts, for a total of 100 beats.

### The Hundred

[Shown on page 62] Place the noodle behind your shoulders and under each arm. Put your legs in a tabletop position and lengthen your arms along your sides. Inhale while lengthening the back of your neck, then nod your head forward to gaze toward your abdominals. Exhale while flexing your upper body and scooping the waist. Lift your arms off the water (in line with your shoulders) and reach your hands toward your heels. Extend

### Rocking

[Shown above] Wrap the noodle behind your shoulders and under your arms. Keep your legs parallel and pressed together and bend your knees toward your buttocks. Reach your arms back and grab your feet. Inhale, engaging your abdominals, and press your feet into your hands, rocking forward as you extend your hips, allowing your legs to spread slightly. Exhale and rock back to the starting position. Repeat 3-5 times.

fun," she says, "Some people have tried Pilates on land and want a new challenge." **PS**

For further information about any of the fusion programs mentioned, see *The Pilates Shopper* on page 95.