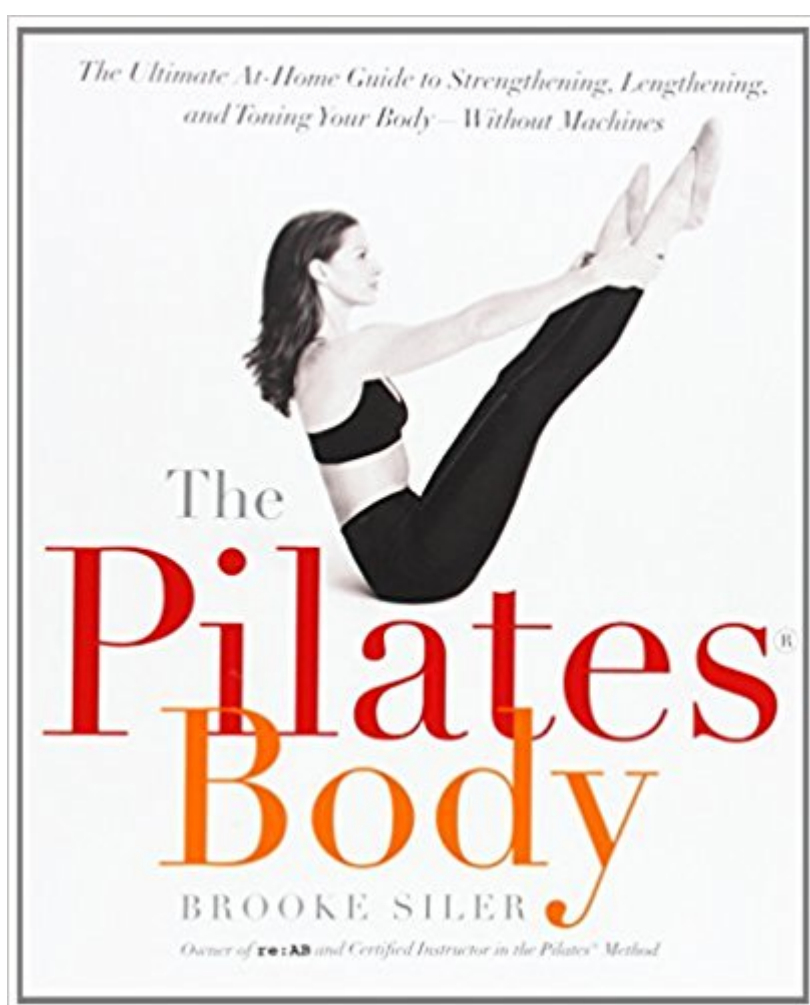


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# The Pilates Body: The Ultimate At-Home Guide To Strengthening, Lengthening And Toning Your Body-Without Machines



## Synopsis

The Pilates® method may be today's hottest exercise, but it has been endorsed by physicians for almost a century. Originally developed by Joseph H. Pilates to help strengthen and condition muscles, Pilates is the ultimate mind-body exercise for anyone who wants to tone, streamline, and realign their body without the bulked-up results of more conventional workout methods. Now, in *The Pilates® Body*, author Brooke Siler—one of the most sought-after personal trainers in the country and owner of New York's top studio for Pilates training, re:AB—provides a complete, easy-to-follow program of Pilates exercises that can be done anywhere, anytime, and without machines. With step-by-step instructions, Siler guides the reader through the complete circuit of mat exercises, each of which is clearly illustrated by photographs, line drawings, and unique visualization exercises. With Pilates you will not only streamline your figure—you will dramatically improve your posture, flexibility, and balance, and enhance your physical and emotional well-being. *The Pilates Body* shows you how.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Thin-but-fit supermodels like Amber Valletta and Shalom Harlow and actresses like Ally McBeal's Courtney Thorne-Smith and Liv Tyler swear by Pilates workouts to keep their figures toned and flexible. *The Pilates Body* is the latest in a string of books dedicated to this fitness program, which is now soaring in popularity nearly 100 years after it was first developed by Joseph Pilates in Germany in the early 1900s. While today's Pilates studios take advantage of patented and intimidating-looking equipment that costs thousands of dollars (and therefore charge accordingly for private sessions),

each exercise in *The Pilates Body* can be performed with just an exercise mat. While all parts of the body are used in the exercises, the focus is on the abdominals, or "powerhouse," which support the back; this makes Pilates an ideal exercise for those with back problems--or those hoping to prevent them. Author Brooke Siler, who trained with Romana Kryzanowska, the oldest living protégé of Joseph Pilates, organizes her book impeccably. After discussing proper alignment and ways to modify the exercises for those with neck, knee, or lower back pain, she jumps right into the 60-plus exercises, which are divided into beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. What differentiates Siler's book from the other Pilates titles is that she includes a disclaimer about the models: "The models in this book have been training in the Pilates method for years. Although their bodies may seem to represent an unrealistic ideal for many, they have worked hard to achieve their fitness goals. I hope in earnest that they do not intimidate but inspire." Also, each exercise is given a two-page spread of its own, and is accompanied by clear photographs and helpful graphics. For example, for the "inner-thigh lifts," there's an illustration suggesting that you imagine a stack of books on the lifting leg to help you increase resistance. Each exercise also includes what Siler calls "The Inside Scoop," or tips she's learned from training hundreds of clients. These include the main goal of the exercise; simple modifications for beginners; important keys to remember while doing the move; and no-nos to prevent injury. While it's important to concentrate and get the technique of each exercise down, Siler's book is perfect for anyone looking for a simple exercise program that promises results, requires a minimum of time, and can be done at home or while traveling. --Erica Jorgensen

"Brooke is extremely knowledgeable about using Pilates as a tool to increase muscle strength and improve life energy and vitality. I love Brooke!"--Amber Valletta  
"All trainers feel committed to their clients. However, few give the dedication of a coach. Brooke is a trainer who is a coach. She pushes me to realize my potential and believes in my ability more than I do."--Trudi Tapscott, Model Editor, *Vogue* magazine  
"In ten sessions you will feel the difference, in twenty you will see the difference, and in thirty you'll have a whole new body."--Joseph H. Pilates

Lots of pictures with explanations and helpful visualizations on what a move should feel like. I have been slowly working through this book and I have it by my side whenever I do the moves, just in case. It helps to spend an hour or so reading the first set of moves you plan to do so that you know how the move should be done before execution, instead of having to take breaks in between each move if you read it while you are doing the moves. This is a great starting point to learning about

Pilates. I highly recommend it.

2MM paper clips and rebinding the book maintains a healthy posture on purchasing The Pilates Body by Brooke Siler.

Wonderful pictures and text descriptions guiding you through Pilates principles and exercises.

This book is a very thorough, wonderful introduction to Pilates, and getting yourself to understand the movements and thought process that comes from practice. I also found the drawings very helpful in terms of what the exercise is meant to do, and what I should be imagining as I go through each exercise. If you enjoyed this book, you should also check out The Women's Health Big Book of Pilates, it is also written by Siler, and goes more in-depth on many important ideas you'll want to understand better as you progress.

This book is one of the best references on the Pilates Method available today, but it's not good enough to be considered a how-to manual. Although a great source of information on the principles of the mat workout, lacks precise instructions on the execution of the exercises, and doesn't include any reference to the equipment and accessories associated to the Method. Learning Pilates from this book without the aid of classes to explain and ensure correct form and fluid, rhythmic movements is very difficult. Its instructions on the motions of the exercises are confusing and not always precise, and its visualizations and diagrams are not clear enough for the inexperienced. Furthermore, only two photographs are given to illustrate each exercise, which are insufficient to properly explain all the necessary motions and positions to perform them. The book only includes the mat workout, which is presented in an well-organized format for various complete workouts, from modified beginner to extra advanced, divided according to the type and level of difficulty of the exercises they comprise. Also, for quick consultations, each complete workout is illustrated in a chart as a sequential list of all its exercises. As a bonus, the book includes a section on Frequently Asked Questions, a Glossary, and a directory of Pilates Studios in the US. I slowly started doing Pilates with this book, but I didn't get too far, as I would sometimes hurt myself as a consequence of a misinterpretation of its instructions. Then I found "Pilates: Body in Motion" by Alycea Ungaro, which is a far superior volume. With its help I took a breath of fresh air that has lasted until today, and I am now doing the advanced workout all by myself. For a satisfying workout that in a short time shows dramatic results that stay with you for a long time, I can't praise enough the Pilates Method.

But if you are trying to do the workout by yourself without the convenience of classes, this book is not the best place to start; you'll do better if you refer to Ungaro's book first and then try this one for additional exercises. I assure you that you won't be disappointed.--Reviewed by M. E. Volmar

I had bilateral hip replacements three years ago (at 52), and now people think I'm in my 40's and I get called "well-preserved" (which makes me feel a bit like a pickled condiment, but still). My arthritis was particularly severe (and widespread) because it started in childhood, with a condition called slipped capital femoral epiphysis. Essentially, the hips developed distortion as I grew; I adapted to my limited range of motion over the years, and ended up with severe limps, incredible pain, and worn joints in the back, knees etc. To give you some idea, I basically didn't drive a car for about 10 years because it was too painful. After my surgery, I did everything--physical therapy, strength training, yoga. I did have some advantages: I was relatively young for hip replacement; I had already taken off the middle-aged paunch I'd developed; and not driving a car had kept me fit. Therapy etc all helped. But finally (at my therapist's recommendation), I went to a "real" Pilates teacher (not just the classes at the gym). I did a course of private lessons, which she required before attending mat classes, and have now been going to group classes for a few months. But I found I needed more than just her classes--I needed to practice at home. As it happens, I bought Siler's book some time earlier, but I really hadn't known what to do with it. I picked it up again and realized it was incredibly close to my teacher's routine. (Turns out, they went to the same school.) Using Siler's book as my home guide, I started practicing every day. Wow. It has been absolutely transformative--and not just my body. I FEEL better; I know my digestion is working better; AND I shed that pesky ten pounds I'd been meaning to lose for my "ideal" weight (6 ft., 175 lbs). I know, I'm making this sound like a miracle cure. And others could probably say that yoga can do the same. But I have found Pilates more clearly organized and focused, and therefore easier to get into and more targeted toward physical rehabilitation. So let me give some downside (for me): I find the exercise a real grind; I don't get a "runner's high

New to Pilates. I like the step by step instructions. Before this book I was struggling with lifting my torso without using my neck and momentum. After reading how to keep your legs in the Pilates stance and tightening up your thighs and gluteus I was able to do this exercise with control.

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