Your First Month on the Mat and the Reformer

Choose the right classes, walk in confident, and build a twice-a-week habit that makes you stronger



HALDEN STUDIO

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Stronger Without the Noise

Why so many people put off starting yoga or pilates, what actually happens in a small, quiet class, and how this guide from Halden Studio on SE Division walks you from curious to comfortable in about four weeks.

The Hardest Class Is the One You Haven't Taken Yet

Most people who walk into Halden for the first time have been meaning to do it for months. Some have had a studio's website open in a browser tab since last spring. Others bought a pair of leggings with good intentions and a mat that still has the shrink wrap on it. The gap between wanting to start and actually starting is rarely about laziness. It's usually about a handful of quiet worries that nobody likes to say out loud.

We hear those worries at our front desk on SE Division every week, so we know them well. They tend to sound reasonable, which is why they keep people at home. The good news is that almost every one of them disappears after the first class or two, once you see what a session really looks like. This book exists to get you through that gap faster, with fewer surprises.

- "I'm not flexible enough for yoga." Flexibility is something yoga builds, not something you need to bring.
- "I'll be the only beginner, and everyone will watch me get it wrong."
- "That reformer machine looks complicated, maybe even a little dangerous."
- "My back, knee or shoulder isn't right, so I should wait until it heals."
- "I don't know which class to book, so I book nothing."
- "Boutique studios feel loud, competitive and not really for people like me."

What Actually Happens in a Small, Quiet Class

Picture a skylit room in the early morning. There are no more than twelve mats laid out on a warm wood floor, or eight reformers spaced a full arm's length apart in the room next door. There's no thumping playlist, no leaderboard on a screen and no wall of mirrors asking you to judge your own reflection. What you can hear is the teacher's voice and, after a few minutes, your own breath.

Small numbers change the whole experience. With twelve people or fewer, a teacher can walk the room, learn your name and actually see what your body is doing. If you mentioned an old knee injury before class, they'll remember it and offer you a different option when the sequence gets to deep lunges. A first-timer and someone with ten years of practice can share the same hour, because the cues are adjusted person by person rather than shouted at a crowd.

That is the core idea behind Halden: you can get noticeably stronger without the noise. Pilates trains the deep muscles around your spine and pelvis with small, precise movements. Yoga builds mobility, balance and a calmer head by linking movement to breath. Neither one requires you to perform for anyone, and both work best when you return to them steadily, week after week.

Who This Book Is For

This guide is written for complete beginners and for people coming back after a long break. Maybe you're a runner or cyclist whose hips and hamstrings have tightened into a knot. Maybe you sit at a desk all day and your lower back has started complaining by mid-afternoon. Maybe you're pregnant, recently postpartum or returning from an injury, and you want strength you can trust without pounding your joints.

It's also for people who simply want a clear plan. You don't need to know the difference between vinyasa and hatha, or what a footbar is, before you start reading. By the end, you'll know which classes suit your body and goals, what to expect when you arrive, and how to fit two or three classes a week into a real life with work, family and other training.

How This Guide Walks You From Curious to Comfortable

We're Halden Studio, a small yoga and reformer pilates studio in Southeast Portland, and this book is a written version of the conversations we have with new students every day. Everything in it comes from watching beginners settle in: what helps, what confuses them, and what makes the difference between someone who tries three classes and someone who is still coming a year later. The plan covers about four weeks, because that's roughly how long it takes for a new routine to stop feeling new.

Each chapter answers one practical question. You can read it straight through in an evening, or jump to the chapter you need the night before your first class. Here is the route we'll take together.

- Chapter 2: An honest comparison of yoga and pilates, plus a quick self-check to choose your starting mix.
- Chapter 3: How the reformer works, what springs and straps actually do, and how to know when you're ready to move beyond Foundations.
- Chapter 4: Your first class minute by minute, with a pre-class checklist and answers to the worries people don't usually voice.

- Chapter 5: Sample four-week schedules for early birds, lunch-breakers and evening people, including how to handle soreness and missed sessions.
- Chapter 6: How to measure progress beyond the scale, pick the right way to pay for classes, and keep going when motivation dips.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Most reasons for putting off yoga or pilates, like not being flexible or fearing the reformer, fade after the first class or two.
- Small, quiet classes let a teacher learn your name, remember your injuries and adjust cues so beginners and experienced students share the same hour.
- This guide gives you a clear four-week path: choose your classes, walk in prepared, and build a steady twice-a-week habit.

CHAPTER 2

Yoga or Pilates: An Honest Comparison

A plain-language breakdown of what each practice trains, how each one feels, and which suits tight hips, back pain, stress, running or recovery from injury. Ends with a simple self-check to pick your starting mix, which for most people is two pilates classes and one or two yoga classes a week.

What Each Practice Actually Trains

Yoga and pilates both make you stronger, and both tend to ease the aches that come from sitting, running or carrying kids around. They just get there by different roads. At our front desk on SE Division, this is the question we hear most from new students, so here is the same honest answer we give in person.

Yoga's main focus is mobility, balance and breath. You move through postures (called asana) and hold each one for several breaths, letting muscles lengthen under load. Over weeks, that builds range of motion in your hips, hamstrings, shoulders and spine, along with the kind of balance you notice when you stop wobbling in a lunge.

Pilates' main focus is core strength and control. The movements are small and precise, aimed at the deep stabilizing muscles around your spine and pelvis that rarely get direct attention in a gym. You can do it on a mat with small balls, rings and bands, or on a reformer, a sliding carriage with adjustable springs that add or reduce resistance.

How Each One Feels in the Room

A yoga class at Halden feels like a flowing, full-body practice that ends calmer than it began. In Vinyasa Flow you link breath to movement and build some heat; in Slow Hatha you hold longer, with blocks, straps and bolsters to make each shape workable. Yin & Restore slows things down further, with supported floor postures held for three to five minutes. Most people leave a yoga class feeling looser and quieter in the head.

Pilates feels slow, focused and surprisingly hard. There is almost no impact on your joints, yet ten careful repetitions can leave your legs shaking. On the reformer, the springs give feedback with every movement, so you learn quickly when you're using your deep core and when you're muscling through with your shoulders. Many students tell us the next day is when they really notice it, especially in the glutes and back.

Neither practice is a competition. We keep our rooms small, never more than 12 mats or 8 reformers, so teachers can walk the room, cue you by name and offer a modification before you strain. That matters in both practices, because good form is where the results come from.

Matching the Practice to Your Body

If you arrive with a specific goal or complaint, use it to decide where to lean first. You'll benefit from both practices eventually, but one will usually give you quicker relief. If you're recovering from an injury, pregnant or postpartum, check with your doctor or physical therapist first, then tell your teacher before class so they can plan options for you.

- Tight hips and hamstrings: lean toward yoga. Slow Hatha and Yin & Restore give tight tissue time to let go.
- Back pain and posture: lean toward pilates. Strengthening the deep muscles around the spine and pelvis is exactly what it's built for.
- Stress and a busy mind: lean toward yoga, especially Yin & Restore or the long savasana at the end of Vinyasa Flow.
- Running and climbing: do both. Yoga restores range of motion; pilates builds the core control that keeps your stride or reach stable.
- Returning from injury: lean toward pilates, starting with Reformer Foundations or Mat Pilates. The low impact and adjustable springs let you rebuild strength gradually.
- Pre- and postnatal strength: lean toward pilates, with your care provider's go-ahead and your teacher's modifications.

A Simple Self-Check for Your Starting Mix

You don't have to choose one forever. Every Halden membership covers both yoga and reformer pilates, and reformer and mat classes count equally toward your monthly total. Most members land on two pilates classes and one or two yoga classes a week, which gives the core strength work enough repetition to stick and leaves room to stretch and recover. Run through the questions below and adjust that starting point to fit you.

If your answers are mixed, that's normal; start with the standard mix and revisit it after your first month. Our teachers and front desk are happy to look at how your first few classes went and suggest a tweak.

- Is your main goal strength, posture or a calmer back? Keep two pilates classes and add one yoga class.
- Is your main goal flexibility, stress relief or recovery from hard training? Flip it: two yoga classes and one pilates class.
- Already running, cycling or lifting three or more days a week? Start with one pilates and one yoga class so you can recover between sessions.
- Brand new to both? Begin with Reformer Foundations and Slow Hatha, then add a third class once those feel familiar.

- Can you realistically commit to two classes a week? Then start there; consistency beats an ambitious plan you can't keep.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Yoga mainly trains mobility, balance and breath; pilates mainly trains deep core strength and control, with almost no impact on your joints.
- Let your body guide your lean: yoga for tight hips and stress, pilates for back pain, posture and rebuilding after injury, both for runners and climbers.
- Most people do best with two pilates classes and one or two yoga classes a week, and a Halden membership covers both so you never have to pick just one.

CHAPTER 3

Meet the Reformer Before You Ride It

What the carriage, springs, straps and footbar do, why heavier springs aren't always harder, and the core principles you'll learn in a Foundations class. Covers how many Foundations classes most beginners take before moving up, and the signs you're ready.

The Machine, Part by Part

The first time you see a reformer, it can look like a cross between a narrow bed and a rowing machine. It is far friendlier than it looks. Every part has one simple job, and once you know those jobs, the whole thing makes sense. In our reformer room on SE Division, eight machines sit a full arm's length apart, so you have space to look, touch and ask questions before anyone moves.

The carriage is the padded platform you lie, kneel or sit on. It rolls along rails, and the springs underneath connect it to the frame. When you push or pull, you move the carriage against the springs; when you return, the springs try to pull it home and your job is to let it come back slowly. The footbar is the padded bar at one end, where your feet or hands press during many exercises. The straps hang from pulleys at the other end and loop around your hands or feet, so you can pull against the springs instead of pushing.

- Carriage: the sliding platform you work on, with shoulder blocks and a headrest
- Springs: the resistance, clipped on or off to change the load
- Footbar: the bar you press against with feet or hands, adjustable in height
- Straps: loops on pulleys for pulling with arms or legs
- Frame and rails: the fixed parts you hold and step on when getting on and off

Why Heavier Springs Aren't Always Harder

Most people assume more springs means a tougher workout. Sometimes that's true: pressing the carriage away with your legs during footwork is harder on a heavier setting, just like lifting a heavier weight. But the reformer has a second trick. In many exercises, a lighter spring makes the carriage less stable, so it wants to wobble and drift, and your deep core has to work harder to keep it still.

A plank with your hands on the footbar and knees on the carriage is a good example. On a heavy spring, the carriage feels anchored and calm. On a light spring, it slides at the slightest shift, and suddenly your abdominals, shoulders and the small muscles around your spine are all switched on. That's why your teacher may take springs off to make an exercise more challenging, and why spring settings are a tool, not a scorecard.

Spring colours and tensions vary between reformer brands, so don't worry about memorising numbers before you arrive. Your Foundations teacher will show you our studio's springs, what each colour means and how to change them safely, and you'll practise doing it yourself.

What You'll Learn in Reformer Foundations

Reformer Foundations is a 50-minute class with no more than eight people, and it's required before Reformer Strength at Halden. That's not a hoop to jump through. It's where you learn to set up your machine, get on and off safely and understand the handful of principles that every reformer exercise is built on. Once those are in your body, harder classes feel like a challenge instead of a puzzle.

Expect a slower pace with plenty of pauses to adjust the footbar, change springs and swap feet into straps. Your teacher will walk the room, cue you by name and check your position from more than one angle. If you've told us about an old knee injury or a tender lower back, your teacher will already have options ready.

- Breath: exhaling on effort helps your deep core engage and keeps you from holding tension
- Neutral spine: finding the natural curves of your back and keeping them steady as your limbs move
- Pelvic and ribcage stability: keeping your hips and ribs quiet so the right muscles do the work
- Shoulder stability: setting your shoulder blades so your neck stays relaxed
- Control on the return: never letting the springs snap the carriage home
- Safe setup: checking springs before you step on, one foot on the frame, carriage brought gently to the stopper

How Many Foundations Classes, and How to Know You're Ready

Most beginners take two or three Foundations classes before moving comfortably into Reformer Strength. Some people need one more, especially if they're coming back from injury or have never done any strength training. There's no prize for rushing; the movements in Reformer Strength use heavier spring loads and slower tempos, and they're far more satisfying when setup is second nature.

On weekdays, Foundations runs at noon, and on weekends there are two Foundations classes each day, which makes it easy to fit a few into your first couple of weeks. If you're starting with our three-class intro, we suggest using at least one of those classes for Foundations. Ask your teacher after class whether you're ready to move up; they'll give you an honest answer.

- You can adjust the footbar and change springs without asking for help
- You get on and off the carriage safely without thinking about it

- The carriage returns quietly, without clunking into the stopper
- You can find neutral spine and hold it while your legs or arms move
- Swapping hands or feet into the straps feels routine, not fiddly
- You finish class feeling worked, not lost

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The reformer has a few simple parts: a sliding carriage, springs for resistance, a footbar to press and straps to pull.
- More springs isn't always harder; lighter springs often make your core work more to keep the carriage steady.
- Most beginners take two or three Foundations classes before Reformer Strength; move up when setup and control feel automatic.

CHAPTER 4

Your First Class, Minute by Minute

What to wear, what to bring (water, grip socks, fitted clothes), why to arrive 10 minutes early, and how to tell your teacher about old injuries, pregnancy or a stiff lower back. Includes a pre-class checklist and the common beginner worries no one says out loud.

What to Wear and What to Bring

The best outfit for yoga or pilates is one you forget about once class starts. Choose fitted clothes that stay put when you fold forward, lie on your back or lift your hips: leggings or close-fitting shorts and a top that won't slide over your face in a downward dog. Loose, baggy shirts are the most common beginner regret, and on the reformer they can catch in the springs or straps. Skip zippers, belts and big buckles that can scratch the carriage or press into your back when you lie down.

You'll practice barefoot or in grip socks, never in shoes. Grip socks have small rubber dots on the soles that keep your feet from sliding on the reformer's footbar and the wooden floor, so if you own a pair, bring them. If you don't, tell us when you arrive and we'll fit you with a pair. Mats, blocks, bolsters and straps are all provided at Halden, so you don't need to buy any equipment before your first class.

- Fitted leggings or shorts and a close-fitting top
- Grip socks (or ask the front desk to fit you)
- A water bottle
- A hair tie if your hair is long enough to get in your way
- A change of clothes if you're heading to work after; we have showers, towels, shampoo and hair dryers
- Your bike lock if you're riding; the bike racks are covered and right by the door

Why We Ask You to Arrive 10 Minutes Early

Ten minutes sounds fussy until you see what fills them. When you walk in, we'll show you the changing rooms and cubbies, point out the free lockers with code locks, and make sure your socks fit. Then we set up your mat or reformer with you, which matters most on the reformer, where the right footbar height and spring settings depend on your body.

Those minutes also give you time to tell your teacher anything they should know before the room fills. And they give you a moment to simply sit on your mat and notice the light coming through the skylights. Rushing in at 6:14 for a 6:15 class means starting with your heart racing and your

mind still on parking. Arriving early means starting class already a little calmer than you were on the street.

- Minutes 1–3: Check in, store your bag and shoes, change if needed
- Minutes 4–6: Grip socks on, mat or reformer set up with a teacher
- Minutes 7–9: A quick word with your teacher about your body
- Minute 10: Sit or lie down and settle your breathing before class begins

How to Tell Your Teacher About Your Body

Your teacher wants to know about the knee you hurt skiing, the shoulder that clicks, the pregnancy you haven't announced at work yet. It isn't a formality: at Halden, teachers note it before class and offer you options throughout, so you can follow the same hour as everyone else with movements that suit you. You don't need medical vocabulary. Plain description is more useful than a diagnosis you half remember.

Keep it short and specific: what hurts or happened, roughly when, and what makes it worse. If you're pregnant, recently postpartum or recovering from surgery, check with your doctor or midwife first and pass along anything they've told you to avoid. And if something comes up mid-class, you can always stop, rest in a comfortable position and catch your teacher's eye. Small rooms make that easy.

- "I had knee surgery two years ago. Deep bends still feel tight."
- "My lower back gets stiff after long days at a desk."
- "I'm 14 weeks pregnant and new to pilates."
- "My left shoulder doesn't like weight overhead."
- "Nothing hurts, but I haven't exercised in a few years."

The Worries No One Says Out Loud

Almost every new student walks in carrying at least one private worry. "I'm not flexible enough for yoga" is the most common, and it's backward: flexibility is something yoga builds, not a ticket you need at the door. "Everyone will be watching me" is the next. In practice, people are busy with their own breath and balance, and our rooms have no mirrors on every wall and no leaderboard to compare yourself against.

Other worries are quieter still. You might fear holding up the class on the reformer, which is exactly why Reformer Foundations exists and is capped at eight people. You might worry about shaking muscles, which is simply what working muscles do. You might wonder about passing gas, sweating through your shirt or needing to rest mid-sequence. All of these happen in every class, to beginners and ten-year practitioners alike, and teachers don't blink. Resting in child's pose or lying on your back is always allowed, and it's never a failure.

Your Pre-Class Checklist

Run through this the night before or as you leave the house. It takes a minute and removes nearly every small thing that can make a first class feel awkward.

- Booked the right class: Slow Hatha for yoga newcomers, Reformer Foundations for first time on the reformer
- Fitted clothes on, no zippers or buckles
- Grip socks and water bottle packed
- Light meal or snack at least an hour before, not a big plate right before
- Leaving early enough to arrive 10 minutes ahead
- One sentence ready about any injury, pregnancy or stiffness
- Phone on silent before you walk into the room

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Wear fitted clothes, bring grip socks and water, and leave the equipment to us: mats, blocks, bolsters and straps are provided.
- Arriving 10 minutes early gets your reformer or mat set up properly and gives you time to brief your teacher.
- Tell your teacher about injuries, pregnancy or stiffness in plain words, and remember that resting mid-class is always allowed.

CHAPTER 5

Building a Four-Week Starter Plan

Sample weekly schedules for early birds, lunch-breakers and evening people, how to pair yoga and pilates with running, cycling or the gym, and how to handle soreness, rest days and missed sessions. Shows how to match your weekly rhythm to a sensible number of classes per month.

Start With Your Week, Not Your Willpower

Most starter plans fail for a boring reason: they ask for more time than a real week has. Before you pick a single class, look at your calendar and find the two slots you could protect almost every week without heroics. Those two slots matter more than any perfect routine, because twice a week is the rhythm where most of our members start to notice real change in strength.

Once you know your slots, the number of classes per month mostly takes care of itself. One class a week is about four a month, two is about eight, and three or more starts to look like unlimited. Choose the count you can keep on your worst ordinary week, not your best one. You can always add a class when life is quiet. It's much harder to recover from a plan that made you feel behind by week two.

- Once a week (about 4 classes a month): a steady habit alongside running, cycling or the gym. At Halden this is Studio 4, $119 a month.
- Twice a week (about 8 a month): the sweet spot for building strength. This is Studio 8, $179 a month.
- Three or more a week: Unlimited, $229 a month, with one reformer class per day.
- Unpredictable schedule: drop-ins at $30 for mat or $38 for reformer, booked up to seven days ahead.

Sample Weeks for Early Birds, Lunch-Breakers and Evening People

These examples use a typical Halden weekday, so check the live schedule we send with your intro confirmation before you lock anything in. The goal is a pattern you can repeat, ideally on the same days at the same times, so the class becomes part of your week rather than a decision you make fresh each time.

Lunch-breakers have one honest constraint: the noon weekday slot is Reformer Foundations. That's ideal for your first few weeks, since it's exactly where new reformer students should be. Once you're ready for Reformer Strength, most lunch people move one class to a weekend, when the studio runs from 8:00 to 17:00 with longer flows and two Foundations classes each day.

- Early bird: Tuesday 7:30 Reformer Strength (after Foundations), Thursday 6:15 Vinyasa Flow, optional Saturday morning flow.
- Lunch-breaker: Monday and Wednesday 12:00 Reformer Foundations for your first weeks, then swap one for a weekend reformer class and add a weekend yoga class.
- Evening person: Monday 17:30 Slow Hatha, Wednesday 18:45 Reformer Strength (after Foundations), Friday 20:00 Yin & Restore when your body needs it.
- Flexible mornings: 9:30 Mat Pilates is a strong all-levels option that pairs well with any reformer day.

Your Four-Week Arc, and How to Fit It Around Other Training

Think of your first month in stages. Week one is about learning the room: Reformer Foundations, a Slow Hatha class and one more of your choice, which is exactly what our $45 intro covers over 14 days. Week two repeats Foundations so the springs, straps and footbar start to feel familiar. By week three, many people are ready to try Reformer Strength or Mat Pilates, and week four settles into the mix most members land on: two pilates classes and one or two yoga classes.

If you already run, cycle or lift, treat yoga and pilates as the training that keeps the rest of your training working. Put Reformer Strength or Mat Pilates on easier days, not the morning after a long run or heavy leg session, since your glutes and deep core will be doing real work. Vinyasa or Yin & Restore fit well after hard efforts, when tight hips and hamstrings need range of motion more than load. Runners and climbers often find one yoga class a week changes how their main sport feels.

- Week 1: Reformer Foundations, Slow Hatha, one class of your choice.
- Week 2: Foundations again, plus one yoga class.
- Week 3: Reformer Strength or Mat Pilates if your teacher agrees you're ready, plus yoga.
- Week 4: two pilates classes and one or two yoga classes.

Soreness, Rest Days and Missed Sessions

Expect to feel your first Reformer Strength class a day or two later, often in places you didn't know you had. Mild, even soreness that eases as you move is normal; sharp pain, joint pain or soreness that gets worse is not, and it's worth mentioning to your teacher before your next class. On sore days, a gentle Slow Hatha or Yin & Restore class usually helps more than lying still.

Missed sessions are part of every real habit, so plan for them instead of punishing yourself. If you miss a class, book the next available one rather than doubling up the following day. Members can reserve two weeks out, which makes it easier to rebook quickly. And if travel, injury or a new baby takes you away for longer, Halden memberships can be paused for up to two months a year.

- Leave at least one day between two reformer strength sessions in your first month.

- Use yoga or Yin & Restore as an active recovery day.
- Missed a class? Rebook within the same week if you can, then move on.
- Tell your teacher about any new pain before class starts.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Pick the two weekly slots you can protect on an ordinary week, then match your class count to them: roughly four, eight or unlimited a month.
- Spend your first two weeks in Foundations and Slow Hatha, then build toward two pilates and one or two yoga classes a week.
- Plan for soreness and missed sessions: recover with gentler classes, rebook instead of doubling up, and pause if life gets in the way.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion: Your Next Steps

How to measure progress beyond the scale, choose between drop-ins, class packs and memberships, and keep going when motivation dips. Closes with an invitation to start with Halden's three-class, $45 intro and talk to the front desk about the plan that fits.

Measure Progress Beyond the Scale

Over this book you've chosen a starting mix of yoga and pilates, met the reformer in a Foundations class, walked into your first session ten minutes early, and built a four-week plan around your actual week. The question now is how to tell whether it's working. The bathroom scale is a poor judge of that. Strength, control and ease show up first in small, everyday moments, often weeks before anything changes in the mirror.

Pick three or four markers in your first week and check them again at week four. Write them down, because memory is generous on good days and harsh on bad ones. A note on your phone works fine. What you're looking for is direction, not perfection: a hold that lasts a little longer, a movement that needs one less modification, a morning that starts with less stiffness.

- Can you hold a plank or a pilates hundred a few breaths longer than in week one?
- Does your lower back feel different after a long day at the desk or in the car?
- How close do your hands get to the floor in a forward fold?
- Do you still need the teacher's cue to find the right spring setting or footbar position?
- How do your hips and hamstrings feel the morning after a run or ride?
- Are you sleeping better on the days you practise?
- Do you leave class calmer than you arrived?

Drop-ins, Class Packs or a Membership

Once your intro classes are done, the right plan depends on one thing: how many classes you'll realistically take each month. Be honest here. A plan that matches your actual week beats an ambitious one that leaves classes unused. Every Halden membership covers both yoga and reformer pilates, and reformer and mat classes count equally toward your monthly total.

Do the arithmetic with your own mix. Four classes a month as drop-ins, two reformer and two mat, comes to $136; Studio 4 covers the same for $119. Eight classes, half reformer and half mat, would be $272 at drop-in rates against $179 for Studio 8. That twice-a-week rhythm is where most members start to see real change in strength, which is why we steer most people toward it once they've settled in.

- Drop-in ($30 mat, $38 reformer): for visitors or anyone whose schedule shifts week to week. Book seven days ahead.
- Class packs: a middle path if you come regularly but unevenly. Ask the front desk for current options.
- Studio 4 ($119/month): one class a week alongside running, cycling or the gym.
- Studio 8 ($179/month): twice a week, the habit this book has been building toward.
- Unlimited ($229/month): three or more classes a week, one reformer class a day, plus two guest passes a month.
- All memberships: month-to-month, no sign-up or cancellation fees, 30 days' notice to cancel, and booking 14 days ahead.

Keep Going When Motivation Dips

Somewhere around week three or week six, most people hit a flat patch. The novelty fades, work gets busy, and the warm bed wins at 6:15 am. This is normal, and it isn't a sign you've picked the wrong practice. Habits hold when they rely on structure rather than mood.

The simplest fix is to book ahead. Members can reserve two weeks out, so put next fortnight's classes in your calendar every Sunday, the way you would a dentist appointment. If a session slips, don't try to make it up with a punishing double; just take the next class on your plan. And if life genuinely changes, with travel, an injury or a new baby, use the pause rather than quitting. You can freeze your membership for up to two months a year and come back to the same room and the same teachers.

- Book your next two weeks of classes every Sunday evening.
- Keep one 'anchor' class you never skip, even on busy weeks.
- Swap rather than skip: tired legs suit Yin & Restore better than the sofa.
- Bring a friend on an Unlimited guest pass.
- Tell your teacher what's going on; they'll adjust the class around you.

Your Next Step: Start With the $45 Intro

Here is the whole plan in one line: take three classes in 14 days, notice how your body responds, then choose the plan that fits the week you really have. The Halden intro costs $45 and is built for

exactly this. We suggest Reformer Foundations, one yoga class (Slow Hatha is a gentle place to begin), and one more of your choice.

To get started, request your intro through the form on our website or give us a call, and we'll reply within one business day with times that suit your week. Arrive ten minutes early, tell your teacher about old injuries or anything else your body is carrying, and let us handle the springs, props and grip socks. After your third class, talk to the front desk about which membership fits. Or don't: there's no pressure at the desk. We're on SE Division Street in Southeast Portland, with covered bike racks right by the door. Twelve mats, eight reformers, and a teacher who will learn your name. We'd love to see you there.

- Request your $45 intro online or by phone.
- Book Reformer Foundations, a yoga class and one class of your choice within 14 days.
- Write down three progress markers before your first class.
- After class three, ask the front desk which plan matches your week.
- Book your next two weeks of classes before you leave.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Track strength, mobility, sleep and calm rather than weight; check your markers at week one and week four.
- Match your plan to the number of classes you'll really take; at twice a week, Studio 8 costs far less than drop-ins.
- Start with Halden's three-class, $45 intro, then let the front desk help you choose a month-to-month plan with no sign-up fees.