

# TenPilates at home

## The workout that everyone's talking about How to get a flat stomach in 6 weeks

I first became interested in Pilates when I was a professional Aussie Rules football player in Melbourne. I had an injury and Pilates proved a superb route to recovery. I had a degree in exercise sports science and human movement and Pilates added a practical layer to that knowledge.

After studying in Los Angeles with the Pilates guru Sebastian LaGree, I trained some celebrities in the States and developed my own, more dynamic, more intense version: tenPilates. It's a non-aerobic style of exercise that gets fast results and changes your shape as well as improving posture and preventing injury.

At my studios in London we use weights, equipment and circuit-style exercises. It usually takes clients six weeks of regular classes to get the bodies they want. On these pages I've devised a version you can do at home. If you do these exercises three times a week for six weeks — you'll notice the difference in your strength and shape — a flatter tum, pert buttocks, lean legs and elongated posture. Each session will take 20-30 minutes. Our unique approach is highly effective and I count a number of celebrities including Claudia Schiffer, Eva Herzigova, Jemima Khan and Mario Testino among my regular clients. Try these exercises and you'll see that the approach can also work for you, whatever your age or current fitness level.

By David Higgins, [tenpilates.com](http://tenpilates.com)



### Thighs Skating leg slide

#### Exercise 1

This simple movement will help to streamline your thighs, as it works the muscles in your inner and outer thigh, as well as the gluteal muscles, quadriceps and hamstrings. You will need a plastic bag to help you to slide if you are doing it on a carpet. Stand with your knees bent and hinge from your waist so that your bottom sticks out slightly. Be careful not to round through your neck and shoulders. Place your hands together, outstretched in front of you as if you are about to dive. Put your right foot on the plastic bag and slide your leg out to the right before dragging it back in again. Repeat for two minutes on each side.



### Buttocks Reverse lunges

#### Exercise 2

This exercise, which targets your gluteal muscles better than most, ideally should be performed on a wooden or a hard floor. If you are exercising on a carpet, use a plastic carrier bag under your back foot to help you to slide. Start with your feet shoulder width apart. Take a big step backwards, sliding your foot along the ground. Then, keeping your torso upright, lower until both your knees are bent 90 degrees. Return to the starting position and repeat for two minutes before switching to the other leg.

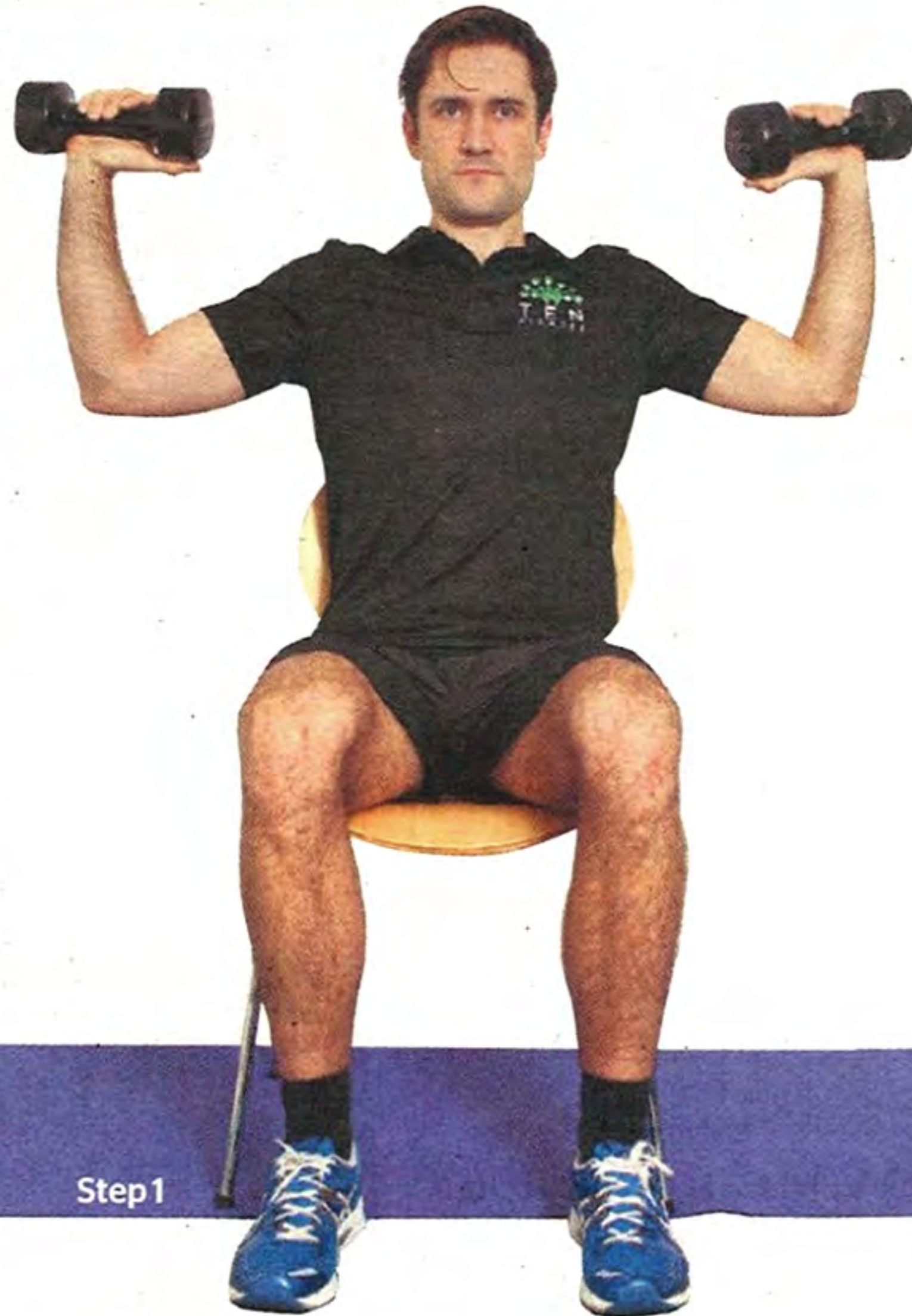




## Chest and shoulders Reduced-range shoulder press

### Exercise 3

Shoulders are a tricky area for people who spend a lot of time slouched over a desk or driving. If you are always hunched, your shoulders can become rounded and your head can begin to lean forward. You end up using your neck or chest muscles instead of your shoulder muscles – so it is vital that you focus when you practise this. You will need either light dumbbells (start with 3lbs) or 1.5 litre bottles filled with sand or water. Sit on a hard-backed chair, making sure that you do not arch or slouch your back. Hold a weight in each hand and raise out to the sides to a level that forms a W shape, with your upper arms lower than parallel to the floor. Press upwards with the weights but only until your arms are parallel to the floor. Repeat the exercise over this limited range for two minutes.



## Full body Step-ups with frontal raise

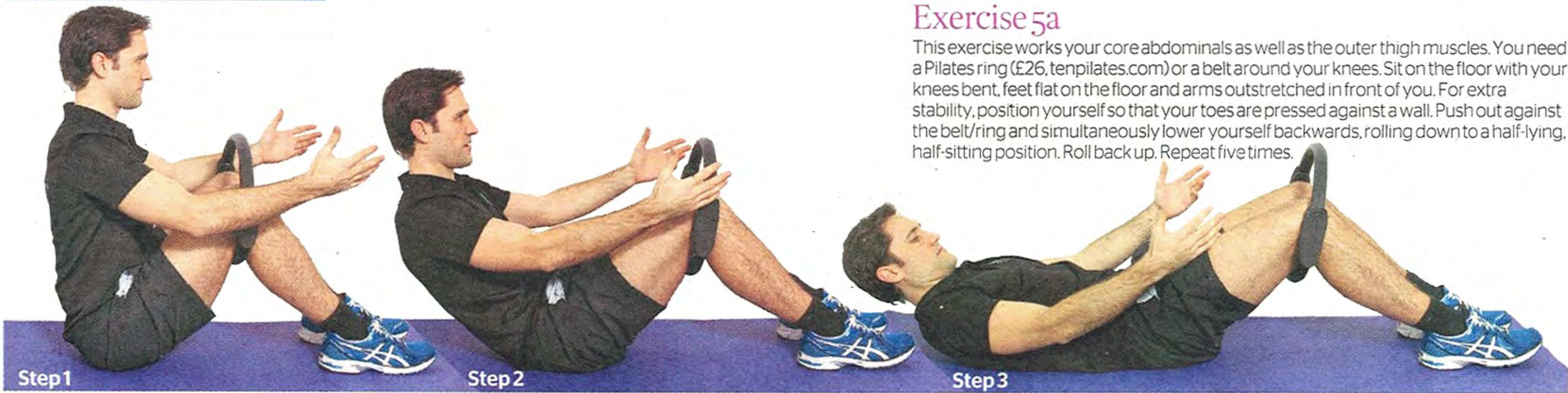
### Exercise 4

You will need weights (or water bottles) and a step or box for this exercise. Hold the weights in your hands by your sides (palms facing inwards). Step up on to the box with your right leg and lift your left knee to almost a 90 degree angle. At the same time, bring your arms up, twisting your palms so that they face downwards and are almost parallel to the floor at the top of the move. Step down, turning your palms back to the start position. Be careful not to lean back – the movement should be flowing and controlled without excessive momentum. Repeat for two minutes on each side.



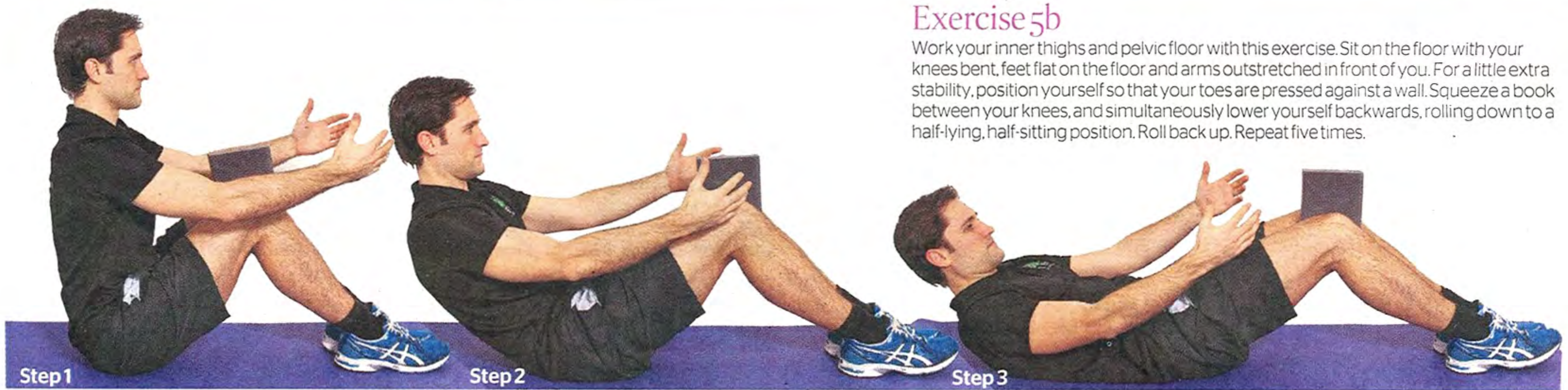


## Abdominals Vertical rollback



### Exercise 5a

This exercise works your core abdominals as well as the outer thigh muscles. You need a Pilates ring (£26, [tenpilates.com](http://tenpilates.com)) or a belt around your knees. Sit on the floor with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor and arms outstretched in front of you. For extra stability, position yourself so that your toes are pressed against a wall. Push out against the belt/ring and simultaneously lower yourself backwards, rolling down to a half-lying, half-sitting position. Roll back up. Repeat five times.



### Exercise 5b

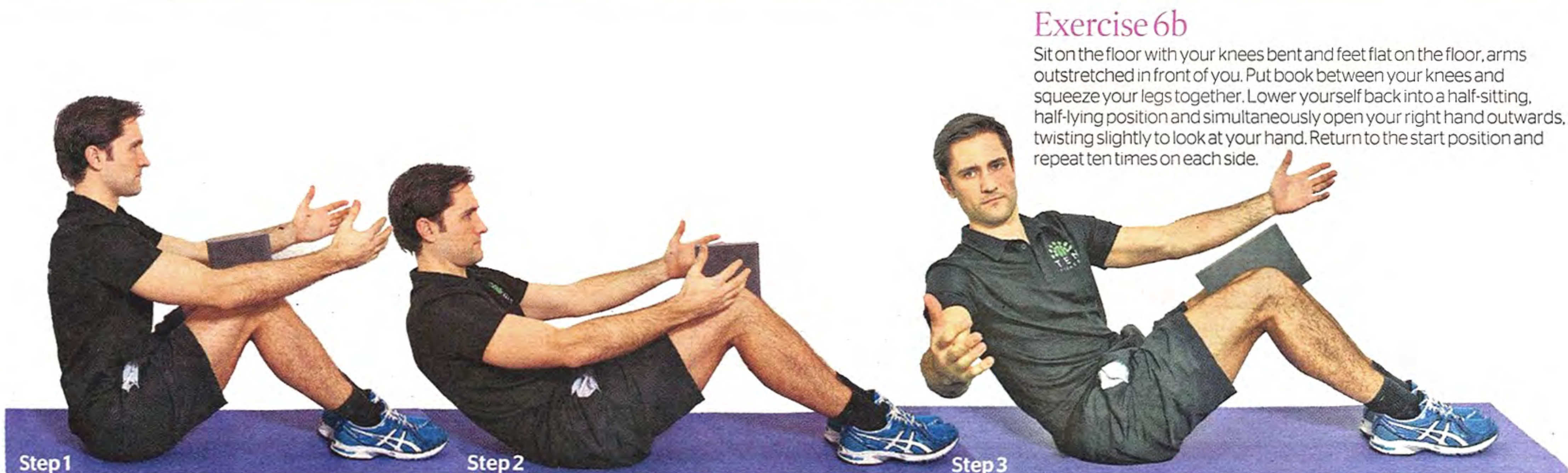
Work your inner thighs and pelvic floor with this exercise. Sit on the floor with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor and arms outstretched in front of you. For a little extra stability, position yourself so that your toes are pressed against a wall. Squeeze a book between your knees, and simultaneously lower yourself backwards, rolling down to a half-lying, half-sitting position. Roll back up. Repeat five times.

## Waist Rollback with oblique twist



### Exercise 6a

Similar to the vertical rollback but also engages the muscles of the waist. Sit on the floor with knees bent and feet flat, arms outstretched. Put a Pilates ring or belt around your knees and push outwards. Lower back into a half-sitting, half-lying position and simultaneously open your right hand outwards, twisting slightly. Return to the start position, repeat ten times on each side.



### Exercise 6b

Sit on the floor with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor, arms outstretched in front of you. Put book between your knees and squeeze your legs together. Lower yourself back into a half-sitting, half-lying position and simultaneously open your right hand outwards, twisting slightly to look at your hand. Return to the start position and repeat ten times on each side.



**Legs** Wall sits

**Exercise 7**

This is a straightforward exercise but one that has unrivalled leg-strengthening benefits. Stand with your back against a wall and press your shoulders, back and head against the surface. Lower yourself by shuffling your feet out until your legs are at almost 90 degrees. Aim to hold the position for one minute.



**Arms** Dips

**Exercise 8**

Dips are a great way to work the tricep muscles in the backs of your arms, helping to get rid of flabby upper arms and bingo wings. Use a stair, step or side of a bath for support (a chair is too unstable). Put your hands on the edge of the step, palms down and fingers forward. Stretch your legs out in front of you, heels on the floor (but do not lock your knees). Bend your arms to lower your bottom towards the floor. Repeat for two minutes.



**Back** Shoulder retraction and back extension

**Exercise 9**

If you spend a lot of time at a desk, you need to retract the muscles that become hunched to regain good function and tone. Lie face down, resting your forehead on the floor. Stretch your arms to your sides. Lift through your head (do not hinge from your lower back and waist) so that you create a double chin. Raise your palms about an inch off the floor at the same time. Repeat ten times.



**Posture** Superman

**Exercise 10**

This is great for ironing out any postural kinks. Start on all fours, forming a box shape with your body. Keep your head in line with your back. Raise your right leg and left arm at the same time. It sounds simple, but there is a lot that you can do wrong. Your hips should remain stable – be careful not to move them to either side. And do not drop your head – a common mistake if you are always hunched. Hold for one minute. Lower back to the start position. Repeat on the other side. If you find the move too difficult, try extending a leg (no arm) at a time.

