

Barre Workouts to do at Home

By: Malia Frey

August 3, 2016

5 Ailey Barre Workout



Ailey Barre Class at The Ailey Extension. Ailey Barre/ Kyle Froman

The next at-home barre workout comes from [Sarita Allen](#), a former dancer with [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#). Sarita founded Ailey Barre in 2015 and teaches the class to students of all levels at [Ailey Extension](#) in New York City.

"Ailey Barre improves posture, increases equilibrium, and enhances core and leg strength," says Sarita. "These improvements will enable you to move through life with power and grace." The exercises are designed to achieve the maximum results in a minimum amount of space. You can use a chair or counter top for support, but all the exercises should be performed with [abdominal muscles](#) scooped in and up, and with the spine as long as possible.

1. **Hip stretch and leg warm-up.** Hold a chair with your right hand and stand tall with the feet in a parallel position beneath you. Lift the left arm to the side so that it is even with the shoulder. Extend left leg forward, raise and hold the foot six inches off the floor. Rotating from the hip, turn the leg out (clockwise) then return back to starting position. Repeat 8 times on each side.
2. **Plié.** Face the back of the chair with legs in second position. Slowly bend the legs as far down as you can go without letting heels come off the floor. Return to straight legs and repeat four times. As you move through the plié, make sure the knees move directly over the toes.
3. **Leg swing.** Hold the chair with your left hand, and extend right arm straight up towards the ceiling. Extend the right leg behind you with toes pointed on the floor. Now swing the right leg freely forward and back 16 times. Repeat on the other side.
4. **Plié 2.** Face the back of the chair with legs in second position. Slowly bend the legs as far as you can go without letting your heels come off the floor. Now lift the heels off the floor and hold for three seconds. Lower the heels, straighten the legs, and repeat the sequence eight times.
5. **Hamstring stretch.** Face the front of the chair. Place the right leg on the chair, and slowly walk the hands down the leg until they rest on either side of the chair seat. The chest will move closer to the knee. While in this forward stretch position, bend and straighten the standing leg eight times. Then return to an upright position and repeat the sequence on the other side.
6. **Leg extension.** Hold onto the back the of the chair with the feet in first position. Lift the right leg placing the toe just below the knee cap. Your leg should remain turned out. Extend your toes away from the body until the leg is straight at a 90-degree angle at your hip. Lower the leg to the floor and repeat 8 times. Then do the entire sequence on the other side.
7. **Hamstring stretch.** Facing the front of the chair, place the right leg on the chair and slowly walk your hands down the leg until they rest on either side of the chair seat. Bend the right knee to create a lunge position. Raise your torso to an upright position and softly pulse your hips forward eight times. Change legs, and repeat the entire exercise on the other side.