Basic Pilates Mat Routine

Chin Tuck

- Lying supine with legs bent feet flat on the floor arms by your side.
- Inhale, pull your chin back (as if you are trying to make a double chin) while keeping your eyes level.
- Exhale and relax.

Abdominal Bracing

- Inhale. Find your neutral position (neutral position is the position between your low back being completely flat against the floor and completely arched) of your pelvis while you are lying in this position.
- Exhale. Gently pull your abdominal muscles to keep this position.
- As you pull in your abdominals think about bringing your pelvis and ribcage close together.
- **Do not** bear down or forcefully suck in your abdomen and maintain relaxed neck and shoulders.
- Inhale and relax.
Abdominal Bracing with Legs

- Inhale; find your neutral position and contract your lower abdominal muscles.
- Exhale; raise your right leg without lifting or rotating your hips. You will need to contract your abdominal muscles more tightly as you move your knee toward your chest.
- Inhale; do not let your hips rise up or rotate.
- Exhale; lift your leg up in the same manner be sure to keep your abdomen tight. Both legs should be bent up together.
- Inhale; hold position.
- Exhale; lower your right leg down slowly.
- Inhale.
- Exhale, and lower the left leg down.

Supine Spinal Rotation

Start by lying on your side with your knees bent and arms extended in front of you.

- Inhale; lift your top arm to the ceiling and exhale as it comes toward the floor behind your body. Keep knees bent to the one side allowing only your trunk to rotate.
- Inhale and exhale staying in the position repeating the breathing cycle 3 times.
- Inhale; bring your arm back up to the ceiling.
- Exhale; as your arm returns to the starting position.
• Repeat the above steps side lying on the opposite side.

• Make sure rotation comes from your spine and not your pelvis. Check to keep your knees and feet stacked on top of each other.

**Bridging**

• Inhale; tighten your abdominal muscles to keep your back in neutral position.

• Exhale; use your abdominal muscles to slowly rise off the surface without bending your lower back. Your abdominal and buttock muscles are used to keep your pelvis up.

• Inhale; relax your shoulders and neck as you hold the lift for 3 seconds.

• Exhale; roll down through the spine one vertebra at a time.

**Pregnant Cat**

• Start on your hands and knees with your head forward and your back relaxed. Your hands should be under your shoulders your knees under your hips.

• Inhale; allow your abdomen to fill with air and relax your abdominal muscles.

• Exhale as you contract your abdominal muscles.

• Repeat 5 to 10 times.
Cat and Camel Stretch

- Inhale; start on your hands with your head forward and your back relaxed. Hands should be under your shoulders and knees under hips. Keep your spine straight and lengthened from tail to head.
- Exhale; tuck your chin in towards your chest, tighten your stomach muscles and round your back up like a cat stretching.
- Inhale; slowly lower your back and bring your head back up to the start position.

Ceiling Punches

- Start in the position of lying on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
- Raise your arms to the ceiling keeping them shoulder width apart and palms facing each other.
- Inhale; raise your arms to the ceiling by raising your shoulders from the floor.
- Exhale; lower shoulder blades back to the floor.
- Repeat 3 times.
**Shoulder Elevation/Depression**

- Lying on your back with legs bent and feet flat on the floor keeping your arms at your sides.
- Inhale; raise shoulders to your ears.
- Exhale; press shoulders away from your ears.
- Repeat 3 times.

![Shoulder Elevation/Depression Illustration](image)

**Abdominal Bracing with Arms**

- Inhale; get into the neutral position and firmly contract your abdominal muscles
- Keep contracting your abdominal muscles and exhale raise one arm above your head.
- Inhale; as you lower the first arm raise your other arm overhead.
- Remember to keep breathing and keep your movements even and steady.
- Keep your trunk from moving by contracting your abdominal muscles and keep your shoulder blades depressed (down away from your ears).

![Abdominal Bracing with Arms Illustration](image)