

TWIST & SHOUT



energize your whole body with fusion matwork

BY TANNIS KOBRINSKY

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I used to think I was born ready to dance. By age five I had already taken my first ballet class, and just 10 years later I was about to begin a full-fledged career in the field. Or so I thought. To my horror, I developed excruciating joint pain and started collapsing in rehearsals and performances. An astute orthopedist diagnosed me with osteochondritis dissecans (bone disease) of the knee and performed serious surgery that banned me from ballet practice for six months. While I had no choice but to shelve my pointe shoes, I refused to completely abandon my first love. I started doing modern, jazz and musical-theater dance, and soon after moved to Los Angeles to pursue acting.

To keep fit on a dancer's budget, I joined a gym and wound up practically living there—so much so that the staff helped me get AFAA-certified in group exercise and then hired me. I'd taught dance in the past, so I was able to easily make the transition into an aerobics teacher as well as a personal trainer. For the next two decades I continued to work as a trainer and dabbled in the entertainment biz, landing minor roles in music videos, TV shows and independent films and even several screenwriting assignments.

Later, in my early 40s, I tore the meniscus in my bad knee from the wear and tear of teaching and had to have surgery—again. When I recovered, my gym enrolled me in a Polestar Pilates certification course and proclaimed me a Pilates instructor before I had completed my training. Shortly thereafter, I tore my ACL in that same ol' knee and had to have yet another surgery. My orthopedist prescribed Pilates as physical therapy, changing my life forever. I finally understood what a powerful healing

and training tool Pilates was. Post-rehab, I studied with BASI founder and Pilates master, Rael Isacowitz, and got fully certified. I started working for Tracey Mallett of ATP Specific Training in Pasadena and have been on staff ever since. Hungry to learn even more, I went on to become an instructor in both Gyrotonic® and Gyrokinesis®. That profound training altered how I teach Pilates: I started integrating twists and spirals into classic moves and encouraged students to channel their inner chi, or life force, through breath and movement. I

launched my own business, Health Habittravels, and started leading Pilates retreats and journeys all over the world.

As a classically trained dancer, I know and value the importance of a solid foundation. Once you've got the basics down, you're ready for fun challenges. This equipment-free workout modifies classical Pilates exercises and incorporates rotations (for balance, strength and joint stretches) and twists, to tighten the waist, release back muscles and improve range of motion. Do the total-body routine as many times per week as you want. Start with three to five repetitions on each side and then build to 10. Before you know it, everyday activities and sports-specific actions will become almost effortless—but your body will look like you've spent all day working out. ▶

Tannis will be leading her next Pilates retreat October 5–12 at the Poppy Farmhouse in Italy. For more info, visit healthabittravels.com.





toe dips

purpose: strengthens obliques

- 1.** Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet flat on the mat. Your arms are at your sides, palms down and fingers together, and your shoulders and neck are relaxed. Inhale and draw your navel to your spine, then exhale and lift your legs into Tabletop.
- 2.** Keeping your knees bent and upper body as stable as possible, inhale and rotate your legs to your left side (keeping them glued together). Exhale as you point your toes down on the left side of the mat.
- 3.** Inhale to lift legs and exhale to return to center. Repeat on your right side. Do 10 repetitions on each side.

TIP:

Relax your upper body and intensify your navel-to-spine connection. Be careful not to hold too much tension in your toes.

teaser prep with spine twist



purpose: lengthens full body, tones obliques and stretches the back

1. Lie flat on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the mat. Pull your navel to your spine and rest your arms by your sides, palms down and fingers together. Extend your left leg up, keeping your knees together and your toes in neutral.

2. Inhale and, keeping your fingers pointed and together, lift your arms, and then open them out and bring down to your sides.

3. Exhale and engage your core to curl up, reaching your arms forward. Keeping your legs straight, sit up tall with your spine straight and your arms extended above your head.

4. Inhale and reach your right arm to the outside of your left leg. Exhale as you use your oblique muscles to rotate at the waist and extend your right arm out at shoulder level. Hold for 2 counts. Inhale and return to the center, then exhale as you roll down to start. Do 2-3 repetitions per side.



TIP: Avoid tucking your pelvis or using your hip flexors or quadriceps.

MODIFICATION:

Instead of extending your leg out, keep it bent at the knee.

FOR THE LEGS

side-lying leg lift with hip rotation



purpose: tones the inner and outer thighs, strengthens the hips and glutes

1. Lie on your right side with your shoulders, hips and legs stacked and in a straight line, feet in neutral. Bend your left elbow in front of your body and rest your head on your right hand. Drawing your navel to your spine, elongate both legs and rotate your hips open so your top heel faces the front of the room. Exhale as you lift your top leg with control. Maintaining the open-hip position, bring your top heel down in front of the extended leg.
2. Exhale as you lift your top leg up, then rotate it as it crosses over the extended leg and bring your toes down behind that leg, toes pointed.
3. Do 10 repetitions, switch sides, and then do 10 reps with your other leg.

advanced:

Instead of resting your head in your hand, extend your arm straight up.

FULL-BODY INTEGRATION



corkscrew with rollover

purpose: strengthens core and pelvic floor; helps with spine flexibility; stretches hamstring and inner thighs

1. Lie on your back, navel pulled into spine and neck and shoulders relaxed. Place your arms by your sides, palms down and fingers together. Extend your legs into Tabletop, feet in Pilates stance and flexed. Keeping your torso and pelvis stable, circle your legs together, squeezing your inner thighs together.
2. Roll your legs back over your head so that you are up on your shoulders, with your legs at a 90-degree angle suspended above the floor in a rollover. Circle your legs over one of your shoulders and then roll down on an exhale, making sure to engage your core muscles. Do not use force or momentum to do this movement. Alternate to the other side and do 3 repetitions on each side.

FULL-BODY INTEGRATION

mermaid with twist

purpose: full-body integration, core and shoulder stability

1. Sit facing forward, with your legs bent or extended at your side, one arm a hands-length distance away from and aligned with your hip and your opposite arm resting on your thigh. Your fingers are rotated out and shoulders are open and down.

2. Engage your core and lat muscles, open wide through your chest and soften your shoulders. Lift your torso off the floor up onto your straight arm and extend your free arm upward from your shoulder, making a T shape. Bend at your hip, thread your arm under your rib cage and then rotate your torso through the space between your supporting arm and your legs as if you were threading a needle.

3. Reverse your rotation back to the front and hold, keeping your shoulders stable and your free arm extended. Descend slowly to your start pose. Do 4 repetitions on each side.

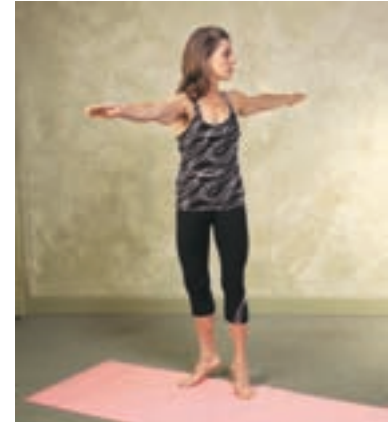


TIP: Align your body correctly before you start. Do not pull all your weight up on your wrist or shoulders.

FOR BALANCE

standing supine twist with eyes closed

purpose: encourages balance, engages deep core muscles, helps you locate and hold your center of gravity



1. Stand with your feet slightly turned out, hip-width distance apart. Engaging your core, rise up onto the balls of your feet, pushing your heels together and lengthening your spine. Close your eyes and try to locate your smallest muscles (proprioceptive receptors in your deep core). Extend your arms out to your sides at shoulder level, palms facing down and fingertips together.

2. Keeping your hips centered, twist at the waist to your left side, bringing your gaze to your left fingertips. Return head to center and repeat on your right side. Do 3 repetitions in each direction. ☯

TIPS:

Don't turn out legs too much; maintain a comfortable Pilates V. Make sure you ground through your toes and heels for a push/pull effect.

Want more?

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