



Farewell Fatigued Feet By Alexis Wolfer

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Easy exercises to salvage your soles



As we slip into our new peep-toe pumps and slinky stilettos as the weather (hopefully) warms up, our feet often suffer. Stiffness, soreness, cramps, and, need I say, blisters, are all too often the consequences of our fashionable footwear. Erika Bloom, founder of Erika Bloom Pilates Plus, however, has easy exercises to make fatigued feet a thing of the past. Done anywhere, these exercises will rejuvenate and strengthen your tired soles, perfect for getting feet in show-off shape for summer.



Caterpillar Feet

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1. **Caterpillar Feet:** Lie on your back with knees bent, feet flat on the floor. Keeping your toes and heels on the ground, point your toes in order to lift the arches of the feet. Draw the toes toward the heels and feel the center of the feet dome. Release the arch by sliding the heels away from the toes to flatten the foot. Your feet will have moved closed to your body. Repeat as your feet walk in towards your torso. Reverse, sliding the heels towards the toes and spreading the toes away to flatten the foot, repeating until your feet get too far away from you to keep your toes on the ground. Repeat twice.



2. Flex and Point: Remain on your back with knees bent, feet flat. Flex both feet keeping the heels on the floor. Roll through the feet to bring them to a point, lifting the heels up and keeping the toes on the floor. Roll through the foot again to return to the flex. Be sure not to skip the ball of the foot while rolling through the foot in either direction. Repeat ten times.



3. Hands in Foot Toe Spreader: Sitting on the floor or in a chair, interlace the finger of one hand with the toes of the opposite foot – as though you are 'holding hands' with your foot. You can cross your legs in order to rest the working foot's shin on the opposite thigh for support. Work the tops of the fingers all the way to the tops of the toes, spreading the foot and toes open. If you need more of a stretch, alternate between squeezing the toes and ball of the foot with the fingers then spreading the toes by pressing out with the fingers.

4. Hands in Foot Ankle Circles: With the same interlaced position, close the hand around the ball of the foot and use that hand to circle your ankle, keeping the foot and ankle completely relaxed. Let the hand do all the work as the ankle makes the largest circle it can. Perform 6 circles in each direction on each foot.

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