

Matwork Fundamentals Exercises

1. **Breathing.** Purpose is to establish the connection between body and mind, allowing mindfulness to begin. Enhances awareness and understanding of complete inhalation and exhalation through forced expiration techniques.
2. **Neutral Alignment.** Established neutral alignment of the spine and creates a starting point for all exercises
3. **Shoulder Drops – Scapular Retraction.** Releases tension in the upper postural area, and helps to gain an understanding of proper shoulder girdle placement
4. **Arm Raises – Rib Cage Placement.** Lengthens the torso and teaches proper alignment of ribs while stretching the latissimus dorsi.
5. **Leg Drops.** Re-enforces neutral spine while extremities re in motion, strengthens lower abdominals and enhances pelvic stabilization
6. **Bridges.** Warms up the torso, hip flexors, buttocks and legs, strengthens abdominal stabilizers, enhances mobility of the spine.
7. **Hip Rolls.** Stretches the sides and back safely and warms up the torso. Teaches pelvic stability and works abdominal muscles
8. **Opposite Arm – Opposite Leg Lift (prone) –** lengthens and strengthens the back muscles. The concept of “co-contraction” between the abdominals and erector spine is emphasized during this exercise. Enhances range of motion and flexibility of the spine and improves pelvic stability.
9. **Cat –** Warms up the torso, releases tension in the lower back, strengthens abdominals and lower back
10. **Rest – Little Piece of Heaven.** Lengthens the spine and releases the back while stretching latissimus dorsi.
11. **Ab Preps – Bracing.** Strengthens the abdominals and re-enforces the concept of “abdominal bracing”. Teaches “navel to spine” and “Pelvic Floor” engagement with emphasis on relaxing the hip flexors.
12. **Hundreds.** Used as a warm-up, to gain strength and stability of the core muscles while the extremities move simultaneously. Strengthens scapular muscles.
13. **Roll downs.** Strengthens deep abdominals to enhance endurance. Re-enforces “curling the spine”, increases flexibility of the spine. Prep for Roll Up.
14. **Roll Ups**
15. **Leg Circles**
16. **Rolling Like a Ball**
17. **Single Leg Stretch**
18. **Double Leg Stretch**
19. **Criss Cross**
20. **Spine Stretch Forward**
21. **Single Leg Kick**
22. **Saw**
23. **Inner Thigh Lifts (side lying)**
24. **Seal**
25. **Pushups**