

# Self-Mastery Handbook



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## What is Self-Mastery?

Self-mastery is Pilates practice you do outside of your course hours.

If you want to become a great pianist, taking lessons is not enough; you also need to practice. The same is true with Pilates. To achieve mastery, you must practice, practice, practice!

To become a Pilates instructor you must not only develop your skills; you must also build relationships in the Pilates industry so you can find a job that fits you perfectly.

Self-Mastery can help you do both those things.

That is why you must accrue a quota of Pilates practice hours, outside of course sessions.

And why we highly recommend you do at least some of those hours at a studio where you want to get paid work.

## Self-Mastery components

Component	What you do	How to: At home	How to: At a studio
Self-practice	Do Pilates exercises	Practice in your lounge	Do Pilates classes Use equipment outside class hours
Practice teaching	Teach Pilates to friends & family	At Northcote campus In your lounge	Use equipment outside class hours
Observation	Watch qualified instructors teach Pilates	Pilates Anytime Pilatesology Pilates DVDs	Observe a qualified instructor teaching

## Required Self-Mastery hours

	Self-practice	Practice teaching	Observation
Cert IV	40 hours	40 hours	40 hours
Diploma	40 hours	40 hours	40 hours

## How to record your Self-Mastery hours

You will record all your self-mastery hours in the self-mastery logbook which you can download from eLearning.

Once your log book is complete, you will need to sign a Statutory Declaration (the Statutory Declaration template is included with the logbook.)

A Statutory Declaration is a legal document and must be signed in the presence of an authorised person such as a police officer or pharmacist. A list of authorised people is supplied with the Statutory Declaration template.



## Self-practice

Certificate IV: 40 hours | Diploma: 40 hours

Self-practice means you, practicing Pilates exercises.

You must practice in order to get better at the exercises, to build your strength, flexibility and confidence. Your self-practice hours can be completed at home, or a combination of home and a Pilates studio and each session must be a minimum of 15min.

### Cert IV self-practice schedule

Course module	Exercise sequences to practice	How much to practice
1	Matwork 1-10 Reformer 1-6	30 minutes, 4x/week
2	Matwork 1-21 Reformer 1-18	30 minutes, 4x/week
3	Matwork 1-29 Reformer 1-28	30 minutes, 4x/week
4	Matwork 1-37 Reformer 1-38	30 minutes, 4x/week
5	Matwork 1-37 Reformer 1-45	30 minutes, 4x/week

If you follow this schedule you will complete your required 40 hours of self-practice and be highly skilled and confident with all the repertoire by the end of module 5.

## Diploma self-practice schedule

Course module	Exercise sequences to practice	How much to practice
1	Chair #1 Chair #2 Cadillac #1 (Push Thru Springs Below) Cadillac #2 (Standing Arm Springs) Barrels #1 (Spine Corrector) Barrels #2 (Ladder Barrel)	2 hours per week
2	Chair #1 Chair #2 Barrels #1 (Spine Corrector) Barrels #2 (Ladder Barrel) Cadillac #1 (Push Thru Springs Below) Cadillac #2 (Standing Arm Springs)	2 hours per week
3	Chair #3 Cadillac #3 (Leg Springs) Barrels #3 (Spine Corrector)	2 hours per week
4	Chair #4 Chair #5 Cadillac #4 (Push Through Springs Above) Cadillac #5 (Rolldown Bar) Barrels #4 (Ladder Barrel) Barrels #5 (Ladder Barrel)	2 hours per week
5	Chair #6 Cadillac #6 (Arm Springs) Barrels #6 (Spine Corrector)	2 hours per week
6	Chair #7 Cadillac #7 (Trapeze) Barrels #7 (Ladder Barrel Adv.)	2 hours per week



## Where to do self-practice

### Benefits of doing self-practice at home

- It's free
- You can focus on perfecting the exercises you learned in the course
- You can do it at times that suit you
- No-one is watching
- No travel time



### Benefits of doing some of your self-practice at a studio

- It's easier to stay motivated in a group session
- You will learn from different instructors
- You will make new friends
- You will meet potential employers
- You may create opportunities to do your observation hours at that studio



## Practice teaching

Certificate IV: 40 hours | Diploma: 40 hours

Practice teaching means you, teaching Pilates to your friends, family or fellow students, or assisting clients in a class that you are observing. You can do your practice teaching at home, at a studio, or a combination.

### Benefits of practice teaching at home

- You can do it anytime
- You don't need to travel
- It may be more convenient for your family and friends
- No one is watching
- You can do short sessions across the day or week



### Benefits of practice-teaching at a studio

- Your clients may find it easier to focus
- You can use Pilates equipment
- You will become comfortable using different brands of Reformers
- You will build relationships with future employers





## Observation

Certificate IV: 40 hours | Diploma: 40 hours

Observation means you, watching a qualified teacher deliver a Pilates session. You can do this at a studio, or at home (with Pilates Anytime or Pilatesology), or a combination.

### Benefits of doing observation at home

- You can do it anytime that suits you
- No travel time
- You don't have to find a studio and build a relationship with the owners
- You can learn from a variety of world-class teachers on Pilates Anytime



### The benefits of doing observation at a studio

- **This is the most effective way to land a job**
- See teaching skills are applied in a real-world studio
- Make friends and build a network in the Pilates industry
- Build your confidence interacting with clients
- Learn important non-Pilates skills e.g. signing clients in to class



## What to pay attention to when you observe

Each time you observe either online or in a studio, pay attention to just one of the following areas, and take written notes:

- Sequences you particularly like
- Cues that worked well
- Spring settings, and spring options, and how they relate to the advertised class level
- How the instructor welcomed, guided, and affirmed beginners
- How many reps, or how much time did the instructor spend on each exercise?
- Where did the instructor stand, and how did they move around the room
- How did the instructor use their vocal tone, pace, and rhythm to lead the class?
- What hands-on cues did they use?



# How to use Self-Mastery to get a job

Jobs are rarely advertised in the Pilates industry.

Instead, jobs happen through relationships, and self-mastery is a powerful opportunity to build relationships with studio owners and instructors.

Studio owners want to hire trainers who share their studio values, and fit with their clients and

team. The best way to determine if a potential trainer is a good fit, is to spend time with them at the studio, in Pilates classes.

That is why doing your self-mastery at a studio is an incredible opportunity to land a job. Self-mastery at a studio is like a weeks-long job interview and internship combined.

By doing your self-mastery at a studio you will have the opportunity to really get to know the studio culture, values and clients, and to show your potential future employer how much you care, and how you can contribute.



## How to find a studio for your Self-Mastery

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### Do classes where you want to work

The best place to start is to talk to your instructor at the studio you currently attend.

If you don't attend classes at a studio, now would be a great time to start. Choose a studio you would like to work at, because job offers frequently arise from a successful relationship.

Watch this interview with James Trenerry who owns 3 of the top 5 performing KX franchises in Australia. James shares where he looks for future trainers, and what attributes he looks for.



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### Leverage Breathe Education Mentor Studios

If you don't already have a studio in mind, there are Breathe Education Mentor studios around Australia who welcome Breathe Education students for self-mastery.

[View Mentor Studios](#)

## How to initiate the conversation

A great way to start this conversation is to approach your instructor outside class time and ask them something or make a comment about the class.

For example - “I love the way you sequenced that middle section based around splits. I’m studying to become a Pilates instructor at the moment and I really get a lot from your classes”



## How to ask permission to observe

After a few little exchanges like this, you may feel ready to ask if you can observe some of their classes.

For example - “Would you mind if I sit in and watch some of your classes, as part of the requirement for my Pilates training? I feel I have a lot to learn from the way you teach. I will be quiet as a mouse in the corner.”



# Class observation etiquette

Throughout your time doing self-mastery at a studio you should:

- Be reliable and punctual
- Dress neatly and so that you fit with the studio culture

When observing a session you should:

- Find an out-of-the-way spot and sit quietly
- Take written notes
- Not interact with your phone or other device
- Not record the session on either video or audio
- Refrain from asking questions or offering comments unless asked to do so



## Insurance cover

During all **unpaid** self-mastery activities including observation and assisting in class you are covered by Breathe Education's insurance.

You can view our current policy in your eLearning portal.

## How to transition from observing to assisting

After you have been observing for a few classes, approach your mentor outside of class time when there are no clients present, and ask permission to make yourself useful.

The key is to find a way of helping that will *make the instructor's life easier*.

### Start by helping outside of class

Start with non-teaching tasks, because those require less trust from your mentor. These tasks will make your mentor's life easier, build trust, demonstrate your work ethic and offer you learning opportunities:

- Tidying, sweeping, or vacuuming the studio space
- Greeting clients at the beginning and end of class
- Signing clients in for their session
- Checking and data entering client screening and induction forms
- Updating client records
- Responding to client emails
- Processing payments

As you become more confident, and your relationship with your mentor develops, approach your mentor **outside of class time** and offer a specific suggestion on how you could make yourself useful in class. Here are two examples of specific suggestions on how you could help your mentor:

- “I notice you always hand out magic circles when you do legs in straps – would it be ok if I collect them up when the clients are done, and put them away for you?” or
- “I notice some of the clients don’t put the equipment back properly at the end of class. Would it be ok if I quietly put it away between classes?” or

## Show that you can help, by helping

The more you can demonstrate that you can make your mentor's life easier, the more they will want you to help.

Packing up the magic circles, soon becomes handing out the magic circles, which soon becomes helping some clients get set up with their magic circles, which soon becomes giving hands-on feedback to the clients whilst they are using the magic circles.



Start with basic tasks like handing out equipment and, as you progress and develop trust and confidence with your mentor, outside of class time you can negotiate taking on more skilled tasks. The list on the following page progresses from examples of basic tasks to more skilled ones:

## Basic tasks to help in class

- Hand out and collect props
- Help newer or less mobile clients with equipment adjustment as directed by your mentor e.g.
  - “it is Andrea’s first time with feet in straps, please help her”
  - “please help Melanie adjust her head rest”

## Moderately skilled tasks

Your mentor may direct you in class to give individual assistance to clients e.g.

- “Please adjust Daniela’s foot position for her” or
- “Please change Rachel’s reformer to 1 full spring”

## Highly skilled tasks

Your mentor may specify in advance that during a particular exercise sequence, you will move through the room and give a specific assist to any clients who need it e.g.

- “when we do lunges at the start of class, look for people who are leaning forward like this, and help them with their hip position like this”
- “when we do side lying leg in strap towards the end of the class today, look for people who are rolling their top hip forwards, and help them roll it back like this”

## Assisting in class counts as practice teaching

If, whilst observing a class you assist at any point, the whole class counts towards your practice teaching hours.

If you observe a class but do not assist at any point, the whole class counts towards your observation hours.

## Request feedback

As soon as possible after every task, ask for feedback on your performance. The best quality feedback is immediate, candid and specific.

## How to receive feedback

Amongst employers everywhere, two of the most highly prized attributes in a team member are "seeks feedback" and "receives feedback well".



Make a habit of asking your mentor for frank feedback each day. This is best done immediately after you complete a task, and when clients are not present.

When receiving feedback maintain your attention on the person giving the feedback and stay silent until they have finished. If there is any part of the feedback that is not clear to you, ask them to give an example and explain it further. When done, thank your mentor for the feedback.

Resist the temptation to make excuses, apologise, deny, or to self-criticise. Just listen, ask for clarification if necessary, then say thanks and move on.



## What counts as Self-Mastery

	Activities that count	Activities that do not count
<b>Self-practice</b>	Practice at home Attending Pilates classes	Practice during course sessions Non-Pilates classes (e.g. Barre)
<b>Practice teaching</b>	Teaching friends at home Assisting in a Pilates class Teaching family at Northcote	Practice during course sessions Non-Pilates classes (e.g. Barre)
<b>Observation</b>	Pilates Anytime Pilatesology Live class in a studio	Instagram videos Participating in Pilates classes

## How to complete your Self-Mastery logs

Your self-mastery logs are the evidence that you have completed your self-mastery hours. You can download them from the self-mastery section in eLearning.

- Each logged session must be a minimum of **15 minutes**
- Add the total HOURS (not minutes) at the bottom of each page
- Each entry should specify in GENERAL terms what you did e.g. "Matwork 1-21" or "Reformer flow class" or 'Clinical Session using cadillac an chair'
- You do NOT need to list every exercise you did in a practice session
- Once you have finished your self-practice, practice teaching and observation hours, complete the **Statutory Declaration** in front of an eligible witness.

## How to submit your Self-Mastery

Once your logs and Statutory Declaration are complete, submit them together as ONE DOCUMENT in the **Self-Mastery section** in your eLearning ( **Module 5 for Certificate IV and Module 6 for Diploma**)

 Self-Mastery logsheet - submit here

### **Submit your Self-Mastery**

When you have completed all of your logs for Self-Mastery hours and your Statutory Declaration – Submit this here:

 Self-Mastery – Submit here