

NAFTA

B@RRE



Contents

Primary Barre Instructor Certification	6
CHAPTER 1: B@rre Fundamentals	8
CHAPTER 2: Principles	12
6 Main Principles	12
Alignment	12
Center	12
Concentration	12
Control	12
Fluidity	12
Precision	12
8 Additional Principles	12
Neutral Pelvic Tuck	12
1-Inch Rule: Small and Controlled Movements	13
Isometric Progression: 1-Inch Up & Down, Pulse, Sharp Pulse	13
The Shake	14
Full Extension	14
Strength and Stretch	14
Focus	14
Breathing	14
CHAPTER 3: Equipment	16
Ballet Barre	16
Hand Weights	16
Ball	16
Bands	16
Mat	16
Bolster	16
CHAPTER 4: B@rre Elements	18
CHAPTER 5: The B@rre Instructor	20
Professionalism	20
Safety	20
Consistency	20
Awareness	20

Keeping Current in the Industry	20
CHAPTER 6: Teaching B@rre	22
Say It	22
Count It	22
Focus It	22
Primary Class Format	22
CHAPTER 7: Cuing a B@rre Class	24
TYPES OF CUES	24
GUIDE TECHNIQUES	24
TYPES OF CUES	24
Connections Cue	24
Challenge Cue	24
Imagery Cue	24
Connecting the Cuing	24
Abdominals	24
Shoulder Girdle	25
Midline	25
Opposition	25
Guide Techniques	25
Physically Adjusting Clients Form and Alignment	26
Facilitating/Leading a Class	26
CHAPTER 8: B@rre Terminology	28
Turnout vs. Parallel Legs	28
Pointed vs. Flexed Feet	28
Levels	28
Alternate	28
Around the World	28
Combinations	28
Counts/Rhythm	28
Circles	28
Open and Close	28
B@rre Foot Positions	29
B@rre Stance	29

Modified B@rre Stance	29
1st Position	29
Modified 1st Position	29
2nd Position	30
Modified 2nd Position	30
3rd Position	30
4th Position	30
5th Position	30
B@rre Arm Positions	31
1st Position	31
2nd Position	31
3rd Position	31
Other Terminology	31
Plie	32
CHAPTER 9: Music	34
Music	34
B@rre Playlist	34
Guidelines	34
Pick a theme	35
Follow the Elements	35
Refer to the format and timing	35
Decide the dynamics of your class	35
Use the dynamics and modulations within each song	35
CHAPTER 10: B@rre Positioning	36
Side-to-Barre	36
Angle Away	36
Angle In	36
Front-to-Barre	36
CHAPTER 11: Special Populations	38
PREGNANCY	38
SPINE	38
Fused Disks	38
Scoliosis	39

SHOULDER	39
WRIST	39
Arthritic Wrists	39
PELVIS	39
Hip Replacement.....	40
KNEES	40
FEET	40
Vertigo	40
Osteoporosis	40

Primary Barre Instructor Certification

Objective: To train and certify individuals to teach in a group setting a basic fitness barre class of which movements combine the elements of Pilates, yoga, and ballet while focusing on strength, flexibility, balance, breathing, and mind/body connection.

Learning Objective 1: During the 8-hour certification, participants will obtain a working knowledge of the purpose, benefits, target population, and history of fitness barre.

Learning Objective 2: After the 8-hour certification, participants will be able to identify and apply the 8 principles of fitness barre within a barre workout class.

Learning Objective 3: After the 8-hour certification, participants will be able to explain and demonstrate key barre terminology often used in a basic fitness barre workout.

Learning Objective 4: During the 8-hour certification, participants will obtain a working knowledge of musculature anatomy and be able to select proper barre exercises that target specific muscle groups.

Learning Objective 5: After the 8-hour certification, participants will be able to explain the importance of the three planes of movement and how they apply to a basic barre workout.

Learning Objective 6: After the 8-hour certification, participants will be able to choose appropriate music and equipment to instruct a well-organized and structured basic fitness barre class.

Learning Objective 7: After the 8-hour certification, participants will be able to format and instruct a safe and effective basic fitness barre class incorporating 60 barre movements while demonstrating proper cueing, body alignment, and technique.

Objective Outcome: These objectives will be measured by a 100 question written exam requiring the participant to achieve a passing grade of 75%.

CHAPTER 1: B@rre Fundamentals

Definition of a Barre Workout: The barre technique is a workout routine that combines elements of ballet, Pilates, yoga, and light weight training into an efficient and effective workout. Barre is a total body workout that utilizes a ballet barre to perform small isometric movements set to popular music. By using one's own bodyweight as resistance while challenging the core, stability, and balance, barre classes manage to give one the streamlined body of a dancer while reinforcing strength and muscle tone. The barre serves as a prop, along with exercise balls, resistance bands, and light hand weights. Example moves include squeezing a ball between the inner thighs while standing on tiptoes, and tiny leg lifts with the back pressed against the wall and hands grasping the barre above. The class burns fat and produces lifted seats, toned arms, long/lean thighs and flat abs all within a 60-minute intense session.

History of Barre Workout: The Primary Fitness Barre workout was born when former ballerina, Lotte Berk opened The Lotte Berk Method on Manchester Street in London. After suffering a back injury, Lotte Berk got the idea of combining her ballet barre training with rehabilitative therapy, and thus The Lotte Berk Method was born. In 1971 the method was introduced to the United States when Lydia Bach, one of Lotte's students, opened The Lotte Berk Method in Manhattan. The premise of the Lotte Berk Method centered on using one's own body weight and a wall-mounted ballet barre to perform whole-body strength and flexibility exercises to develop a dancer's body.

The Lotte Berk Method quickly built an intensely loyal following that included Madison Avenue socialites and Hollywood celebrities. Today, many modern-day barre workouts are offered at yoga, dance, and fitness studios across the world.

Benefits of a Barre Workout:

1. Burns Calories And Fat
2. Protects Joints
3. Strength And Flexibility Moves Alternating Throughout The Class Creating Long Lean Muscle Without Bulk
4. Restores Natural Balance And Coordination
5. Improves Posture
6. Stimulates The Circulatory System
7. Reduces Stress, Fatigue, Discomfort, and Pain
8. Boosts Immune System
9. Helps To Prevent Bone Deterioration
10. Increases Focus Obtaining Mental Health Benefits Achieved In Yoga Or Meditation
11. Developed For All Fitness Levels

Target Population: Created for each and every unique body type, the barre workout incorporates concise isometric movements to develop long and lean muscles for everyone. Instructors of all ages and sizes take their class on a journey to tighter glutes, leaner legs,

and toner arms (all with the help of great music!). No matter one's fitness level or mindset one has on exercise, fitness barre offers a one-of-a-kind workout experience that will have students coming back for more!

Recommended Wear: Recommended clothing for a barre workout consists of leggings or capris. Shorts are not recommended. Wearing flexible and comfortable clothing is essential to a successful workout. Wearing socks is mandatory. Socks with grippers on the bottom provide one with a secure footing for some of the more advanced workout positions.

B@rre strives to equip compassionate, skilled fitness instructors with tools that empower clients to attain their best possible fitness level. During this program, each trainee will learn the philosophy, exercises and elements of the B@rre classes. Along with the exercises, trainees will practice and learn the Beyond-Barre Elements and Teaching Compass that will prepare them to teach each class with confidence and creativity.

The B@rre exercise program is a cardio-infused workout that uses classical ballet barre exercises to strengthen and develop long, lean muscles. The workout incorporates upper-body sculpting, a stomach-flattening abdominal series. Balls, bands and light weights can be incorporated into a B@rre workout for extra challenge and fun. Modifications for each exercise make the program appropriate and customizable for all fitness levels.

The B@rre workout focuses on proper body alignment to produce optimum body-transforming results and avoid strain and injury. B@rre exercises are performed with a neutral pelvis, honoring the natural curves of the spine. This neutral position is healthy for the lower back and helps maintain flexible hip flexors and long, lean quadriceps. Working with a neutral pelvis reduces stress on the joints and helps to create the dancer's physique that clients desire.

Creativity is also an important aspect of B@rre. The Creativity Tools and Body Positions for each exercise offer a variety of ways to change the workout as well as challenge the clients. In short, B@rre is a total-body workout, one that slims and strengthens while improving flexibility and cardiovascular health.

Until recently, the ballet barre has been used strictly by dancers to help gain control of muscles, increase flexibility and develop lean muscles throughout the entire body. The creators of B@rre have made this useful piece of equipment accessible to anyone looking for a fun, challenging way to stay in shape.

The Important Anatomy section of this manual describes the torso as a "box" that does not shift even as the arms and legs perform the action. This static position is

challenging and trains the body and mind for the next levels of B@rre. When clients have mastered the connections, introduce a variation from the Body Positions list.

Body Positions included in each exercise description create new variations of the exercises. Choose the body position to create the desired outcome of the workout. For example, rotating the torso and spine in will challenge flexibility and may be chosen to give the class a stretch focus.

As the class progresses, the instructor may incorporate more than one body position to allow for more dynamic movement and make each exercise—and the class—more challenging for the mind and body. Choose the body positions that will help you give your class a focus, whether it's sculpting, stretching or endurance building. More difficult moves and more complicated choreography will add to the dynamics of the class and allow clients to continue to experience changes in their bodies.

Have fun with the various body positions recommended for each exercise. Clients should be able to maintain all of their connections, allowing for the instructor to challenge them with choreography and variations. Have fun, create a class focus, and challenge your clients!

CHAPTER 2: Principles

6 Main Principles

Alignment

Proper alignment is essential to safe and effective movement execution. For proper alignment, gravity pulls down through the vertical axis of our skeletal system rather than stressing muscles and soft tissue. This relationship directly affects the alignment of our head, shoulder girdle, spine, pelvic girdle, knees, ankles and feet (see neutral posture). Posture is the position we hold each joint of our bodies in against gravity. The pull of gravity is the primary reason people are misalignment.

Center

The center is the core, powerhouse and the middle. It is the foundation for all other movement. Core stability is required to move with control. Spinal and pelvic stabilization are at the heart of core stability, and our core is paramount to alignment.

Concentration

Concentrating on each movement of every exercise and connecting the mind to the body. Concentration is focusing on the task at hand and not thinking about the problems of the day

Control

Neuromuscular control is simply the mind sending a signal to the muscle, which results in movement. Sloppy movements are controlled by forces of gravity such as momentum while intentional movement requires control

Fluidity

Fluid and graceful movements require coordination. Movements should have the appearance of being executed with ease before we progress. One muscle engages and continues to work until the next muscle engages and then flows into the exercise.

Precision

Precision creates efficient and effective movement. Precision requires focus on perfect technique for every movement of every repetition of every exercise. Pay attention to details to maintain ideal alignment movement with perfections. You must also recover when necessary to continue with form that ensures safety, efficiency and economy of movement.

8 Additional Principles

Neutral Pelvic Tuck

When performing barre exercises whether the exercises are performed standing, seated, or lying down, one should ensure that the body maintains a neutral spine. The terminology that is typically used in a barre for- mat is to perform a *neutral pelvic tuck*. However, this terminology should not be confused with an exaggerated posterior tilt of the pelvic region (ASIS-Anterior Superior Iliac Spine). Understanding common posture misalignments will enlighten an

individual as to the differences between what is proper spinal alignment and improper spinal alignment. Practicing proper body and spinal alignment will prevent injury and encourage a more efficient and effective workout maximizing results.

Anterior Tilt (Hyperlordosis Back) Anterior pelvic tilt is when the front of the pelvis drops or tilts forward and the back of the pelvis rises. This happens when the hip flexors shorten and the hip extensors lengthen. The abdominals (rectus abdominis) are usually weak and the back muscles (erector spinae) are tight. This imbalance may lead to hyperlordosis which is an exaggerated curve of the lower back (lumbar spine).

Posterior Tilt (Flat Back) Posterior pelvic tilt is when the front of the pelvis rises or tilts back and the back of the pelvis drops. This happens when the hip flexors lengthen and the hip extensors shorten, particularly the gluteus maximus which is the primary hyper-extensor of the hip. The spine is rounded with the rectus abdominis shortened and the erector spinae lengthened.

Forward Shifted Pelvis (Swayback) Swayback is when an individual has an abnormally hollow or sagging back. There is an excessive downward curvature of the spinal column.

Neutral Pelvis The alignment of the ASIS (Anterior Superior Iliac Spine – aka Hip Points) and the Pubic Bone in line with each other in the Coronal Plane. (Remember that the Coronal Plane is the plane that divides you in half creating front and back; anterior and posterior.) You can create this alignment when lying down, sitting up, kneeling and standing up.

Neutral Spine The natural and balanced curves of the spine when in Neutral Pelvis. When the pelvis is in its neutral position, it allows for the most amount of space between each vertebra as they are aligned in their natural curves. Coccyx – lordotic, Sacrum – kyphotic, Lumbar – lordotic, Thoracic – kyphotic, Cervical – lordotic.

1-Inch Rule: Small and Controlled Movements

When performing barre exercises you will perform small and controlled movements that target slow twitch fibers which improves endurance. Performing exercises within a range of motion of one (1) inch enables one to perform exercises in high volume. This type of movement simulates an isometric muscle contraction with a mini break in between contractions. There will be times in the barre workout where the exercise being performed will be held in the same position for a period of time.

Isometric Progression: 1-Inch Up & Down, Pulse, Sharp Pulse

Each exercise performed in a barre class can follow a series of movements that includes moving the muscle a certain number of reps 1-inch up and down, pulsing, and then sharpening the pulse. The instructor chooses the exercise, cues the students to perform the exercise in full extension (full range of motion). Then the instructor cues the students to shorten the exercise to the 1-inch rule (1-inch up/1-inch down). Then the instructor cues the students to pulse the exercise “at the top of the contraction or lift”. Then the instructor cues the students to “sharpen the pulse”. To

cue the students to sharpen the pulse, the instructor may say “Up and Hold”, “Release and Up”, or “Release and Hold”.

The Shake

It is normal for participants to feel a shaking or quivering of the muscles. Shaking is the muscles' response to the work placed on them and they are gently forced to fatigue. This is actually a sign that the exercise is being performed properly and that the muscles are fatiguing in order to gain strength and endurance.

Full Extension

One of the goals of a barre class is to create length and strength within the muscles eliciting a long, lean body. In order to accomplish this goal, one should execute each exercise with full extension prior to moving into the Isometric Progression. Full extension of the body as a whole and as individual parts will create a long, lean, sculpted look. The barre class incorporates both isometric movements and full extension movements to simulate real life functionality.

Strength and Stretch

Because a main goal of the barre exercises is to lengthen and strengthen the body using multiple muscles at the same time, each exercise is followed by a stretch. This is different from a traditional exercise format where all of the flexibility exercises and stretches are performed at the end of class. In a barre class, the stretches are sprinkled throughout the class with a refreshing yoga series at the end of class.

Focus

Mind and body connection is a must in order to achieve maximum results from a barre class. Performing the smaller movements in a barre class brings on a whole new level of body awareness which improves muscle activation for frequently underused smaller muscles. This practice strengthens the neuro-muscular connection.

Breathing

Oxygen is imperative to the working muscles. In addition to oxygen, the manner in which one breathes determines the effectiveness of the barre exercise. In general, one should breathe in through the nose and exhale forcefully out through the mouth. As one inhales he/she should expand the ribcage out to the sides. As one exhales, he/she should do so forcefully drawing the ribcage in as though being cinched in a corset. When exhaling in this manner, the exercise can be performed with more intensity making the exercise more effective. Inhale to prepare for a movement, exhale as you perform the movement. In the yoga sun salutation, inhale when you open in a pose, exhale when you fold or close a pose. As you hold a yoga pose, breathe deep. Every time you exhale within a yoga pose, go deeper into the stretch.

CHAPTER 3: Equipment

Ballet Barre

Fixed, wall-mounted ballet barres are typically set from 36-42 inches high and 6-9 inches from the wall. Free-standing barres are a great option when space is limited and wall-mounted is not an option. Free-standing barres are adjustable in height.

Hand Weights

NAFTA recommends using 1- to 5 pound weights.

Ball

A 9-inch ball can be used as an add-in for some exercises.

Bands

Long resistance bands and resistance bands with ankle cuffs can be used as add-ins for some exercises.

Mat

Mats should be at least a half-inch thick.

Bolster

A bolster (28 x 10 inches) is used to support the spine in the Low Barre section. (If your barres are not wall-mounted, you won't need bolsters.)

CHAPTER 4: B@rre Elements

The B@rre Elements are designed to ensure a continuous flow of energy throughout the class by working muscles to fatigue and then stretching to ensure long, lean muscles and prevent soreness. The work is done from standing to midlevel to lying to create a logical evolution throughout the class.

1. **Warm-Up:** Gets blood flowing and heats up the body before the workout begins. This helps prevent muscle strain or injury while working out.
2. **Weights:** Isolates and sculpts the arm muscles. Distal load provides additional challenge to the core.
3. **High Barre:** Primarily works the legs for an additional challenge to the core.
4. **Mid Barre:** Isolates the legs, strengthens the back muscles and the abdominals. Lifts and firms the butt.
5. **Low Barre:** Challenges the legs in a seated position while strengthening the abdominals.
6. **Floor Work:** Strengthens the core and provides an additional challenge to the upper and lower body.
7. **Wrap-Up:** Consists of Jumps in Center, Stretches at Barre and Balance.

Jumps in the Center: Increases the heart rate, promotes bone density and creates muscle heat prior to the final stretches.

Stretches at Barre: Cool down to lengthen the fatigued muscles and increase flexibility and range of motion.

Balance: Improves the body's balance and awareness in space.

Optional steps: The addition of balls, bands and small weights provides additional challenge while keeping the workouts fun and creative.

CHAPTER 5: The B@rre Instructor

The B@rre Instructor Conduct is based on four concepts that provide a clear, concise approach to teaching.

Professionalism

Maintain a high standard of professionalism when dealing with clients. Respect the line between instructor and client. You are there to provide a safe yet effective B@rre workout.

As an instructor and leader of the class, it is imperative that you maintain a level of professionalism at all times at the studio. Dress appropriately and practice hygienic grooming behavior. In other words, dress in fitness barre clothes including sticky socks and look “well-put together”. When you look good, then you feel more confident. When you are more confident, your students will have more confidence in your ability to instruct them. Save socializing chit-chat for before and after class. Even then, be aware of the content of conversations. Have fun with your students, but also understand that there is a line between student and teacher while in the studio.

Safety

Before each workout, check the equipment for safety. Make sure the barre is secure and splinter-free. Encourage clients to hold the barre if they feel unstable. If clients are unstable in exercises, refer to the modifications.

Consistency

Stay true to the Teaching Compass and Elements of the B@rre program. Avoid deviating from the program in order to ensure the integrity of the exercise form.

Awareness

Be “tuned in” to each client. Be aware of what they are doing (and maybe what they shouldn’t be doing.) Consider each client’s limitations and make modifications if necessary. When appropriate, know when it is safe to increase difficulty in an exercise. Tell each client that they too must be aware of how they feel during an exercise. Ask clients if they have injuries or pain. Be cautious, modify or leave out an exercise if it causes pain.

Keeping Current in the Industry

Always stay up-to-date on what is happening in the fitness industry. Read industry publications and choose reputable websites to research. Know what your students are being exposed to in the news and on the web regarding new health and fitness trends. Your students see you as the expert, and they may have questions for you regarding what they are reading and hearing. Be ready to field questions; however, know your limitations. If you do not know what your students are asking, tell them that you will research it and get back to them. Your students appreciate your level of dedication and you will be more knowledgeable for it. In addition,

maintain a current status with your certifications and attend continuing education workshops.

CHAPTER 6: Teaching B@rre

The Say It, Count It, and Focus It teaching formula is the backbone of the B@rre method. In every class, the teacher leads the students in exercises following the teaching compass steps.

Say It – Tell the client how to do the exercise.

SET-UP: Set clients up in the exercise.

ACTION: Get clients moving. Use a dynamic voice. Voice modulations and energy create encouragement, support and command. Use your voice creatively with a balance of rhythm, enthusiasm and dynamic energy to create a fun atmosphere.

Count It – Start slowly for accuracy then build to tempo.

Use counts to create a rhythm within an action. Counts build to repetitions, which in turn build into sets. For example, when teaching tendu, the instructor might take 2 counts to extend the leg and 2 counts to drag the leg in; repeat the action 8 times (repetitions); and perform the 8 repetitions 4 times (sets).

Focus It - Focus and challenge the client by giving cues, connections and guide techniques.

Cues are the phrases and imagery used to correct body alignment as well as challenge clients. The cues are also used to stabilize, center and create opposition in the body.

Guide techniques are a way to verbally or with touch, guide the client into proper body positions. Always ask a client before you touch to guide to a correct position. NEVER force a client's body position.

Primary Class Format

- Warm-up (1 Song)
- Barre: Lower Body (1 Song)
- Barre: Upper Body (1 Song)
- Floor: Lower Body (1 Song)
- Floor: Upper Body (1 Song)
- Barre: Lower Body Prop (1 Song)
- Barre: Upper Body Prop (1 Song)
- Floor: Lower Body Prop (1 Song)

- Floor: Upper Body Prop (1 Song)
- Floor/Barre Core (2 Songs)
- Cool-Down Yoga/Meditation (2 Songs)

CHAPTER 7: Cuing a B@rre Class

TYPES OF CUES

- Connections Cue
- Challenge Cue
- Imagery Cue

GUIDE TECHNIQUES

- Visual Guide
- Touch Guide
- Surround Guide

TYPES OF CUES

Cues are the words that help clients find proper body positions, enhance the intra-muscular connections and increase challenge during an exercise. Focus on 1-2 cues per exercise.

Connections Cue

Corrects a client's body alignment and position. For example, "Draw the abdominals in and up."

Challenge Cue

Makes an exercise more difficult by adding work to another part of the body that is not primarily working. For example, "Hug the mid-line of the legs in B@rre stance" while doing the weights progression.

Imagery Cue

An image that relates to the exercise and is given to increase energy and difficulty. For example, "Imagine you are squashing lemons into the floor as you lower your heels."

Connecting the Cuing

Connections are ways to engage the body for a focused B@rre workout. Always work from proximal to distal positions. Start with the abdominal connection and progress distally. Engaging the connections below create stability. Maintaining these connections help to ensure proper body positioning and makes the workout more challenging.

Abdominals

This is the primary cue and connection. Clients should be able to maintain a strong abdominal connection before progressing or layering on other connections and cues. Strong abdominals are an important part of a strong body and can help reduce overall strain and injury. Clients with back pain often find relief when the

abdominals are strengthened. Deepening and lengthening the abdominals places them in the proper position to better support the spine.

Supporting and honoring the natural curves of the spine lets the client move optimally. When the abdominals deepen in towards the spine and lengthen up the spine, this supports the spine and puts the pelvis into a neutral position.

Shoulder Girdle

This is the secondary connection and cue, but equal to the abdominals for posture and optimal body alignment. When the shoulders are in an ideal position and the abdominals are in and up, the spine is more fully supported. For example, cue the client to place their shoulders on and gliding down their back.

Midline

The midline of the body is the centerline. Imagine a straight line from the middle of the forehead to the nose, all the way down to between the ankle bones. The midline can also mean the space in between limbs, or the space between two sets of limbs. Cueing the midline activates the muscles in the outer extremities and works the muscles closer to the bone. (ex: Cue the inner thighs to hug the midline.)

Opposition

This is the last layer of the cues. Opposition uses two cues that both root and extend the muscles, while cueing stabilization. Opposition connections create longer and leaner muscles and create energy throughout the body.

Guide Techniques

Guide clients into proper positions whenever possible with the use of verbal cues or your hands. This will provide an auditory or tactile experience to enable the client to find proper alignment and can add additional challenge to the work. ALWAYS ask before you touch. NEVER “force” a client’s position. Always touch with purpose.

Visual Guide: The instructor may choose to have the client guide their own body into the correct position. This can be done by having the client look down at themselves or in a mirror.

Touch Guide: The instructor physically guides the client into the proper position or movement.

Surround Guide: Without touching the client, the instructor uses their hands to restrict the client’s movement and so creates the limits for the movement.

Physically Adjusting Clients Form and Alignment

Physically adjusting students into the correct position is very helpful in helping to develop muscle memory for new students. Approaching a student to place your hands on his/her body must be performed with grace and ease. Touch the person with respect and gentleness to ease him/her into proper position. Always announce to the class that you may need to physically adjust individuals to help with technique. Ask your students to let you know if this will make them feel uncomfortable or if they have any issues that require their bodies to be misaligned. Communication is KEY when physically adjusting students' form and alignment.

Facilitating/Leading a Class

Remember that you are the instructor and the workout is for your students. Teaching a class does not mean that this is the instructor's workout time. You are the leader of the group! You are there to facilitate a workout and not get a workout yourself. Keep your eyes open for misalignments and poor technique. It is your job to correct, coach, and encourage!

CHAPTER 8: B@rre Terminology

Turnout vs. Parallel Legs

For B@rre, turning out the legs is the ideal in some exercises; parallel is used mainly as a modification. However, both can be used to challenge and work different muscles in each exercise.

Pointed vs. Flexed Feet

When performing ballet-inspired exercises, the tendency is to point the toes. Using flexed feet creates variety as well as change the function of the exercise. Also, when using the arms, the hands can point down to the floor or flex up to the ceiling.

Levels

Changing the level of an exercise—from standing to demi plié to grand plié, for example— can vary the difficulty. Use this tool to challenge and vary an exercise. Using different levels for the torso and arms can achieve more difficulty within an exercise.

Alternate

Alternating arms, legs, feet or hands provides variety, challenges the mind and allows the client to rest one side of the body.

Around the World

Alternating the direction of an exercise from front, side, back and then in reverse provides challenge and works the body from all sides.

Combinations

Combining different creativity tools, as well as combining exercises, builds stamina, creates seamless transitions between exercises, and challenges the mind and body.

Counts/Rhythm

Changing the counts or rhythm of an exercise can vary the workout, creating more of a challenge for the mind and body.

Circles

Make big or small circles with either the arms or legs to create a different dynamic and challenge for an exercise.

Open and Close

Add an open and close action with arms or legs to create more difficulty within an exercise.

B@rre Foot Positions

B@rre Stance

The ideal stance for the B@rre workout: The feet are parallel, inner hip-width apart; arms are at the sides of the body; the pelvis is in a neutral position; abdominals deepen in towards the spine and lengthen up the spine to create support; the shoulder blades are on and glide down the back; all limbs hug into the midline; the knees are slightly bent and soft to avoid hyper-extension; all points of the foot are on the floor to prevent pronation or supination.

The B@rre stance is maintained throughout the B@rre workout so the client is in a position to sustain and challenge their stability connections (described in the Connections section.) A 9” ball can be used between the knees to help maintain the proper inner hip width apart stance.

Modified B@rre Stance

This modified stance is used for clients who have hip conditions or injuries: Instead of being parallel, the feet are inner hip-width apart with a slight outward rotation of the legs. The slight outward rotation puts the legs in an anatomically natural stance.

As in the B@rre stance, a client in the modified B@rre stance should have a neutral pelvis; abdominals deepen in towards the spine and lengthen up the spine to create support; shoulder blades are on and glide down the back; all limbs hug into the midline; knees are slightly bent and soft to avoid hyper-extension; all points of the foot on the floor to avoid pronation or supination.

1st Position

In 1st position of the feet, the legs are rotated outward from the hip sockets, the heels are together and the toes and balls of the feet apart. This classical ballet position is the primary and fundamental position used to create long, lean, sculpted leg muscles. 1st position is used in the barre portion of the B@rre workout. This is a challenging position to maintain with stability. The instructor must cue a neutral pelvis along with the abdominals deepening in towards the spine and lengthening up the spine. In 1st Position, the hips should never be forced into an extreme externally rotated placement.

Modified 1st Position

Modified 1st position is similar to 1st position, but with less rotation in the hip sockets. In Modified 1st position, the balls of the feet should be only fist-distance apart when the heels are together. This is an optimal natural anatomical position. Modified 1st position creates less strain on the musculature of the pelvis and allows the pelvis to be in a natural position. This stance is best for clients who are experiencing hip issues.

2nd Position

In 2nd position legs are externally rotated from the hip socket, the heels are a little wider than hip-width apart and the balls of the feet and toes wider still. This classical ballet position is the second fundamental position used to sculpt and lengthen the leg muscles. 2nd position is used in the barre portion of the Barre workout. The pelvis is in a neutral position and the abdominals deepen in towards the spine and lengthen up the spine.

This position is not as challenging as 1st position because there is a wider base of support. However, the external rotation creates instability, which can make this position challenging. Cue the client to keep the midline connection between the inner thigh muscles, which will create deeper work into those muscles. In 2nd Position, the hips should never be forced into an extreme outward rotation.

Modified 2nd Position

Modified 2nd position is the same set-up as the ideal 2nd position, but with less external rotation. This slight rotation will put the body back into a natural stance, which is taken from the optimal anatomical alignment.

This stance is also best for clients who have hip issues such as injuries. Modified 2nd position will allow clients to get the most out of the exercises while maintaining a neutral pelvis, putting less strain on muscles and joints.

3rd Position

Now slide your foot back to touch the other, but instead of touching heels together as in first position, this time bring one foot further across the other. The heel of your front foot should be touching the area of the arch of your back foot. It's from third position that you'll probably start most of your barre exercises from as a beginner, so take a little time to find and get used to this position.

4th Position

4th position is a position in which the feet are at right angles to the direction of the body, the toes pointing out, with one foot forward and the other foot back

5th Position

5th position, the feet are turned out and pressed closely together, the heel of the one foot against the toe of the other.

B@rre Arm Positions

1st Position

This is the main ballet position of the arms for beginners. Keep your arms relaxed and roughly the width of your face apart. Your hands shouldn't be touching your thighs. Keep them just an inch or so in front of you.

2nd Position

Arms are out to the sides, angled down and forward, with palms facing forward. El-bows are slightly lower than the shoulders, and wrists are level with the elbow.

3rd Position

Arms are extended above your head, slightly frontward as arms maintain a gently curved line. Shoulders must be kept down.

Other Terminology

Arabesque

The body is supported on one leg, with the other leg extended directly behind the body with a straight knee. The standing leg can be straight or in Plié, but the back leg must always be straight. Arabesque can be found in almost every aspect of ballet, both contemporary and classical, as well as other dance forms. Arabesque can be done with the back leg either on the ground or raised in the air.

Attitude Lift

A position where the dancer is standing on one leg with the other lifted usually to the front or back. The leg in the air is bent at the knee so that it forms roughly a 45 degree angle.

Chasse

To move or slide across the room. The word means "To Chase". One foot chases the other. Going from 1st to 2nd position. The movement can go side-ways or forward and backwards.

Demi

Demi is a classical ballet term meaning "half." It is the direct translation of the French word and should always be a part of another term. For example, demi-Plié means "half bend at the knees." Demi is used less commonly for other terms like demi-arabesque, meaning "half arabesque," or demi-tour, meaning "half-turn."

Fondu

A classical ballet term meaning "sinking down," It describes both the movement and the quality of a dancer where they are doing a plié on a single leg. If you think of a plié being for two legs, a fondu is the same, just for one. Fondu is one of the most beneficial exercises at barre because it allows the dancers to work against gravity, push strongly against the floor, and focus on controlling the movement every inch of the way.

Grande

A classical ballet term meaning "big" or "large." It is always used to describe another step. For example, *grande alle-gro* translates to "big jumps." Or, *grande jete* means "big throw."

Parallel

A position of the feet or legs being in a parallel position in reference to one another. This position is in opposition to the turn-out.

Passe

A classical ballet term meaning "passed." It refers to the movement when a dancer goes through a retiré position, which is when one leg is bent so it looks like a triangle with the foot placed near the other leg's knee.

Plié

A movement when a dancer is bending at the knees. Pliés are typically done in 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th positions in classical ballet, both at the barre and center in classes. Correct use and development of a plié is a basic but essential movement to technique. Pliés act as a sort of springboard for all jumps and are an important key for turns. Additionally, a correct and functional plié is necessary for smooth transitions between movements. Most importantly, a plié helps provide the proper cushioning when landing from jumps, keeping the dancer from becoming easily injured and able to dance very long ballets and dances.

Pelvic Tuck

The position of the pelvic region in a neutral pelvis or neutral spine.

Releve

A classical ballet term meaning "raised." It describes the action when a dancer rises up and seemingly is standing "on their toes". It can be done in many different positions and on one or both legs. Relevé is a step that builds a lot of strength in a dancer's feet, calves, and thighs that allows him or her to do many types of jumps and turns.

Turn Out

A position of the legs where the hips are rotated outwards as opposed to parallel. The turn-out occurs at the hips. In turn the feet will be positioned with the heels turned in and the toes will be turned out in a 'V' position.

Tendu

The action of stretching your leg and foot out from one position to another while keeping it on the floor. Tendu literally translates from French as "stretched". A tendu in classical ballet, outside of a class, is most commonly seen as a preparation for more complex steps such as a pirouette or jump.

CHAPTER 9: Music

Changing the counts can make an exercise easier or more challenging. For example, using more counts to do an exercise slows the action. Going slower allows clients to do the exercise with proper technique and understanding. But holding a position for a beat or two also requires more strength and endurance. Conversely, using fewer counts will quicken the action. This will challenge the client's mind and connections, which also increases the difficulty of the exercise.

Music

B@rre incorporates music to add fun, energetic rhythm to each class. Instructors can use music to create a variety of dynamics and rhythms for each exercise. Be aware of the class and its fitness level and determine the pace and dynamic of the class accordingly.

Especially with mixed-level, beginning classes, use music as a “pulse” for the class. However, because most B@rre classes include clients in a range of fitness levels, staying on a strict beat will be difficult. Starting on the first beat of the measure could actually lengthen the class beyond the 55-minute format. Having strict counts for the entire workout means the entire class must be pre-choreographed and the clients must know the entire routine. Advanced clients and classes can move to this kind of momentum, but it is not required.

B@rre Playlist

In B@rre, music is used as a tool. The tempo, or pace, of music can set the speed of the class; the dynamics are the variations in loudness and softness; modulations are changes of key; all these elements might change in recurring patterns or rhythms. An instructor can use music to guide the class.

Music is also motivating: When clients think they can't make it to the end of a set, music can help them push through fatigue and exert themselves more than they may have previously thought was possible. Listening to familiar songs also increases positive feelings. When an event or activity makes us feel good, we want to repeat that activity. In B@rre, our goals are to increase positivity, empower clients and promote camaraderie within each class. Music can be an important instrument to help clients form bonds and feel good.

Guidelines

Here are some guidelines for choosing and using music in any B@rre class.

Pick a theme

Be certain to have a variety of music at your studio so you can set different tones for each class. For example, you may want slower tempo for B@rre Basics and higher energy music for other levels. Also, choose music that will appeal to all of your clients. There are millions of songs to choose from, so mix up your choice of artists to ensure everyone enjoying the music.

Follow the Elements

When creating a playlist for a B@rre class, keep the seven elements in mind. For example, in *B@rre Grace*, the Warm Up music may be slower at first to match with the slower movement of the beginning warm up.

Refer to the format and timing

Each progression lasts from 5 to 10 minutes. When choosing music remember to calculate the length of each song to match, as best as possible, the duration of the section.

Decide the dynamics of your class

Ask yourself these questions: Do you want the warm-up to start slow and build to a quicker tempo? Or would you like the class to start with high energy and a fast pace? Where would you like to slow the class? How would you like the class to end?

Use the dynamics and modulations within each song

This is important when deciding on how your class will flow. Increasing and decreasing the heart rate will allow for more stamina and a higher calorie burn. Remember that every client is at a different fitness level and should work at their own pace and tempo. With this in mind, challenge clients when appropriate by keeping them on the beat or by holding for a few beats longer. Just because a song may be slower, doesn't mean it will make the work easier! This is where you'll find the most creativity and variety in each class.

CHAPTER 10: B@rre Positioning

Barre positioning are used to conserve space in a class setting, but can also be used as a innovative tool to challenge clients.

Side-to-Barre

Stand adjacent to the bar with feet in either 1st or 2nd position with one hand lightly touching the barre and the other arm in 1st or 2nd position.

Angle Away

Start in Parallel Facing and turn body away from barre about 45°. Move the hand on the barre forward slightly and place the other arm in the position indicated for the exercise. This facing allows clients a greater range of movement in a crowded class.

Angle In

Start in Parallel Facing and turn body toward barre about 45°. Move the hand on the barre forward slightly. The other arm reaches forward matching the line made with the back leg, which creates a counter-balance. This facing also allows clients a greater range of movement in a crowded class.

Front-to-Barre

Stand facing the barre with both hands on the bar.

CHAPTER 11: Special Populations

B@rre is designed for every “body.” Each exercise has an ideal set-up and position, as well as any necessary modifications for individual cases. The Special Cases below are for the instructor to use as a guide to ensure a safe and effective workout regardless of individual limitations. Clients with medical conditions, including pregnancy, should always consult their physician and receive personalized advice and guidelines before taking part in a B@rre class.

PREGNANCY

Make sure the client brings water to class and does not become overheated. Due to extra blood volume, pregnant women can become dizzy easily. Changing positions (sitting to standing, prone to sitting, etc.) has to be done gradually; standing stationary may also bring on dizziness.

If the client has been exercising regularly prior to pregnancy, she should be able to maintain her routine during the first trimester. During the second trimester, prone positions, inversions, and deep twisting should be eliminated. During the third trimester lighten or forgo abdominal work, avoid overstretching, and do not hold supine positions for more than 1 minute. Encourage her to hold the barre for additional support as her body changes and balance may be off.

SPINE

Herniated Disks

Chronic herniations should be separated into non-symptomatic and chronic symptomatic. With all herniations a stronger core will help create better alignment and more disc space and alleviate pain.

Non-symptomatic clients can do everything in a workout as long as neutral pelvis is the focus: Avoid all tucking. This allows the client to begin to create space in between the disc spaces. This is also dependent on proper cueing by the teacher. If the herniations are in the neck, use lighter weights for all arm work. Have clients curl their head up for mat work as long as there is no pain; if there is pain, leave the head down or prop up with a ball or a bolster (ex. Mat Work- Lift Up). If the herniations are in the lower back, be careful of seated work and forward flexion (ex. Low Barre). Minimize glute and hamstring work as this can aggravate lower back herniations (ex. Leg Isolation Series).

Fused Disks

Don’t expect individual articulation of each vertebra. There will also be limited range of motion during twisting and forward flexion.

Scoliosis

No specific precautions should be made for this individual. With scoliosis, you often see imbalance in placement. Cue clients to be square and even but know it will not be perfect. If one side is substantially weaker than the other you could use a heavier weight on the weaker side for all standing arm weights. The same applies to Barre Work; use an ankle weight on the weak side to try to put the body into better balance.

SHOULDER

Rotator Cuff Injury

There are many people that have rotator cuff issues, ranging from a small degree of tendonitis to complete tears. People with acute rotator cuff injuries should not attend a Barre class. For all others, most importantly, always have your client plugging their shoulder into the socket. Be cautious with all shoulder stretches and make sure that the client does not hang in the joint or overstretch. Avoid lifting the arms overhead especially with weights. Small ranges of motion are critical, especially with chronic shoulder issues. The intent is to strengthen the small muscles around the joint and ease the strain on the ligaments.

WRIST

Carpel Tunnel

Exercise and movement will help chronic carpal tunnel. Strengthening the core musculature of the primary and secondary connections will enable the wrists to heal. Stretching the wrists will also help open up space around the median nerve and therefore relieve pressure on the nerve. If weight-bearing work such as plank causes discomfort, the client can go down to the forearms. Innervations of the forearm musculature come from the lower cervical and upper thoracic spine.

Arthritic Wrists

People with arthritic wrists should be assumed to have arthritis of the cervical spine. Any plank position should be done with the wrists in a natural hand out position—consider putting blocks under the wrists to provide a broader base of support. If weight-bearing work is too difficult for the wrist, the client can go down to the forearms. Most arthritic wrists aren't so severe that major accommodations would need to be made. Teachers should encourage clients to keep strengthening the wrists as much as possible to combat arthritis.

PELVIS

Bursitis

The only movements that should be avoided are those that cause pain. Advise small ranges of motion with the joint plugged into the torso. Avoid forcing any position.

Hip Replacement

Be certain that clients who have hip replacements are cleared by their doctor and physical therapist before attending class. Hip replacements age and wear down: A typical life span of a hip replacement is 10 years. Therefore, the longer the client has had the replacement the more cautious we should be. Refer to the modified stance and foot placement. Avoid crossing the mid- line (ex. Leg Isolation Series) and deep flexion of the hip (ex. Low Barre, Mermaid, Second-Side Lunge Stretch).

KNEES

ACL/MCL Injury

People with acute ACL or MCL injuries should not attend a B@rre class. Be certain that anyone recovering from surgery has been cleared by their doctor before attending class. Refer to modified stances and foot placement.

FEET

Plantar Fasciitis (fash-ee-ahy-tis)

People with acute plantar fasciitis pain should not attend a B@rre class. Plantar fasciitis has many contributing causes. Working the leg in natural stance is critical. Plantar Fasciitis usually follows a significant pronation in the foot, which also comes from the knee and hip. All of the work we are doing in B@rre, will help improve the function of the muscles involved, B@rre helping them toward strong natural movement and lessening or eliminating pain.

Vertigo

Clients with vertigo should gradually change positions and ideally pause during a position change. The most difficult change in position is from lying down to standing. When clients move from lying to sitting, have them sit up and acclimate before standing. Remind the client with vertigo to breathe.

Osteoporosis

All of the jumping and standing work in B@rre will help build bone density. Increased muscle mass will also help the bones get stronger. Focus on posture and alignment as this is very important to help fight against osteoporosis. It is important to minimize forward flexion and lighten twisting as these are contraindicated for osteoporosis.