

'MY LIFE IN A DAY'

Hollie Grant

The Pilates instructor and founder of The Pilates PT Method (pilatespt.co.uk) explains how lockdown has altered her business



'With a super-fit dad in the Parachute Regiment, I went to a military boarding school where exercise was seen as a really positive thing to do.

But when I got to university, I discovered that a lot of women only worked out to lose weight. After graduating, I worked as a pastry chef for a year before realising my "dream job" was not for me, and later became a receptionist for a Pilates studio. I tried some classes and fell in love with Pilates immediately, especially as it's all about being strong, healthy and capable rather than how your body looks. Over time, I qualified as an instructor and became head trainer at other studios. But it was when I created my own method that things really took off.'

'My method evolved while I was training for a charity event to run from one side of the country to the other using a combination of Pilates, running and HIIT. I soon realised I was the fittest I'd ever been – I never got injuries and I felt really strong and full of energy – so I started incorporating HIIT into my Pilates sessions with clients, basically alternating bursts of high-

intensity cardio and low-intensity strength work. It proved so popular that when I started struggling to meet demand, I began training up a team of all-female instructors and opened my first studio in Fulham six years ago, followed by a second studio in Knightsbridge three years later. Initially, it was called The Model Method and,

while I did train models, including Jourdan Dunn, I later changed the name to The Pilates PT Method to reflect that my method is for all women.'

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privacy. Each studio has won awards, and the training spaces are really comforting with a sofa alongside all the equipment, including a Pilates reformer, treadmill, TRX, resistance bands and various weights. The sessions are really fun and we use as many motivational tools as possible, including wearing a heart rate monitor and recording results so you focus on your fitness gains.'



HOLLIE'S TIPS FOR WORKING FROM HOME

- 'Get dressed for the day as if you're getting dressed for work and leaving the house. It helps put you in a working mindset and you'll find it easier to switch off when your work is done and it's time to relax.'
- 'Try to work in a space you don't associate with relaxing, i.e. not on the sofa, otherwise you'll find it harder to relax in that space when your work is done.'
- 'Get outside as soon as you can in the morning, even it's for just a walk around the block. Otherwise, once you start work, you might never leave the house.'



'I was nervous about doing live workouts at first, but I've grown in confidence and rediscovered how much I love helping people'

'My one-year-old daughter, Freya, wakes around 6.30am. I bring her back to bed to breastfeed her while my husband Stuart makes us tea and then we all cuddle for half an hour. Next, Stuart makes breakfast – something like a frittata with wild garlic and hops (he loves to forage as well as cook) – then we'll have a family dog walk. After that, I'll use the Headspace app to meditate before writing in my journal to clear my mind before work. Stuart and I have a great work/life balance, taking it in turns daily to handle emails, Instagram, marketing and catch-up calls with online clients and instructors, or be on childcare duty.'

'Pre-lockdown, I travelled to London from Oxfordshire twice a week to teach my long-term clients, but as soon as the coronavirus hit, studios got quieter. Although we already ran an online training platform offering tailor-made plans, we decided to give live Zoom classes a go (£10 per class and free for NHS workers). They were an instant hit, especially my pre-and post-natal classes using my trimester-specific The Bump Plan methodology I developed while pregnant. I'm teaching up to three live classes most days and, while it's exhausting, it's been a very positive experience and we'll keep it going once the studios are open. I was nervous about doing live workouts at first, especially as I hadn't returned to full-time teaching since maternity leave, but I've grown in confidence and rediscovered how much I love talking about Pilates and helping people with their bodies'

'After I've finished my classes, had dinner and put Freya down for the night, it's normally quite late, so I might watch a bit of TV with my husband before heading to bed by 10pm. It sounds boring, but we have a great routine going and, because there can be so much randomness in my life, I wouldn't change it for the world!'

WORDS: Joanna Ebsworth