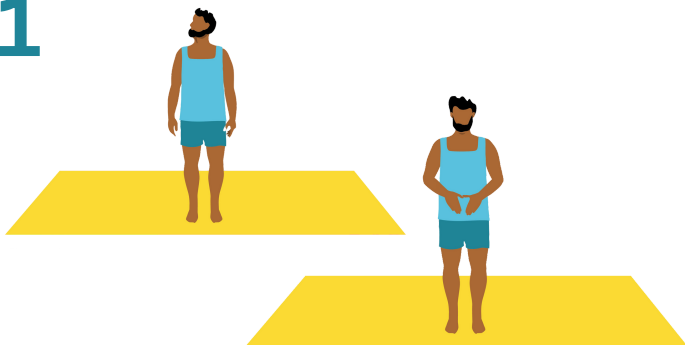


# Standing pilates - Level 1

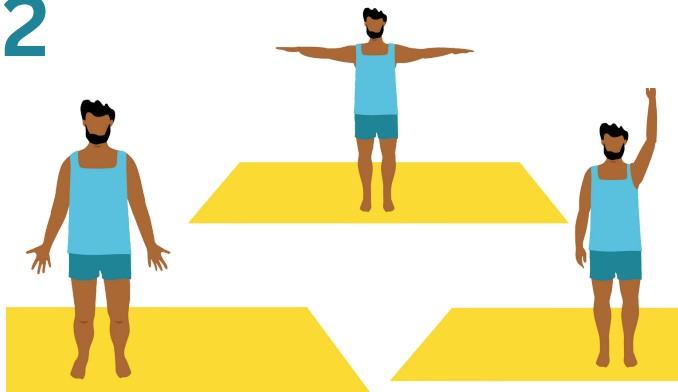
6 exercises of Pilates for people with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome and hypermobility spectrum disorders. Please remember to read the guidance overleaf and check with your Health Professional before starting. You can find videos of these movements on our website [ehlers-danlos.org](http://ehlers-danlos.org) and search 'Making Movement Accessible'

1



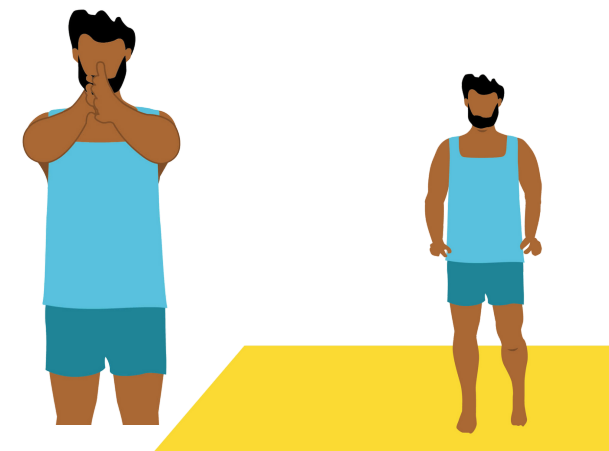
Standing tall. Line your heels underneath your hips, soften your knees and relax your shoulders.  
Exhale to tilt your pubic bone to your nose and then inhale to relax back to a neutral position where your spine is long.  
Roll your shoulders forward, up, back then down gently and not to your greatest extreme, then relax them away from your ears.  
Look up to the sky on the right keeping the back of your neck long, inhale, exhale as you semi circle your chin to your chest then up to the left.

2



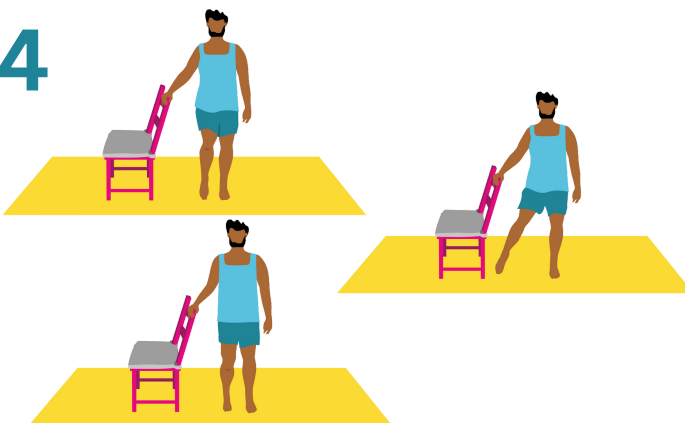
Bring little fingers to the outside of your thighs then reach thumbs to each other above your head or to the height that is comfortable for you, lifting arms up the sides.  
Reach hands out to the sides in a T shape then bring the hands together in front of you.  
Reach one arm up and the other down then swap.  
Reach your hands to a T shape, relax your shoulders and circle the arms in tight circles.

3



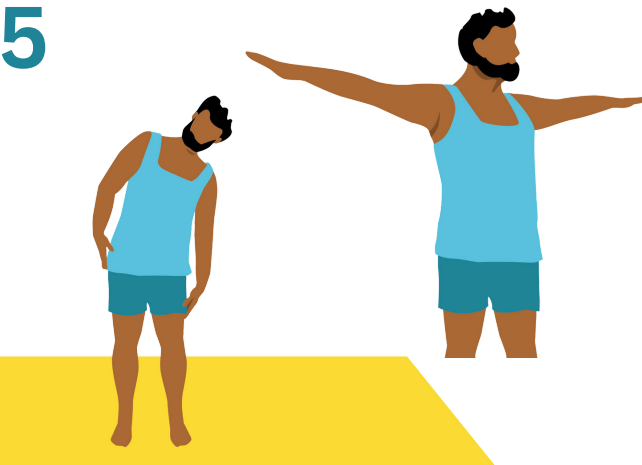
Lift one heel, then swap mid air. When you land your heel keep your knee soft.  
Gently bend your knees forward as though you are sliding up and down a wall, try with feet facing forward then angle your feet out to a diagonal with knees tracing the big toe.

4



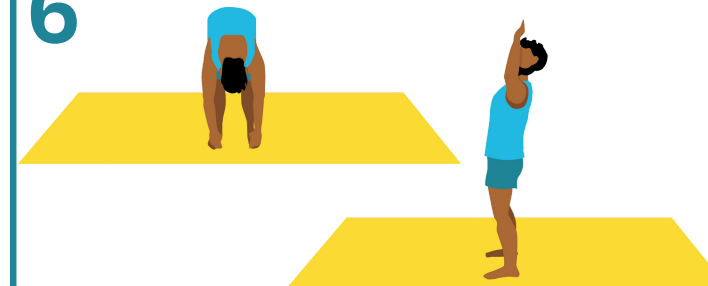
Lift one heel to start whilst holding onto a stable surface  
Progress to lifting the foot off the floor.  
Then tap your foot in front of you, to your side and behind.  
Circle your foot from the front to the back without tapping it on the floor.  
Try the above when you feel ready without holding on or keeping a stable surface close to you to help with confidence.

5



The following movements need to be small and controlled, please don't reach to your furthest point.  
Standing tall, reach one hand to the floor in a side stretch.  
Reach your hands into a T position or cross them over your chest and rotate, keeping your hips facing forward and your hands in your peripheral vision.

6



If you have osteoporosis or ruptured discs in your spine keep your hands on your thighs and keep the following movement small.  
Inhale to prepare then exhale to tilt your chin down and allow the rest of your spine to follow imagining each vertebra unstacking.  
At the point that is comfortable for you, take a breath and exhale as you roll your spine back up, restacking your vertebra one at a time.  
If you have POTs, to prevent dizziness squeeze your calf muscles, thighs and buttocks on your way back up.



## EHLERS-DANLOS SUPPORT UK

The Ehlers-Danlos Support UK is the UK's leading charity representing over 15,000 members. Our vision is that across the UK, people with EDS or HSD will be connected, heard, supported and have equitable access to care. We are the voice of the EDS/HSD community in the UK. We bring together people with EDS and HSD in the UK to equitably access diagnosis, treatment and care. We do this through:

**Awareness** – We advocate for and empower our community to drive change. We raise their voices, and work with the NHS across the UK in pursuit of services accessible by all.

**Support** – We provide a platform to support and connect our community. We deliver information and advice on living with EDS/HSD.

**Knowledge** – We build knowledge through information, training and enabling research. We confront misunderstanding and challenge inequality.

The Ehlers-Danlos syndromes (EDS) are a group of 13 individual genetic conditions, which affect the body's connective tissue. Hypermobility spectrum disorder (HSD) has similar symptoms to the most common type of EDS. People with EDS and HSD tend to experience a broad range of symptoms including long term pain, very loose joints which dislocate easily, chronic fatigue, dizziness, palpitations and digestive disorders. These are complex conditions that are often misunderstood, misdiagnosed and mismanaged.

Supported by a wonderful team of over 100+ dedicated volunteers, our face to face and virtual support group services provide support, information, reassurance and, most importantly, social contact with others in a similar situation. We also host webinars run by health professionals and therapists and have a free advice line supporting over 1,500 people a year.

*Registered Address: International House, 45-55 Commercial Street, London, E1 6BD  
The Ehlers-Danlos Support UK is a Charity registered in England and Wales (1157027)  
and Scotland (SC046712) Registered Company No. 8924646.*

### Hints and Tips to keep you safe

We know there are so many benefits to exercising if you have EDS or HSD. However, if we push too hard or hyperextend we may cause more harm than good. We have put together some hints and tips for you to consider while exercising to keep you safe and help you get the most out of your moves.

- Check your surroundings are safe, that there are no trip hazards or doors that can open in and hit you
- Minimise distractions such as children, pets or TV. You need to focus on your body and getting distracted can lead to accidents
- Keep a phone nearby or have someone in the house with you when you first start so you can call for help if you need it
- Calm your body and mind first so you can concentrate. Start with some gentle breathing exercises. Try inhaling for 4 counts and exhaling for 6 and increasing the exhale
- Slow your movement down and pay attention to what your body is doing. Exercising in front of a mirror is really helpful
- Try not to stretch your body or force stretches no matter how good it feels. Move gently into a stretch and come out of it instead of holding it for sustained periods
- Less is more with activating your core muscles. Think 20-30%. There is no need to brace. Breathing out is often enough to activate your core and pelvic floor. If you feel you need a bit more support for a move, gently pull your belly button to your spine and imagine it lifting
- If you get confused about when to breath, just keep breathing, try not to hold your breath
- Try to keep your elbows and knees soft and don't lock them, especially if you are standing or holding weights
- When moving your arms, try to keep your hands in your peripheral vision, this will help keep you from hyperextending
- Sitting and listening is perfectly acceptable whenever you need to rest

Some additional tips below if you have MCAS or POTs that may help you tolerate exercise better with less adverse reactions.

#### If you have MCAS:

- Consider pre-medicating before the class under the advice of your medical professional
- Keep your rescue meds nearby, Antihistamines or Epi Pen if you have been prescribed them
- If you're not used to moving, do a little bit, see how your body feels and do a bit more if you are ok
- Try to keep your heart rate low, no need to push yourself, you can increase your exercise tolerance gradually but it will take some time and patience

#### If you have POTs:

- Seated or bed exercise is a great way to begin as standing still or for long periods can be challenging · Compression gear can help if you can tolerate it
- Hydrate before a class and keep sipping. Consider Electrolytes
- Lie down or stop if symptoms start
- If sitting from lying, standing from sitting, or coming up from a Roll Down (any postural changes) gently squeeze the legs, bum and tummy before moving up. Once you are up, take a breath then slowly release the muscles.



You can help us to continue to offer support to those who need it, by donating here

#### Contact us:

0800 246 1391

info@ehlers-danlos.org

ehlers-danlos.org

#### Advice line:

0800 907 8518

advice@ehlers-danlos.org

GP toolkit: gptoolkit.ehlers-danlos.org

@ehlersdanlosuk



Before starting any exercise program, consult your doctor to ensure it is suitable for your health condition. Participating in physical activity involves inherent risks of injury, and you should always listen to your body and stop if you experience pain. By using this guide, you acknowledge that you are voluntarily assuming all risks associated with exercise and agree to not hold the creators liable for any injuries sustained. Thank you to Mobilates for the information provided in these exercises.

