



Teacher Training Agenda

Module 3: Chair

Day 1: Fundamental & Intermediate Chair

0:00 – 0:30

Bringing It Back to the Mat: The Ultimate Goal Why Start on the Mat?

Joseph Pilates designed his system so that every apparatus ultimately supports and strengthens the Mat repertoire. The Chair provides assistance, feedback, resistance, and support that help students develop the strength, control, flexibility, and body awareness needed for successful Mat work.

Learning the Order

- Start Strong: includes exercises like the Hundred, Roll Up, Roll Over, Single Leg Circles, Rolling Like a Ball, Single Leg Stretch, Double Leg Stretch, Single Straight Leg Stretch, Double Straight Leg Stretch, Criss Cross, Spine Stretch Forward.
 - *These prepare the body—activate center, mobilize spine and hips.*
- Challenging Connections & Working Against Gravity: moves into Open Leg Rocker, Corkscrew, Saw, Swan, Single Leg Kick, Double Leg Kick, Thigh Stretch, Neck Pull.
 - *Here you're challenging gravity, upper/lower body connections, more complex sequencing.*
- Balance & Control: includes High Scissors, High Bicycle, Shoulder Bridge, Spine Twist, Jackknife, Side Leg Kicks, Teaser, Hip Circles, Swimming.
 - *The body is required to stabilize, control large ranges of motion, balance on sides, work from less stable positions.*
- Finish Strong: covers Leg Pull Front & Back, Kneeling Side Kicks, Side Bend, Boomerang, Seal, Crab, Rocking, Control Balance, Push-Ups.
 - *The order finishes with full-body integration and standing posture, emphasizing precision and coordination.*

0:30 – 0:45

About the Chair

Understanding the Wunda Chair

- History and evolution of the Wunda Chair
- Joseph Pilates' original vision and purpose
- Why the Chair was designed as functional furniture
- The Chair's role within the Pilates system
- Oral history and lineage traditions surrounding the Wunda Chair

Why Train on the Chair?

Students will explore how the Chair develops:

- Functional strength
- Balance and stability
- Coordination
- Body awareness (proprioception)
- Nervous system organization
- Precision under load
- Upright movement patterns

The Chair Reveals...

Students will learn how the Chair exposes:

- Asymmetries
- Poor weight transfer
- Instability
- Compensatory movement patterns
- Loss of alignment
- Weak transitions
- Inefficient movement strategies

Fundamental Chair Concepts

- Stability before mobility
- Spring awareness and resistance management
- Safe setup
- Safe entry and exit
- Precision over power
- Functional movement patterns
- Upright control
- Integration of the whole body

Spring Awareness

Understanding that springs may:

- Increase resistance
- Provide assistance
- Improve movement quality
- Challenge stability
- Change the movement objective

Safety Principles

Students will demonstrate:

- Appropriate spring selection
- Safe client positioning
- Proper spotting techniques
- Safe transitions
- Equipment awareness
- Risk management

Chair Connections

Understanding how Chair work improves:

- Chair organization
- Core integration
- Balance
- Stability
- Functional strength
- Movement efficiency across apparatus

Client Readiness for Chair

Students will identify when clients are ready to begin Chair training based on:

- Core stability
- Lumbo-pelvic stability
- Postural control
- Balance
- Body awareness
- Breath coordination
- Safe movement transitions
- Ability to follow movement instructions

Readiness for Advanced Chair

Students will explore progression criteria including:

- Control under instability
- Precision
- Confidence
- Efficient movement patterns
- Breath control
- Safe progressions
- Movement quality over difficulty

What the Chair Develops for the Mat

The Chair is one of the best apparatuses for developing a Mat practice:

- **Core strength** against gravity
- **Single-leg stability**
- **Upright balance**
- **Scapular stability**
- **Shoulder girdle strength**
- **Hip dissociation**
- **Spinal articulation**
- **Posterior chain strength**
- **Functional lower-body power**
- **Precision under load**
- **Body awareness (proprioception)**
- **Control without external support**

Wunda Chair → Mat Exercise Connections

Mat Exercise	Chair Exercise(s)	How the Chair Supports the Mat Exercise
Breathing	Seated Foot Press	Develops postural organization, breath expansion, and rib cage control in an upright position.
The Hundred	Seated Press Downs, Standing Pump	Builds shoulder stability, core endurance, and trunk control without neck tension.
Roll Up	Hamstring Stretch, Standing Pike Preparation	Improves posterior chain length, abdominal control, and spinal articulation.
Single Leg Circles	Standing Leg Press, Standing Side Press	Develops pelvic stability while moving one leg independently.
Rolling Like a Ball	Seated Pump, Standing Balance Work	Reinforces deep abdominal lift and center control rather than momentum.
Single Leg Stretch	Seated Press Downs	Encourages trunk stability while one leg moves independently.
Double Leg Stretch	Standing Pump	Challenges trunk stability while coordinating upper and lower extremities.
Spine Stretch Forward	Hamstring Stretch	Improves hip hinging, spinal flexion, and axial length.
Open Leg Rocker	Pike Preparation	Builds shoulder stability, abdominal lift, and balance required for rocking.
Corkscrew	Standing Side Press	Strengthens oblique control and pelvic stabilization during rotational movement.
Saw	Standing Side Press	Develops rotational stability and spinal elongation.
Swan	Swan on Chair	Strengthens the posterior chain, scapular stabilization, and thoracic extension.
Single Leg Kick	Prone Presses	Builds posterior chain strength and hip extension control.
Double Leg Kick	Swan & Prone Extensions	Improves spinal extension, shoulder opening, and posterior endurance.
Neck Pull	Standing Pike	Develops eccentric abdominal control and spinal articulation.
Scissors	Standing Single Leg Press	Improves pelvic stability and unilateral leg control.

Bicycle	Standing Leg Press	Develops hip dissociation while maintaining trunk stability.
Shoulder Bridge	Standing Pump	Strengthens posterior chain, hip extension, and pelvic organization.
Teaser	Pike, Tendon Stretch Preparation	Builds abdominal lift, balance, spinal articulation, and control against gravity.
Hip Twist	Standing Side Press	Challenges oblique stability and controlled rotation.
Swimming	Swan, Prone Press	Develops cross-body integration, spinal extension, and endurance.
Leg Pull Front	Pike, Press Up	Builds shoulder girdle stability and whole-body integration.
Leg Pull Back	Reverse Presses	Develops posterior chain strength, shoulder extension, and hip stability.
Side Kick Series	Standing Side Press	Improves lateral stability and pelvic organization.
Side Bend	Side Press	Develops lateral chain strength and shoulder stability.
Boomerang	Pike & Balance Series	Reinforces sequencing, balance, control, and advanced spinal organization.
Seal	Seated Balance Work	Improves dynamic balance and deep core control.
Push Up	Pike, Press Up	Strengthens upper body integration, scapular control, and core stability.

0:45 – 3:00

Chair Exercise Review - Fundamental Repertoire

Supine

- Lying Flat

Side Lying

Seated

- Dips
- Footwork
- Mermaid

Standing

- Ankle Pumps
- Standing Leg Pumps
- Washer Woman
-

Chair Exercise Review - Intermediate Repertoire

Supine

- Lying Flat (Bridging, Parakeet)

Kneeling

- Cat
- Kneeling Mermaid

Prone Series

Seated

- Dips
- Frog Series
- Teaser
- Reverse Swan

Standing Series

- Lunges
- Pull Ups

Chair Exercise Review - Intermediate Repertoire

Supine, Prone, Seated, Standing

BREAK

3:00 - 3:30

Teaching Labs

Purpose of the Teaching Labs

The Teaching Labs are where knowledge becomes teaching skill.

While the exercise review portion of the training focuses on learning the repertoire, understanding movement mechanics, and experiencing the exercises in your own body, the Teaching Labs provide an opportunity to develop the practical skills required to become an effective Pilates instructor.

During the Teaching Labs, students rotate through the roles of teacher, client, and observer. This allows each participant to experience the exercises from multiple perspectives while developing confidence in communication, observation, and hands-on teaching.

The purpose of the Teaching Labs is to help students:

- Practice teaching exercises in a supportive learning environment
- Develop clear, concise, and effective cueing skills
- Improve observation and movement analysis
- Learn to identify compensations and movement patterns
- Practice selecting appropriate modifications and progressions
- Gain confidence with exercise setup, spring changes, and transitions
- Develop professional teaching presence and communication skills
- Learn how to create a safe and positive experience for clients

Most importantly, the Teaching Labs encourage students to think beyond memorizing exercises and begin thinking like teachers. Rather than simply asking, "What exercise comes next?" students learn to ask, "What does this client need, and how can I use Pilates to help them move better?"

The goal is not perfection. The goal is practice. Through repetition, feedback, and guided mentorship, students gradually build the confidence and teaching skills necessary to lead safe, effective, and engaging Pilates sessions.

Round 1: Fundamental Exercise Analysis

(3:30 - 4:10 *transition time* 4:10 - 4:20)

Students evaluate:

- Purpose
- Prerequisites
- Contraindications
- Safety considerations

Round 2: Teaching Fundamental Skills

(4:20 - 5:00 *transition time* 5:00 - 5:10)

Students teach:

- Flexion exercises
- Extension
- Rotational exercises
- Lateral flexion exercises

Focus:

- Spotting techniques
- Spring selection
- Safety management

Round 3: Fundamental Chair Sequence (5:10 - 5:50)

Students design and teach a short Chair session including:

- Warm-up
- Mobility component
- Strength component
- Extension work
- Integration and cooldown

Focus:

- Flow
- Programming
- Exercise selection
- Instructor presence
- Client safety

5:50 – 6:00

Educator Feedback & Wrap-Up

- Individual feedback
- Teaching strengths & Areas for growth
- Preparation for independent teaching
- Questions and discussion

"Every cue you refine, every movement you observe, and every client you understand brings you one step closer to becoming the instructor someone will never forget."

Day 2: Intermediate/Advanced Chair

0:00 – 0:30

Chair Flow with Master Trainer

0:30 – 0:45

Review & Integration

- Key concepts from Day 1
- Questions and discussion
- Review of spinal mobility principles
- Progression from beginner to intermediate work

0:45 – 3:00

Intermediate & Advanced Chair Repertoire

Focus Areas

- Lateral flexion
- Rotation
- Deep spinal extension
- Inversions
- Full-body integration

3:30 – 5:50

Teaching Labs

Round 1: Advanced Exercise Analysis

(3:30 - 4:10 *transition time* 4:10 - 4:20)

Students evaluate:

- Purpose
- Prerequisites
- Contraindications
- Safety considerations

Round 2: Teaching Intermediate Skills

(4:20 - 5:00 *transition time* 5:00 - 5:10)

Students teach:

- Extension exercises
- Rotational exercises
- Lateral flexion exercises
- Inversion preparation drills

Focus:

- Spotting techniques
- Spring selection
- Safety management

Round 3: Intermediate Chair Sequence (5:10 - 5:50)

Students design and teach a short Chair session including:

- Warm-up
- Mobility component
- Strength component
- Extension work
- Integration and cooldown

Focus:

- Flow
- Programming
- Exercise selection
- Instructor presence
- Client safety

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Educator Feedback & Wrap-Up

- Individual feedback
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