

## **Congratulations! Below is your “Pilates Ab Blueprint”**

Hi...I'm Sylvia Favela, people call me “Queen of Pilates”, the Body Weight Pilates expert on core strength and functional training. For over a decade I've helped hundreds of people, trainers and professional athletes improve core strength, lean, tone and strengthen their physique with Pilates. These core-strengthening moves will give you a stronger core, improve physical performance, increase muscle endurance, reduce injuries and redefine the midsection through these dynamic Pilates exercises.

Whether you are a novice to Pilates, advanced or a top fitness athlete, this Pilates system is geared to challenge any fitness level by carefully incorporating these exercises to your fitness routine. A sit-up isn't just a sit-up. You will find these specific moves will target the deep abdominal muscles and not only strengthen the core but give the midsection a sleek defined appearance.

You will find 14 illustrations of each Pilates exercise along with detailed step-by-step instructions to executing each and every move. These Pilates exercises are designed for you to easily plug into your existing workouts or your new fitness routine.

At the end of the illustrations are 3 Done-For-You workout plans for you to plug into your daily training. Each Workout plan is divided into 4 sets, each set includes 5 Pilates exercises with the seconds/repetitions suggested. Depending on the fitness level of your group, you have the option to choose either seconds or reps of each exercise.

Along with each illustrated exercise is a modification for each exercise in the event the exercise is too challenging and a client struggles through the move in the beginning. Each exercise is suggested at 12 reps, reduce this count to half if you find yourself struggling with the movement.

Keep mindful control of your body. Body awareness is the key to executing these core moves. Do not throw your body around to complete the moves or rush through them. Each and every move is controlled, always pull your abdominals in and keep them engaged while doing these exercises. Your abdominals do not rest at any time while performing each exercise.

Be safe when doing your exercises, if you feel any discomfort in your low back make sure to pull up through the pelvic floor and draw your knees a bit closer to your body.

Practiced regularly, core strength and muscle endurance will increase quickly and helps to reduce risk of injuries substantially.

Enjoy and have fun!

*Sylvia Favela*

*“Queen of Pilates”*

<http://www.360PilatesWorkout.com>

### ***Exercise Considerations***

Consult with a physician before beginning the exercises in this book. A physician can determine which exercises are appropriate for you or your clients, and if any should be avoided or modified.

### ***Disclaimer***

***“Pilates Ab Blueprint”*** eBook is primarily an educational resource and is not intended to take the place of the advice and recommendations of a physician. If you suspect you or your client has a health problem, please have him or her seek the services of a physician or healthcare professional.

Exercise is an ever-changing science. As new research and clinical experience broaden our knowledge, changes in exercise and exercise prescriptions are inevitable. The author has checked with sources believed to be reliable in her effort to provide information that is complete and generally in accord with the standards accepted at the time of publication. However, in view of the possibility of human error or changes in exercise science, neither the author nor any other party who has been involved in the preparation or publication of this work warrants that the information contained herein is in every respect accurate or complete, and they are not responsible for any errors or omissions or for the results obtained from the use of such information. Readers are encouraged to confirm the information contained herein with other sources.

## V-Roll Up



- Lay on your back, legs up to table top position
- Keep both legs together and inner thighs squeezing firmly.
- Keep lats engaged (latissimus dorsi) by squeezing between shoulder blades.
- Inhale chest lift up, do not tuck your chin down to the chest.
- Arms extended straight out in front of the body.
- Exhale peel your back off the floor as you roll up to a seated position, keeping the feet off the floor.
- Draw the rib cage in and pull your belly button in towards your spine.
- Squeeze the inner thighs together as you go through the movement.
- Avoid the temptation to thrust the ribs forward or lean your head forward.
- The body will shake slightly as you keep the torso extended. This is normal.

*\*\*Modification – Keep one leg down to the floor as you roll up, alternate the legs*

**Side Note:** *You are targeting your deep abdominal muscles, back extensors, internal and external oblique's. As you progress through the movement keep your hips still and do not rock them side-to-side.*

## Hip Extensions



- Begin lying on your back, legs up and knees bent at 90-degree angle.
- Extend the arms forward as you lift the chest up keeping head forward, do not tuck chin into chest.
- Inhale extend the legs up towards the ceiling.
- Exhale pull the knees in towards the chest.
- Do not let the knees come in past the line of the waistline
- Keep chest lifted at all times as the legs move back and forth.
- Keep both hips and butt anchored down on the floor.
- Keep lats engaged (latissimus dorsi) by squeezing between shoulder blades.
- Keep both legs lengthened and as straight as possible during the movement.
- Draw the ribs in and pull your belly button in towards your spine.
- Squeeze the inner thighs together as you go through the movement.
- Avoid the temptation to thrust the ribs forward or lean your head forward.

*\*\*Modification – If there is any discomfort in the neck lower your head down to the floor. Bend the knees slightly if the hamstrings and back is too tight and if the move is limited by flexibility.*

**Side Note:** You are targeting your deep abdominal muscles, back extensors, internal and external oblique's. As you progress through the movement keep your hips still and do not rock them side-to-side.

## Ab Pull



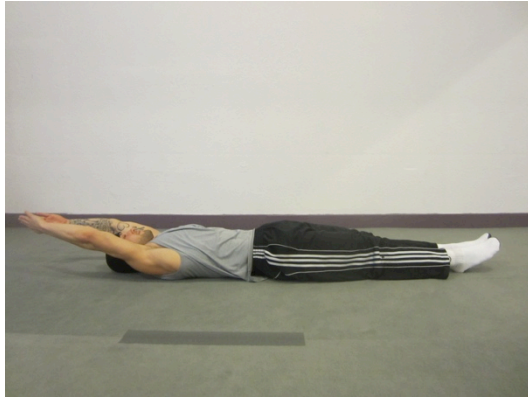
- Lying on your back, extend left leg straight up while the right leg stays down to the floor.
- Chest lift up, goal is to have shoulder blades off the floor.
- Place both hands behind the calve or thigh on the left leg.
- Do not let the knee come past the waistline; this forces the lower abdominals to stay engaged.
- Inhale switch to the opposite side.
- Exhale place the hands behind the opposite leg.
- Continue to switch legs in the air.
- As you switch sides make sure to keep the inner thighs engaged.
- Do not tuck your chin to your chest; you want to keep a distance from your chin to your chest.
- Head remains in alignment to the spine throughout the exercise. Keep lats engaged (latissimus dorsi) by squeezing between shoulder blades.
- As you switch from side to side keep your pelvis still and avoid pulling on the hip flexors.
- Keep lats engaged (latissimus dorsi) by squeezing between shoulder blades.
- Keep your pelvis still, attempting to not let it move side to side.

*\*\*Modification – Pull both knees past the waistline for assistance. If there is any discomfort in the neck, keep the head down.*

**Side Note:** *You are targeting your deep abdominal muscles, obliques, hip flexor flexibility and strength. As you move the legs back and forth keep your hips still and do not rock them side-to-side. Make sure to engage the pelvic floor to minimize movement in the pelvis.*



## Chest Up



- Lay flat on the floor, legs straight out, heels pressed down to the floor, arms straight overhead.
- Keep ribs down; do not let the ribs thrust forward and out.
- Keep your head up and do not tuck chin to chest or roll shoulders forward.
- Inhale lift head, neck and shoulders off the floor as the arms move forward.
- Exhale continue to peel your spine off the floor.
- Head in line to the spine, eyes should face down towards the knee.
- Keep lats engaged (latissimus dorsi) by squeezing between shoulder blades.
- Both legs must stay together, inner thighs squeezing together and feet pointed and squeezing side by side.
- Keep ribs pulled in and prevent them from thrusting outward.
- Inhale roll back down to the floor, placing each vertebrae on the floor, lift the pubic up as you place your low back down to the floor.
- Avoid the temptation to use momentum during this movement; it is a controlled move using the deep abdominal muscles.
- Keep your pelvis still, attempting to not let it move side to side.

*\*\*Modification – Slightly bend both knees during the movement. If the upper back and shoulders are tight keeping the arms straight overhead may be a challenge, slightly bend the elbows to help with the movement.*

**Side Note:** You are targeting your entire core, hamstring flexibility/strength, shoulder flexibility/strength, and hip flexor flexibility/strength. Do not let the head come forward in front of your shoulders or tuck your chin down during the movement.

## Overhead Reach



- Begin by lying on your back.
- Chest lift, goal is to have shoulder blades off the floor.
- Lift both feet off the floor while keeping the knees bent at 90 degrees.
- Place each hand on top the knees.
- Inhale extend both arms overhead as you keep the chest lifted at all times.
- Legs do not move.
- Do not let the knees come past the waistline; this forces the lower abdominals to stay engaged.
- Exhale bring both hands back on top of the knees.
- Do not tuck your chin to your chest; you want to keep a distance from your chin to your chest.
- Head remains in alignment to the spine throughout the exercise.
- Pull your belly button in towards the spine and avoid pulling on the hip flexors.
- Keep lats engaged (latissimus dorsi) by squeezing between shoulder blades.
- Keep your pelvis still, attempting to not let it move side to side.

*\*\*Modification – Pull both knees past the waistline for assistance. If there is any discomfort in the neck, keep the head down.*

**Side Note:** *You are targeting your deep abdominal muscles, obliques, hip flexor flexibility and strength. As you move the legs back and forth keep your hips still and do not rock them side-to-side. Make sure to engage the pelvic floor to minimize movement in the pelvis.*



## Overhead Reach Extension



- Begin by lying on your back.
- Chest lift, goal is to have shoulder blades off the floor.
- Lift both feet off the floor while keeping the knees bent at 90 degrees.
- Place each hand on top the knees.
- Inhale extend both arms overhead as you keep the chest lifted at all times.
- And extend the legs straight out in front of you.
- Exhale bring the arms down back in front of you, hands placed on the knees and pulling both knees back in.
- Do not let the knees come past the waistline; this forces the lower abdominals to stay engaged.
- Do not tuck your chin to your chest; you want to keep a distance from your chin to your chest.
- Head remains in alignment to the spine throughout the exercise.
- Pull your belly button in towards the spine and avoid pulling on the hip flexors.
- Keep lats engaged (latissimus dorsi) by squeezing between shoulder blades.
- Keep your pelvis still, attempting to not let it move side to side.

*\*\*Modification – Pull both knees past the waistline for assistance. If there is any discomfort in the neck, keep the head down.*

**Side Note:** You are targeting your deep abdominal muscles, obliques, hip flexor flexibility and strength. As you move the legs back and forth keep your hips still and do not rock them side-to-side. Make sure to engage the pelvic floor to minimize movement in the pelvis.

## X-Cross



- Lay flat on the floor.
- Interlace hands behind head, do not tuck chin into chest.
- Lift chest up towards thighs.
- Bring both legs up to tabletop position, bend left knee in towards chest.
- Exhale twist at the waistline to the right side, keeping the right knee bent and straighten the opposite leg straight out.
- Stay in a chest lift throughout the entire movement.
- Inhale as you twist to the opposite direction.
- Exhale twist at the waistline to the left side, keeping the left knee bent and straighten the opposite leg straight out.
- Keep the ribs pulled in and belly button pulled in toward the spine.
- Avoid neck pain by letting your head lay heavy in your hands.
- Do not let the legs come in further than the line of your hip.
- Abdominals are engaged the whole time; there is no rest when the legs come in.
- Avoid the temptation to thrust the ribs forward.
- Repeat movement by alternating each side.

*\*\*Modification – Do not extend the legs out, keep them slightly bent and towards the chest. If there is any discomfort in the neck, keep the head down.*

**Side Note:** You are targeting your deep abdominal muscles, internal and external obliques. As you progress through the movement keep your hips still and do not rock them side-to-side. Do not intentionally flatten your back into the floor. This will happen naturally as you engage your deep transverse abdominals, in other words - engage the pelvic floor.

## X-Cross Switch



- Lay flat on the floor.
- Interlace hands behind head, do not tuck chin into chest.
- Lift chest up towards thighs.
- Bring both legs straight up to the ceiling.
- Exhale twist at the waistline to the right side, keeping the right leg straight up and lowering the left leg to the floor.
- Inhale as you twist by towards the center.
- Exhale twist at the waistline to the left side, keeping the left leg straight up and lowering the right leg to the floor.
- Stay in a chest lift throughout the entire movement.
- Continue to switch side to side as your legs move up and down.
- Keep the ribs pulled in and belly button pulled in toward the spine.
- Avoid neck pain by letting your head lay heavy in your hands.
- Do not let the legs come in further than the line of your hip.
- Abdominals are engaged the whole time; there is no rest when the legs come in.
- Avoid the temptation to thrust the ribs forward.
- Repeat movement by alternating each side.

*\*\*Modification – Do not extend the legs out, keep them slightly bent and towards the chest. If there is any discomfort in the neck, keep the head down.*

**Side Note:** *You are targeting your deep abdominal muscles, internal and external obliques. As you progress through the movement keep your hips still and do not rock them side-to-side. Do not intentionally flatten your back into the floor. This will happen naturally as you engage your deep transverse abdominals.*

## Plank X-Reach



- Start with your legs straight back , forearms placed down firmly to the floor.
- Keep shoulders directly in line with the elbows to begin.
- Keep lats engaged (latissimus dorsi) by squeezing between shoulder blades.
- Upper back should be flat, do not round.
- Draw ribs towards each by pulling your stomach in not out.
- Keep belly button pulled in towards the spine.
- Lower back should be lengthened and pelvis slightly tucked under to prevent arching of the low back.
- Feet are apart, shoulder width apart.
- Exhale extend the right arm straight overhead and extend the left leg back behind the body.
- Inhale hold for the suggested seconds.
- Inner thighs should be active and squeezing at all times to prevent unnecessary pressure on the knees.

*\*\*Modification – Move your legs from a straight position to a kneeling position. This will help beginners and will help to ease off any pressure on your back.*

**Side Note:** You are targeting your deep abdominal muscles. As you progress through the movement keep the deep transverse abdominals working, in other words - engage the pelvic floor.



## Plank Back



- Start with your legs straight back, forearms placed down firmly to the floor.
- Keep shoulders directly in line with the elbows to begin.
- Keep lats engaged (latissimus dorsi) by squeezing between shoulder blades.
- Upper back should be flat, do not round.
- Draw ribs towards each by pulling your stomach in not out.
- Keep belly button pulled in towards the spine.
- Lower back should be lengthened and pelvis slightly tucked under to prevent arching of the low back.
- Exhale drive your elbows into the floor as you push your shoulders back behind the elbows.
- Inhale hold for the suggested seconds.
- Inner thighs should be active and squeezing at all times to prevent unnecessary pressure on the knees.
- Legs are together during the entire movement.

*\*\*Modification – Move your legs from a straight position to a kneeling position. This will help beginners and will help to ease off any pressure on your back.*

**Side Note:** You are targeting your deep abdominal muscles. As you progress through the movement keep the deep transverse abdominals working, in other words - engage the pelvic floor.

## Push-Up Kick



- Start with your legs straight back, hands placed to the side of the body.
- Elbows are bent as the chest, pelvis and thighs hover the floor.
- Keep lats engaged (latissimus dorsi) by squeezing between shoulder blades.
- Upper back should be flat, do not round.
- Draw ribs towards each other by pulling your stomach in not out.
- Keep belly button pulled in towards the spine.
- Lower back should be lengthened and pelvis slightly tucked under to prevent arching of the low back.
- Exhale extend the arms straight as you bring right knee in towards the chest. Keep your pelvis as low to floor as possible and right shin hovering the floor.
- Inhale extend the leg straight back toe to the floor, bend elbows towards the back of the body and hover.
- Exhale repeat movement.
- Repeat up to 10 reps on the same leg then switch sides.

*\*\*Modification – Bend the knees to the floor rather than keeping them straight back behind the body throughout the movement.*

**Side Note:** *You are targeting your deep abdominal muscles. As you progress through the movement keep the deep transverse abdominals working, in other words - engage the pelvic floor.*



## Oblique Kick



- Begin on your side.
- Place left hand down on the floor, opposite hand behind the head
- Extend both legs straight out onto the floor.
- Lift the right leg up and straight out in line to the hip.
- Keep hips stacked.
- Exhale bend the right knee in towards the chest.
- Inhale back to start position.
- Keep bottom leg lengthened and as straight as possible and together.
- Do not let the shoulder drop; keep distance from the ear to the shoulder throughout the movement.
- Keep hips stacked throughout movement.
- Do not let the ribs thrust forward, keep them pulled in.
- Draw belly button in towards the spine.
- Stay on the same side to complete repetitions.
- Repeat movement on other side.

***\*\*Modification – Bend bottom knee down to the floor, keep hips stacked at all times. If there is too much pressure on the wrist, move down to the forearms. This will help beginners and will help to ease off any pressure on your back.***

***Side Note:** You are targeting your deep abdominal and oblique muscles. As you progress through the movement keep your hips square and inner thighs engaged at all times.*

## Core Reach



- Lay flat on the floor, legs straight up to the ceiling, heel of the palms pressed down to the floor, keep both arms as close as possible to the body.
- Keep both shoulders down and chest opened.
- Keep ribs down; do not let the ribs thrust forward and out.
- Keep your head down and do not roll shoulders forward.
- Exhale lift the legs off the floor by using the deep abdominal muscles to reach the toes to the floor. (Do not thrust your hips up, or use momentum)
- Inhale lower the pelvis down to the hover the floor.
- Exhale reach the toes up towards the ceiling.
- Both legs must stay together, inner thighs squeezing together and feet pointed and squeezing side by side.
- Keep ribs pulled in and prevent them from thrusting outward.
- Avoid the temptation to use momentum during this movement; it is a controlled move using the deep abdominal muscles.
- Keep your pelvis still, attempting to not let it move side to side.

*\*\*Modification – Slightly bend both knees during the movement. If the upper back and shoulders are tight keeping the arms straight overhead may be a challenge, slightly bend the elbows to help with the movement.*

**Side Note:** You are targeting your entire core, hamstring flexibility/strength, shoulder flexibility/strength, and hip flexor flexibility/strength. Do not let the head come up or lift the shoulders off the floor.

## Hamstring Reach



- Lay flat on the floor, legs straight out at a 45-degree angle.
- Keep ribs down; do not let the ribs thrust forward and out.
- Keep your head down and do not tuck chin to chest or roll shoulders forward.
- Exhale roll through your spine as you roll off your low back and bring the legs over.
- Keeping the legs parallel to the floor.
- Inhale hold.
- Exhale roll down controlling your move articulating through the spine and placing each vertebrae down to the floor.
- Both legs must stay together, inner thighs squeezing together and feet pointed and squeezing side by side.
- Keep ribs pulled in and prevent them from thrusting outward.
- Inhale roll back down to the floor, placing each vertebrae on the floor, lift the pubic up as you place your low back down to the floor.
- Avoid the temptation to use momentum during this movement; it is a controlled move using the deep abdominal muscles.
- Keep your pelvis still, attempting to not let it move side to side.

***\*\*Modification – Slightly bend both knees during the movement. If the upper back and shoulders are tight keeping the arms straight overhead may be a challenge, slightly bend the elbows to help with the movement.***

***Side Note:** You are targeting your entire core, hamstring flexibility/strength, shoulder flexibility/strength, hip flexor flexibility/strength, lower lumbar flexion. Do not let the head come forward in front of your shoulders or tuck your chin down during the movement*

## **Workout #1 – Workout At A Glance**

*Done-for-you workout plan, you can either do the amount of reps or seconds suggested below. Refer to the illustrated pictures above for descriptions and details of each Pilates exercise.*

### **Exercise**

V-Roll Up	30 seconds or 12 reps
Core Reach	30 seconds or 12 reps
Hamstring Reach	30 seconds or 12 reps
Plank Back	30 seconds
Plank X-Reach	10 sec each side
<b>Rest 15 seconds</b>	
Oblique Kick	30 sec each side or 12 reps each side
Push Up Kick	30 sec each side or 12 reps each side
Chest Up	30 seconds or 12 reps
Plank Back	30 seconds
Plank X-Reach	10 sec each side
<b>Rest 15 seconds</b>	
X-Cross Switch	30 sec each side or 12 reps each side
X-Cross	30 sec each side or 12 reps each side
Overhead Reach	30 seconds or 12 reps
Overhead Reach Extension	30 seconds or 12 reps
Plank Back	30 seconds
<b>Rest 15 seconds</b>	
Ab Pull	30 seconds or 12 reps each side
Hip Extension	30 seconds or 12 reps
Plank Back	30 seconds
Plank X-Reach	10 sec each side
V-Roll Up	30 seconds or 12 reps

## Workout #2 – Workout At A Glance

*Done-for-you workout plan, you can either do the amount of reps or seconds suggested below. Refer to the illustrated pictures above for descriptions and details of each Pilates exercise.*

### Exercise

X-Cross	30 seconds or 12 reps each side
X-Cross Switch	30 seconds or 12 reps each side
Plank Back	30 seconds
V-Roll Up	30 seconds or 12 reps
Hamstring Reach	30 seconds or 12 reps
<b>Rest 15 seconds</b>	
Push Up Kick	30 sec each side or 12 reps each side
Oblique Kick	30 sec each side or 12 reps each side
Plank Back	30 seconds
Overhead Reach	30 seconds or 12 reps
Overhead Reach Extension	30 seconds or 12 reps
<b>Rest 15 seconds</b>	
Hip Extension	30 seconds or 12 reps
Ab Pull	30 seconds or 12 reps each side
Plank X-Reach	10 seconds each side
Chest Up	30 seconds or 12 reps
Core Reach	30 seconds or 12 reps
<b>Rest 15 seconds</b>	
Push Up Kick	30 seconds or 12 reps each side
Plank Back	30 seconds
Push Up Kick	30 seconds or 12 reps each side
Plank Back	30 seconds
Chest Up	30 seconds or 12 reps

### **Workout #3 – Workout At A Glance**

*Done-for-you workout plan, you can either do the amount of reps or seconds suggested below. Refer to the illustrated pictures above for descriptions and details of each Pilates exercise.*

#### **Exercise**

V-Roll Up	30 seconds or 12 reps
Push Up Kick	30 sec each side or 12 reps
Plank X-Reach	10 sec each side
Core Reach	30 seconds or 12 reps
Hamstring Reach	30 seconds or 12 reps
<b>Rest 15 seconds</b>	
Chest Up	30 seconds or 12 reps
Push Up Kick	30 sec each side or 12 reps each side
Plank Back	30 seconds
Plank X-Reach	10 sec each side
V-Roll Up	30 seconds or 12 reps
<b>Rest 15 seconds</b>	
X-Cross Switch	30 sec each side or 12 reps each side
X-Cross	30 sec each side or 12 reps each side
Plank Back	30 seconds
Overhead Reach	30 seconds or 12 reps
Overhead Reach Extension	30 seconds or 12 reps
<b>Rest 15 seconds</b>	
Ab Pull	30 seconds or 12 reps each side
Hip Extension	30 seconds or 12 reps
Plank Back	30 seconds
Plank X-Reach	10 sec each side
V-Roll Up	30 seconds or 12 reps