

Build Confidence and Purpose with Pilates

Episode 6 · The teacher onboarding checklist · Tania Huddart

Onboarding isn't a day. It's a year.

So many studios hire someone wonderful, hand them a schedule and say, "See you Tuesday." This checklist is the alternative. It takes a new teacher from before their first day to the end of their first year.

You won't need every line. A small studio might do some of these over a cup of tea. That still counts. Tick what you have done, and leave the rest for when it fits.

New teacher

Start date

Mentor or buddy

1. Before the first day

Ideally, a lot happens before day one.

Paperwork

- ☐ The agreement between you, and whatever tax forms apply where you live. (Whether they are a contractor or an employee is a real decision. Talk to an accountant where you live.)
- ☐ Check their qualifications: Pilates certification, CPR and first aid.
- ☐ Make sure liability insurance covers them.

Access and welcome

- ☐ Set up their access to your booking and communication systems.
- ☐ Give them a welcome pack: your studio policies, and something about your culture and what you stand for.
- ☐ Pair them with a mentor or buddy: someone experienced they can ask the small questions they'd feel silly asking you.

Equipment and uniform

- ☐ Let them know what to wear, and provide any uniform or gear.
- ☐ Check the studio equipment is ready for them.

2. The first day

Showing them around

- ☐ A proper tour: where the equipment lives, the key areas of the studio, where the emergency exits are.
- ☐ Introduce them to the team. Who everyone is.

Their role

- ☐ Go through their class schedule and what you are asking of them.
- ☐ Make sure they have the equipment and materials they need.

Safety and policies

- ☐ Talk through safety and emergency procedures.
- ☐ Go over studio policies, including dress code and how the team keeps in touch.

Technology

- ☐ Show them how to use the booking and client software for their classes.

3. The first week

Settling in

- ☐ Sit down with them to talk through their schedule and what you expect.

Watching and practising

- ☐ Let them watch a few classes, so they can see how your studio teaches and how clients are greeted.
- ☐ If they need it, let them practise teaching with a senior teacher alongside.

Feedback

- ☐ Sit down and ask how it's going. Answer their questions and concerns.
- ☐ Invite them to team meetings and to any training that's coming up.

4. The first month

A proper conversation

- ☐ Talk about how they are going, and what's on their mind.
- ☐ Look at the feedback from their first classes together. Not to criticise. To help.

Training

- ☐ Check they have finished any qualifications and safety training your studio needs.
- ☐ Arrange for them to watch experienced teachers, to see different teaching styles and ways of managing a class.

Being part of the team

- ☐ Encourage them to join team meetings and workshops.
- ☐ Gently check they can adapt exercises for different people: the beginner, the client coming back from an injury, the one who has been coming for ten years.

5. The first three months

Ongoing support

- ☐ Check in regularly. Talk about how it's going, what's been hard, and what clients are saying.
- ☐ Share ideas for their professional development, such as workshops or online courses.

Growing their skills

- ☐ Keep giving them chances to watch other teachers. Not because they're doing it wrong. Because everyone teaches better after watching someone else teach.

Feedback

- ☐ Gather feedback from their clients, to find what could be better and to celebrate what's going well.
- ☐ Check they understand your safety and emergency procedures.

6. The first year

A full review

- ☐ Sit down for a full review of their year, with honest and kind feedback.
- ☐ Check they are up to date with qualifications and continuing education.

Further training

- ☐ Offer more advanced training in teaching skills and managing a class.
- ☐ Run a workshop on new ideas and equipment, to keep their teaching fresh.

Where they want to go

- ☐ Talk about where they want to go, and what they'd love to learn next. Keep having these conversations.
- ☐ Encourage them to go to conferences or meet other teachers in the industry.

Their classes

- ☐ Look at their schedule together. Is it working for them and for clients?
- ☐ Ask their clients how they are finding the classes.

A question to sit with

How do I show my teachers they're valued, beyond the day I hired them?

Be honest with yourself on that one. Check-ins, thank-yous, and time together that isn't all work all count.

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