

KRISTY WRIGHT SCHELL

LIQUID YOGA/LIQUID FIT ON THE AQUAMAT PART I



Yoga and fitness on water? Yes, you heard it right! The newly developed inflatable yoga mats now allow us to take our yoga and fitness from the gym to the pool. These inflatable mats offer participants the opportunity to challenge their body in a new and fun way – while getting the best possible core body workout.

Taking fitness to the water will awaken our fast twitch muscles which rarely get asked to fire on solid ground. The instability under your feet means your body is continuously being challenged to find balance, or a place to rest. Just sitting, kneeling or standing on the mat pushes your body to find balance.

TABLE TOP is a position that can be accessible to all levels using opposite arm and leg extensions. The nice thing about this movement is it offers a range of challenges to all participants BUT keeps you low enough to the mat with the option to touch down with fingers and toes at any time. I suggest 3 breaths for each movement, with pauses in between to reset to a proper table top and connect to the breath.

LEVEL 1 From all fours extend your right leg and place tucked toes at the back of the mat and press down until you feel your lower abdominals engage. Slide your left hand forward onto tented finger tips. Follow your breath in and out for 3 counts.

LEVEL 2 From level one simply lift the extended leg and arm to float. You will feel the mat providing feedback to your core and may start to see ripples in the water. Often students start to laugh because the mat almost jiggles beneath them – I encourage it because laughter helps students reconnect to their breath and it's also a great core workout.

LEVEL 3 From level two add Inhale extending arm and leg. Exhale and curl the spine and bring the knee and elbow closer together – eventually to touch.

LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2



LEVEL 3



HANDOUT COURTESY OF BCRPA

LIQUID YOGA / LIQUID FIT ON THE AQUAMAT PART I CONTINUED.

NOTE: THIS IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL ADVICE.

HANDOUT COURTESY OF BCRPA



SIDE TO SIDE SLIDE

When it comes to Liquid Fitness sessions, more dynamic movements are incorporated both on and off the mat. The Side to Side Slide is one that everyone enjoys!

Getting students up to their feet simply standing can be challenging enough. The key elements are: soft knees and water in the joints. This keeps the muscles above and below the joints engaged and ready to 'catch' you.

NOTE:

After each of the above exercises, come back to standing tall with softness in the joints to maintain balance. NEVER lock the knees.



LEVEL 1 From a standing (or kneeling position) feel how the mat wants to move below your feet as you sway your hips; almost like standing on ice or a slippery floor with wool socks. Move from the hips finding the fluid in the middle body, start slowly with small shifts to avoid big recovery movements.

LEVEL 2 Bend your knees into a low squat – hands out to assist with balance. Practice getting low with even pressure on both feet – make less ripples.



LEVEL 3 Bend one knee and press on the opposite side and begin to tip the board left to right – this will engage some bigger muscles like glutes, quads and calves – as you increase the speed you increase the heart rate. **MAKE SOME WAVES** for your neighbours – 30 seconds to 1 minute fast then **STOP** and try to maintain the low squat until the mat levels and waves subside. Keeping hips low in transitions and during this activity will create more stability for you.



KRISTY WRIGHT SCHELL is the owner of Just Add Water Yoga Ltd. and a Stand Up Paddle Instructor Trainer & Athlete. Kristy teaches this program in Vancouver at the Westin Bayshore Hotel and offers Instructor Trainings across Canada to support facilities in creating a powerful program that caters to all levels.

For more details on Liquid Yoga and Liquid Fit Instructor Training or regular classes please contact: Kristy@standuppaddlevancouver.com

Photo Credit: Moonrider Pro & The Westin Bayshore