

Yoga versus Pilates: Which one is better for increasing Range of Motion?

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ABSTRACT

Pilates and Yoga are two popular types of exercise programs known to improve range of motion (ROM). The purpose of this experiment was to investigate differences between Yoga and Pilates in terms of ROM benefits. Subjects consisted of twenty college age students with no previous experience with either exercise program. After a consent form was completed, initial ROM was measured for each subject using a goniometer. The nine ROM tests included: sit and reach, right and left hip flexion, right and left hip extension, right and left shoulder internal rotation, and right and left shoulder external rotation. Subjects were then randomly selected for either the Yoga or the Pilates exercise groups. One exercise DVD, either Yoga or Pilates, was distributed to each subject accordingly. Each subject was then asked to follow the instructional DVD for twelve sessions once a day for an hour a day. At the completion of the twelve sessions, identical ROM exams were measured for each subject. Pre-test and post-test ROM assessments were analyzed using a T-test for the Yoga and the Pilates groups. Results show that the Yoga group made some minimal improvements to ROM in some areas and no improvements in other areas. The Pilates group, however, demonstrated improvements in ROM in all subjects and in all tests. ROM improvement between the Yoga group and the Pilates group was compared using a T-test. The results show that for 7 out of the 9 tests administered, the Pilates group had significantly better improvement (see table). The Left Hip Extension and Right Shoulder External Rotation were the only two measurements that were insignificant. Overall, Pilates appeared to show better results than Yoga in term of ROM over twelve sessions.

Test	T-Test Results
Sit and Reach	T(9)=5.5141, p<.05
Right Hip Flexion	T(9)=3.4306, p<.05
Left Hip Flexion	T(9)=4.4907, p<.05
Right Hip Extension	T(9)=2.3772, p<.05
Left Hip Extension	T(9)=1.6164, p>.05
Right Shoulder Internal Rotation	T(9)=7.0046, p<.05
Left Shoulder Internal Rotation	T(9)=6.7082, p<.05
Right Shoulder External Rotation	T(9)=2.2119, p>.05
Left Shoulder External Rotation	T(9)=4.1798, p<.05

