

Prenatal Fitness — Workbook

This workbook accompanies the Prenatal Fitness course and gives you structured space to apply each module to your own pregnancy or postpartum journey. Use the exercises, worksheets, and checklists to move from general education to personalised planning. Remember: this workbook supports reflection and organisation — it does not replace guidance from your midwife, OB, or pelvic-floor physiotherapist.

Physiology of a Moving Pregnancy

Ground your exercise decisions in an understanding of your own physiology and build the communication habits that keep your care team informed.

Exercise: Physiological Change Self-Audit

Reflect on the physiological changes described in Module 1. For each change, note whether you have experienced or noticed it and how it has affected your activity so far.

- Which physiological change has had the most noticeable impact on your ability to exercise — cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, hormonal, or balance? Describe what you noticed and when.

- Have you used the talk test or RPE to gauge intensity? Write a description of what moderate intensity feels like for you right now, in your own words.

- Identify one exercise or activity you have already modified (intentionally or instinctively) because of pregnancy. What did you change and why?

- What is one question about your physiology you want to bring to your next provider appointment?

Worksheet: My Exercise Clearance Profile

Complete this worksheet before or at your next prenatal appointment. Bring it with you as a discussion starter. Fill in each field based on your current situation.

Current trimester / weeks pregnant

Pre-pregnancy exercise habits (types, frequency, intensity)

Current exercise habits (types, frequency, intensity)

Known risk factors or complications discussed with provider

Any pelvic-floor symptoms (leaking, heaviness, pain, urgency)

Provider clearance received (yes / no / not yet discussed)

Pelvic-floor physiotherapy referral status

Questions to ask at next appointment

Checklist: Provider Communication Checklist

- Discuss exercise history and current activity at first prenatal appointment
- Ask whether my pregnancy is classified as uncomplicated for exercise
- Request a referral to a pelvic-floor physiotherapist
- Confirm the warning signs that should make me stop exercise and contact my provider
- Write down any absolute or relative contraindications specific to my pregnancy
- Set a reminder to revisit exercise discussion at each trimester transition
- Note my provider's name and after-hours contact for exercise-related concerns

Trimester-by-Trimester Exercise Guide

Map out a trimester-appropriate exercise plan and track how your programme evolves across pregnancy.

Exercise: Trimester Reflection Journal

Use these prompts to check in at each trimester transition. Write briefly and honestly — this is for your own planning, not a performance review.

- What exercise modes are working well for you this trimester, and which have you reduced or stopped? What drove those decisions?

- Have you experienced any symptoms during or after exercise (pelvic pain, leaking, shortness of breath, pelvic heaviness)? If yes, describe them and note whether you have discussed them with your provider.

- On a scale of 1–10, how consistent has your movement habit been this trimester? What has helped or hindered consistency?

- Write one intention for how you will modify or maintain your exercise programme in the coming trimester.

Worksheet: Weekly Exercise Plan — Pregnancy Edition

Plan your exercise week using this template. Complete one sheet per trimester or update as needed. Use the talk test to self-monitor intensity and note any symptoms after each session.

Current trimester and weeks

Monday — session type, duration, intensity notes, symptoms after

Tuesday — session type, duration, intensity notes, symptoms after

Wednesday — session type, duration, intensity notes, symptoms after

Thursday — session type, duration, intensity notes, symptoms after

Friday — session type, duration, intensity notes, symptoms after

Saturday — session type, duration, intensity notes, symptoms after

Sunday — session type, duration, intensity notes, symptoms after

Weekly pelvic-floor exercise completed (yes / partial / no)

Notes for next week

Checklist: Trimester Modification Checklist

- First trimester: schedule exercise around nausea patterns (morning vs evening)
- First trimester: shift focus from performance to form and habit-building
- Second trimester: transition away from sustained supine positions by week 20
- Second trimester: monitor for round ligament pain and slow transitions if present
- Second trimester: begin daily pelvic-floor activation and release practice
- Second trimester: assess balance stability and reduce single-leg loading if unstable
- Third trimester: replace floor-based core work with incline or standing alternatives
- Third trimester: add supported deep squats and hip-flexor lengthening from week 34
- Third trimester: monitor for coning during any core exercise and modify immediately
- All trimesters: stop and contact provider if any warning sign appears

Pelvic Floor and Core Through Pregnancy

Build daily pelvic-floor and core habits using the progression frameworks from Module 3, and track your symptom response to guide load decisions.

Exercise: Pelvic Floor Awareness Practice

This is a guided awareness exercise, not a performance exercise. Find a comfortable seated or lying position and work through these prompts slowly.

- Describe where you feel your pelvic floor. Can you locate it at rest? Write a brief description of what awareness of this area feels like for you.

- Practise one full contract-and-release cycle. On a scale of 1–5, how clearly can you feel the lift phase? The release phase? Which is easier and which requires more attention?

- After your pelvic-floor practice session today, note any symptoms: discomfort, fatigue in the pelvic region, or difficulty releasing. These observations are useful for your physiotherapist.

- What is one situation in your daily life (lifting, coughing, walking upstairs) where you notice your pelvic floor most? How does awareness of it change how you move in that situation?

Worksheet: Core and Pelvic Floor Symptom Tracker

Log your daily pelvic-floor and core exercise along with any symptoms. This log is a clinical communication tool — bring it to your pelvic-floor physiotherapy appointments.

Date

Exercises performed (list)

Any coning or doming observed (yes / no / unsure)

Leaking during or after exercise (yes / no — if yes, during which exercise)

Pelvic heaviness or pressure (0–10 scale)

Pelvic or low-back pain (0–10 scale, location)

Pelvic-floor activation sets completed (number)

Pelvic-floor release sets completed (number)

General notes or questions for physiotherapist

Checklist: Daily Pelvic Floor and Core Habits

- Complete 3 sets of 10 pelvic-floor activation and full-release repetitions
- Include 3–5 long holds (5–10 seconds each) in pelvic-floor practice
- Practise 360-degree breathing before resistance training sessions
- Cue exhale on effort during any lifting or pushing movement
- Check for coning during core exercises and modify if present
- Avoid Valsalva breath-holding during resistance training
- Perform at least one pelvic-floor release exercise (deep squat or hip-flexor stretch) daily from week 34
- Log any new or worsening symptoms and raise at next provider or physio appointment

Postpartum Return to Exercise

Structure your postpartum return to activity with clear phase targets, a symptom monitoring system, and a long-term pelvic health commitment.

Exercise: Postpartum Recovery Reflection

Complete these prompts at 2 weeks, 6 weeks, and 12 weeks postpartum. Date each entry so you can track your recovery arc over time.

- What does your body feel like right now — energy, pain levels, pelvic-floor symptoms, mood? Be honest. This is a baseline, not a judgment.

- What movement have you managed this week (walks, gentle mobility, pelvic-floor work)? How did your body respond during and after?

- What is one thing you are eager to return to, and one thing you are nervous about? Write both without filtering.

- Have you been assessed by a pelvic-floor physiotherapist yet? If yes, what were the key findings? If no, what is your next step to access this?

Worksheet: Postpartum Return-to-Exercise Phase Tracker

Track your progression through the four return-to-exercise phases. Mark the date you enter each phase, any symptoms that prompted you to slow down, and your clearance status for the next phase.

Birth date and birth route (vaginal / caesarean)

Phase 1 start date (week 0) — activities: walking, pelvic-floor breathing

Phase 1 end date and any symptoms that extended the phase

Phase 2 start date (target: week 6 with clearance) — activities: progressive body-weight, brisk walking,

swimming

6-week provider clearance received (yes / no / date)

Pelvic-floor physio assessment completed (yes / no / date and key findings)

Phase 2 end date and readiness notes for Phase 3

Phase 3 start date (target: week 10–12) — activities: light external loading, jogging intervals

Pelvic-floor self-screen results before jogging (passed / not yet / symptoms noted)

Phase 4 start date (target: week 16+) — activities: full training, HIIT, running

Notes and ongoing goals

Checklist: Postpartum Red-Flag and Milestone Checklist

- Contact provider if bleeding (lochia) persists beyond 8 weeks
- Contact provider if pelvic pain worsens after any exercise session
- Contact provider if urinary or bowel leakage increases despite reducing load
- Contact provider if a vaginal bulge or pressure sensation appears or worsens
- Attend 6-week postnatal check and discuss exercise clearance specifically
- Book pelvic-floor physiotherapy assessment by 8 weeks postpartum
- Complete pelvic-floor self-screen before returning to running or impact activities
- Delay running, HIIT, and heavy lifting until pelvic-floor screen is passed
- Schedule an annual pelvic-floor check as an ongoing healthcare habit
- Discuss breastfeeding and exercise caloric needs with provider or dietitian if applicable

Your Action Plan

1. Obtain written exercise clearance from your midwife or OB before starting or modifying any exercise programme during pregnancy
2. Book a pelvic-floor physiotherapy assessment at the start of pregnancy and again at 6–8 weeks postpartum
3. Begin daily pelvic-floor activation and release practice (3 sets of 10) starting in the first trimester
4. Use the talk test to self-monitor exercise intensity at every session throughout pregnancy
5. Transition all core work away from supine positions by week 20 of pregnancy
6. Add supported deep squats and hip-flexor lengthening from week 34 as birth preparation
7. Follow the four-phase postpartum return protocol: walking first, progressive loading second, light impact third, full training last
8. Complete the pelvic-floor self-screen (walk, jog on the spot, hop, star jumps) before returning to running or HIIT
9. Log symptoms — leaking, heaviness, coning, pain — after every exercise session and bring the log to provider appointments
10. Schedule an annual pelvic-floor check as a standard part of your healthcare routine after having children

