

# The Top Ten Myths About Pilates

Written by Brie Adina Neff

**Myth #1: Mat Pilates is not real Pilates.**

Mat work is actually the heart and soul of the Pilates system of exercise. Joseph Pilates designed the mat work for his own body to compliment all of his many physical activities (boxing, fencing, gymnastics, etc.) before he created any of the other equipment. He designed seven major pieces of equipment (along with some minor

**Myth #3: There is no cardio in Pilates and it can't help you lose weight.**

Although it may take a few lessons to absorb the major principals of the work, once you put it all together, the pace is picked up A LOT! There are many exercises that can be covered in a 1 hour lesson depending on the ability of the client. And, the system is ideally practiced with both strength and precision – the result will certainly

system—if you are doing it right, you won't be relaxing until you are finished your session. It is, however, a different approach to physical exertion. And since we tailor the workout to your abilities, it won't feel exhausting. Most people feel invigorated upon completion of a lesson.

**Myth #6: Group Pilates classes on the equipment are OK.**

Unfortunately this is not a good idea unless you are an experienced Pilates practitioner. Although the equipment feels great and may seem simple to use, it can be extremely dangerous. Your instructor is keeping one eye out for your safety during your entire lesson. You will not be saving any money in a group class if you are not ready for it, but you will be risking some serious injuries!

**Myth #7: You can learn Pilates from a book or video.**

There are some wonderful Pilates resources out there, but they are intended as a supplement to lessons you are taking with a properly certified

Pilates Instructor. A book can't tell you if you are doing something improperly or dangerous, and it certainly can't assess your skill level to tell you if you are not ready for a certain exercise. Rest assured that a properly certified Pilates Instructor has spent years studying the work in extreme detail to be able to determine exactly which exercise to give you and when to get the best results in the shortest amount of time.

**Myth #8: Private Pilates lessons are not for beginners.**

Private Pilates lessons are ideal for all levels of students. A properly certified Pilates Instructor should be able to give any level student a

challenging, fun, and safe lesson tailored precisely to the student's abilities.

**Myth #9: Pilates is for women only.**

Joseph Pilates was the founder of the Pilates system and invented each of the exercises, the equipment upon which we practice them, the order and rhythm in which they are performed, and the way in which they are taught. Mr. Pilates was very much an athlete who studied many physical disciplines including gymnastics, boxing, wrestling, fencing, martial arts, and many others. In recent years, many professional athletes have discovered the benefits of the Pilates system and its potential to boost performance and extend their careers.

**Myth #10: You have to be flexible to do Pilates.**

Pilates is a fantastic tool to help build flexibility in all individuals. Each exercise is designed to strengthen and stretch a given muscle group or groups. The only way to improve flexibility is to stretch. And Pilates can show you the safe way to do it. 



ones) including the Universal Reformer, Cadillac, Wunda Chair, High Chair, Barrels, and THE MAT. The equipment is intended to be used as tools within a system to help the participant achieve optimal strength, flexibility, and overall health.

**Myth #2: A Mat-Only Certification is OK.**

Because Pilates works as a system, your instructor should be knowledgeable about ALL the parts of the system. Seeing an instructor who is only certified in the mat is like seeing a doctor who only knows about the thumb!

leave you sweating! But remember, there is scientific proof that muscle weighs more than fat. Some people will not lose pounds but inches.

**Myth #4: There is no weight training in Pilates.**

In Pilates we use springs to create resistance. Depending on the exercise and the ability of the student, the resistance may be a lot. Men love the arm springs and the pull ups where they really feel the burn!

**Myth #5: Pilates is relaxing like yoga.**

First of all, not all yoga is relaxing. Secondly, Pilates is an exercise

*Brie Adina Neff*

Brie Adina Neff is Director and Senior Certified Instructor at Equilibrium Pilates, and one of the youngest chosen Level 3 Romana's Pilates instructors in the world and teacher in the classical method as introduced to her by Romana Kryzanowska. Equilibrium, located at 424 S. 2nd St. (at Lombard), has received Philadelphia Style's "Best Pilates Studio 2007," City Paper's People's Choice Award for "Best Pilates Studio," and is a two-time winner of Philadelphia Magazine's Best of Philly Award. For more information and a schedule of classes, please call 215-923-3669 or visit [www.equilibrium-pilates.com](http://www.equilibrium-pilates.com).