

WHAT IS PILATES?

The Pilates method is an exercise 'system' created by Joseph Pilates in the 1920's, which gained initial prominence when Joe used his methods to rehabilitate injured soldiers during the Great War. In a nutshell, it is a specifically crafted series of exercises designed to realign your posture and naturally condition your body.

How Many Types of Pilates are There?

There are three main types, all of which use the basic principles of Pilates. All classes last between 60 and 90 minutes, and will cost from as little as \$12 for a group mat class, up to over \$100 for a private one-on-one apparatus session. **Mat Work** is what it says - basic work on a mat using your bodyweight as resistance. It's the closest you'll get to a Yoga-style workout, and classes number between 5 and 20 depending on the level of instructor. **Group Reformer Classes** are carried out on a piece of apparatus which looks not too dissimilar to a single bed. Resistance is provided via a series of adjustable springs and pulleys, and the workout is very similar to that experienced with mat work. Expect up to a dozen co-exercisers in your class. The apparatus session involves using a whole array of machinery and equipment, from the very impressive, Cadillac (a sort of four-poster bed with pulleys and springs), to the aptly-named, barrel and spinal corrector. These sessions are usually carried out one-on-one, and are used for rehab, or are goal-specific.

What are the Main Benefits of Pilates

According to its creator, Joseph Pilates, "it develops the body uniformly, corrects wrong postures, restores physical vitality, invigorates the mind and elevates the spirit." Aside from teaching the body awareness of posture, balance and movement, Pilates has an extremely positive effect on overall flexibility and core

strength. It also lengthens and streamlines muscles, therefore building overall strength without the bulk associated with conventional weight training methods. Also, because Pilates has the ability to focus on targeted muscle groups, it is also widely used for injury rehabilitation.

To Gain the Most from My Pilates, How Many Times a Week Should I be Going?

For the very best results, you should have 2-3 hour-long sessions per week.

Can I Practice at Home?

It is not advisable to use Pilates apparatus unsupervised. However, once you feel confident with your mat work, it is perfectly OK to practice this at home. A good mat and a clear space is all that's needed.

How and Where Would I Find a Pilates Teacher?

The Pilates Alliance is an independent regulatory body for the Pilates industry. Call them on 02 8399 3836 for a recommendation, or advice. Alternatively, if you find a Pilates studio in your area that you are keen to join, ask them for their qualifications and experience, then call the Alliance. They should be able to tell you if they are a recognised practitioner.

Are There any Recognised Qualifications for Pilates Teachers?

Yes, there are some excellent facilities for training in the Pilates method. Again, the Pilates Alliance are a good source for recommending quality training courses and qualifications. Pilates International is a recognised and independently regulated training body for certification in the Pilates method, and operate out of most capital cities in Australia, plus Auckland and Singapore. Call Julie on 9699 5509 for information.



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