



## EXERCISE SHEET

Here are some exercises that you can practice in between sessions. Remember pain is the body's warning signal, any acute pain must not be ignored.

### **SPINE CURLS**

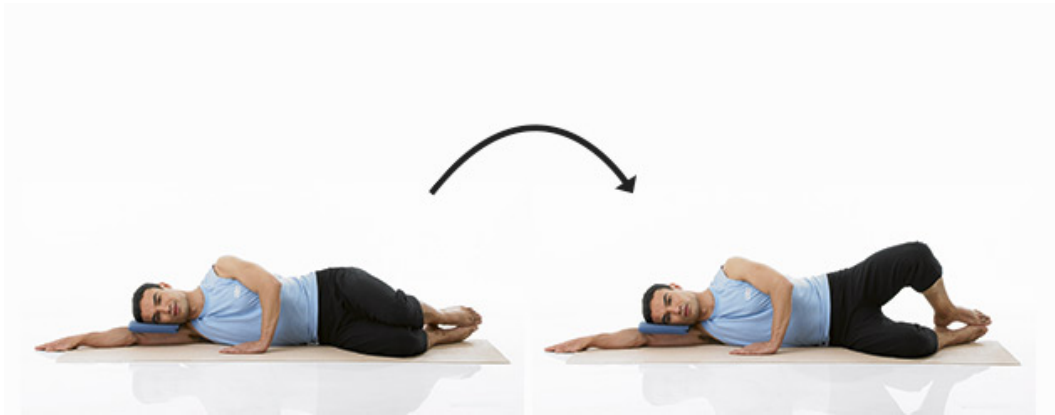
Wheeling the spine up to the tips of the shoulder blades. Soften through the breastbone and wheel the spine back down back into neutral before commencing again.



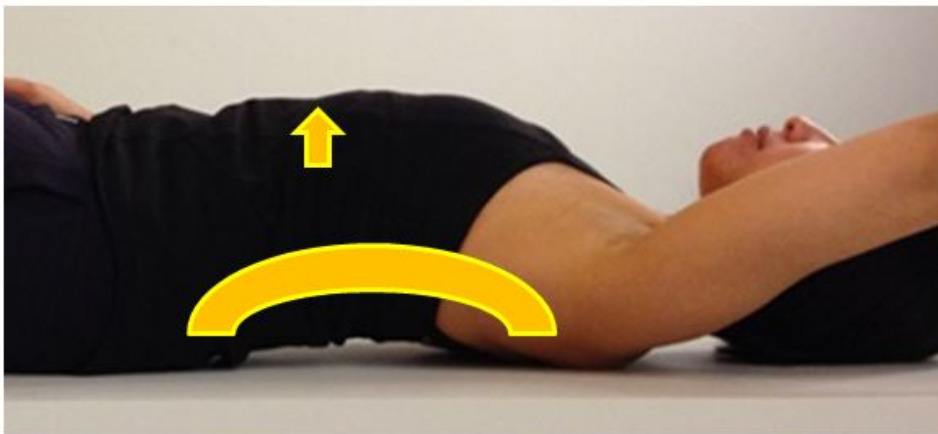
### **CAT**



## OYSTER



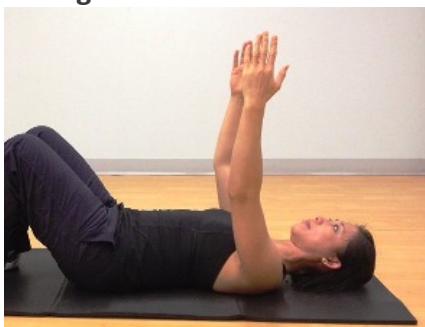
## RIBCAGE CLOSURE



### How can you tell if your ribcage is not in “neutral”?

In an ideal standing **posture**, viewed from the side, your ear, shoulder, hips, knees and ankles fall in a straight line. “Rib posture” should pretty much fall within these lines as well.

### Ribcage Arms Fundamental

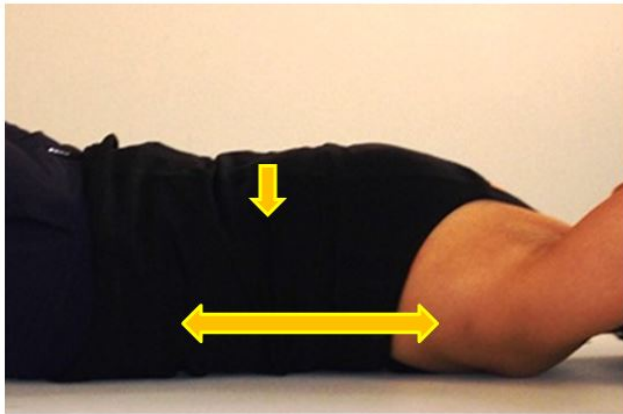


Lie supine, knees bent, with your arms straight and by your sides on the mat. Inhale and activate the deep core as you bring your arms straight in front of you, 90 degrees from the mat with the palms faced in.

Exhale as you reach your arms over your head.



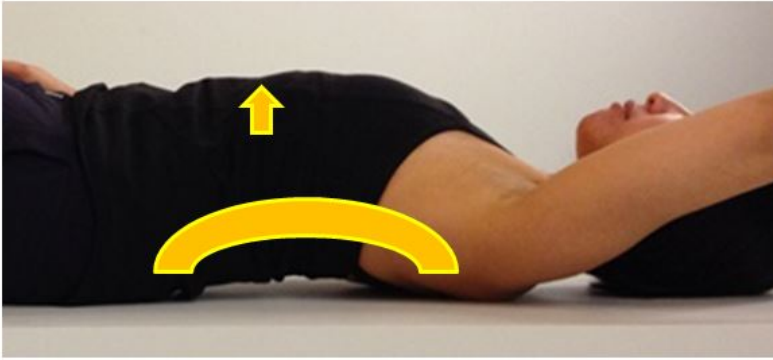
*Ideally*, as you reach your arms, you'll maintain core connection to draw the ribs together in the front and the whole ribcage remains steadily lengthened along the mat like a base.



However, if there is tightness in the chest and shoulder muscles, it's easy for the arms to take the spine out of alignment. If you feel your mid-back come off the mat, as you reach your arms overhead, it's likely that the ribcage is "popping" forward. This is an example of overdoing the reach.



Instead of a long steady base, the mid-back is shortening up, and shaped more like a banana. Now you wouldn't want a banana for a foundation would you?



The ribcage has many fascial connections and can get bound up or stuck. Habitual movement patterns, shoulder restrictions from hunched posture or general tightness can be the culprits for causing this instability to occur. You can see that when the arm arrives at its point of limitation, in order to increase the reach, the body uses a strategy to recruit the spine like this example shows. Note that these examples are from a position lying down.

Imagine it now from a standing position, and if you were lifting a heavy weight. If you did that repeatedly, with enough time, your body will eventually give you a message...ouch!

That's why we incorporate the Ribcage Arms exercise as a fundamental in Pilates. We use it to enlighten proper arm and scapular positioning, and bring awareness to a suitable working range that is healthy and safe for the shoulder girdle. Underlying this with core support fine-tunes it even further.

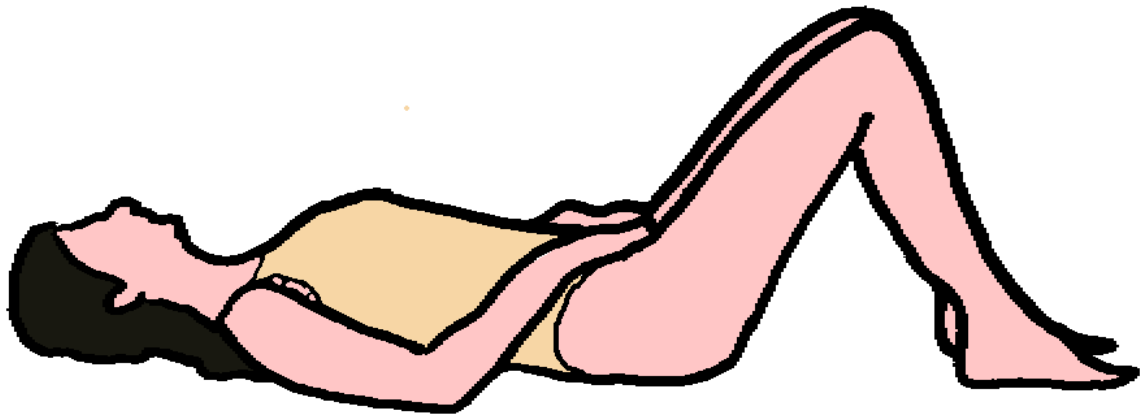
Ironic, in a way, that it's called a 'cage' – since it has an integral role in creating freedom of movement!

## **C-CURVE**

The action of scooping the abdominals 'Pilates Scoop', creating a C Shape with the spine.



## PELVIC CLOCKS – Finding neutral pelvis.



**Pelvis Arched**  
Inhale and rock your  
pelvis towards your  
tailbone



**Pelvis Neutral**



**Pelvis Tucked**  
Exhale and rock your  
pelvis towards your  
belly button

**BACK EXTENSION – DIAMOND PRESS** – Keep Head in line with spine – cervical and thoracic extension mid/upper back, not lower back.



**BACK EXTENSION – DART** –



**WAIST TWIST**



## SIDE REACH



## LEG SLIDES AND KNEE FOLDS



## CURL UPS

