POLE 101

Pole Fitness Certification Course - Beginner Level

POLE FITNESS INSTRUCTOR MANUAL

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Acknowledgements: *to God, for making this possible*

Gravity Vertical Education

www.gravityverticaleducation.com

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Course Overview

Pole 101 Pole Fitness Instructor (PFI) Online Certification Course is nationally approved as a Canadian Pole Fitness Association - CPFA Certification Course and meets Canadian guidelines and standards for Pole Fitness Education. Furthermore, the Certification course is worth continuing fitness education credits with Canadian Fitness Professionals (canfitpro - www.canfitpro) and the Canadian Pole Fitness Association (CPFA). Upon completion, students will have the knowledge and skills required to conduct a safe and successful Pole Fitness Program.

The PFI Level One Online Course consists of the following :

- Eight to ten hours of Lecture on Pole Fitness Theory
- Eight to ten hours of Practical Experience Training hours (depending on student experience and fitness level)
- Home Assignments of estimating completion time of twelve hours on average
- Ongoing Email Support Consultations
- Forty-Five minutes Online Theory Exam
- Sixty minutes practical video
- GVF Pole Fitness Certification Diploma (upon completing the above)
- 16 CPFA - 3 canfitpro continuing education credits

GVE uses official CPFA evaluating methods and exams that will allow students to simultaneously apply passing grades towards obtaining a **CPFA Certified Instructor Certificate** with out a re-evaluation.

For more information: www.canadianpolefitnessassociation.com

1. Pole 101 - Pole Fitness Instructor Certification Course Objectives:

- Understand and apply musculoskeletal anatomy and movement to Pole Fitness
- Learn Safe Practice Techniques and Injury Prevention Methods
- Learn how to properly demonstrate, break down and instruct Pole Fitness exercises in a safe, professional and comprehensive manner
- Learn exercise modifications for various levels of participants
- Learn safe spotting techniques, how to identify unsafe practices among participants and how to properly correct exercises
- Learn to develop a complete Pole Fitness Class and each of its components
- Learn how to link exercises and transitions into Pole Fitness routines
- Learn Pole Fitness terminology, physical and physiological adaptations to training, equipment safety, and general information on the Pole Fitness industry
- Understand professional responsibilities and ethics of becoming a Pole Fitness instructor

Addressing safety and proper body mechanics is the primarily goal.

2. Pole 101 - Pole Fitness Instructor Certification Course Outline:

- Introduction to Pole Fitness and its benefits
- Safety guidelines and injury prevention
- Equipment Description and Maintenance
- Minor Related Injuries, Prevention and Treatment
- Major Related Injuries Overview
- Teaching Pole Fitness: Preparation, Presentation, Class Structure, Teaching Methods, Class Safety, Forms, Insurance, Cueing and Spotting Techniques.
- Pole Fitness Industry
- Exercise and Movement Analysis, Anatomy and break down
- Video Tutorials
- Cross Training and Flexibility
- Home Assignments
- Evaluation

3. About this Course:

- Chapters 1 to 7 : Pole Fitness Theory
- Chapter 8 to 10 : Pole Fitness Practical and Tutorials
- Appendix 1 & 2: Manual aids in musculature and terminology
- Appendix 3: Home Assignments - Mandatory
- Theory Evaluation: Online Multiple Choice Questions
- Practical Evaluation: 60 minute video submission broken into no more than 15 minutes segments and loaded privately to YouTube

4. Evaluation Specifications:

- FREE OF CHARGE EXAMS: Exams will be free of charge **if completed within the first 6 months from course enrolment**; afterwards Exam Fees May Apply
- The Theory Exam consists of time limited, multiple choice questions that are easily accessed online
- The Practical Exam will include the following instruction given to a minimum of one student:
    - Warm Up
    - Two Pole Spins and One Transition Move
    - Short combination of various moves
    - Two Pole Conditioning exercises
    - DOMINANT AND NON DOMINANT INSTRUCTION: All teaching must be done on dominant and non-dominant sides of the body
    - Cool-Down and Flexibility

For assignment submission, questions or any other inquiries feel free to contact The Gravity Team gravityverticaleducation@gmail.com at any time!

CHAPTER 1: Overview of Pole Fitness

1. Pole Fitness Defined

Pole Fitness is a type of physical exercise that combines Dance and Gymnastics techniques on a vertical pole.

Pole Fitness is further defined as an *empowering athletic art form that provides a whole body work out using a vertical pole, allowing numerous physical and physiological benefits to take place.*

Not to be confused with "erotic pole dancing," a Pole Fitness workout can be as invigorating and burn as many calories as a traditional workout such as running, aerobics classes or other gym routines.

A static or spinning metal vertical pole is used as an apparatus to perform exercises during a Pole Fitness class. Core work, strength and endurance training techniques are required to perform the exercises, which recruit a broad range of muscle groups to work in unison. Pole Fitness uses the body itself as resistance and will tone and define muscles as well as shape and develop flexibility.

When learning exercises and combining them with transitional moves, Pole Fitness becomes a complete cardiovascular workout. Furthermore, Pole Fitness is an opportunity for endless creativity and self-expression: by playing with momentum and centrifugal force, discovering new grips, hooks and mounts, and by letting the music inspire you, Pole Fitness becomes Art.

2. History of Pole Fitness

Many dance forms have historically struggled to gain recognition and respect before they were widely accepted. Dance forms such as Ballet, The Waltz and The Tango came under severe critical scrutiny. Ballet, as classically conservative as it is viewed today could be considered to be the pole dancing of its day. Any dance that highlighted the feminine form or physical contact was often viewed this way. In the 16th and 17th centuries the only physical contact or self-expression that was accepted in public was the occasional handshake or blush. The Tangos, the Latin sensual dances were very often linked to brothels.

Throughout history, evidence of cultures using a pole to perform, entertain, entice and titillate can be found. It is from these roots that we believe Pole Dancing and Pole Fitness have evolved.

Pole performance can be traced back thousands of years to Africa, **China, and India.**

Early stories tell of **African tribal rituals** in which betrothed women would dance provocatively around a wooden phallus. The dance was designed to show their future husbands how they wanted to be made love to. In other parts of the world, the Maypole Dance, which dates back to the 12th century, incorporates dancing around a pole as part of a pagan celebration of fertility.

Chinese Pole history dates back prior to the 12th century, where acrobats would place a wooden pole of 3 - 9 meters high into the ground and perform a series of acrobatic moves for the emperor. The pole was covered with a rubber material and the acrobats would wear full body costumes. Due to the high gripping properties of the poles and costumes used, performances lacked some fluidity when compared to modern Pole Fitness. Chinese acrobats would display climbing, sliding down, stretching and holding positions using acute strength and skill. Performers of this time would regularly have burn marks on their shoulders which represented a form of identity and respect for their art.

The " **Indian Pole"** referred to as Mallakhamb or Malkhamb, is a traditional Indian sport in which a gymnast performs in concert with a vertical wooden pole or rope. The word Mallakhamb also refers to the pole used in the sport. Mallakhamb was originated in Maharastra, India, during the 12th century, as a form of training for wrestlers. The word "Malla" means wrestler, while "khamb" translates as pole. The sport has athletes climb up a wooden pole, 55 cm in diameter at the base - 35 cm at the top, and perform various poses and feats very much like today's Pole Fitness. In India this art is about feeling and understanding the strength and balance of one's body, and it is becoming increasingly popular in recent years, trying to gain recognition as an official sport.

Pole dancing itself has been said to originate in the height of the **American Depression**, where travelling Fairs would go from town to town entertaining the crowds in tents, featuring erotic Hoochie Coochie Dancers. The phrase Hoochie Coochie originates from the suggestive hip movement performed by the dancers, who would dance with the pole holding the tent in place.

Earliest recorded pole dances were in Oregon, US in 1968, and following this, the pole dance craze is believed to have kicked off in Canada in the 1980's.

Fawnia Dietrich initiated the first ever instructional pole dance video in 1998. In 2000 Sheila Kelley opened the S Factor in Los Angeles. When Oprah Winfrey featured Sheila on her show in 2003, the world was introduced what is now called to Pole Fitness.

The rest of the world quickly followed, with Pole Dancing and Pole Fitness Classes, Studios, Academies, Competition and Training spaces opening in the US, Canada, Europe, Asia and South America.

Every Year passing we see a tremendous growth in the pole industry. There are three main streams emerging:

1) **Pole Dance**: Entertainment art of dancing around, with, and on a vertical pole
2) **Pole Fitness**: Exercise form of Pole Dancing
3) **Pole Sport:** Competitive form of Pole Fitness

There is a growing community of men who are taking up pole fitness and fitness programs for children are being launched around the world.

The pole has made its way into mainstream culture, into households and into the gyms.This valuable, creative form of exercise is here to stay.

3. Pole Fitness Benefits

Fitness benefits are related to the **specificity of training**, which means that the body's physical adaptations to the exercise are specific to the system worked. Generally, the type of exercise that develops cardiovascular endurance is not very effective at developing the optimum muscular strength and vice versa; same scenario for flexibility training and core training programs. **Optimum Physical Fitness** is often defined as the condition resulting from a lifestyle that leads to the developing of optimal level of cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and flexibility, as well as the achievement and maintenance of optimal body weight.

Poles Fitness is a great balance between all aspects of fitness training:

- **Resistance Training** against one's own body weight that projects into over all muscle toning, stronger bones and increased endurance
- **Cardiovascular Training** when exercises are properly interlaced in a routine that can burn around 400 calories an hour depending on skill level
- **Flexibility Training** that will increase mobility around joints
- **Core Training** that will make one look slimmer, improve posture and stand taller

Pole Fitness is also a great form of **Functional Training** that will improve one's performance of functional activities outside of the training environment. Unlike traditional strength training exercises, which focus on the isolation of an individual muscle to maximize overload, Pole Fitness incorporates multiple muscle groups with focus on the creation of correct movement patterns. As a result, the moves and exercises of this type of functional training program will require participants to coordinate, balance, control and time muscle contractions, promoting an overall better neuromuscular control that will carry over to activities outside the fitness studio.

a.Physiological benefits:

–**Increased Muscular Strength:** Muscle fibres respond to the resistance by increasing in size and strength of contractions. Since Pole Fitness uses the body as resistance, overall muscle tone will be achieved. Muscles also become more efficient at recruiting motor units that will further improve their strength. Connective tissue, ligaments and tendons will also become stronger

- **Increased Muscular Endurance**: Over time, muscles adapt to repetitive movement and resistance, and are able to perform for longer periods of time and to sustain longer contractions

- **Increased Muscle Tone**: muscle tone is the amount of residual tension in a muscle at rest and this will improve with regular Pole Fitness training. It is commonly referred as muscle definition, which is a visible shape of the muscle

- **Increased Cardiovascular Fitness and Endurance:** Pole Fitness improves the efficiency of the heart, lungs and vascular system by delivering essential oxygen to the working muscle tissues which in turn increases overall long term endurance.

- **Increased Lean Muscle Mass / decrease body fat:** Muscle mass is lean mass. Using an individual's body weight as resistance will increase overall muscles mass. Additionally, muscle is the body's most potent and active tissue for burning calories and

body fat. Muscles constantly need repair and maintenance from use that cause them to be continually active, even when the body is at rest. Muscle depends on fat calories for this needed energy. So, more muscle = faster metabolic rate = more calories burned throughout the entire day, even when at rest.

- **Increased Core Strength:** Pole Fitness requires core activation prior to every exercise. Core strength will remarkably increase after continuous Pole training. Some of the benefits of training the core are:
  - Greater efficiency of movement
  - Improved body control and balance
  - Increased power output from both the core musculature and peripheral muscles such as the shoulders, arms and legs
  - Reduced risk of injury (core muscles act as shock absorbers for jumps and rebounds and by improving once balance and stability)
  - Improved athletic performance
  - Stand taller, look slimmer
  - Better support for internal organs and the spine: better overall health

- **Improves Posture and Balance:** This happens as a result of core training plus overall muscle strength training. Maintaining good posture is a very important component of a healthy lifestyle. Proper body positioning and alignment should be encouraged and practiced at all times. Some of the benefits of proper posture are:
  - Optimal organ and muscle function for maximum energy, endurance, and stamina
  - Optimal biomechanics for the best possible muscle performance
  - Fewer upper and lower back problems
  - A flatter and stronger stomach
  - Greater concentration and mental ability which happens as a result of reduced pain and fatigue.

- **Increased Flexibility:** Flexibility is the range of motion (R.O.M) in a joint. It varies from joint to joint and is dependent on the surrounding anatomical structure, the extent of the joint's normal use injury or muscle tightness. Pole Fitness spins will naturally cause the body to lengthen while becoming stronger.

- **Improved Coordination and basic Dance Skills:** Pole Fitness exercises are compound moves that teach participants to coordinate hand positions and leg variations while spinning around the pole and at times while inverted. Practicing at the beat of a song, adding transitional moves and floor moves in a smooth manner will also improve one's dance skills and body awareness

- **Overall Fitness Benefits:** Reduced risk of injuries, improved quality of life, improved overall energy, reduce stress, improved physical performance, weight control and better overall health

b. **Psychological Benefits:**

- **Increased Self-Esteem and Confidence:** As body image, posture, health and general appearance improves so will one's self-esteem and confidence

- **Improves Body Awareness:** Better sense of how the body feels and moves

- **Empowering:** Women that participate in Pole Fitness often report a feeling of empowerment that generates not only from the achievement of spins and pole tricks but also from re-discovering their sensuality and feminism

- **Personal Enjoyment and Gratification:** Contrary to the atmosphere of most traditional gyms, Pole Fitness is truly a gratifying exercise experience where participants voluntarily demand new moves and more challenging exercises. Pole Fitness is the ONE workout where time flies and exercise becomes "unnoticed" until the end of a class… it is FUN! as simple as that

CHAPTER 2: Pole Fitness Safety

To ensure everyone's safety – instructor and student alike – the following safety measures should be implemented.

1. Before Beginning Pole Fitness:

- Skin should be clean and free of lotions, oils, and other similar substances that will transfer onto the pole surface and make it slippery, thus harder to grip. A slippery surface is hazardous and will increase the chances of potential injuries
- All rings, bracelets, watches, necklaces, and other loose jewellery must be removed as they can potentially cut skin while practicing pole moves. Jewellery may also cause scratches and sharp scuffs on the pole surface, making it unsafe to use
- Always double check that equipment is properly installed before commencing each training session. Over time bolts and mounts may become loose and many removable poles require ongoing tightening for proper installation set up
- Wipe pole with alcohol water and towel to remove oils, dirt and germs from the surface. Cleaning should be repeated during training as much as needed
- Towels and cleaners should be kept nearby when practicing. When the body is warmed up, hands start to sweat and can create a slippery film on the pole. Wipe down hands and pole with a towel frequently during pole sessions to avoid slipping off
- Always warm up prior to starting Pole Fitness for at least ten minutes to reduce the risk of injuries and to prepare body for physical exercise

2. Class Attire

The type of clothing is determined by the complexity of the moves being performed. Since some Pole moves will position the body in unique ways, appropriate clothing that does not allow for unnecessary exposure should be worn.

Beginner classes require little skin contact. Attire should consist of loose but comfortable clothing. Long pants, t-shirt, bare feet or runners are a good option for beginners since covering the skin usually helps to reduce or minimize pole bruising and burns.

As students advance and more complex moves are introduced, attire will need to change. Short shorts, tank tops, bare ankles, and exposed midriff will be required.

The type of footwear worn will depend on requirements of the class. Runners will provide proper support for classes that involve high aerobic exercises. Bare feet, ballet slippers or similar foot wear are suitable for Pole Fitness as it allows for easy movement. If runners are necessary or preferred, choose a low friction style.

3. Injury Prevention

Pole Fitness is a highly physical sport where all major muscle groups in the body are used. However, the upper-body muscles are crucial for the strength required to lift, hold and move the body about the pole and are in constant motion with every exercise.

When performing on the pole, the active body parts being used to do a spin or trick should always extend to a full range of motion to help prevent pole injuries.

Pole Fitness requires the participant to lift and hold their own body weight on the pole. The wrist, arms and upper back are used every time a pole move is done. Therefore, **wrist strain**, **carpal tunnel, tennis elbow, and rotator cuff injuries** are the most common and possible related injuries to Pole Fitness.

Overuse, lack of strength and improper positioning are the main causes of injuries.

There are a few ways that pole injuries can be avoided. These include: warming up and cooling down the muscles, using proper form of active body parts, balancing overall strengthening of the whole body, proper diet, allowing the body to rest between workouts, and most of all, listening to one's body.

Exercises must be performed on both the dominant and non-dominant side of the body.

> *It is a paramount that students achieve optimum strength and flexibility balance between upper/lower body, front and back, left and right side of the body. Pole exercises are usually easier to perform on the stronger (dominant) side of the body and therefore the tendency is to focus practice and exercises on one side only. However, this will create muscular imbalances that can have serious adverse effects in one's overall health and be the cause of injuries. Training evenly on stronger / weaker side of the body during pole exercises combined with cross training is the best way to ensure muscular balance.*

Cold muscles increase the potential for injuries, so always remember to warm up for a minimum of 10 minutes and a cool down / stretch of 10 - 15 minutes.

4. Joint Safety and Proper Body Positioning

While often exposing the joints to stresses cannot be avoided, caution can be used in order to maximize joint safety. Proper body positioning, technique and muscle recruitment will not only make Pole Fitness exercises safer, but also nicer looking and easier to perform. Chapter number eight will expand in further detail proper form for each exercise.

As general rule:

a. Neck:

- Maintain neutral alignment with a long tall neck when possible
- Use caution with hyperextension

b. Shoulders:

- Work within normal range of motion of joint
- Shoulder muscles should be engaged by pulling shoulder girdle down and back away from the ears and squeezing the scapula (activating primarily the Latissimus Dorsi and Rhomboids Minor and Major as well as Mid and Lower Trapezius)

c. Wrist:

- Maintain neutral alignment during most exercises ensuring no great flexion, extension or twisting force is applied. Do not allow the wrist to wrap around the pole
- Be cautious not to grip the pole too tightly while exercising (a natural tendency to compensating for weak upper back muscles). This can cause pain and injuries to the hand and wrist: it is the upper back and core muscles that should do most of the work, not the fingers
- Practice wrist strengthening and stretching exercises (Refer to chapter 9)

d. Elbows:

- Do not lock while performing straight-arm exercises. As a general rule, keep joint soft at all times
- Do not hyper-extend; work within the joint normal range of motion

e. Core:

- Engage the deep core muscles by activating the Transversus Abdominis to provide better support of the entire body
- Engage Abdominal muscles

f. Knees:

- Avoid going past 90° during loaded knee flexion
- Avoid rotating (pivoting) on a planted foot
- Do not lock into an extended position during exercises; keep joints soft

5. The Core

The Core is the bridge that connects movement from fingertips to toes. The muscles of the deep core include the Diaphragm, Transversus Abdominis (TVA) Anterior Pelvic Floor, Lumbar Multifidus and Psoas (refer to Apendix 1). The Transversus Abdominis is a very important muscle that wraps around the spine and attaches to the pelvis acting as a girdle or a natural belt. When properly contracted, this "corset effect" supports and flattens the stomach, protects the spine and stabilizes the whole body. It's these muscle groups that are critical for the transfer of energy from large to small body parts during activities and are fundamental to succeed at Pole Fitness.

The Core muscles should activate prior to any body movement stabilizing the pelvis and the lower back. When this is done, Pole Fitness becomes easier to perform, nicer looking and SAFER. Deep core activation will also make one look slimmer, stand taller and improve one's posture.

Do not mistake core for abdominal muscles. Core muscles are stabilizers and abdominals are movers. Abdominal muscles refer to the Rectus Abdominis (front), Erector Spinae (lower back) and the Obliques (sides). The Obliques muscles can also act as stabilizers. Both the core and abdominals should be properly trained and activated prior to exercise and movement. Be aware that over training the abdominals muscles can actually cause core to weaken, since abdominal muscles tend to take over shutting off the deep core.

6. Exercise Frequency

Pole Fitness should be treated as a whole body-weight training exercise. Accordingly, workouts should be scheduled on an every-other-day basis since muscles typically need 48 hours to repair the micro-tears caused by resistance training. After muscles heal they also adapt to the resistance and become slightly stronger with each work out. Cardiovascular training can be done every day, even on the same day as Pole Fitness exercise program. Flexibility training is also recommended and safe to do on a daily basis. Remember to always warm up prior to stretching.

7. Proper Nutrition

Staying healthy and having enough energy for daily activities requires proper nutrition. The type and amount of food we eat will either enhance or inhibit our health wellness and our ability to perform.

Pole Fitness is a very enjoyable activity, but also a highly physical and energy demanding sport, thus a possible cause of overtraining. Having quality foods and a balanced diet is fundamental to be able to learn, perform and become more skilful at Pole Fitness.

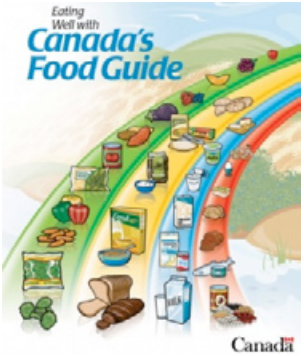
Eating well is not difficult in principle. All that is needed is to eat a selection of foods that supplies appropriate amounts of essential nutrients and energy. Yet putting it into practice can be challenging for some. Fitness leaders should become knowledgeable about nutrition to be able to provide sound, credible information to class participants in terms that they can understand and follow. Furthermore, instructors should also know when to refer them to a registered dietician or nutritionist.

8. Hydration

Water is the single most critical nutrient for health, growth, and development and only second to oxygen for sustaining life. It is not only the most important nutrient in the body, but also the most abundant. Fifty to seventy percent (sometimes higher) of one's body weight is water. Water is important to regulate body temperature, remove waste products, maintaining balanced PH and for energy production.

Staying hydrated is a big concern for regular exercisers. During intense exercise one may lose one to two litters of water per hour. Dehydration causes early fatigue and affects coordination skills. Performance can be challenged by loosing as little as 2% of body weight due to dehydration. To prevent this from happening, individuals participating in physical activity must drink plenty of fluids before, during and after a workout. Do not relay on thirst as an indicator for drink breaks. Drink regularly.

9. Canada Food Guide



Health Canada offers a complete Food Guide to ensure all Canadians achieve proper nutrition guidelines. There is also another guide directed to educators "Resource for Educators and Communicators Guide" that provides background information, tips and tools to complement each recommendation in Canada's Food Guide.

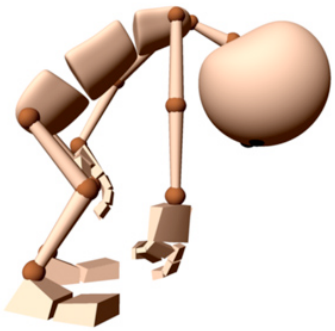
10. Adequate Rest

Recovery between workouts is based on the intensity of the workout and the individual recovery ability of each person. Generally, a period of about 48 hours between intense workouts is the norm to achieve positive adaptations in the neuromuscular system and progressive improvements in muscular strength and endurance.

Many students report a tremendous desire to excel very quickly at Pole Fitness. Always remember, asking too much too soon from the body, will cause it to shut down, often by means of injury!

11. Symptoms of Overtraining

- Poor performance
- Increase resting heart rate and / or blood pressure
- Eating and sleeping problems
- General fatigue and fatigue during workouts
- Aching muscles
- Weight loss
- Physiological problems, such as difficulty concentrating, restlessness, irritability, anxiety.
- Susceptibility to illness, colds, etc



12. Special Populations

Fitness professionals often encounter class participants with special needs or health problems. It is crucial for instructors to be able to identify red flags (health conditions) that can be aggravated by exercise, and to update client's records regularly to prevent unnoticed future health problems.

Once a condition has been identified, medical approval and specific exercise guidelines and limitations must be obtained from a qualified health provider before proceeding with exercise training.

Some of the most commonly encountered health concerns or special needs are:

- Coronary Artery Diseases
- Hypertension
- Stroke
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Cancer
- Osteoporosis
- Arthritis
- Older Adults
- Pregnancy

Usually, participants with one or more of the above characteristics should only engage in low or no-impact activities with specific exercise modifications to ensure safety and proper training.

Pole Fitness may not be a preferred choice of exercise for people with special needs or health concerns. However, always follow doctor's recommendations and ensure a proper description of the exercise (Pole Fitness) is provided to the physician.

As an example to review, some of the exercise guidelines for Osteoporosis include:

- Avoid jumping - high impact aerobics
- Avoid spinal flexion, crunches
- Avoid abduction / adduction of the legs
- Avoid moving legs sideways / across the body

For Arthritis:

- Low intensity / low impact activities
- Intensity must be controlled during inflammation / pain periods
- Avoid awkward movements

A person experiencing symptoms in either scenario would not be suitable for a Pole Fitness Class since most exercises involve momentum and some velocity, high intensity bursts, leg movements in various directions, high impact moves, high resistance, etc.

13. Pregnancy

Continuation of pre-pregnancy exercise program with some modifications is generally safe. However, Pole Fitness is not an activity recommended for pregnant women for several reasons:

- Centre of gravity changes during pregnancy and balance is targeted. Controlled movement and even surfaces for exercise are strongly advised to avoid falls. Pole exercises involve momentum and some velocity and movements are not strictly controlled at all times to be safe for pregnancy.

- The heart is overworked due to demands of pregnancy and increase in blood volume. High intensity exercise should be avoided during the early stages of pregnancy, spinning around the pole can aggravate morning sickness and increase dizziness that can challenge balance and increase discomfort.

- Hormone Relaxin increases joint laxity during pregnancy. Joints become looser and as a result there is a higher risk of injury. Pole Fitness can put considerable stress on shoulders, elbow and wrist joints. Added joint instability during pregnancy creates even higher chances of injury. Moreover, the significant increase in body weight during pregnancy naturally adds more stress to the joints.

- Lying on your back for a period of longer than 2 minutes can affect blood flow to the baby, so supine floor work should not be performed.

- During the third trimester, weight training with arms over the head is not advised as this also affects blood flow. Pole Fitness is weight training with either one or both arms above the head, and as such should be avoided.

Lifting added-body weight on a vertical bar with unstable joints and a shifted gravity centre is not advised.

CHAPTER 3: Pole Fitness Equipment

As the industry continues to grow and advance there are new products entering the market, new materials are being tested, new designs are being introduced and accessory products are being manufactured to help students master the pole.

1. The Pole

A **standard pole** consists of a hollow steel or brass bar with circular cross section, running from floor to ceiling. The new standard diameter is 1.75 cm, allowing it to be gripped comfortably with one hand. Diameters of 4.5 cm (1 1/2 inches) and 5 cm (2 inches) are also available.

A **spinning pole,** as its name suggests, is similar to a standard pole but spins using ball bearings. The purpose of this pole is to achieve better momentum and more speed around the pole. This creates an added dramatic effect and tends to make exercises easier in some aspects but harder in others: less energy and skill is required to gain momentum, but higher speed can cause motion sickness and make exercise harder to control.

Materials of which poles are made of include polished stainless steel, chromed steel, brass, powder coating, and titanium coating. Poles can also be made of acrylic glass that allows use of "glow poles" with LED lighting effects. Each material surface has different gripping properties. Polished steel is one of the slickest materials, which provides for a faster, more fluid movement; brass poles provide more friction and better grip, allowing for an easier hold with hands or legs required for advance moves and inversions. Brass is also recommended for participants who have excessive sweaty palms since it is a porous material and can help absorb some of the moisture. There are also new removable “pole covers” that can be place on the poles, not only to help remedy sweaty palms issues, but also allow participants to do inversions and advanced tricks fully clothed.

Poles can be held in place by using threading to brace them against a ceiling joist, by using tension (spring loaded), or secured permanently with a ceiling mount. Stationary, spinning, and removable versions are available.

There are now poles available for use in clubs that provide visual effects, often referred to as **show poles**. These poles are made with clear plastics and contain water, glitter, and special reflective materials which stand out when used in conjunction with strobe lighting, as well as lighting hidden in their base joists. However, these poles are not favourable to athletes wanting to achieve better pole tricks, as they bend slightly and have a tendency to create a friction burn when slid down with any sort of speed.

2. Equipment Installation and Maintenance

- ✓ FOLLOW PRODUCT INSTRUCTIONS: Always follow manufactures instructions regarding how to properly install and maintain the equipment
- ✓ PROPER POLE SPACING: Always ensure there is enough space around the pole to be able to perform all moves safely: use common sense
- ✓ REGULAR TIGHTENING OF EQUIPMENT: Double check equipment is properly secured before each training session; over time bolts and mounts may become loose and many removable poles require ongoing tightening for proper installation set up
- ✓ CLEANING: Ensure equipment is properly cleaned. Alcohol water is a good option since easily removes oil and dirt while disinfecting the equipment

3. General Terminology Guide

New equipment is flooding the market everyday in support of Pole Fitness. Beware of sub-standard products. Below is some general terminology and resources to help make the right decision for specific needs.

There are a number of factors to consider when selecting poles:

- Level of Skill and Practice intended to achieve
- Future need to remove the pole

- Height of the ceiling
- Space available for pole area

Pole Terminology includes:

- **Removable**: Completely removable – no screws or fixing required to hold in place
- **Permanent:** Permanently fitted with floor and ceiling mounts
- **Semi-permanent:** Removable pole with a fixed ceiling mount
- **Static:** Do not move or rotate; Stationary Poles
- **Rotating or Spinning:** Poles that rotate or spin. Most have a pin located at the bottom of the pole that can be inserted to change from static to spinning mode
- **Brushed Finish**: Poles that have a rough surface. Non-polished. Note: although these poles are very economical to purchase they offer no grip and therefore can be quite dangerous
- **Polished Finish**: Poles that have a smooth finish
- **Brass Finish:** Brass Finish provides excellent skin grip as it absorbs the oils from your skin but as a result requires continuous cleaning
- **Titanium Finish:** Resembles brass but requires less maintenance
- **Stainless Steel:** Poles made of stainless steel, which are sturdy and long lasting
- **Coloured:** Poles come in a wide variety of colours. Colours are powder coatings that are sprayed on. Over time, scratches appear and coating will come off
- **Petit:** Poles that are less than 1.5 inches in diameter are considered petit. As a woman's hands tend to be a bit smaller, the petit poles are well received
- **Regular Diameter:** Poles are 2 inches in diameter. Although standard size, it can be a challenge for some clients to use as their hands are too small to effectively grip the pole. There is a new standard of 1.75 inches currently in use
- **Stages:** Stages are platforms where the pole is fixed in the base and does not require a top ceiling to gain stability
- **Crank Pressure Fit**: Poles that are held in place by extending a rod until pole is secured
- **Spring Pressure Fit:** Poles that are held in place by extending a rod in length which places pressure on spring. As pressure is added to spring, tension increases
- **Two-piece Pole:** Portable two piece pole, completely removable – no screw fixings required, easily transportable
- **Single Cut:** Poles that are one piece
- **Multi-piece Poles:** Poles that are assembled together through a series of inter-locking pieces

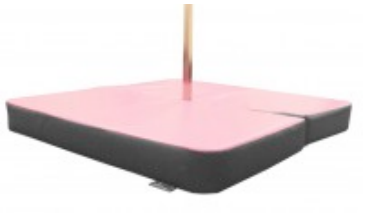
There are several Pole Manufacturers but the market leaders in both service and quality are:

- X-poles
- Lil Mynx
- Platinum Stages
- Brass Works - BC

Accessories

There are several products designed to assist Pole Fitness students while learning. These include grip enhancer products, gloves, ankle and wrist protectors and crash mats.

- **Grip:** Pole dancing requires a great deal of strength. For additional grip, there are several non-slip grip products available. They come in a wide variety of strengths and can be used anywhere on the body that additional grip is required.
- **Pole Dancing Gloves:** Gloves are available with tack or without tack and are used to obtain additional grip and reduce calluses. Non-tack are used for static poles; tack gloves are used for spinning / rotating poles.
- **Ankle Protectors:** With tack strips, are used by the novice student to build confidence while still increasing upper body strength. Non-tack is for the advanced student to minimize bruising.
- **Crash Mats**: A safety mat that can be placed around the base of poles to act as shock absorber in case of falls.



CHAPTER 4: Common Minor Related Injuries

As with any sport, there are risks involved in Pole Fitness. **Bruises, Skin Rips** and **Pole Burns** are the most common minor injuries related to the activity, but they will be minimized as participants become more comfortable and experienced with Pole Fitness.

1. Bruises

Bruises develop when small blood vessels under the skin tear or rupture, most often from a bump or fall (like crashing into the pole). Bruising can also be caused from a repetitive pressure point on the pole and happen unnoticeably if participant tends to bruise easily. Blood leaks into tissues under the skin and causes the black-and-blue colour.

As bruises heal, usually within two to four weeks, they often turn colours, including purplish black, reddish blue, or yellowish green. Sometimes the area of the bruise spreads down the body in the direction of gravity. A bruise on a leg usually will take longer to heal than a bruise on the face or arms.

Most bruises are not a cause for concern and will go away on their own. Home treatment may speed healing and relieve the swelling and soreness that often accompany bruises caused by injury. But severe bruising, swelling, and pain that begin within 30 minutes of an injury may mean a more serious problem, such as a severe sprain or a fracture.

Home treatment for bruises to help relieve pain, swelling, and stiffness include:

- **Rest** and protect the bruised area
- **Ice** to reduce pain and swelling. Apply ice or cold pack as soon as possible for 10 to 20 minutes duration, three or more times a day
- **Heat** after 48 to 72 hours and if swelling is gone, heat and gentle exercise can aid in helping restore and maintain flexibility and increase circulation
- **Compression** or wrapping the bruised area with an elastic bandage can help decrease swelling. Be careful not to wrap area too tight and decrease circulation
- **Elevate** the bruised area on pillows while applying ice and anytime when sitting or lying down to help minimize swelling
- **Gently Massage** or rub the area to relieve pain and encourage blood flow. Do not massage the bruised area if it causes pain
- **Witch Hazel** extract is obtained from the barks and leaves of the Witch hazel flowering plant and can help heal damaged veins
- **Arnica Gel**: Pain relieving, antiseptic, and anti-inflammatory. This is a non-greasy, non-stick gel that quickly absorbs into the skin to reduce inflammation. It's indicated for bruises, strained joints, muscles, ligaments and tendons and it is made from the flowers of the Arnica plant

- 70% Rubbing Alcohol (which most studios have for cleaning) can be sprayed on the area right away to contract the pores and temporarily relieve bruises.

Symptoms to watch for during home treatment:

- If a bruise lasts longer than four weeks
- Symptoms become more severe or frequent
- New symptoms develop, such as infection symptoms

If any of the above occurs seek immediate medical attention.

2. Pole Burn

Pole burn is a form of abrasion or chafing caused by the friction of the skin rubbing against the pole. Because friction generates heat, it creates a mild burn on the superficial layers of skin. Common areas of pole burn are wrist, inner thighs and inside of arm.

As the body becomes stronger and delicate skin areas toughen chances of pole burn decrease.

Home Treatment for Pole Burn may include:

- **ALOE VERA:** Aloe Vera soothes burns, is anti-bacterial and promotes tissue regeneration. It can be found in different forms such as creams, gel, or applied directly from the plant by slicing an Aloe Vera leaf open
- **CALENDULA:** Calendula oil, creams or ointments are considered to be an excellent remedy for all kinds of skin damage such as wounds, scars, burns, scalds, abrasions, infections, various inflammations and other injuries. The powerful action of the Calendula plant derives, lies in improving the blood flow to the inflicted area and in further tissue regeneration. Its anti-inflammatory and anti-spasmodic properties have been proved by substantial scientific evidence
- **LAVENDER:** Lavender Essential oil (therapeutic grade) is known for its soothing pain relief, antibacterial properties and ability to regenerate tissue. Follow manufactures directions on how to apply it to the skin

How to prevent Bruising and Friction Burns:

- Focusing on strength to control moves more effectively is the best way to prevent minor injuries. As muscles become stronger they will hold the body in position reducing friction on the skin and chances of bruising against the pole
- Shoes, ankle protectors, leg warmers or long pants (depending on the skin exposure level needed), can be used to protect the feet and legs
- Wearing wrist sweat bands can minimize wrist friction burns from spins but are not recommended as participants will tend to overlook the cause of the burn (wrapping wrist around pole) and may adopt the improper technique
- A well balanced diet and proper nutrition will supercharge the immune system and boost energy levels as well as the body's ability to heal minor injuries a little faster. Iron will improve circulation, prevent anaemia and fend off bruising
- Minimize bruising by following recommended treatment as soon as possible

3. Pole Rips

A Pole Rip happens when the superficial layers of skin separate from the lower layers of blood-rich tissue. An excessively tight grip on the pole or callus build-up while spinning around the pole can forcefully pull the upper layer of skin away from the lower layers causing a pocket to form, which becomes a blister that eventually rips.

Some successful Home Treatments for Pole Rip which may help decrease pain, prevent infection, and help heal large or broken blisters can be implemented by the following:

- KEEP HANDS AND BLISTER CLEAN: Wash hands with soap and water before touching blisters as they can easily become infected. Keep blister area clean to aid healing.
- NATURAL HEALING: Most large blisters will break and heal on their own.
- LEAVE GOOD SKIN IN PLACE: Do not remove the protective covering of skin, unless it tears or gets dirty or pus forms under it.
- NO ALCOHOL OR IODINE: Do not use alcohol or iodine on the blister as this may delay healing.
- CALENDULA: Use Calendula oil, cream or ointment for a natural remedy alternative. Calendula has wound-healing, anti-inflammatory and antiseptic properties and it is an ingredient in many first - aid creams
- LIGHT BANDAGES: Loosely apply a bandage or gauze as needed.
- MOISTURIZE: Once new skin has re-grown over the rip area, moisturize to prevent dry, cracked skin and reoccurring rips.
- BANDAGING AND RECOVERY: If immediate training is required rip should be protected with band-aid and covered with medical tape. **It is recommended to wait until the blister is completely healed before resuming pole activity.**

Signs of infection include:

- Increased pain, swelling, redness, or warmth around the blister
- Red streaks extending away from the blister
- Drainage of pus from the blister
- Swollen lymph nodes in your neck, armpit, or groin
- Fever

How to prevent Pole Rips and Blisters:

- GOOD GRIP CONTROL: Focus on adequate grip control to avoid blisters to rupture and to prevent future pole rips on the hands / wrist area
- WASH AND MOISTURIZE: Wash and moisturize hands after every pole practice
- PUMICE STONE USE: Pumice stone can be used to prevent excess callous build up. It is recommended to use while bathing, when the skin is softer from the water temperature. Gently rub the stone ever the calluses until the skin improves.
- Re-apply lotion as needed following pole practice (avoid lotions prior practice).

Chapter 5: Major Related Injuries

Pole Fitness is a highly physical sport that requires participants to lift up and to support their own body weight on a vertical bar, while spinning or holding a pose / isometric contraction. It requires a great amount of muscular strength and endurance as well as coordination.

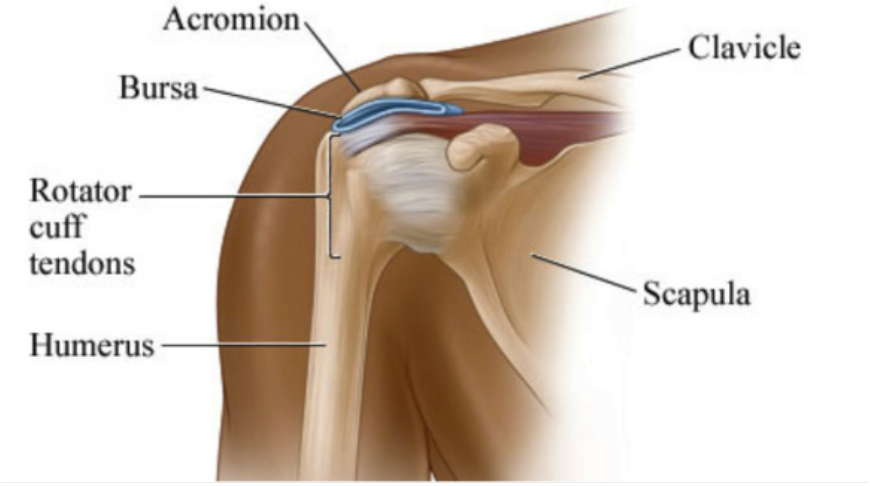
The wrist, elbows and shoulder joints are involved in every Pole Fitness exercise and as a result, these joints sustain an ongoing amount of added stress. Therefore, most major injuries related to Pole Fitness will most likely involve the wrist joint, shoulder joint and or the elbow joint.

In presence of an injury or problem, always consult your doctor.

1. Shoulder Problems and Injuries

Minor shoulder problems, such as sore muscles, aches and pains, are common and can be caused by everyday wear and tear, overuse, and injury or simply by the natural aging process.

The shoulder joint moves every time the arm moves. To better understand shoulder problems and injuries it is important to review the anatomy and function of the shoulder:



The shoulder is a ball-and-socket joint with three main bones: the upper arm bone (humerus), collarbone (clavicle), and shoulder blade (scapula). Muscles, tendons and ligaments hold these bones together. The shoulder joint has the greatest range of motion of any joint in the body, and as a result, is more likely to be injured or cause problems than other joints in the body. The Acromioclavicular (AC) Joint lies over the top of the shoulder and is also easily injured.

Shoulder problems can be minor or serious. Symptoms may include pain, swelling, numbness, tingling, weakness, changes in temperature or colour, or changes in range of motion. Shoulder injuries most commonly occur during sports activities such as Pole Fitness but also during work-

related tasks and home projects. Acute and overuse injuries are common causes of shoulder symptoms. Home treatment often can help relieve minor aches and pains.

a. Acute Injuries

Acute (sudden) injuries are the most common cause of shoulder pain. An acute injury may occur from a fall on an outstretched arm, a direct blow to the shoulder, or abnormal twisting or bending of the shoulder. Pain may be sudden and severe and bruising or swelling may develop soon after the injury. If there is nerve or blood vessel damage, the shoulder, arm, or hand may feel numb, tingly, weak, or cold, or may look pale or blue.

Acute injuries include:

- **Contusion:** An injury to the body in which skin and bone are not broken, but damage is done to tissues under the skin, causing a bruise or bruises .
- **Sprains:** Injuries to the ligaments that connect bone to bone and help stabilize the shoulder joints.
- **Strains**: Damage to the muscles or its tendons.
- **Separation of the shoulder**: This occurs when the outer end of the collarbone (clavicle) separates from the end (Acromion) of the shoulder blade because of torn ligaments. This injury occurs most often from a blow to a shoulder or a fall onto a shoulder or outstretched hand or arm
- **Torn Rotator Cuff:** Which may occur from a direct blow to or over-stretching of the tendon.
- **Fractures:** Broken bones that may occur when a bone is twisted, struck directly, or used to brace against a fall.
- **Dislocation:** Pulling or pushing bones out of their normal relationship to the other bones that make up the joint.

b. Overuse Injuries

Overuse injuries occur when too much stress is placed on a joint or other tissues. This often results from overdoing an activity or through repetition of an activity with insufficient rest, such as Pole Fitness overtraining.

Overuse injuries include:

- **Bursitis:** Inflammation of the sac of fluid that cushions and lubricates the joint area between one bone and another and surrounding tissues.
- **Tendinitis**: Inflammation of the tendons (tough, rope-like fibers that connect muscles to bones).
- **Muscle Strain:** Over stretching or over contraction, affecting the muscle or its tendon.
- **Frozen Shoulder:** Condition that limits shoulder movement and may follow an injury.
- **Impingement Syndrome:** Occurs when the tendons of the Rotator Cuff muscles become irritated and inflamed as they pass through the sub-Acromial space (the passage beneath the Acromion). This can result in pain, weakness and loss of movement at the shoulder.

Other possible causes of Shoulder Symptoms:

- **Muscular tension** and or poor posture.
- **Osteoarthritis:** Breakdown of the cartilage that protects and cushions the shoulder joints.
- **Calcium build-up** in the tendons of the shoulder.
- An irritated or pinched nerve or a herniated disc in the neck.

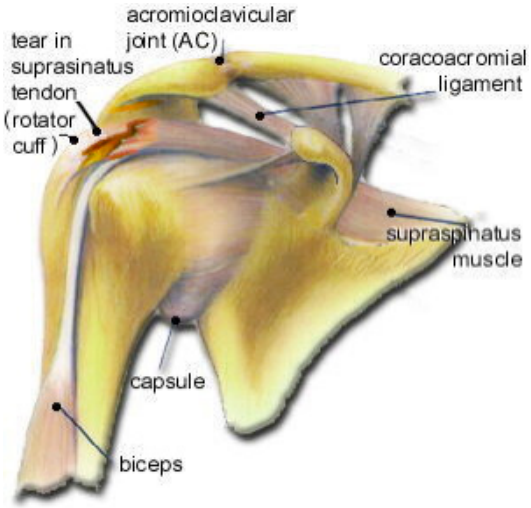
2. Rotator Cuff Disorders

The Rotator Cuff is a group of tendons and muscles in the shoulder that work together to provide the Glenohumeral (Shoulder) joint with dynamic stability, helping to control the joint during rotation (hence the name).

The Rotator Cuff muscles include:

- Supraspinatus
- Infraspinatus
- Teres Minor
- Subscapularis

Supraspinatus and Infraspinatus are the most commonly injured Rotator Cuff muscles. Rotator Cuff disorders occur when tissues in the shoulder get irritated or damaged.



Rotator Cuff disorders include:

- Inflammation of the tendons (Tendinitis) or of a bursa (Bursitis). In the shoulder, a bursa is a small, fluid-filled sac that serves as a cushion between the tendons and the bones.
- Impingement, in which a tendon is squeezed and rubs against bone
- Calcium build-up in the tendons.
- Partial or complete tears of the Rotator Cuff tendons.

The shoulder is, again, a ball-and-socket joint, where the ball at the top of the upper arm bone fits into the socket of the shoulder blade. Because of its wide range of motion the muscles and tendons of the Rotator Cuff have to work hard to hold the bones in place. As a result, they are easy to injure and are prone to wear and tear.

Most Rotator Cuff disorders are caused by a combination of:

- **Normal wear and tear:** Using the shoulder for years can slowly damage the Rotator Cuff and lead to structural changes, such as thinning and fraying of the tendons and reduced blood supply.
- **Overuse:** Activities that often require lifting the arms above the head - such as Pole Fitness, Tennis, Swimming, or House Painting - can also lead to Rotator Cuff problems if not done properly and by not allowing enough rest. Even normal motions made often over a long time period can stress or injure the Rotator Cuff.

Normal wear and tear as well as overuse can lead to **impingement** and higher chances of injury.

It takes great force to tear a healthy Rotator Cuff tendon, but sometimes simple, small movements can cause a final tear in a shoulder already damaged.

a. Rotator Cuff Symptoms

- Pain, often on the side and front of the upper arm and shoulder
- Difficulty doing everyday activities and pain during the night
- Weakness in the shoulder

b. Immediate Treatment

It is important to treat a Rotator Cuff problem, without treatment, the shoulder may get weaker and one may not be able to lift the arm up at all. For most Rotator Cuff disorders doctors usually recommend these steps first:

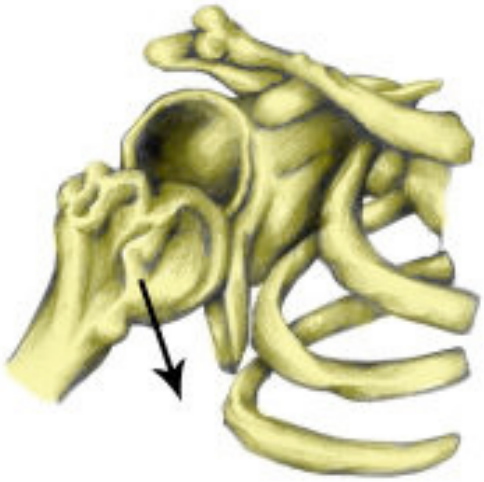
- **Rest** the shoulder but do not immobilize, as this can cause the joint to become stiff (frozen shoulder)
- **Use ice or heat**
- **Stop** any activity that hurts the shoulder
- **Physiotherapy** may be recommended by doctors to help reduce pain and to provide exercises to stretch and strengthen the shoulder. To achieve good results treatment may take from a couple of weeks to several months.

c. Prevention

Adequate balance of strength and flexibility around the shoulder joint will decrease the chances of injury. A strong and flexible joint is capable of withstand repetitive stress and impact more effectively. Isolated strength training and stretching for the shoulders will aid in the prevent injuries. Additionally, while practicing Pole Fitness:

- Work within normal range of motion of joint
- Engage shoulders at all times during pole work: shoulders should be relaxed down and back by activating primarily the Latissimus Dorsi and Rhomboid Minor and Major as well as Mid and Lower Trapezius
- Avoid "hanging" of the pole and pulling shoulder out of the socket by engaging both shoulders and deep core muscles.

3. Shoulder Dislocation



Shoulder dislocation is a very common traumatic injury that occurs a wide range of sports. A dislocated shoulder is an injury in which the upper arm bone (humerus) is forced out of the cup-shaped socket that's part of the shoulder blade. A dislocated shoulder is a more extensive injury than a separated shoulder, which involves damage to ligaments of the joint where the top of your shoulder blade meets the end of your collarbone. The shoulder joint is particularly prone to dislocations due to its high mobility, which sacrifices stability.

95% of the shoulder dislocations are usually anterior and caused when the shoulder is externally rotated and/or abducted. Dislocation can also be posterior, inferior, superior or intra thoracic and can cause complications and damage to the surrounding muscles, tendons, nerves, blood vessels and cartilage, such as the Glenoid Labrum. Furthermore, shoulder dislocations can become a reoccurring problem and may need a careful rehabilitation exercise program to prevent the highly unstable Glenohumeral joints from repeated dislocation.

a. Shoulder Dislocation Symptoms

- A visibly deformed or out of place shoulder
- Swelling or discoloration (bruising)
- Intense pain
- Inability to move the joint
- The injured person will usually hold the arm close into their body and resist abducting and externally rotating the shoulder

Shoulder dislocation may also cause numbness, weakness or tingling near the injury, such as in the neck or down the arm. The shoulder muscles may spasm from the disruption, often increasing the pain intensity.

b. Immediate Treatment

Call 911 - Do not move the injured person

- **Rest.** Do not move the joint. Splint or sling the shoulder joint in its current position. **Do not try to move the shoulder** or force it back into place. This can damage the shoulder joint and its surrounding muscles, ligaments, nerves or blood vessels
- **Ice** the injured joint. Applying ice to your shoulder can help reduce pain and swelling by controlling internal bleeding and the build-up of fluids in and around your shoulder joint
- **Seek medical attention** as soon as possible. The shoulder should be reduced (put back in) by a trained medical professional as soon as possible. **Never attempt to pop it back yourself as you may cause further damage**

c. Prevention

Adequate balance of strength and flexibility around the shoulder joint will decrease the chances of injury. A strong and flexible joint is capable of withstanding repetitive stress and impact more effectively. Isolated strength training and stretching for the shoulders will aid in prevent injuries. Additionally, while practicing Pole Fitness:

- Work within normal range of motion of joint
- Engage shoulders at all times during pole work : shoulders should be pulled down and back by activating primarily the Latissimus Dorsi and Rhomboids Minor and Major as well as Mid and Lower Trapezius
- Avoid “hanging” from the Pole and pulling the shoulder out of the socket by engaging both shoulders and deep core muscles.

4. Tennis Elbow

Tennis Elbow, also known as Lateral Epicondylitis, is soreness or pain on the outer part of the elbow. It happens when the tendons that connect the muscles of the forearm to the elbow become damaged. The pain may spread down the arm to the wrist. Left untreated, it may hurt to do simple things like turn a key or open a door.

a. Causes

- **Overuse:** Most of the time tennis elbow is caused by overuse during activities that involve twisting the arm over and over. This can stress the tendon, causing small tears that in time lead to pain
- A **direct blow** to the outer elbow can also cause tendon damage

Tennis Elbow is common in tennis players, but most people get it from other activities that work the same muscles, such as gardening, painting, or using a screwdriver. Pole Fitness can also be the cause of Tennis Elbow, mostly due to overtraining and putting too much stress on the elbow joint (poor body mechanics and technique).

b. Immediate Treatment:

- **Rest** the arm, and avoid any activity that makes the pain worse
- **Ice.** Apply ice or cold packs at least 3 times a day for as long as there is pain, swelling, and inflammation
- **Physiotherapy** and adequate fitness training is recommended once the pain eases to stretch and strengthen the tendon (aids in the healing process and prevents further injuries)

c. Prevention:

- Pay close attention to proper body mechanics, proper hand grips and body alignment
- Switch hands during pole work, and allow the elbow to rest between exercises
- Always take time to warm up before and stretch after exercise
- After strenuous activity, ice can be used to prevent pain and swelling

Most people feel pain relief and improvement in a few weeks of treatment, but it may take 6 to 12 months for the tendon to heal.

5. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is pain, tingling, and other problems in the hand because of pressure on the Median Nerve. The Median Nerve is one of the nerves that supply the hand. It passes through the wrist in a narrow channel called the carpal tunnel, along with wrist tendons.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome can be caused by a number of factors, including:

- Illnesses such as Hypothyroidism, Rheumatoid Arthritis, and Diabetes
- Pregnancy
- Obesity
- Repeated hand movements (Repetitive Strain Injury, RIS) especially if the wrist is bent down (hands lower than wrists)
- Wrist injuries and bone fractures
- Smoking as it can reduce blood flow to the Median Nerve

All of these conditions can cause a narrowing of the space through which the Median Nerve passes. The cause may be structural such as with a fracture or congenital cases, or due to swelling, inflammation or fluid retention.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is three times more common in women, probably because they have a smaller Carpal Tunnel. Activities that continually involve repeating the same movement with the wrists are at higher risk for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. During Pole Fitness, poor body mechanics and technique, as well as weak and or tight wrist muscles can result in inflammation of the wrist joint and narrowing of the carpal tunnel. It also has a higher prevalence in people with diabetes and other conditions that directly affect the nervous system. It usually occurs firstly and sometimes solely in the dominant hand, where it is also more painful.

a. Symptoms

Carpal Tunnel symptoms usually increase gradually and may initially be only present at night. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome may be in one or both wrists.

- A dull ache in the wrist and forearm.
- Pain that radiates into the thumb and four fingers (excluding the little finger).
- Sensations of tingling, burning in the hand or four fingers.
- Pain that is worse at night.
- Pain that radiates into the forearm, elbow or shoulder.
- Weakness in the fingers and hands.

Symptoms most often occur in the thumb, index finger, middle finger, and half of the ring finger. If there is a problem with your other fingers but the little finger is fine, this may be a sign of have Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. A different nerve gives feeling to the little finger.

b. Immediate Treatment

- **Stop** activities that cause numbness and pain. Rest the wrist longer between activities
- **Ice** the wrist for 10 to 15 minutes 1 or 2 times an hour

Once symptoms have improved, stretching and strengthening exercises can be used to help prevent a reoccurrence of symptoms. All exercises should be performed pain-free. If pain occurs, go back a step. Firstly, a person should aim for a full, pain-free range of motion, before moving on to strengthening. Resistance bands are excellent for performing wrist-strengthening exercises (see wrist cross training exercises; Page 108).

More alternative treatments include acupuncture and yoga, which have been linked to an improvement in Carpal Tunnel syndrome symptoms.

c. Prevention:

- Pay close attention to proper body mechanics, proper hand grips and body alignment
- Switch hands during the activity, and allow the wrist to rest between exercises
- Make sure not to grip the pole too strong, as this can cause the hand and wrist to wrap around the pole as you spin as well as pain in the fingers
- Always take time to warm up before and stretch the fingers and wrist after exercise (see chapter 4)
- After strenuous activity, icing the area can prevent pain and swelling

CHAPTER 6: Teaching Pole Fitness

A fitness professional is a leader, role model, teacher and supporter whose primary role is to provide safe and effective fitness classes. To be successful, leaders need to incorporate many different skills and abilities including knowledge, experience, planning, communication skills, and professionalism.

Pole Fitness instructors must have the ability to properly demonstrate, clearly describe and break down exercises, as well as to provide helpful feedback.

1. Code of Ethics

Pole Fitness instructors as well as other fitness leaders must follow a basic code of ethics:

- Provide safe and effective exercise instruction
- Provide equal and fair treatment to all participants
- Understand the current research and latest techniques in exercise
- Be knowledgeable in the prevention and management of injuries and First Aid emergencies: maintain current First Aid and CPR
- Always keep confidentiality of all client information
- Refer clients to more qualified fitness, medical or health professionals when appropriate

In addition, successful Pole Fitness Instructors must:

- Maintain a high level of technical knowledge
- Apply their knowledge to a variety of training needs
- Create fun and effective exercise programs
- Demonstrate proper and safe exercise techniques
- Provide valuable feedback to participants
- Communicate effectively
- Provide inspiration, motivation and encouragement
- Conduct their job in a professional, respectful and ethical manner

2. Personal Awareness

Getting to know and accept oneself is fundamental for personal improvement and growth. The instructor's attitudes, behaviour, and experiences will affect teaching and leadership abilities.

Positive focus should be on an individual's strengths while working to identify areas for improvement on a one on one basis.

3. Preparation

Taking time to prepare and plan fitness programs will help in achieving success as a qualified Pole Fitness Instructor. Long-term (macro plans) and short-term goals (micro plans) should be designed. Create opportunities for feedback during class is essential for improvement.

4. Presentation

Instructors should focus on being educators while teaching to the current level required for the student at that time. An instructor that is too "flashy" can be intimidating to a student.

Professional and Personable: Being punctual, well groomed, friendly, enthusiastic, encouraging and approachable. Proper posture and voice control is also very important for a successful presentation.Videotaping is helpful tool and further aids in polishing Pole Fitness teaching skills.

5. Practice

Practice, practice and practice some more! Practice makes perfect. Even the most experienced instructors take time to practice.

6. Participant Centered

Studies on exercise adherence show that adults need to feel welcome, have a say, and enjoy the overall experience. To keep class participant centered instructors should:

- Make themselves available before and after class to answer questions.
- Be friendly, sincere, and honest.
- Include everyone in the class, make eye contact and allow for a two-way communication.
- Get to know the class (remembering names, preferences, etc) while acknowledging individuality.
- Invite participants to share their knowledge or experience with the class regularly.
- Ask for feedback, ideas for improvements
- Always teach participants how to modify exercises to meet their needs.
- Educate on what is taking place during the class! Studies show that a better understanding of exercises movement and anatomy allow for better muscle-mind connection, thus better overall results.
- Have participants be responsible for setting their own limits
- Relate exercises to daily life when possible.
- Acknowledge the progress of the class.
- Be an effective role model: practice a healthy lifestyle and "do as you preach". Sharing your own experiences with exercise (success and failures) can be useful for students to help relate and find motivation from you as their instructor.

7. Professionalism

The fitness industry is always growing and evolving; as new research and clinical studies broaden knowledge, changes in programming and standards are required.

To stay current, instructors need to participate in professional development workshops, courses, and participate in personal research.

The first responsibility of the instructor is to be properly trained by a provincially and nationally recognized institution such as Gravity Vertical Fitness and registered with provincial and national associations such as the Canadian Pole Fitness Association. Maintaining a current fitness registrations and First Aid / CPR is also fundamental.

Pole Fitness instructors should teach within their scope of practice and purchase proper liability insurance.

8. Insurance

Incredible energy and time is required to become a Pole Fitness instructor. Being certified as fitness professional does not protect against findings of negligence. An insurance policy is a contract designed to protect the instructor and her / his assets from litigation. Common reasons for litigation against instructors include: muscle, joint and back injuries, broken and bruised bones.

There are many types of coverage and specific policies. When choosing insurance it is essential to describe in detail the services and type of activities that require coverage. If an injury occurs but it is related to an activity not described in the insurance policy the company can deny the claim. It is also recommended to find out what is NOT covered as well. Contacting an insurance professional is advisable to ensure appropriate coverage.

Independent contractors working at a fitness studio or health club, should enquire about insurance coverage provided by the facility (if any) and make sure coverage details and policies are included in the Agreement for Services contract.

9. Pole Fitness Class - Safety Checklist

- ✓ Every class participants must successfully complete a Physical Activity Readiness (Par-Q) form with no “red flags”, and sign a Waiver and Release form.
- ✓ Remind participants to keep skin clean, free of all lotions, oils, and other similar substances that can transfer into the pole surface and make it slippery and harder to grip
- ✓ All rings, bracelets, watches, necklaces, and other loose jewellery must be removed.

- ✓ Equipment should always be checked for proper installation before commencing each training session. Over time bolts and mounts may become loose and many removable poles do require ongoing tightening for proper installation set up and regular maintenance.

- ✓ Equipment must be properly cleaned and safe to use at all times. Alcohol water mixture and a towel is recommended to remove oils, dirt and disinfect.

- ✓ Adequate number of clean towels and spray bottles must be available for participants to wipe down equipment as much as needed.

- ✓ Exercises must be instructed on both arms, and both sides of the body at equal intensity.

- ✓ Educate and remind participants of proper body positioning and alignment.

- ✓ Allow for proper warm up, cool down and stretching during each class.

10. Class Components

During Pole Fitness Class cardiovascular exercise and muscular conditioning can be achieved simultaneously when properly combining pole spins and transitions into a Pole Fitness routine.

A Pole Fitness class includes four sections:

a. Warm up
b. Cardiovascular training + muscular conditioning = Main Exercises and Spins
c. Cross training
d. Cool down and flexibility training

a. Warm-Up

The warm up should prepare the participant mentally, physically and socially for the workout. The purpose is to:

- Increase the heart rate and respiratory rate and as a result increase blood flow and oxygen exchange
- Increase muscle and connective tissue temperature
- Increase muscle elasticity
- Increase nerve conductivity
- Release synovial fluid for joint lubrication
- Assist with injury prevention
- Sets energetic, supportive mood

Warm up moves should progress from smaller moves to larger, full range of motion around the joints movements. It can include simple choreography with or without the pole at a low intensity or unrelated moves. Most "Transition moves" are suitable to incorporate during warm ups. Dynamic stretches can be very beneficial to add at the

end of the warm up component to enhance mobility around specific joints such as the shoulders, wrists and hips.

The goal is to slowly warm and "wake up" the body to get ready for more strenuous activity.

b. Cardiovascular Training + Muscle Conditioning = Main Exercises and Spins

The cardio component of a class is where the most physical work and energy expenditure takes place. A typical cardio section consists of continuous movement of large muscle groups to bring heart rate into a training zone and maintaining. Benefits of cardio exercises include:

- Improve cardio respiratory system
- Burn calories to decrease body fat
- Increase muscular endurance
- Increase energy throughout the day
- Increase ability to cope with stress
- Decrease risks for heart disease

The muscle conditioning component of a class involves resistance exercises to improve the strength and endurance of the body's major muscle groups. Pole Fitness uses a person's body weight as resistance against gravity, on the vertical bar. Benefits of muscle conditioning include:

- Increase muscular strength, endurance, and muscle tone
- Increase joint stability
- Decrease risk of injury
- Improve posture
- Increase lean muscle mass / "fat burning machines": the increase in lean muscle mass that results from strength training is the key to your body's ability to metabolize glucose and thus, burn fat. This occurs because muscle cells require more energy (and also burn more calories) than fat cells
- Change in body composition: As one ages, the body changes in composition as lean muscle decreases while fat deposits increase. Muscular strength also declines approximately 5% per decade for the untrained individual. Strength training slows down this process
- Strengthen the skeletal system: Weight training helps protect bones by facilitating bone regeneration. This is an important benefit, particularly for women, as decreased estrogen production causes bone demineralization. This in turn increases the risks of osteoporosis and the additional risk of incurring stress fractures
- Better coping skills with regular daily activities

During Pole Fitness classes cardiovascular training and muscle conditioning are combined into one solid class component that also involves some flexibility training:

- Pole exercises and spins require participants to engage large muscle groups, using body weight as resistance against gravity, promoting muscular strength, endurance and deep core activation
- When exercises are properly combined into a routine format, Pole Fitness becomes a cardiovascular workout that can burn on average 400 calories per hour, depending on the class level
- Many Pole Fitness exercises include short bursts of higher intensity - anaerobic exercise training.
- Furthermore, during pole exercises and spins, centrifugal force and momentum around the pole elongate and stretch the body promoting flexibility and elongated muscles.

Pole Fitness classes must provide a balance of movements around the joints (flexion / extension, abduction / adduction etc.) and attention should be given to muscles not focused on during the cardiovascular + muscle conditioning section. This should be addressed during the cross training component.

c. Cross Training

To ensure a complete body workout is achieved, it is important that each major muscle group is trained at least once during each class. Training only a few muscle groups leads to imbalance in the body and increases the risk of injury.

During Pole Fitness classes there is a tendency to perform exercises on the strongest side of the body. Pole Fitness instructors must explain and emphasize the importance of practicing on both dominant and non dominant sides of the body to avoid muscular imbalances that can lead to more serious problems and to ensure adequate rest to the body is provided.

Overtraining can also be the cause of injuries and health conditions.

The Cross Training component should focus on "complementary" exercises on/off the pole, floor exercises, and using additional equipment to focus on those areas or muscles not sufficiently worked during the previous class component and to facilitate progression to more advanced pole exercises, such as inversions. Aim for achieving balance between upper/lower body, front and back areas by the end of each class.

d. Cool Down and Flexibility Training

This final component of the class helps participants recover from the workout by returning the muscles to their normal resting length and improving joint flexibility. It involves deep breathing techniques, gentle music and stretching of all the major muscle groups.

People don't stretch due to a perceived time constraint and because they don't understand the full benefits of flexibility training. Stretching needs to be a part of every work out as it:

- Prevents injury, such as muscle strains
- Prepares muscles and joints for more strenuous activities, such as Pole Fitness
- Makes exercises easier by signalling the muscles that they will be taken through the range of motion
- Reduces muscle tension and makes the body feel more relaxed
- Increases kinaesthetic awareness: mind-body connection
- Helps with coordination by allowing for freer and easier movement
- Increases physical efficiency:
    - A flexible joint requires less energy to move through the ROM
    - Stretching can increase nerve impulse to the muscle
- Increases circulation
- Having long, strong muscles develops postural awareness and muscular balance
- Stretching after a workout can help clean up lactic acid form the muscles
- Increases the extensibility of the muscles
- Stretching feels good!

Problems with Lack of Flexibility include**:**

- Tights muscles can tear more easily
- Lack of stretching can cause muscles to shorten
- Without flexibility, joints don't move properly
- Muscles can remain sore for longer periods when not stretching

11. Cueing and Spotting

There are different methods of correcting a student's positioning while attempting an exercise. Demonstration followed by proper description of the correct movement is always the first step. Teaching proper biomechanics and the step-by-step technique of how to correctly perform each exercise is crucial. Verbal cueing must be clear and concise.

While avoiding hands-on guidance, mirroring the student's approach often helps by showing what is being done incorrectly.

Gentle touch spotting is sometimes necessary to guide students into the correct position on the pole. Consent from participants must be given before attempting touch spotting.

While spotting, instructors must be aware of where they stand to avoid getting caught in the way of a spin.

12. Pole Fitness - Types of Learners

There are three main types of "learners" that instructors will commonly encounter during a Pole Fitness class:

a. **Visual Learners**
b. **Methodical Analyzers Learners**
c. **Natural Learners**

Visual learners will benefit most from demonstration of the exercise and mental visualization.

Methodical Analyzers rely on cueing and they break down exercises excessively to their disadvantage, confusing and complicating the technique. These types of learners are the most challenging to instruct and are very commonly encountered. It is important for instructors to keep cueing simply and coherently, narrowing down any explanation to two to four steps and then combining them. Comments such as how the exercise should "feel" can also be helpful.

Natural Learners will benefit from both, cueing and demonstrations, and are the most effective and easy type of students to instruct.

13. Forms

a. Health Screening

It is the responsibility of all fitness leaders to ensure the safety of the students / participants. Every person that takes a fitness class should be screened for health and medical concerns prior to the fist class. This can be done with a Par-Q form (Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire form).

If an individual answers yes to one or more questions on the form, medical clearance is required before proceeding. This could be a written note from the person's family doctor or a completed PAR-X form. Regardless, it should contain a statement that the specific training program, such as Pole Fitness, is safe for the individual and it should include a detailed description on what he or she should or should not do during exercise.

It is recommended to update client's health screening at least once a year to prevent unnoticed health issues that can conflict with the type of exercise provided.

b. Liability Release

Participants should be fully informed of the risks associated with physical exercise and be willing to personally accept those risks before starting exercise. This is done with a written liability waiver that releases the instructor and the facility from legal responsibility in the case of an injury occuring during the class. However, it is important to remember that is not a replacement for proper Liability Insurance but only an additional precaution for both, participants and instructors.

Chapter 7: Pole Fitness Industry

1. Evolution of the Industry

The Pole Fitness Industry has seen a tremendous growth in the past decade alone and it is continuing to gain popularity as more women and men become interested, not only in participating but also in teaching Pole Fitness.

Actress Sheila Kelley's first appearance on the Oprah show has definitely marked a memorable time in the history of pole dancing. She revealed to millions of viewers another aspect of pole by performing Pole Fitness moves. Ever since, way the pole is viewed by society has slowly started to change.

Today we are experiencing pole "Apps" for smart phones, online tutorials, exclusive Pole Fitness clothing lines, Pole Dance magazines, a yearly International Pole and Exotic Dance Fitness Convention and the growing possibility of bringing Pole Fitness to the Olympic Games.

There are many Pole Fitness competitions occurring worldwide. These are strictly non-nude and non-stripping performances focused on pole dance as an athletic and artistic form of dance and exercise.

The very first Pole Fitness competition was held in Amsterdam in 2005, as Miss Pole Dance World. Since then, over 25 countries from all continents host and participate in both National and International Pole Fitness competitions and the number keeps growing. In Canada, the Canadian Pole Fitness Championships take place at a regional and national level with the winner moving forward to international competitions.

2. Fitness Legitimacy

Pole Fitness is continuing to gain respect and recognition as a truly effective path to health and fitness. Canadian Health Magazine - the Fall 2010 Edition - recognized Pole Fitness as a top new fitness trend for Canadians. Pole Fitness is now approved as Continuing Education for Canadian fitness professionals. FIBO 2010 (Germany), the world's largest event devoted to health, fitness and well being, included Pole Fitness among the latest fitness trends.

Pole Fitness studios are opening all around us, at a fast pace, and that translates into a demand for Certified Pole Fitness Instructors constantly on the rise. Often, with the urgent need to supply for this increasing demand, the quality of instruction and service provided is affected.

As fitness professionals and pole dancing lovers, it is very important to maintain high standards of education and instruction, not only within ourselves, but also within our present and then future Pole Fitness studios, so that the industry will also continue gaining respect and legitimacy.

3. Pole Fitness Jobs

Pole Fitness offers a wide variety of job options for Certified Instructors. The first step on the job search would be to become familiar with the Pole Fitness studios in the area. Current studios are a good option particularly if already a student at the facility, since owners will commonly acknowledge the advantage in familiarity with the classes formats, other participants and instructors.

If there aren't any Pole Fitness studios around, or simply not wanting to be self employed there are other options as well:

- Open a private studio
- Teach private lessons
- Propose to offer classes at a local gym or recreation centre.
- Start a Pole Party business

Whatever the chosen path may be, it is always important to approach the Pole Fitness Industry in a professional manner, both in person and on paper.

Most fitness facilities, studios and private clients will most likely pay close attention to the following aspects of a resume:

- Pole Fitness Certification
- Pole Fitness Registrations and current memberships
- Fitness Leadership Certification
- Post-Secondary / University Education
- Work experience
- Related activities experience
- First Aid and CPR Training

Additionally, a friendly, upbeat and outgoing personality is a very important asset beyond Pole Fitness skills - remember advanced athletes are not always good teachers!

When seeking work at fitness facilities such as Pole Fitness studios, demonstrating true passion, commitment and interest in learning are always appreciated and recognized by studio's owners. Joining classes and being open to learn, asking questions from experienced instructors and requesting

feedback is a good approach. Studios owners / managers will soon notice these positive attitudes which will increase your chances of obtaining a job at site.

4. Future of Pole Fitness

As Pole Fitness becomes accessible to a wider spectrum of people, it will continue to gain recognition as a legitimate form of exercise with tremendous health benefits. The future of Pole Fitness is only limited by the imagination and skill of the people who work in the industry but there are some clear trends emerging.

Future trends show several areas of expansion:

- **Kids Programming:** Children are being introduced to Pole Fitness via their mothers. As children are sometimes forced to wait outside the classroom while Mom attends her Pole Fitness class their natural curiosity led to the children trying to mimic their mother's moves on the pole. Moreover, most committed moms likely have a pole in their household as well, that soon enough becomes part of the children's games. The result, kids are realizing all of the same benefits of Pole Fitness that their mothers have – increased overall strength and endurance while getting a cardio work out and having fun.

- **Gymnastics programs**: Pole Fitness has often been referred to as gymnastics on a vertical bar. As the artistic beauty of Pole Fitness becomes more prominent in performances and less overtly sexual, over time, gymnastics groups will start to add a pole to their areas of discipline.

- **Men's Programs:** Men wanting to participate in Pole Fitness are growing. Men are naturally stronger than women, especially in the upper body, which allows for some of the most challenge poses to be done with ease. However, not all women want to have men in their classes so specific co-ed classes need to be added to the schedule or men's only classes.

- **Olympics:** There is an international push to have Pole Fitness recognized as an Olympic Sport. The process of become part of the Olympics can take decades to achieve and the criteria is long and demanding. Whether or not Pole Fitness becomes a sport on its own or is combined with another discipline, such as gymnastics, only time will tell. However, having the conversation forces society to look at Pole Dancing in another light. It challenges people's current perception of pole, and to think in broader terms.

As an industry, several steps can be taken to further Pole Fitness: standardized language, terms of reference, competition rules, and recognized Fitness Instructor Programs are but a few areas, which require advancement and are currently being undertaken by such groups as the Canadian Pole Fitness Association and the International Pole Dancing Association.

CHAPTER 8: Pole Fitness Foundations

Proper biomechanics, technique, strength and control are fundamental to prevent injuries and for proper exercise training development. It is extremely important to follow progressive and systematic Pole Fitness training in order to build the strength, coordination, adequate muscle recruitment and flexibility necessary to perform more advance moves.

Proper body alignment is considered to be the most mechanically efficient and safest position for the body to be in while moving around the pole. Pole exercises require awareness of where body is in relation to pole. Proper body positioning is the foundation for each move and will enable participant to:

- Recruit the proper muscles for each exercise, ensuring joint integrity and safety.
- Generate push / pull forces to create resistance and stability
- Create and sustain momentum using centrifugal force
- Sustain static holds and poses whether upright or inverted
- Utilize pivot points for turns and spirals
- Move gracefully and add artistry to Pole Fitness

1. Terminology

The following common terms will be used throughout the manual:

- **INSIDE / OUTSIDE (Arm or Leg):** refers to the arm or leg being used in relation to the pole by standing right to the side of it

- **MEDIAL**: Towards the midline of the body

- **LATERAL**: Away from the midline of the body

- **MOMENTUM (M):** "Force or Speed of movement". M = Mass x Velocity. Can be safely achieved by walking (not running, jumping or speed walking) around the pole and by using arms, legs and body weight to generate spinning revolutions around the pole

- **TRANSITION (Moves):** Refers to exercises that allow the participant to change directions, body and hand positioning in a smooth manner, and to re-adjust for subsequent moves. Transitions are also considered a "breather" or pause from strenuous activity as they provide exerciser with time to rest and slow down the training pace

- **WALKING CIRCLE:** Refers to the imaginary circle created when walking around the pole about one foot away in distance from its base. It is the safest position to be in relation to the pole for most spins involving momentum. Moving into the walking circle

can create entanglement with the pole, whereas stepping out of it can force participant to jump towards it and bruise.

- **SET UP POSITION:** Body positioning when facing pole or facing forward and applies for the majority of the spins (Tutorials # 2 &3)

- Standing facing pole, feet in the walking circle
- Dominant arm at eye level, non dominant about half a foot below
- Hips reach back, fully extending the spine
- Arms are extended, wrists and elbows in neutral position - straight line from knuckles to shoulder
- Shoulders engaged, chest is up: scapula is pulled down and back together, shoulders down and away from the ears
- Head and neck in alignment with the spine, neutral
- Deep core and abdominals engaged
- Knees soft, weight on the ball of the feet keep pulling hips back and never towards pole
- Longest distance between pole and body is always at the hips
- Heels slightly up

Variation"Side Set Up":

- Standing beside pole, feet in the walking circle
- Dominant arm is extended and grabs pole at eye level
- Shoulders stay engaged, wrist neutral and elbow extended
- Hips reach away from pole and never into the pole

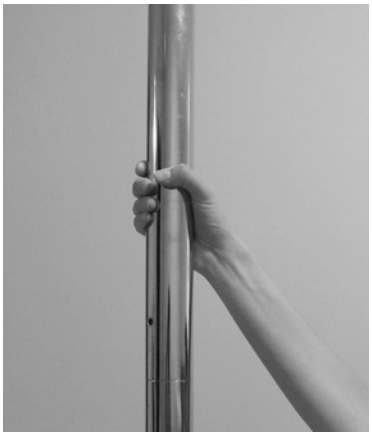
- **ABDOMINAL ENGAGEMENT:** To activate the abdominal muscles and deep core stabilizers with "belly button to spine" or "pull abdominals in" (Tutorial # 4)

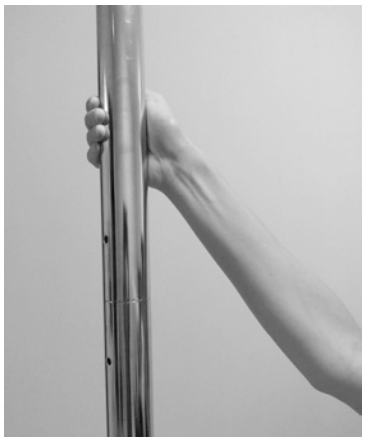
- **SHOULDER ENGAGEMENT:** To activate the shoulder girdle muscles in order to keep to Humerus bone in the socket joint, pulling shoulder girdle down and away from the ears, lifting the chest up and squeezing scapula together. It applies spins, pull ups and inversions (Tutorial #5)

2. Grip

The "Pole Grip" refers to the position of hands and fingers when grabbing the pole. Each student will have a slightly different way of gripping the pole, depending on individual factors such as strength, sweatiness or dryness of the hands.

There are 2 main hand grips:





- **Baseball Grip**: The thumb opposing the fingers, wrapped around the pole
- **Cup Grip**: The thumb is located on the same side as the fingers, wrapped around the pole

Issues with Grip can result from different factors, the most common being:

- **Perspiration:** When hands become too sweaty student will have difficulty holding on to the pole
- **Excessive Grip:** Overly tight grip due to excessive strength or fear of falling off

There are different grip aids for **perspiration issues** such as Dry Hands, Mighty Grip and Tight Grip. If a participant has an extreme perspiration condition, such as Hyperhydrosis (overactive sweat glands), the use of pole fitness gloves or workout gloves might be necessary. However, many "sweaty palms cases" are simply a Beginner's side effect from mild anxiety or fear when participating on Pole for the first time and will resolve on its own once student builds some degree of confidence and familiarity with Pole. Allow for an adaptation period before opting for a griping aid.

Some students will grip to the pole too tightly, creating an **Excessive Grip**. This can cause difficulty to spin and maintain a neutral wrist, plus excessive stress on the finger (falanges) joints. These particular students usually benefit from a Cup Grip versus a Baseball Grip. Lifting the heal of the hand off the pole or pushing it forward while spinning can also help loosen the Excessive Grip.

3. Technique

Technique is the step-by-step way of accomplishing a move. Good technique allows the participant to master basic Pole Fitness moves in easy manner, build good fundamentals, create smooth transitions and move into more challenging pole exercises. It is also recommended to always demonstrate exercise first before breaking technique down into steps.

During Beginner levels, the following teaching progression will ensure safe and adequate learning, avoid injuries and creating "bad pole habits".

a. **Body Alignment :** First step in a Pole Fitness class is to teach proper body positioning for spinning, referred as "Set Up position" (page 50). Incorporating a Pole Walk is a good way for students to practice maintaining proper Set Up position throughout movement:

- Standing beside the pole, about one foot away from the pole (walking circle)
- Inside arm fully extended grabbing pole high up, keeping shoulders engaged
- Wrist and elbow neutral (straight line from knuckle to the shoulder)
- Hips lean away from pole and never into the pole
- Keep neck neutral in alignment with the spine
- Allow body weight to create momentum around the pole, stepping on the ball of the feet and allowing feet to pivot while walking

b. **Basic Momentum Test**: This exercise will demonstrate how momentum is created without kicking or swinging the body aggressively.

- From Set Up (Facing pole)
- Soften knees pulling hips away from pole at all times (allow knees to bend)
- Allow feet to pivot - stay on the balls of the feet
- Slightly lean towards non-dominant arm with body, creating momentum and allowing the back of the knees to wrap around pole
- Should be practiced in both directions

The following are common technique errors that can cause the participant to not finish with knees behind the pole:

- Not reaching out with the body (or not reaching out enough) is the most common mistake
- Holding pole too tightly (refer to page 51)
- Reaching too high on the pole - unable to engage the shoulders
- Not engaging Deep Core and Abdominals
- Staying planted on the floor, not allowing a pivot point; softening the knees will decrease friction with the floor

c. **Single Leg Momentum Test (Tutorial # 3):**

- From Set Up position (Facing Pole)
- Soften knees pulling hips away from pole at all times

- Extend one leg out to the side and away from the pole (about 45 degree angle from planted leg) keeping knees soft
- Allow planted foot to pivot
- Draw one full circle around pole while keeping extended leg in the same position during the entire spin
- Switch feet on the ground on the same spot as planted foot
- Ensure exercise was done correctly by checking finishing position as equal to beginning position but on the opposite foot
- Weak Momentum? Reach extended leg further out to create an imaginary bigger circle around the pole. Keep extended leg out to the side, not behind the body.

NOTE: Performing a momentum test although it may seem quite simple, it can be very challenging and somehow scary for Beginners to pole. There is a sense of velocity involved and students are not yet familiar with the equipment. The following are some helpful tips to overcome momentum difficulties:

- When students fails to pull hips away from pole suggest resting head on the extended arms
- Mention an imaginary rope tied to their lover back, hips pulling away from pole during entire motion
- When forcing momentum, practice with eyes closed to "feel" momentum instead
- Looking over the shoulder might facilitate momentum, but beware it can create dizziness

d. Visualization

Being able to visualize the exercise in a perfect execution is an important element for success. Picturing feet, hands and body placement in relation to the pole will enhance connection between mind and body, therefore facilitating recruitment of proper muscles and overall body performance.

e. Set Short - Term Goals

The body needs time to build the strength and flexibility required to progress into advanced levels. Pole Fitness Beginners are commonly tempted to attempt complex exercises sooner than is safe for them to do so. This can put students at a high chance of injury, and can generate disappointment in their lack of ability. To avoid this situation, realistic short-term goals within current skill level should be set and celebrated. Looking back at the starting point and acknowledging achievements is a great way to find encouragement and to avoid focusing on what is unachievable, at that current stage. Pole Fitness should always be enjoyable, fun and SAFE.

4. Sample Class Plan

The following is a sample of a level one Pole Fitness class.

A wide variety of fitness specialties can easily be incorporated to Pole to develop unique class formats targeting different physical adaptations to exercise. Adequate training and advance experience in each field is often required to adequately develop and teach these variations of Pole classes. In these combinations, class components slightly change to adapt to new fitness targets but the warm ups and cool downs always remain in place.

Instructors, who teach what is suitable for their personal backgrounds and areas of expertise, use creativity and develop enjoyable yet effective classes will easily excel and outstand within the industry.

Some examples are:

- Yoga-Pole
- Pilates on Pole
- Pole Ballet
- Cardio Pole (Pole Dance)
- Pole Resistance Circuits

Pole 101 can be easily divided into two levels classes of 4 consecutive weeks each, or taught as an intense 6 to 8 week program.

Sample class level 1 (day 2-3)	
Warm up	Pole Walk
	Step and Turn
	Back Slide Body Wave
	Hip Dips
	Figure 8s
	Shoulder Rolls
	Hand Circles
Main Exercises Allow time to practice on both arms	Pole Holds
	Pole Hold Half Spin
	Knee Spin
	Fireman Spin
	Fan Legs Turns
Routine It is a good idea to keep building onto the routine as you advance though out the level.	Pole Walk, Pole Hold Half Spin back and forth Pole Walk Pirouette Back Slide Body Wave to floor Pole Walk Knee Spin

Cross Training	Planks
	Push Ups
	Pole Leg Drops
	Pole Triceps Push
	Pole Squats
	Traveling Lunges
Flexibility Training	Side Pole Stretch
	Walk Up/Down pole Stretch
	Biceps / Chest Stretch
	Calf Stretch
	Hip Flexors and Quadriceps stretch
	Abs Stretch
	Inner Thigh Stretch
	Neck Rotations
	Wrist Stretch

5. Pole Fitness Class

Exercises are listed in order of difficulty from basic to complex. Master all previous exercises on both sides of the body, dominant and non-dominant, before moving on to more advance ones.

Class Components

Pole Fitness classes will usually consist of the following components:

a. Warm up
b. Main Exercises and Spins
c. Strengthening and cross training (when needed)
d. Cool down - Flexibility Training

a. Warm Up

Warm up exercises progress from small to large full range of motion of movements with the goal to slowly warm and "wake up" the body to prepare for more strenuous activity. Most transition moves can be integrated into a warm up routine.

- **<u>Remember:</u> goal of warm up is not only to warm up the body but also to warm up the equipment: cold metal is much harder to grip and is unsafe to practice with.**

Pole Walking (Transition for spinning) Tutorial # 2

Proper "Pole Walk" is very important to practice and to be comfortable with since most pole moves will commonly start off from a pole walk. The exercise allows for the opportunity to practice proper body alignment and posture.

Description:

1. From Side Set Up Position
2. Start walking around pole
3. Maintain a neutral wrist at all times
4. Turn slightly towards pole as you walk
5. Walk heel toe to allow pivoting on ball of the feet
6. Change direction by pivoting on outside foot, and switching lead arm

Key Points:

- Do not pull body towards the pole, keep arms straight with a soft elbow
- Do not allow wrist to wrap around pole while walking
- Soften grip when wrist wrapping
- Look up (not to the hands)
- Toe should naturally pivot towards pole with each step to create proper momentum

Notes

Body Waves (Transition) - Tutorial # 16

Description:

1. Facing pole within walking circle
2. Hand reach pole about shoulder height
3. Movement is smooth continuous sequence, as follows:
   - •Chest to pole
   - •Torso to pole
   - •Hips to pole
   - •Lean back, opening up shoulder blades
   - •Roll spine away from pole extending legs
4. Repeat continuously without pause, to create wave movement; legs extended on way in, bent on way back

Safety:

- Knees must not pass 90-degree angle

Variations:

- Increase / decrease of movement
- Keep knees apart
- Stand facing forward beside pole with one foot in front of the other to create an up/down movement, verses forward and back
- Reverse motion to create a “Reverse body wave effect”
- Extended Leg Body Wave ***

***

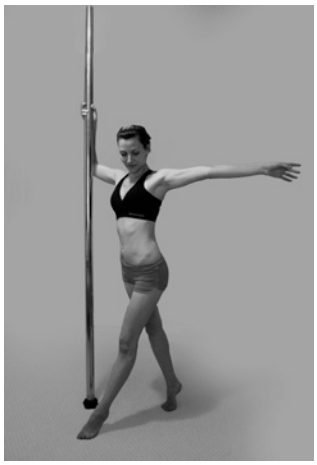
Step and Turn (Transition)

Description:
1. Stand beside pole facing forward
2. Place inside hand on pole at chest height, step with outside foot forward and in front of pole staying up onto toes
3. Pivoting on outside foot until facing opposite direction; switch hands at same time

Key Points:
- Transfer body weight from inside leg to outside leg

Variations:
- Use outside arm to create momentum by reaching out fully extended
- Bring foot up first then pivot

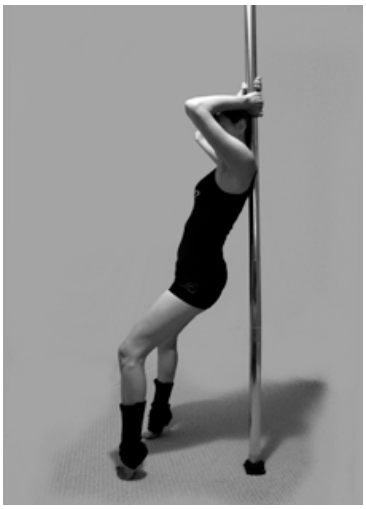
Safety:
- Do not bring knee forward as it may hit the pole



Notes

Hip Circles On Pole (Transition) Tutorial # 36

This exercise can be used as a core strengthening exercise by isolating hips, while focusing on well-defined circles that do not involve chest movement.



Description:

1. Face away from pole; rest pole against top of shoulder and upper back. Pole is between shoulder blade and spine
2. Take one step forward keeping upper-back on pole
3. With soft knees, push pelvis forward then to one side, backwards and to other side
4. Connect the dots in one smooth motion drawing a circle with hips
5. Change direction

Safety:

- Do not place pole on spine
- keep knees soft

Variations:

- Step to side as circling hips around pole. Travel will incorporate more balance and coordination skills into exercise
- Without Pole (Tutorial)

1. Standing hip-width distance away, practice isolating hips inside to side by sitting on right hip then to the left hip
2. Practice isolating hips back to front: come back to centre, soften knees and tilt pelvis to neutral (without engaging the glutes) and push back arching the lower spine
3. Combine both isolations into Standing Hip Circles

- Strengthening exercise: Sitting into a full squat hold, isolate the hips while focusing on well defined hip circles that do not involve chest movement
- Go up on toes to increase the intensity
- Facing pole, hands on pole

Key Points:

- Practice hip circles off pole
- When stepping to side visualize “spiralling” around pole with hips
- Shoulder stay square to pole

Notes

Hip Dips (Transition) Tutorial# 67

Disclaimer: High heels are not recommended to wear during Pole Fitness classes. This tutorial is not exclusive to Pole Fitness Certification and should not be practiced with high heels.

Description:

1. Pole Walk around pole
2. Transfer all body weight on inside hip (sink into hip)
3. Sweep outside leg in a circular motion and cross over inside leg
4. Turn body to face pole while switching hands on pole
5. Facing pole, perform a small semi-squat (dip down) and transfer weight onto other hip ; motion is up and down
6. Movement comes back down into a dip then transfer weight onto other hip away, switch hands on pole and turn away from pole to starting position, sweeping outside leg back in a circular motion.

Safety:

- If during warm up, gently increase the intensity of the move
- Knees must not pass 90-degree angle
- Toes slightly turned out

Key Points:

- Movement repeats back and forth to starting position
- Adding more momentum from outside leg facilitates turning of body
- Follow motion up and down versus side to side
- Practice dips separately

Notes

Figure "8s" (Transition) Tutorial # 35

Disclaimer: High heels are not recommended to wear during Pole Fitness classes. This tutorial is not exclusive to Pole Fitness Certification and should not be practiced with high heels.

Description:

1. Face pole standing about hip-width distance away, place both hands on pole at chest height
2. Stand tall, chest up with neutral spine.
3. With legs extended and knees soft, stand on toes
4. Keep torso in line with pole
5. Find the four corners of the room or visualize a clock
6. In four counts: Push right hip to four o'clock leaving body weight on the right, twist to two o'clock. Follow by pushing left hip diagonally back to eight o'clock leaving all the weight on the left then twist to ten o'clock

Variations:

- **Without pole - tutorial :**

1. Standing feet hip-width distance away, transfer body weight to one hip pushing hip bone up (keep torso straight and bending opposite knee)
2. Find 4 corners of the room, from back corner push hip bone to the front corner (keeping hip bone up) then transfer body weigh into opposite hip - back corner - and repeat

- Reverse motion (salsa twist or belly dancing figure 8s)
- Stand closer to pole or farther away from pole
- Bent knees
- Go up on toes and straighten legs
- Change speed of movement

Key Points:

- Keep torso in line with pole and don't allow shoulder to follow motion
- Do not lift the heal off floor to push hip up
- Keep core engaged to support natural back arch
- Transfer all the body weight form one hip to the other

Notes

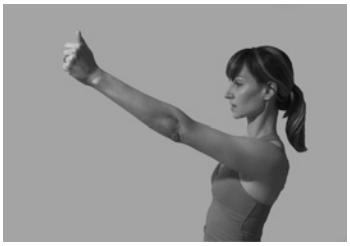
Shoulder Rolls

Warm up for shoulder specifically

Description:
1. Stand feet hip-width apart, knees soft, neutral spine and chest up
2. Slowly roll shoulders forward in a circular motion
3. Gradually add elbows and upper arm into movement
4. Finally incorporate whole arm into circular motion, always gentle and controlled
5. Repeat in opposite direction

Safety:
- When circling arms, stay within a safe ROM and keep shoulders relaxed. Slow and controlled motion
- Keep thumbs up

Variations:
- One shoulder at a time
- Roll shoulders at the same time in opposite directions



Hand Circles

Warm up for wrist specifically

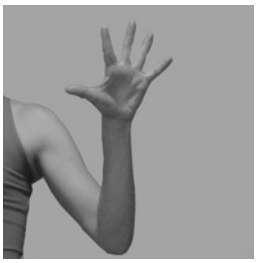
Description:
1. Stand feet hip-width apart, knees soft, neutral spine and chest up
2. Gently circle hands / wrists to the right and to left to warm up and lubricate the wrist joints and muscles

Variation:
- Incorporate wrist circles with shoulder rolls or other moves to increase intensity and challenge coordination

Hand "Sprinklers"

Warm up for hand and wrist specifically

Description:
1. Stand with feet hip-width apart, knees soft, neutral spine and chest up
2. Make a fist then open hand strong spreading fingers wide apart
3. Slowly increase speed of movement
4. Resembles trying to "sprinkle water on someone"



Fan Legs-into Wide Stance (Transition)

This exercise requires hip flexibility, balance and coordination.

Description:

1. Face away from pole; rest pole against top of shoulder and upper back, between shoulder blade and spine
2. Knees soft, feet hip-with apart, grab pole above head with one hand, thumbs down
3. Engage core and swing right leg clockwise direction starting at seven pm and ending at five pm with foot placed hip-width distance away from pole and to side.
4. Repeat with left leg, counter clockwise
5. Final position wide stance

Safety:

- Do not place pole on spine

Variations:

- Move foot placement closer or farther away from pole.
- Grab pole above head with two hands
- Keep hands on pole, at hips, or move around

Key Points:

- Turn hips to the right before fanning leg to the left and vice versa for fluidity
- Go up on toes for easier pivot point

Main Muscles Worked:

- Gluteus Medius and Minumus
- Tensor Faciae Latae
- Hip Adductors / Abductors group
- Deep Core muscles

Notes

Pirouette (Transition) Back Slide Tutorial # 8

Description:

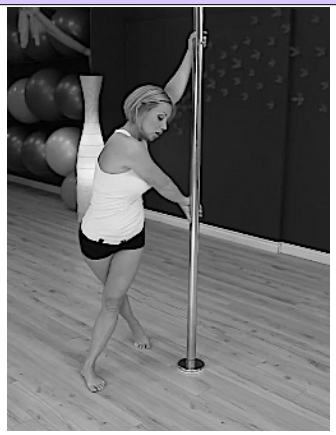
1. From Set Up position
2. Inside foot steps forward one foot and half way from pole
3. Outside arm extends out, palm facing away thumb down and reaches behind pole about hip-height
4. Turn body towards pole, look under top arm bringing outside leg between body and pole in a full circle
5. Slide top arm up and bottom arm down on pole, fully extending arms
6. Turn body under top arm bringing head to pole
7. Continue turning body until facing away, back on pole
8. Rest body on pole keeping natural arch of the spine

Key Points:

– Long reach of the hands; allow hands to create turning motion

Variations:

– Pivot on outside foot



360 Pirouette (Transition)

Description:

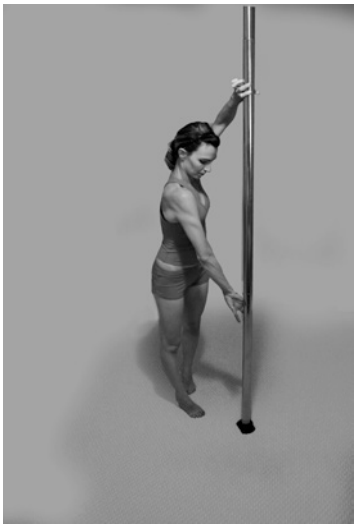
1. Stand beside pole, inside hand high on pole
2. Step out to side, leaving hip-width distance separation. Elbow fully extended, shoulder back and down
3. Pivoting on inside foot, bring body in towards high arm and turn inwards under arm (motion resembles trying to look at armpit)
4. Outside hand comes towards pole and warp around fingers, pointing down for balance and support
5. Continue pivoting around to starting position by releasing bottom hand

Key Points:

– Reach out with non supported leg to assist pivot
– Go up on toes to assist pivoting if needed
– Place inside hand high on pole to allow room to turn under

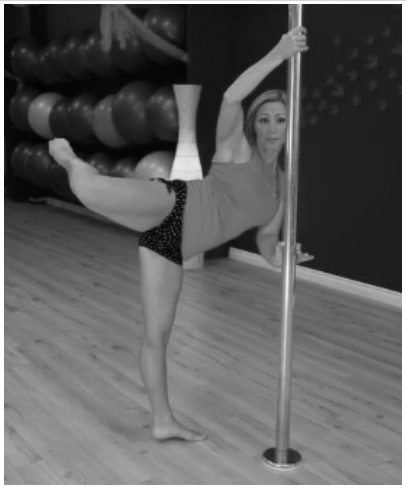
Variations:

– Pivot on outside foot



Bucking Horse (Transition) Tutorial # 9

Transition move that allows you to change direction of pole walk. Should be practiced in stages (exercises)



Description:

Exercise one:

1. Standing beside pole in walking circle on ball of the feet
2. Inside hang reaches pole about neck height, elbow bent
3. Swing outside leg straight up and straight back, without bending knee (create 1/2 circle)

Exercise two:

4. Inside leg takes step forward
5. Outside leg swings straight up to 45 degrees
6. Inside hand slides down on pole as outside hand reaches pole over head, thumb up
7. Pivot on planted foot and face pole
8. Bring top leg high up, bend knee (pause) then straighten and bring down
9. Swing top leg straight through, release bottom hand and turn body into opposite direction as started
10. Bend knee at top (pause)
11. Straighten leg and continue motion back again
12. Step back and ball-change

Safety:

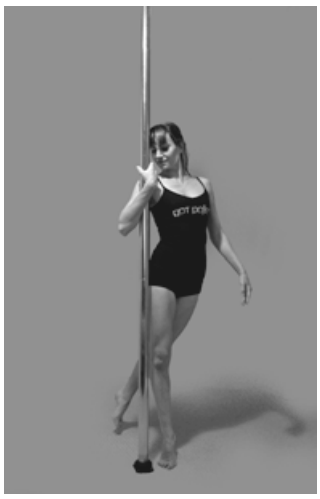
– Open up hip to side when bringing leg straight back to avoid bending knee when lack of flexibility

Key Points:

– Practice in stages then combine both exercises

Pull in - Pole Walk (Transition)

Variation of Pole Walk. It resembles wrapping body around pole.



Description:

1. Stand beside pole hip-width distance away
2. Fully extend inside arm and place hand high on pole with fingers opposing the thumb, wrapping around pole
3. Shoulders are engaged, back and down and not elevated; elbow is fully extended, but not locked or hyper-extended
4. Chest is up, spine neutral; stand tall and engage core muscles
5. Start walking around pole, keeping in mind all of the above
6. Slowly contract Biceps of inside arm and pull body towards pole while continuing to walk. Once elbow is bent about 90 degrees, body should be close against pole

Shoulder Slide (Transition)

Beginner transition to floor.

Description:

1. Face away from pole; rest pole against top of shoulder and upper back, between shoulder blade and spine
2. Take one step forward keeping upper shoulder on pole while chest is up
3. Reach hands up and overhead, grabbing backside of pole with thumbs down. Bottom hand same as shoulder resting against pole
4. Engage abdominals and slightly arch back while looking up towards ceiling
5. If too close to pole, readjust by taking step forward until body position allows for safe slide
6. Lift one leg and extend out straight; slide to floor in controlled fashion
7. Switch shoulders

Safety:

- Use hands to decrease pressure on shoulder

Variations:

- Keep both legs on floor, one farther out than the other

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Deep Core Muscles
- Erector Spinae
- Quadriceps

Notes

Outside Arm Turn (Transition)

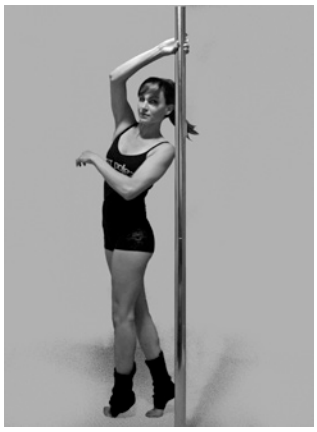
Variation of a pirouette that allows for one full turn and half (finish facing opposite way)

Description:

1. Stand beside pole hip-width distance away, chest up and core engaged. Place inside hand at head height
2. Step with inside foot, outside arm comes across face with palm up and grips pole between thumb and index finger
3. Turn towards inside arm and release inside arm while pivoting on outside foot
4. Re-grab with inside hand and continue onto next move

Key Points:

- Turning on toes will facilitate pivoting
- Control balance - stay up on inside leg until full rotation is complete
- Will finish facing opposite direction



Notes

Back Slide (Transition / Strengthening) Tutorial # 8

Description:

1. Face away from pole resting against top of shoulder and upper back. Pole is between shoulder blade and spine; toes pointing forward, knees hip-width apart
2. Slide down until knees are at 90-degree angle; push back up using Gluts and Quadriceps muscles about 1/4 of way up and hold
3. Tuck tailbone under and lift one vertebra at a time spine of pole until shoulders are resting only
4. Squeeze scapula and lift chest up bringing whole body off pole (Body Wave Off)

Safety:

- Knees must not pass 90-degree angle. Adjust standing distance from pole if necessary
- Do not allow body to slide up while body waving off pole to avoid pressure on the neck

Variations:

- Knees together
- Wide stance
- Stand on toes to challenge balance and target calf muscles

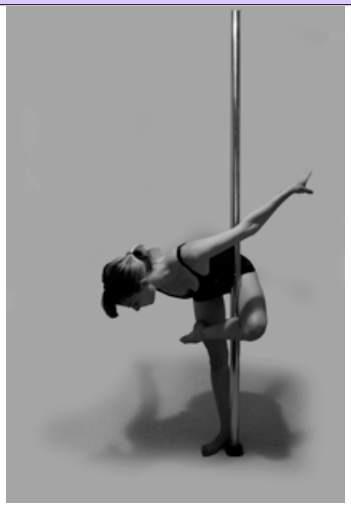
Main Muscles Worked:

- Quadriceps
- Gluteus Maximus
- Hamstrings
- Hip Adductors (with a wide stance)

Hook and Bow (Transition)

Description:

1. Stand behind pole hip-width distance away, inside hand high on pole
2. Shoulders engaged back and down, chest up and core engage
3. Inside leg hooks around and in front of pole at knee pit
4. Standing leg extended with soft knee
5. Use deep core muscles to aid with balance, bring shoulders around and in front of pole to opposite side of hooked knee, and bend forward at hips
6. Return to standing



Main Muscles Worked:

- Abductors
- Hip flexors
- Erector Spinae
- Deep core
- Supporting leg muscles

Inside Leg Hook and Bow (Transition)

Good flexibility and balance exercise.

Description:

1. Stand beside pole, hip-width distance away. Stand tall with chest up and neutral spine
2. Place inside arm high on pole fully extended
3. Hook inside leg on pole at knee pit
4. Bend forward at the hip and come back up gracefully

Variations:

- Bend sideways at hips

Major Muscles Worked:

- Hip Abductores
- Hamstrings
- (Supporting muscles of the leg)
- Abdominals and Obliques (if bending sideways)
- Erector Spinae

Also known As…

- Flamingo

Notes

Back Bend Kick (Transition) - Tutorial # 14

Description:

1. From Side Set Up position, take three steps around pole, starting on inside foot
2. Take a fourth step forward (outside leg) and turn to face pole as outside arm comes across to reach pole high, above inside hand
3. Turn inside elbow up and turn body underneath it
4. Lean ribcage into pole
5. Take one step behind (now outside leg) to open up hips more
6. Release outside arm and bring down slowly
7. Gently bend body backwards as inside leg lifts straight up, then kicks in and back down
8. Practice on non-dominant arm as well

Safety:

- To decrease pressure on lower back muscles activate abdominals prior to bending back and keep rib cage in contact with pole
- When neck is a concern modify exercise by allowing neck to turn away and slightly down towards floor during motion

Variations:

- To decrease intensity keep both hands on pole

Key Points:

- Practice kick exercise first then add rest of move

Main Muscles Worked:

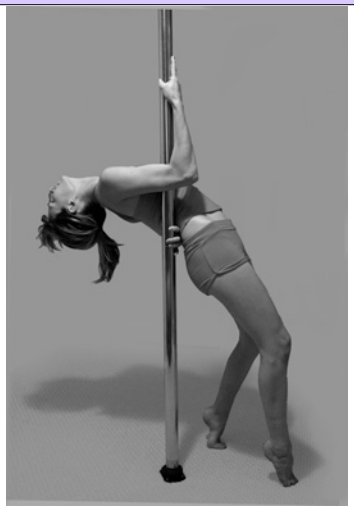
- Erector Spinae
- Deep Core
- Biceps Brachii

Notes

Assisted Bridge / Transition

Description:

1. Stand beside pole
2. Inside hand on pole at shoulder height
3. Chest up, shoulders and core engaged
4. Step forward past pole with the inside foot
5. Outside hand comes underneath lower back and grabs pole with thumb up
6. Gently lean back while lower back is slightly supported by forearm underneath it
7. Slowly return to standing
8. Practice on non-dominant side as well



Safety:

- Exercise requires great deal of flexibility and deep core strength. Progress slowly and do not attempt a full backwards bridge. Keep core and abdominals engaged prior to bending back.
- When the lower back is a cause of concern keep hips in contact with pole to assist decreasing pressure on lower back
- When the neck is a cause of concern modify exercise by turning head away and slightly down towards floor during exercise

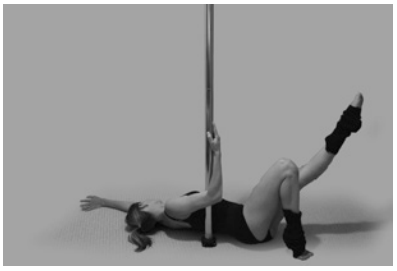
Major Muscles Worked:

- Erector Spinae and Low back muscles
- Deep core

Back Bend Slide (Transition)

Description:

1. Stand beside pole
2. Place inside hand on pole at shoulder height with elbow extended.
3. Inside foot steps forward past pole
4. Bend elbow and place pole on inside armpit, resting ribcage on pole for support
5. Drag outside leg forward towards inside leg; engage core and gently lean back allowing body to slide down pole to floor while bending knees
6. Outside hand is off pole and out to side
7. Practice on other side



Variations:

- Decrease intensity by placing outside hand on pole
- While sliding down turn body towards pole by tucking inside foot under body, away from pole or facing upwards

Safety:

- Decrease weight load on lower back muscles by activating abdominals prior to bending back
- Do not hang off pole, keep shoulders engaged

Main Muscles Worked:

- Erector Spinae and lower back muscles
- Deep Core
- Quadriceps

Back Slide Body Wave - Tutorial # 75

Disclaimer: High heels are not recommended to wear during Pole Fitness classes. This tutorial is not exclusive to Pole Fitness Certification and should not be practiced with high heels.

Transition to ground. Combination of shoulder slide, pirouette and body waves

Description:

1. From Side Set Up position, pirouette to face away from pole and lean top of shoulder against pole
2. Circle legs out one at a time to wide stance
3. Pole should be placed between shoulder joint and neck, head on opposite side, neutral neck
4. Grab pole above head, cup grip
5. Body wave by lifting chest, torso then hips - as chest comes down shoulders slide down on pole
6. Leg movement should naturally follow, bending at the knees as lowering body down
7. Body wave down to floor

Safety:

- Decrease weight load on lower back muscles by activating abdominals
- Keep shoulder engaged and control movement - do not drop down to floor
- Use hand grip to assist with stability

Main Muscles Worked:

- Erector Spinae and lower back muscles
- Deep Core
- Quadriceps

b. Main Exercises and Spins

Exercises are listed in order of difficulty from basic to complex. Master all previous exercises on both sides of the body, dominant and non-dominant, before moving on to more advance ones.

Attempt all spins from standing position. When comfortable with technique incorporate Pole Walk to gain more momentum to spin.

Momentum Spin - Tutorial # 3

Allows practicing momentum and gives a feel for using upper body muscles and core to support body up while spinning around pole. One foot will always remain on floor.

Description:

1. From Set Up (facing pole)
2. Soften knees pulling hips away from pole at all times
3. Extend one leg out to side and away from pole (about 45 degree angle from planted leg), keeping knees soft
4. Allow planted foot to pivot
5. Draw one full circle around pole keeping extended leg in same position during entire spin
6. Switch feet on ground at same spot
7. Ensure exercise was perform correctly by checking finishing position as equal to beginning position but on opposite foot
8. Practice on non-dominant arm as well

Note: Both outside arm and leg will help in creating momentum by reaching out.

Safety:

- Keep shoulders engaged and do not hang from the pole while squatting down

Key Points:

- Push hips away from pole during entire Spin
- Do forcefully pull body towards pole, keep arms straight - soft elbows
- Do not force momentum by swinging outside leg: outside leg should be out to side, not behind body
- If unable to create enough momentum reach leg further out and way from pole

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Biceps Brachii
- Deep Core
- Quadriceps, Hamstrings and Gluteus

Also known as...

- Grounded Spin
- Step Around Spin

Inside Knee Medial Wrap

Great Beginner exercise as one foot will always be on the floor. Gives beginners a feel for using upper body muscles to lift the body up and off ground while spinning around pole.

Description:

1. From Side Set Up position
2. Step with inside foot to begin move.
3. Outside leg lifts at about 45 degree angle and reaches out away from pole to create momentum for the spin
4. Continue to reach out while outside hand comes around and grabs pole at chest-height, thumb up. Keep looking forward
5. When close to one full spin completed, tuck planted toes under so top on foot is facing down allowing body to reach floor
6. Pole should be placed in knee pit and outside leg extended out
7. Practice on non-dominant arm as well

Variations:

- Keep outside leg behind
- Keep outside leg to the side
- Bend outside leg and bring knees together at end of spin (pole will be between knees)

Key Points:

- Do not force momentum by swinging outside leg; reach away from pole
- Outside leg must be kept extended then add a variation
- Do forcefully pull body towards the pole keep arms straight - soft elbow while spinning
- If needed use outside hand to push body away from pole

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Quadriceps
- Deep Core

Also known as...

- Grounded Spin to the floor

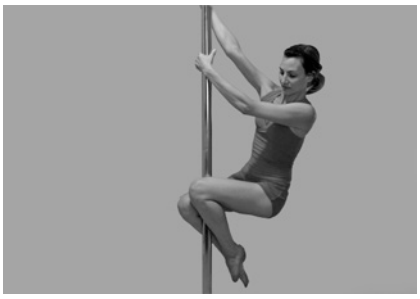
Notes

Knee Spin

Advanced Beginner exercise as both feet will lift off the ground.

Description:

1. From Side Set Up position
2. Step with inside foot to begin move.
3. Outside leg lifts at about 45 degree angle
4. Reach outside leg and body out away from pole creating momentum for the spin
5. Continue to reach out as outside hand comes around and grabs pole at chest-height, thumb up
6. Turn body toward pole into Set Up position, while placing outside leg along side of pole with bent knee
7. As outside leg meets pole, inside legs follows and placed on other side of pole with a bent knee - feet are off floor
8. Practice on non-dominant arm as well



Safety:

- Avoid placing pole on bony part of the knee

Key Points:

- Push hips away from pole during entire Spin
- Do forcefully pull body towards the pole keep arms straight - soft elbow
- Do not force momentum by swinging outside leg
- Squeeze pole between legs

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Hip flexors
- Quadriceps
- Deep Core muscle

Also known as...

- Knee Fireman Spin
- Basic Spin

Notes

Extended Leg Knee Spin

Advanced variation of Knee Spin, master knee spin before attempting.

Description:

1. From Side Set Up position
2. Step with inside foot to begin move.
3. Outside leg lifts at about 45 degree angle
4. Reach outside leg and body out away from pole creating momentum for the spin
5. Continue to reach out as outside hand comes around and grabs pole at chest-height, thumb up
6. Turn body toward pole into Set Up position, while placing outside leg along side of pole with bent knee
7. As outside leg meets pole, inside legs follows and placed on other side of pole with a bent knee - feet are off floor
8. When ready extend one knee fully, toes pointing towards ceiling
9. Practice on non-dominant arm as well

Safety:

- Avoid placing pole on bony part of the knee

Key Points:

- Push hips away from pole during entire spin
- Do not pull body towards pole, keep arms straight - soft elbow
- Do not force momentum by swinging outside leg
- Squeeze pole between legs
- As knee extends hips will come closer to pole, use arms and core to stay way

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Hip flexors
- Quadriceps
- Deep core muscles

Also known as...

- Martini Spin
- Leg up Fireman Spin

Notes

Ankle Hook Spin

Advance Beginner exercise, as both feet will lift off the ground.

Description:

1. From Side Set Up position
2. Step with inside foot to begin move.
3. Outside leg lifts at about 45 degree angle
4. Reach outside leg and body out away from pole creating momentum for the spin
5. Continue to reach out as outside hand comes around and grabs pole at chest-height, thumb up
6. Turn body towards pole into Set Up position, as outside leg comes in front of pole and hooks at ankle with bent knee
7. As outside leg meets pole, inside legs follows and placed on other side of pole with a bent knee, pole resting on top of foot, legs crossed at ankles
8. Practice on non-dominant arm as well

Key Points:

- Push hips away from pole during entire spin
- Do not pull body towards pole, keep arms straight - soft elbow
- Do not force momentum by swinging outside leg
- Squeeze between the ankles

Variation:

- Start from standing, by pushing off with inside foot and reaching outside leg out for momentum

Major Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Hip flexors
- Quadriceps
- Deep Core muscles

Also known as...

- Ankle Fireman Spin
- Firefly
- Genni
- Cross Ankle Spin

Notes

Fireman Spin - Tutorial # 6

Advanced Beginner exercise, as both feet will lift off the ground.

Description:

1. From Set Up position (facing pole)
2. Lift outside leg out to side, about 45 degree angle, away from pole
3. Head is neutral in alignment with neck
4. Maintaining outside leg position, gently lean towards lifted leg allowing body (not leg) to create momentum for spin
5. Planted foot pivots and leg wraps around pole, lifting off floor
6. Outside leg crosses over top
7. Should finish with pole wrapped behind planted leg knee.
8. Practice on non-dominant arm as well (other direction)

Safety:

- Reach away from pole constantly to avoid crashing into pole

Key Points:

- Push hips away from pole during entire spin
- Do not pull body towards pole, keep arms straight - soft elbow
- Do not force momentum by swinging outside leg
- If finished with pole close to pelvis reach out further for more momentum

Main Muscles Worked:

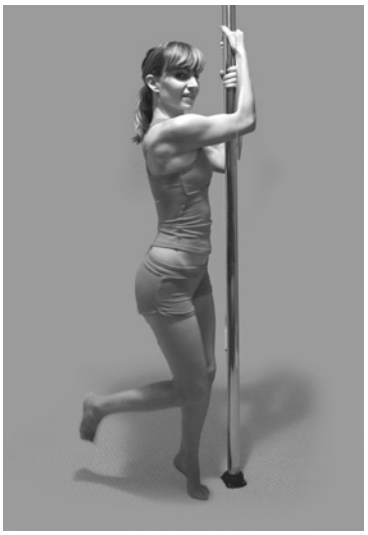
- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Hip flexors
- Quadriceps
- Deep Core muscle

Pole Hold Half-Spin

Can be use as a Transition move to change directions.

Description:

1. Face away from pole, elbow distance separation
2. Inside forearm on pole, elbow at 90-degree flexion
3. Keep shoulders and core engaged; chest up, neutral wrist
4. Step in front of pole, use shoulders to lift body up
5. Outside arm comes around and grips pole above other hand, while turning body towards pole and circling heels around by bending at knees
6. Switch directions and alternate bottom hand



Safety:

- Do not jump into spin
- Standing on your toes will prevent jumping

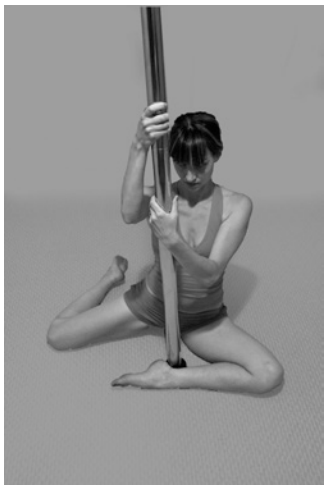
Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Pectoralis
- Biceps Brachii
- Posterior Deltoids
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Rhomboids
- Deep Core

Notes

Pinwheel Hook Spin

Advanced Beginner exercise, as both feet will lift off the ground.



Description:

1. From Side Set Up position
2. Step with inside foot to begin move.
3. Outside leg lifts at about 45 degree angle
4. Reach outside leg and body out away from pole creating momentum for the spin
5. Continue to reach out as outside hand comes around and grabs pole at chest-height, thumb up
6. Turn body towards pole into Set Up Position as outside leg comes in front of pole and hooks at ankle with bent knee
7. As outside leg meets pole, inside legs lifts off, knee bends backwards and to side. Toes should be pointed (outside leg forward, inside leg turned back) and lower legs parallel to ground - Leg position same as Twizzler Spin

Variation:

- Start from standing by pushing off with inside foot and swinging outside leg around for momentum

Key Points:

- Push hips away from pole during entire spin
- Do not pull body towards pole keep arms straight - soft elbow
- Practice leg positioning on the floor, work on flexibility

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus (back leg)
- Abductors and hip flexors
- Deep Core

Also Known as...

- Heel Attitude

Notes

Front Hook Spin

Forward facing spin with top arm carrying majority of weight.

Description:
1. From Side Set Up position
2. Bring outside arm across chest and placed on pole
3. Inside leg hooks at knee pit while outside foot pushes off floor. Hips are pushed forward
4. Once both legs are off ground, bring toes together behind pole by bending knees, with toes pointing back, creating a triangle shape with legs
5. Spin down to floor
6. Alternate arms

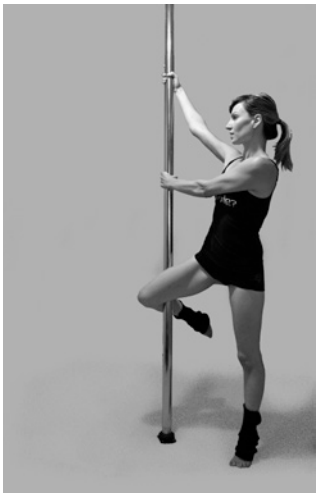
Safety:
- Ensure pole is secured at knee pit
- Keep inside shoulder engaged at all times

Variation:
- Land on knees by spinning fully to ground
- Land on feet by propping legs out from behind pole at end of spin
- Increase intensity of move by performing as a “single arm inside leg hook spin” (***) : outside leg starts extended behind pole and comes around to front of pole to reach ground

Key Points:
- Push hips forward during entire spin
- Do not pull body towards the pole keep arms straight - soft elbow
- Stay up on pole by keeping shoulders and core engaged

Main Muscles Worked:
- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and mid Trapezius
- Teres Major
- Hip Abductors
- Hamstrings
- Deep Core muscles

Also Knows As…
- Front Hook Swing



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Back Spin - Tutorial # 7

Backwards rotation spin.

Description:

1. From Side Set Up position
2. Inside hand reaches about head level, elbow bent
3. Outside hand reaches above head, thumb up, elbow slightly bent
4. Reach body way form pole, straightening top arm
5. Outside leg lifts up with bent knee, creating straight line from top hand to knee
6. Reaching out at all times, allow body to fall back while maintaining above position
7. Planted foot pivots as planted leg wraps around pole naturally
8. Lift planted foot off floor
9. Spin down to floor

From Pole Walk:

1. From Set Up position, take three steps starting with inside foot
2. Pivot on outside foot towards pole as outside hand reaches pole about neck height with a bent elbow
3. Body turns towards pole and continues until facing backwards
4. Inside leg rotates outwards away from pole, lifts up with a bent knee
5. Allow body to fall back, pivoting on planted foot and naturally wrapping around pole
6. Lift planted foot off floor maintaining shoulders and core engaged (do not drop)
7. Spin down to floor
8. Alternate arms (practice in both directions)

Safety:

- Do not jump into pole. Bring body close while adjusting handgrip for backwards spin

Key Points:

- Practice back spin first, then add Pole Walk
- Do not allow head to fall back first
- Stay up on pole by keeping shoulders and core engaged
- When finished there should be space between body and pole, pole should be behind knee

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and mid Trapezius
- Teres major
- Biceps Brachii
- Hip Abductors
- Hamstrings
- Deep Core muscles

Also Knows As...

- Back Hook
- Reverse Hook

Gallop Around

Variation of Side Pole Knee Ups conditioning exercise with the addition of momentum around pole.

Description:

1. Stand beside pole with torso only inches away. Place inside arm at head-height, fingers up, with pole resting close to armpit
2. Outside arm grabs pole above inside hand with elbow pointing forward
3. Neutral wrists
4. Engage shoulders back and down, chest up
5. Engage core muscles and lift knees towards chest while pushing slightly forward with hips
6. Come back down to floor. Feet one-step further ahead from starting point
7. Readjust hands and repeat sequence
8. Change arms and direction of travel

Safety:

- Keep hips in front of pole to avoid hitting against it
- Maintain control of movement and avoid jumping into move
- Re-asses shoulders and core engagement between landings

Variations:

- Increase / decrease intensity by adjusting speed of movement

Key Points:

- Engage core and lift hips forward in front of pole
- Lift chest up and maintain scapula down and back

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Posterior Deltoid
- Mid / lower Trapezius
- Pectoralis
- Biceps Brachii
- Deep Core and Abdominals
- Hip Flexors

Notes

Fan Legs Turns (Transition-Conditioning)

Advanced transition, as it requires upper and lower body strength and flexibility.

Description:

1. Stand close to pole facing forward; place pole close to armpit of inside arm. Bend elbow and grab pole above head fingers pointing up
2. Outside arm grabs pole above inside hand, with elbow pointing forward
3. Hips in front of pole
4. Engage core; engage shoulders back and down, chest up
5. Inside leg starts movement by drawing a circle down and up across opposite hip and body
6. Staying strong on shoulders lift other leg around following circle as inside leg passes pole. Outside leg follows inside leg in a smooth motion
7. Movement rotates body and switches sides on pole
8. Alternate sides

Safety:

- Stay close to pole to avoid hitting hip against it
- If unable to perform Side Pole Knee Ups (conditioning section), not ready for this exercise

Key Points:

- Hips in front of pole always
- Engaging core is key to lighten the legs - facilitate movement
- Point toes and picture drawing a circle down, away and up towards pole again
- Allow motion to turn body around

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Posterior Deltoid
- Lower and Mid Trapezious
- Biceps Brachii
- Deep core and Abdominals
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus
- Tensor Fasciae Latae
- Hip Abductors / Adductors

Notes

Wind Tunnel Spin - Tutorial # 142

Description:

Exercise 1:

1. From side Set Up position, inside hand grabs pole above head arm fully extended
2. Lift inside hip up leaning body down away from pole, and hook inside leg on pole, behind knee pit with thigh parallel to floor (dropping torso to side will assist lifting of the hips)
3. Sink hips back to achieve a zigzag body position
4. Outside hand grabs pole below inside hand, keeping shoulder engaged - torso will slightly turn towards pole
5. Rock on planted feet to create momentum, back and forth - heel to toe

Exercise 2:

1. From Side Set Up, bring inside leg out across body, reaching away from pole
2. Pointing toes, swing leg around and in front of pole in a circular motion to hook at keen pit, hip height
3. As inside leg creates momentum, outside hand grabs pole below inside hand and planted foot pushes off (heel to toe)
4. Bring outside leg to pole, resting top of foot on pole, knees close together in semi stack position

Exercise 3:

1. Add a Pole Walk of 4 steps and continue with exercise 2

Safety:

- Practice with leg warmers or long pants to avoid pole burn behind knee pit while learning to control grip
- Do not forcefully kick leg around to hook on pole to avoid bruising; gently swing leg around and place on pole
- Stay strong on shoulder, do not hang from pole

Key Points:

- Practice into the 3 stages of exercise first
- Activate Oblique muscles to assist with lifting of hips
- When lacking flexibility, slightly lean torso to side away from pole for inside leg to be parallel to floor

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Posterior Deltoid
- Mid / lower Trapezius
- Obliques
- Hip Flexors

Knee Tuck Spin

Description:

1. Pole walk around pole with inside arm at below shoulder level
2. Pull body closer to pole by bending elbow; rest forearm on pole
3. Place outside hand above inside hand; engage shoulders down and back, engage core
4. Extend outside leg out and bring around in a circle to gain momentum, lift and tuck knees. Wrap knees and torso around pole while spinning
5. Reverse direction

Safety:

- Bring body close to pole before lifting knees to avoid hitting it

Key Points:

- Pole should be minimum diagonal to body while spinning, below chest level
- The more horizontal body to pole the more revolutions around pole can be achieved

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Posterior Deltoid
- Mid / lower Trapezius
- Pectoralis
- Biceps Brachii
- Deep Core and Abdominals
- Hip Flexors

Also Known as…

- Cradle Spin

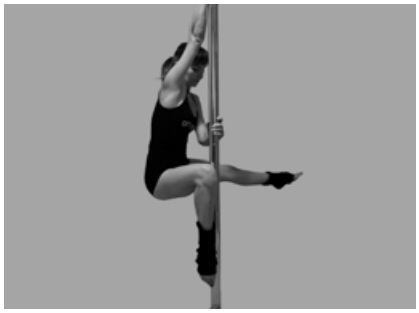
Notes

Single Leg Knee Spin

Variation of Knee Spin with inside leg coming into pole first.

Description:

1. From Side Set Up position, walk around pole
2. While engaging shoulders pull up slightly and place inside medial knee on pole with hips bent at 90 degree. Pole will be resting along inside of lower leg. Outside leg extends out and away from pole to create momentum
3. Place outside arm at chest height on pole while pushing off with outside leg
4. Outside leg stays extended out to side a few seconds, then comes around strong creating more momentum
5. Finally placed outside leg on pole to complete a full knee spin
6. Alternate sides



Safety:

- No jumping up onto pole
- Avoid placing pole on the bony part of knee

Key Points:

- Shoulders must be engage fully to lift body up

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Hip flexors
- Quadriceps
- Hip Abductors
- Deep Core muscles

Also Known as...

- Flying Fireman

Notes

Twizzler Spin - Tutorial # 13

Description: Legs into the Pinwheel position without hooking on the pole and spinning backwards freely. Broken down into exercises first.

Exercise one:

1. From side Set Up position
2. Take three step around pole, starting with inside foot
3. On last step, bring outside arm to pole across chest and push off with inside leg
4. Bring legs into diamond position to floor

Exercise two:

1. Practice pivoting motion on floor, from diamond position
2. Pivoting on one knee, turn body towards and under top arm
3. Bring top leg back with a bent knee.
4. Leg position resembles pinwheel, with knees bent about 90 degree angle, inside leg forward, outside leg back and both horizontal to floor.

Exercise three: combine exercise one and two, spinning down to ground:

1. Take three steps around pole, starting with inside foot
2. On last step, bring outside arm to pole across chest and push off with inside leg
3. Strong in shoulders, pick body up with upper back muscles and core.
4. Turn body towards and under top arm creating momentum to spin backwards
5. Bring legs into pinwheel position
6. Spin down to ground
7. Alternate arms

Safety:

- Do not jump into pole.
- Focus on shoulder and core engagement to avoid dropping body down

Key Points:

- Thighs are not in contact with pole; use outside leg and body to create enough momentum by reaching away from pole
- Do not pull body towards pole, keep minimum forearm separation

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus (back leg)
- Abductors and hip flexors
- Deep Core muscles

Also known as…

- Reverse Attitude
- Backwards Pinwheel Spin

Chair Spin

Advanced spin (forward facing). One arm will carry most of body weight out to side of pole.

Description:

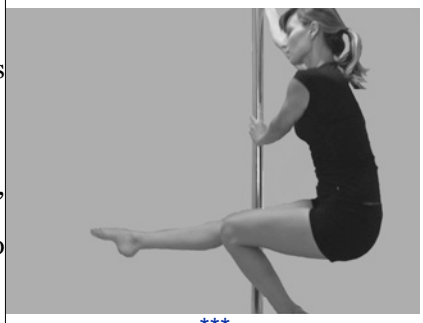
1. From Side Set Up position, walk around pole
2. Outside arm comes across the chest and is placed with open palm on pole to keep spin in right direction and to avoid hitting pole
3. Step with inside foot to begin spin as outside lift of from behind fully extended reaching out and away from pole, creating a semicircle around it
4. Outside leg come to front of body as inside leg lifts off, both knees bend and come forward and up into sitting position while spinning around pole
5. Alternate arms
6. Plant feet for landing

Safety:

- Do not hang from pole. Stay strong in shoulders and core
- Do not put pressure on inside wrist, achieve enough momentum away from pole

Variations:***

- Extended leg Chair Spin: Requires higher core and Quadriceps strength



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Key Points:

- Inside hand can be placed slightly lower than for a regular spin, about eye level
- Reach outside leg far and swing around extended to front to create good momentum
- Deep core engagement is key to lifting the legs
- Outside hand does not assist to keep body up but away from pole

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Mid / lower Trapezius
- Deep Core and Rectus Abdominis
- Quadriceps and Hip flexors

Notes

Pole Sit Climb - Tutorial # 17

Exercise involves performing a pole Pull Up and Sit on pole plus a climb.

Description:

Pole Pull Up and Sit:

1. Facing pole with torso in contact with pole
2. Dominant arm grabs pole at 90 degree angle, other hand on top
3. Engaging shoulders and core pull body up on pole while lifting knees up to about hip height
4. Cross legs on pole, dominant leg on bottom.

Climb up:

1. Re-grab pole higher up, repeat pull up exercise while extending legs and bringing up on pole again

Come down:

1. Bring bottom (lower) foot behind pole with flexed foot
2. Uncross leg and extend down, keeping pole crossed at ankles
3. Gently loosen up grip and slide down to floor in a controlled manner, landing on balls of feet

Safety:

- Maintain good posture and do not allow shoulders to come up when reaching up for pole
- Do not jump up onto pole

Key Points:

- Skin needs to be exposed minimum from knee down
- Pull body up using upper back muscles

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Pectoralis
- Biceps Brachii
- Posterior Deltoid
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Rhomboids
- Leg Adductors
- Hip Flexors

X- Grab Climb - Tutorial # 16

Exercise will help strengthen leg muscles and practice climbing pole in a graceful manner.

Description:

1. Facing pole within walking circle, start movement with “extended leg body wave” both hands on pole about shoulder height (dominant at bottom)
2. Lift extended leg up with bent knee and place lower leg behind pole, crossing at ankle (slightly diagonal)
3. Flexed foot
4. Engage shoulders and core, pull body up using shoulders and arms muscles and place other leg on opposite side of pole, calf across pole, crossing at ankle
5. Squeeze pole between knees allowing legs to hold body up
6. Re-grab hand higher up on pole
7. Slide knees up about hip height
8. Push body away from pole an reposition pole back between knees
9. Tuck tail bone under, bring torso and chest to pole - Body wave up on pole
10. Gently loosen up grip and slide down to floor in a controlled manner

Safety:

- Maintain good posture and do not allow shoulders to come up when reaching up for pole
- Do not jump up onto pole

Key Points:

- Skin needs to be exposed minimum from knee down
- Pull body up using upper back muscles and push down with legs while squeezing pole
- Keep pole between the knees not thighs

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Pectoralis
- Biceps Brachii
- Posterior Deltoid
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Rhomboids
- Leg Adductors
- Gracilis & Hip Flexors
- Calf muscles

Lazy Boy Spin - Tutorial # 11

Advanced spin, requires bracket grip positioning (see shoulder strengthening exercises)

Description:

1. From Side Set Up, pole walk around pole three steps
2. On last step, outside hand reaches pole low on a bracket grip position
3. Engage top shoulder keeping wrist neutral at all times
4. Outside leg pushes off from behind reaching out to side
5. Body follows creating momentum reaching away from pole at all times
6. Legs come together with bent knee
7. Before landing on floor turn body towards pole and continue turning
8. Finish facing in opposite position than started

Safety:

- Do not hang from pole. Engage shoulders and core
- Top shoulder should carry most of body weight without putting any pressure on lower arm/wrist
- Wrists must be kept neutral at all times
- Hand placemat is slightly lower

Key Points:

- Bottom arm must reach pole low
- Body reaches away from pole at all times

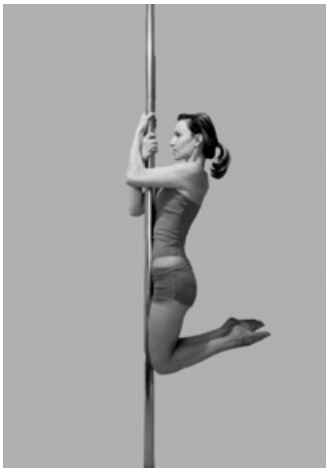
Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Mid / lower Trapezius
- Deep Core and Abdominals

Notes

c. Pole Fitness Strengthening and Conditioning

It is important for Beginners to exercise in general to develop strength and flexibility in the shoulders, arms, hands and core before moving onto spins. As a general rule, students must be able to hold their body up during a pole hold for a few seconds before beginning spinning exercises.

Pole Hold	
Strength building and control move which can also be used to asses student progress. **Description:** 1. Face pole with torso in contact, place one hand at head height, other directly above, palms facing inwards fingers wrapped around pole. Bottom arm al about 90-degree angle at elbow 2. Keep shoulders and core engaged; chest up; neutral wrists 3. Stand on toes; breathe in and lift feet off the ground by bending at knees while breathing out, hold and bring feet back down 4. Perform 10-15 repetitions, up to 3 sets. Alternate top hand 5. Work up to 5-second hold per repetition, with proper form **Safety:** – Do not jump into move; upper body should not move up or down; hold position while lifting the feet up – Do not release the shoulders: keep chest up and maintain scapula down and back **Variations:** – Lift one foot at a time, holding for one-second **Key Points:** – Starting on toes will prevent jumping – Do not grip excessively and focus on shoulder muscles to activate – Control both phases of movement **Main Muscles Worked:** – Latissimus Dorsi – Teres Major – Pectoralis – Biceps Brachii – Posterior Deltoid – Lower and Mid Trapezius – Rhomboids – Deep Core and Abdominals	 
Notes	

Pole Hold-Knees Up

Strength building and control move also used to assess student progress.

Description:

1. Face pole with torso in contact; place one hand at head height the other directly above, palms facing inwards fingers wrapped around pole. Bottom elbow should be at about 90-degree
2. Chest up, engage shoulders and core muscles
3. Breathe in and lift feet off the ground by bending at knees while breathing out. Progress to lift knees forward and up, thighs parallel to ground. When tired loosen grip and slide gently to floor keeping arm position
4. Perform 10-15 repetitions, up to 3 sets. Alternate top hand
5. Work up to 5-second hold per repetition, with proper form.

Safety:

- Do not jump into move; upper body should not move up or down; hold position while lifting the feet up
- Do not release the shoulders: keep chest up and maintain scapula down and back

Variations:

- To increase intensity and target Quadriceps bring knees up then extend in front***

***

Key Points:

- Starting on toes will prevent jumping
- Do not grip excessively and focus on shoulder muscles to activate
- Control both phases of movement
- Engaging deep core is key to lighten the legs

Major Muscles involved:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Pectoralis
- Biceps Brachii
- Posterior Deltoid
- Rhomdoids
- Deep Core Rectus Abdominis
- Hip Flexors

Notes

Pole Hold - Leg Abduction

Variation of Pole Hold that requires greater abdominal and quadriceps strength, and increased hip flexibility.

Description:

1. Face pole, with torso in contact. Place one hand at head height the other directly above, palms facing inwards fingers wrapped around pole. Bottom elbow should be at about 90-degree
2. Chest up, engage shoulders and core muscles
3. Breathe in and lift feet off ground by bending at knees while breathing out. Progress to lift knees forward and up and extend legs in front parallel to ground while breathing out
4. Open legs to side in transverse abduction
5. Slowly lower to floor while maintaining V position
6. Perform 10-15 repetitions, up to 3 sets. Alternate bottom hand

Safety:

- Do not jump into move; upper body should not move up or down; hold position while lifting the feet up
- Do not release the shoulders: keep chest up and maintain scapula down and back

Key Points:

- Starting on toes will prevent jumping
- Do not grip excessively and focus on shoulder muscles to activate
- Control both phases of movement
- Engaging deep core is key to lighten the legs

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Pectoralis
- Biceps Brachii
- Posterior Deltoid
- Rhomdoids
- Deep Core Rectus Abdominis
- Quadriceps and Hip Flexors
- Gluteus Medius and Minimus
- Tensor Fasciae Latae

Notes

Fireman Slides - Tutorial # 98

Strength building and grip control exercise

Description:

1. Face pole with torso in contact, place one hand at head height, other directly above, palms facing inwards fingers wrapped around pole. Aim for 90-degree angle at elbow
2. Keep shoulders and core engaged; chest up; neutral wrists
3. Stand on toes; breathe in and lift feet off the ground by bending at knees while breathing out.
4. Hold 5 seconds and loosen grip and slide gently to floor, always in control, maintaining shoulder and abdominal engagement
5. Perform 10-15 repetitions, up to 3 sets. Alternate top hand

Safety:

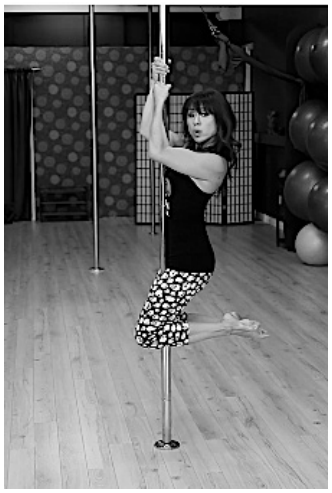
- Do not jump into move; upper body should not move up or down; hold position while lifting the feet up
- Do not release the shoulders: keep chest up and maintain scapula down and back even when sliding down

Key Points:

- Starting on toes will prevent jumping
- Do not grip excessively and focus on shoulder muscles to activate
- Control both phases of movement

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Pectoralis
- Biceps Brachii
- Posterior Deltoid
- Lower and Mid Trapezius
- Rhomboids
- Deep Core and Abdominals



Notes

Pole Single Arm Rowing

Description:

1. Face pole slightly off centre standing to one side of pole and keeping arm-distance away.
2. Place hand that is closest to pole at shoulder height, fingers wrapped around, thumb up and wrist neutral
3. Lean back until arm is fully extended
4. Keep shoulders and core engaged; chest up; spine in neutral alignment
5. Avoiding any twisting of body using upper back and arm muscles, slowly pull back to straight position
6. Perform 15-20 repetitions per arm, up to 3 sets

Safety:

- Do not lock your elbows
- Ensure spine remains neutral

Variations:

- Start with both hands on pole

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Posterior Deltoid
- Rhomboids
- Mid-Trapezius
- Biceps Brachii
- Teres Major
- Deep core muscles

Notes

Pole Triceps Push

Description:
1. Face pole slightly off centre standing to one side of pole and keeping arm-distance away
2. Place hand that is closest to pole at chest height, fingers wrapped around, thumb up and wrist neutral
3. Keep shoulders and core engaged; chest up; spine in neutral alignment
4. With the body square to pole, lean forward and slowly push body back to a straight position using triceps and chest. Avoid twisting body
5. Perform 15-20 repetitions per arm, up to 3 sets

Main Muscles Worked:
- Triceps Brachii
- Pectoralis
- Deep Core muscles

Pole Leg Drop

Description:
1. Lie on back with head at pole, reach back and grab pole at head height
2. Engage abdominals and keep back pressed into floor
3. Extend legs and lift at 90-degree angle in slow controlled manner
4. Slowly lower legs while maintaining the abdominals engaged. Do not rest legs on floor
5. Perform 15-20 repetitions, up to 3 sets

Safety:
- Avoid arching lower back

Variations:
- Lower one leg at a time
- Place pole beside the neck

Main Muscles Worked:
- Lower Abdominals
- Deep Core muscles
- Hip Flexors

Notes

Pole Bridge - Walk Out

Description:
1. Face away from pole resting top of one shoulder on pole
2. Grab pole beside neck with both hands thumb down. Head is beside pole and bottom hand should be same as shoulder pole is resting on
3. Engage deep core muscles and slowly start walking feet out keeping body straight and slide down to floor
4. Practice on both shoulders

Safety:
- Keep neutral spine by engaging deep core muscles and lower back muscles
- Use your hands to decrease pressure on the shoulder

Main Muscles Worked:
- Deep Core
- Rectus Abdominis
- Erector Spinae
- Quadriceps
- Hamstrings

Pole Squat

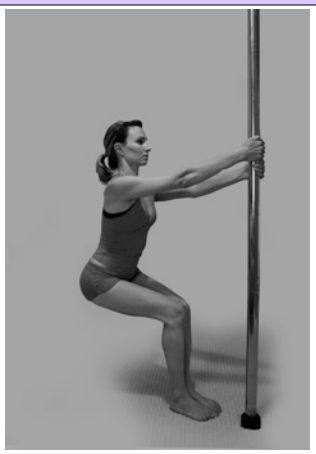
Description:
1. Face pole, standing hip-width distance away
2. Grip pole with both hands at chest height, feet hip-width apart and toes pointing forward
3. Engage shoulders, chest up, and sit back into squatting until thighs are parallel to the floor
4. Hold 3 to 5 seconds and return to standing
5. Perform 15-20 repetitions, up to 3 sets

Variations:
- Stand on toes to challenge balance and target calf muscles
- Single leg squat: extend one leg up to increase intensity ***

Safety:
- Knees must not pass 90-degree angle

Key Points:
- Lean back as far as possible to fully activate Glutes
- Keep chest up and do not hag from pole

Main Muscles Worked:
- Quadriceps
- Gluteus Maximus
- Hamstrings
- Gastrocnemious / Calf muscles



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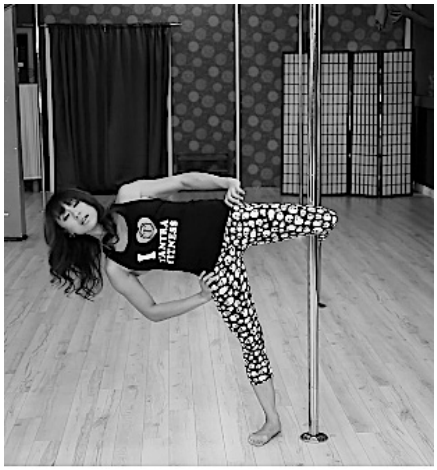
Knee Hold Side Crunch - Tutorial # 99

This exercise requires a fair amount of hip flexibility.

Description:

1. Stand beside pole, chest up, neutral spine, hips width-distance
2. Place inside hand high on pole.
3. Move outside foot about a foot away from base of pole
4. Engage deep core, lean body away from pole and hook pole with inside leg hip-height, at knee pit
5. Bottom knee is soft but extended (not locked)
6. Remove inside hand from pole and place on hips; use core muscles to keep balance
7. Extend body sideways and down, bringing outside shoulder towards floor without twisting or turning body. Keep body facing forward at all times and in alignment with pole
8. Bring body back up and squeeze Obliques crunching to other side between hip and rib cage
9. Perform 10-15 repetitions per side. Complete up to 3 sets



Safety:

- Bottom knee in never locked
- Control both phases of movement
- If pain is felt in lower back ensure proper abdominal engagement and avoid arching spine and lower leg on pole
- Do not squeeze pole too tightly with inside leg; hook and lean away

Variations:

- To increase intensity step inside foot closer to base of pole
- To further increase intensity, extend one arm out
- For highest level of difficulty extend both arms out

Key Points:

- Do not push hips back or forward; maintain a straight line from shoulders to knee
- Focus on isolating Obliques and deep core muscles

Main Muscles Worked:

- The Obliques
- Deep Core muscles
- Quadriceps and Hamstrings and legs muscles as supporting muscles
- Gastrocnemious / Calf muscles / Tibialis Anterior, also as supporting assisting muscles

Notes

Side Pole Knee Ups

Description:

1. Stand beside pole with torso only inches away. Place inside arm on pole at head-height, fingers up, with pole resting close to armpit
2. Outside arm grabs pole above inside hand with elbow pointing forward
3. Neutral wrists
4. Engage shoulders back and down, chest up
5. Engage core muscles and lift knees towards chest
6. Hold for a few seconds and release without losing body positioning
7. Perform 15-20 repetitions, and switch sides. Complete 2-3 sets

Safety:

- Keep hips in front of pole to avoid hitting against it
- Re-asses shoulders and core engagement between repetitions

Variations:

- For higher intensity do not touch floor between reps

Key Points:

- Engage core and lift hips forward in front of pole
- Lift chest up and maintain scapula down and back

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Posterior Deltoid
- Mid / lower Trapezius
- Pectoralis
- Biceps Brachii
- Deep Core and Abdominals
- Hip Flexors

Notes

Bracket Grip Intro - Shoulder Strengthening - Tutorial # 11

Advanced hand grip that allows participant to stay away from pole at all times. If performed incorrectly it can cause injuries. Extreme caution must be taken to follow all safety guidelines and step by step instruction. If unsure of how to perform correctly avoid bracket grips.

Description:

1. Sitting on floor with pole between legs, reach pole up with dominant arm
2. Non dominant arm reaches down low on pole, fully extended
3. Wrists are neutral
4. Engage top shoulders and lift hips off floor
5. Perform 15-20 repetitions, and switch sides. Complete 2-3 sets.

Safety:

- Bottom arm and wrist should not be carrying weight, if so practice shoulder engagement before continuing with exercise
- Ensure a neutral wrist at all times

Key Points:

- Engage shoulder and core, lift chest up

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Posterior Deltoid
- Mid / lower Trapezius
- Pectoralis
- Deep core and Abdominals

Notes

Bracket Grip & Shoulder Strengthening- Tutorial # 147

Advanced hand grip that allows participant to stay away from pole at all times. If performed incorrectly it can cause injuries. Extreme caution must be taken to follow all safety guidelines and step by step instruction. If unsure of how to perform correctly avoid bracket grips.

Description:

1. Sitting mid-back on a chair or body ball up close to pole maintaining distance between body and pole
2. Dominant arm reaches up high on pole
3. Engage shoulders muscles, core and abdominals and slightly lift body up pulling down into shoulder joint. This can be practiced as a shoulder strengthening exercise alternating top arm.
4. Add Bracket Grip position by reaching low with other arm
5. Lift body once again by engaging top shoulder, keeping bottom shoulder strong in neutral line to bottom hand, and activating deep core and abdominals
6. Lastly lift both feet up off floor ensuring neutral arms and wrist and no weight is carried by bottom arm

Safety:

- Bottom arm and wrist should not be carrying weight, if so practice shoulder engagement before continuing with exercise
- Ensure a neutral wrist at all times
- **If any drop of weight is felt when lifting feet of floor participant is not ready for Bracket Grips**

Key Points:

- Engage shoulders and core, tucking tailbone under and lifting chest up
- Do not perform if unsure of proper technique or if weight-tension is felt on bottom arm

Main Muscles Worked:

- Latissimus Dorsi
- Teres Major
- Posterior Deltoid
- Mid / lower Trapezius
- Pectoralis
- Deep Core and Abdominals

Notes

Shoulder Mount Pull Ups - Tutorial # 100

Introduction to shoulder mount ; Advanced Core Training exercise

Description:

Level 1:

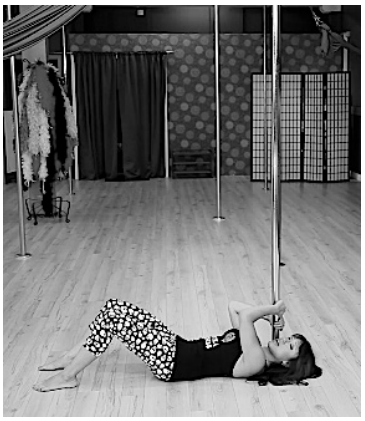
1. Lying on floor with pole above dominant shoulder
2. Dominant hand grabs pole with "Cup Grip"- all fingers to same side of pole, thumb down
3. Opposite hand grabs pole above it, Cup Grip.
4. Feet flat on floor with bent knees, engage shoulders lifting chest up and squeezing scapula; elbows close to body
5. Engage core and abdominals, spine is flat on floor
6. Keeping all of the above, bring knees towards chest, extend legs out to side into V-straddle position and continue to lift hips and torso off floor as far as possible without putting pressure on neck
7. Hold; bring body back to floor in a controlled motion, one vertebra at a time, lower hips, bend knees and place feet on floor gently
8. Perform 15-20 repetitions on each side

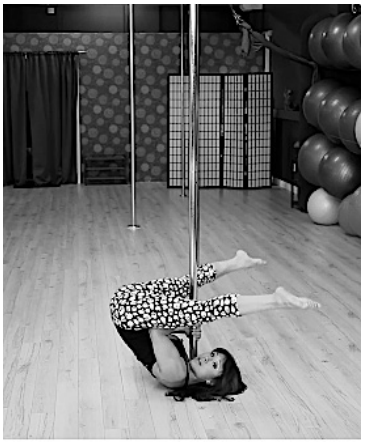
Level 2:

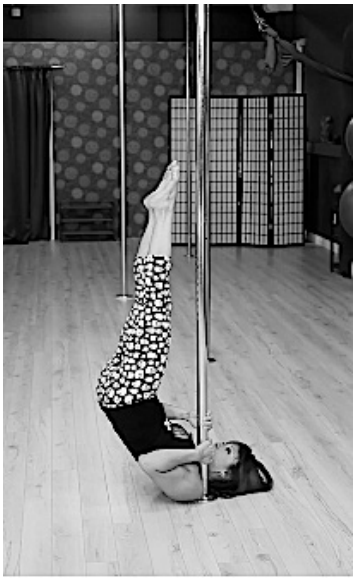
1. Lying on floor with pole above dominant shoulder
2. Dominant hand grabs pole with "Cup Grip" - all fingers to same side of pole, thumb down
3. Opposite hand grabs pole above it, Cup Grip.
4. Bring knees above hips and extend legs up
5. Engage shoulders, lifting chest up and squeezing scapula; elbows close to body
6. Engage core and abdominals, spine is flat on floor
7. Keeping all of the above, lift hips and legs straight up and off floor, towards ceiling with pointed toes, without passing pole line
8. Hold; bring body back to floor in a controlled motion, one vertebra at a time, lower hips to floor gently
9. Perform 15-20 repetitions on each side

Level3:

1. Sitting in front of pole, facing away, rest dominant shoulder on pole with head to opposite side.
2. Body should be no higher than a 45 degree angle with floor.
3. Dominant hand grabs pole with "Cup Grip"- all fingers to same side of pole, thumb down
4. Opposite hand grabs pole above it, Cup Grip.
5. Engage shoulders, lifting chest up and squeezing shoulder blades
6. Engage core and abdominals
7. Lift hips off floor, bringing keens towards chest
8. Hold; bring body back to floor in a controlled motion, one vertebra at a time, lower hips to floor gently, place feet on floor
9. Perform 15-20 repetitions on each side



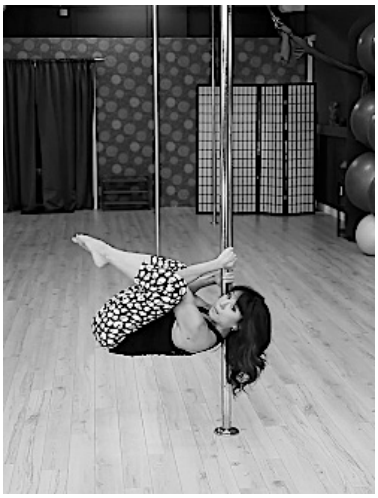




Safety:
- Pole resting on upper Trapezious muscle, not on shoulder joint or other bony structure; ensure skin grip. Head is to opposite side, neutral neck
- Do not use momentum by swinging the legs forcefully towards pole or pushing off with feet; allow core, abdominals and shoulder muscles to bring body off floor
- Do not drop down but control down phase

Key Points:
- Look up to pole, where body will reach pole
- Maintaining shoulder and core-abdominal engagement the entire exercise
- Elbows must stay close to body
- Do not allow shoulders to come up and tense

Main Muscles Worked:
- Trapezious
- Latissimus Dorsi
- Upper Pectoralis
- Deltoids
- Deep Core
- Rectus Abdominis
- Triceps / Biceps
- Hip flexors



Jackknife Sit-Ups - Tutorial # 131

Do not attempt this exercise standing up on feet - standing up version in only suitable for advanced pole fitness levels.

Description:
1. Lying on floor with pole between legs, up close to body
2. Extend both legs and cross behind pole, at the ankles
3. Extend both arms in front
4. Engage deep core and abdominals, spine flat against floor
5. Sit up towards pole and attempt to reach toes
6. Roll back down in controlled manner, one vertebra at a time
7. Perform 15-20 repetitions. Complete 2-3 sets.

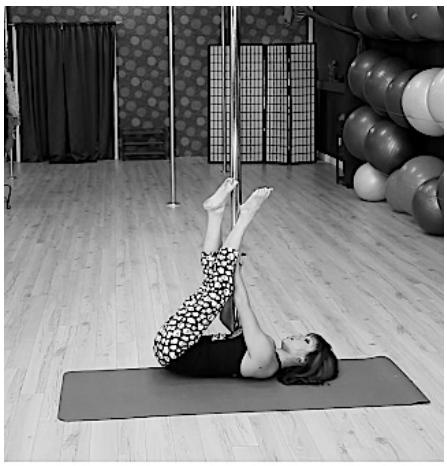
Safety:
- Do not use arms or head to create momentum to lift off floor
- Keep neck neutral and shoulder relaxed
- Do not practice from standing

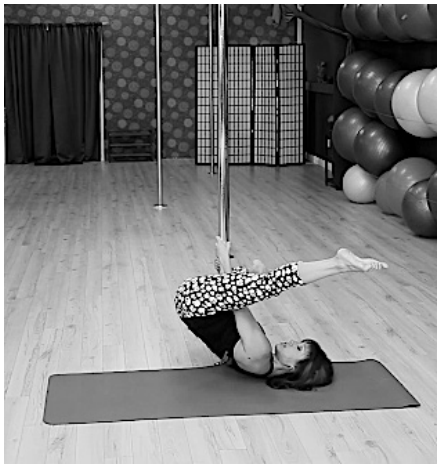
Main Muscles Worked:
- Deep core and Abdominals

Notes

Inversion Exercise - Tutorial # 95

Do not attempt this exercise standing up on feet - standing version in only suitable for advance pole fitness levels.





Description:

1. Lying on floor facing up with pole under armpit about chest level, feet flat on floor
2. Extend outside leg up and hook ankle on pole, place opposite leg on other side of pole into X grab (pole between legs crossing at ankles), toes pointed
3. Outside hand grabs pole about mid calf muscles inside hand just below
4. Engage core, pull shoulders back and down into scapula
5. Pull down strongly on pole, squeeze inner thing, glutes and bring legs and hips as high as possible on pole
6. Slowly lower hips and legs while maintaining the abdominals engaged. Do not rest legs on floor and repeat
7. Perform 15-20 repetitions, up to 3 sets

Safety:

- Avoid arching lower back
- Do not put any pressure on neck
- Do not practice from standing

Variations:

- For higher intensity extend legs out into V-straddle position, back into x-grab and release down
- For advanced variation lower legs in V-straddle position during release phase

Main Muscles Worked:

- Lower Abdominals
- Deep Core muscles
- Hip Flexors
- Inner thigh muscles and Glutes

6. Trouble Shooting

The following chart lists common problems for most momentum spins and a solution to fix them. However, ninety percent of the cases the problem is due to not reaching out with the body enough.

Problem	Solution
Holding on too tight	Cup the pole, check for dry/sweaty hands, lift a finger, engage the shoulders to take the pressure off the hands, keep arms straight, push the heal of the hand forward.

Ending too close to the pole	Engage the core, continue reaching out, start with the arms lower, resist gravity, and keep arms straight.
Not making it all the way around	Keep arms straight, engage the core, keep reaching out, don't hold on too tight, and keep the hips far away from the pole.
Hitting the pole with the legs	Keep the knees soft, keep pulling the hips back, don't plant the feet, and keep the knees slightly open.
Stepping over top	Keep pulling back in the hips, keep the head down.

7. Combinations and choreography

Pole Fitness often translates into Pole Dance that reflects the individuality and uniqueness of each dancer. Moves start to flow with the music and appear to be effortless. Pole Fitness becomes and art, a way of self-expression where women can find comfort in their own sensuality and gracefulness.

Artistry is not simple task; it requires many things to take place at once and for some it can be difficult to find inspiration. Artistry will allow one to find their own style, incorporating individual personality into Pole Fitness; truly connecting with body and senses.

"Dance is the hidden language of the soul" ~Martha Graham

When creating a dance or exercise routine pattern, several moves can be included not only to assist with body positioning for the next move (smoothly), but also to give the body a few seconds to recover from the high energy – powerful moves that Pole Fitness involves. These moves are called transition moves and many are listed in chapter 6.

However, Pole Fitness exercises can be linked together without any transition. The following are only a few examples:

- Momentum Spin into Pirouette into back bend
- Chair Spin into Inside Leg Hook forward spin
- Chair Spin into Backward spin
- Chair Spin into Backward Pinwheel Spin

Use creativity and proper technique to create your own combos!

Tutorial 10 - Pole Combo # 1 gracefully links the following moves:

- Pole Walk into Back Spin
- Pole Walk into Back Slide
- Pole Walk into Fireman Spin
- Pole Walk into Back Bend with Kick

Chapter 9: Cross Training & Flexibility

Complementary Cross Training & Flexibility Training

Cross training and Flexibility training exercises should be incorporated in a class. The following are suggested exercises, which compliment Pole Fitness. However, other exercises that follow fitness industry safety guidelines and fall within the fitness Professional scope of practice may be included.

1. Cross Training

Cross training ensures a balanced exercise program is achieved. It will assist participants to further gain strength and stamina needed for advance Pole Fitness levels.

Due to gravity, flexibility or stiffness, naturally stronger muscles and poor body mechanics, certain muscles become elongated and weak while others are shortened and tight. Fitness leaders must encourage class participants (and themselves) to maintain good posture.

Optimum balance requires equal strength on both sides of the joints. The cross training component of a class is used to focus on muscles that might be under-utilized during a Pole Fitness class.

As a general guide to work on, muscles, which tend to be strongest or dominant, are:

Musle	Action
Biceps Brachii	Flexes and supinates elbow joint
Upper Trapezious	Elevates scapula (as in shoulder shrugs)
Rhomboids	Pulls scapula up
Quadriceps Femoris	Extends knee
Vastus Lateralis	Part of the Quadriceps Femoris group (keeps knee cap in place)
Iliopsoas	Main hip flexor
Gluteus Medius	Leg abductor
Erector Spinae	Lumbar area (when too tight causes hyperextension of back)
Hamstrings	Flexes knee and extends hip.

Muscles on the body that tend to be elongated and/or weak are:

Muscle	Action
Triceps Brachii	Extends shoulder and elbow
Middle / lower Trapezius	Pulls scapula down and together
Gluteus Maximus	The biggest muscle in body
Gluteus Medius	Hip abductor
Hamstrings	Usually overly tight
Vastus Medialis	One of quadriceps Femoris muscles. (Keeps patella (knee cap) in place)
Serratus Anterior	Stabilizes scapula (weak Serratus causes the scapula to flair out)
Transverse Abdominis	(Second to Multifidus to activate for deep core stabilization)

Here are just a few ideas to incorporate to a Pole Fitness Class. Choose cross training exercises that compliment the class to provide maximum workout.

Basic Plank

Isometric hold; full body activation and deep core training.

Description:

1. Lie face down on mat resting on forearms, palms flat on floor
2. Push off floor, raising up onto toes and resting on elbows
3. Keep spine neutral and stay straight from head to heels
4. Tilt pelvis and contract deep core to prevent hips from sticking up in the air or sagging down in middle
5. Hold 20 to 60 seconds, lower and repeat for 3-5 reps

Main Muscles Worked:

- Deep Core muscles
- Abdominals
- Lower back / Erector Spinae
- Supporting leg muscles
- Shoulder Muscles

Notes

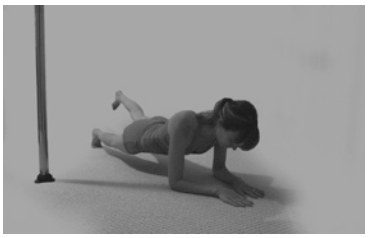
Side Planks

Description:
1. Lie on side with only hips, legs and forearm touching floor
2. Place forearm in front of body on mat
3. Top hand either palm down on mat or on hip
4. Top leg directly on top of bottom leg; lift hips up
5. Hold a few seconds and lower body
6. Repeat 10-20 x in good form, up to 3 sets
7. Switch sides

Main Muscles Worked:
- Deep Core
- Internal and External Obliques
- Quadratus Lumborum
- Chest and shoulder muscles

Heel Up Plank

Description:
1. Lie face down on mat resting on forearms, palms flat on floor
2. Push off floor, raising up onto toes and resting on elbows
3. Keep spine neutral and stay straight from head to heels
4. Tilt pelvis and contract deep core to prevent hips from sticking up in the air or sagging down in middle
5. Hold and find balance. Lift one heel up with an extended leg and hold
6. Bring leg back, and repeat with other
7. Keep alternating legs, 16-20 x up to 3 sets



Safety:
- We aware of small ROM for hyper-extension of hips: do not twist and arch back in order to raise heel higher up; movement should be small.

Main Muscles Worked:
- Deep Core
- Abdominals and lower back muscles
- Hamstrings and Gluteus Maximus

Notes

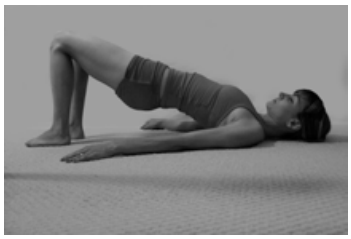
Bridge Hip Extensions

Description:

1. Lie flat on back and bend knees so feet are flat on floor
2. Raise buttocks and lower back off floor and push upwards. Squeeze glutes
3. Head, shoulders, upper back and feet will remain flat on floor
4. Hold two seconds and slowly lower to starting position

Main Muscles Worked:

- Gluteus Maximus
- Hamstrigns
- Lower back muscles
- Deep Core



Single Leg Bridge Hamstrings

Description:

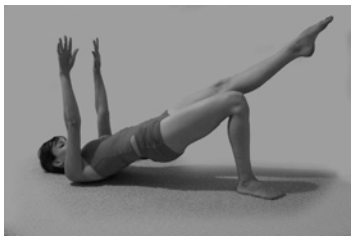
1. Lie on back with hands at sides, knees bent and feet flat on floor under knees
2. Engage deep core muscles
3. Raise hips up to create straight line from knees to shoulders
4. Slowly raise and extend one leg out while keeping pelvis raised and level
5. Goal is to maintain straight line from shoulders to extended leg and hold for 20 to 30 seconds

Safety:

- If hips sag or drop, place leg back on floor and do a double leg bridge until strength builds

Main Muscles Worked:

- Hamstrings
- Gluteus Maximus
- Lumbar Extensors
- Deep Core



Notes

Push Ups

Description:
1. Lie face down on floor. Place palms down at shoulder level, fingers pointing forward
2. Push up until body weight rests only on palms and toes. Keep neutral spine by engaging deep core muscles
3. Lower to starting position and repeat

Variations:
- Lower intensity by starting from knees
- To accent chest: place hands wider than shoulder-width
- To target back and Triceps: bring your hands close together with thumbs and index fingers touching

Safety:
- Maintain neutral spine and do not let head drop down

Main Muscles Worked:
- Pectoralis Major
- Triceps Brachii
- Deltoids
- Deep core and Abdominals

Scissor Jumps

Description:
1. Stand with one leg forward and other leg extended behind, toes on floor, chest up and neutral spine
2. Assume lunge position by bending front knee dipping toward floor.
3. Place arms straight out in front or to the sides
4. Swiftly jump up and switch legs in midair in a motion like a scissor and lunge down
5. Perform 16-20 reps, up to 3 sets

Safety:
- Land softly
- Keep thighs parallel to ground on way down and knees above the ankles.

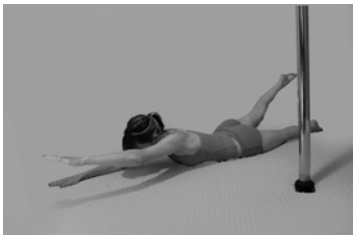
Main Muscles Worked:
- Quadriceps
- Hamstring
- Gluteus Maximus

Notes

Back Extensions

Description:
1. Lie on stomach, facedown, arms straight out in front, palms down
2. Contract abdominals
3. Lift left arm and right leg one inch off floor, and stretch out
4. Hold position for five slow counts and lower
5. Repeat with right arm and left leg
6. Repeat continuously, 16-20 Repetitions, up to 3 sets

Main Muscles Worked:
- Lower back muscles / Erector Spinae
- Hamstrings and Gluteus Maximus



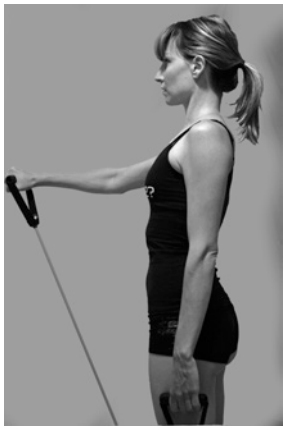
Front Deltoid Raise (*tubing required*)

Description:
1. Anchor tubing under feet, stand hip-width apart with strong, tall posture
2. Firmly hold tube in hands and raise arms to front until horizontal with ground
3. Lower and repeat

Variation:
- Adjust intensity by lengthening / shortening tubing

Safety:
- Maintain proper posture and activate deep core muscles
- Do not allow body to shift as lifting arms. If so, tension might be too strong

Main Muscles Worked:
- Deltoid, Anterior
- Pectoralis Major
- Serratus Anterior
- Trapezious
- Rectus Abdominis



Notes

Side Deltoid Raise (*tubing required*)

Description:
1. With tubing in right hand, step on tubing with right foot. Maintain good posture and engage core
2. With palm facing floor, lift arm straight to side to shoulder height
3. Lower the handle down slowly as you resist the pull from the tubing
4. Perform 10-12 reps, up to 3 sets per arm

Variation:
- Adjust intensity by lengthening / shortening tubing

Safety:
- Be careful to maintain good form. Do not tip body sideways or arch back to lift

Main Muscles Worked:
- Mid-Deltoids
- Deep Core and Abdominals
- Obliques

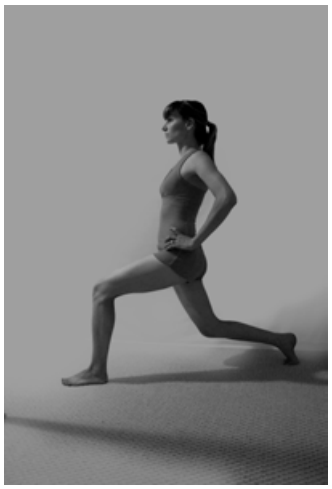
Traveling Lunges

Description:
1. Start with feet hip-width apart toes pointing forward
2. Chest up, shoulder engaged, back and down, neutral spine, core engaged
3. Using right leg, take step forward with knee in front of body
4. Bend right knee, keeping right foot flat on ground. Left heel will rise up
5. Lower body until right leg is parallel to ground, then raise your leg and bring left leg through until original standing position is resumed
6. Repeat lunging out across floor 12-15 reps, up to 3 sets

Variations:
- Focus on Hamstrings and Gluteus: Increase step forward and sit deeper into lunge
- Focus on Quadriceps: Take shorter steps

Safety:
- Keep thighs parallel to floor and do not allow knees to pass over ankles

Main Muscles Worked:
- Quadriceps
- Hamstring
- Gluteus Maximus
- Deep Core muscles



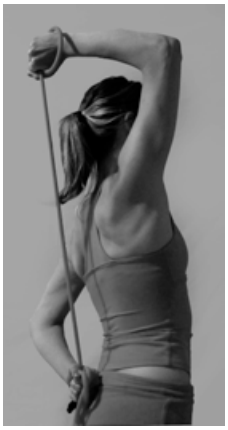
Triceps Overhead (*tubing required*)

Description:

1. Grip tubing with left hand and extend arm straight up, with tubing behind body touching back
2. Bend lift elbow, dropping hand behind head
3. Reach right hand behind back and grab loose end of tubing at about mid-back height
4. Holding right hand secure in place, extend left elbow, pulling tubing overhead
5. Lower left hand back behind head
6. Perform 10-15 repetitions, up to 3 sets per arm

Main Muscles Worked:

- Triceps Brachii



Shoulder External Rotation (*tubing required*)

Exercise will help strengthen the Rotator Cuff muscles thus helping prevent Pole Fitness injuries.

Description:

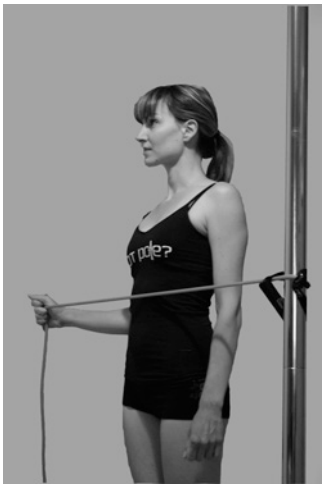
1. Secure one end of tubing on pole, at elbow height
2. Stand beside pole and grab other end with outside hand so tubing is extended
3. Bent elbow at 90-degree flexion and keep upper arm close to body
4. Externally rotate arm pulling tubing out and away from body
5. Make sure to control the movement at all times

Safety:

- Maintain good posture and do not allow shoulders to come up
- Tension should allow for comfortable rotation and control of movement

Main Muscles Worked:

- Infraespinatus
- Teres Minor



Notes

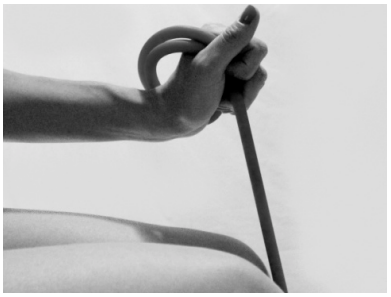
Wrist Extension (*tubing required*)

Wrist strengthening exercise to help prevent Pole Fitness injuries.

Description:
1. Sitting on a chair place one end of tubing band under foot
2. Wrap other end around palm and rest forearm on thigh with palm facing down
3. Keeping forearm flat on thigh, pull wrist back
4. Slowly return to starting position
5. Perform 10-20 reps, up to 3 set

Safety:
- Control movement times and gradually increase intensity

Main Muscles worked
- Extensor Digitorum
- Extensor Carpi Radialis
- Extensor Carpi Radialis Longus
- Extensor Carpi Ulnaris



Wrist Flexion (*tubing required*)

Wrist strengthening exercise to help prevent Pole Fitness injuries.

Description
1. Sitting on a chair place one end of tubing band under foot
2. Wrap other end around palm and rest forearm on thigh with palm facing up
3. Keeping forearm flat on thigh, curl wrist
4. Slowly return to starting position
5. Perform 10-20 reps, up to 3 sets

Main Muscles Worked
- Flexor Carpi Radlialis
- Flexor Carpi Ulnaris
- Flexor Digitorum

Rubber Band Finger Extension

Exercise to strengthen hand and wrist muscles.

Description:
1. Bring fingertips together and places a rubber band around them
2. Move fingers apart against resistance of band
3. Hold for 2-3 seconds, rest and repeat

Main Muscles Worked
- Extensor Digitorum
- Extensor Pollicis

2. Flexibility Training

General guidelines:

- Always ensure stretching is part of the exercises routine.
- A slow and gentle stretch is most appropriate
- The ideal time to stretch is right after the fitness class: muscles are fully warm by then and stretching will aid in removing lactic acid
- Always ensure proper alignment: a slight change in body positioning will cause to stretch different muscles.
- Recent studies have shown that repeating a stretch two or three times will cause the muscles to relax and elongate more than with only one repetition.
- Strength training combined with flexibility training can help improve posture and prevent injuries: by strengthening weak muscles and lengthening short ones proper body balance can be achieved.
- Ballistic (bouncing) stretches are out!
- Studies suggest that static holds of 15-30 seconds are shown to be most effective and safe types of stretching. As Flexibility improves, stretches may be held up to a minute.
- Never stretch cold muscles!
- Don't stretch to the point of pain, stay within the normal Range of Motion of the joints.
- Always stretch both sides of the body equally.

All major muscles groups worked during class must be stretched. Close attention should be paid to upper the back and shoulder muscles, arm, wrist and hand muscles, as they are in constant use during most pole work.

Side Pole Stretch

To stretch shoulders, muscles alongside of torso, especially the Latissimus Dorsi, and alongside of the hips.

Description:

1. Standing beside pole, hip-with distance away, grip pole with outside hand overhead, thumb up
2. Inside hand comes across body and should be place at shoulder height with fingers pointing up and forearm resting on pole
3. Keeping the hips over feet bring top hand lower and slowly lean out to side pushing hips away from pole

Safety:

– Do not hang from pole; allow stretch to safely stay “in joint”

Variation:

– Increase intensity by placing inside hand lower down on pole, fingers pointing down or by stepping closer to pole with top hand lower, as this will allow stretching further out (photo)

Back Pole Stretch

Stretch for shoulders, arms, back of torso; lower back, Gluteus and Hamstrings.

Description:

1. Face pole hip-width distance away, grip with both hands at chest height
2. While staying square with pole, slowly breath out and push hips out back keeping knees extended

Safety:

– Do not hang from pole; keep joints in sockets while allowing muscles to be stretched

Variation:

– To increase the stretch in Hamstrings, bring the feet closer to the pole and repeat

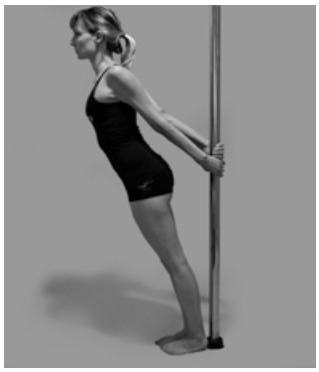
Notes

Front Pole Stretch

Effective stretch for the Anterior Deltoid.

Description:
1. Face away from pole with back resting against pole
2. Grab pole with both hands behind at hip height
3. Maintaining a neutral spin, slightly lean forward stretching the chest and arm muscles

Safety:
- Adjust hands as necessary



Walk Down / Up Pole Stretch

A variation of the Back Pole Stretch to lengthen back of shoulders, arms, back of torso, Gluteus and back of legs, specially Hamstrings.

Description:
1. Face pole hip-width distance away, grip with both hands at head height
2. While staying square with pole, slowly breathe out and walk hands down pole while pushing hips out back and keeping spine straight and knees extended
3. Continue walking hands down; avoid rounding back

Safety:
- Do not hang from the pole; keep joint in socket while allowing muscles to be stretched.

Chest Stretch

Effective stretch for Pectoralis Major.

Description:
1. Stand beside pole and place inside elbow at shoulder height on pole, with fingers pointing up. Forearm will be resting on pole
2. Take a small step forward while keeping arm in place, slightly behind you

Safety:
- Do not allow shoulder to rise up; elbow should not be higher than shoulder height.

Gluteus with Pole Stretch

Effective stretch for Gluteus Maximus.

Description:
1. Face pole hip-width distance away, grab with both hands at chest height
2. With toes pointing forward, bring right foot up and over left leg and rest it on top of the left knee
3. Sit back as in a pole squat
4. Keep the right hip open to side

Safety:
- Keep grounded knee above ankle

Variation:
- To add upper back stretch lean away and back from pole with extended elbows
-

Hip Flexors / Quadriceps Stretch

Effective stretch for Quadriceps and Hip Flexors.

Description:
1. Face pole and place one hand at chest-height on pole for support
2. Keep knees together, bend one knee and grab top of foot from behind, and slightly bring knee backwards stretching the hips
3. Supporting knee should be soft, and hips pressed forward

Safety:
- Avoid forceful pull on knee or aching back

Inner Thigh Stretch

Effective stretch for Hip Adductors.

Description:
1. Sit on floor, and open legs far out to side
2. Keep spine neutral and do not round back

Abdominal Stretch

Description:
1. Stand tall, take deep breath in and lift arms up above head
2. Keeping neutral spine reach as high as possible

Cat Stretch

Effective stretch for back of shoulders, back of torso and lower back muscles.

Description:
1. Start on all fours
2. Tuck head in towards chest, arch back and tuck hips in

Biceps Stretch

Effective stretch for Biceps Brachii.

Description:
1. Stand beside pole with the inside hand thumb down on the back of the pole at shoulder height
2. Take a small step forward, while arm is gently pulled back
3. Alternate sides

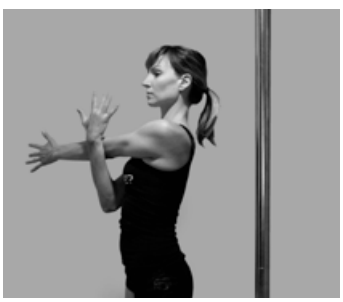
Variation:
- Without pole, simply turn thumb down and press arm back

Rear Deltoids Stretch

Effective stretch for Posterior Deltoid.

Description:
1. Extend right arm out front and bring straight across body towards opposite shoulder
2. With left hand push arm gently toward body

Safety:
- Keep shoulders down and relax



Trapeziuos

Effective stretch for Trapezius.

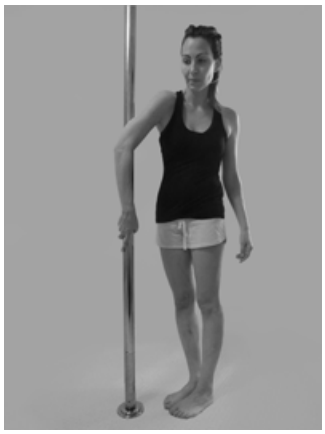
Description:
1. Bring chin to chest and turn head slightly to side for Superior Trapezius stretch
2. Pull arms forward and hold for Medial and Inferior Trapezious stretch

Rotator Cuff Stretch on Pole

Effective stretch for the Rotator Cuff Muscle Group

Description:
1. Stand facing pole
2. Bring right arm across body at chest height, bend at elbow and grab pole on opposite side, fingers pointing down.
3. Elbow should be at about 90 degrees
4. Gently rotate body outwards to feel a slight stretch on the shoulder

Safety:
- Work within normal ROM and do not stretch too far

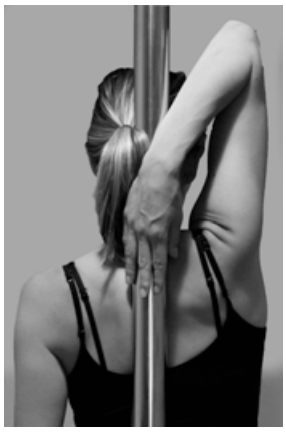


Triceps Stretch on Pole

Effective stretch for Triceps Brachii.

Description:
1. Face away from pole
2. With tall neutral spine lift one arm up and bend at elbow so hand is behind head, touching pole
3. Walk fingers down pole
4. Alternate arms

Safety:
- Do not use other hand to press elbow down as this can cause stress on arm ligaments



Calf Stretch

Effective stretch for Gastrocnemious muscle and back of calf.

Description:
1. Face pole, arm distance away
2. Maintaining a neutral spine, step one foot in front of pole, close to base
3. Bend front knee bringing body forward, while keeping back heel in contact with floor at all times

Wrist Flexors Stretch

Description:
1. Place one hand against wall, fingers pointing down, below shoulder height with arm extended
2. Using other hand spread fingers wide
3. Adjust height of the hand across the wall to vary intensity of the stretch

Wrist Extensors Stretch

Description:
1. Extend arms straight to palms down
2. Flex hands down towards floor

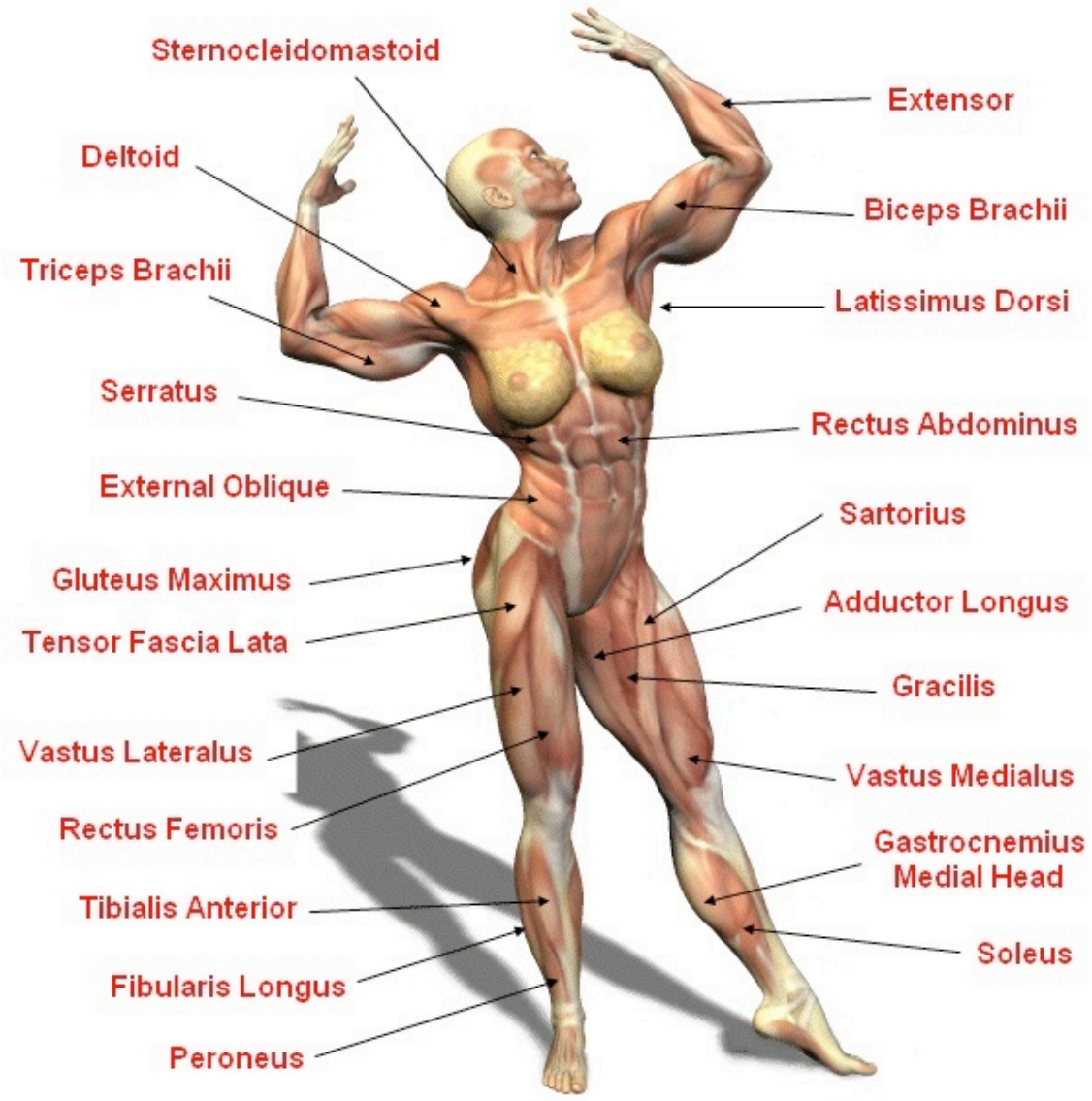
Hand Circles

Dynamic stretch for both, wrist flexors and extensors.

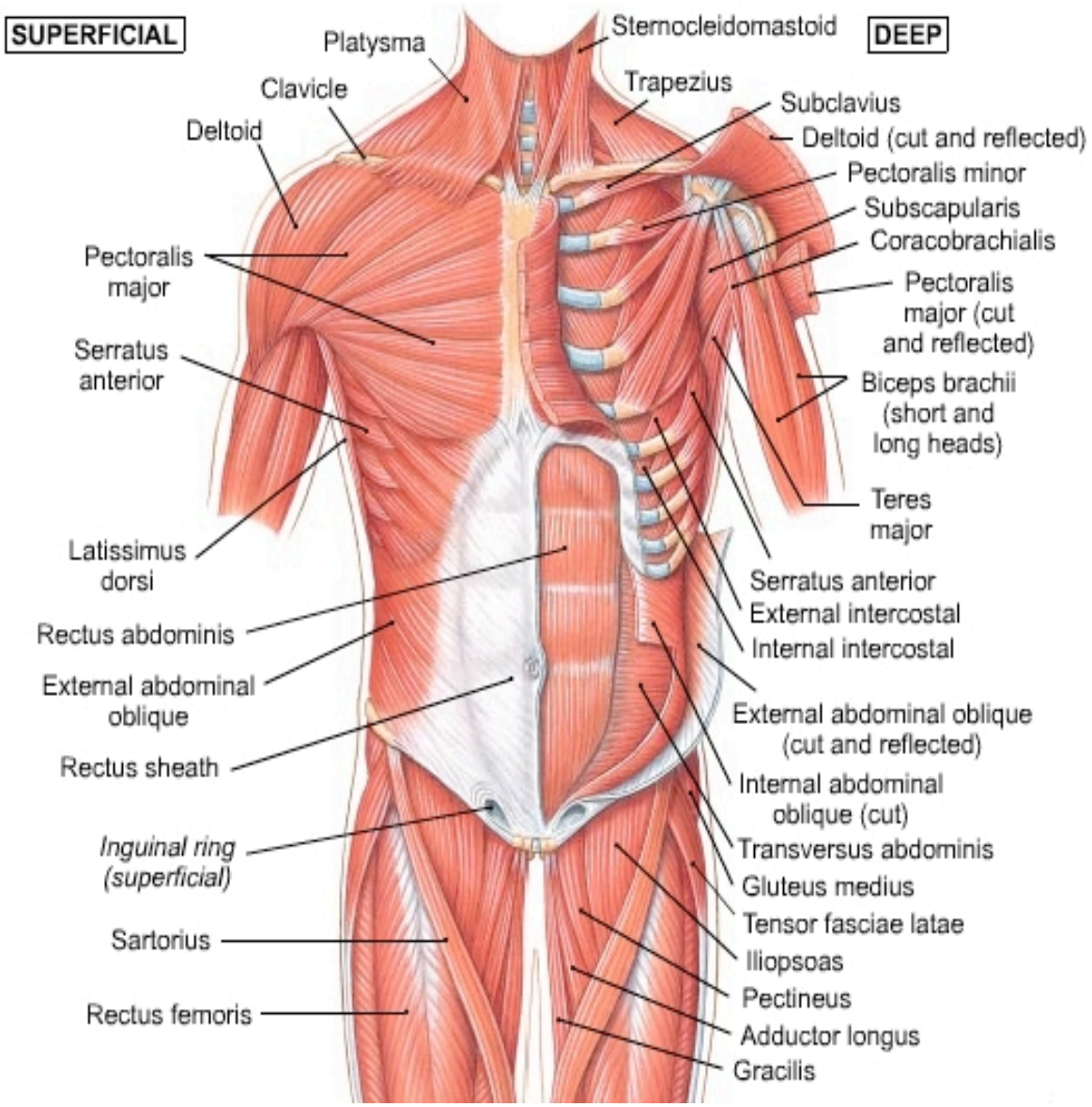
Description:
1. Extend arms straight out front and gently circle hands in both directions

Appendix 1: Muscle Reference Guide

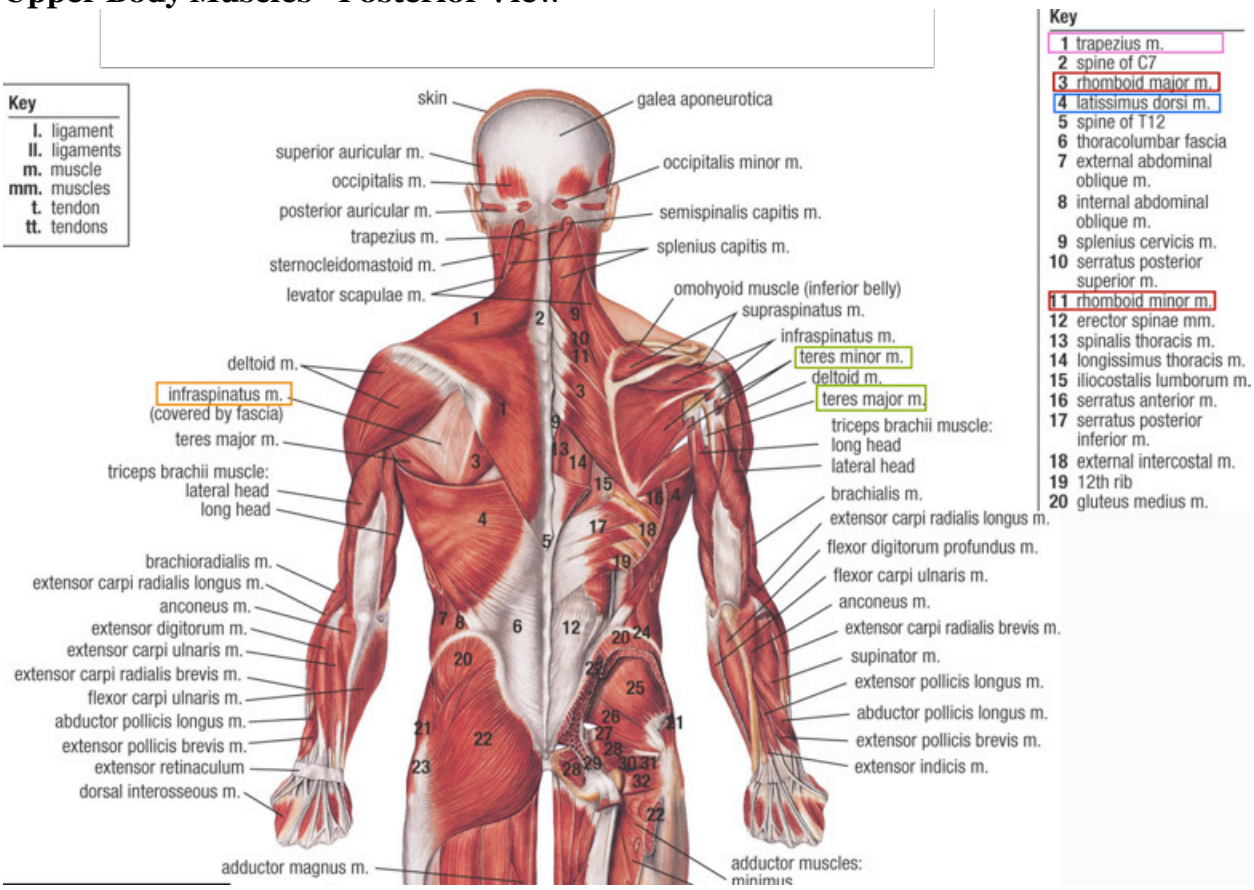
Female Front Muscle Anatomy



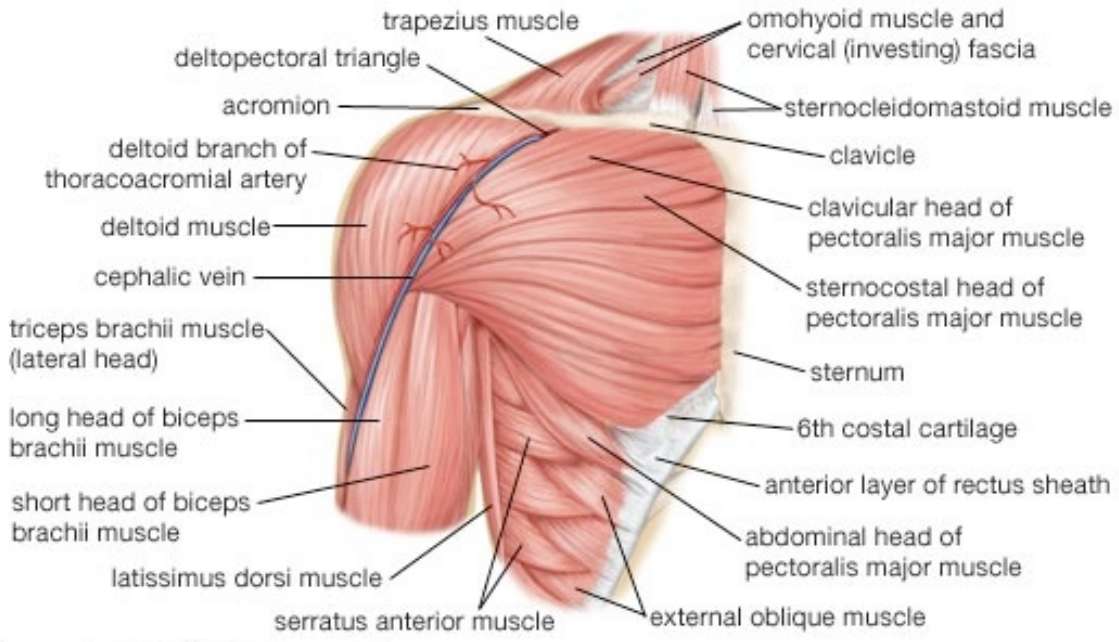
Upper Body Muscles - Anterior View



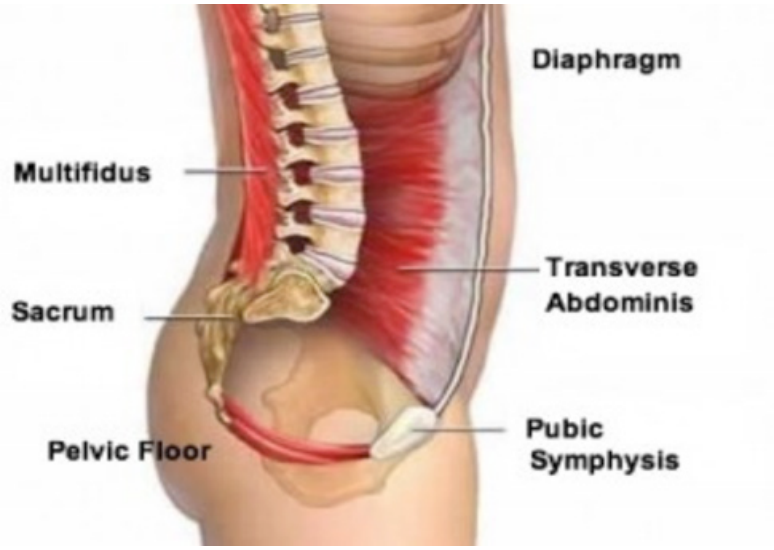
Upper Body Muscles - Posterior View



Muscles of the Shoulder – anterior view



Deep Core Muscles



Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms

Abductor: A muscle that upon contraction draws away from the middle.

Abrasion: A scraping away a portion of the skin or mucus membrane.

Active Stretching: A stretching of a muscle that requires muscle contraction through a range of motion. No outside force is applied.

Adductor: A muscle that draws a part towards the middle.

Adherence: The amount of a programmed exercise a client engages in during a specific time period compared to the amount of exercise recommended for that time period.

Aerobic: With, or in the presence of oxygen.

Anaerobic: Without the presence of oxygen; not oxygen required.

Antagonist: A muscle that counter-acts the action of another muscle.

Anterior: Anatomical term meaning toward the front; opposite of posterior.

Arthritis: Inflammatory condition involving a joint.

Asthma: A disease of the pulmonary system characterized by difficult breathing due to narrowing of bronchial smooth muscle and overproduction of mucus.

Biomechanics: The mechanical forces at work in a particular body or organ.

Body Composition: The makeup of the body in terms of relative percentage of fat-free mass and body fat.

Bolt: A metal bar or rod in the mechanism of a lock that is thrown or withdrawn by turning the key. / A fastener consisting of a threaded pin or rod with a head at one end, designed to be inserted through holes in assembled parts and secured by a mated nut that is tightened by applying torque.

Bursitis: Painful inflammation of a bursa, occurring most often in the knees, hips, shoulders and elbows.

Calorie: The amount of heat required to raise the temperature of one kilogram of water one-degree Celsius; also called kilocalorie.

Cardiovascular: Pertaining to the heart and small blood vessels.

Cartilage: A smooth, semi-opaque material take prevents friction on a joint.

Centrifugal Force: An apparent force that seems to pull a rotating or spinning object away from a centre

Contraction: the process of drawing up and thickening of a muscle fibre.

Code of ethics: Code, supplementary to other professional standards of practice developed by professional organizations to govern professional conduct.

Connective tissue: the tissue that binds together and supports various structures of the body (example, ligaments and tendons).

Core training: The progressive training of the musculature of the lumbo-pelvic-hip complex and/or the transversus abdominis, which has a central role in posture and in stabilising the lumbar spine.

Cross training: A method of physical training in which a variety of exercises and changes in body positions or modes of exercise are utilized to positively motivate and stimulate additional strength gains or reduce injury.

Diaphragm: The partition, of muscles and membranes that separates the chest cavity and the abdominal cavity.

Dehydration: A condition of having less than optimal amount of water in the body.

Diabetes: A disease of carbohydrate metabolism in which an absolute or relative deficiency of insulin results in inability to metabolize carbohydrates normally.

Elasticity: Temporary or recoverable elongation of connective tissue.

Electrolytes: The minerals sodium, potassium, and chlorine, which are present in the body as ions (electrically charged particles).

Essential nutrients: A nutrient that must be supplied by diet since it cannot be produced by the body.

Extension: Movement at a joint that brings two parts into a straight line increasing the angle of the joint.

Fascia: A sheet of band of fibrous tissue that lies deep to the skin or forms an attachment for muscles and organs.

Flexibility: The range of motion possible about a joint.

Flexion: movement about a joint in which bones on either side are brought closer to each other reducing the joint angle; opposite of extension.

Functional Training: A training model that involves exercises specifically designed to improve a client's performance of activities outside the training environment.

Glenoid Labrum: It is a ring of cartilage that deepens the Glenoid Fossa and acts as a cup, in which the Humerus rests, forming the Glenohumeral (or shoulder) joint.

Heart Disease: A structural or functional abnormality of the heart or of the blood vessels supplying the heart that impairs its normal functioning.

Hypertension: High blood pressure. A disease of the arteries caused by such pressure.

Hypothyroidism: A deficiency or the bodily condition resulting from a deficiency in the production of thyroid hormones by the thyroid gland, resulting in a slowing of the metabolic rate.

Impingement syndrome: Reduction of the space for the Supraspinatus muscle and /or the long head of the Biceps tendon to pass under the anterior edge of the Acromion and Coracoacromial ligament; attributed to muscle hypertrophy and inflammation caused by micro traumas.

Inversion (pole): To position the body upside down on the vertical bar.

Inhalation: The process of breathing in.

Isometric contraction: Static Contraction - The muscle generates force while the joint angle remains the same. Example: Pushing against an immovable object.

Isotonic contraction: Dynamic Contraction – The force causes movement at the joint. Type of contraction that occurs during most activities. Concentric phase (when the muscle shortens) and Eccentric phase (when the muscle lengthens).

Joint laxity: Lack of stability of a joint.

Joist: A joist, in architecture and engineering, is one of the horizontal supporting members that run from wall to wall, wall to beam, or beam to beam to support a ceiling, roof, or floor. It may be made of wood, steel, or concrete. Typically, a beam is bigger than, and is thus distinguished from, a joist. Joists are often supported by beams and are usually repetitive.

Lactic Acid: A waste product of anaerobic energy production known to localized muscle fatigue.

Lateral: Anatomical term meaning away from the midline of the body; pertaining to the side; opposite of medial.

LED lighting: Light emitting diodes are diodes (electronic components that let electricity pass in only one direction) that emit visible light when electricity is applied, much like a light bulb. When many LEDs are side-by-side, they can create pictures, such as the scrolling red LED signs found everywhere.

Ligament: A connective tissue that functions to connect two bones.

Medial: Anatomical term meaning towards the midline of the body; pertaining to the centre; opposite of lateral.

Mirroring: Imitating another's behaviour or attitudes.

Momentum: A quantity that expresses the motion of a body and its resistance to slowing down. It is equal to the product of the body's mass and velocity.

Motor Unit: A motor nerve and all the muscle fibres it stimulates.

Muscular Endurance: the capacity of a muscle to exert force repeatedly against resistance, or to hold a static contraction over time.

Muscular Strength: The maximum force that a muscle or muscle group can exert against resistance in a single contraction.

Muscle Tone: Refers to the amount of tension or resistance to movement in a muscle. Muscle tone is what enables us to keep our bodies in a certain position or posture.

Naids: Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, usually abbreviated to NSAIDs or NAIDs, but also referred to as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory agents / analgesics (NSAIAs) or non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory medicines (NSAIMs), are drugs with analgesic and antipyretic (fever-reducing) effects and which have, in higher doses, anti-inflammatory effects.

Negligence: A civil wrong (tort) causing injury or harm to another person or to property as the result of doing something or failing to provide a proper or reasonable level of care.

Neuromuscular: Pertaining to both nerves and muscles.

Osteoporosis: A disorder in which bone density decreases and susceptibility to fracture increases.

Overtraining: Constant intense training that does not provide adequate time for recovery.

Overuse Injury: an injury caused by activity that places too much stress on one area of the body over and extended period.

Phallus: A picture, sculpture, or other representation of a penis, especially one regarded as a symbol of the reproductive force of life.

Passive Stretch: A stretch in which the elastic components of the muscle are relaxed and the portion of muscle most likely to be loaded is the connective tissue.

Peripheral: Near the surface of an organ or the body.

POC: Points of contact where the pole comes in contact with the body.

Posterior: Anatomical term meaning toward the back; opposite of anterior.

Psychological: Relating to the mind or mental processes.

Range of Motion (ROM): The number of degrees that a joint will allow on of its segments to move.

Rheumatoid Arthritis: An autoimmune disease that causes inflammation of connective tissues and joints.

Rotation: The process of moving a body part around a central axis.

Scope of Practice: The range and limit of responsibilities normally associated with a specific job or profession.

Sprain: A traumatic twist of a joint that results in stretching or tearing of the stabilizing connective tissues; mainly involves ligaments or joints capsules, and causes dislocations, swelling and pain.

Stabilizing Muscles: Muscles that stabilize the joint.

Strain: A stretch, tear or rip in the muscle or adjacent tissue such as the fascia or tendon.

Stroke: A sudden and often severe attack due to blockage of an artery into the brain.

Sublingually: Used to describe medicines that are administered by being placed under the tongue to dissolve.

Superficial: External, located close to or on the body surface.

Synovial Fluid: Transparent, viscous lubricating fluid found in the joint cavities, bursae and tendon sheaths.

Tendinitis: Inflammation of a tendon.

Tendon: Strong, fibrous connective tissue that attaches a muscle to a bone.

Waiver: Voluntary abandonment of a right to file a suit; not always legally binding.

Appendix 3: Study Guide & Home Assignments

1. **Pole Fitness Theory**

- Define Pole Fitness.
- Describe in a few sentences the possible origins of Pole Fitness.
- Describe how is Pole Fitness a form of functional training.
- List seven Physiological benefits to Pole Fitness. Explain two.
- List two Psychological benefits to Pole Fitness and explain.
- Is Pole Fitness a weight training exercise? What are the muscular adaptations we can expect from it?
- What makes Pole Fitness a Core-Training workout? What are the benefits of having a well trained core?
- List the safety precautions to review prior to starting a class.
- Muscles of which body area are crucial during PF?
- Which body joints take the most stress during PF?
- What are the main general causes of injuries related to the activity?
- How could you prevent and avoid these injuries?
- Why is it important to exercise equally on dominant and non-dominant sides of the body?
- Describe proper body alignment and joint safety for the neck, shoulders, wrist, elbows and knees during pole work.
- How frequently should one participate in Pole Fitness?
- What are symptoms of overtraining?
- Why is PF generally not recommended for special populations? What about pregnancy and PF?
- List two different types of poles providing as much detail and variables as possible.
- How does a brass finish differ from stainless steel finish in terms of Pole Fitness training?
- What is the best pole for small hands? Inversions?
- What are the general equipment safety guidelines?
- List two accessories that can be used during PF? Would you recommend them? Why?
- Name two transition moves and describe their purpose.
- Describe Set Up position
- What is Momentum? How can momentum be safely achieved?

- Describe two momentum teaching exercises, step by step.
- What is absolutely not safe to do in order to get momentum?
- How does visualization help when learning new exercises?
- Why are short term Pole Fitness goals important to set?
- List two minor PF related injuries, common causes and brief description.
- List two major PF related injuries, common causes and brief description.
- List three Code of Ethics examples all instructors should adhere to.
- What does being a Participant centered and Professional PF instructor requires?
- What are the basic PF class components? Describe each one.
- Why is it important to include cross training in Pole Fitness classes?
- All major muscle groups must be properly stretched after class. Which ones require special attention?
- List two emerging trends in Pole Fitness.
- What can be done as PF instructors to further gain respect and legitimacy in the Fitness Industry?

2. Practical

- What are the two exercises that beginners must master, in order to progress with spins? List the muscles involved.
- Which areas of the body must receive extra attention during a whole body warm up for PF? Provide examples of adequate warm up exercises for that purpose.
- Describe three basic strength-training exercises for spinning.
- Develop a warm up routine that includes 4 exercises on the pole and 2 off the pole.
- List and describe how to properly perform 3 basic strengthening exercises for PF level 2 Class. What major muscles are being worked?
- Develop a cool down routine that includes stretching exercises for all major muscle groups, mainly done on the pole.
- What areas of the body must receive extra attention during a stretching segment? Explain why.
- Develop a step-by-step short routine that includes 4 spins and 2 transitions and floor work.

Provide with safety guidelines, proper body alignment cues, and major muscles worked.

Appendix 4: References and Suggested Reading

- Ace Personal Training Manual
- A Strong Core for Life, Sue Dumais
- Sports Core Series, Twist Conditioning
- Stretching, Christina M. Truscott
- Sportsinjutyclinic.net
- Canada Food Guide
- Tantra Fitness Tutorials
- Art of Pole 1 and 2 DVD series
- The Herbal Drugstore, Linda B.White, Steven Foster and the staff of Herbs for Health

