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pilatesstyle
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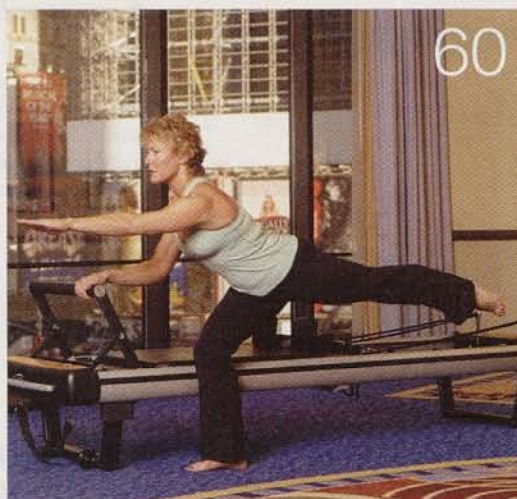
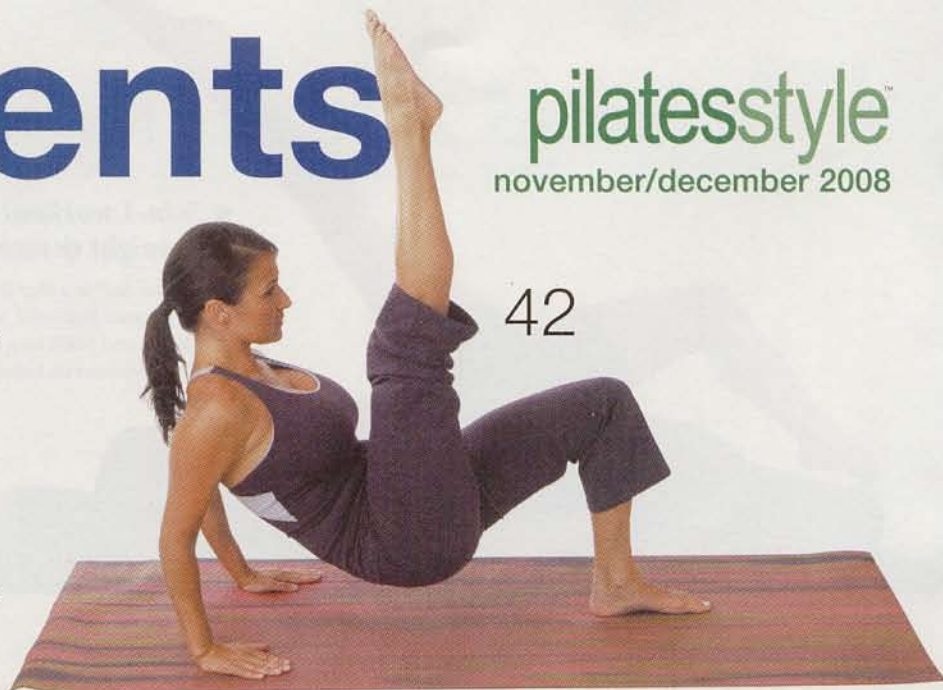
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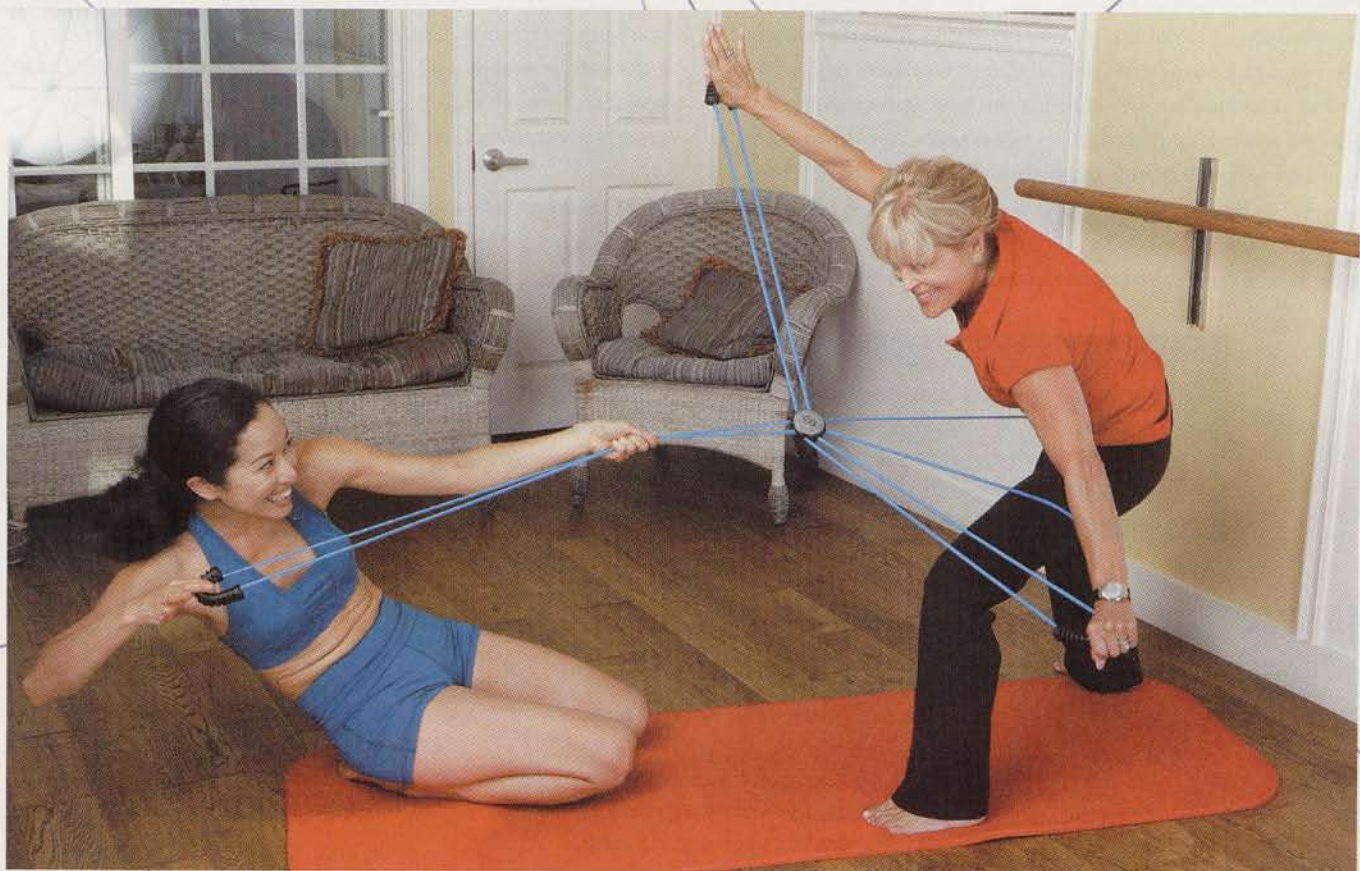
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the only pilates astrology column on any planet





PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARTHUR COHEN. MODEL SANDY SHIMODA IS WEARING TOMMY HILF. MARI IS DRESSED IN ELISABETTA POGGI.

home workout

don't let winter weather derail your routine. work out like a pro in the comfort of your living room

BY HEIDI DVORAK

Sometimes the biggest workout challenge we face in winter is getting out of the house and over to the studio. But neither snow nor sleet nor gloom will stop you from doing Mari Winsor's brand-spanking-new home routine that can exercise your whole body as intensely as a studio session. All you need is a CorePlus Reformer, Winsor's newest tool (and obsession). This inexpensive, lightweight, portable tubing has a centered disk and can totally "reform" the body. Winsor loves it because it's so easy to handle, yet it can replicate exercises done on the Reformer and Cadillac and enhances the resistance of matwork.

It may not be a full-size apparatus, but the CorePlus

Reformer packs a mighty punch. Its sturdy, flexible design, with four strong loops for your hands and feet, helps engage your entire body and provides immediate brain-muscle feedback. The one thing it doesn't come equipped with is the mind-body connection. You have to supply that yourself. "You need to work like you're submerged in quicksand," Winsor says. "Concentrate. It's hard to be mindful about form, balance and engaging the correct muscles if you're working too quickly."

But when you do zero in on your movement, you'll reap huge benefits. "You'll see that it works your core in a subtle way," she adds. "You won't feel a burn, but to properly execute the exercises, you have to engage your Powerhouse. But, used properly, this prop will naturally draw in your core."

WORKOUT BY MARI WINSOR

While the CorePlus Reformer does mimic the effects of certain apparatus work—like legwork with springs on the Cadillac—there are some differences. "This tool allows you to lengthen your limbs without tensing," Winsor explains, "and that creates space in your body. It also enables you to monitor

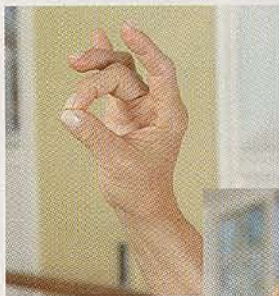
your balance. One of the things you always must do is anchor your legs individually so you can detect weakness immediately.”

But you don't have to wait for the first snowstorm to try this great workout. Just find an open space, set down your mat and follow Winsor's instructions to “think about where you are in time and space. If you pay attention to what this prop tells you, it will help you focus, build strength and gain flexibility in no time.” Depending on how much time

you have, you can squeeze in a good 10-minute sequence, a decent 20-minute one or get a full hour-long workout. Once you start to work with the CorePlus Reformer, you'll start creating your own favorite routines.

The CorePlus Reformer with 50-minute DVD workout will be available for \$29.98 on December 2, 2008, at gaiam.com and amazon.com.

TO BEGIN: The CorePlus Reformer has four handles. Slip one over the arch on each foot and hold one in each hand. To ensure that you are working your arms and not your wrists, keep your wrists long with a straight line from your knuckles to your elbows. (In other words, don't break at the wrists.) All the exercises are performed lying on your back on a mat. Beginners may keep their head on the floor. More-advanced students should raise their head off the floor.



castanets

This warm-up prepares your wrists, hands and fingers to comfortably grip the prop.



1. On each hand, put your thumb and pointer finger together, and then, one at a time, the rest of your fingers—middle fingers, forefingers and pinkies, holding for no more than one second each.

2. When you reach your pinkies, rotate your wrists inward into a closed fist. Repeat 5 times for each hand.

tip: Perform this throughout the day if you engage in continual gripping motions like driving, typing or holding a phone.

walking the mountain



targeted muscles: abdominals, glutes, quadriceps, calves, biceps

1. Hold the handles into your chest, slightly bend your elbows and draw in your abdominals.

2. Raise both legs to a 75-degree angle above the floor. Keep your knees soft and lengthen your legs like they're arrows shooting out of your hip sockets.

3. Lower your right leg 6 to 8 inches below your left one. Then lower your left leg 6 to 8 inches below the right one, as if you were walking down through the air. Keep your legs within the frame of your hips.

4. Slowly, with control, keep walking each leg until both are a few inches above the floor. Repeat 6 to 8 times.

tip: If your lower back starts to move or to hurt, don't take your legs so low. Release your shoulders down away from your ears.



leg circles

targeted muscles: abdominals, glutes, quadriceps, adductors, abductors, calves, biceps

1. Raise your legs up at a 75-degree angle. Keep your legs straight and shoulder-width apart, toes pointed.
2. Slightly bend your elbows, draw in your abs and open your legs to shoulder width.
3. Circle both legs smoothly around, about the size of a barrel rim, until they meet 6 to 8 inches off the floor. Repeat, making 5 counterclockwise circles, then reverse, making 6 clockwise circles.

tip: Check your form to make equal circle sizes for each leg; both legs should stay raised to the same height.



advanced: Trace wider circles.

frogs

targeted muscles: abdominals, glutes, quadriceps, adductors, abductors, calves, biceps

1. Extend your legs out at a 45-degree angle. Rotate them slightly from your hips so that your legs are softly turned out with your toes pointed.
2. Bend your knees over your hips and flex your feet.
3. Extend your legs back out to a 45-degree angle. Repeat 10 times.

tip: Don't bend your knees so wide that your buttocks lift off the floor.



beats

targeted muscles: abdominals, glutes, quadriceps, adductors, abductors, calves, biceps

1. Open your legs shoulder-width apart and raise them just above the floor with your toes pointed.
2. Beat your legs together 20 times with your feet gently flexed. Legs should open no wider than 10 inches.

tip: Feel the resistance as you beat your legs so the tubing doesn't control you.





scissors

targeted muscles: abdominals, glutes, quadriceps, adductors, abductors, hamstrings, calves

1. With pointed toes, raise your right leg straight over your hip and your left leg about 6 inches above the floor.
2. Switch legs for a total of 10 times. With each movement, both legs should reach longer.

tip: Keep your lower back down, your powerhouse deeply engaged and your torso quiet.



teaser

targeted muscles: abdominals, glutes, quadriceps, calves, biceps

1. Sit up and raise your legs off the floor at a 45-degree angle.
2. Hold on to the tubing and walk your hands up the band one hand at a time, spreading your thumb out as you scoop in your abdominals and lift your upper body one vertebra at a time.
3. When you reach the top, walk your hands back down the band one hand at a time, as you lower back down one vertebra at a time. Repeat 3 times. 🌀



advanced: Stretch your body out on the floor. With control, lift your body up to Teaser position, pause for a moment and slowly release down. Repeat 4 times.





a heady apparatus

expand your repertoire with one of joe's favorites, the guillotine

BY HEIDI DVORAK

Model Jamie Trout, an instructor at True Pilates East and Pure Pilates in Ft. Lauderdale, loves the Guillotine "because it points out your weaknesses and encourages your muscles to be symmetric."

t

hink you're a master of apparatus? You've probably got your Reformer and Cadillac exercises down pat. But are you a pro on the Ladder Barrel, Wunda Chair, Electric Chair and Pedipole? You are? Well then, how about the Guillotine? The most imposing of Joseph Pilates' original inventions may be the least common piece of studio equipment, but

many feel it's one of the most important. John Degenshein, a Romana Pilates instructor with his own NYC studio, True Pilates East, is one of those Guillotine advocates (or should we say addicts?). With its clean lines and versatility, he explains, this "usable piece of art" was conceived as a gym in a doorway to save space and to function like its older sibling, the Cadillac.

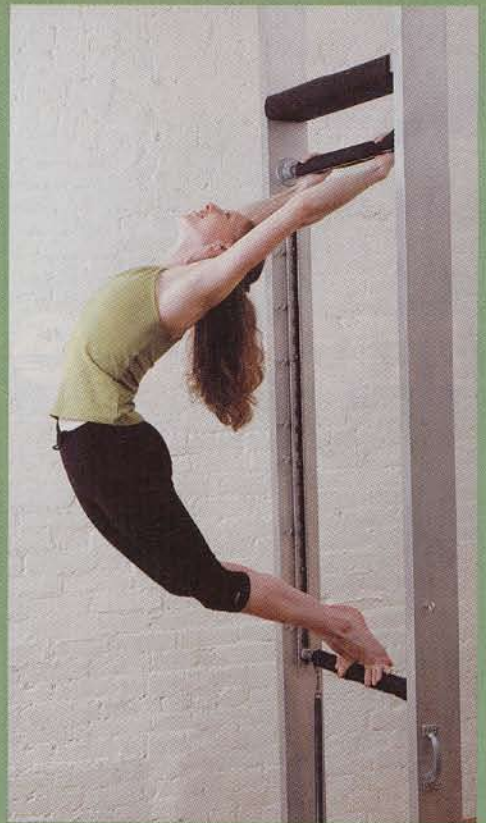
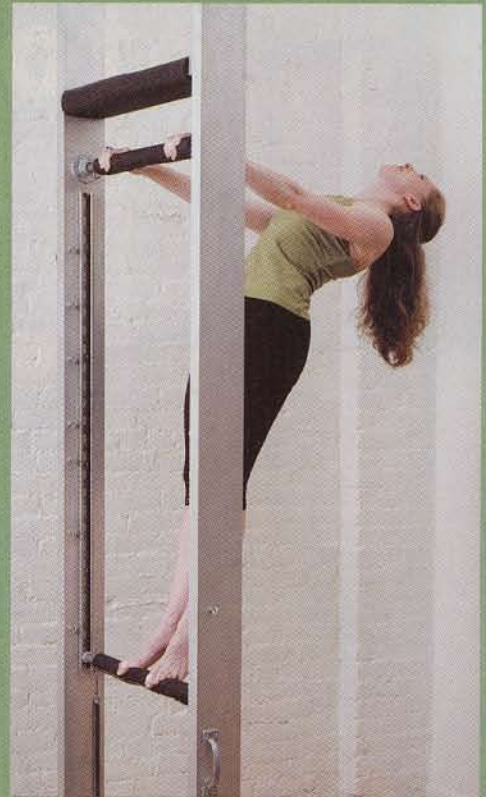
Degenshein began building his Pilates studio with a six-month gut renovation of an 1869 Upper East Side townhouse, outfitting it with chandeliers, Italian ceiling fans, pine floors, white brick walls, leather couches and Belgian tiles in the bathrooms. Opened in October 2006 with partner Tom Gesimondo of True Pilates NY, True Pilates East was designed with a discriminating eye. For Degenshein, the Guillotine occupying center stage on the duplex studio's top floor was

not intended as a substitute for the Cadillac (the studio has two) but as a desirable supplement. "Its design and height contribute to a more comfortable workout," he notes. "On the Cadillac, in the initial stages of Tower and Monkey, your head and neck hang off the end unsupported. On the Guillotine you can rest your head and neck on a padded, extended mat, enabling you to completely focus on the required muscle contractions. It also better accommodates tall clients who exceed the maximum height of the Cadillac's push-through bar."

WORKOUT BY JOHN DEGENSHEIN

You'll never get bored on the Guillotine. With seven hooks and a spring on each side of the frame, it can be adjusted to fit a range of heights and work different muscle groups with the simple repositioning of the springs. "It has a permanently affixed spring-loaded bar, so it forces you to work your body evenly to keep it level without wobbling," he adds. "You can also add a rollback bar and arm or leg springs to expand your repertoire."

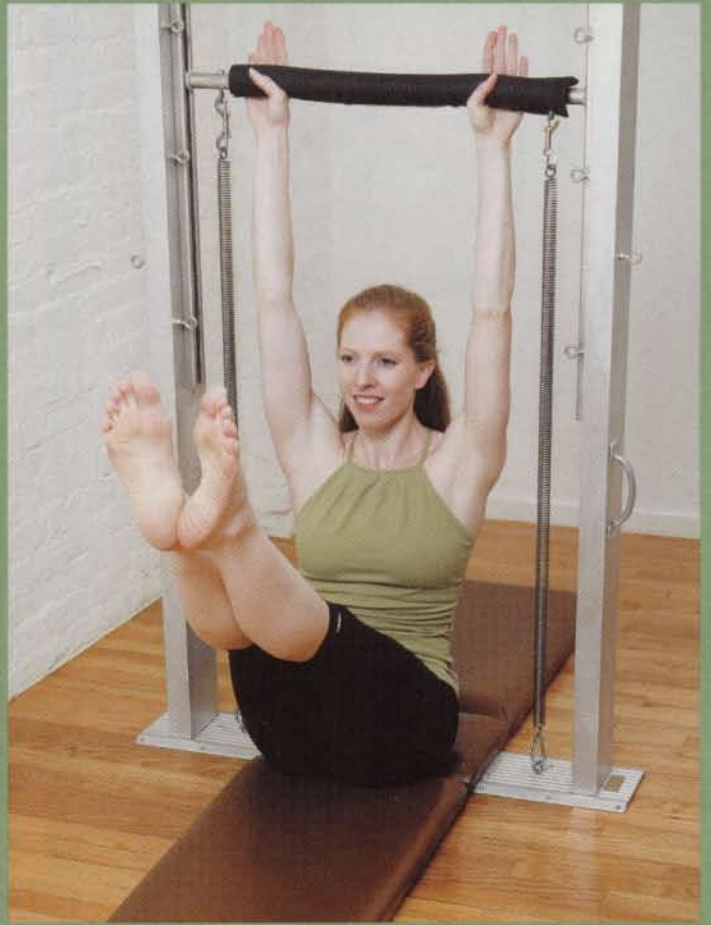
Degenshein designed the following workout to demonstrate how versatile the Guillotine is and how it enhances certain exercises and replaces work that can only be done on a Cadillac, of which many studios have just one. But this is only the beginning. Once you start experimenting, be careful: You too could lose your head over the Guillotine.



full circle

purpose: The only exercise in this routine that can be done only on the Guillotine (and often at the end), it uses the apparatus' frame to stretch the entire body and open the chest and shoulders.

1. Place your hands shoulder-width apart on the top bar and your feet in Pilates stance on the bottom bar. Lean back into a C-curve shape.
2. Lean back into a big arc, fully extending your arms and legs.
3. Scrape your chest up as much as possible into a high arc to the top bar to push out. Repeat three times in each direction.



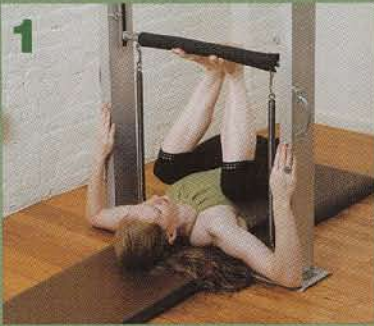
teaser

purpose: strengthens the powerhouse, back, shoulders and arms; improves balance

1. Lie down with your chest under the bar. Grasp the bar with both hands, shoulder-width apart and arms straight.
2. Engage your powerhouse and sit up, pushing the bar up and keeping your back straight and slightly tilted back.
3. Raise and lower your legs 3 times.
4. Lower your legs down a few inches, or as much as you can, and then roll down your spine, one vertebra at a time.

advanced:

Raise your legs and arms up at the same time. Bend your elbows, lowering them behind the bar and your head (a move called shaving).



tower



purpose: to strengthen the spine and powerhouse as well as to improve flexibility, breathing and coordination

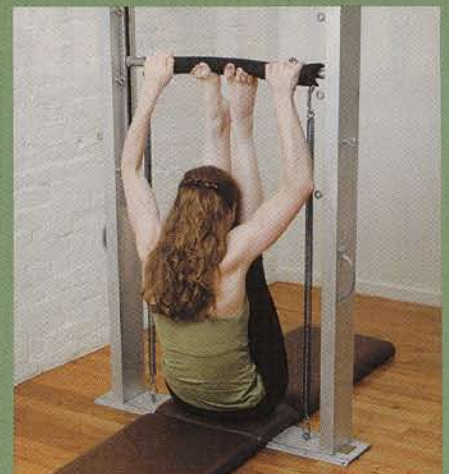
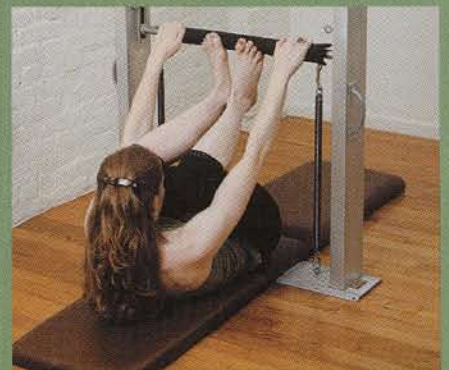
1. Lie down on the mat with the bar over your throat. Extend your elbows out at your sides, keeping them on the floor with your hands resting on the frame. Place your feet under the bar in parallel (or Pilates stance) with your tailbone flat on the mat, knees open and bent into your chest.
2. Straighten your legs, keeping your hips down. Point and flex your feet once.
3. Push the bar up as far as you can, then bend your knees back toward your chest, keeping them open. Do 3 reps, and then roll down one vertebra at a time.

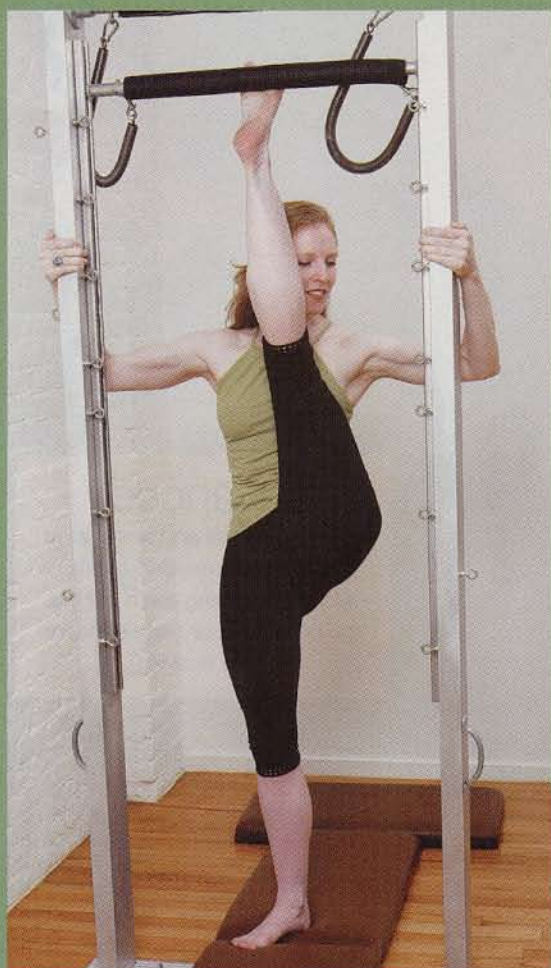
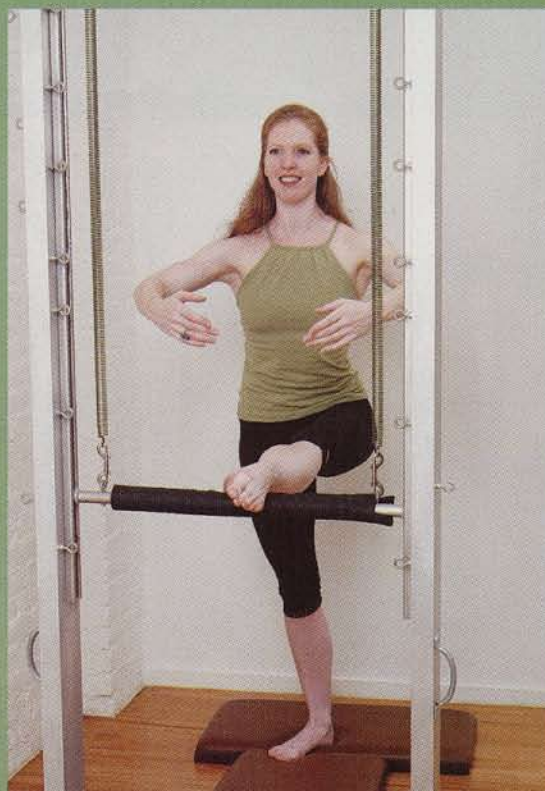
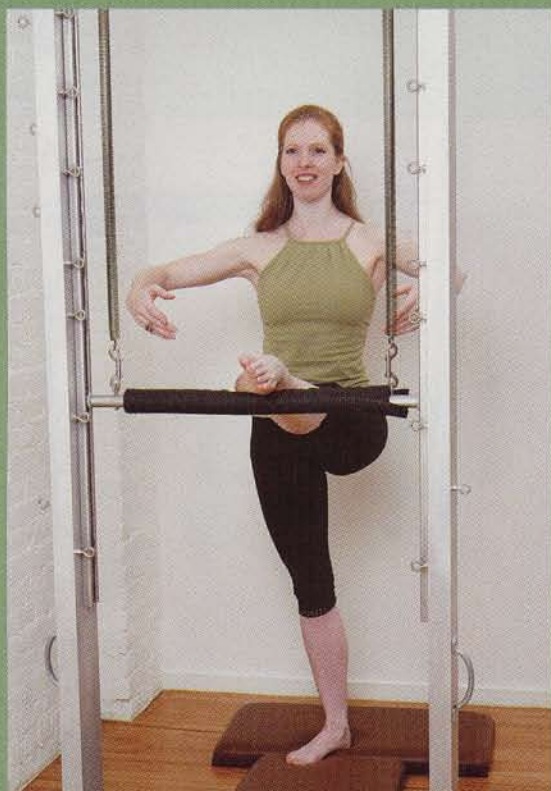
tip:
Try to keep bar even throughout exercises.

monkey

purpose: improves the flexibility of the back and legs and strengthens the powerhouse

1. Lying down on the mat, bring your knees to your chest, making sure your tailbone is under the bar.
2. Place your feet on the bar in Pilates stance and then place your hands by your feet, about shoulder-width apart.
3. Holding on to the bar, straighten your legs to push the bar up, hugging your chest as close to your legs as possible. When you're fully extended, point and flex your feet one time.
4. Return to original position and repeat process 3 times.





ballet stretches

purpose: stretches and strengthens the legs, strengthens the powerhouse and improves balance

1. Step back from the bar the length of one leg's distance away. Stand in the center of the mat with your arms out to the sides, like you're hugging a beach ball. Place your left foot on the center of the bar, with your knee bent, the side of your foot on the bar.
2. Push your foot down slightly and hold for 3 counts.
3. Hop or shimmy your standing foot close to the bar, and then, using your powerhouse, push the bar up until you're in a standing split. Hold on to the sides of the frame in line with your head, elbows bent.
4. Hop or shimmy back, remove your leg and place your foot on the floor. Switch legs. Do 3 reps on each leg.

hip stretch

purpose: opens the hips and strengthens the legs

1. Lie down on your right side with your hips stacked, directly under the bar. Align your shoulders with your hips. You can support your head with your hand or lay your head down.
2. Place the ball and toes of your top foot on the bar. Bend your top knee toward the back of your shoulder. Point and flex your foot.
3. Lower the bar down evenly. Do 3 reps on each side then switch sides.



advanced:
Bring your raised foot closer to the body.

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