




# SpineSafe Pilates - LESSON PLAN

Before exercises start, set up with Base Line Essential Principles (BLEPs) to set up good posture and warm up with a simple mobilization of joints:

- Foot leg positioning, hip distance, 2<sup>nd</sup> toe under knee, under hip, under shoulder, head level
- Neutral pelvis and spine
- Lateral breathing into rib cage adding abdominal hollowing and lifting pelvic floor
- Rib to hip ratio and ribcage placement
- Shoulders back and down
- Neck aligned on head

Exercise name	Action
<p><b>Pelvic tilts 1<sup>st</sup> standing against wall and all fours</b></p> 	<p><b>Standing</b>            Feet and knees hip distance apart, slightly bend the knees            Inhale to prepare, exhale and tuck tailbone under or press waistband into wall/floor while hollowing abdomen            Inhale and relax, repeat</p> <p><b>All fours</b>            Neutral spine, hands under shoulders, knees under hips            Inhale to prepare, exhale and tuck tailbone under while hollowing abdomen            Inhale and relax back to neutral, repeat</p>
<p><b>Standing Spine Twist</b></p> 	<p><b>Standing Spine Twist</b>            Feet and knees hip distance apart slightly bend the knees            Keeping the hips as still as you can rotate right from the thoracic area return and rotate left, repeat            Keep hip bones facing forward initially            Maintain shoulder stability            Keep crown of head over tail bone            Lead and move from the ribs</p> <p>Variations:            Feet together – challenges balance            Pole across shoulders – teaches moving thoracic spine            One leg – increased balance challenge &amp; single leg strength</p>
<p><b>Standing foot pedals</b></p> 	<p>Heel lifts – hands on hip – peel one heel of the floor tracking the knee in line with the second toe and lower repeat on opposite side</p> <p>Foot Pedals as above –come up higher and alternate the foot pedal from one leg to the other focusing on pelvis stability and knee / ankle alignment in line with 2<sup>nd</sup> toe            Keep pelvis still and level            Maintain neutral spine and hip to rib connection            Keep weight distribution even through the legs. This shouldn't change as you lift the heel because the weight should just transfer into the ball of the foot</p> <p>Progression            Add a resistance band above the knee</p>

### Standing knee lifts



Side sways – start the exercise by swaying sideways from right to left – exchanging weight between the feet without lifting the foot  
Weight transfers from the ankles not the waist  
Start with heel lift focus on body's natural sway envelope, track knees in line with the hip  
Repeat several times then progress to lifting heel and bringing knee up

### Hip hinge into monkey squats



Use **pole** to help correct spinal alignment **OR**  
Arms behind back also useful to correct forward lean on squat (if shoulders and thoracic area allows)  
Buttocks sit back as you simultaneously bend the knees  
Maintaining neutral spinal alignment  
Keep the weight equal over both feet  
Knees track over second toe  
Press back up to standing – \_straighten legs but avoid hyperextending or locking out knees

### Cat stretch



Draw Sacrum under as if tucking tail bone under without moving above the bottom of the ribs  
Return to neutral  
Extends Sacrum up to the ceiling without lowering the ribs  
Return to neutral

### Superman all fours








Set up all fours position – wrist in line with shoulders – same distance as length of trunk  
Knees in line with the hips  
Spine in neutral, contract abdomen & pelvic floor on exhale  
Small ball on lower back for stability feedback - try to complete the exercise without the ball falling off.  
**1** = Hover the hand keeping the body still – elbows are bent slightly, return to start and repeat on opposite side  
**2/3** = Pinpoint – opposite arm to leg lengthen arm and leg or arm on its own, leg on its own etc. depending upon your ability  
Progressions  
Diagonal arms and leg, 10-2, pivot  
**4** Elbow to opposite knee  
Arm & leg lifts x 8-12 L/R  
Add resistance bands/weights

### Side plank



Lie on your side with your elbow straight underneath your shoulder  
Bend your knees. (see photo)  
Shoulder away from ear  
Lift up, bring your hips forward so your body is in a straight line.  
Lift the pelvis using abdominal muscles  
Keep your head back in line with your body.  
Pretend you have headlights on both your hips and shoulders. They should face straight ahead and point straight across the room to the same location.

<p><b>Swan dive lumbar</b></p> 	<p>Engage abdominals very slightly          Glide the shoulder blades down the back (avoid over recruiting or drawing shoulder blades together)          Peel the nose, chin and breastbone off the floor          Visualise lengthening through the spine as you lift and lower          Progress by extending through the spine with segmental control – lengthen legs as the spine lifts higher – Glutes will engage</p>
<p><b>Gluteal bracing</b></p> 	<p>Phase 1 - Maintain shoulders and upper back relaxed, shoulder blades drawn down very slightly          Hip to rib connection or visualise hip bones drawing closer together slightly and breath normally          Draw the buttocks closer – observe buttock connection before moving on. As if kissing them together, relax and contract several times          Phase 2 - As the buttocks draw towards each other keep the hip bones and pubic bone in the same place as the toes tuck under, straighten out the legs - feel as if you are lifting the front of the kneecaps and drawing up on your inside thigh</p>
<p><b>Side leg series One (Right &amp; Left)</b></p> 	<p>Hip to rib connection          Lengthen both legs          Lift the top leg to hip height only pointing the toes          Flex the foot and lower the leg</p>
<p><b>Supine heel slides</b></p> 	<p>Fingers on hip bones to check pelvis remains still and level throughout.          Think about lifting the foot without putting more pressure through opposite leg          Hover the foot off the floor          Lengthen the leg away from the body foot slightly off the floor and return, repeat other side.</p>
<p><b>Arm pullover</b></p> 	<p>The start position can be from picture 1 or picture two          Palms face the floor - draw down from shoulder and lats feel as if the arms lengthen as you hover them off the floor          Turn palms to face each other and lift toward the ceiling          Arm can go over head - leading with the thumb and return to side of pelvis palms facing down          Combine with pelvic floor contraction          Can alternate arms</p>

### Shoulder bridge



Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat. Your feet and knees should be parallel and hip-width apart, and your spine should be in neutral position.  
Arms relax along the sides your body.  
Inhale and prepare to move.  
On an exhalation, scoop your abs and engage your pelvic floor as you tuck your tailbone beneath you. Starting at your pelvis, roll your spine up toward the ceiling, one vertebra at a time. Raise your hips until you are in a straight line  
Holding this pose, strongly engage your core muscles and draw your navel in toward your spine.  
To release, exhale and roll your spine back down to the mat, one vertebra at a time.  
Variation: lift keeping torso straight between shoulders and hips if back uncomfortable rolling spine.

### Hip Rolls



Place hands on ribs to stabilise  
Keep the knees together, use a ball or pillow between knees  
Rotate the joined legs to the right keeping the back of the ribs in their start position – small ROM  
Gradually increase the rotation still using segmental control  
Allow ribs to peel away as they rotate but draw ribs down more at the front – feel as if you are being wrung out in the middle.

### Kneel press to standing & stretch



Kneel press strengthens thigh muscles for a good standing strategy  
Tuck back toes under, weight forwards over front leg  
Push both feet into floor to lift  
Minimise pushing with hands, use legs  
Progression, hover back knee one inch and hold before rising