

# DYNAMIC BALANCE: THE YIN AND YANG STUDIO WORKOUT



**CYCLELATES COMBINES TWO OF THE MOST POPULAR FORMS OF GROUP EXERCISE** – indoor cycling and Pilates – and is a relatively new concept in the health and fitness industry.

As a former world bodyboarding champion and professional athlete I had always worked hard to stay fit for competition. After fracturing my neck while competing in 1996, I took up Pilates training to improve core fitness but found that I wasn't getting the level of cardio exercise I needed. As a result, I started cycling to Pilates classes and began noticing the significant benefits of combining the two forms of exercise and thought to myself 'why not combine the two into one workout?' And so the idea of Cyclelates was born.

During seven years on the professional bodyboarding tour, which included winning four world championships, I had the opportunity to visit and work out in large fitness facilities and small studios all around the world. I gained a greater understanding of my body and achieved more effective results by training at the smaller, more personalised gyms. This experience, along with my new found passion for Cyclelates, led to the recent establishment of a Cyclelates Studio on the Gold Coast where we offer group and private classes for indoor cycling, Pilates mat work and Cyclelates.

Cyclelates represents a beautifully balanced fitness class which I have tagged the 'Yin and Yang' workout. The

ancient Chinese concept of Yin and Yang was originally used to describe pairs of objects in nature that had both complementary and opposing characteristics. Yin represents strength, stillness and meditation while Yang is associated with energy, movement and stimulation. Applying the idea to Cyclelates, you can observe the benefits of strength, flexibility and cardio fitness that come from combining the gentle but still strong-flowing movements of Pilates along with a high-speed, vigorous cycling session.

The Cyclelates class starts with 30 minutes of Pilates, the Yin, where emphasis is on controlled, slow movements and proper breathing to build awareness of the body. The following 30-minute energetic cycling session is focused on working hard to increase the heart rate and burn fat, the perfect Yang, and finishes with a cool down and stretch.

Anyone, including professional athletes, wanting to maintain cardio fitness while improving their core stability and strength can utilise the benefits of Cyclelates. New mums in particular are ideal clients to benefit from Cyclelates classes, which can really help with those post-baby body blues. With little time for long exercise routines, new mums need a workout that is efficient and gets results. The Pilates segment will help pull abdominals back to the centre and up, while the cycling element will burn a high amount of calories in one session, helping to get rid of those extra kilos gained during pregnancy.



## Studio layout

The way in which you set up your Cyclelates class is dependent on space in your facility. If space is limited, set up the Pilates area and the cycling area parallel to one another in a single room so that you can easily transition from the first half of the session to the next. To fully develop the Yin and Yang concept, however, it is ideal to have separate rooms for each workout, to create a calm, soothing and meditative environment for the Pilates and to then transition to a darker room, with various light and music settings to create a more energised atmosphere for the cycling. If separate rooms are not available, consider using a large curtain to divide a single room in two.

## Class size

For clients to get the best results from both Pilates and indoor cycling, smaller sized classes with a maximum of 20 participants is recommended. More time for one-on-one instruction will allow better technique assimilation and improved results in the long run. Technique is important for both Pilates and cycling and you may like to offer an introductory one-on-one class in which you can instruct the client in more detail.

## Fitness levels

Starting out, it is best to allow participants to take each 30-minute session at their own pace in order to determine their fitness level; beginner, intermediate or advanced. A client who is cycle-fit but a beginner at Pilates would benefit from an initial one-hour Pilates class. Conversely, if the client is advanced in Pilates, but has no experience with indoor cycling, a 30-minute bike ride should be enough to get started. Smaller studios may find it easier to offer more personalised training options.

## Cyclelates circuit

Cyclelates lends itself easily to a circuit program, alternating between Pilates and cycling at each station. At the Cyclelates Studio we incorporate different training equipment, including the Flexi-Bar, BOSU®, rollers, Thera-Bands, Pilates Ring and Pilates Sculpting Ball. It is advisable to offer circuit classes for clients at the intermediate or advanced levels.

In addition to Cyclelates, CycleBoxing is another concept that has been introduced which combines boxing and indoor cycling for a complementary cardio and strength workout. By embracing the concept of both complementary and opposing characteristics, you can be creative and explore other Yin and Yang group exercise variations at your facility. ■



### Stephanie Petterson

Originally from Brazil but now happily residing on Australia's Gold Coast, Stephanie is a passionate Freestyle group exercise instructor and professional bodyboarder who won her first world title at the age of 20. Stephanie's athletic training over the past 24 years has included weight lifting, dancing, yoga, Capoeira, Pilates and cycling, the latter two of which she has combined to create her Cyclelates concept. For more information visit [www.cyclelates.com.au](http://www.cyclelates.com.au)