

How to Choose the Best Pilates Certification Program: 8 Essential Factors

Becoming a certified Pilates instructor is one of the most meaningful career decisions you can make. It is a path that combines movement, human connection, and real impact, and the right training will set you apart in a crowded market. Done well, your certification becomes the foundation for a career where you are the go-to instructor in your area, someone clients trust and seek out because your skills deliver real results.

But not all programs are created equal, and the choices you make now will shape your earning potential, your confidence, and your reputation for years to come. Here are the eight factors that matter most.

1. Is the Certification Program Accredited and Recognized?

Accreditation matters more than most people realize when they are starting out. A certification tied to a single studio or regional brand can limit your career options and may require you to retrain if you ever want to teach elsewhere or expand your scope.

Balanced Body is the world leader in Pilates education, **with internationally recognized credentials that open doors industry wide**. Bovée Pilates/Pilates in East is a Balanced Body Authorized Training Center, which means the certification you earn here carries weight everywhere, not just locally.

2. What Are the Certification Requirements?

Becoming a truly skilled instructor takes time, and the best programs are structured to build your knowledge layer by layer. Balanced Body offers four certification levels:

- Mat Certification: 134 hours
- Reformer Certification: 214 hours
- Mat and Reformer Certification: 332 hours
- Comprehensive Certification: 520 hours

Programs that cut corners on hours are cutting corners on your preparation. The instructors who stand out and stay booked are the ones who invested in training that left them genuinely ready, not scrambling to fill in gaps once they are in front of clients.

3. Who Are the Lead Instructors, and What Are Their Qualifications?

This is where many prospective students do not ask hard enough questions, and it is one of the most important factors of all. **The depth and experience of the person training you has a direct impact on the quality of your skills and your job prospects when you finish.**

At Bovée Pilates, you train with Ahmé Bovée, a Master Pilates Instructor with 26 years of experience and over 40,000 hours of teaching expertise. Ahmé serves as a Principal Educator for Balanced Body, the world leader in Pilates education, and is ranked in the top tier of their Educators worldwide. She has been a conference presenter and industry thought leader for two decades, with deep expertise in anatomy and positive psychology, two areas that are extremely valuable at this level.

Ahmé has spent 20 years specifically focused on teaching teachers. That distinction matters. Someone new to educator training simply does not have the accumulated insight to know how people learn movement, where they get stuck, and what it actually takes to build a confident, skilled instructor. Her mission is straightforward: to help every person she trains become the most successful, sought-after instructor they can be.

Alongside Ahmé, you will learn from a hand-selected team of educators, each chosen for the depth and breadth of what they bring to the training experience. Amy Hamilton is classically trained under Romana Kryzanowska, one of Joseph Pilates' most celebrated protégés and the foremost authority on classical Pilates. Dayle Buick brings specialized expertise in athletic performance and Pilates training, adding a dimension that serves instructors working with active and high-performance clients. Hannah Andersen is a Dance Professor at Wayne State University, whose background in movement science and performance brings a level of artistry and body awareness that elevates everything around it.

Together, this team brings a richness to your learning experience that a single-instructor model simply cannot match. You are not just getting one perspective. You are getting a faculty that is deeply experienced, genuinely invested in your success, and collectively represents some of the most respected backgrounds in the field.

When you are evaluating any program, **ask how long the lead instructor has been training instructors specifically, not just teaching clients.** It is a very different skill set, and it shows.

4. What Teaching Philosophy and Style Does the Program Follow?

Strong certification programs teach both foundational principles and the science that continues to evolve around movement and the body. Balanced Body Education integrates

classical Pilates with modern exercise science, which means you graduate with both the roots and the research.

At Bovée Pilates, that foundation is deepened through The Bovée Way, a methodology built on anatomy, attunement, and the belief that lasting results come from working with the body rather than pushing against it. You will learn not just what to do, but why it works, and how to explain that to your clients in a way that builds trust and gets results.

5. Where Is the Training Located? Is There an Online Option?

Our main studio is in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where most in-person training takes place. Many courses are also available via livestream, which means students from across the country and internationally have been able to complete their training with us.

For equipment-based coursework, you will need access to Pilates apparatus to fully participate. And while the flexibility of online learning is a real advantage, we encourage in-person attendance whenever possible. The hands-on experience is something that simply cannot be replicated on a screen.

6. How Long Does It Take to Get Certified?

The timeline depends on the certification level you choose and how quickly you complete your coursework and practice hours. Most students take between six months and one year to earn their certification.

One of the things that makes Bovée Pilates training work for real people with real schedules is the flexibility built into our program. You pay as you go rather than one large upfront cost, and you can self-pace your training with a wide selection of weekend course options to choose from. The program is designed to be customizable around your life, not the other way around.

Many students begin teaching part-time while they are still in training, particularly those who have a local mentor supporting them along the way.

7. Does the Program Offer Continuing Education and Advanced Training?

Both Balanced Body and Bovée Pilates are committed to education that does not stop at certification. We offer ongoing coursework in areas like pre and postnatal Pilates, rehab-focused training, and athletic performance.

Beyond coursework, Bovée Pilates offers an apprenticeship program for additional hands-on experience and mentorship after you certify. We also provide weekly open studio time for practice and complimentary online mentoring to support you as you build your skills and your confidence in those early months of teaching.

The instructors who keep growing are the ones who keep thriving. The training infrastructure we have built is designed to support you well past graduation day.

8. What Do Past Students Say About the Program?

We would encourage anyone evaluating a program to read the reviews, not just the marketing. Our Google reviews reflect a consistent experience: students from a wide range of backgrounds, including fitness professionals, physical therapists, and career changers, describe training that is rigorous, inspiring, and genuinely fun. They leave feeling prepared and confident, not just credentialed.

Can I Switch to Balanced Body if I Started Training Elsewhere?

Yes. If you have already begun training somewhere else but feel like you are missing depth, support, or a credential that travels well, Balanced Body offers a Bridge Program.

- You can apply to transfer coursework from previous training.
- Some prior education may count toward Balanced Body certification, so you may not need to start over.
- This is a strong option for anyone who wants to expand their career with an internationally recognized credential.

If your current program is not giving you what you hoped for, we are happy to talk through what a transition might look like for you.

Ready to start your journey?

Contact us today to learn more about upcoming training dates and how Bovée Pilates can help you build the career you came here for.