

Guide to Pilates



What Pilates is and how it can benefit you

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Physio on the River
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www.physio-on-the-river.co.uk/pilates-offer

Pilates Guide Contents

We have put together this guide to Pilates to explain what it is, how it can benefit you, how to choose a class and how our classes at Physio on the River work. We hope you find it helpful.

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1. What is Pilates?	3
2. Who is Pilates for?	3
3. What are the health benefits of Pilates?	4
4. Can Pilates help me lose weight?	4
5. Can I injure myself doing Pilates?	4
6. What's the difference between Pilates and Yoga?	4
7. How our classes work and why you should choose Physio on the River	4
8. How do I know which class I should join?	5
9. Sources of information and links	5

How to book your Pilates classes or get advice from Physio on the River:

Phone: 020 8876 5690

Email: help@physio-on-the-river.co.uk

Website enquiry: <https://www.physio-on-the-river.co.uk/pilates-offer>

1. What is Pilates?

Pilates is a beautiful movement technique developed by Joseph Pilates in the 1920s. Its philosophy is simple: to create a fit healthy body that is flexible and strong, ready to enjoy life to the full.

Pilates exercises concentrate on improving core stability, posture, body awareness and increasing flexibility and strength. Specific stretches and exercises promote a sense of body control that carries through to everyday life. A fitter, leaner body is the result with participants gaining control over how they move and exercise both in and out of the studio. This results in a reduced risk of injury.

Pilates exercises are done on a mat or using special equipment such as a Reformer, Cadillac or Barrel. At Physio on the River we offer Matwork classes only and they are taken in our studio.

2. Who is Pilates for?

Pilates can benefit people of all ages and abilities. It can be used to help gain strength in certain medical conditions as well as simply for those who want to challenge their general fitness and body control. This is especially important as we get older.

Elite athletes often use it as part of their training to gain core control. **Our core** is a term used to describe the cylinder in the centre of our body. Our deep abdominal muscles form a corset of strength around our trunk. Our pelvic floor muscles support the bottom of the cylinder and our diaphragm supports the top of the cylinder. We have important muscles attached to our pelvis and our shoulder girdle (shoulders and shoulder blades) that move our legs and arms. If these muscles don't have a firm platform to work from, we cannot perform sport to the highest level. So, Pilates forms an essential tool to help sports players.

If you belong to a **sports team** and would like us to design a class tailored specifically to the needs of your sport, we can organise that.

If you are **recovering from an orthopaedic operation** such as a hip replacement, spinal surgery or a knee replacement, Pilates can be a very useful form of exercise to help you recover your inner strength, suppleness and co-ordination.

Not everybody enjoys sweating it out in the gym, but Pilates is **a very safe, low impact form of exercise that anyone can enjoy.** It can be particularly helpful for managing a **chronic back problem.**

At Physio on the River we have some **special Pilates classes.** **We have a Physiotherapist who takes some of our classes.** We call these **Rehab Pilates** and they are suitable for anyone recovering from injury or an operation or who would like to take the classes at a gentler pace. She is a full qualified Chartered Physiotherapist so her in depth knowledge of the body and operations and illnesses that can affect your body, means that she can make sure you exercise safely.

Our Physio also takes some **Pilates for Osteoporosis classes.** These are designed for people suffering with Osteoporosis (reduced bone density) and Osteopenia (the precursor to Osteoporosis). The exercises are done in a weight bearing position and are modified to stimulate greater bone density.

Pilates is also perfect for pregnant ladies and mums recovering from childbirth. The exercises strengthen your abdominal and pelvic floor muscles and if you are sporty, can help you return to your activity safely.

If you are pregnant you can join any Level 1 class after your first trimester. If you have just had your baby you must have your 6-week check with your doctor before commencing a class and your doctor must be happy for you to do so.

3. What are the health benefits of Pilates?

There are many reports on the health benefits of Pilates. However, few of these have been subjected to rigorous scientific examination, and there's a need for more research in this area.

Practitioners and our customers say regular Pilates can **improve posture, muscle tone, balance and joint mobility, as well as relieve stress and tension.**

For elite athletes, including dancers, Pilates can complement training by developing whole-body strength and flexibility, and **help reduce the risk of injury**, particularly injuries to the back.

4. Can Pilates help me lose weight?

Pilates is classed as a **muscle strengthening activity**, which can help you **maintain** a healthy weight.

Classes can vary in intensity: they can be gentle, or dynamic and challenging and offer a solid workout.

If you want to lose weight, you're advised to combine Pilates with a healthy diet and some aerobic activities, such as swimming, walking and cycling.

5. Can I injure myself doing Pilates?

Pilates is a low-impact form of exercise, so injuries are uncommon.

However, it's important to find a qualified teacher and a class suited to your level of fitness and ability. Here at Physio on the River our classes are divided into levels 1-4 – from complete beginner to advanced. We take care to make sure that all the attendees are of a similar standard.

Pilates teachers are not medically qualified so, if you're recovering from injury, you're advised to check with your GP or relevant health professional on the suitability of certain exercises or movements before starting a class.

However, as mentioned earlier we do have a Physiotherapist who is also a Pilates instructor and her more in-depth knowledge and skills allow her to help those recovering from injury or pain. She also offers one to one tuition if you prefer.

We also ask you to fill out a health questionnaire before you start so we are aware of any health issues you may have. It's important that you also keep us abreast of any health conditions or aches and pains you develop once attending the classes so we can take proper care of you.

6. What's the difference between Pilates and Yoga?

Both Pilates and Yoga work on posture, body strength, flexibility, balance and coordination. They also both give a sense of wellbeing and calm. However, it's probably fair to say that Yoga works a little more on flexibility with many of the exercises stretching you from the tips of your fingers to the tips of your toes! Pilates is a little more strength based. Yoga also includes relaxation, meditation and has a spiritual element. Some people practice yoga for its physical benefits but for many Yogis their practice of yoga becomes a way of life.

7. How our classes work and why you should choose Physio on the River

- At Physio on the River we run our classes on a termly basis like school terms. During the holidays we sometimes run a skeleton timetable for those who want to keep going with their classes.
- We run about 23 Pilates classes a week spread **throughout the day and evening**, 7 days a week
- **Small classes** – never more than 7 in the class so lots of individual attention

- Classes are divided into **levels of difficulty** – so you are always with people of the same standard and **always progressing**
- We also offer **Rehab classes** taken by a fully qualified **Physiotherapist who is also trained as a Pilates instructor**. These are perfect for those returning from injury or surgery or who simply want to exercise at a gentler pace
- Where capacity allows, we offer **catch up classes** for any classes missed within a term
- We also offer **individual lessons**, duets and trios which can be arranged at a time suited to you
- We provide all the mats and small equipment you require so all you have to bring is yourself!
- Any loose clothing is suitable for the class – no Lycra required!

8. How do I know which class I should join?

If you are unsure which class to choose, our class coordinator, Angela Ranger, is always on hand to help. She is a Physiotherapist and regularly takes Pilates and Yoga classes herself, so is really well placed to advise you.

She knows all the class teachers and their particular ways of teaching, and she knows the standard of each class.

We also allow people to try out a class first before committing to a full term. We understand that it's important to like your teacher and their style of teaching, so we want you to find a good match.

9. Sources of information and links.

Timetable for our current term classes

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