

Benefits of adding Barrels programming to your workout

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Sometimes, being 'over a barrel' is a good thing! Highly effective Pilates Instructors are always looking for ways to help clients achieve their fitness goals. Much less intimidating than the larger pieces like the V2 Max Plus™ Reformer or the Cadillac, the full line of barrels – Ladder Barrel, Spine Corrector and Arc Barrel – are the power trio of supplementary Pilates equipment. Mostly portable and extremely versatile, the Merrithew™ barrels are vital to any well-equipped facility.

The smallest of the barrels, the Arc Barrel – available with wooden sides as the Arc Barrel Deluxe – is the perfect accompaniment to any Mat session. Modifications of standard Matwork exercises allow instructors to perfect starting positions to reduce tension, allow more range, access targeted muscle groups and even increase the challenge to each exercise. As a support in supine positions, the head and shoulders, feet, hands or pelvis can be on the barrel, and in prone, the barrel is ideal to neutralize over-active lumbar extensors. The padded foam surface and durable vinyl upholstery will make the Arc Barrel virtually indispensable.

Only slightly larger, the Spine Corrector features a small angled step and a steeper curve as well as wooden handles. The step provides often-needed height to reduce tension in a seated position while the increased curve requires a greater degree of joint mobility, particularly in the spine. The additional height allows for greater ranges of motion and delivers extra intensity where more strength and stability are required from the exerciser.

When programming requires the use of exercises performed in a standing or vertical position, the Ladder Barrel fits the bill nicely. Adjustable to the needs of each individual, the smooth wooden rungs of the ladder provide sturdy support for either the hands or the feet. Although many exercises in the Ladder Barrel repertoire are variations of moves found elsewhere, the benefits of the height and curvature of the barrel are obvious. Complete spinal support is available when moving into full extension or lateral flexion on the padded surface. The smaller base of support and elevation serve to increase body-weight resistance and place more emphasis on upper and lower body stability.

Having knowledge of all three barrels and how they can be incorporated to fine-tune a workout allows the Fully-Certified Instructor to make an educated decision on which barrel is best suited to each situation. This decision may be based on the individual needs of the client, strengths and weaknesses as well as postural deviations. Knowing how each barrel progresses or regresses the same series of exercises will promote safer and more effective programs across the board.

For more, visit: <https://www.merrithew.com>