



Andromeda Trumbull

Dr. Andromeda Trumbull, D.C., is Co-Founder of the Pilates Sports Center. She was inspired to become a Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine because of her own spinal condition, Scoliosis, and specializing in the proper rehabilitation of the lower back, Trumbull was introduced to Pilates as a fitness regimen and was so impressed that she became an instructor, offering Pilates to her patients as a way of treating pain and resolving it more effectively. The profound results of her patients led her to co-create The Pilates Sports Center Teacher Training Program, allowing her the opportunity to promote the highest standard of excellence in Pilates education.



Kelli Coleman Altounian

Kelli Coleman Altounian, Co-Founder. As a dance teacher and professional performer, Kelli toured with the world famous Radio City Rockettes for seven years, and became a key spokesperson for the line. After sustaining a career-ending back injury, Kelli was introduced to Pilates as a form of physical therapy. The effects were so successful that she chose to study Pilates, becoming the owner and operator of Pilates Studio City. As co-founder of The Pilates Sports Center Teacher Training Program, she shares her expertise to perpetuate this very effective therapeutic and fitness regimen.



Know and Love Your Reformer

By Andromeda Trumbull and Kelli Altounian

Your Reformer is a versatile piece of equipment. Setting it up to suit the needs of each client helps you become a better trainer and can maximize the results your clients can achieve. As an example, the travel distance of the Reformer carriage varies from machine to machine, and changes the way the work is felt by the client. This distance is impacted by spring tension and placement of the footbar and springbar. Observing the amount of flexion and extension at the hip and/or knee, and how soon the client begins and ends each movement, can give you insight into what element needs to be modified for optimal results.

Proper management and maintenance can also extend the life of your equipment. This article acquaints you with the various features of your Balanced Body Reformer, and provides tips on proper use and maintenance.

Proper Reformer Management

Footbar

Lowering or raising the footbar changes the leg and hip angles for exercises performed. Make sure the equipment is adjusted to compensate for your client's physiology. For example, a high footbar position raises the knees and drives the pelvis posterior toward the foot-end of the frame, thus flexing the spine. This can make neutral spine demanding, if not impossible for some clients. If you are advocating neutral spine for a particular exercise, be absolutely sure your client can attain it if the bar is raised.

Footbars on the **Infinity** and **Allegro® Reformers** can be adjusted horizontally—up the length of the frame—as well as vertically, which changes the angles.

Springbars

The springbar is typically adjusted to change the tension on the springs. Alternatively, Reformers with the **Revo® Springbar System** have five indexed stop positions that provide up to 12" of adjustability from carriage to footbar, creating the ergonomically correct position for any user. Each position automatically maintains neutral or zero tension at the start of carriage travel. Simply add springs to increase the challenge of the exercise as needed.

Shoulder Rests

Shoulder rests can be removed and reversed on newer machines. This feature allows you to adjust the space between them for a wider or narrower fit, ensuring maximum comfort for clients with small or large necks. Removing the rests entirely is also useful for exercises such as reverse quadruped work where the hands may need to be flat.

Risers

Risers allow variable angles of rope resistance. They are standard equipment on newer Reformers, or available as an add-on to older models. Be sure to tighten the pulleys on the risers and align them vertically for safety and effectiveness. If you find that the ropes limit the desired range of motion, adjust the riser height so that the client can move freely.

Ropes or Straps

Changing the length of your ropes or straps affects the degree of difficulty of your client's workout. (Straps are adjustable on most Balanced Body Reformers.) To set up the most common length for a basic workout session, run the rope or strap through the riser post pulleys and attach to the post behind the shoulder rests.

If the straps are shortened, more tension is created in an exercise and can cause unnecessary loading of the shoulders and legs during supine work. Alternately, longer straps may cause work to begin too late in the movement, and/or result in a loss of tension. Plan and modify length appropriately for your client.

In addition, double loop straps are available to allow for a quick transition from a long strap to a short strap.

Padded Foot Plates (also called Jumpboards) and Standing Platforms

Padded foot plates add great versatility to your Reformer. In addition to allowing jumping and other cardio exercises, a padded foot plate re-creates a biomechanically accurate standing position while on the Reformer. Foot plates vary depending on the machine you have, as do the sizes and set-up positions. Balanced Body also has a Jumpus Maximus version of the foot plate for many Reformer models, which feature a larger vertical surface area than a standard foot plate.

The width of Standing Platforms (located on the foot-end of the machine) also varies per Reformer. An oversized platform is available in order to increase the horizontal surface area (with the exception of the Allegro®). Oversized standing platforms are useful for doing standing exercises facing the side of the Reformer in external hip rotation and for standing exercises done facing towards or away from the carriage. Always be sure the platform is properly secured by tightening the knobs.

Modifications for Different Client Sizes

For the Petite Client or Child:

Footbar adjustments

- On the Standard footbar, raise the footbar to its highest position
- On the Revo Footbar adjust the springbar toward the footbar
- On the Infinity and Allegro, adjust the footbar closer to the carriage
- Use shoulder spacer blocks if the springbar or footbar won't accommodate the size of the client

Box work adjustments

- Use NY box (smaller).
- Use a half moon box or pad as needed under the feet, to keep the hips at about 90 degrees of flexion while seated on box
- For short box work, move box toward the shoulder rests.

For the Tall Client:

Footbar adjustments

- On the Standard footbar, lower the footbar to its lowest position
- On the Revo footbar, adjust the springbar toward the carriage
- On the Infinity and Allegro, adjust the footbar farther from the carriage

Box work adjustments

- Use large box
- Add a moon box on top of box as needed, for 90° hip flexion while seated
- Set box over shoulder rests for short box work

Proper Reformer Maintenance

General Reminders

- Make sure all warnings and user manuals for equipment are read thoroughly and understood
- Do not physically alter equipment in any way
- Do not use the equipment if worn, broken or damaged
- Keep body, hair and clothing free of all moving parts
- Never allow children to be around or on equipment without supervision
- A periodic inspection of your springs is critical due to the potential of serious injury resulting from spring failure

Daily/Weekly Check List

- Wipe all equipment down daily
- Thoroughly clean equipment once a week

Monthly Check List – Reformer

If you are using the equipment on a daily basis, we strongly suggest a twice-monthly maintenance program.

- Check all straps for security, hooks and attachments
- Check tracks for build-up of dirt
- Check wheels for wear
- Make sure all bolts are secure, retightening if necessary
- Check springs for wear
- Check footbar pad and make sure footbar is bolted securely to the frame
- Check straps/ropes for wear

If you notice wear or damage to any of the above items, please call Balanced Body technical support at 1-800-PILATES.

Cleaning Tips

- Clean the machine after each client session. We suggest natural tea tree oil (available at any health food store), diluted with water (1 part oil and 10 parts water). You can also use 1 teaspoon of oil per 1 standard spray bottle filled with water. After cleaning with oil solution, wipe down with clean water to limit residue build-up. Some clients may be allergic to tea tree oil. As an alternative, you use a non-alcohol based spray or premoistened wipes. Your decision will also depend on whether you want your area to be fragrance- free. Do not use Windex® or alcohol-based products. They will dry out your upholstery and cause fading.
- Minwax® is a great product to use on the wood
- Reformers and Trapeze Tables occasionally need silicone. A cross bar may stick or a side wheel may squeak. If this happens, lightly spray dry silicone on a rag, then wipe the aluminum-tracking rail where the side wheel makes contact. Use “dry” silicone, which does not have an oil base. Oil-based (“wet”) silicone and WD40® attract dirt and should not be used. Never spray silicone near or inside the wheels – this can wash the lubricant out of the bearings and ruin the bearings. You can purchase dry silicone at most hardware and auto parts stores. Be careful to protect your carpet or floor when spraying; silicone may stain it.
- Straps and fuzzies can be washed. Use Woolite® in gentle cycle. We suggest you lay them flat to dry. However if you do put them in a dryer, place them inside a pillow case with a towel to prevent the metal rings from hitting the inside of the dryer. Putting them loose into the dryer is not only noisy, it can cause damage to the dryer interior.