

Pilates

What is Pilates

Joseph Pilates, born in Germany in 1880 suffered from asthma and rickets but was determined to improve his physical health. He developed a system of exercise that he called 'Controlology'. He was interned in England during World War I and used this form of exercise to improve the health and morale of fellow prisoners. Pilates is a gentle, low impact form of exercise that has a full range of exercises that will help you to develop efficient movement, flexibility, strength, co-ordination, balance and endurance. It is not just an exercise routine – it is an *awareness* of posture and movement that you can build into everyday life. Pilates is based on controlled flowing movements which are described as strengthening the “core” muscles that some people claim will help to stabilize the spine.

What are the benefits of Pilates?

There have been many reports and research done on the benefits of Pilates although many have not been subjected to rigorous scientific examination and there's a need for more research in this area. However there is some evidence that Pilates can help with;

- Reducing stress and tension
- Improving flexibility and mobility
- Creating a sense of well being and calm
- Improving weight control balance
- Improving posture
- Improving body awareness

Different forms of Pilates

There are two main forms of Pilates; mat based or machine based Pilates.

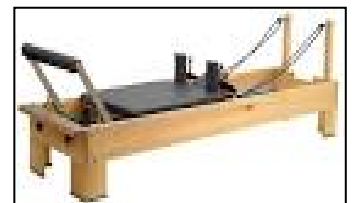
Mat based

Mat based Pilate's classes tend to be much easier to find and are usually done in larger groups than machine based groups. Mat based Pilates incorporates seated, standing and lying based exercises that engage your 'core muscles' which can replicate and improve your normal daily movements. This form of Pilates can regularly be performed with the use of resistance bands, balls other small pieces of equipment.



Machine based Pilates

Machine based Pilates is more commonly performed on a 'reformer' which is a sliding soft platform anchored at one end with springs. You can perform 100's of exercises in sitting, kneeling, standing or lying using the resistance of the springs to incorporate intensity. This form of Pilates tends to be harder to find in the community and has a greater cost implication.



Which one is best?

Both forms have their benefits, the decision is completely yours.

Pilates in the community

Community Pilates classes are becoming more and more popular and instructors are constantly adapting and evolving their practise so that Pilates can be inclusive for all despite any health condition you may have. If you have any concerns about joining a group many instructors would encourage you to discuss this with them so they can offer reassurance on their practices before attending. There are several benefits in joining a community instructor lead class however Pilates can also be accessed at home via DVD's, interactive computer consoles or self taught books.

For more information on finding a local Pilates classes;

Torbay

- www.torbaygymnastics.co.uk
- www.pilatesnearyou.co.uk
- www.tlh.co.uk/aztec-studio
- www.rivieracentre.co.uk
- www.purebalancestudio.co.uk
- www.flowphysio.co.uk

Teignbridge

- [www. Workit-uk.co.uk](http://www.Workit-uk.co.uk)
- www.venningfitness.co.uk
- www.bodyandsole.org.uk
- www.yo-pilates.co.uk
- www.pilates-sessions.co.uk
- www.teignheritage.org.uk

South Hams

- www.quayphysio.co.uk
- <http://thehenhouse>
- www.shiatsuandpilates.co.uk
- www.harbourhouse.org.uk
- www.fitness-factory-totnes.com
- www.toneleisure.co.uk

For patients with a Torbay based GP Pilates can now be accessed on the Fit Bay scheme.

http://www.torbaycaretrust.nhs.uk/yourlife/healthy_lifestyles/fitness_in_torbay/Pages/Default.aspx